University of Sussex

The Making of Modern Indian Diplomacy: A Critique of Eurocentrism

Deep K Datta-Ray
Department of International Relations
Submitted for the degree of DPhil
November 2009

SUMMARY

Deep K Datta-Ray
Submitted for the degree of D.Phil

The Making of Modern Indian Diplomacy: A Critique of Eurocentrism

Diplomacy is conventionally understood as an authentic European invention which was internationalized during colonialism. For Indians, the moment of colonial liberation was a false-dawn because the colonized had internalized a European logic and performed a European practice. Implicit in such a reading is the enduring centrality of Europe to understanding the logics of Indian diplomacy. The only contribution to diplomacy permitted of India is restricted to practice, to Indians adulterating pure, European, diplomacy. This Eurocentric discourse renders two possibilities impossible: that diplomacy may have Indian origins and that they offer un-theorised potentialities.

These potentialities are the subject because combined they suggest that Indian diplomacy might move to a logic unknown to conventional approaches. However, what is first required is a conceptual space for this possibility, something, it is argued, civilizational analysis provides because its focus on continuities does not devalue transformational changes. Populating this conceptual space requires ascertaining empirically whether Indian diplomacy is indeed extra-European? It is why current practices are exposed and then placed in the context of the literature to reveal ruptures, what are termed controversies. The most significant, arguably, is the question of what is Indian diplomatic modernity? Resolving this controversy requires exploring not only the history of the revealed practices but also excavating the conceptual categories which produce them. The investigation therefore is not a history, but a genealogy for it identifies the present and then moves along two axes: tracing the origins of the bureaucratic apparatus and the rationales underpinning them. The genealogical moves made are dictated by the practitioners and practices themselves because the aim is not to theorize about the literature but to expose the rationalities which animate the practitioners of international politics today. The only means to actually verify if the identified mentalities do animate international politics is to demonstrate their impact on practice. It is why the project is argued empirically, in terms of the 'stuff' of IR.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

What I want to say here and now is that India is not heading towards catastrophe: India is a living catastrophe and its people, including its intellectuals, know it.

– Paul R. Brass[1]

India is a democracy, by far the best functioning and genuine free system of any of the nations achieving independence following the Second World War. Its ruling group speaks excellent English. The Indian civil service, though extremely bureaucratic and influenced by socialist theories imbibed at the London School of Economics, is one of the most effective in the developing world. Almost all of its leaders have studied in Western universities. Yet Americans have, in the past, great difficulty in coming to grips with the way Indian leaders approach foreign policy.

– Henry Kissinger[2]

In 2007 Indian diplomats and American officials negotiated a treaty which undid decades of what India has called 'nuclear apartheid,' unravelling a nuclear regime crafted specifically to 'contain' India and generally to prevent the history of India's nuclear program ever being repeated by anyone. This treaty, the 123 Agreement, has been understood in a variety of ways. Within India, the agreement generated a political crisis which threatened the Government – the

---

[1] Brass. 2006. P.120
[2] Kissinger. 2001. p.154

first time an international negotiation had done so. India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh – the arch proponent and principal architect of the deal – faced a triple challenge arising from domestic political opposition, elements of his own bureaucracy and from the international community.[3] Ultimately, he put himself personally on the line to neuter the most significant opponents by threatening to resign if his party did not back him.[4] Faced with Singh's intransigence, a reluctant Congress Party and a majority in the Indian Parliament did support him. The United States (US) Congress approved of the treaty, as did the international Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). All of this was possible only because US President George W. Bush was firmly behind the agreement. A President universally derided for creating the quagmire of Iraq and Afghanistan pushed through a deal with a Prime Minister regarded as spineless, a 'very civil *servant*'.[5] The 123 Agreement reflected the meeting of minds in Washington between Singh and Bush in 2005 and the rest, as they say, is history. Over the next two years Indian diplomats worked out the details of an agreement to bring India in from the cold to a nuclear powered fire. In the West it was seen as a blow for non-proliferation. China opposed the deal to the end acting thru its proxies – New Zealand, Austria and Ireland amongst other nations usually lumped together as the 'West'. Meanwhile, many in India viewed the agreement as a capitulation to the West. Others – especially within the Indian Foreign Ministry – saw in it the triumph of *realpolitik* over Non-Alignment which had governed India's engagement with the world since independence. The US expected payment for the agreement: India should ditch its longstanding avoidance of international alignments for an alliance with the US, said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.[6] Ultimately, India got what it wanted and was able to reject US calls for a strategic realignment. Moreover, always exceptional in the nuclear debate, India remained exceptional even upon joining the nuclear community: no other nation has the right to never open a handful of its reactors to the international community for inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).[7] India made what looked like strategic concessions during the process of negotiations – such as voting for the first time against Iran at the United Nations,

---

[3] Datta-Ray. July 8, 2008.& Datta-Ray. September 9, 2008.
[4] Datta-Ray. July 10, 2008.
[5] Interview with a former BJP Cabinet Minister.
[6] Datta-Ray. August 13, 2008. See also Pranab assails Rice remarks. June 30, 2007.
[7] See the Indo-US Separation Plan. And the Government of India's note to the IAEA.

alongside the US – but it was just tactical: Indo-Iranian relations have returned today to what they were before the 123 negotiations.[8]

Clearly, Indian foreign policy is remaking the international order. In two short years, India deconstructed the West's nuclear order built up over decades, broke up a Western-led international cartel and secured from the West exceptional privileges for itself. India seeks to reproduce these successes in other fields, to counter and overcome international regimes in trade, the movement of people and, much more immediate, the environment, crafted by Western Europe and North America.[9]

The future Indian intends to craft, it is argued, arises from a history – intellectual as much as practical – which has never been systematically investigated. No doubt the history of Indian diplomacy has generated a multitude of examinations and explanations by analysts, India-watchers and foreign diplomats, but none are synoptic or focused on diplomacy. When the extant work is not reproducing the pronouncements of politicians, the literature invokes the categories of classical IR to explain Indian practice.[10] This is not to deny the explicative powers of IR. However, the purpose of this project is to identify practice in terms of the practitioners and to illuminate their rationales because they govern the makers of Indian foreign policy. It is only by unearthing these conceptual categories that any explanation true to the protagonists is possible. What current investigations do not do is provide a reading of Indian international relations in the terms in which the actors perceive the world or the rationales of the policy makers themselves when it comes to formulating policy.[11] Only one work approaches such a perspective and written by a former diplomat, it focuses simply on bureaucratic structures, not mentalities or their evolution.[12] Though histories of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS and also known as the Ministry of External Affairs, MEA) do attempt to explicate the mentalities of the agents, they are highly specific and lack historical depth. They are however highly indicative.[13] Detailed history is another genre, and Datta-Ray's *Waiting for America* and *Looking East to Look West* are based on extensive access to participants and primary sources and do tell the story of

---

[8] Private interview with a very senior Cabinet member in the Congress Government.
[9] Interview with Secretary level officers and senior politicians in the Congress Cabinet.
[10] A. Appadorai & M.S. Rajan. 1988 & A. Appadorai. 1963.
[11] Karnad. 2002 & Bajpai. 2004.
[12] Rana. 2009. For a highly explorative article on culture see. Latham. 1997.
[13] Dixit. 1998. & Dixit. 2004.

Indian diplomacy in terms of both diplomats and politicians and their underlying rationales and logics. However, both works are limited to specific episodes.[14] In short, works firmly grounded in primary work are episodic while those that purport to present the underlying principles and operations of the MEA are rare. Those that do exist are speculative or attempt to fit the actors into categories alien to the practitioners. No work attempts to systematically identify the present condition and mentality of the IFS in terms of the personnel composing the organisation and formulating policy. Nor does any work attempt to systematically explain how today's rationales, exposed in hard practice, arose.[15] Instead, the literature amounts frequently to no more than a series of diktats with little substantiation or even means of verification while the practitioner's experience of dealing with India or on behalf of India leaves them – and us – at best with tantalizing indications but more often than not, befuddled.

This inexplicability – expressed by diplomats and academics[16] who engage India – and the total lack of dialogue between the pronouncements of analysts, academics and India-watchers and actual practitioners is what this project seeks to replace by systematically exploring the Indian diplomatic present in the terms of current practitioners and thru the sparse and scattered traces their predecessors have left us.[17] A producer-centred approach to IR is proposed because IR's self professed concerns are states and their interactions within the international system. In a world where increasingly the most significant decisions are made at the inter-state level, an approach from within IR and focused on the mentalities of the communities making and remaking the international system can make significant contributions. What is first required, of course, is to eject certain notions, including, opposing states of being paraded by anthropologists, that is, the 'other' of cultural theorists; that actors are either separated from their society or that public and private lives are somehow disconnected. Only by doing so can

---

[14] Datta-Ray. 2002 & Datta-Ray. 2009.

[15] The lack of dedicated analysis of the MEA leads scholars to make nonsensical suggestions based on faulty premises. See: Markey. July 2009.

[16] Markey. Ibid.

[17] For instance when and if IR scholars focus on the threats to India they speak of China and Pakistan. In other words, scholars speak of 'geo-strategic' threats. However, India's Prime Minister and senior diplomats perceive the ay the greatest threat to India lies within, from the disenfranchised within while the without offers opportunities rather than threats. See 'Naxals biggest threat, says PM.' 16 September, 2009. & Indian papers have invented stories of Chinese perfidy. A long standing bogey is that China is building a series of naval bases to encircle India. See No Chinese military bases in Indian Ocean. 11 September, 2009 & Cherian. Oct.10-23, 2009.

one return to the original call by Wight to study the states-system from the perspective for the diplomatic community itself.[18]

Work plan

The aim of the project, then, is to:

1. Fill the gap in a literature on Indian foreign policy which is devoid of any explanation of practice in terms of the agents themselves. The project will therefore identify current rationalities and the practices they produce.

2. To identify historically how the rationalities underpinning current practice became possible.

A framework borrowed from 'civilizational analysis' will be deployed to manage the data because it accords importance to specific legacies while providing space for contact between civilizations and hence modification. This framework will be modified because as its proponents note, civilizational analysis requires considerable modification to be applicable to different societies. Secondly, civilizational analysis precludes the possibility of modernity arising outside Europe. It is to ensure that the project is not limited by these two possibilities that civilizational analysis is tailored. Further tailoring is required because the project is concerned only with those aspects of the civilization which continue to shape practice today. It is for this reason that the project uses the genealogical method. Genealogy starts from today because history is being excavated not for history's sake but to discover the why today exists in the way it does? In short, the present is the starting point for a civilizational analysis performed genealogically.

This is why chapter two identifies current practices but is not simply an exercise in list-making. The purpose is to identify key ruptures and controversies for systematic enquiry. The means to locate them is to situate the findings of the fieldwork within the literature's pronouncements. The most significant controversy arises from the literature's position that diplomacy is an authentic, modern, European invention. Though this project is not a quest for origins, it cannot but engage with the question because the disciplinary position is contrary to the findings in the field. This is critical because enveloped in the literature's position is a particular view of what modernity is: diplomacy regardless of where it is practiced is definitively Europeanized because

---

[18] Wight. 1966. p.18

modernity was born there. Given the divergences between the findings within the field and the literature, a short explanation of the nature of the fieldwork is required and provided before introducing lived Indian reality.

The project seeks to resolve the controversies produced by the juxtaposing of the fieldwork chapter by chapter. The means is not to theorise-about-theory but to investigate historically the notions and practices the fieldwork uncovered and along the tangents the agents themselves offered. Chapter three investigates one such avenue: the *Mahābhārata* (Mb) which is selected because the agents say it provides the conceptual tools for modern Indian diplomacy. Yet, IR has never viewed it as a resource, either conceptually or practically. This text is universally known in India, has significant sections on diplomacy and is regularly referred to by Indian diplomats. The Mb requires analysis because it is presented and understood today by serving Indian diplomats as the origins of, and the means of understanding, diplomacy. This text is investigated in terms of the current understandings of the Mb by Indian diplomats to ascertain their deep-seated conceptual understanding of diplomacy. The Mb is not mined for historical fact; rather it is viewed in terms of current diplomats – as the repository for a philosophy (termed *dharma*) and practices of diplomacy. Finally, the practices of diplomacy are also highlighted to illustrate that it was known to Indians millennia before the entrance of Europeans.

Chapter four resolves the controversy about origins with specific reference to practice. The evidence is in the records left by the earliest diplomatic contacts between India and Europe. The historical record demonstrates that what actually happened was that the British inserted themselves into long established local diplomatic practices. However, these were not those described by the Mb since first diplomatic contact between the two civilizations took place when India was under Mughal rule. That meant that though *dharma* was the philosophy of diplomatic action – the conceptual apparatus – it was subsumed in Mughal India by a Muslim logic. This was, it is argued, secularized as far as diplomacy is concerned because the Mughals found themselves in a land of *dharma*. Next, the actual inter-civilizational diplomatic contact between Europe and the Mughal Empire is investigated in detail and in terms of a wealth of sources, including the diaries maintained by the interlopers themselves. The focus is on European perceptions because this is the moment that the literature imbues with the entrance of 'modernity'. The moment is rendered controversial by the historical evidence. A plethora of

sources, European and local, exist, including the detailed diaries and correspondence of the British. The evidence suggests, conclusively, that far from the Mughals transforming themselves, it was the reverse: the British adopted existing diplomatic practices.

Chapter five continues to unravel a controversy produced by the previous chapter: If the British did insert themselves into prevalent practices then why does the literature imbue colonialism with such significance? It is, for the literature, the moment of inter-civilizational contact when modernity entered India. What then, was the actual contribution of European modernity? The answer, the chapter argues, was the introduction of underlying principles, the metaphysic of 'othering' which further subsumed *dharma*. 'The other', became the *leitmotif* of the British Raj and it came to govern British diplomacy in India. This had odd practical manifestations because though the British appropriated local practices, they eliminated locals and ultimately local diplomacy by deleting locals from positions of decision making, curtailing diplomacy between locals, subsuming local rationales for diplomacy. In short, it was the extinction of local diplomacy. The chapter introduces the British metaphysic of the 'other' in social terms, the social system it engendered in India and how these overwhelmed local practice and thought. Despite the changes the Raj produced in the Empire, there were continuities between the British and Mughals, but in distinct ways. Of significance was that they were both focused on bodies: for the Mughals the polity was an extension of the Emperor's divine self whereas for the British, the polity came to fundamentally divided along racial lines.

The final controversy tackled in chapter six arises from the earlier chapters: Though India possessed a diplomatic theory (*dharma*) this was subsumed. Next, though India possessed a diplomatic practice, this was usurped by the British to further their own metaphysic. Both naturally indicate what is the literature's conclusion, that diplomacy in the non-West is derived, that non-Western diplomacy can at best make only a contribution at the level of practice and that Europe remains central to understanding modern diplomacy. Yet, the fieldwork suggests otherwise. The practitioners claim to be performing to a tune which is resolutely local. What then is modern Indian diplomacy? The means to answer this question is to once again to delve into the world of modern Indian diplomacy and to tease out the intellectual origins of their thought and to verify these in terms of practice. The preeminent diplomats, including India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, are analysed and explored along the vectors, once again,

that they themselves suggest. This leads directly to Mahatma Gandhi who is posited as the key formulator of the principles of Indian foreign policy by the practitioners. Gandhi's and Nehru's thoughts require a return to the notions of *dharma* encapsulated in the Mb and are introduced with reference to several philosophers – since modern India's founding fathers had no interest in keeping with *dharma* to formulate philosophy as understood in the West. Since the project is interested in actuality, the operation of Gandhi's and Nehru's formulations will be traced in terms of actual policy. The specific policy will be nuclear because of the role it has played in the geographical zone that IR has been traditionally concerned with: Europe and North America.

In short, the analysis first produces a series of controversies by using the tool of *ostranenie*. This is to compare the literature's position with the actuality of Indian diplomatic practice. The intent is to manage these controversies not by theorising but by exploring the world of the practitioners since it is they who are remaking the international order. The exploration, it is argued, reveals the mentality or *weltanschauung* of Indian diplomacy thru investigating its key figures. However, for a project interested in actuality, the intention is not to displace one body of theory with another but to demonstrate how local theories govern non-Western diplomacy. This is why revealing the mentality is not enough. What is also required is to ascertain the operation of that mentality in actual diplomatic encounters. This is done in an investigation of the literature on the Indo-China war set in relief by the arguments of this project. Finally, in a post-script, the analysis returns to the Indo-US nuclear deal as a demonstration of how the practices and theories uncovered in the project operate today.

Ends

CHAPTER ONE: CONTROVERSIES

The Indian political theorist has a harder task than his Western counterpart. He first of all has to be a good deal more learned for he is required to know the history of Western political thought as well as the history of Asian thought. He has to possess an array of linguistic skills that are uncharacteristic nowadays of Western political theories. Second, he has to sustain a relationship with his Western colleagues in which he takes their concerns with a seriousness that they rarely, unless they are among the few Western specialists in Indian politics, reciprocate. Thus, genuine dialogue is for the most part lacking. It is we in the West who are impoverished by our failure to sustain our part in this dialogue.

– Alasdair MacIntyre[1]

Introduction

The doyen of modern diplomatic studies, Martin Wight complained in 1966 that 'few political thinkers have made it their business to study the states-system, the diplomatic community *itself*.'[2] Theoretically, if not practically, it is a different story. In 1998 Cohen told us that diplomacy is the 'engine room' of international relations.[3] Sharp concurs.[4] Others go further: Diplomacy is not just the key to international relations but to comprehending social life in general.[5] Evidently, scholars do talk about diplomacy. Furthermore, though the practice of diplomacy is infused with significance by the discipline of IR, that discipline tells us nothing about *why* diplomats perform international relations and *how* they do it.[6] Answering these two questions in a meaningful manner calls for shifting the focus of analysis to the producers of

---

[1] Quoted in B.N.Ray. 1998.
[2] Wight. 1966. p.18
[3] Cohen. 1998.
[4] Sharp. 1999.
[5] Constantinou. 1996.
[6] This line of enquiry was first proposed by Martin Wight. See Wight. 1966. Since then others have encouraged the same type of enquiry. See: Cohen. May 4, 1998; Sharp. 1999; Constantinou. 1996; Simpson. 1995. Most recently Hopgood has asked: ' … what has the discipline of IR, taught anyone about how world politics works in *detail* that they would not have learned by the meticulous reading of a few quality newspapers or by reading history?' in Hopgood. 2003.

international relations: diplomats. To do so is to restore agency to the actors. It is to assume that international relations are produced by participants, some more markedly than others and that underpinning their actions are certain ideas. Identifying these requires not theorizing about theory but performing producer-centred analysis of IR.

A disciplinary assumption precludes such an enterprise. One theoretical; the other historical. Together, not only do they structure diplomatic theory and the history of diplomacy but also shape our understanding of international relations as it functions today. The theoretical assumption is a particular conceptualization of modernity, its conflation with the West and the internationalization of this 'Western modernity'. These presumptions produce a peculiar understanding of diplomacy and lead to totalizing histories where diplomacy functions to overcome a universe of alienated subjects.

Such a reading of IR precludes the possibility of agents acting on an entirely different metaphysic, the principle of a unified cosmos. Tickner, for instance, notes that:

> 'Contrary to the Western model of universality, which is premised upon a self-other binary in which the other's agency and identity must necessarily be negated, Hindu culture's universality does not require the suppression of difference, given that each of the particularistic identities that comprise it are viewed as legitimate and equal parts of a unified whole.'[7]

Are we to assume that despite a radically different understanding of universality that the practitioners of diplomacy in India act on the same principles which govern Western diplomacy? Exploring the significance of such non-Western conceptualizations can lead to a 'rethinking' of the 'foundational knowledge of what constitutes IR' writes Behera in a special issue of *International Relations of the Asia Pacific* dedicated to 'why is there no non-Western theory of IR'.[8] But such a move requires two acts. First, it 'calls for creating alternative sites of knowledge construction with an alternative set of tools and resources.' This thesis will not attempt to create an alternative site of knowledge production but will rather explore one of several unexplored sites already in existence: the IFS.

---

[7] Tickner. 2003. p.304.
[8] Behera. 2007. p. 358

Exploring a site never considered for analysis however requires some explanation and devising a method. This chapter will therefore:

1. Identify the current thinking about the rationale underpinning diplomacy.

2. Demonstrate the limits of such analysis with reference to what Buzan and Little call the 'failure' of such investigations.

3. Introduce and modify civilizational analysis as a means to investigate Indian diplomacy.

4. Outline the necessity of using a 'genealogical' method to perform the analysis.

The internationalization of Western modernity

An investigation of diplomacy which seeks to move beyond the limits set by Eurocentric assumptions conflating diplomacy and modernity with the West requires identifying how this conflation inhibits research into non-Western international relations.[9] In IR the conflation of modernity with the West is unquestioned. Bull's *The Anarchical Society* is indicative. He assumes that the cultural underpinnings of the modern states system and the diplomatic system are preponderantly European. Bull writes that by the 'eighteenth and nineteenth centuries international society' had 'visible expression in certain institutions that reflected the co-operation of its member states. International law was recognised to be a distinct body of rules, arising from the co-operation of modern states; it was seen to be distinct also from matters of private law extending across frontiers, as was recognised in the nineteenth century by the term 'public international law''. Alongside this, 'the diplomatic system, whose role in relation to international society was now set out in the writings of Callieres and other diplomatic theorists, was recognised to be the concern of international society as a whole by the Congress of Vienna, whose Final Act regularised it and brought it into conformity with the doctrine of sovereign equality of states.'[10]

---

[9] Recent works have even begun to do this along a major tangent – proposing Eastern origins for Western civilization. See Hobson. 2004. Several works have attempted to rescue the history and theories of non-European civilization from Eurocentric discourse. See Abu-Lughod 1989; Amin 1989; Bernal 1991; Blaut 1993, 1992; Frank 1998; Goody 1996; Gran 1996; Joseph 1992; Kanth 2005; Pomeranz 2000; Wolf 1982
[10] Bull. 1977. P.37

This history has produced a culture of modernity which is resolutely Western and as Bull's subtext indicates, imposed upon the non-Western world:

> 'It is important to bear in mind, however, that if contemporary international society does have any cultural basis, this is not any genuinely global culture, but is rather the culture of so-called 'modernity'. And if we ask what is modernity in culture, it is not clear how we answer this except by saying that it is the culture of the dominant Western powers.'[11]

Such a culture produces a particular type of 'rationality' which of course is also Western. For Bull, ensconced within the dominant culture, described as an 'international political culture which determines the attitudes towards the states system of the societies that compose it,'[12] there is 'such a thing as rationality in the sense of action that is internally consistent with given goals. Diplomatic theory presents the role of the 'ideal ambassador' in terms of adherence to canons of rationality in this sense, and the modern diplomatic tradition embodies an attempt to sustain behaviour on this model.'[13]

Though the West is the origin and at best the benefactor, it is however increasingly under threat. As Bull states:

> 'We may say that in this world international society there is at least a diplomatic or elite culture, comprising the common intellectual culture of modernity: some common languages, principally English, a common scientific understanding of the world, certain common notions and techniques that derive from the universal espousal by governments in the modern world of economic development and their universal involvement in modern technology. However, this common intellectual culture exists only at the elite level; its roots are shallow in many societies, and the common diplomatic culture that does exist today is not powerfully reinforced by an international political culture favourable to the working of a states system. Moreover, it is doubtful whether, even at the diplomatic level, it embraces what was called a common moral culture or set of common values, as distinct from a common intellectual culture.'

---

[11] Ibid., P.39
[12] Ibid., P.316
[13] Ibid., P.170

And:

> 'The future of international society is likely to be determined, among other
> things, by the preservation and extension of a cosmopolitan culture, embracing
> both common ideas and common values, and rooted in societies in general as
> well as their elites, that can provide the world international society of today
> with the kind of underpinning enjoyed by the geographically smaller and
> culturally more homogenous international societies of the past.'[14]

However despite all, Western conceptions continue to influence world politics – everywhere.[15]

The assumption is of course totally untested and highly limiting since it denies the non-West
any ability apart from brute force. Nor is Bull's position original or novel. In conflating
modernity with European culture, he squarely positions himself within a set of theoreticians
whose analyses grew out of studies of Western Europe, including amongst others, Eisenstadt
and Nelson, indicating the hegemonic nature of these views. In following them, Bull also sets
the tone for successive investigations into the understanding of international society and its
functioning. Secondly, though Bull attributes a certain dynamic to diplomacy – dictated by the
particular concerns of the particular diplomatic operation – the underlying rationality is one of
Western modernity. Finally, though the influence of Western modernity is in decline by,
presumably the rise of non-Western modernities, Bull closes with the statement that the
'cosmopolitan culture of today, like the international society which it helps to sustain, is
weighted in favour of the dominant cultures of the West.' For Bull, then, the decline of Western
power does not mean that Europe's influence will wain. The international system will continue
to be sustained by the culture of the West which after all, it is assumed, produced the
diplomatic systems of the non-Western world.

Bull's student Der Derian theorises this position by identifying two critical moments in
diplomatic history: when the *mutual* estrangement *of* states *from* Western Christendom gives
rise to an international diplomatic system; and when the Third World's revolt against Western
'Lordship' precipitates the transformation of diplomacy into a truly global system'.[16] In this
post-structuralist reading even the limited space Bull allowed in his historicist reading for the

---

[14] Ibid., P.316-317
[15] See Bull, H. & A. Watson. 1984
[16] Der Derian. 1987. p.23.

development of non-Western diplomacy – that is the possibility of a modernity developing without Western contact – is erased by Der Derian who presents the multiple births of non-Western diplomacy as identical, appearing from the same European mould. At the centre of these delusive myths that structure the discipline is a mantra that the West, writes a historian of China, continues to repeat:

> 'Be like us and you will succeed. Persist in your own (i.e., backward) ways and you will fail.' Above all writes Murphy, 'The rhetoric of imperialism has continued to blind us to many truths, as it has kept us from seeing the falseness of Western assumptions that Asia was somehow wrong because it did not uniformly react to Western assertions in a Western way.' [17]

The Western way – and everyone's way – of diplomacy set out by Der Derian arises from Bull's notion of modernity being Westernized. This for Der Derian is alienation. The section on alienation – technically the most important part of the book, for it drives the entire investigation – ends with the statement 'I do wish to reiterate that alienation is not a philosopher's stone.'[18] And yet he makes it the *leitmotif* of diplomacy. The notion is furthered when he writes that diplomacy is the least dangerous possibility 'until we learn to recognize ourselves as the Other.'[19] He identifies diplomacy as a means to overcome 'otherness' (and in *Antidiplomacy* argues that everyone is a diplomat).[20] *Antidiplomacy* is the victory of alienation. Everyone is rendered as alienated from the other but simultaneously Der Derian draws upon several criteria to group together individuals supposedly irreconcilably divided. One such criterion is colonial and colonized. And yet, there is scantly a mention of the latter or investigation of what actually happened to the colonized? In short, what happened when the metaphysic of modernity, 'othering', entered the non-modern world?

Der Derian's theoretical image of diplomacy being structured around an alienation which supposedly permeates society from the state level, via communities to even the micro level of individual human beings precludes a number of avenues central to the type of research

---

[17] Ibid., Introduction p.4-5.
[18] Ibid., p.28.
[19] Ibid., p.209.
[20] Der Derian. 2001.

proposed. Bull hints at this when he notes the decline of Western power. If modern understandings are in decline, what other rationalities are on the rise? If for instance a people viewing the world as founded not on alienation but on inextricably intermixed subjects in a unified cosmos practice diplomacy what would it be? And what is the significance for diplomatic encounters with such an organization? In such a world, the underlying assumption is not sovereign alienated subjects but interconnected subjects constantly in a process of negotiation to reduce constricting forces to create a state of being with the minimum of encumbrances. The way of achieving this could be to ceaselessly experiment. Such diplomacy would be an ongoing experiment to not break barriers but, what? Finally, what shape will the cosmopolitan society Bull speaks of take? All these questions arise from a central problématique: is international society truly balanced in favour of Western modernity? The answer requires investigating not just non-Western societies but the practitioners of diplomacy in those societies because the central concern of this work is not how international relations ought to be, but how it is and why.

Consequences: Disciplinary failure and regeneration

The failure to study even European international relations in a broader social and historical context has in part contributed to what Buzan and Little call the discipline's 'failure as an intellectual project.'[21] The failure is not only the discipline's abstraction from what it professes to study (IR *practices*), but also a product of the discipline's insulated theorizing about not actual *practice*, but theory. After all, the discipline's key texts – Morgenthau, Waltz, Keohane and Nye, Gilpin, Walt, Wendt etc. – are 'necessary reading to understand the discipline, not to analyse what happens in IR as people experience it every day.'[22] For a discipline that professes to explain diplomacy the disconnect between the two is surprising. As Sharp notes, there is a lack of clarity about diplomacy[23] and it emanates from the discipline *intentionally* cutting itself from the polis (society) and thereby *deliberately* creating a misfit between the means of study and the actual object of study.

---

[21] Buzan & Little. 2001.
[22] Hopgood. 2003.
[23] Sharp. 1999. p.44

Correcting these self-inflicted wounds is one of the aims of this chapter. The moves have already been made. The broader failings of such approaches have been recognized by the discipline. It is suggested that a move towards recognizing the plurality of precept and practice, i.e., the inextricably intertwined relationship between theory and practice would correct the error. The discipline also encourages the transgression of disciplinary, methodological and theoretical boundaries[24] and others tell us 'How to Make a Social Science Practical' and encourage 'pragmatism, critical social science and multiperspectival theory.'[25]

Following these suggestions, the thesis researches the social world, i.e., the actual world of international relations as a means of healing the rupture that led to the discipline's 'failure'. Investigating practice is essential because if we are to understand the rationale underpinning a particular nation's diplomacy then the discipline has to explore the practice of that diplomacy and how it came about. Just as Bull's notions arose from a section of the literature, these newer disciplinary realizations match other developments within the academy. Geertz, for one, argues that 'a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms' is the means by 'which people communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life'.[26] This project limits itself to understanding 'life' as the work of the people who conduct relations between sovereign units since the intention is to identify the manner in which a particular set of people understand and act. In short, it is to investigate the development of *why* they do *what* they do and *how* they do it.

Answering questions of this type though aided by Geertz's approach requires moving beyond him. Another step is required – especially when the object of study is diplomacy, a practice which by definition is 'inter-cultural,' international and at the very core of modern global relations. Geertz's approach is useful because 'political theory [is] understood as an intellectual craft,' and challenges Western political and social theorists to put to the test the adequacy of their views on political power through a cross-cultural search for new meanings.[27] In IR this is an attempt to explain international relations, in Hollis' and Smith's words, from both 'inside and

---

[24] Buzan & Little. 2001.
[25] Bohman. 2002.
[26] Geertz. 1973. p.89
[27] Ball. P.29

outside.'[28] Yet, despite this, very few scholars have attempted to understand IR from the inside. Even 'Constructivists' who stress 'culture' rarely perform empirical research. If it were attempted, then such an inquiry would correspond to what Dallmayr calls 'propitious moments in the history of political philosophy,' when 'Western and Eastern thought for the first time can become partners in a genuine global dialogue.'[29] The practice of diplomacy is a vehicle that lends itself to such dialogue – as a category of analysis operationalised as a social practice when academics choose to do so. They do so when in addition to using Foucault, Merleau-Ponty or Lacan to understand the self or the body in India or Africa, they also take local conceptual packages to understand local issues. Doing so is vital for an investigation into how international relations is actually made, because in that realm the 'symbolic forms' of the practitioners – and not the observers – make the stuff of international relations.

Tools of analysis: Civilizations

Why use civilizational analysis as the means to comprehend the 'symbolic forms' of the practitioners? Firstly, because it focuses on what Geertz calls the 'minimal degree of coherence' which 'cultural systems must have' to denote what we 'call systems.' Geertz goes on to note that 'by observation, they normally have a great deal more.'[30] Secondly, the concept of labyrinth of civilizations, 'all of them caught up in the modern transmutation, but each of them possessing specific legacies and resources that can be reactivated in inventive ways' provides a means of capturing the dynamic relations between a civilization and the global ecumene.[31] Thirdly, Nelson's multifaceted and 'systematic' work provides the means to grasp theory and history because his style of 'investigation was linked to an urgent concern about current intellectual and historical challenges. He opposed all theoretical 'uniformitarianism', as a distortion of the actualities of human experience through their reduction to one or another comprehensive system of concepts'.[32] Civilizational analysis therefore focuses on the particular in a milieu and over time while being fundamentally concerned with actual events.

---

[28] i.e., theoretically and practically. See Hollis & Smith. 1990.
[29] Dallmayr. 1990.
[30] Geertz. 1973. pp.17-18.
[31] Arnason. 2006. p.52.
[32] Quote from Nielsen. 1981. P.241-2

The term civilization however poses a formidable set of definitional problems. As Arnason notes, thinking of 'civilization' or 'civilizations', i.e. in the singular or plural makes a world of difference. Interwoven is the relationship between civilization and culture if only because authors connect the two.[33] Wallerstein, however, short-circuits the notion of a plurality of civilizations by claiming that they are a fiction, nothing but ideological uses of the past. In short, 'the concept of civilizations (plural) arose as a defence against the ravages of civilization (singular)'.[34] Even so, the 'defence' implies difference, and that very difference requires analysis to understand why the 'defence' was fought at all? At a more basic level, Wallerstein excludes the possibility that History might actually be more constitutive of the present than simply providing a collection of facts waiting to be deployed.

In any case several authors adopt the contrary position and view History as constitutive of the present. Bagby presents civilizations in the plural because he relies on culture and posits civilizations as internal to a culture, defined as a 'way of life'.[35] In forwarding such a highly localised and comprehensive conceptualisation of culture, he excludes the possibility of civilizations undergoing transformational change. In contrast, culturalist approaches emphasize the locality and hence plurality of civilizations. For Braudel civilizations are 'geographical areas' and to grasp a civilization requires analysing the land and its contours, climate, vegetation, animal species and natural or other advantages and what locals have made of these conditions. He finally posits 'civilizations as ways of thought' though obviously aware that this cultural component is least transferrable across civilizational borders, therefore most likely to be misunderstood and hence requiring detailed investigation.[36] Moving along this trajectory, Katzenstein notes that civilizations exist as porous geographical spaces; exist over long periods; are primarily cultural entities consisting of shared meanings and cosmological world views, particularly in the area of high culture, at times shared at least to some extent even beyond the elite stratum.[37] He emphasizes that civilizations have clearly demarcated geographic centres. Arnason interjects that Katzenstein's approach is somewhat ahistorical since he appears

---

[33] Rival definitions are provided by, amongst others: Bowden. 2004; Mozaffari. 2002; Elias. 1994; Cox. 2000; Cox. 2001; Mazlish. 2004; Mazlish. 2001.; Arnason. 2003; Nelson. 1973; Tehranian. 2007; Braudel. 1993.

[34] Wallerstein. 1991. p.224

[35] Bagby. 1963.

[36] Braudel. 1993. p.9

[37] Puchala. 1997. p.8, 10

oblivious to the transformations of the high culture from with its civilizational base. Arnason therefore posits a 'relational and pluralistic concept of civilization, i.e. one that emphasizes the interconnections of culture and the social world' because it is 'more sensitive to the diversity of historical experience.'[38]

In keeping with the lines of enquiry and approaches outlined above, civilization will be understood in the plural because Asian identity or commonality cannot be reduced to a strategic fiction.[39] However, civilization will not be understood as nested in a 'way of life' as they are always open to radical change in Asia,[40] nor will it be presumed that regardless of their histories that all civilizations are destined for a modernity of control over nature and society. To do so would impose the subject matter into a restrictive deterministic framework framed on the European Enlightenment experience. In any case terms such as nature are understood in radically different ways even within civilizations.[41] Civilizations will however be assumed to exist in the *long durée* because of the 'degree of coherence' they provide to its current members and because even when being renegotiated they may be by the coherence imbuing features of the civilization. However, the ubiquitous notion of many civilizations transforming into modernity raises a fundamental question: does 'a single principle' originating in Europe animate the culture of all modernities?[42] Implied is that regardless of their specificities civilizations have all transformed into modernity. If so, why study anything before the advent and transmission of the European principle which provides the 'degree of coherence' in all societies today?

The question has to be posed not just because Bull characterizes modernity as synonymous with the West but because both the standard, if rival, conceptions of modernity presume that the entire globe is animated by a modernity born in Europe. The conceptions are modernity as a self-contained and complete civilization, imposing its logics and systems on other civilizations or modernity understood as a set of technical innovations adaptable to various civilizations. Interlinking them is their antipathy towards tradition. This section will explore these conceptions

---

[38] Arnason p.4
[39] See Nay 1970; Camroux and Domenach, 1997.
[40] See for instance Dikotter. 2007
[41] Nielsen. 1991.
[42] Kaviraj. 2000. p. 137

and then challenge them by proposing the possibility of a completely modern practice arising in the non-Western world.

The dominant conceptions of modernity can be traced to von Laue's materialist analysis of 'the world revolution of Westernization'.[43] The story is that possessing an exceptional combination of cultural skills, Western society achieved a decisive advantage in the contest for military power. Von Laue continues that as Western powers 'exploited the world's resources … for their own gain … Western political ambition and competitiveness became universal'.[44] Simultaneously all non-Western responses to Western domination failed because the non-Western world was unable to 'match the cultural creativity of spontaneous cooperation' in the West.[45] Hence, the world Westernized since it was the only way to challenge European domination. Accompanying von Laue's temporal explanation is Parson's 'spiritual' notion that modernity is the direct inheritor of a potential locked in Christian culture.[46] Its ability to maintain a relatively high level of 'differentiation from the social system with which it was interdependent' is what unlocked modernity in Europe.[47] This reading posits Christianity as imbuing the culture with the capacity to transcend given contexts and boundaries. It is the root of both the proactive ability to adapt and the inclusivist principles of integration.

For Luhman the defining feature of this new Christian-culture was a reflexive and relativistic understanding of culture.[48] Modernity therefore differs from the 'regional societies of earlier civilizations (Hochkulturen)' with 'cosmic world-views' linked to a set of moral principles.[49] The new civilization of modernity not only undermined its own originary world but also other worlds making for a uniform, global society.[50] The diffusion of modernity was facilitated by purely cognitive integrations of possible partners for interaction, what Luhmann called a 'world society'. Later, Luhmann defined the unity of world society in terms of global communicative operations. However, Luhmann's global society even today remains an abstraction and so he

---

[43] Von Laue. 1987.
[44] Ibid. p.4
[45] Ibid. p.6
[46] Parsons. 1966.
[47] Parsons.. 1971. P.29.
[48] Luhman. 1997. P.151.
[49] Luhman. P.64.
[50] Luhman. 1997. P. 145-70.

introduced the notion of cultural diversity by noting that civilizational remnants remain. Local cultures are regarded as a problem of the system to be managed by a new reflexive and relativistic concept of culture.[51]

Eisenstadt offers a slightly different reading with three defining components. He keeps with von Laue and Luhman that modernity was born in Europe and is a technique to question everything including itself. This is 'reflexivity' and 'it developed first in Western and Central Europe' entailing 'distinct ideological as well as institutional premises.'[52] Eisenstadt draws on Weber who 'finds the existential threshold of modernity in a certain deconstruction: of what he speaks of as the "ethical postulate that the world is a God-ordained, and hence somehow meaningfully and ethically oriented cosmos."'[53] The deconstruction produced a distinct shift in how human agency was conceptualised, its position in time and a conception of the future characterised by a number of possibilities realisable through autonomous human agency. The premises of prevailing social, ontological, and political order, and the legitimating of that order, were no longer taken for granted. An intensive reflexivity developed around the basic ontological premises of structures of social and political authority. This reflexivity 'gave rise to an awareness of multiple visions that could be contested'.[54] It is this ability to question and problematize foundational premises, i.e. a metaphysic, that is for Eisenstadt the defining feature of modernity.[55] Helpfully, he lists the various social phenomena that this ability produced. In short: new roles beyond traditionally sanctioned ones,[56] a wider translocal identity,[57] rebellion and protest,[58] a distinctive manner of creating identity boundaries,[59] and of course, for a modernity arising from Christianity – the possibility of creating Heaven on Earth.[60]

---

[51] Ibid., p.151
[52] Eisenstadt. 2000. p.3
[53] Faubion. 1993, p.113. Of course Nietzsche made the same point and earlier in *Genealogy of Morality* first published in 1887.
[54] Eisenstadt. 2000. P.4
[55] Ibid. p.22-26
[56] Lerner. 1958.
[57] Inkeles & Smith. 1974.
[58] Ackermann. 1991.
[59] Eisenstadt & Giesen. 1995; Shils. 1975.
[60] Eisenstadt. 1992. Eisenstadt. 1978; Eisenstadt. 1985: Eisenstadt. 1981; Vogelin. 1975; Seligman. 1989. p.1-44

Now defined, the second component of Eisenstadt's argument is that modernity 'should be seen … as a case of the spread of a new civilization of a new great tradition – not unlike, for instance, the spread of Christianity or of Islam or the establishment of the Great Historical Empires.'[61] Modernity 'is the emergence of a new civilization' *it is also* 'a mutation of the European legacy into a more global and dynamic pattern'.[62] Yet, 'modernity and Westernization are not identical; Western patterns of modernity are not the only "authentic" modernities, though they enjoy historical precedence and continue to be a basic reference point for others.' In other words, though Europe was the first to produce the technology of reflexivity, this technique can be deployed elsewhere and create questioning minds in other civilizations. The only difference is that the premises questioned are not those which defined the old European civilization, but the metaphysics of other civilizations which modern Europe came into contact with. It is in this sense that modernities are multiple.

Finally, modernity basically performs the same function elsewhere as it did originally in Europe. It is 'the most far-reaching undermining of traditional civilizations that has ever occurred in history together with the creation of new international systems within which take place continuous shifts in power, influence and centres of cultural model-building'.[63] This takes place even where there is no tradition. As Ortiz shows, despite lacking an 'ageless' tradition, Latin America still has a story of modernization. It is choosing from differing modernities in the form of either Americanization or the 'spiritual' qualities of Europe.

This reading, defining modernity by the development of reflexivity from a particular religious tradition – Christianity – and in a particular location – Europe – is challenged by, perhaps unsurprisingly by an Indian schooled in social-science. Kaviraj raises the question stated above: Does a 'single principle' animate all modernities? He describes the above processes as subsets of what is a single process of rationalization in the social world. Kaviraj's attack is threefold and limited to how the European notion of reflexivity is operationalised in foreign climes. At no point does he consider the possibility of an alternative birthplace for reflexivity – the hallmark of European modernity. Kaviraj's first point is that even if the 'single principle' was introduced, and

---

[61] Eisenstadt. 1978. p. 172.
[62] Arnason. P.29
[63] Ibid. p. 172-3

created a 'modern way of doing things' the principle 'is not written on a "clean slate."'[64] Second, 'not only is one process insufficient for the production of others, but the precise manner in which they are interconnected have a strong bearing on the form that modernity takes.'[65] Third, because 'modernity' is defined by reflexivity, it 'generates a constantly recursive consideration of options and consequently learn from an analysis of their own and others' experience. Because of the existence of this kind of recursive rationality it is unpractical to expect that later societies would blindly repeat the experiences of the West. The initial conditions of their modernity are different, and therefore they cannot imitate the West.'[66]

Despite his attack, Kaviraj has not moved very far from the theorists he challenges. All of them rule out-of-court the possibility that reflexivity could have been born anywhere outside Europe. There is no scope that 'modernity' can be animated by anything other than the specific historical conditions which tempered it in the region of its birth. This project will however entertain the notion of not just multiple modernities but multiple reflexivities. To do so, at the very least, permits possibilities so far denied to the non-Western world.

An alternative starting point for the investigation does not mean a wholesale evacuation of the methods of civilizational analysis, only, applying that method – a deep study of a particular process – to the non-Western world. Eisenstadt provides the example. An Eisenstadt-like investigation into a non-western civilization could very well undermine the foundational assumptions which arose from his study of just one civilization to underpin all civilizations – that *only* Christian-Western society produced the required cultural predisposition towards social transformation as a result of an entirely new conception of social agency. Such an agency, if it originated in a radically different historical, geographical and social setting could be capable of producing far deeper and broader social relations – in terms of numbers of humans affected and the depth of continuing lived history – rather than being solely concerned with and driven by the urge to 'undermine' tradition. Eisenstadt's reading presumes that non-Christian civilizations adopted not just modern, Western institutions in the hope of realising a Christian ideal on Earth but also the basic tensions which prefigure the Christian revolutionary ideal. Such a reading denies the possibility of *other*, *alternative* civilizational aspirations. Only a historical investigation

---

[64] Kaviraj p.138
[65] Ibid., p.139
[66] Ibid., P.140

of a non-Christian civilization can verify Eisenstadt. Such an investigation might produce a completely different set of ideals, or none at all, for which Western institutions and practices are just conduits. What is therefore required is not just a history of the spread of colonial power but also of modernity understood as an intellectual mode and why it was absorbed by non-Westerns. It shifts the emphasis to the prevailing logics which made modernity attractive to non-Westerns and how those logics appropriated modernity, that is if there was anything too appropriate. The question is not how European modernity spread, but what actually is modernity and how new was it to the non-Western world? It is, in short, the attempt to identify the metaphysic of modernity and verify whether it existed outside Europe.

This identification may move from the literature positing colonialism as the preeminent moment when the metaphysic of modernity was transmitted to the world. The rest of this section will explore the nature of this transmission to create a space for the possibility that the transmission might have been from East to West. At the centre is the ability of metaphysics to intermingle which is indicated by Aranason's pluralistic theory of civilization and related argument about multiple modernities.[67] With a strong hermeneutical dimension to civilizational analysis, Aranason's relies on Castoriadis's theory of the imaginary component in cultural models of interpretation, which are a central feature of the self-constitution of every society.[68] For Aranson, Castoriadis broke new ground in philosophy in that his notion of a radical social imaginary can be seen as the mechanism that lies at the core of civilizational encounters. In this approach civilizations are contested grounds in which different visions of the world emerge and undergo transformation, central to which are dynamics of encounters and syntheses.

This very internal differentiation leads sociological writers to speak of civilization in the plural. They recognize not more or less fixed entities but focus instead on cross-border and transcivilizational encounters.[69] This outlook originated with Nelson whose means of inquiry offers a system which affirms the continuity of civilizations in the *longue durée*, yet open to fundamental transformation, even accepting of a change in 'metaphysic' heralded by inter-civilizational contact. At the same time, he attempts to avoid the positivism of modernity and the essentialism which accompanies it. Nelson's ideas, drawn from Durkheim and Mauss,

---

[67] Arnason. 2003.
[68] Castoriadis. 1987.
[69] Cox. 2001. p.109; Mazlish. 2004. P. xi; Mozaffari. 2002. pp.75-92.; Holzner.

focused on the highest level cultural production common to a society or the 'coefficient of expansion and internalization'.[70] These highest level cultural productions, what Mauss called 'categories of the human spirit'[71] are the ones which define views across time and space[72] because they are the 'directive systems' defining reality but not necessarily free from conflicts among 'mediatorial elites'.[73] In other words, they are a cultural repertoire constantly open to reinvention. To analyse these processes requires penetrating a society at its elite level. That is why the central policy making apparatus of India is the target for study – for it represents if not just the high culture of Indian international relations, it is where 'mediatorial elites' operate thru their 'directive systems' to create the foreign policy of over 1 billion humans.

Nelson was however not limited to the processes of the mediatorial elites. The central focus of Nelson's civilizational analysis is the study of intercivilizational encounters, those occasions when the central frame, or metaphysic of a civilization is challenged thru contact with another civilization. For him there were primarily three types of consciousness or ways of being.[74] Sacro-magical – central to which is a sense of collective responsibility and sacrifices, expiations and commemorations of collective crimes or wrongs which require atonement.[75] The second, Faith structures is explained by 'the key to is that individuals committed to faith feel themselves to be part of the truth, a manifestation of the divine in expression of the universal will or sovereign design'.[76] And 'Any member of the community can claim to be a messenger, exemplar or incarnation of the faith. Charismatic breaks with social class and caste privilege are regularly possible'.[77] Faith structures for Nelson laid the basis for universal participation and total rationalization or modernity.

In the Christian world total rationalization occurred when acute disagreements about the central rationales concerning action, belief and opinion resulted in a 'crisis of faith'. For Nelson, such an 'axial shift' towards a comprehensive rationalization took place in Western Europe in

---

[70] Durkheim & Mauss. 1971. p.812
[71] Nielsen. 1999. P.13-16
[72] Nelson. 1981. P.84
[73] Ibid. ch.2
[74] Ibid. p.80, 92.
[75] Ibid. p.93
[76] Ibid. p.95
[77] Ibid. p.96

the 12th – 13th centuries.[78] The problem is however that this is just one way, not the way as is assumed by the academy. In the European case over centuries modernity gestated until finally there was a 'maximum rationalization of intelligence' which required 'substantial numbers of persons be[ing] legally empowered and psychologically disposed to carry on mental production at the highest level of operation without being called to a halt by disabling private or public inhibitions or barriers'.[79] It required individuals to transcend the 'particularistic restraints of family, kin, caste and class and allow their minds to wander within 'neutral zones' provided by institutions free from political and religious dictate'.[80] This is just a typology, not meant to be a comprehensive classificatory device and 'for it to have wider applicability beyond the questions discussed by Nelson, it requires considerable conceptual differentiation and historical specification'.[81]

Another advantage is that such an approach is that it is realisable since the object is actual manifestations of the structures of consciousness which constitute historical 'phenomenologies' of experience and expression.[82] The typology implies a concrete research program found especially in the study of historical individuals. Nelson himself focused on major European historical figures. Such an approach has the advantage of avoiding the false choice between 'macro' and 'micro' analysis. The 'macro' concept of civilizational complexes points to the highest level categories constituting the structures of consciousness of civilizations, but they are experienced and put to work by individuals in real 'micro' situations and predicaments where conduct, opinion, thought and imagination take place. This emphasis on individual experience, consciousness and forms of expression provides a particularly valuable entry point into the concrete study of such civilizational processes.

Though focused on the advancement of rationalization processes in the West, Nelson deals with an equally strong concern with the precariousness of civilizational patterns.[83] Nelson dismissed

---

[78] Ibid. p.99. Axial Age civilizations are those that developed independently of each other. See. Jaspers. 1953.
[79] Ibid. p.184, 187
[80] Nielsen. Sept. 2001. p.409
[81] Ibid. p. 410
[82] Nelson. 1981. p.203-5
[83] Ibid. p.8-9

the notion of fixed and irreversible historical stages as 'unhistorical'.[84] It is possible for 'regressions' to occur from one type to another.[85] There can occur the selective development in 'segmental' form of 'modernizing', rationalizing enclaves within fundamentally 'traditional' societies as they encounter modern ones.[86] Yet, the means in which these changes were imagined were a product of assuming that the rationality of modernity originated in only one place. It led to, as Nielsen notes:

> 'Weber's way of posing his questions, asking why in one civilization (the 'West') cultural developments of 'universal significance and value' emerged which did not occur independently elsewhere.[87] This form of question has particularly unhappy consequences. Indeed, Nelson is not entirely free from this tendency. It too easily becomes a study of the 'success' and (especially) the 'failure' of civilizations in the gestation of particular cultural forms (for example, modern science) abstracted from universal history. It obscures a more central question: what structures, histories and experiences did actually occur in different civilizations?'[88]

What is therefore required is an Eisenstadt-type deep investigation into the structures, histories and experiences of a non-Western civilization. 'To get at this problem, we must disaggregate the ideas, images and categories embedded in various sacro-magical structures and study their histories, including their relationships to later possible developments with the core sacro-magical structure.'[89] Only by doing this in the same manner as has already been done for Europe can one begin to ascertain the metaphysic of modernity, check its uniqueness and perhaps even posit that the flow was not from West to East but the other way around.

Nelson provides a method of capturing these flows. As Nelson notes, the emergence of faith structures is already a 'pre-monition of the next phase': that is, the rational examination of the contents of faith through the development of a prime science of theology.[90] But how was this

---

[84] Ibid. 1981. p.91
[85] Ibid. 1981. p.97
[86] Nelson 1981. p. 102-5.
[87] Weber. 1958. pp. 13-31.
[88] Nielsen. Benjamin Nelson's Sociology of Civilizations. International Sociology vol.16, no.3. p.411-12.
[89] Ibid. p.412
[90] Nelson. 1981. p.94

done? And even more fundamental, how did local faith structures structure the examination and how did foreign 'prime science' affect the examination? Nelson argues that the various 'Axial Age' cultures developed universalising and rationalising outlooks to varying degrees and in different ways.[91] He also notes that the intracivilizational adaptation of Greek, Roman, and Jewish-Christian ideas in later European history contributed to Europe's subsequent development of fully rationalized civilizational structures.[92] But these later adaptations assume the prior partial rationalization of specific cultural spheres in these ancient civilizations. We need to understand these rationalizing segments emerging in ancient civilizations after their initial breakthroughs into their 'axial' formations.[93] Once again, it requires a return to a deep study of the histories of particular ideas, images and rationales.

Local 'logics' for 'local' practices and encounters

A deep study of non-Western ideas, images and rationales would be undermined if they were interpreted according to the Western canon. To do so would simply reproduce the view that modernity (regardless of the guises it takes on) is 'animated by a single principle.'[94] Such an approach does not discount intermingling only that it recognises that there are local logics at play during the process of contact with European modernity. Hesitant first steps towards allowing the non-Western lay person, as the representative of their everyday culture to serve as an authoritative source. Anthropologists, since they make a fetish of going into the Third World, have done so. They even make non-western intellectuals the object of study. What they resolutely will not do is this. Social scientists will always analyse non-Western thru the lens of authoritative Westerners. Essentially, social scientists overlook the literate, high cultures of the places they study. This is especially relevant to the study of diplomatic practice because the entire society is 'high culture' and infused with a particular cultural repertoire developed over time. Uncovering the 'inherited conceptions' and 'symbolic forms' is not enough. What is also required is to take them on their terms. To understand the rationale underpinning actions in a particular context. In short, while the anthropologist allows the lay individual to be a source of authority and to challenge the reader but always thru a patina of Western theory. Social

---

[91] Nelson 1981. p.11
[92] Nelson 1981. p.98
[93] Eisenstadt. 1986
[94] Kaviraj. P.137

scientists engage the ordinary but never adopt the frameworks that they use, i.e., the intellectuals of the non-West.[95]

This resistance to engage prestigious, literate non-Westerns seriously, as capable of producing theory has resulted in the disqualification of people who produce the analytic categories of ordinary people, the ones anthropologists patronizingly claim to be retrieving.[96] What is required is to conduct research on the terms of the researched. To allow them their authoritative sources, to develop what Haliburton, calls 'authoritative sources.' He means philosophers and social analysts whose ideas social scientists adopt, whose words are quoted to help make sense of some object of study. Authoritative sources provide the principle theoretical insights that guide the work and draw meaning out of the ethnographic material used. In other words, they teach the audience something about a truly different world and the purpose of authoritative sources is not to establish the validity of the work being performed but rather introducing a quote or a set of insights, using the words of the authority as an originary point in the work's interpretive endeavours.

The last shibboleth of civilizational analysis which, arising from the notion of an originary Western modernity, has to be discarded because of the possibilities it closes off. It is the notion of 'master', 'hybridity' and 'cross-contamination' forwarded by Delanty.[97] These three terms might have marked the displacement of civilization in the singular by civilizations in the plural (as put forward by Nelson's notion of encounters) but there remains in them an aroma of the Weberian question of 'universal significance and value.' In terms of IR, though Bull does not explicitly say so, his notion of a 'cosmopolitan culture' and it being predominantly Western rides on this limiting view of an expanding and all-consuming Western culture.

These notions are limiting because they are founded on the notion of 'authenticity'. Master suggests as its opposite the novice, hybrid means the coming together of two masters while cross-contamination indicates the unselfconscious coming together of two masters. The underpinning notion of purity can be contested on many grounds but for this project is self-defeating because it assumes 'alienation' between two, at the very least, pure masters who

---

[95] Halliburton. Autumn 2004. P.793-817
[96] For instance Subaltern Studies.
[97] Delanty. 2006. P.45-46

engage each other. It is a return to Der Derian and his notion of the 'other'. Diplomacy, in such an understanding of interactions is rendered, once again, the transactions between two essentialist, pure, and opposing, forms. Such an understanding renders meaningless Cox's suggestion that civilizations evolve gradually and are forever changing, in response to their internal pluralism and international encounters.[98]

Despite the falsehood of 'purity' which underpins 'hybridity', it nonetheless continues to be deployed eagerly in cultural studies today.[99] This despite the decline in respectability of racial theories: the term was first used by physical anthropologists in the nineteenth century keen to describe 'mixture' of 'pure races' as inferior, mongrelised 'hybrids'.[100] Bakhtin was one of the first to transpose the term from biology to culture by describing the 'mixture' of two social languages as 'hybridisation'. The linguist Whinnon similarly argued in 1971 that is was satisfactory because 'the biological and linguistic processes of hybridisation are closely comparable if not mechanically identical.'[101] Such deliberate parallels are not surprising, since the fields of biology and linguistics have overlapped ever since their appearance in the nineteenth century: race and language were virtually synonymous in Darwin's time, for instance in the use of the term 'Aryan'.[102] Despite the decline in respectability of the notion of 'hybridity' first in biology and now in linguistics, not a few practitioners of cultural studies have resorted to it to perpetuate essentialist understandings of human interaction. 'Hybridity' continues to replicate simple binary opposites and, more importantly rides roughshod over the perspectives of historical agents, who did not necessarily see a clash in the juxtaposition of different objects.

The final term 'cross-contamination' is a subset of the notion of 'acculturation', used to portray the changes induced by 'globalisation'. Social scientists critical of the 'intrusion of the West' have interpreted the global circulation of ideas and commodities as the result of a market system with no regard for local needs. Latouche argues that the rise of the West to world domination has brought widespread social, cultural and material destruction, as 'oppressed people' reject Eurocentric modes of development: globalisation has led to acculturation, as a

---

[98] Cox 2000. P.217, 220
[99] Young. 1995.
[100] Duvernay-Bolens. Jan-March 1993., pp.144-52; for an overview of recent uses of the notion of hybridity see Kapchan & Strong. 1999. pp.239-53.
[101] Whinnom. 1971. p.91
[102] For a study of the links between racial theory and the study of languages see Hutton. 1999.

stable, tradition bound regime of production is followed by a disoriented response to a new global mode of production.[103] 'Traditional Russia', argues von Laue, was destroyed by imported gadgets, whether grand pianos or fine liquors.[104] The idea that a global economy of ideas leads to the inevitable destruction of local identities, as a homogenised culture ruthlessly displaces previously autonomous cultural experiences in its subjugation of the world, has appeal for those – such as Bull – who mistake globalisation with Westernisation. But local people have always creatively incorporated products, institutions and social forms for purposes other than those intended by their producers, as Errington and Gewertz demonstrate in the case of Papua New Guinea.[105] Sahlins too notes that local culture does not necessarily disappear under the impact of rapid change, as global homogeneity and local differentiation develop together: he refers to this process as the 'indigenisation of modernity' a vision articulated around the arresting image of lokua, small fish living in reef ponds cut off from the sea at tidal lows but periodically replenished by ocean waters.[106]

Using 'hybridization' and 'cross-contamination' to ascertain the operation of a 'minimal degree of coherence' or the 'transcivilizational bridges' which undermine the coherence however is to reinforce the notion that diplomacy is nothing but contact across alienated 'others'. Using such a paradigm to investigate non-Western diplomacy is to fall back into the trap of the 'other', defeats the notion of a radically different metaphysic which does not recognise the self/other divide and precludes the option of a unified cosmos, or the negation of 'alienation' in philosophical terms.

Instead the concept of appropriation is a more useful tool to account for the emergence of a particular modernity. Appropriation assumes ordinary people operate from within a social universe in which things are used and circulated in culturally specific ways. Cultural modernity was not a set of givens imposed but a repertoire of new opportunities. A kit of tools which could be flexibly appropriated in a variety of imaginative ways and crucially a kit which could have been adopted by the West. The local, in this process of cultural bricolage, was transformed just as much as the global was inflected to adjust to existing conditions: inculturation rather than

---

[103] Latouche. 1995; see also Spybey. 1995.
[104] von Laue. 1987. pp.43-5.
[105] Errington & Gewertz. March 1996. pp.114-26; See also Miller. 1994.
[106] Sahlins. 2000.

acculturation accounts for the broad cultural and material changes which marks the operation of diplomacy.

A critique of the fictions of 'authenticity', 'hybridity' and 'acculturation' thus leads us to emphasise instead the circulation of practices between civilizations and their creative appropriation by users in a variety of rapidly changing social contexts. As Appiah has observed, there is no fully autochthonous, echt-African culture awaiting salvage, and the postulation of a binary opposition between a unitary Africa against a monolithic 'West' is the last of the shibboleths of the modernisers that we should learn to live without. In his analysis of a sculpture representing a Yoruba man with a bicycle, which he uses to explore how pan-Africanism and postmodernist theory have failed to come to terms with cultural bricolage and the ceaseless circulation of cultures, he underlines that the African artist who carved it cared little that the bicycle was the white man's invention: 'It is there because someone cared for its solidity; it is there because it will take us further than our feet will take us; it is there because machines are now as African as novelists – and as fabricated as the kingdom of Nakem.'[107] What such an approach opens up is the possibility of a universal notion of pragmatic-practicalism which while it underpins the transmission of goods and ideas cannot explain to what uses they are put to. For that what is required is to return to the local logics produced by accumulated experience in the form of cultural traits.

Method

Why use Nietzsche – a European philosopher – and his method of genealogy to analyse the non-Western world? In seeking to answer this question, this section outlines the main aspects of Nietzsche's genealogical approach to demonstrate its fit with the notion of civilizations.[108] Nietzsche's method is useful in a world of civilizations constantly undergoing change thru cultural bricolage for four reasons. First, a genealogy is focused on the present.[109] Secondly, a genealogy does not just present a history of now but also critiques it by making the obvious contingent thereby expanding the boundaries of knowledge. Thirdly, it focuses on the moments

---

[107] Ibid., p.157
[108] Cox. 2001; Mazlissh. 2004; Mozaffari. 2002.
[109] In terms of this project the idea of inventing diplomacy. See Acharya & Buzan. 2007. p.287-312;
Behera. 2007. p.341-368.

of manoeuvre and is therefore particularly suited to the in-depth historical analysis over the *longue durée* required by civilizational analysis. Finally, a genealogy readily acknowledges its location in a stream of intellectualising.

Nietzsche's *Towards a Genealogy of Morals* is the text which dealt with genealogy. While Nietzsche never described anything approximating a 'genealogical approach' and he innately abhorred systems – 'I mistrust all systematizers and avoid them'[110] – his writings provide a means to map a genealogical approach. The task of outlining a genealogical method is complicated by Nietzsche not offering any specific definition of genealogy. In fact he noted 'only that which has no history is definable'.[111] Furthermore, Nietzsche's genealogical approach insists, from the outset, on the necessity of allowing for a plurality of appropriations. Nothing, in other words, would contradict the intentions of the genealogist more, than to attach only a single meaning to the term 'genealogical'. Nor do the various aspects of the genealogical approach form a coherent, harmonious and parsimonious whole; rather, there is often a creative and productive tension between its various constituent components. Despite these tensions, however, there are at least four aspects of Nietzsche's work that broadly outline the main attributes of his approach and that have subsequently inspired other, similar studies.[112]

In the first instance, genealogy is a specific type of historical inquiry. Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals, for example, turned quite explicitly towards the history of morals in Europe. Yet, a genealogy is not merely an ordinary history, if there is such a thing. For, a genealogy is primarily concerned with providing a *history of the present* rather than a history of the past.[113] Instead 'writing a history of the past in terms of the present',[114] or even in terms of some idealised future, a genealogy serves to illuminate the present from the perspective of the past.[115] Indeed, as Jens Bartelson notes in his study of sovereignty, 'a genealogy has not as its task to tell what

---

[110] Nietsche. 1968. See also Saurette. 1996.

[111] Nietzsche. 1967. II, §13, 80. This is, of course, not to insist that definitions are irrelevant, but rather that they always already entail 'an enormous sphere of human evaluations'. See Shinoda. 1998. P. 13.

[112] Foucault, for example, once noted that '[i]f I wanted to be pretentious, I would use "The Genealogy of Morals" as the general title of what I am doing'. Foucault. 1980. P. 53. See also Schrift. 1995; and Mahon. 1992. For some examples within the discipline of International Relations, see Der Derian. 1987; Ashley. 1987; Smith. 1995; and Bartelson. 1995.

[113] See Foucault. 1979. P. 31.

[114] Ibid., 31.

[115] Bartelson, p.7.

actually happened in the past , but to describe how the present became logically possible'.[116] The first characteristic of a genealogical approach then is that it is a historical study that turns towards the past, not for the sake of the past, but in order to explain something that remains problematic or unknown today. It is, in short, a history of how we have become what we are.[117]

Secondly and closely related to this first point, a genealogy is also a critique of the present. As Owen observes, in the Nietzschean usage a genealogy aims at 'providing a history of the present in order to facilitate critical reflection on the present'.[118] It is critical in the broader Coxian sense, rather than the narrower Habermasian one, in that it does not simply take the prevailing order for granted but rather seeks to inquire into how this order evolved historically;[119] it is, in the words of Shinoda, 'a philology of the history of human evaluations'.[120] Much in this vein Nietzsche himself insisted that:

> 'we need a critique of moral values…and for that there is needed a knowledge
>
> of the conditions and circumstances under which [morals] grew, under which
>
> they evolved and changed…a knowledge of a kind that has never yet existed or
>
> even been desired.'[121]

The point of his genealogy, in turn, was to gather the requisite knowledge in order to facilitate critique. This critical perspective also serves to explain why Nietzsche chose to subtitle his work a *Streitschrift*, a polemical treatise aimed at provoking controversy about the moral imagination of modern Europeans. Later, Foucault would similarly draw upon a genealogical approach in order to challenge many of the ways in which Europeans traditionally thought about power, knowledge, sexuality, punishment, etc. Following Nietzsche's earlier maxim of only attacking that which is successful,[122] both Nietzsche and Foucault demonstrated how the genealogical approach can be used in order to reflect critically on some of a society's most cherished ideals, 'especially as they pretend to be compelling and absolutely obvious'.[123] In addition, then, to being a history of the present, a genealogy is usually also a critical reflection on something that

---

[116] Ibid., p. 8.
[117] Owen. 1994. P. 163.
[118] Owen. 1995. P. 39.
[119] See Cox's useful distinction between critical theory and problem-solving theory. Cox. 1981.
[120] Shinoda. 2000.
[121] Nietzsche, Genealogy, §6, 20.
[122] Nietzsche. 1967. 'Why I am So Wise', §7, 232.
[123] Blondel. 1994. P. 310.

is predominant in the present – for the purposes of this study, the accepted notion of 'alienation' governing diplomacy.

In order to facilitate such a critical history of the present, a genealogical approach, thirdly, does not seek to recount the entire history of a phenomenon from the time of its historical emergence through to the present day. A genealogy answers the concern that: 'In practical terms, if we are to know what diplomacy is, or where it might be heading, we must know how it came into being.'[124] The answer is episodic, restricted to those historical episodes that are of decisive importance in seeking to understand a current phenomenon, singled out as problematic.[125] To this extent, a genealogical investigation is also much more interested in a phenomenon's descent, or *Herkunft*, than in its origin or *Ursprung*. The reason for this lies partly in Nietzsche's own warning that 'the cause of the origin of a thing and its eventual utility…lies worlds apart'.[126] The utility of a present value may be altogether different from the reasons or conditions under which it first emerged, and a confusion of the two should be avoided. In this vein, Nietzsche's own genealogical study of morality was also partially directed against Rée's book, *The Origin of the Moral Sensations*, in which the latter used a social-Darwinist perspective to demonstrate that the modern individual constituted the highest product of a linear, human evolution.[127] The fault of this book, Nietzsche argued, was that it reduced the history of morality to the notion of its utility in the present.[128] Nietzsche, however, wished to contest these neat and linear conceptions that couched the question of morals exclusively in terms of utility, disagreeing with the book proposition by proposition.[129] It is also in this same sense that Foucault later echoed in his article 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' that the genealogist 'must be able to recognise the events of history, its jolts, its surprises, its unsteady victories and unpalatable defeats—the basis of all beginning atavisms, and heredities.'[130] Nietzsche's genealogical approach therefore does not seek to simply recount historical continuities leading to the present, but rather wishes to recover the important ruptures, detours and discontinuities that gave rise to the present, the 'accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the

---

[124] Der Derian. 1987. p.1
[125] Bartelson, p. 8.
[126] Nietzsche, Genealogy, II, §12, 77.
[127] Ibid., Preface, §4, 18.
[128] Hoy. P. 251.
[129] Nietzsche, Genealogy, §4, 18.
[130] Foucault. 1998. P. 373.

complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us', as Foucault put it.[131]

Fourthly and finally, the genealogical approach readily acknowledges that it is already situated in a particular historical and cultural context. A genealogy is self-consciously immanent.[132] Moreover, it claims this status not only for itself but also for the phenomena it investigates. Foucault emphasised this point with reference to Nietzsche in his aforementioned essay when he noted how the genealogist:

> 'finds that there is 'something altogether different' behind things: not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence, or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms. Examining the history of reason, he learns that it was born in an altogether 'reasonable' fashion—from chance.'[133]

In this sense, a genealogy is also an exercise in what Foucault calls an 'effective history'; it seeks to distance itself from the metaphysical assumptions that characterise much of traditional history, such as the histories produced by the discipline.[134] Indeed, the genealogical ethos might even be seen as an alternative to the traditional ontologies in that, as Alexander Nehamas explains, '[i]t allows for many alternatives, and it neither discovers nor imposes once and for all a ready-made reality because it depends on the indeterminate picture of the world provided by the will-to-power'.[135] It could be said that a genealogy in the sense pioneered by Nietzsche is a historical, critical, episodical and effective account of a contemporary phenomenon that is deemed problematic.

Conclusions

In keeping with the method of genealogy, this chapter has identified the state of the art of IR and attempted to create a space for a producer-centred analysis of diplomacy. The enterprise is further complicated by the fact that the target for analysis is non-Western. The project's

---

[131] Foucault. 'Nietzsche', p. 374.
[132] See, for example, Nietzsche, Genealogy, §3, 17 and Foucault, 'Nietzsche', 382.
[133] Foucault, 'Nietzsche', 371. The reference is to Nietzsche. 1982. §123, 77.
[134] See Foucault, 'Nietzsche', 379-81; and Owen. P. 147.
[135] Nehamas. 1985. P. 104.

effectiveness lies in not only uncovering the practices but the local logics underpinning them and their evolution to explain the world as it exists today. In terms of IR, diplomacy is understood as an authentically modern practice and within the academy there is the conflating of modernity with the West. In IR, Der Derian inserted into Bull's historicity the metaphysic of 'alienation' and converted diplomacy into the means to overcome alienation. This focus on a particular history and example to explain the world produced in IR a theoretical abstraction from real practices and opinions resulting in what Buzan and Little call the 'failure of the discipline'.

The means to correct this failure is to invoke the tool of civilizational analysis. Eisenstadt is invoked because he is a proponent of civilizational analysis as a technique and is also concerned with the coming of modernity. However, Eisenstadt's conclusions are ejected since Kaviraj questions the feasibility of attributing highly differentiated processes to one process originating in Europe. Kaviraj himself stops short of the possibility of alternative births of modernity. In addition, though Nelson, like Eisenstadt, ascribes modernity to Europe, the former also thru the notion of intercivilizational encounters opens the possibility of transmission between civilizations. Tracing these meetings from the perspective of the practitioners in a non-Western civilization required two further steps. First, not attempting to force non-Western practices into Western models. This requires recognising that a non-Western civilization has its own canon which is interpreted and reinterpreted by successive elites as they encounter other civilizations. Secondly, intercivilizational encounters cannot operate on the principles of 'authenticity' in a world defined by constant change.

The project essentially aims to do what Behera encourages when writing: 'Those re-imagining IR, however, must question the implicit yet ubiquitous usage of western standards to *judge* knowledge produced through non-western modes of thinking or at non-western sites of knowledge making.'[136] Such an enterprise need not be inexplicable to another civilization. What is required is translation of practices and the logics underpinning them in relation to other discourses. It is a start to creating the 'genuine dialogie' MacIntyre spoke of.

Ends

---

[136] Behera. P.360

CHAPTER TWO: DIPLOMACY TODAY

What to do, we are like this only!

— Indian diplomat quoting

Quick Gun Murugun[1]

Introduction

A precursor to 'genuine dialogie' with Indian diplomacy requires knowing what exists today. This chapter will introduce Indian diplomatic society as it exists in the context of the literature, to argue for two possibilities rendered impossible by the discipline. One is the idea that modernity and its practices could arise independently in the non-West. The other is that modernity requires analysis in terms of local theoretical frameworks. Yet, it is the position of authors on diplomacy that diplomacy as an authentic, modern, European invention was adopted by the rest of the world, including India. This makes for a knot – a controversy – which the genealogical method can undo because it takes something natural (the disciplinary position), demonstrates (through empirical evidence) why this is highly unnatural for a given diplomatic community, and then resolves the knot by exposing the historical roots of today's practices and their underlying notions. Genealogy thus renders what is taken for granted (i.e., the position of authors on diplomacy) as strange and unfamiliar – defamiliarized (*ostranenie*) – by placing it in the context of actual practitioners.[2] In this it performs the same function as Tolstoy's *Kholstomer* where the artist estranges the everyday by presenting it from some novel perspective – in his case that of a

---

[1] The diplomat quoted a line from a very popular Indian television advertising spoof of American spaghetti Westerns. It features a fat south Indian called Quick Gun Murugan in garish cowboy attire. He walks into a kitsch bar in a hick town, orders a whisky and a dosa (a vegetarian snack), spews expletives and challenges one and all to fight. As the spoof ends the punchline appears: 'We are like this only'. See: http://www.quickgunmurugun.com/

[2] Crawford. 1984. pp. 209-219

horse.[3] But genealogy is not just a literary device.[4] It moves beyond defamiliarization to take another step – *refamiliarization* – by explaining the controversy in terms of the controversial. It is a reconstructive process, but not to return to familiar ground.[5] The return is to a new framework, required not least because, as Plumb commented, consensus about history does little to further historical knowledge and consequently there is little point in accumulating facts within agreed frameworks of knowledge.[6] What are required are new frameworks, not because they are new but because the old are not the terms in which the practitioners practise diplomacy. This chapter will therefore first demonstrate IR's position on diplomacy. This will then be defamiliarized by introducing the MEA through the people who actually compose it. In terms of the diplomat quoted above, the chapter aims to first explicate what it is that Indian diplomats are and then examine why they are 'like this'. These moves are made to test whether the possibilities decreed impossible by the discipline do exist. For now, the chapter will present the literature and then Indian diplomatic reality.

Theoretical understandings of non-Western modernity

The possibility for Indian diplomatic originality is according to the discipline impossible. At best Indian diplomacy is a derivative discourse. This is because IR understands diplomacy to be 'essentially European in its focus, its concepts and in its monopoly of power'.[7] The major thinkers of diplomacy are Machiavelli, Guicciardini, Grotius, Richelieu, Wicquefort, Callieres, Satow, Nicolson and Kissinger according to Berridge's *Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissinger* from the Palgrave series 'Studies in Diplomacy'. IR accepts these authors as seminal. They are the classical thinkers of diplomacy. Not only are they European but Berridge also asserts that the diplomacy of 'the modern world system … first came into being in the Italian peninsula and reached its full expression in Europe'.[8] As for diplomatic theory, Berridge says: 'as with other forms of theorising … diplomatic theory is reflective in character, permanently indebted to historical reasoning, and unfailingly ethical in inspiration'. He adds that 'diplomatic

---

[3] Shklovsky. 1990. P.7-12
[4] Ginzburg. 1996. P. 8-28.
[5] Refamiliarization in this work is therefore similar to the proposals made by Miall & Kuiken. 1994. See also: Miall & Kuiken. 2001; & Miall & Kuiken. 2002.
[6] Dikotter. 2008. P.1
[7] Anderson. 1993; See also Der Derian 1987; Berridge 1995; Hamilton & Langhorne 1995.
[8] Berridge. 2001. P.1

theory appeared at the same time as diplomacy began to assume its distinctively modern form in the late fifteenth century'.[9] Explicit is the belief that diplomacy is an authentic Western invention and that the theories of diplomacy arise from the practice of diplomacy in Western Europe. This original European practice and theory has, in the main, remained unchanged to this day. In the *Dictionary of Diplomacy*, also published by Palgrave, Berridge agrees that the 'essence of diplomacy is unchanged'. It has to do 'as always … with promoting and justifying states' interests.'[10]

According to the literature on diplomacy, therefore, the only contribution a study of Indian diplomacy can make is to describe the interests that drive Indian diplomacy without saying anything about the nature of diplomacy. In short, it is impossible for such an investigation to make any meaningful claims about 'diplomacy' per se because as Neumann puts it: 'Like other cultures, diplomacy does not stand still for its portrait. Still, it is true that it carries with it the memory of its history, and that history is a Western history.'[11] This notion affects not just IR but also extra-IR theorists. The manner in which they are bound together can be unveiled by the category of 'modernity'. The corollary to IR's declaration that this European cultural form called diplomacy holds the world together is the proclamation by the theorists of modernity that non-Western societies, too, are tinged by Europe. The claim is made in works that range from the overt to the subtle (relatively). They are all, however, held together by the notion that studying the East must be premised on first studying the West. If alienation is the touchstone for theorists of diplomacy, then its equivalent amongst the theorizers of modernity is that the West is central to understanding the East. That the East today cannot be understood on its own terms but only with reference to the West. In other words, modernity is in some way, shape or form, a Western attribute.

Non-Western writers are just as liable to advance this view as Gaonkar's *Alternative Modernities* indicate*s.* It begins: 'to think in terms of 'alternative modernities' is to admit that modernity is inescapable and to desist from speculations about the end of modernity. Born in the West some centuries ago under relatively specific socio-historical conditions, modernity is now

---

[9] Ibid. P.2
[10] Berridge & James. 2001.
[11] Neumann. 2005. p. 72

everywhere'. For Gaonkar, 'the West remains the major clearinghouse of global modernity.'[12] He argues that: 'Modernity has travelled from the West to the rest of the world not only in terms of cultural forms, social practices, and institutional arrangements, but also as a form of discourse that interrogates the present.'[13] There is no room in such a reading of modernity for saying anything about modernity that is *not relational* to Europe.

A relational view of modernity has other implications for an investigation into modern practices. For Chakrabarty in *Provincializing Europe* it means that the very act of thinking about modernity means having to first immerse oneself in European history and concepts. Chakrabarty writes:

> 'The phenomenon of "political modernity" is impossible to think of anywhere in the world without invoking certain categories and concepts, the genealogies of which go deep into the intellectual and even theological traditions of Europe. Concepts such as citizenship, the state, civil society, public sphere, human rights, equality before the law, the individual, distinctions between public and private, the idea of the subject, democracy, popular sovereignty, social justice, scientific rationality, and so on all bear the burden of European thought and history. One simply cannot think of political modernity without these and other related concepts that found a climactic form in the course of the European Enlightenment and the nineteenth century.'[14]

Later, in *Habitations of modernity*, he concedes that it might be possible to think of modernity in non-European terms and begins to question the meanings of modernity in non-Europe. He poses the question: 'How do we think about the global legacy of the European Enlightenment in lands far away from Europe in geography or history? How do we envision or document ways of being modern that will speak to that which is shared across the world as well as to that which belongs to human cultural diversity? Here modernity might manifest itself in new and unforeseen ways, but they are still related to Europe.' After all, Chakrabarty's project is to conceptualise 'forms of modernity that have deviated from all canonical understandings of the term.'[15] The West remains instrumental to the development of the non-West.

---

[12] Gaonkar. 2001. P. 1
[13] Ibid. p.14
[14] Chakrabary. 2007. P.6
[15] Chakrabarty. 2002. All quotes from Introduction.

Taylor hesitantly destabilizes the sanctity of the West in the development of modernity by proposing a 'cultural' manner of understanding rather than an 'acultural' perspective. The former describes the transition to modernity in terms of a set of culture-neutral operations. 'On this view, modernity is not specifically Western, even though it may have started in the West. Instead, it is that form of life toward which all cultures converge, as they go through, one after another, substantially the same changes.'[16] For Taylor, the first error is that Western modernity is itself a distinctive 'culture'. Second, it imposes a false uniformity on encounters between the West and the rest. In contrast, cultural theory holds that modernity always unfolds within specific cultural or civilizational contexts and that different starting points lead to different outcomes. In writing 'I want to describe the change as moving us from one dense constellation of background understanding and imaginary to another,'[17] Taylor proposes a research agenda that he performs in his *Sources of the Self*. However, once again Taylor's modernity remains the product of an intermingling of two dense cultures.

This meeting of dense constellations is what van der Veer proposes for investigation. His view demotes the notion of centre and periphery because modernity is produced by the intermeshing of differing cultures. He argues that 'national culture in both India and Britain is developed in relation to a shared colonial experience' and the means of finding this is to adopt the 'interactional perspective'.[18] Such a method permits 'an escape from the essentialisms of British modernity versus Indian anti-modernity by attempting to lay out fields of historical interaction and encounter, however fragmentary. In fact, the fragmentary nature of the enterprise is a blessing in disguise because it works against the grain of national history, which is written to put fragments into a whole, signifying the nation, or else put them to oblivion. Interactional history is precisely an attempt to go beyond the national story and get at some of the fragments without losing coherence in the telling of the tale.'[19] At the heart of this story is the formation of modernity out of mutuality. One is not possible without the other. Yet once again, no explanation of modernity can emerge from the non-West.

---

[16] Taylor. Two Theories of Modernity. *Public Culture* 11(1): p.153-174. P.169
[17] Ibid., p. 173-174
[18] van der Veer. P.3-8
[19] Ibid. p.8

For Nandy the explanation for this Western-centred understanding of modernity is 'history.' Specifically, it is because of the nature of the linkages between the non-Western world and the West. These are not merely political forms – diplomacy being one and in itself Western as IR reminds us – but also through 'historicised readings of the past'.[20] As Kaviraj remarks, Nandy's *The Intimate Enemy*, 'makes an implicit philosophical point about how historical positions are advanced.'[21] These historical positions (themselves modern) about the Europeanization of the non-Western world are an 'over-stretched modernity' in itself.[22] Modern history writing orders and structures the operation of modern societies regardless of location. This is aided by Indian intellectuals – like the ones mentioned above – who absorbed colonial self-definitions deeply enough to reproduce them in their own ideas. In other words, the West orders relations both within societies and between them. In Nandy's terms, 'The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and in minds.'[23]

The way the 'West' has extended itself is thru 'history,' or rather a linear conceptualization of history. The effect of this history was to let Western ideas 'percolate to the deepest level of Hindu religious ideas and accepted Western cultural theories of political subjugation and economic backwardness.' Nandy observes that the 'newly created sense of linear history in Hinduism – an internalized counterpart to the Western theory of progress – was a perfect instrument … allowed one to project into history the sense of inferiority *vis-à-vis* an imperial faith and to see the golden age of Hinduism as an ancient version of the modern West."[24] This imposition tried to replace an unselfconscious Hindu understanding of history. So Nandy writes of:

> 'the salience given by Indian culture to myth as a structured fantasy which, in its dynamic of the here and now, represents what in another culture would be called the dynamic of history. In other words, the diachronic relationships of history are mirrored in the synchronic relationship of myths and are fully reproducible from the latter if the rules of transformation are known.[25] … If for the West the present was a special case of an unfolding history, for traditional

---

[20] Nandy. 2000. p. 170
[21] Kaviraj. 1984; p.136-138
[22] Nandy. 2000. p. 167
[23] Nandy. 1983. p.xi.
[24] Ibid. p.26.
[25] Ibid. P.56-57

India history was a special case of an all-embracing permanent present, waiting

to be interpreted and reinterpreted.'[26]

The past for Indians was a way 'of reaffirming or altering the present.' The past 'can be an authority but the nature of the authority is seen as shifting, amorphous and amenable to intervention.' The reliance on myths by traditional Indians 'allows access to the processes which constitute history at the level of the here-and-the-now. Consciously acknowledged as the core of a culture, they widen instead of restricting human choices. They allow one to remember in an anticipatory fashion and to concentrate on undoing aspects of the present rather than avenging the past.'[27] In short, Nandy outlines the opposite of history, theory or philosophy, and specifically a way of being which governs the event while transcending specificity.

Sources of non-Western modernity: History, fieldwork and de Certeau

Myth as philosophy as opposed to the philosophy-of-History is the preeminent possibility that IR excludes. The significance of myth is that it provides a rationale emanating from the actors themselves. It also provides the means of penetrating India's diplomatic community today. Understood in the strictest sense, this is the MEA. The means are determined by the object of discovery, specifically the multiple histories of the MEA. Why multiple? The fieldwork uncovered that not only were there discrepancies (to use the language of History) in the MEA's official history of itself but that this history did not match what diplomats said privately – or formally to themselves.[28] The history of the MEA presented below can therefore be only a partial history. It is the official history; it is the history of the MEA for itself. What is of significance is not History, but the manner of deploying it.

Early in the career of an Indian Foreign Service probationer – before formal confirmation into the service as an officer though, in practice, it is a given – there is an introductory lecture on the 'evolution' and 'organisation' of the Ministry. The slides of the lecture highlighting its key points were made available to me and the presenter also personally conveyed the history to me. This reading presents the MEA emerging from the 'creation of the "Secret and Political Department"

---

[26]Ibid. P.57
[27] Ibid. P.57, 59
[28] See Chapter III

in 1842 to deal with foreign affairs during Warren Hastings's period.'[29] The MEA's website claims a similar origin though its date of birth is pushed further back. The website states:

> 'The origin of the Indian Foreign Service can be traced back to the British rule when the Foreign Department was created to conduct business with the "Foreign European Powers". In fact it was on September 13, 1783, when the Board of Directors of the East India Company passed a resolution at Fort William, Calcutta (now Kolkata), to create a department, which could help "relieve the pressure" on the Warren Hastings administration in conducting its "secret and political business". Subsequently known as the "Indian Foreign Department", it went ahead with the expansion of diplomatic representation, wherever necessary, to protect British interests.'[30]

To further investigate this history of the MEA, by the MEA and for the MEA, I approached the MEA's Historical Division for a history of itself. They provided me with a set of photocopied documents which appear to be an amalgam of 18th century documents. To my questions about 'what is this' came the reply 'this is what we give to someone who wants to know our history.' These documents push the MEA's start even further back to 1756 when a 'Secret Committee' comprising four members was formed and entrusted with conducting the political and military affairs of the British East India Company (EIC) in Bengal.

Combining the documents, slides and MEA website, the history of the MEA is this: The Court of Directors in London created a 'Select Committee' to manage the rising threat of the French in India. This took over the functions of the Secret Committee in 1757. Growing complications in the operations of the Company led to a decision to divide the functions of the Select Committee into two distinct departments -- the 'Public' and the 'Secret'. The latter conducted the Company's relations with other powers in India. The former handled matters of administration. Both came under a Secretary. Though briefly dissolved, the Secret Department continued to operate and in 1783 was granted a 'Foreign' Department to handle subjects concerning foreign nations and powers.

---

[29] Slide on Evolution supplied by MEA.
[30] MEA Website. Accessed on 20 June 2009. http://meaindia.nic.in/onmouse/ifs.htm

In 1786 the Secret Department was reorganised into four separate Departments: Secret and Political, Secret and Military, Secret and Foreign and the Secret Department of Reform. The next significant changes came with the Charter Act of 1833. The Secret Department was transferred from the Government of Bengal to the Government of India. In 1842 the Foreign branch was abolished and all its functions transferred to the Political branch. The transfer of the Company's responsibilities to the British Crown in 1858 by the Government of India Act prompted a reorganisation resulting in a Foreign Department with functions under six headings: Finance, General, Judicial, Military, Political and Revenue.

The Department's power spread as it sought to take control of technologies and territories. The foremost technology was the 'electric telegraph' which was transferred in 1867 from the Public Works Department to the Foreign Department. A Cypher Branch was added in 1904 to deal with communications, and in keeping with Mughal practice, a *Toshakhana*[31] was created to keep custody of presents received. The Internal Branch was created in 1908 to manage ceremonial functions. The Department's territorial jurisdiction was also broadened to include the North West Frontier Province – under the Home Department – in 1863. However, settled areas such as the Punjab and the Central Provinces were transferred from the Foreign Department as were mundane administrative tasks like revenue settlement, agriculture and forests. The Foreign Department began to look more like a modern foreign service as it divested itself of roles which are today performed by a Home Ministry. The first indication of this was in 1876 when the Foreign Department's remit was stipulated: it would handle political matters, relations with foreign states outside India, princely and feudatory states in India, and independent or semi-independent hill tribes, passports, questions of extradition and extra-territorial jurisdiction and administration of the Frontier districts. The Department took charge of issues arising from interactions between British India and foreign states – be they Indian or extra-Indian.

As a result of these changes, the Department was renamed in 1914 the Foreign and Political Department. It had two wings: foreign and political. The next evolutionary stage was in 1935 when the Government of India Act split the Foreign and Political Department into the External Affairs Department and the Political Department. The latter handled all matters arising out of British India's interactions with other local states. Later, the Commonwealth Department was

---

[31] Treasury

also created as an addendum. This was the structure that existed on the eve of independence. Nehru organised its personnel into the Indian Foreign Service and called the combined set-up the Ministry of External Affairs.

As the three sources make clear, they posit the MEA firmly within the narrative of colonial modernity, but, simultaneously, it was completely at odds with what diplomats claim as the root of their diplomacy. A comment by an officer that reflects the views of several others in the service is significant, despite its hesitant language:

> 'You see, we are secular. So a secular history cannot create a timeline going back further. We are so riven with all kinds of things but we are here. This kind of story then becomes the best way of … you know … maybe of not causing any problems. In any case you cannot connect institutionally the MEA to older institutions, can you? So for the purposes of an introduction it worked.'

The comment exposes the secondary nature of History to a very particular philosophy of presentism for diplomats. Precision in dates is irrelevant. The history presented is, as Nandy reminds us, 'an authority but the nature of that authority is shifting, amorphous and amenable to intervention.' The essential point is that the MEA's History is not incorrect. It does not misrepresent. It pares History down for a particular purpose, surviving the present in a particular form. This purpose underpins Indian diplomacy and its origins are not in colonial-era institutions but in the indigenous myths with which every Indian is familiar. The very act of paring down History and locating the MEA within colonialism is a product of this philosophy. Furthermore, these acts are also designed to reaffirm and deal with issues and complexes predating colonialism. For Indians then, the present is not a special case of an unfolding history. Quite the opposite. History is a special case of an all-embracing permanent present which in turn is a product of History. In short, there are levels of history each determined by the purpose of the exercise. It is not history which dominates, but the present which uses history for its purposes. That is not to abuse history – for no version of the MEA's histories were factually wrong. As the diplomat said, secularism entered India with the British and that is what the state puts forward as policy. It is acceptable and correct only because it matches to a large extent earlier indigenous notions of the presentist philosophy upon which secularism is grafted.

Another possibility ruled out of court in non-Western modernity is a 'relative' freedom from doctrine. The word 'relative' is used because ultimately there is no escape from underlying principles. However, the type of doctrine which animates Indian diplomats is best described as a doctrine of anti-doctrine. This is exposed at the terminal edges of identity and boundary – notions central to a community whose job is to represent a defined political entity. The underlying rationale for multiple identities and flexible boundaries is a practical-pragmatism. This is easily and incorrectly mistaken for duplicity and the fieldwork provides a means of explaining the operation of these self-perceptions. Since the fieldwork is atypical, it requires some explanation.[32]

A useful trope is Chakrabarty's *adda* which he defines as the Bengali practice of men (usually) gathering together in a particular place for directionless, informal yet often intensely serious discussion. Chakrabarty notes that *adda* is inimical to 'proper' European bourgeois sociability, with its emphasis on male sociability, regulated domestic life and delineation of the world into spheres of work and leisure. Yet, *adda* is also a product of Bengal's own modernity having arrived at its current form in the early twentieth century. *Adda* involved the production of a social space and a form of sociability that is neither 'domestic' nor 'public', and so cannot be assimilated into what he sees as European norms. Furthermore, Chakrabarty implies *adda* is how Bengalis 'get a grip on the modern world and make themselves at home in it.'[33] The modern world being understood as 'globalised capitalism now'.[34] *Adda's* social value is magnified to the level of providing a space of relative autonomy from the otherwise deterministic forces of global capital. Calcuttans now fear that 'a busy and all-consuming ethic of work might overtake their lives'.[35] Chakrabarty's materialist suggestion is that '[t]he perceived gradual disappearance' of *adda* is 'related no doubt to changes in the political economy of the city'.[36] Secondly, though Chakrabarty wants to show how Western modernity cannot capture the East in Western terms, he essentialises the West. Wilson critiques Chakrabarty by writing that he:

---

[32] For three exceptions see: Neumann. 2005; Hopgood. 2006 & Barnett. 2004.
[33] Chakrabarty poses Berman's question. See Berman. 1988. p.5
[34] Chakrabarty. Provincizlising Europe. P.213
[35] Ibid.,. P.181
[36] Ibid., P.213

'never interrogates how Bengalis imagine the "West" that they are so self-consciously different from. He never stops to consider how Western modernity was itself imagined, consumed and reproduced in Bengal, both in a material and discursive form. Throughout his work, Chakrabarty assumes that Western "modernity" is an actually existing set of real, non-discursive social processes, whose consumption by twentieth-century Bengalis was entirely unmediated by discourse.'[37]

Contrary to Chakrabarty, my *addas* were nowhere as complicated. They happened because it was practical. People engaged me out of pragmatism – I had lived abroad, and faced with the daunting prospect of having to go abroad they wanted to know about abroad. *Addas* were ideal for exchanging information. It was the way in which people liked to conduct themselves as did I. Most of the *addas* were held in my quarters, but a fair share were also held in the homes of foreign service officers, in offices, between phone calls, and during visits from friends bearing sweets to celebrate births and marriages or even to avoid distractions at weekends. This was how questions were answered. The questions themselves were generated by the access I was allowed to nearly all aspects of the training provided to officers. I was also involved in the training – meeting a request by probationers for instruction in writing reports in English – for two batches of entrants. The same pattern was followed during my two weeks attending the Lall Bahadur Shastri Academy in Mussoori where all civil servants receive their primary training. Finally, though the fieldwork was focused on the bureaucracy itself, it was not rigidly focused. Interviews were also conducted with various Ministers including the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister. But even here, the process was malleable and boundaries flexible. My entrée was familial – most of these people were family friends.

Unlike the complexes Chakrabarty highlights, there was no question of 'getting to grip with the modern world' in my *addas*. They were the world, precisely because they encompassed both work and pleasure. Rather than being a means of escaping from modernity, *adda* is the means by which work is done by and between officials at the centre of Indian modernity: the state. For instance, the Prime Minister of India makes a practice of meeting dozens of people every day, asking questions, discussing ideas and listening to their views on a variety of subjects. There is

---

[37] Wilson. Autumn, 2001. P.290

no note-keeper at these meetings but they are as much a means of discussing ideas and carrying out substantial work, as they are about catching up with old friends and keeping his constituency happy. A related myth is that research into the state means accessing files because the rational state which Weber conjured is ordered and systematic. It is. But as an official said: 'Why do you want to look at files? That will tell you only process. Never intent.'[38]

Intent and its origins, i.e., self-perceptions and boundaries imagined and real, were explored through my *addas*. The nature of the *adda* goes some way in explaining perceptions. The *addas* were similar to Gusterson's notion of a polyphonic-dialogue.[39] Over the 14 months of my attachment to the MEA, I began with interviews and ended with *addas*. Though initially intent on conducting in-depth interviews of one diplomat at a time, the meetings quickly became jamborees. In part it was because I lived with nearly 60 diplomats (or 10 percent of the current strength).[40] These officers ranged from the junior most in rank (probationer) to the senior most (secretary). My *addas* were a success if the animated participation of the conversationalists is to be interpreted as a sign of engagement and intellectual commitment. The reason for the success can be explained by Harraway's notion of 'situated knowledge'.[41] My enquiries did not set out to be conquests; they sparked lively verbal exchanges between different situated knowledges, including the literature of the academy – introduced by me.[42] This method of operating maintained the critical effect of classically objectivist writing, but it achieved it by the very immediate and real juxtaposing of different discursive surfaces. It opened up spaces where different perspectives coexisted and were gauged in novel ways, while relativizing the author's position. In short, there was no particular ideology which governed participants, rather a constant revising of each other's positions in constant interaction. To establish some order in this process of constant revision we turn to de Certeau.

In *Writing of History*, de Certeau describes the processes initiated by first contact between a European and a naked female 'native' lying in a hammock thus: 'An inaugural scene: after a moment of stupor … the conqueror will write the body of the other and trace there his own

---

[38] Interview with a member of the Prime Minister's personal staff.
[39] See Gusterson. 1993. 22. p. 73-75
[40] For comparison, the UK maintains 22,500 diplomats. Conversation with British Deputy High Commissioner to India in New Delhi.
[41] Harraway. 1989.
[42] Rosaldo. 1989. P.206-7

history … This is writing that conquers. It will use the New World as if it were a blank, 'savage' page on which Western desire will be written.'[43] It is what Spivak calls 'worlding,'[44] the ordering of other worlds thru European culture. The remaining object of this chapter is to defamiliarize this familiar reading by exposing the tangible practices and the logics which motivate them. In short, it poses the question: How did the naked woman respond and why? At best History records the movements of the woman but is silent about her rationality. It is this silence which this chapter seeks to populate with the silent voices of India's diplomatic community.

A means of understanding the manner in which practices conceal local-logics is indicated by de Certeau's concept of *metis*[45] understood as 'ways of operating': victories of the 'weak' over the 'strong' . . . , clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things, 'hunter's cunning,' maneuvers, polymorphic simulations, joyful discoveries, poetic as well as warlike.''[46] The failing of this model is that it privileges neither the tool nor user but the process he calls '*tools manipulated by users.*'[47] It means that the agent for change is an activity. His approach offers a useful site to investigate practices but divests actual users of the power to effect change. Such an approach would make it impossible to make any useful contribution to either the theorising of diplomacy or the discourse of modernity not because the non-West has nothing to offer but because there is nothing more to say about anything. All that is left for the researcher is to collect improvisations.

To assume, however, that individuals actually possess logics for their actions offers a more profitable line of enquiry. First, it permits the notion of a repertoire (Geertz). It is possible to access this repertoire by observing what de Certeau calls improvisations. Unlike de Certeau, there is, however, another accessible step through Scott's conception of *metis* which is an 'array of practical skills and acquired intelligence in responding to a constantly changing natural and

---

[43] de Certeau. 1988. P. xxv-xxvi

[44] Spivak. 1985. p. 133

[45] The term originates in Greek mythology, referring to the first bride of Zeus. For a brief account of its origin, see Scott. 1998. P. 424, n.8. As Scott points out, Odysseus was an exemplary Greek figure often praised for using metis to outwit opponents and enemies (ibid., 313). According to Scott, metis was widely practised and shared across various cultures and philosophical thoughts, from Taoism to Native Americans. de Certeau also mentions the Greek Sophists, the Chinese author Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, and the Arabic anthology, *The Book of Tricks,* as belonging to this tradition. See de Certeau. 2002. xx.

[46] de Certeau. 2002. xix.

[47] Ibid. P.21

human environment.'[48] Local communities are repositories of non-modern (by definition) knowledge/practice worked out over millennia.[49] In such a conception the only new things to be said about anything can emerge from bodies of knowledge untapped by the academy. de Certeau was aware of these liminal effects of strategy on tactics and that the means to create something more than the 'alternatives' that theorists of modernity forward is to discover non-modern knowledge/practice. He wrote:

> In the final analysis, and in any general semiotics of tactics as such, the former [tactics] are only so many variants of the latter [strategies]. Obviously, the elaboration of such a semiotics would require a rather different emphasis than has necessarily been that of the research which presently bears that name, and which is oriented around the rationality of proper meaning. In particular, it would impose the study of quite different arts of thinking and action, such as the sixty-four hexagrams of the Chinese I-Ching, or the metis ('intelligence') of ancient Greece, or of the Arabic *hila*, or of any number of other forms of 'logic' now alien to us.[50]

To the list of alien logics could be added the logic of what is called 'traditional' India. It is these which the project proposes to uncover. A genealogy however not interested in the past for the sake of the past. It is interested in the past as an explanation of what exists today. What is therefore required first is setting out in detail the practices of today.

Non-Western modernity

The Muslim wife of a Hindu IFS officer said, 'it would be unthinkable for these new officers to marry a Muslim'.[51] Ironically, a social milieu that is by definition fractured (along caste and economic lines) itself provides the notion of community. It makes the service, at least amongst its new entrants, a cosmos where vastly different social and economic worlds collide. The wife's comment was typical of a secularised Indian; implicit in it was the belief that the new generation is not. However, the new generation still creates a community – its members eat, live and work together, if only to secure promotion – which in its production sets in relief a

---

[48] Scott. p.313.
[49] Ibid., Chapter 9, 10.
[50] de Certeau; Jameson; Lovitt. 1980. p.8
[51] Interview

society wracked by divisions. For instance, north and south Indians mainly socialised separately amongst their own groups. As a diplomat put it, 'Look at how divided we are, how can anything outside this building be more divided?'[52] Another added, 'There are many Indias.' If the different contradictory worlds that are India commune, if only to live, eat, play and work together, then there is no reason why the nation-state that is India cannot commune with other nation-states. In short, Indian diplomats are produced by a social milieu which is founded on divisions and borders and the particular so that their lived reality makes them into persons who are constantly focused on the particular to secure their own futures. A secondary product is secularism founded on particularistic interest rather than an Enlightenment principle.

Though Indian diplomats were once steeped in the principles of the Enlightenment (imbibed at Oxbridge and the London School of Economics), the social fabric of the MEA has gradually been transformed since independence. Where once India's elite queued to join the IFS, today they move to London, New York and other cities in the United States. Today's IFS consists of a sizeable proportion of people who the Anglicised, secularized and properly modernized elite of India consider unimaginably different. The section below describes how the IFS arrived at its current configuration. In doing so, it makes two points:

1. European influence very rarely penetrated into the depths of the society which produces today's Indian diplomats.
2. Indian diplomat's harness modernity to further non-modern aims.

The historic and socially embedded divisions that now operate in the diplomatic service mean that the service has been transformed from a 'playground' for the Anglicised elite to a society that is far more representative of the India untouched by colonialism. This is the 'other' India, the constitutional alternative of *Bharat,* the ancient indigenous name for the land that roughly matches today's India. Caste and economics – categories that predate colonialism – are the borders between the self and the 'other' for these occupants of *Bharat* who continue to play a powerful role despite attempts to socially even out the MEA. Originally, royals were incorporated into the IFS to provide 'psychological and political rehabilitation for erstwhile

---

[52] Interview with member of 1979 batch officer

rulers' wrote India's first Foreign Secretary, who was himself a man of *Bharat*.[53] Blue-blooded diplomats were given important assignments[54] but by the 1950s Nehru's opinion of them got the better of his wish to provide some form of rehabilitation to deposed princes. Nehru wrote in 1955:

'I do not think one can entrust them (royals) with diplomatic work. They have not been a success at it. Of course it might be useful to send them to some out of the way place if they are prepared to go, or someplace where no political flair is necessary'.[55]

Today, the Indian constitution safeguards a proportion of central government jobs for people who are defined as 'backward' in some manner or form as opposed to the General category. In practice, some 50 percent of entrants into the IFS are from the Schedule Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Caste (OBC) quotas. Though some probationers qualified for these categories , they still chose to compete thru the General category.[56] The Europeanised Indian mentality is in retreat. Once upon a time, toppers in the civil service exams opted for the IFS. A cursory look at the civil list shows that the last topper to join the IFS was in 1976, a year when nearly half of the 25 officers recruited came from the leading liberal arts college in India – St. Stephens in Delhi.[57]

The active removal of the socio-economic elite and its replacement by the disadvantaged has led to the service incorporating a whole new class of people. Today, an Indian diplomat could just as easily be the son of a labourer or a rickshaw puller as the daughter of judge.[58] If an entrant from a socially disadvantaged group is from a metropolitan city, it can be assumed that he or she comes from the bottom of society in practically every computation of the word

---

[53] Menon. 1956. p.204. Menon also writes that Sardar Patel proposed five or six Maharajahs or near relatives be incorporated into the services. Entry could be arranged by the royal elite. The Nawab of Rampur requested Lord Moutbatten to recommend his son's name to Sardar Patel for induction into the newly established Central Service. The Viceroy wrote here is a 'high class Muslim' who has a 'charming wife'. The Sardar let the Nawab's son into the service. See Dass. 1973. Vol. VIII. P.367-8

[54] Jam Sahib Ranjit Sinhji of Nawangar represented India at the League of Nations in 1920 & 1922 and his son upon becoming Rajpramukh of Saurashtra was India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Maharajah Bhupinder Singh of Patiala attended the League and his son Yadavindra Singh became Permanent Representative to the UN and ambassador to Italy and the Netherlands. See Ramusack. 1978. p.244

[55] Nehru. 27 February 1955. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru.

[56] Interview with member of 2007 batch

[57] Varma. August 6 2000.

[58] Interview with probationers of 2007 and 2008 batch

'bottom'. One batch had just one person from a major city and he belonged to the OBC category. He used only his first name and visibly stiffened when, taking down his cell phone number at our first meeting, I asked his surname. Only later did he explain he had dropped his surname because it betrayed his caste. His story briefly is:

> 'My grandfather was a pavement dweller and my father was educated to class 10. He's a minor civil servant. I grew up without ever having a bedroom and slept on the living room floor with my various cousins. I was a good student and transferred to another school. Then I had a Bengali teacher who saw some potential in me and to cut a long story short, after several extra classes for IIT, the civil services etc., I finally managed to wind up here'.

The story is not unique. The pre-IFS life of the entrants interviewed shows that most of them were plagued by *poverty*. This manifests itself in a plethora of ways and is heightened by the everyday difficulties of Indian life such as endemic corruption, family obligations (educating and finding jobs for cousins, daughters and sisters or getting them married), and, in villages, making do without basic services. Some interviewees mentioned relatives who live without running water and electricity. The only means of escape is a technical education. One needs a trade. There is little or no time for relaxation. Life is an endless round of preparing for exams and taking extra classes since school and university teachers often regard providing what they are meant to as an extra service – deliverable only for what amounts to a bribe. The run-around does not end with university. Competing for the Union Public Services Commission (UPSC) exams for entry into all the civil service means moving to a major city to enrol at an expensive crammer. Living conditions can be grim while preparing for the tests. One only needs to google pictures of the lower middle class New Delhi suburb of Munirka to get a flavour. Out of nearly 200,000 candidates who take the entrance exams yearly some 500 finally obtain a job after a selection process that takes two years. Yet, some young Indians still choose to go through the UPSC's competitive process though they have jobs in the booming Information Technology sector. They all gave a similar explanation:

> 'Do you know what IT work is? It's sitting at a computer writing lines of code man. Code! Where is the life in that *(sic)*? This work [government service] is about life. It's about managing people, lives … creating something tangible. The money is not much but it offers so much more: excitement, social interaction with the many

India's and foreigners and of course one day we might play a small role in deciding which way the country will go.'[59]

Entry into the service by people with a technical education and far more diverse backgrounds has changed the perception of the IFS as an elite service reserved for the traditional elite. The implications are twofold. Given the historical perception of the service it is not attractive to the Indian masses. Interest amongst qualifying candidates in the IFS has been steadily shrinking over the last thirty years. Haksar, the first Dean of the Foreign Service Institute, observed that in 1959, three persons joined the IFS and that they came from the top 15 of the combined UPSC merit list.[60] Within a few years the situation changed as one had to go further down the list to fill the positions of the IFS. In 1970, the 11 candidates came from the first 72 in the list; and in 1981 20 out of the first 81. In 1988, 10 IFS vacancies could be filled only by reaching down to the 480th position on the merit list. In 1981 ten came from the top 487 and in 1990 filling IFS positions required going down to the 709th candidate in the exams. In 1993 15 positions were filled by going to the 641st candidate. Haksar concludes that because of the IFS's growing unpopularity with the best students or the social elite, in practice the earlier quota of 22.5 percent reservations has already been in force for the last 30 years 'without causing any notable disasters'. He adds:

> 'Some reserved category recruits may well have been substandard or worse. But so have some from the general category. Both categories have produced officers of proven competence, which shows that everyone can do well if given the opportunity.'[61]

Barring some freak years, the downhill trend continues. The IFS has obviously lost its lustre amongst the majority. In part this is because it was seen as a 'vestige of the last bastion of the brown sahib' where the 'last remnant' of the ICS were ensconced from a time when natives were 'despised and kept at a distance to avoid offending the prime responsibilities of their masters' and treated with 'disdain'. SC and ST entrants feel discriminated against, suspecting that they are given relatively unimportant posts.[62] A new probationer from the OBC category

---

[59] Amalgamation of interviews with four diplomats of 2006, 2007 and 2008 batches
[60] The UPSC is the body which conducts the civil services entrance exam.
[61] Haksar. August 16 1992; Haksar. Sept 4 1994.
[62] Laiq. 27 Sept. 1999. p.28

urged me to investigate the percentage of people from lower castes who made it to ambassador in desirable and/or important capitals.[63] However, this probationer himself was selected for one of the most challenging positions on offer which indicates that though caste is not a determinant for selection for assignments, intellectually officers continue to perceive the world along deeply embedded caste lines. The conviction is aggravated by the fact that postings and promotions are on the basis of inter-personal relationships rather than any formal system.[64]

The other impact of change in the social recruitment of the IFS is that the children of the classes 'traditionally' perceived (by diplomats themselves) to provide the manpower for the diplomatic service do not aspire to working for the government. Ten interviews with the children of IFS and other central government officers produced a remarkable uniformity of answers. Though they all thought their parents were doing 'good' and 'important' work, none of them wanted 'that type of career' and preferred to work either 'abroad, the best place being the US or in the 'private sector because it pays a lot of money though there is not much status, but that will change as India develops a larger organised market.' The underpinning rationale was that the people who join the service now come from lower levels of society and are not Westernized. 'They are a bit *jungly* (uncivilised) nowadays,' said the daughter of an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer. She elaborated that they 'can't use cutlery', 'don't speak English' and are 'dirty'.[65]

Despite the differences between the born-elite and the entrance-exam elite, both groups operate on the same principles and agree that the system of positive discrimination has produced a cadre which is in the process of great social change. Everyone agrees that the IFS is a social escalator. A diplomat and former Cabinet Minister who joined in 1979 says from his batch only his daughter is still in India; the children of all his colleagues have settled abroad. Another adds, 'none of our children join the service. Why should they?' To the question 'What do they do?' the answer is 'They work abroad. They do something better.' Indians become diplomats primarily to serve themselves. The prevailing culture of *Bharat* is that there is no contradiction

---

[63] An impossible task since the Civil List does not state information about the officer's caste or quota.

[64] As a senior territorial head at Headquarters indicated: 'I got to know all of them (important people) when I was in Moscow. I had to go and receive them and they got to know me … so by and by when the time came I was a known quantity'. Interview.

[65] Interviews with six sons and daughters of central government officers who never considered public service and work for multinationals.

between opting to migrate and representing the nation. One recent addition to the IFS said that if he had the option he would have migrated to the US. The IAS was his second option; the IFS came third. 'I'm here because I could not get anything else but it is not a bad place to be. The accommodation is good.' A senior officer stated that 'the new lot don't have any understanding of anything … they come straight from the village. That's why you have to explain things to them using the *Mahābhārata*. No more Brown Sahibs in the IFS.' His verdict indicated that culturally they were local rather than a coalescence of local and modern (i.e., Anglicised or Westernised). All this bears out the validity of Nandy's 'scepticism of the Indian state' in the sense that instead of operating under some unitary national idea, the state's employees are motivated only by an economy of self-interest.

How is self-interest understood? To the question of why Indians seek 'status' the uniform answer was 'everyone does so. We have done so forever (caste, moving within and beyond) and people today around the world seek it. You realise it in different ways, but we all seek it.' The answer demonstrates that deep-seated divisions within Indian society have a corollary which negates the concept of self and 'other'. The Indian diplomat's concept of the world and the universe within which s/he operates is what I term a *dharmic* order. It is a world where everything is part of a unified system. It is the psychological assumption that produces behaviour.[66] It is a psychological assumption because it pervades both the social and work life of the Indian diplomat. In speech they utter the word *dharma* without being aware of it; at work notes on *dharma* are exchanged and distributed throughout the service.[67] Since *dharma* views the world as interlinked, by implication, any action has consequences. Thus *dharmic* action requires, before any action, the weighing of everything in the cosmos.

The *dharmic* conception which is the overwhelming principle – if it can be described as such – underpinning the actions of the individual diplomat is not universal since some diplomats are practising Christians or Muslims, adhering to a religion that could be at variance to the *dharmic* conception. The imperative for action for non-Muslim and non-Christian diplomats arises from the event itself rather than from a prescribed doctrine. There is no code to act on the event. The tension is partially resolved by the interviews – along with archival investigations – indicating

---

[66] Mercer. 2005. pp. 77-106
[67] Jaswant Singh as Foreign Minister distributed a note on *dharma*. Interview. March 2007

that the philosophical notion present in Christianity of a correct means of acting has not been adulterated by the surrounding environment, but is the adulteration.[68] In short, foreign religions are no more than superficial, limited to observable practice.

It means that the culture is one of 'unselfconscious Hinduism, by which most Indians, Hindus as well as non-Hindus, live.'[69] This is a philosophy of lived experience rather than a systematically formulated 'ideology.'[70] One operation of reconstituting power relations within the IFS was a long standing and fierce argument between two probationers, one from the General category and the other from the OBC category about the merits/demerits of the quota entry system. The argument was finally resolved, as one them put it, by the pragmatic ultimate of 'not bothering with it, I mean we are in, so why bother talking about it?' He went on to describe the essence of co-existence and inter-mingling that sustains the Indian identity. 'How else do you think we all *(sic)* have been rubbing up against each other along for this many thousands of years(?)' He added: 'The next thing is to progress, and for that we have to do something for the country, we have to work together.' In part this is because, as Haksar observed, 'Living and working under similar conditions in a comparatively small community also has a certain homogenising effect which often blurs diversities of social and economic backgrounds.'[71] This has been happening for millennia and as such is only a microcosm of a wider social practice, but, yet, it is still happening! It indicates that the process is one of constant rediscovery. Beliefs are not discarded. They are simply shelved in order to collectively pursue social cohesion and personal welfare. In short, it is the philosophy of practical-pragmatism.

This practical-pragmatism is activated by an ability to shelve beliefs, conceptions and ideas – in the case of the quota something which played a decisive role in shaping their lives – superficially indicating flexibility and fragmentation. This ability is however predicated on a unifying notion which is the constructed and thereby fictional nature of the world. The interviews, observation and analysis of documents suggest that though the world is regarded as unified and inextricably

---

[68] Interview with 2007 batch officer. A low caste (toddy tapper) South Indian, this interviewee described how in a Christian wedding someone or the other would come and do some 'Hindu' ritual. It was accepted that this was 'heretical' because it acknowledged 'false-gods' but it was also their custom. 'Christianity over there is not like the Vatican … of course most of it is the same but there are all these little things.'

[69] Nandy. 1991. P. 100–101, 44, xi, 104.

[70] Nandy. 1992. P.70

[71] Haksar. August 16 1992; Haksar. Sept 4 1994.

intermeshed, nothing is fixed. Most fundamentally, the state itself is seen as a fictional entity. As the Foreign Secretary (the MEA's bureaucratic head) said: 'What is fixed? We are certainly not fixed. And the state? Our borders are constantly being renegotiated. Look at Kashmir – it's contested. There is no official border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. And the nature of governance? That too changes. Look at Nepal.' He closed this idea by stating: 'The world is fluid. Our part of the world even more so and we have been fluid for centuries. That is the way of the world. The difference is that unlike others our history makes us able to accept it.'[72] This position does not of course discount the role of the state. In fact, it is the duty of someone who wants to effect change to participate in the most powerful social organisation in existence to bring about change, including the revision and even deletion of the state.

The 'natural state' of 'fluidity' can occasionally perplex even practitioners of diplomacy. On a personal level, a young diplomat expressed the very reality of what IR terms the 'fictional nature of the world' with a story about his father. 'Nothing makes sense in this country. My father was on a train and as it passed from one area to another the caste attributed to his surname changed. So at some point everyone thought he was high-caste and treated him well whereas at other points he fell to the bottom of the caste system.'[73] His comment was of course partly made in jest – the caste system is all too real. It provided him with the leg up to enter the IFS and simultaneously, the very fact that his standing in the social system changes during the course of a train ride suggests that the world dramatically and in a very real sense in terms of lived reality is open to constant and radical redesign.

The lack of permanence does not indicate immateriality. Rather, it proffers the hope of redesign. This is not necessarily by the functionaries of the state. At the most fundamental level the ultimate manner in which their world was remade was by qualifying for the IFS. 'The next thing' says a senior officer 'is for some to go back to where they come from to show what big things they have become.' Another officer asked,

> 'Why have I joined the service? Because I come from a family with a typical
> middle class family. I was a management trainee with Citi Bank [implying that it
> was a lucrative job in the modern economy] but my father said "Forget about

---

[72] Interview with Foreign Secretary.
[73] Interview with 2007 batch officer

the neighbours, even I don't know what you are doing!" So I wrote the exam and when I got in, forget about the neighbours, the entire *mohalla* [area] knew what I was doing!'[74]

The son's success was a watershed moment for the entire family. In more concrete terms, a handful of new diplomats had arranged marriages with girls from a 'better' background than themselves.[75] One walked with four mobiles – one for each newspaper in which he had placed a marriage advertisement. Remaking, it would appear, is a constant in the world of the Indian diplomat. At the other extreme of policy making, senior diplomats agreed that their political masters were the ablest diplomats because 'look at the transformations they are trying to bring about and the management required! Their jobs are infinitely more complicated than ours.' The quality which made a diplomat's diplomat is the ability to foster change by managing relations in a complex world.

The underlying assumption of the world being in flux is similar to Constantinou's argument that the state is fictional. Citing Mayall's realist comment that states actually exist, Constantinou observes that the actuality of the representations of this notional entity are taken 'for the actuality of its existence, a fiction turned into a reality, with a life and logic of its own.'[76] Yet there is none of the ambivalence which Hoffman detects when he writes that 'diplomacy's linkage to the state is paradoxical and problematic. ... The state … is a paradoxical institution since it claims a monopoly of force which it does not, and cannot, possess'.[77] The Indian diplomat does not claim to have a monopoly of force and enjoys only a tenuous grasp on authority.[78] As all the interviews had a porsographical component to them, the data shows that the vast majority is enmeshed in a world where the rule of modern law is alien. Life is riddled with small acts of corruption. They are well aware of the hollow pretensions of the state –

---

[74] Interview with 2007 batch officers and instructors at LaBasNa

[75] 'Better' is understood in a plethora of ways but usually comprised of a coming together of some key traits including the ability to speak English, wealth and of course, caste and family. The opinion that they are 'better' was one that was silently agreed upon by a number of their colleagues within the service.

[76] Constantinou. 1996. p.104-105.

[77] Hoffman. 2003. p.526-527.

[78] As one officer put it, 'I can't even get a bank account opened with my position.' On a more official, policy making level an officer said, 'until very recently the territorial heads would never put forward an option. It was left to the Foreign Secretary. These are very senior level officers we are talking about. They should at least be able to put forward options – to be able to shoulder responsibility.' Interview with 2007 batch officer.

because they lived it and now are it. A woman told a diplomat that her world did not require laws. 'Laws are for animals and we are not animals. We can take care [govern] ourselves'. As another Indian diplomat said, 'India is a state which works in practice, but not in theory.' Theory is, of course, European. The reason why India does not work in terms of European theory is because in actual practice no unified concept of the state governs the actions of the employees of the state. As such, if a concept may be deduced then it has to be concerned with the concerns of the practitioners. It is how they see reality and frame it, conceptualize it and act upon it in an event rather than thru some doctrinaire understanding of what reality is.[79]

For example, several officers abroad complained that Headquarters never respond to their memos. They are left to get on with it on their own terms, to respond to events as they see fit. Practices and practitioners are both essential to the event. IR, in the throes of unpacking the state, is realizing that the state is both true and false – fact and fiction – and is realizing that 'we should resist its arrogant assumption that it is the former and never the latter'.[80] It would appear that this was never an issue for Indian bureaucrats. In short, the practice of Indian diplomacy is based on specific actions based around the event. As one ambassador said: 'We are always fire fighting.'

Negotiating non-Western modernity: The 'event'

Given the underlying notion of flux inherent to the Indian worldview, what are the markers, the waypoints used by the practitioners to navigate the cosmos? Is Indian diplomacy just 'fire-fighting' or is there a policy emanating from a general idea of the purpose of diplomacy? The concept of the 'event' is evoked but it raises the question: What makes an event an event? What has been selected are those which the practitioners have self-defined as noteworthy and the various practices that they produce. All the interviews conducted with members of the political class and diplomatic service suggest that the event which led to their joining the service and in conducting their work was to 'improve the human condition' (the individual human being interviewed being the primary target for improvement) or to 'do something for the country'. But this has very particular meanings in India.

---

[79] Der Derian. 2001. p.217.
[80] Hoffman. 2003. p.530.

The fundamental meaning is produced by the type of person who joins the MEA. The rich by and large eschew the service. More importantly, the feeling within the MEA was not one of privilege and wealth. They did not see themselves as the country's economic elite. Quite the opposite – they saw themselves as strivers. Striving to escape poverty. Once again, we turn to Nandy's Gandhi. For Nandy, Gandhi was not a critical traditionalist. Nandy writes:

> 'Gandhi did not want to defend traditions; he lived with them. Nor did he, like Nehru, want to museumize cultures within a modern frame. Gandhi's frame was traditional but he was willing to criticize some traditions violently. He was even willing to include in his frame elements of modernity as critical vectors. He found no dissonance between his rejection of modern technology and his advocacy of the bicycle, the lathe and the sewing machine. Gandhi defied the modern world by opting for an alternative frame; the specifics in his frame were frequently modern.'[81]

Poverty is one of the oldest Indian traditions. It was why Gandhi lived in 'poverty'. This ancient category is understood as the defining event from the level of the individual diplomat to the state.

MEA officers come from villages or small towns and their lived experience 'is of the IAS, the district commissioner, the policemen.' They are the experiences of highly localised governance.[82] This is in contrast to an earlier generation – now at Ambassador level – whose primary motivation were Nehruvian ideals. The interviewee expanded: 'What is foreign service? That word itself is not a good word, is it? I mean 'foreign' is … (a silence followed) …' A Joint Secretary rank officer briefing probationers explained the silence:

> 'A lot of you will come from India, I mean real India not Delhi. And now you must also be wondering what all this Foreign Service is? A lot of the work you will do will be very remote and … we are all friends here … quite pointless. But this job which I'm doing, it can give you something real. You don't have to go

---

[81] Nandy. 1987. P. 238–48. p. 240–41.
[82] Interview with 2006 batch officer

abroad. You can be posted in your part of India. You can actually help people from your place!'[83]

'Your place' was central to the identity of the bulk of the probationers interviewed. The place of origin was decisively and unquestioningly understood. It could be described but was completely variegated given that officers questioned came from backgrounds whose only commonality appeared to be poverty, the 'universal'[84] desire to escape from it, and that they qualified to take the civil services exams. Secondly, the real contribution this man was making was as a passport officer. In other words, his contribution was to help Indians escape from India – a possibility which at least one IFS officer viewed as an opportunity.

Poverty is an important analytical category because in the *dharmic* conception it is seen as an 'injustice'. Put simply, it is more akin to the notion of being wrong or as K Subrahmanyam, the father of the 123 Agreement negotiator and himself the architect of India's nuclear strategy, put it, 'it destabilizes the universe.'[85] The uniform assumption by India's diplomatic class is that the instability of poverty is anathema. In part, this can be explained with reference to *dharma*. *Dharma* is the taking of action based on the event. The action is *dharmic* if it is in consonance with the cosmos, but the practitioner – the individual diplomat – has to judge the event to decide what (if any) action to take. Here there is a surprising uniformity in reactions within the service. Rather than becoming a melee of contesting voices, there is agreement that poverty is the primary focus of diplomacy because, as the fieldwork – verified by visits to the homes of some diplomats – shows, most diplomats perceive themselves to have come from poverty. Interviews exploring the background of diplomats show that the rationale for escaping poverty is as basic as eating. It is taken as universal and real.[86] Upon visiting a slum as part of their training one probationer commented, 'it was better than any slum I've ever seen. They had solid houses'. The Indian diplomat's tangible relation to poverty – set in dynamic relief by images of the developed world and the Indian rich on television – is a governing principle in determining both personal and public action.

---

[83] Speech by RPO(Delhi).
[84] Interview with 2005 batch officer
[85] Interview with K Subrahmanyam. New Delhi. June 2007
[86] 'Wanting to escape from poverty, to better oneself is not Indian. It is found everywhere, I'm no different from anyone in US or UK wherever it might be.' Interview with 2006 batch officer.

Reared on the notion of a unified cosmos, Indian diplomats are by and large uninterested in effecting change throughout the cosmos. Hence their lack of interest in international diplomacy. A UPSC topper categorically stated she was not interested in the IFS and preferred working in rural India.[87] The sentiment is produced in part by the service being 'elite' – i.e., Westernised – and in part by the urge to effect change locally – within their own community or ancestral zone. This is not, as has been noted above, done for the public good but to raise individual 'status'.

At the personal level the pre-eminent guide for escaping poverty was the accrual of status. 'Status' is understood in a variety of ways – primarily it is practical: the ability to get things done, i.e., to overcome the small acts of corruption and difficulty which pervade Indian life. Status is also the means to gain recognition amongst ones immediate circle – family, friends, community (in terms of caste) and neighbourhood. The status afforded by a diplomatic job also allows the civil servant to broaden his social field. It is a means to engage with other people only accessible to those with status. In short, the diplomat wants to be a diplomat because of the transformational capabilities of the 'Government of India' legend embossed on his business card.

The legend 'GoI' provides concrete temporal advantages. There were discussions about finding a stationer who would, contrary to the rulebook, make cards for junior officers with the Asoka Pillar because it conveyed status.[88] My incomprehension at this quest was removed by probationers explaining the underlying logic to me. It stemmed from the poverty and corruption which marred their lives. One officer explained that after several unsuccessful visits to a bank to open an account things began to change only when he produced his visiting card. Another said that he wanted to transfer his motorbike from his home state to Delhi. A friend had agreed to handle the requisite paperwork but the man in charge wanted a bribe. The officer then phoned a local official, told him of his IFS credentials and the paperwork was done without any money changing hands. It must be admitted that 'status' is not always deployed only to obtain what ordinarily ought to be a right. On occasion it is also used to subvert, if unsuccessfully, the law. On one occasion an officer attempted to use his office to obtain exemption from a state law and failed.

---

[87] Khanna. May 18, 2001

[88] The Asoka Pillar is the symbol of the Government of India and can only be used by an officer of Joint Secretary or above.

A very practical example of malleability and flexibility towards influences from beyond the local culture was evident at a diplomat's wedding I attended in Western India. The groom (the officer who invited me) was asked about the historicity of his dress by another officer. Pointing to each item of clothing the groom said: 'The turban is my caste, this shirt is of our clan and this cummerbund is Western … see we have India here!'[89] On a long train ride a coterie of diplomats began taking it in turns to recite *ghazals* and doublets in Persian.[90] It was evidently a friendly competition to demonstrate knowledge and ability which served no other purpose than to demonstrate culture – just that the culture was high Persian, imported by the Mughals. Yet, none of those who were knowledgeable in the language was Persian or even a Muslim. In India Persian was once what English is today. Another members of the group said: 'I come from a Hindi-speaking family. But I was sent to a school where all our elite go and so I made it a point to learn English, to change my accent. So, all this is acquired'. English is indispensible to obtaining work. But changing one's accent is symbolic of 'status', that is mimicking those regarded as superior if only in social terms.

In stark contrast to Indian diplomatic practice, Neumann suggests that the (Western) diplomat is composed of three intermingling scripts.[91]

1. The bureaucratic script: a mundane technical worker who conforms with and submits to the role that his office demands and is homebound.
2. The hero script, a narrative of life realized by the diplomat taking on travel and political roles.
3. The script that makes the diplomat a diplomat: the script of the negotiator/mediator.

For Neumann the first two scripts are present in any Western person. But only the diplomat has the third and for him the academic's function is to study how the scripts are juggled for the practice of international relations lies in this management. Neumann limits himself to the Norwegian diplomatic service and is silent on how such a Western script is performed by non-Westerners or indeed whether it can be.

---

[89] Interview with 2004 batch officer.
[90] Conversation with several officers of the 2008 batch.
[91] Neumann. 2005.

The discussion above suggests that the script present in any Indian person (as opposed to a Westerner) is *dharma* (a unified cosmos in constant flux). An analysis of the IFS shows that the second and third items of Neumann's script are absent in a large number of Indian officers. As most of the MEA come from relatively poor backgrounds and operate in an environment which lacks support staff, the manner in which they operate is produced by their circumstances. Of Neumann's scripts, ironically, only the first one is applicable to Indian diplomats.

Stemming from poverty there is another script – not found anywhere in Neumann's theory – that identifies the Indian diplomat. This is *jugar,* roughly translated as 'to make do' in a number of Indian languages. The wealthy do not need to make do. Only the poor have to. In practice *jugar* is part and parcel of Indian life. It also defines the manner in which Indian diplomats operate. In brief, the Indian officials involved in the Indo-US nuclear negotiations said that the US deployed a huge number of people at meetings with a variety of separate skills. On occasion only two Indian diplomats had to negotiate with over 50 on the US side. Part of the reason for this mismatch was the MEA's shortage of staff. Explaining this, the Foreign Secretary's comments again demonstrate that Indians do not perceive themselves as different from non-Indians. He said:

> 'the IFS is really less than 700 people; and when we look at comparable countries, for every Indian diplomat, there are four Brazilian diplomats; for every Indian diplomat, there are seven Chinese diplomats. Now, we might be wonderful and very efficient, but we are not that efficient or that good.'[92]

The Ministry's Historical division was shut down because of a manpower shortage. The Minister has a staff of essentially two – one from the IFS and another from an allied service – which is smaller than Algeria's. An officer's responsibility includes everything from arranging a visiting dignitary's paperwork to writing policy analysis papers. Given the workload at Headquarters, embassies find it very difficult to communicate with officers. An officer says 'we don't respond because there is nothing to say, usually they want us to change something.' Working conditions are poor. Sometimes, officers work in rooms without fans, leave alone air conditioners, in the summer heat. A formal application for an air conditioner was never heard of. Bathrooms attached to offices are often stacked with rotting files. Embassies complain that headquarters

---

[92] Fifteenth Report. Standing Committee on External Affairs. 2006-07. 14th Lok Sabah. Lok Sabah Secretariat. P.13

never repy to their notes and memos so that the ambassador is left much to his own devices to get things done. An ambassador says he cannot get a mobile phone when visiting Delhi and has to use his wife's phone. Given the paucity of resources, even the most successful officers have to perform mundane tasks such as creating guest lists and checking on entertainment programs. Essentially, there is a feeling of being hard pressed but not because of the lack of facilities – to which they quickly become reconciled. The main irritant is that the social recognition that many new candidates assumed would come with the job does not appear.

The minority of diplomats who appear to be the most successful are the ones that exploit the idea of 'jugar'. They are the ones who make do effectively in propagating the core values of the MEA and its aims with very little. Right from the start of one's career people are selected for their general outlook and placed in positions based on informal consultations among a handful of people in the Ministry. It was unsurprising to me when the selections for the first duty-postings were announced. The people who in my opinion were the most focused on getting their jobs done and willing to focus on that 'event' by shelving other concerns were assigned to the most demanding assignments. Already their reputations were being cut and the future direction of their career crafted.

Conclusions

In de Certeau's terms, the IFS is the native woman in the *Writing of History*. Very little is known about what she thought. Her descendents evidently do not think they were conquered. Instead, they use the techniques that the colonizers introduced to simply further native desires. A significant desire is to escape poverty – both physical and social. But it is an error to posit a distinction between self and 'other'. The starting point is instead a unified cosmos – many diplomats referred to their socio-religious beliefs as being founded in the concept of '*sanatandharm*', i.e., the universal way, but actualized locally. It is why Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee finds it inexplicable that 'there should be any objection to us having friendly relations with China and Japan and the US and Iran. We want to help ourselves by being friendly with everyone.'[93] One set of relationships does not imply anything more or less than that particular relationship. It does not exclude others. It explains why India has never understood the logoc of

---

[93] Interview. December 2008

'blocs' or of the Cold War. 'We have poor relations with Pakistan but that is no reason why they should not gain a stake in our economy. If only they agreed to negotiate with us and open borders,' says an ambassador. The specter of being misunderstood constantly plagues the IFS as nations mistake a treaty or an agreement as significant of greater shifts or changes. 'It's like they are reading tea-leaves. An agreement is an agreement. Nothing more or less. Full Stop.' [94] Even when the Indian diplomat is practising diplomacy, the moves are only superficially those presumed by IR. Inside, in the mind the diplomat is however moving to a different style.[95]

This chapter has demonstrated that the IFS is a distinctive modernity. But is this a derivative discourse? Verifying this requires identifying the rationales of the present. What is discovered about today provokes controversy because it is distinct from the literature. For the artist *ostranenie* is a means of evoking a novel response beneficial in its own right and immensely effective as Tolstoy's horse demonstrates. For the literature there is a far more compelling reason to investigate the present in terms of its past: modernist histories of non-Western modernity have little to say about those practices in the terms of the practitioners themselves. It is to the logics underpinning practices, in the terms of the practitioners, that we now turn to.

ENDS

---

[94] Interview with senior member at Headquaters
[95] Buchanan. 1997.

CHAPTER THREE: NON-WESTERN SOURCES OF INDIAN DIPLOMATIC THEORY

whatever is here may be found elsewhere, but what is absent from here does

not exist anywhere

– Mahābhārata, 1.56.33

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the people of India have learnt to

think and act in terms of the Mahabharata.

– R.N. Dandekar[1]

Introduction

This chapter and the next will explore the roots of the modernity identified in the previous chapter. This will be done along two axes. This chapter will isolate the intellectual foundations of Indian diplomatic modernity and the next chapter will identify the roots of Indian diplomatic practice. This is because as a very senior Secretary level officer says:

> 'Our ancient heritage has not been institutionalized but it is there in our own lives, in our family lives, in the lives of our societies. MEA is not institutionally something ancient. I know we've had colonialism, but the point is regardless of our heritage not being institutionalized, it has survived in the sinews of our society. We responded, we acted and reacted to colonial rule, to situations and people that colonialism brought to us in our way. That's our heritage, it's what shapes our official behaviour because *we* are the officials. *We* animate this bureaucracy even though it might once have been alien.'[2]

This chapter will explore this 'ancient heritage' whereas the next, the roots of institutions. Once again this chapter moves from the diplomatic present along the lines practitioners suggest. They all point to the *Mahābhārata* (Mb). The use of the text and its understandings today by Indian diplomats are presented. This requires first developing a means of handling the text in the terms of those who use it and then applying the method to the text to tease out the theoretical notions embedded in the text.

---

[1] Dandekar. 1954. P.2
[2] Interview with Secretary, Government of India in London.

The Mahābhārata Today

The local roots of the theoretical principles motivating Indian modernity are not difficult to locate in terms of the practitioners themselves. In a lecture to new diplomats, India's Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon began by referring to a pillar of the Anglo-Saxon diplomatic community and then switched to a text never investigated by IR as a repository of diplomatic practice, much less a theory of diplomacy. In switching to this text, the arch-practitioner of Indian diplomacy returned home – because it was the only language of diplomacy his audience was familiar with.[3]

The text Menon began with was Nicholson's *Diplomacy*.[4] Menon selected seven qualities from the 'Nicholson test' for the ideal diplomat.[5] They were: truthfulness, precision, calm, patience, good temper, modesty and loyalty.[6] The reference to Nicolson would be accepted, even expected, by IR. After all, Nicolson is regarded as having epitomised the ideal diplomat and is viewed as an eminent theorist.[7] It would reassure Bull that an Indian Foreign Secretary refers to Nicolson in a talk on 'what qualities one looks for in a diplomat and whether these have changed over time.' But for Menon, these qualities are 'what your mother told you anyway.' So why do diplomats need them?

> 'These are the qualities which enhance your credibility as a diplomat. … Even if
> you are threatening the use of force, which is the most extreme case of what
> you may be asked to do, you are credible not because of the capability to use
> force, but because what you say is credible. There is no point in making the
> threat if you yourself are not credible.'

---

[3] A former diplomat said so in contemptuous terms. Interview.
[4] Nicolson. 1964
[5] Sir Ernest Satow. 1979. p.451
[6] Nicolson also mentions: intelligence, knowledge, discernment, prudence, hospitality, charm, industry, courage and tact. Menon mentioned 'precision' which Nicolson called 'accuracy'. See Nicolson. Diplomacy. P.67
[7] These values were for Nicolson and successive generations of theorists an amalgam of Graeco-Roman ethical values, the moral injunctions of the Enlightenment, and the characteristics of the English gentleman. In other words, they epitomise Western civilisation. See H. Nicolson. 1955. p.40-80, 162-205; 'Introduction' to Sir Horace Rumbold. The War Crisis in Berlin July-August 1914. 2nd edn. London. Constable. 1944. p.xix

In addition to 'credibility,' Menon added two more virtues: 'the ability to think for the other' and 'remember that you are dealing with people.' The former is premised on the idea that a negotiation can only work if both parties compromise and arrive at an acceptable conclusion. A negotiation does not work if it is based on either lies or on force. Deploying ones 'asymmetric' power to force through an agreement makes it only meaningful in the short term.

The virtues Menon dwelt upon and the other two come from the Mb. It provides other qualities unmentioned by Nicolson: 'high personal reputation' and 'knowing everyone.' Menon's speech requires quoting at length:

> 'It is interesting that when as an Indian diplomat you look back, in India, our first earliest ideal sort of diplomat was Krishna in the Mb. For six months before the Great War there was this intense period of diplomacy and tremendous negotiation and mediation between all the mini-states, tribes and dynasties. Krishna was involved in most of them and the Mb goes into this in great detail. It actually goes through the qualities that made Krishna a good diplomat. How did he manage to achieve his goals? And this is interesting. They come to the same list of seven virtues. It is almost identical. They used slightly different words but basically, it is the same seven things that they think a diplomat should be doing. He had two added advantages, if you read the Mb; one of them was high personal reputation. It helps, if people think you are God or think that you are special. More so, he personally knew everybody in every single royal family that he was dealing with - in those days, it was royal families. But for me, the interesting thing is that here are two people separated over time by thousands of years. Nicholson, early 20th century, classical European diplomat; he was at Versailles. Krishna in the Mb, 2500 years ago at least, in what is still a semi-tribal society and yet they both say the same thing; both describe the same set of virtues for a diplomat. Which means that there is a remarkable continuity over time, over space; that the qualities required of a diplomat over vastly different cultures and over a very long period of historical time are much the same.'

Menon's lecture was also significant in terms of delivery. He did not introduce or explain the text. He did not need to. In my role as teacher for two batches of IFS officers I discovered

everyone knew the ins and outs of the Mb. One said: 'No matter how English speaking we are, this [the Mb] remains our basic [*sic*]. Our history.' Furthermore, in private conversations with some forty new diplomats not a single officer contradicted Menon's opinions. To put this knowledge in a European context makes it even more extraordinary. The Mb is a text some 2,500 years old, yet Indians today know it intimately. The European equivalent would be a deep familiarity with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Moreover, the Mb has been – at the very least – a referential text for diplomats throughout the history of Indian diplomacy. India's first Foreign Secretary wrote:

> '… long before European diplomacy, and Europe itself, assumed shape, the art
> of diplomacy had been developed, particularly in India … Take Krishna's mission
> as an envoy of the Pandavas to the Court of the Kauravas. Krishna says 'I shall go
> to the Court of the Kauravas to present your case in the best light and try and
> get them to accept your demands, but if my efforts fail and war becomes
> inevitable we shall show the world that we are right and they are wrong, so that
> the world may not misjudge between us.' Here, in a nutshell, is the essence of
> diplomacy, which may be defined as the art of negotiation. Its primary purpose
> is to avoid war, but if war should become inevitable the world should know who
> was responsible for it. Even in Sri Krishna's days, public opinion was a factor to
> be taken into account.'[8]

Evidently, from the time of Indian independence to today, the Mb has provided a trope for Indian diplomats. The text is however not limited to providing the means for Indian diplomats to orient themselves to the technicalities of 'diplomacy'. The Mb is primarily a repository for a philosophy of action played out in the everyday lives of individual diplomats and the making of Indian diplomatic policy. In short, if the purpose is to identify the fundamental canons governing the decision-making matrices in the spheres of opinion and act[9] then the Mb is indispensible. This chapter will argue that the Mb not only represents the 'highest levels of cultural productions … common over long historical periods to two or more people, societies, or territories'[10] but also that, in Nelson's terms, the Mb is one of the fundamental canons

---

[8] Menon. 1977. p.4-5
[9] Nelson. 1962. And Nelson. 1972. p.123-127
[10] Nielsen. 2004. p.120. In stating this, Nielsen is in line with Weber and Durkheim/Mauss.

governing the decision making matrices in the spheres of opinion and act.[11] The Mb is a directive system providing the symbolic economy of the civilization.[12]

Civilizational analysis is the ideal tool to investigate the formation and meaning of this text along routes proposed. Nielsen, in disengaging Nelson's research question from a European orbit notes that, 'similar questions might be asked about Islam, Buddhism and others. How are they to be brought under the definition of a faith structure emphasizing individual and collective purgation of evil through conformity with a *logos* or world soul? Or are different categories important to these faith structures?'[13] Given the paucity of such questions being posed in the non-Western world, it is no surprise that Nelson himself mistakenly concluded that 'the immense variety of languages, social groups and prescriptive rituals in India stood in the way of a full ventilation of the principal structures and a full rationalization of intelligence. The moves to neutralization, generalization, universalization, rationalization were checked at every turn.'[14] In other words, in India the transition from faith structures to the rational was impeded. In particular, India was unable to harness the 'scientific-technological-perspectival revolution' which took place in Europe, making it a progressive society. India, in contrast, remained a stationary society, until presumably contact with dynamic Europe.[15]

Nelson's analysis is neither novel nor correct. His reading is the product of a very particular strand of European understanding of history and philosophy applied to India. As a corrective, Nielsen notes that to apply Nelson's method to the non-Western world requires not just new categories but a new system of analysis. This is required because colonialism converted pre-colonial systems of knowledge into raw data for European systems of historiography *and* delegitimized pre-colonial systems of knowledge though they continue to shape non-Western reality.[16] Rather than force Indian reality into European perspectives, a new technique of analysis will be developed from *Textures of Time*. The analysis will adapt *textures* as a technique to recover not pre-colonial history from local texts but a philosophy of practice. In doing so the

---

[11] Nelson. 1962.
[12] Nelson1973. p.83.
[13] Nielsen. Benjamin Nelson's Sociology of Civilizations. P. 413
[14] Nelson. Ibid. p.88
[15] Nelson. Ibid. p.87-88
[16] See Mantena. October 2007.p. 396-408.

analysis is guided by the criticisms of Mantena[17] and Nandy.[18] In applying the technique the chapter will finally conclude by unraveling two controversies arising from the mismatch between Indian diplomatic practice and the position of the academy. They are the notion that both the rationality of modernity and that the conceptions of diplomatic modernity entered India via colonialism.

Managing the text

In *Textures* the authors propose two tools: genres and texture. If European (or Europeanized) eyes searched for a historical genre in classical Indian texts then they would conclude that Indians wrote ahistorical myths. *Textures* however proposes that history was written in terms of dominant genres at any given time and that these change. As genres are replaced they may come to be seen as 'literature'.[19] Examining a number of south Indian pre-colonial texts the authors find in them a conception of history recognisable to today's academics. *Textures* points out that what is at stake here between history and myth is not what is true and false, but what is factual and fictive. *Textures* argues the mythical in a text does not discredit a text's historical genre. But this is not enough to understand the historical sensibilities of pre-colonial society. The reader, *Textures* argues knew what is real and false through the internal clues. This is *texture*. It is a set of 'subgeneric markers … shorthand for the diagnostic elements that enable the reader to make distinctions within a genre … the clues left for the reader to find, deliberately created as part of textual (and perhaps individual authorial) intention [and] comprehensible to its intended audience.'[20] It is the search for the internal structuring of a text to identify 'historical' aspects. The ideal reader therefore is part-and-parcel in constructing the text. Mantena's critique of this is: 'how do we know what makes up the cognitive world of the reader? Surely, by employing the same criteria/categories (such as verifiability) to identify that which is history, we attribute to readers the cognitive make-up of modern historians.'

---

[17] Ibid.

[18] Mantena, Ibid., & Nandy. May, 1995.

[19] Even in the Western tradition, the question of genre was always in flux. Only after the professionalization of the discipline of history in the nineteenth century did a genre monopolize claims on historical truth.

[20] Rao, et al. Textures. Introduction: A Palette of Histories.

A means of tackling Mantena is to turn to the rationalisation challenge that myth faced in antiquarian Greece. The challenge came on two fronts: history and philosophy. The distinction being that the former, assumes the myth contained a kernel of truth, while the latter assumes the myth contained a kind of truth.[21] History arose from, for example, Hesiod, who states that the Muses do not always speak the truth, thereby constituting a realm of truth over which he himself claims authority. It was the birth of the guild of historians and their claim to 'truth.'[22] Veyne characterised this as the devaluation of myth to a 'lie'.[23] The second rationalisation challenge was allegorical interpretation representing the critical methodology of philosophers. In ancient Greece, Pausanias while rationalising myths concluded they encoded a truth in the form of allegory and riddle. Pausanias began a sceptic but the process of study made him grow to 'hold a more thoughtful view of them.'[24] His 'road to Damascus' provides the means to manage Mantena's critique. True, Pausanias created a dogma of interpretation by divorcing the facts in a myth from the stories of history and he did this by minimally adhering to the conventions of his own 'program of truth'.[25] But, Pausanias did not revoke the myth. He did not need to because he was not looking for verifiability, which *Textures* seeks. Pausanias did talk about the past and from his position but without attempting to subsume the past into his framework. An analogy is knowing full-well that Lady Macbeth is a figment of the imagination and still enquiring how many children she may have.[26] The emphasis is not on verifiable fact, but on teasing out codes. These are a reality, they may even be historical reality but the latter, they can *only* be found in the totality of the myth. As Veyne writes,'"reality" is the child of the constitutive imagination of our tribe.'[27] Furthermore, the exegesis Pausanias proposed was founded upon constantly limiting the infringement of our own codes on the myth – as much as possible. Reconceptualising the pre-rupture past in the categories of a post-rupture present is

---

[21] Veyne. 1988. p.65, 65-69

[22] Veyne. P.30-31, 33 on the rise of the 'professional investigators'(p.33). See Preus. 1987. P.40-55.

[23] In the twentieth century, Lévi-Strauss's response to myth was to attempt to reconstruct mythic consciousness in contradistinction to the historical consciousness of the West (something that Giambattista Vico attempted in the seventeenth century; Ernst Cassirer, inspired in part by Vico, also tried to provide a logic to myth). See Lévi-Strauss. 1966. Vico. 1984; Cassirer. 1946.

[24] Veyne. P.11

[25] Ibid., P.21-22, Chapter 5

[26] Ibid., P.98

[27] Ibid., P.113

not new. It is Ganeri assures us, 'among the most characteristic hallmarks of Indian intellectual practice.'[28]

Reading the Mb in this manner – looking for the *textures* within the text to tease out not verifiable fact, but the codes of a society – does not produce a lesser 'truth'. It is for Nandy far more consequential than verifiable truth because it offers ethical and therapeutic benefits denied by historicization.[29] This is Nandy's carefully delineated target. Nandy's historicization is a conquering force, striving to bring the past under its domain[30] which, predicated on secularism and liberalism is convinced that all pasts are the same. Even alternative conceptions of the past cannot escape. They are rendered the same through the deployment of an 'imperialism of categories.'[31] This is Enlightenment History. It, and not the past is the target for Nandy's attack. In fact the past, for Nandy, is the balm to the malaise of liberal-secularist empirical historicism. He explains this with the example of the clash between secularists and Hindu nationalists who locked in a '"historical" battle understand each other perfectly' because the battleground is empirical, verifiable history.[32] The cure to this 'historical' battle is to negate empiricism by returning to the 'point of view' articulated in the example of Vivekananda managing the pain of verifiable empirical 'fact' by a 'moral' accrued by a millennia old culture. The 'moral', is of course, 'ahistorical.'[33] The resolution to the clash is an affirmation of the power of the moral in managing 'fact' and in doing so affirms the concept of 'timeless truths' which are anathema to Enlightenment History which reduced them to either insanity or realpolitik.[34] Vivekananda's management of pain, an act of 'principled forgetfulness,' is an abomination to Enlightenment History's purpose of laying bare the past on the basis of a frame of reference. This takes the form of either a theme of return (so continuity or recovery), progress or stages (evolutionary sequencing) says Nandy.[35]

---

[28] Ganeri. 2008. 36, p.551–562. P.560
[29] Pomper. May, 1995. P.4
[30] The striving went even beyond Nandy's conception. There was a new science of source criticism which graded the value of information to be controlled. See Jones. 2001.
[31] Nandy. History's Forgotten Doubles,pp. 44-66. P.53-4
[32] Ibid., P.64-65
[33] Defined as 'principled forgetfulness' and 'timeless truths,' i.e., 'transcendental theories of the past'. Ibid., P.47-51
[34] Ibid., p.51
[35] Ibid., P.48

Nandy's critique is only partially relevant – because following today's understandings of the Mb, it will be read for 'tacit theories,' what Veyne calls 'morals' and will not be mined for verifiable truth. In fact, Nandy presents an Indian equivalent to Pausinias – Bose who studied the *purānas*. After contextualising Bose in the relevant manner, i.e., a society looking for its own empirical verifiable history, Nandy states that Bose concluded the *purānas* were a type of history beyond Enlightenment History's comprehension. In short, Bose's conclusions were Pausinias'. Indian myths, like Greek myths, are important not because they abound with empirical facts, which may or may not be important, but because they are suffused with theories expressed in stories of being and action. These are relevant, if only because they guided action until the very recent past, as Nandy shows they did, through his concrete, contextualised examples. Now, in using this method of argumentation and presentation, Nandy actually sanctifies the 'historical method' of Enlightenment History. Moreover, that Nandy uses the 'historical method' to mount his attack on Enlightenment History is testimony to the 'historical method's' independent value. It can be used, as Nandy does, to craft, what we shall call, a 'new history.'[36] It is new because what it seeks are not 'facts' but the identification of 'morals'. Evidently this is to deal with history from outside Enlightenment History[37] because it is not 'facts' that are being sought. Rather the subject matter now is morals, by definition, 'timeless truths' or 'theories of transcendence.'

Nandy's charge however remains that this is simply historicising the ahistorical. What is therefore required is to view these phenomena on their terms. That, should be the 'new history's' framework. A key to devising a frame is provided by Nandy who uses two: describing a past authorized by referring to sources[38] and ideational. Firstly, Nandy presents a narrative of the past organised around the history of Enlightenment History in India and grounded empirically:

> When modern history first entered the Indian intellectual scene in the middle of
> the last century, many accepted it as a powerful adjunct to the kit-bag of Indian

---

[36] Burke uses the term though his meaning is somewhat different to the use the term is put to here. See Burke. 2001.
[37] As defined by Nandy. See Doubles., P.50
[38] Smith. 2000. P.103-108. p.103

civilization. … The domination of that consciousness has now become, as the confrontation at Ayodhya shows, a cultural and political liability.[39]

Nandy's article is also ideational because it seeks to counteract Enlightenment History by offering an antidote from outside it – myths. This is understandable since myths are incontestably part of India's past and present (as Menon demonstrates). Nandy does this from *within* and *now*. Even Bose, Westernised and steeped in psychoanalysis – a practice alien to Indian civilization[40] – finds an eternal truth in the *purānas*. Bose is representative of his ahistorical culture: 'all times exist only in present times and can be decoded only in terms of the contemporaneous. There is no past independent of us; there is no future that is not present here and now.'[41] But Bose, essentially searched for *textures* using psychoanalysis. Why impose this alien category on Indians? Secondly, self-evidently Nandy's uneducated masses are ahistorical,[42] but what of the powerful?

The powerful of course matter. And there are few more powerful than those who compose bureaucracies today. To this the genealogist's concern with today sets policy as an important – perhaps the most significant – target for contemporary research especially because, as Shore notes: 'policy' is taken as an unproblematic given, without reference to sociocultural contexts and there is a neglect of institutional complexity. Thirdly, it is not just public policy, but also the academy which continues to use dichotomous frames (such as 'state' versus 'private' or 'hegemonic' versus 'subsumed' discourses).[43] Uncovering the complexity of policy processes, its underlying rationales and their location in society is why this chapter began with Menon who, in contradistinction to Enlightenment History invokes a timeless diplomatic theory across space

---

[39] Nandy, Doubles., P.65

[40] Freud himself wrote in 1914 that 'psychoanalysis is my creation; for ten years I was the only one occupied with it … .' See Freud. 1914; Psychoanalysis' roots are entrenched in the intersection of Enlightenment and Romanticist culture in Europe. See Bergmann. 1993. p.929-955; McGrath demonstrates that psychoanalysis was a product of a crisis in Austrian liberal culture and internalised liberalism, 'psychologized' liberalism. See McGrath. 1992.

[41] Nandy. Doubles. P.64

[42] Nandy asks rhetorically: 'Why did the same history (of Ayodhya) not move millions of Indians for hundreds of years, not even the first generation of Hindu nationalists in the nineteenth century, not even, for that matter, the founders and ideologues of the same parties that are today at the forefront of the temple movement?' Doubles. P.60-61

[43] Wedel, Shore, Feldman, Stacy Lathrop. July 2005. P.43; See also Kalb, van der Land, Staring, van Steenbergen, Wilterdink. 2000. p.8

from the Mb. The means to uncover the morals of the Mb as understood by modern Indians is to deploy the method developed to the text.

Application: The Mahābhārata

A vast and totally novel text to IR, the Mb requires a simple introduction, thru an analogy of a single word. To say the concept of 'sincerity' has been valuable through many ages and in many cultures is banal. Thus, for Rousseau and the European Enlightenment, sincerity meant authenticity, revealing the secrets of one's heart. In the Mb however, sincerity takes no less than thirteen forms, including impartiality, self-control, toleration and non-violence.[44] No wonder then that in the absence of the method termed *textures*, the first generation of Westerners to analyse the Mb declared it to be 'literary unthing' (*literarisches Unding*),[45] a 'monstrous chaos' (*ungeheuerliches Chaos*).[46] Yet, it obviously was in demand throughout India. Archaeological investigations show that the text was spread throughout India and in several languages. Despite the vast linguistic and geographical landscape over which the Mb was spread it acquired an overwhelming unity including patterns of agreement and disagreement in readings and in passages included or not included. Archival work points conclusively to a single written 'text' of a Mb existing at some point in the ancestry of these manuscripts.[47] It means that the main storyline remains unchanged and it was, and remains, interwoven into the fabric of Indian cultural and social life.[48] The Mb has played a major role in educating Indian peoples, in structuring and informing their imagination and sensibilities in fundamental ways. The Mb not only gave Indians grand heroes and villains, thrilling stories, and profound crises; it schooled them in cosmology, philosophy, theology, and ethics, and through it all it legitimized and inculcated ethical and political patterns fundamentally important to what is called 'Hindu'

---

[44] Mb 12.156.3—26.

[45] Winternitz 1908-22, 1:272. 1962 (Quoted in Hiltebeitel Introduction.)

[46] Oldenberg 1922, p.1.

[47] See Sukthankar's "Prolegomena" to the critical edition, Sukthankar et al., The Mahabharata, vol. 1, xxxiv, liv-v, lxxxviii-xci. The amount of unity that exists particularly between geographically remote traditions which often have discrepant traditions intervening between them such as Kashmir and Kerala, can be explained only on the assumption of a fixed text antecedent to those manuscripts, an archetype. For the variations which exist can be explained as later, particular innovations resulting from various dynamic factors in the tradition, while the unity cannot be explained , generally , as parallel independent invention.

[48] Dunham. 1991. Chapter I. 1991

civilisation,[49] a viewpoint which can be traced from Dahlman.[50] Yet the inability of non-Indians to comprehend the Mb persisted as scholars took it to be an encyclopaedia of things Indian as they existed, before being precipitated into the epic, and to a certain extent defining things as they exist today. It is what the culture thinks of itself.[51] This was the first move towards discovering the *texture* of the documents. Yet, no explanation exists of if, and how, the present is connected to the ancient myths,[52] in what manner and most simply: why?

The first *texture* is that Indians designate the Mb in terms very different to those used by Europeans. None of these terms can be translated as epic. Indians designate the Mb *itihāsa*, which might be broadly translated as 'chronicle'. The Sanskrit word – part of the modern lexicon – is ironical. A literal translation of *itihāsa* is: 'Thus (iti), indeed (hā), it was (asa).' *Itihāsa* is an irony, because implicit is the notion that it could have been many other things. In defining the Mb's literary canon thus, Indians introduce a contingency unfound in Enlightenment History. This contingency is a defining *texture* of the Mb. The term for 'history' in the modern sense in some of India's vernacular languages has been derived from this word – a greater irony because *itihāsa* in the sense it is used by Indians clearly means the 'Once upon a time' of Western story telling.[53] *Itihāsa* is narrative which has been transformed by editing into a sacred narrative – a morality tale. The Mb is generally accepted as the longest poem in the world and it boasts that all knowledge is contained within its some 75,000 verses. In the opening section, the text states that in relation to the four aims of man (dharma, artha, kama, moksa) 'whatever is here may be found elsewhere, but what is absent from here does not exist anywhere'.[54] Fitting a quart into a thimble, this chapter uses condensed quotes.

Divided into several books, the entire Mb is cast in the form of narrative discourse, although more than half of it is primarily didactic or descriptive. Here lies another *texture*. The manner of

---

[49] Fitzgerald. 1991. p.151
[50] See Dahlman. 1895 & 1899. Dahlman saw the Mb as 'die Erzieherin des Volkes zu höheren religiösen und sittlichen Ideen, Lehrerin des Volkes' (the tutor of the people for higher religious and moral ideas, the schoolmarm of the people, Genesis … p.142).
[51] Dimock, Jr. 1974.
[52] Brockington. 1998.
[53] It is possible to translate itihāsa differently by dividing the compound thus: iti-hāsa, which can be rendered 'So? Derision!', i.e. So it could never have been! This is nearer in sense to the 'Once upon a time' and used in speech.
[54] Mb 1.56.33, repeated at 18.5.38, following the same first line

presentation is example after example to illustrate a moral point. Through descriptions, the Mb lays out a code of conduct which will be termed *dharma*. That *dharma* is introduced in this manner is a clue to the nature of *dharma*. As White remarks: 'Narrative might well be considered a solution to a problem of general human concern, namely, the problem of how to translate *knowing* into telling, the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning that are generally human rather than culture specific'.[55] Narrativization, White insists, is also a moralizing, and when narrativity is present, morality or a moralizing impulse is present too. This is a humdrum matter for the readers of the Mb. It makes the constant refrain: 'where there is *dharma*, there is victory,' testifying to the basic moralizing impulse behind the discourse of violence in the epic. i.e., behind its specific way of talking about violent death and all-engulfing ruin. The operation of this code in the practice of diplomacy takes up a significant portion of the book. One of the many things the Mb does is demonstrate the variety of manners in which *dharma* is operationalised in diplomacy.

In Nelson's terms, the pre-eminent 'structure of consciousness' in Indian civilization is *dharma.* An ancient category, it continues to inform the mentalities of modern Indians. Used assuredly by Indians, (India's former Foreign Minister, the man who initiated nuclear negotiations with the United States keeps a note on dharma on his desk), the term continues to confuse foreign observers. Kakar argues, 'the role of myths, especially those of religious derivation, in defining and integrating the traditional elements and common features of identity and society in Hindu India cannot be overestimated.'[56] This is a long way from Creel who applies a type of Enlightenment History to Indian metaphysics when he 'mines' texts for self-defined philosophy. Finding none, Creel argues that the concept of *dharma* is symbolically vital but conceptually empty; that while neo-Hinduism certainly has ideology, it has not developed, and it is implied may never develop, a tradition of hard-headed philosophical reflection on ethical questions. Creel's central contribution is to demonstrate clearly that for contemporary Hinduism there is no philosophy of *dharma* even though one would think there ought to be. (The negative conclusion suggests that the status of *dharma* in modern India should be studied social scientifically rather than philosophically, but this is not a path which Creel follows.) In the final

---

[55] Mehta. 1990. p. 262
[56] Kakar.

section, Creel exhibits Hindu thought's systematic inadequacy.[57] His investigations are however limited by his lack of *texture*, an assumption – that it was the intention of the Indian cosmos to *present* 'philosophy' as understood in Western terms. For Creel, the failure of the Mb is that it does not approach the form and manner of European philosophical texts. There is nothing like a 'categorical imperative' in the Mb. What is found instead are a series of events woven into a narrative. Not only is it delusive to cast the Mb as inadequate because it does not approach a set of conditions imposed upon the text but it counterproductive to dismiss a text which patently serves to organise thought and action for Indians themselves. It is why Doniger and Derrett write:

> 'While historians and anthropologists discuss the emergence of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka into the nuclear age … Out understanding of them is not so immediately relevant. Their conception of themselves is all important. Herein tradition is made and remade, and the dramatic events in India stress the vital importance of discovering what is DUTY. … the innate sense of propriety (not 'fairness') which is called *dharma*! Uganda, South Africa, South America and Iron Curtain countries have no *dharma*: and one of the consequences is notorious. India's *dharma* owes nothing to freedom movements or Independence.'[58]

Predating the modern Indian state, one of the origins of *dharma* is the Mb. Hiltebeitel has uncovered a *texture* located within the text. The Mb is an education in *dharma*. It is specifically for the King Yudhisthira but given the text's dissemination it has also served to educate many others. Secondly, the dissemination of the text may have not been incidental but a matter of design. Another *texture* of the text is the very metre of its composition, the *anustubh* metre which was associated with the low caste, and hence numerically much larger, *śūdras*. It would explain why a complex and long story came to be prevalent throughout the Indian subcontinent.[59] The text will be penetrated at the very moment Yudhisthira despairs about his education stating:

> 'Whether we know or do not know *dharma*, whether it is knowable or not,
> *dharma* is finer than the finest edge of a sword and more substantial than a

---

[57] Creel. 1977
[58] Doniger & Derrett. Introduction.
[59] Sharma. 2000.

mountain. On first sight, it appears clear and solid like a town; on a close logical

look, it vanishes from view.'[60]

The viewpoint is replicated endlessly in the text, not least by sages who state: 'Were there only

one *shastra*, (instrument) and only one means of gaining the Good, the situation would be clear;

but there are may *shastra-s*, and by describing 'the Good' in different ways, they have hidden its

meaning.'[61] Essentially, within the Mb the word *dharma* is a repository for all that is good. It is

both nature and nurture, i.e., it is present in humans and also attainable by humans. The Mb in

no certain terms states:

> 'All the sayings of *dharma* are with a view of nurturing, cherishing, providing
>
> more amply, enriching, increasing, enhancing, all living beings: in one word,
>
> securing their prabhava. Therefore, whatever has the characteristic of bringing
>
> that about is *dharma*. That is certain.'[62]

The centrality of *dharma* is attested to in several passages in the Mb:

> 'All the sayings of *dharma* are with a view to supporting, sustaining, bringing
>
> together, and in their togetherness upholding, all living beings, securing, in one
>
> word, their *dharma*. Therefore, whatever has the characteristic of doing that, is
>
> *dharma*. That is certain.'[63]

Furthermore,

> 'Whatever has its beginning in justice, that alone is called *dharma*; whatever is
>
> unjust and oppressive is *adharma*. This is the rule settled by those who can be
>
> respected.'[64]

The text also states in a long passage that there are many ways of leading a life. No manner of

living is denigrated and none is put forward as better than others. This is done by the sage

Brihaspati who recites the many ways of living:

> 'Some people praise conciliation and friendliness. Some others praise strenuous
>
> effort. Some praise neither the one nor the other exclusively. And there are
>
> those who praise both.

---

[60] Mb. Shantiparvan. 260.12-3

[61] Ibid. 287.10

[62] Ibid. 109.10

[63] Ibid. 109.11

[64] Mb. Vanaparvan. 131.11

Some people praise sacrificial rites; and some praise total withdrawal from the world. There are those who praise only 'giving'; and there are those who praise only 'receiving'.

Some people, leaving everything, are given to silence and meditation. Some others praise obtaining a kingdom after much fight and destruction, though with the aim of protecting the people. And there are those who do self-reflection in solitude.

However, after observing this variety and reflecting deeply, the learned and the wise have concluded that not to be aggressive towards other beings is *dharma* in the eyes of the good and the saintly.'[65]

The concept of *irony* encompassed in the word *itihāsa* used to describe the Mb unlocks another *texture*. It is indeed ironic that the sage concludes that non-violence is *dharma* because the Mb is about a great war. This is not a paradox because the Mb is also about the practice of *dharma* in difficult situations – situations antithetical to *dharma*, i.e., *adharma*. The text is constantly punctuated with such apparent paradoxes. They are actually *texture*, means to understanding the meaning of *dharma*. Given the literary means the text uses, the method of capturing *dharma* is to focus on some of the main paradoxes presented in the text. Four in particular will be investigated. They are:

1. Declaring the sacrosanct position of the vow while undermining it.
2. Espousing non-violence while waging war.
3. Forwarding life thru death.
4. The merits of social order while showing its undoing or the wilful forgetting of everything.

These apparent paradoxes were first viewed as such, with the conclusion by those alien to the *texture* of the Mb that the text was an *unthing*. This quality is precisely what makes the Mb what it is, it encapsulates the Mb's very message: that the maintenance of order is dependent not on the nature of that order but on resolving immediate and individual situations. As the passages above demonstrate – without ever using the term – the central notion of *dharma* is that it is context specific. This has been central to the civilization, making it distinct from Europe.[66]

---

[65] Mb. Adiparvan 156.10-29
[66] For a history of 'context' in Europe see. Burke. 2002

Dharma does not move on a definite path. It changes colour according to the position and mode of incidents. *Dharma* is the guideline for determination – not all we want in life – it is virtue. Non violence, for example, is a great virtue – this has been proclaimed in the epic but not always put into practice. The epic is, after all, is the story of a great war.[67]

In times of strife – which the Mb describes – reliability is given renewed impetus. The Mb hence dwells on the concept of the *vow* or promise before destabilising the concept demonstrating that even such a central concept is not quite so central relative to *dharma*. To make the point that keeping to the truth of one's vow does not always conform to *dharma*, Krsna tells the story of an inverse case: a very cruel act of killing by hunter named Balaka who shot a blind beast he had never seen before, yet was nonetheless carried off to heaven because the beast had vowed to kill all creatures. Underlying the destruction of the blind beast is resistance of the universalising concept of *ahimsa* upon which the epic rests. Nowhere is this clearer than from a glance at the uncertain status the Mb accords it among the 'highest *dharmas*.' As Hiltebeitel notes, *ahimsa* and *anrasamsya* are both the 'highest dharma.' Yudhisthira, who has every right to be confused on this issue by the end of the war, makes the 'highest dharma' of the king his first and most enduring question to Bhisma.[68] Of the fifty-four instances Hiltebeitel finds in the Mb, the tally of the different excellences said to be the 'highest dharma' includes more than 25 categories and numerous sub-categories. These also include individual *dharmas*.

This *texture* leads Hiltebeitel to conclude that the highest *dharma* seems to be knowing the highest *dharma* for whatever particular situation one is in, and recognizing that situation within an ontology that admits virtually endless variation and deferral in matters of formulating and approaching 'the highest.'[69] This is the fourth, apparent paradox: of simultaneously upholding and deconstructing social order. If the Mb states different things about the highest *dharma*, it is *anrasamsya* that has the most occurrences. This quality is especially promulgated to Yudhisthira at the very end of the epic. Here there is a dramatic inclusion of those whom the caste system would exclude. It is the undoing of the very social system which the entire Mb for some 75,000 verses has been describing and in so doing, reinforcing.

---

[67] Frawley. 1995. p.25-39
[68] 12.56.2; 161.48; 353.8
[69] Hiltebeitel. 2001. P.208

The primacy of presentism and conducting oneself with reference to the current is clear in another *texture*: it is the last story of the text, the closing lesson. At the very end of the Mb, Yudhishthira is accompanied by a stray dog as he alone walks into heaven. The king of the gods bars his way, since caste law regards dogs as unclean, the animal equivalent of Dalits (the people who have been various referred to in the past as Untouchables, Scheduled Castes, and Harijans). Yudhishthira refuses to enter unless the dog comes in too. In the very act of insistence, the *dharma* King chooses to forget all that society says is right and proper. He is praised for this and the dog turns out to be a disguised form of the god Dharma, *dharma* incarnate. Attempting some dialogie between civilizations Doniger has translated the momentous significance of this passage into Western terms. In the Western canon, Doniger writes, the incarnation itself is astounding, the equivalent of the God of the Hebrew Bible taking the form of a pig. But the king's willingness to include the dog among those 'who are devoted to one,' as he puts it, is equally astounding and quite 'wonderful. … When we realise by the epic's end that he departs this world through his noncruelty toward a dog, we see that it has been a long and painful lesson' and that the lesson is that even the highest rules of society are subject to context which is the ultimate determinant for action.[70]

A final note on the general notion of *dharma* arises from the Mb presenting a cosmos where the operations of a variety of *dharmas* is a given. How do, in such a cosmos differing, sometimes opposing *dharmas* relate to each other? More specifically, how should people of different *dharmas* act when they come into conflicting situations? This too is set out in the following passage from the Mb.

> 'If one *dharma* is destructive of another dharma, then it is wickedness in the garb of *dharma*, and not *dharma*. Only that is *dharma* truly that is established without denigrating and opposing another *dharma*.
> In case there is conflict between one *dharma* and another, one should reflect on their relative weight, and then act accordingly; what does not denigrate and obstruct others is *dharma*.'[71]

As the Mb progresses the text states firstly the centrality of *dharma* to life, the multiplicity of human beliefs and ways of living and that these are all valid. Finally, it concludes that the

---

[70] Doniger. 2006
[71] Mb. Adiparvan 156.31-37

essence of human life iare *relations* and that the pursuance of relationships in a manner conducive to all practitioners is central to living. In short, *dharma* is the art of maintaining relationships, of navigating a crowded a world.

The means to operationalised relationships in terms of *dharma* are also set out. Since desires are inescapable, the individual, the Mb insists, must know one's desires. The individual must know oneself. Clarity of purpose is the first step to maintaining equable relationships with the rest of society. The Mb approaches this in terms of the social good in the following:

> 'Those who have thought deeply are of the view that *dharma* is what is done for all beings with one's heart and mind. Therefore, let one do, with one's heart and mind, what is good for all beings.'[72]

The statement raises the question of what is good for all beings? And the answer is:

> 'What he does not find agreeable when done by others unto him, that he should not do unto others. He must know that what is unhappy for him cannot be happy for others.
>
> Whatever is not agreeable to him, that he should not do unto others. This, in brief, is *dharma*; all else is only selfishness.'[73]

The Mb equates knowing oneself with *dharma*. Quite simply the Mb argues that doing good for all is directly related to knowing what is good for oneself. Not knowing oneself produces confusion for those surrounding the self, creates conflict and is a suboptimal manner of conducting human relationships. As Krsna himself explains to Arjuna, '*Dharma* is so called because it upholds and supports the life of people. Only that which has the ability to sustain is *dharma*.'[74]

The centrality of *dharma* to human life raises the question: Can *dharma* as outlined in the Mb be the basis for a more detailed code of action? The question is pertinent both for the hyper-flexibility of *dharma* and the deep thought it requires. The former is the notion that even socially accepted *dharma* might be overturned at any moment and by any individual given the circumstances. The latter is that given the variety of events and situations that require gauging

---

[72] Ibid. 157.1
[73] Ibid. 157.2-5
[74] (Karna p.49). (p.264)

and weighing before action is taken there is the ever present spectre of paralysis. Hence the question: Can *dharma* provide the rationale for action or is it simply a philosophical exercise?

The Mb deals with these questions by first giving 'time' and 'place' the predominant position in terms of decision making:

> 'The sages have in the treaties relating to *dharma*, wealth and material prosperity, and ultimate human freedom, too, considered 'time' and 'place' to be the prime factors in human achievements.
>
> The one who, after examining their true import, uses 'place' and 'time' in a way that is harmonious gains the fruits of his aspirations.'[75]

It is within these two coordinates, time and place, that *dharma* and human life takes place. Within these limits Yudhisthira explicates the problem of action in a world without any fundamental imperative for action. In the excerpts quoted below, Yudhisthira systematically questions all the classical sources of *dharma* and the impossibility of action in a world of multiple realities. He says:

> 'The learned declare the Veda to be the basis of *dharma*. But the Veda change according to each cycle of Time … different *dharma* for different capacities.[76]
>
> Neither can one ascertain *dharma* by a mere reading of the vedic texts.[77]
>
> There is one kind of *dharma* for a person in an equable situation, and of another kind for one in distress; how can a reading of the Veda alone decide what the *dharma* in a situation of distress shall be?[78]
>
> As regards the *smrti*, they were derived from the Veda, and could not be authoritative only if the Veda were so; but when the Veda was not free from ambiguity, nor authoritative for every situation, how could the smrti be so? Often conflicting with each other, where was the force in either?[79]
>
> As for cultured conduct being the standard of *dharma*, it suffered from the fallacy of the circularity of definition; the conduct of good men is called *dharma*,

---

[75] Shantiparvan 137.23-24
[76] Shantiparvan 260.12-13
[77] Shantiparvan 260.3
[78] Shantiparvan 260.4
[79] Ibid. 260.9-10

and good men are those whose conduct reflects *dharma*. With this fallacy in its definition, 'cultured conduct' could not be a proof of *dharma*.'[80]

Furthermore, there is no single code for conduct beneficial to all in equal measure, or applicable to all in all circumstances. On the contrary, the very thing that helped some rise acted to obstruct others.[81] This is why Yudhisthira concludes by stating: 'None could see anywhere conduct that would be uniformly good for all,'[82] and that, 'The same act is *dharma* or *adharma* for different people, depending on 'time', 'place' and the 'person concerned''. Ultimately Yudhisthira poses the most fundamental question:

> 'All things of this world are shot through with truth and untruth, how does one distinguish one from the other? What is truth? What is untruth? At what time shall one speak the truth and at what time may one speak the untruth?'[83]

It is indicative, in fact it is a *texture*, that the Mb breaks from the usual practice of precise, descriptive answers. Instead, there is no answer to Yudhisthira's question. This is significant because the Mb, as Hiltebeitel notes, is the education of Yudhisthira. There is no categorical reply to this most fundamental of questions about taking action in a world shot thru with relativity. There is no device such as a 'categorical imperative' to disperse the problem of relativity. The threat of paralysis posed by relativity is however dealt with two opposing perspectives:

> 'Reasoning is not stable … the substance of *dharma* is as deep as a cave. Where the masses, the people have trodden, that is the way.[84]
>
> One should depend upon one's intelligence to decide between *dharma* and *adharma* and act accordingly.'[85]

And

> '*Dharma* and cultured conduct arise from intelligence and it is from intelligence that they are known. It is by recourse to intelligence, learning different things from different people, and not by depending only upon one branch of *dharma*

---

[80] Ibid 260.5
[81] Ibid. 260.18-19
[82] Ibid. 260.17
[83] Ibid. 109.2-3 also 160.1-2
[84] Vanaparvan. 313.117
[85] Shantiparvan. 141.102

that one should illumine one's path[86] … the Good must be free from doubt,

which indeed it is.'[87]

In another passage, Bhisma – one of Yudhisthira's brothers – attacks an overwhelming reliance on sensory perception as the guide to action: 'Thinking they are learned, they are however like children in the reasoning that there is only one test – that of direct sense perception. It is only long practice and living one's life in its many expression that one can have insight into reality there is no other way.'[88] In short, action falls into two categories: the herd instinct or actively engaging society, reflecting on engagements and negotiating a course of action beneficial to both the actor and society. It is, in short, the mentality which motivated Menon when he said one must think for the negotiating partner. This mentality is described in practice and in great detail in the Mb.

The practice of diplomacy in the Mahābhārata

The practice of diplomacy will be introduced for two reasons. First, to demonstrate that Indians were conceptually aware of a diplomacy very similar to what exists today but millennia before the arrival of the Europeans and secondly to show how the metaphysic of dharma could be operationalised in the hypothetical, or real, situations (the distinction is irrelevant) presented in the Mb. In keeping with the manner in which the Mb presents its philosophy, diplomacy is also presented as a practice which generate whirling eddies of practice, inestimably complicating the operation of *dharma*. These complications are set out in considerable detail, which explains why, even though about a great war, a considerable part of the Mb is expended on the diplomacy preceding the war. The Mb also ascribes a central role to diplomacy in terms of personality. The leading God in the text – Krsna – conducts the diplomacy. To the surrounding characters, that is, the protagonists, Krsna appears as a man[89] though there are suspicions that he is a God (revealed in the theosophanies of Gita to Arjuna alone). Diplomacy is necessitated because two branches of a family, the Pandavas and Kauravas are in conflict. They have a choice

---

[86] Ibid. 142.3-7
[87] Ibid. 287.15
[88] Anushasanaparvan 162.6-7
[89] There are also theosophanies at Mb 10.6 (to Asvatthamam), 12.51 (to the dying Bhisma). See Laine 1989. Hiltebeitel. 1976. 126-127

between Krsna and his armies.[90] The former is chosen by the Pandavas. The choice is pregnant with meaning. The Pandavas are the 'good' and their virtue leads them to know that a man of quality – as Krsna most certainly is – is far superior to vast armies. With the choice made, the political situation between the factions disintegrates. Krsna makes a final attempt at peace by planning an embassy to the Kaurava court. It is here, even before diplomacy has gotten underway, that the Mb demonstrates that the authors of the text had a complex understanding of human behaviour.

As Krsna makes his way to the Kauravas, their leader Duryodhana plots perfidy to prevent the embassy from succeeding. He tells his father: Listen to me attentively (and I shall tell you) what a great deed have I thought of. I shall imprison Krsna, who is the last refuge of the Pandavas. When he will be imprisoned, all the Vrsnis and the Pandavas, and all our Earth become subject to me. And he will come tomorrow morning.[91] The father reproaches his son, reminding him of an ambassador's immunity: Never tell me this, o ruler of men, this does not correspond with the eternal law (*dharma*)! You see, Krsna will come here as ambassador, besides he is our relative and he is always dear to us.[92] Of note is that the first order of argumentation against Duryodhana is not familial, but Krsna's diplomatic status. It would not be 'mining' for verifiable fact to state that in terms of theory it is justifiable to state that a very modern concept is being articulated. The concept of immunity for ambassadors predates the Mb to another Indian text, the Arthasastra. The text cannot be regarded as part of the Indian canon because it was lost and only rediscovered in 1909. Though popularized in the West as India's answer to Machiavelli, the text remains – relative to the Mb – unknown. However, the Artha does provide detailed information about diplomatic protocol, stating that ambassadors came in three categories:

1. Ambassador Plenipotentiary, whose task was to conduct the affair. He possessed complete powers of a Minister and was able to negotiate independently and act on his own and according to circumstances. It is in this category that Krsna falls.

2. Ambassador with limited power. Not allowed to deviate from instructions or exceed the authority invested in him.

---

[90] Nath provides a useful overview about military thinking in the Mb. See Nath. 1990.
[91] Mb. Mahavanaparvan. 86.17-18
[92] Ibid. 86.17-18

3. Ambassador-messenger who was a special messenger. His duties were to only transfer (in the Mb orally) the entrusted message and to return with an answer. He was not empowered to negotiate at all.[93]

These are mentioned not because they are programmatic to Indian 'myth' (this particular political text, as opposed to myth was lost) but because the Artha provides a context to the practices of diplomacy. Krsna is a negotiator and uses four methods of negotiating. These are laid out in the Artha and are:

1. Peaceful negotiations – initial contact with Duryodhana.
2. Bribery – offering the kingdom to Karna
3. Sowing dissension – pitting Duryodhana's mother against him.
4. Open warfare – given the failure of 1, 2 and 3.

To begin with, Krsna pays courtesy visits, displays great care and tact. Later he resorts to persuasion, trying to convince Duryodhana. Even the persuasion takes forms. Krsna speaks in a friendly manner with praise and epithets[94] but when invited to partake in a meal, drink and entertainment Krsna refuses. Questioned as to why he refused entertainment Krsna's reply clarifies his position. He did not mean to be discourteous. 'Ambassadors enjoy meals and accept honours only after they have achieved their aim. Therefore only then, when my aim would be achieved, you will be able, o descendents of Bharata, to honour me and my companions with your hospitality.' Realizing that he is not making any headway Krsna changes tactics – but very slightly. He gradually begins to warn Duryodhana of the coming danger from the Pandavas are strong. It is not weakness but strength that makes them strive for peace. Krsna states: 'Would you like to get yourself on the bed of heroes? Really you shall obtain it, with your councilors. Just wait a little longer and the great battle will start.'[95] At the meeting is present Duryodhana's mother who has from the start been against the war and councils her son thus. Another councilor, who convinced of Duryodhana's mindset – *dharma* – is convinced by Krsna's speech but fails to adequately debate the issue with his king. The meeting ends in failure with Duryodhana storming out. Noting this failure of Duryodhana's courtiers to adequately brief their king, Krsna's closing speech states: 'This is the gravest fault of all the elders of the Kuru race that you have not seized and restrained this king, who is making evil enjoying his authority. I think

---

[93] Altekar. P.300, 326.
[94] Mb. Mahaparvan. 5.122.7
[95] Ibid. 152.2

the time has come for this, o chastiser of foes. And if this is done now, then everything may come to a peaceful end.'[96]

In contrast to Duryodhana, Krsna's activities are a paragon of diplomatic virtue. He understands completely the importance of his mission – maintaining peace. The importance of this dictates his highly moral behaviour. As he enters the opposing domain, Krsna moves through the ritualistic procedures expected of an ambassador. He pays courtesy visits – which double as intelligence gathering, though like any good diplomat, Krsna does not stoop to any untoward means. Ultimately, even as Krsna departs, his embassy a failure, he makes one last attempt to negotiate. He does so by trying to sow dissent in the Kaurava ranks. Krsna discloses to a member of the Kauravas called Karna that he is the senior most Kaurava, not Duryodhana. Krsna offers to help make Karna king of the Kauravas and so avert the war that Duryodhana is set to cause. If Karna accepts, says Krsna, then peace will be concluded on this day itself.[97] Karna, having been raised not to be a king, though by birth he is, refuses Krsna and this last attempt at peace fails.

After his failure, Krsna himself speaks about the four methods of politics (stated above) telling Yudhisthira: 'At first, o king, I used all the possible means for the reconciliation, striving to preserve the close fraternal friendship between them and us, in order to avid splitting the Kuru race and for the prosperity of all. When the reconciliation with them was rejected, I had made the second attempt – to cause the split among them, and also mentioned your feats, accomplished by you in relations both with men and gods. And when Duryodhana neglected my reconciling speeches then I tried to split them …. To prevent the division of the Kuru people I also told them about your readiness to offer them a gift.' Ultimately, Krsna informs Yudhisthira that Duryodhana was told that the Pandavas would be content with just five villages. This most minimal of demands is made to ensure peace. But, even this, what is a token gift in exchange for giving up a kingdom, was rejected. Krsna notes: 'Though he was told this, this impious man did not want to give even these. That is why I consider it is the only way left now, to use the fourth means that is the severe punishment for these *adharmic* peoples.'[98] The phrase used for 'severe punishment' is *dandam caturtham*, i.e., the fourth and most sever means of politics – war.

---

[96] Ibid. 126.33-34
[97] Ibid. 138.27-28
[98] Ibid. 148.17

The use of *adharmic* by Krsna is significant. The decision by the negotiator that the people he is negotiating with are *adarmic* is the signal to war. The decision, in this instance, is based on the negotiator's judgment. The negotiator's judgment arises from his having attempted to arrive at a solution befitting of *dharma* which is – crucially – dependent on the negotiators own position in time and space. In this case Krsna, a God, wants to avoid mass slaughter (though the people he represents are motivated by other aims). That Krsna is willing to wage war shows that war was, ultimately, an acceptable method of maintaining *dharma*. Thus, the Mb operates on the principle that it is impossible to reject war but simultaneously those of *dharma* continuously strive to permanently avoid war, especially aggressive war.[99] As Mackenzie Brown articulates, 'ancient Hindu political wisdom of the first millennium B.C. is still a good key to the political thinking of Asiatic peoples' because in that ancient system, 'a precise code of international relations and power diplomacy was worked out.'[100]

Ideals are the essence of morality tales such as the Mb myth. However, what is moral? What is the manner of acting in the specific context of diplomacy? What, in short, are the accrued notions of proper diplomatic behavior? The question will be answered by briefly setting out the qualities Krsna embodies, i.e., his *dharma*. Krsna makes his own opinions, specific to diplomacy know during the negotiations. His comment is brief but it could be programmatic for any existing diplomatic service. Krsna says:

> Making efforts to establish peace here I would not arouse blame amongst people. And if I manage to achieve peace with the Kauravas in a proper way without harming the profits of the Pandavas, then my good would have great importance and the Kauravas would escape great danger.[101]

Evidently, Krsna regards his mission, dedicated to peace, as an honourable aim and realizes his responsibility to the people whose confidence is precious to him. Krsna directly tells the Kauravas: Let peace come between the Kauravas and the Pandavas – with this cherished motive did I come here, o the offspring of Bharata, just to try to achieve without feat of arms of the glorious heroes.[102] In part Krsna is successful, though the overall mission fails. He convinces the Kaurava leader's father to avert himself from the battle and to save his relatives and the people

---

[99] Altekar. Op cit. p.292
[100] Mackenzie Brown.
[101] Mb. Mahaparvan. 91.19
[102] Ibid. 93,3

of Earth. Krsna councils for peace knowing the consequences of war. The context for these comments is an idea expounded by Krsna immediately before the war: asakta Karman or *action without attachment*.

It is for Brodbeck a 'comprehensive deconstructive philosophy of deliberate behaviours. As such, when this technique is applied, it applies to all past, present and future deliberate behaviours of the person applying it.'[103] In practice this would mean, for example, a warrior may kill his relatives and teachers without suffering the normal consequences of such actions, i.e., psychological trauma in this life and spiritual demerit in the next. As well as being the originator, communicator of the technique of asakta karman, Krsna is also its most excellent practitioner. Krsna's attitude to action is: For me there is nothing to be done, nothing in the three worlds to be obtained; even so I move in *karman* … Actions do not stain me. I do not delight in the fruit of actions. Whoever perceives me in this way is not bound by *karmans*.'[104] Textually, the claim that Krsna acts *asakta* is intended to provide an example for people to follow, a guide to acting *asakta*, as well as a guarantee both of the possibility and the utility of so acting. The attachment to be shed is specifically attachment to the fruits of one's actions: one must act out of duty, rather than to achieve something one desires. It is in keeping with Krsna's caste obligations. He is a ksatriya with a network of class and kinship loyalties which inform and frame his actions but at one and the same time as being a man, he is God Almighty.[105] Brodbeck has demonstrated that the ideals that Krsna embodies – non attachment – are realised only when Krsna behaves as a divine being. His divine actions are perfectly compatible with the *dharma* he is meant to encapsulate. However, it is significant that as a human Krsna is not always able to keep to his *dharma*.[106]

For almost the entire narrative of the Mb, Krsna's divinity is not a theme expounded by the narrators. When the subject comes up, it is generally kept at the level of the characters in the drama. Throughout the war Krsna's divinity serves as provocative rumour[107], underpinning the Pandavas hope that they can win and the Kauravas' fear that they might lose. Krsna is special

---

[103] Brodbeck. 2004. p.84
[104] 3.22
[105] Mb 5.129
[106] Brodbeck. 2003.
[107] At Mb 12.271 when the war is over, Yudhisthira asks Bhisma whether or not Krsna is the highest Lord.

because it is he who makes the difference between the two sides. Hence the line: 'where there is Krsna, there is victory.'[108] However, to one unversed in the *texture* of the Mb there appear to be contradictions. To start with, why does the unattached Krsna take such an interest in these family squabbles? Krsna claims that he owes the same loyalty to the Kauravas as to the Pandavas. Krsna is neutral: neither he personally nor his tribe stand to gain from the outcome. Others are embroiled in a terrific mess, their honour at stake, their wives abused and estates confiscated, they are necessarily involved in the war, but Krsna is detached enough to act as mediator. Krsna does not have the option of inaction because he (unlike Baladeva's non-participation) does not endorse the renunciation of action. Krsna's *karmayoga* positions itself in opposition to Baladeva. In taking part, albeit only as a charioteer, Krsna is embodying one of the basics of his theory *asakta karman*, that inactivity should be shunned. But how does Krsna conceive of his activity, given that he does not stand to gain? What is he participating *for*?

Krsna' private cogitations on this matter are not explored by the epic, yet it is possible to reconstruct a political philosophy embodied by Krsna's behaviour. This work has been done most thoroughly by More, who tries to unite Krsna's philosophy with his ksatriya biography as given in the Mb, and argues that his divinity grew out of popular respect for this philosophy.[109] More presents Krsna's political vision as anti-imperialistic and based on the principle of local autonomy. Particularly important in this regard is More's analysis of Yudhisthira's *rajasuya yajna*, performed under Krsna's instigation and supervision, in which he highlights the defeat of the expansionist Karasamdha and the reinstatement of the local chieftains he had imprisoned.

Krsna's people, the Vrsnis, have lost their ancestral lands and been forced to relocate to Dvaraka.[110] Krsna therefore has first-hand experience of the disruptive effect such expansionism can have, and his removal of Jarasamdha (who forced Krsna's people to move) with the assistance of the Pandavas is presented by More as a matter of principle rather than just the settling of an old score. As Krsna says to Jarasamdha: 'We, attendant to the afflicted, have come here for the sake of occasioning the prosperity of [our] relations, to restrain you, the cause of their ruin.'[111] Duryodhana is cut from the same cloth as Jarasamdha, being keen to annexe the

---

[108] 6.21. 12d
[109] More. 1995. P.19-21
[110] (Mb 2.13).
[111] 2.20.12

territory of others and defend it militarily. Krsna having replaced an imperialist with a federalist, now sees that federalist threatened by another imperialist, and once again steps in.

Though More might be criticised for finding anachronistically reconstructing a *texture* to Krsna's politics from a modern humanistic perspective, it is quite possible to explain those politics in the context of ancient India. The Mb was created in the context of population expansion, urbanisation, and increasing social interaction between groups. Centralisation and subjugation would have been live issues: tribal ways of life would have been subject to disturbing and often violent interactions. It is against this background, and in response to Jarasamdha, that Krsna's ideas of *lokasamgraha*, the holding-together of world(s), are to be understood. He views an ideal, prosperous life as dependent on an idealised network of reciprocal, respectful and mutually beneficial interactions with one's close kin and other social groups as well as with the *devas*. Krsna's activism is conservative: he wants to ensure the continuity of existing human ecologies (lokas), which he sees as being newly vulnerable to disruption by *varna* miscegenation,[112] by removal of locally traditional power structures, and by neglect of oblations to the *devas*.[113]

Because *lokasamgraha* is of great value, great pains must be taken, when necessary, to remove the disruption threatening it. As More explains, Krsna appreciates that the end justifies the means: he urges the Pandavas to resort to dastardly tricks in order to defeat their enemies, disregarding existing conventions of chivalry. He thus has a flexible attitude to *dharma*.[114] Duryodhana justifies his aggressive imperialism by citing Brhaspati, saying that the quest for victory takes him above *dharma* and *adharma*.[115] Likewise Krsna, to counter that imperialism, rises above the *dharmas* of chivalry, depending instead on *niti*,[116] a situation-sensitive, improvisatory strategic sense. It seems that some aspects of *ksatriyadharma* (the *dharma* of

---

[112] (1:38-44)
[113] (3:10-11)
[114] (see also Mb 8.49, 9.59).
[115] 'Brhaspati said that the business of kings is other than the business of folk, and therefore [his] own profit is always zealously to be thought of by the king. The conduct of the *ksatriya* is directed to victory. He in his own conduct, be it *dharma* or *adharma*' (Mb 2.50: 14-15)
[116] The word does not occur in the Bhagavadagita, but is certainly applicable to Krsna's methods, and is discussed in Mb 12.59 and the Arthasastra. See Kangle 1965. p.3-6.

warriors) were out of date: armies had become larger, weaponry more advanced, and more was now at stake.

More's account of Krsna's political philosophy is plausible both textually and historically, providing an explanation of his activity in terms not of short-term or personal goals but of maintaining the background conditions for satisfactory human existence. It matches very well with the attitude Krsna urges Arjuna to adopt. However, this political philosophy of Krsna's is never made explicit in the Mb, which, in accounting for Krsna's involvement in the war, implies his friendship with Arjuna just as strongly. Krsna in encouraging the Pandavas to insist upon the return of their kingdom, appeals more readily to their ksatriya honour than he does to the political implications of their not doing so.

Likewise earlier, when he co-opted them to remove Jarasamdha, he sold the scheme to them on the basis of benefits to their status and prestige within the ksatriya community, rather than by expounding his political vision. Because this *ad hominem* verbal behaviour is fully explicable as Krsna's *niti*, More's reconstruction of his political philosophy, though faultless, is nowhere actually demonstrable. Hence we cannot simply conclude that Krsna perceives all his actions in terms of *lokasamgraha*, and is thus *asakta*. Even were Krsna to expound the philosophy outlined above, this would not tell us about his attachment or lack thereof. Perhaps it would lead us to imagine that he is particularly attached to a certain philosophy. Or perhaps, again, it would lead us to imagine that he is appealing to laudable sounding principles as cover for his attachment to the Pandavas, Arjuna in particular. In a way, *not* talking about his motivations suggests that Krsna could be *asakta*, for the non-attached actor is said to be without personal motives.

Conclusion

A genealogy of current practices by definition must untangle the controversy it produces by tracing the history, understood as the underlying rationales underpinning today's practices. For diplomatic modernity the Mb is a central text because of the centrality current practitioners attribute to it and more generally because it permeates the intellectual reality of Indian society. Furthermore the analysis must be done on the terms of the practitioners – that is the object of investigation (diplomats and their craft) and the literature, since its pronouncements on

diplomacy generate the controversy. Unfortunately, past attempts to analyse the Mb have been from a philological perspective – not from the perspective of the Mb being a morality tale, a repository of knowledge or of how it informs the logics underpinning practice. The investigation in keeping with Nelson's and Nielsen's notion of putting the same questions which motivate European civilizational analysis to non-Western civilizations[117] crafted the technique of *textures* so that an analysis of local texts was not unravelled by the imposition of alien categories. These had rendered the Mb an '*unthing*' devoid of any philosophical merit. Yet, it inspires diplomats and to undo this controversy the analysis exposed in the Mb the system of spiritual direction which provides the symbolic economy of Indian civilization.[118] This is *dharma* and it provides the rationale for a user-specific method of acting. The axes for action are the location of the practitioner in time and space. *Dharma* is about negotiating a crowded world. Not overcoming difference – in fact to overcome another's *dharma* is often antithetical to the principles of *dharma*. A multilayered concept, *dharma* however, ultimately puts the user at the centre. It is the user's good (within expanding and concentric circles of 'good' as judged by the user and society of which the user is inextricably enmeshed) which is the guide to action.

This rationale informs the main diplomat in the Mb, Krsna. Within the person of Krsna, it is evident that though he strives to be removed from personally motivated justifications he fails. Therein lies another principle of *dharma* – it is by definition not attainable; only something which can inform thought and action. As a spiritualist wrote in a European philosophical journal:

> 'Thus, it is evident that Indian spirituality is based upon a strong foundation of realism. It sees no conflict between spirituality and the ordinary values of life. Hinduism is by no means otherworldly or anti-social in the usual sense of these words. Indian thinkers have come to grips with reality, whose meaning, however, changes at different stages in the development of the soul. They have reflected upon and faced man's real problems of life, from his first wandering into the realm of phenomena to his final liberation, and have exhorted him first to idealize the real and then to realize the ideal.'[119]

---

[117] Nielsen. Benjamin Nelson's Sociology of Civilizations. P. 413
[118] Nelson. 1973. p.83.
[119] Swami Nikhilananda. Apr. - Jul., 1959. p.66

An example of the relation between real and ideal in terms of the text and its delivery is the God-man Krsna whose actions are not verifiable truth, and that he, Enlightenment History tells us, could not have existed, but that does not negate the meanings ensconced in his interactions. It is his very divinity which reinforces the ideal in a situation. Krsna's diplomacy also provides a symbolic-economy lodged deep in Indian civilization informing modern day practice. On occasion it befuddles and confuses non-Indian negotiating partners as happened with when former Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh was negotiating the diplomatic timetable with the Americans. An Indian diplomat suggested drawing up the schedule on the basis of the astrological calendar. Far from being locked in the past the logics of the Mb obviously continue to inform action.

In short, the controversy that this chapter attempted to unravel is the notion that non-Westerns lacked a conception of diplomatic theory. This chapter demonstrated that India possesses a civilizational notion for the practices of today in the Mb. That this text cannot be completely demythologized is irrelevant[120] since what is of note is not empirical fact, but the conceptual repertoire of diplomacy – something found in abundance in the Mb. However, these non-Western conceptions do not imply that this was the start of a long march to 'modernity' or what post-colonialists call 'alternative modernities'. To argue that would be to fall into the same teleological trap Nandy criticises. The past, as Nandy reminds us, is full of contradictions, lapses, folds and repetitions. Instead, all that has been argued here is that there existed in the local culture certain conceptions about both practice and the theories underpinning those practices which existed independently of the colonial moment and in fact long predated it. The next chapter will explore whether the same holds for the actual practice of diplomacy.

ENDS

---

[120] Hiltebeitel. P.270

CHAPTER FOUR: NON-WESTERN SOURCES OF INDIAN DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE

The great challenge to an historical anthropology is not merely to know how events are ordered by culture, but how, in that process, the culture is reordered. How does the reproduction of a structure become its transformation?

– Marshall Sahlins[1]

You see we do not know power. We have not held power for a long time. We knew it and how to handle it … but we've been out of practice for … what … a thousand years?

– K. Shankar Bajpai,
Chairman National Security Advisory Board
and
former Indian Ambassador to Washington

Introduction

The previous chapter identified the logics underpinning the practices of today as expressed by the practitioners themselves by analysing the Mb, a text which has informed Indian thought for at least two millennia. The investigation of that document in terms of the present was performed to identify the component in the culture central to the self-constitution of the society,[2] that is, the civilization's metaphysic. However this does not necessarily indicate inflexibility or stasis. It is possible for the metaphysic to manage change during the moments of contact with alien systems. The metaphysic may also be altered, erased or subsumed or a combination of these possibilities may occur. What is certain is that since the cultural signifiers civilizational analysis is interested in are highly tenacious the means of their modification must necessarily be epic. These are what Nelson calls transcivilizational encounters – those occasions when the central frame, or metaphysic of a civilization is affected by another civilization.[3] The coming of the Mughals was such a moment solidifying an era in which, as India's National Security Adviser says, locals lost touch with power.

---

[1] 1981. P.8
[2] Castoriadis. 1987.
[3] Cox. 2001; Sternberg. 2001.

In India the metaphysic of the Mb was subsumed – at least at the state level. This was how, in Sahlins' terms the process or intercivilizational contact between Mughals and locals reordered the local culture. It was also during the Mughal period that first diplomatic contact with Europe took place. An epoch imbued with significance by the academy as it was supposedly the inauguration of the age of modern diplomacy in India. As Eisenstadt writes, modernity is 'a new civilization of a new great tradition,'[4] the latter because modernity *is also* 'a mutation of the European legacy into a more global and dynamic pattern.'[5] Ultimately, 'they (Westerners) enjoy historical precedence and continue to be a basic reference point for others.' In IR Bull notes the origins of the modern international system lie in the West and that despite the rise of non-Western cultures, the practice of diplomacy will remain, for the foreseeable future, weighted in favour of the West.[6]

In contrast to this hegemonic position, the chapter will demonstrate that the Europeans encountered a well established diplomatic system and it was a language which they could understand, if not speak because the manner and style of diplomacy were indecipherable. And so, the British became eager students of local customs, manners, practices and ways, enthusiastically converting themselves in order to secure their ambitions. In doing so the British ejected some long held prejudices. In short, this chapter adds to the previous chapter by arguing that there already existed in addition to local theories also local practices into which the British inserted themselves. In presenting the argument, the chapter intends to demonstrate that contrary to the notion that diplomacy was introduced by the British or that diplomacy was inflected by European culture, what actually happened was the reverse. The entire process of exploration of will be conducted using Nelson's typology. Not meant to be a comprehensive classificatory device, it requires modification to take note of local characteristics. As Nielsen writes, 'Indeed, for [Nelson's typology] to have a wider applicability, it requires considerable conceptual differentiation and historical specification.'[7] Central to the typology is that it is not limited to cognitive processes but actually investigate the manifestation of the structures of

---

[4] Eisenstadt. 1978. p. 172.
[5] Arnason. P.29
[6] Bull. P.316-317
[7] Nielsen, International Sociology vol.16, no.3. p.410

consciousness as historical 'phenomenologies' of experience and expression.[8] It is why Nelson himself focused on key personalities to trace changes in his structures of consciousness. Similarly this chapter focuses on the leading edge, the actual agents of transcivilizational encounters.

A caveat is necessary. Though the British were the first Europeans to attempt diplomatic relations with India they were not the first to negotiate. The first Europeans were the Portuguese however two factors ensured that they played a passing role in the evolution of diplomacy in the Indian subcontinent. First, they never negotiated with the centre – that is the Mughal Emperor – and instead negotiated with local chiefs.[9] Secondly they were quickly displaced by the British. The consequence of these two factors is that modern practices of diplomacy and decision making were well established before the arrival of the Europeans.

In short, the chapter will:

1. Introduce Mughal state culture in particular their theory of the state and bureaucratic and diplomatic practices to demonstrate that there already existed a system not far removed from the modernity supposedly invented in Europe.

2. Anthropologically analyse the diplomatic contacts between Mughals and British from the latter's perspective to show that if there was any cultural transference it was on the part of the Europeans.

The state of diplomacy in Mughal India

The rationale and practices of the Mughal state around the time of the arrival of the British though Islamic were not so dissimilar in terms of practice so as to bar locals from participating. Their codes are best laid out in the Ain-I Akbari, the third volume of the Akbar-nama 'by far the greatest work in the whole series of Muhammedan histories of India.' Much more than a

---

[8] Nelson. 1981. p.203-05
[9] Though Akbar made an unsuccessful attempt to communicate with the Portuguese King Philip II in 1582 to create an alliance against the Ottomans. See Maktubat-i-Allami. Pp. 37-9. The letter is dated Rabiul evvel, 900 A.H./March-April. 1582. Also see E. Rehatsek, 'A Letter of the Emperor Akbar Asking for the Christian Scriptures,' The Indian Antiquity, April 1887, pp. 135-139. For another interpretation of the purpose of this embassy see M.S. Renick, 'Akbar's First Embassy to Goa: Its Diplomatic and Religious Aspects,' Indica, 1970, vol. i. pp. 46-47.

history, it contains the Ain-I, that is mode of governing of Akbar and is 'in fact the Administration Report and Statistical Return of his government.'[10] The books are composed by Abul Fazl[11] who starts his description with a discussion of the need and hence the cause of the existence of the monarch. The passage sets out the reasons of state which are different from *dharma*. Though local traditions of *dharma* were displaced by an economic notion of the world both in terms of practice were concerned with maintaining order.

Abul Fazl sets out the reason for state for the Mughal Empire by stating that:

> 'No dignity is higher in the eyes of God than royalty; and those who are wise, drink from its auspicious fountain. A sufficient proof of this, for those who require one, is the fact that royalty is a remedy for the spirit of rebellion, and the reason why subjects obey. Even the meaning of the word Padshah shows this; for pad signifies stability and possession, and shah means origin, lord. A king is therefore, the origin of stability and possession. If royalty did not exist. The storm of strife would never subside, nor selfish ambitions disappear. Mankind, being under the burden of lawlessness and lust, would sink into the pit of destruction; the world, this great market place, would lose its prosperity, and the whole earth become a barren waste. But by the light of imperial justice, some follow with cheerfulness the road of obedience, whilst others abstain from violence through fear of punishment; and out of necessity make choice of the path of rectitude. Shah is also a name given to one who surpasses his

---

[10] See Blochmann.

[11] Was Akbar's minister and friend, born in Agra in 14 Jan. 1551. His father was persecuted for having professed Mahdawi ideas, i.e., ideas preached by a group of highly educated men of great oratorical powers who assumed a hostile position to the learned men of the court. At the Court the learned men were all staunch Sunnis who believed it their duty to keep the king in line with God. The persecutions which his (Fazl's) father had to suffer did not fail to make a lasting impression on him. Abu l-Fazl learned toleration, the practice of which in later years formed the basis of Akbar's friendship for him. … he began to teach long before the age of 20. Meanwhile Akbar at first was merely annoyed at the 'Pharaoh like pride' of the learned at court. Theological wranglings, loss of etiquette even in front of the Emperor etc. all turned Akbar against the learned at court. Whether to heal or persecute (thereby create fractions). Abu l Fazl at last persuaded the emperor that a subject ought to look upon the king not only as the temporal, but also as the only spiritual guide. In 1578 Abu raised the issue and created a storm. By 1589 Akbar had founded a new religion the Din-i Ilahi or the 'Divine Faith' whose chief tenet was one God and that Akbar was His viceregent on earth. In 1598 Fazl went on his first active service. He then rose to beomce a military commander and died in battle on 12 August, 1602.

fellows; it is also a term applied to a bridegroom – the world, as the bride, bethroes herself to the King, and becomes his worshipper.'

Central, then to Mughal statecraft is maintaining 'stability and possession' so that 'the world, this great market place' does not 'lose its prosperity'. Maintaining this economic order required a king worthy of his title. 'Silly and short-sighted men cannot distinguish a *true* king from a *selfish* ruler. In the case of the former [a large treasury, a numerous army, clever servants, obedient subjects, an abundance of wise men, a multitude of skilful workmen, and a superfluity of means of enjoyment] are lasting; but in that of the latter, of short duration. The former does not attach himself to these things, as his object is to remove oppression and provide for everything which is good.'

A central conflict with *dharma* was in terms of rationale: Islam melded the human with the divine in the body of the Emperor. It made temporal success divine. This is because of the belief that the divine acted thru the Emperor. In practical terms, the Mughal Emperor worshipped the sun as the visible representative of God and as the immediate source of life. Hence, wrote Abul Fazl, 'Royalty is a light emanating from God, and a ray from the sun, the illuminator of the universe, the argument of the book of perfection, the receptacle of all virtues.'[12] As Akbar himself said 'We, by virtue of our being the shadow of God, receive little and give much. Our forgiveness has no relish for vengeance.'[13]

Abul Fazl also sets out in detail the requirements of the Heavenly King. The first ten qualities may be said to be those possessed by an Emperor who is the finger of God. Abul Fazl then adds two more qualities which suggest that though the Emperor was the finger of God, in the temporal world he was expected to perform his duties only in concert with his courtiers. In other words, the office of Mughal Emperor, by the time of Akbar, had become the head of an established group of advisers and the Emperor had twelve duties set out in the Akbar Nama.[14]

The Mughal state was therefore, in theory, radically different from local conceptions of rulership and *dharma.* Islam offered a hierarchy which was given permanence and authority from God.

---

[12] See Blochmann. Vol. I. p. 1-10.
[13] See Blochmann. Vol. III. Chapter xviii. P.136
[14] Ibid. chapter lxxxi. p.680-1

The Mb too offers structures, such as caste, which were perhaps far more invasive in practice than Mughal social systems. However, the ordering finger of God imbued Mughal polity with a sacred right – faith – redolent of Christian European civilization. This similarity permits Nelson's categories to be applied effectively. In Nelson's terms Mughal polity is consciousness type 2 (faith structure) while the local culture of *dharma* would be a mixture of consciousness type 1 (magical) and 3 (rationalised).

Though a faith based structure, the divine will, which was enacted thru the body of the Emperor could only function with the aid of advisers. By the time of Akbar, the system of governance and advice had coagulated into a large and established bureaucracy – the Mansabdari system or rank in a general sense.[15] Though a system founded on faith, it was a bureaucratic apparatus and the precursor to modern bureaucracies in India. This bureaucracy is what conducted the foreign relations of the Mughal Empire.

Mansabdars were organised by status rather than wealth and etiquette reflected and reinforced hierarchies.[16] The imperial service of the Mughals functioned within the framework of regulations and royal decrees and ordinances. There were in addition to the King's household several departments which officers of the government managed at the centre and in the provinces according to established manuals called dastur-ul-amal. This departmentalised system, even though limited in extent, tended to impart to the Mughal officials certain qualities of public service. But they were not public servants in the modern sense of the term. All of these officials were organizationally embedded in a regular mode of ranking, the mansabdari system. Officers were graded and paid according to the number of troops and horses expected to be maintained and supplied and as the terms and conditions of service were governed by no fixed principle of contract or covenant, they could be appointed or dismissed at will as personal servants.[17] To clarify: All nobles were mansabdars, but all mansabdars were not nobles.[18] The Mansabdari system became a complex and interconnected system with no clear borders demarcating function. This was ensured by the interpenetration of the institutions of the army,

---

[15] Aziz. p.2
[16] Singh. 2004. p.72
[17] Misra. 1977. p.55
[18] Ibid. p. 184

nobility and officials. Akbar organised the administrative machinery on a military basis and there were hardly any officers of state who did not have a mansab.

The effectiveness of the Mughal bureaucracy was impeded by its 'failure to organise well-defined institutions in accordance with the democratic principles of Islam.'[19] Thus though the Ain-I Akbari stresses the need and purpose of ministers, on the other hand, no legal sanction was accorded to them as representatives of the people and responsible to the public. The will of the Emperor ultimately decided policy. In Akbar's time the power of the Grand Vizier (the senior most official position) was reduced because it was perceived he had too much power.[20] Below the Grand Vizier came four ministers who denoted the general layout of the Mughal court. Notably, there is no foreign minister but this did not preclude foreign relations, the despatching of ambassadors and their reception or the negotiation of binding treaties. The four ministers in order of precedence were:

1.   Diwan, also called Vizier, responsible for revenue and finance.
2.   Mir Bakhshi responsible for administration and army organisation.
3.   Sadr, head of ecclesiastical and judicial departments.
4.   Mir Saman Chief Executive Officer in charge of factories and stores of the State.[21]

Though originating in the final two qualities required of an Emperor, the mansabdari system was the means for conducting diplomacy by the Mughal Empire. While Ambassadors were directly appointed by the Emperor and carried his imprimatur and visiting Ambassadors dealt were received by the Emperor the actual work of negotiations was conducted by senior members of the mansabdar. It was this organisation – acting in accordance with the general principles of the Mughal Emperor – that conducted foreign relations with the English.

Motivated by faith, the mansabdari bureaucracy however conducted a diplomacy concerned with matters temporal. This section briefly outlines Mughal diplomacy to illustrate that the practice of modern Indian diplomacy has a well established local lineage. Diplomacy under Akbar was a continuation of the policies and practices of his forefathers. Diplomats were selected by the Emperor, from the ranks of the mansabdars and the messages they carried were

---

[19] UN Day. P.30
[20] Ibid. P.35
[21] Ibid. P.39

personally from the Emperor but decided upon after consultations with the mansabdars. Ambassadors were to be accorded the respect due to agents of a powerful entity. Similarly, the Mughal court was also expected to accord similar treatment to visiting envoys. The lack of a foreign office did not preclude diplomacy. It was purely the realm of royalty. A 13th century document by Adab-ul-Harb stated that ambassadors must be nobles. The Mughals kept with the principle indicating the highly prestigious position of diplomacy.[22]

One example is selected from the Ain-I-Akbari to demonstrate that despite the lack of a dedicated foreign office the Mughal Empire had established procedures to perform diplomacy and conduct negotiations with an entity similar in power and status to itself. In the 16th and 17th centuries the rival to the Mughal Empire was the Ottoman Empire and the bone of contention between India and Iran was Qandahar – a buffer zone between the two empires. A series of communications and envoys were used to ensure that relations across the zone did not spill over into conflict.

The first steps were taken early in Akbar's reign, when his guardian Bairam Khan sent Shah Ghazi Sultan as envoy to Iran's Shah Tahmasp.[23] Bairam Khan saw the necessity of establishing cordial relationship with the Safavi court, especially now when the boy-king Akbar was beset with difficulties and required the Shah's moral support. Shah Tahmasp received the envoy with honour and in 1562 sent his cousin Sayyid Beg on embassy to Akbar with a letter offering condolences for the death of the Emperor Humayun and congratulations on his accession and emphasizing the necessity of cementing the bond of friendship between the two kingdoms.[24] In 1564 Akbar received another envoy from Shah Tahmasp who came with a letter and rarities of Iran.[25] Early in November, 1572, during his march from Sirohi to Patan, Akbar received Yar Ali Beg, envoy from Sultan Muhammad Kudabanda, Shah Tahmasp's eldest son in the coming war of succession in Persia. He carried a letter which intended to 'to recall ancient relations and to renew friendship in order that by the help of such divine glory he might act vigorously against the princes of Turan. Another object was that he might repose in peace and be without

---

[22] Nizami. 1978. P.327-328
[23] In Akbar Nama Vol III chapter CIV, we learn he was born on 22 Feb. 1514 succeeded his father on 24 may 1524. See Blochmann. P.896.
[24] See Akbar Nama vol II. Chapter XLII, p.262 & for letter chapter XLIII. See Blochmann. p.263-267.
[25] Akbar Nama vol. II chapter LIV, See Blochmann. p.358.

apprehension of the strokes of the world-conquering armies.'[26] The death of Shah Tahmasp in 1576 was the signal for the outbreak of civil war and anarchy, followed by a succession of weak rulers, during which diplomatic intercourse between the Mughal Empire and Persia was stopped. But under Shah 'Abbas (1587-1629) a closer contact was established between Agra and Isfahan.

The Ain-I-Akbari records that in 1591 Shah 'Abbas sent his envoy Yadgar Sultan Rumlu who arrived at the Mughal court on 16 May with choice presents and a supplicatory letter to Akbar asking for military help. Akbar could not agree to send an auxiliary force for the recovery of Khurasan from the Uzbegs. This was contrary to his noble's suggestions. They wanted to clear the debt Akbar's father and grandfather owed to the Safavi dynasty. Demonstrating the supreme power of the Emperor in foreign relations, Akbar refused to follow counsel because he did not consider it politic to go against the powerful Uzbeg king with whom he was in alliance and whose hostility would be a menace at the frontier. Yadgar Sultan remained in Akbar's court for three and a half years.[27] On 2 December, 1594, Akbar gave him leave and sent with him Ziya-ul-mulk Qazvini and Abu Nasir Khvafi as envoys to the Shah with curiosities of Hindusthan and a letter full of instructions and written in a most patronising spirit which reminds one of the letters that Shah Tahmasp had addressed to Akbar's father, the Emperor Humayun.[28] Akbar's envoys were given a splendid reception at Qazvin by Shah 'Abbas. They remained in Persia until 1597-8 when they obtained leave and the Shah sent Minuchihr Beg with a letter and choice presents to the Mughal court. The capture of Qandahar by the Mughals did not sever the diplomatic connection. The envoy arrived at the Mughal court in November, 1598. In his letter the Shah referred to his activities against the Uzbegs in which he expected Akbar's good wishes and support. Next year Shah 'Abbas sent from Herat Mirza 'Ali Beg on embassy to Akbar with a letter informing him of this victory in Hurasan after the death of 'Abdullah Khan. 'Ali Beg arrived at court on 11 March, 1599, and both he and Minuchihr Beg remained in court until 4 April, 1601, when they obtained leave. Akbar sent with them his own envoy Ma'sum Khan Bhakkari and they arrived in Persia in 1602. Ma'sum Khan remained at the Safavi court for more than a year and returned in 1604.

---

[26] Akbar Nama. Vol ii. See Blochmann. P. 534
[27] Akbar Nama. Vol. iii. Chapter. CIV See Blochmann. P.893-901
[28] Akbar Nama. Vol. iii. Chapter. Cxix. See Blochmann. P.1007-1022

In short, Mughal-Ottoman relations in terms of practice bore all the hallmarks of modernity. It was marked by established procedures and rules. As in modern India, relations were marked by personal communications at the highest level. Ambassadors were tasked with obtaining specific goals, stationed at the foreign capital for extended periods of time and decisions were made by the Emperor – and on occasion against the advice of the mansabdars. There was also an established procedure of delivering gifts and writing letters in a particular style.

The coming of authentic, modern, European Diplomacy

The fundamental difference between India today and Mughal diplomacy is that the bureaucratic apparatus was regarded as an extension of the ruler's body. It was this that the British penetrated. The first attempts were by Sir Thomas Roe sent by King James to the court of Akbar's son, Emperor Jahangir in 1614.[29] Roe's visit demonstrates that the Mughals had an established set of practices for foreign visitors, including ambassadors. Upon landing in Surat mid-September 1615, Roe immediately collided with the Mughals who had never received anything other than traders of the East India Company. A week passed before Roe could set foot on India because he insisted that as an ambassador he was not subject to customs examination, while Zulfikar Khan the Governor of Surat was equally adamant that by the traditions of Surat he was.[30] Roe responded by threatening to despatch a messenger direct to the Emperor to inform him of the 'barbarous usage of me, being ambassador to a mighty King in league with him, and come a far journey upon his royal word.' The Governor responded with a messenger to insist that Roe pay him a formal visit before proceeding to the Emperor's court. Roe refused stating:

> 'it was too late to offer me Curtesyes, especially under pretence of dishonouring my Master: That it was the Custome of Europe to visit those of my quality first, and that I durst not breake yt in penaltye of my head, haveinge expresse Command from my Master to Mayntayne the Honor of a free king, and to visit none but such as first did that respect due to his Majestie and that therefore I would never doe vt.'[31]

The Governor acceded and Roe was able to convince the Mughal governor that he was indeed an ambassador. Roe was received as such by the Emperor who showed him a courtesy and

---

[29] According to the articles of agreement. See Birdwood & Foster. 1893. pp. 446

[30] The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe. 1899. vol. i. p.54

[31] Ibid. p.53

favour which though befitting an Ambassador was possibly also due to the two men having struck a chord.[32]

After some time in the Mughal court, Roe disclosed the object of his mission. To negotiate a commercial treaty 'which should place the position of the English in India on a firm and lasting basis and secure them against all oppression by the provincial officials.'[33] The English wanted a treaty or a comprehensive grant of privileges. His negotiations were however unsuccessful. In August 1617 he wrote 'Neyther will this overgrowne elephant descend to article or bynde him selfe reciprocally to any prince upon termes of equality, but only by way of favour admit our stay so long as it either likes him or those that governe him.'[34] And in 1618, three years after his arrival, Roe writes that 'I am infinitely weary of this unprofitable imployment … I am weary; yt it is impossible, and I will not stay yow an hower'.[35] Roe finally received limited permission for Englishmen to reside in the country to conduct trade. 'In other words, Roe completely failed in his negotiation' but not because the Mughal Empire did not understand what the British wanted – it was just that they did not want to accede to a treaty.[36]

The second attempt by the English to conduct diplomacy was markedly different from the first. The diary of Niccolao Manucci provides a detailed glimpse of the bureaucratized procedures encountered during the diplomatic mission by Ambassador Lord Bellomont, sent by King Charles II. The first substantive difference between Roe's visit and Bellomont's was at the moment of arrival. Like Roe, Bellomont too arrived in Surat but received a very different welcome. The Mughal Empire – at least at the port of Surat – had acclimatized to the arrival of English ambassadors. Manucci notes that 'When the governor of Surat heard of the ambassador's arrival, he ordered his secretary to pay him a visit. The message thus brought was that rumour said he had come as ambassador, therefore he was requested to state whether this was true or

---

[32] 'The King' wrote Roe. 'never used any Ambassador with so much respect.' See The Embassy of Thomas Roe. 1899. vol. i. p.112

[33] Foster. England's Quest of Eastern Trade. P.283. For the nineteen articles constituting the draft of the proposed treaty see Pinkerton. 1811. vol. iii. P.8

[34] Letter to the English Ambassador at Constantinople, 21 August, 1617: Add. MS 6115, f. 207

[35] The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India. London. OUP. 1926. p.470

[36] C.R. Wilson. P. vi.

not. It was necessary for him (the governor) to send a report to the emperor Xaaiahan (Shahjahan), then ruling over the empire of the Great Mogul.'[37]

The Ambassador was given leave to travel to the Mughal court but was suddenly taken ill and died on 20th June 1656 within days of his arrival in India.[38] His death exposes the hollowness of the academy's position that the locals were unfamiliar with the practices of diplomacy for though the death took place in a relatively unpopulated area in between two cities, the local Mughal officials responded in a manner which demonstrated that even in the hinterland, and in death, the they were fully cognizant with the procedures to be followed in such an unlikely event. The death also demonstrates that there was an official hierarchy which extended all the way to the Emperor. Manucci writes:

> 'We carried the body at once to a sarae called Orel [Hodal], between Agrah and
> Dihli, and, it being already late, we did not bury him that night. The official at
> the sarae sent notice to the local judicial officer, who hastened to the spot, and,
> putting his seal on all the baggage, laid an embargo upon it. I asked him why he
> seized and sealed up those goods. He answered me that it was the custom of
> that realm, and that he could no release the things until an order came from
> court, they being the property of an ambassador.'[39]

Though the bureaucratic apparatus had swung into operation it was open to abuse by the mansabdars themselves. An account from a few days later details this. About a week after the death, write Manucci:

> 'two Englishmen appeared … dressed after the fashion and in the costume of
> the country, men in the service of the king Shahjahan. They informed me that
> they had come under the king's orders to carry away the property of the
> ambassador, which lapsed to the crown. To that I retorted by asking if they bore
> any order, whereupon they laughed … . Many a time did I entreat them for
> God's sake to make over to me what was mine; but … they scoffed at me, and
> said 'Shut your mouth; if you say a word we will take your horse and your arms
> away.' The belongings were removed to Delhi 'where the Englishmen deposited

---

[37] Manucci. 1965. Chapter xvii. P.59.
[38] Ibid. p.69
[39] Ibid. p. 70

the property in a *sarae*, put seals on the room doors, and told me to go about my business. … I expressed my astonishment that they should lock up in a *sarae* room property that they said belonged to the king. I asked them angrily whether the king had no other place in which to store the goods he owned; but they knew quite well that the property did not belong to them, and that they were taking the king's name in vain, solely in order that they might get hold of other people's goods.[40]

Though it achieved less than Roe's mission, Lord Bellomont's mission did demonstrate that the Mughal Empire was not only familiar with ambassadors but now recognised English Ambassadors and accorded them the courtesies due to people of their rank. Secondly, the Ambassador, as an envoy of a King dealt with the Mughal Emperor and even in death decisions pertaining to his body could only be made by the Emperor. However, the impunity with which the English officers in the Emperor's service were able to deceive Manucci highlights that corruption was very much part and parcel of the Mughal bureaucratic apparatus.

The final envoy from England was Sir William Norris. Inexplicably, Norris chose to break with established custom and landed at Masulipatam on 25 September, 1699. This was out of line with established landing procedures and Norris had to make his way to Surat – the landing point of his predecessors. In 1700 he reached Surat and nearly a year passed before he was able to set out for the Mughal camp in January 1701. Upon arriving at the court, the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb reminded Norris of an offer made by letter by the English to protect the seas from pirates. Aurangzeb made this an indispensible condition to the granting of any treaties to the British.[41] Unable to meet the Mughal requirements, Norris departed in November 1701 having achieved no treaty or bettered the situation of the British in India in any manner. The incident did illustrate that Mughal diplomacy was familiar with ambassadors, protocol and negotiating treaties along with the notion of conditionality.

The next attempt by the English to conduct diplomacy with the centre was the Surman Embassy in 1714 to acquire through a Mughal document – a *firman* – to hold thirty eight villages around Calcutta from which the British could extract taxes. That they wanted a *firman*, i.e., a binding

---

[40] Ibid. chapter xix. P.84-85
[41] Hunter. History of India. Vol. ii. P.355-357

document granted by the Emperor himself to a supplicatory power is indicative of the British's willingness to acquiesce to local practices. The British were well aware of various grades of imperial documents and it was specifically a *firman* that they wanted. Rather than forcing their own codes, they specifically wanted the legal codes of the Mughal Empire.

In contrast to the earlier missions, the Embassy was composed of commoners already stationed in India as opposed to nobles sent out from England.[42] There was talk of including Manucci but he was regarded as too old. The requirement for the Embassy arose from developments in the decades between Roe and Norris's missions when the 'English extended their settlements along both coasts of India' thru a series of local agreements with Governors acting on behalf of the Mughal Emperor. Similarly, the English in India were employed by the East India Company (EIC) and acted for their Crown. The Charter of 1683 made the EIC 'not a private adventurer, but an incorporated society invested with certain sovereign powers by the Sovereign of Great Britain.'[43] Meanwhile, during the period the EIC was establishing itself to trade in Bengal the Mughal Empire was dissolving. It meant that the English to safeguard their trade had to fortify their bases in India. 'But fortified settlements cost money to keep up and must be supported by revenues. Consequently, they must needs approach the Mughal, for the land in India was his alone, and it was his to make grants of territory great or small.'[44]

The Surman Embassy, led by John Surman took place over three years. A detailed diary along with all the allied documents of the Embassy provides a photographic record of how the British negotiated with the Mughal Empire. Though the British were willing to be subsumed into the established order, at first they met with little success. This was due to their being influenced by Europeans and thru them Indians who claimed to know the processes of the Court and how to negotiate. It was a ruse. The Indian informants were most likely motivated by the desire to secure the gifts the English had brought. These gifts were brought because it was supposed that the Mughal Emperor's imprimatur could be bought. In this they were completely deceived. It was only after Surman removed himself from the influence of the Armenian padres, stopped trying to bribe his way into Court and began following established Mughal codes and procedures

---

[42] Ibid. vol. ii. P154-55
[43] Fifth Report on East India Affairs. 1812. p.vi
[44] Wilson. 1983. p.x

(which he already knew) did he start succeeding. The final agreement met nearly all of their requirements and it was granted under the Mughal code.

The Surman Embassy travelled under the Union Jack – as fully accredited negotiators on behalf of Great Britain.[45] Just as Englishmen served the Mughal Empire, the Indian interpreter Cojah Seerhaud demanded parity with his companions and was also given a flag.[46] As agents of the Crown they were keen to maintain their standing and took great care in the appearance of their party. In this they matched the Mughal Court's concern with dress and the formality of court.[47] 'Considering Everybody Ought to make a handsome appearance' the party procured the finest clothes available and even provided themselves with palanquins plated with silver.[48] The convoy for the four envoys was a hundred and sixty bullock wagons each creaking under a load of more than half a ton.[49] Much of this was presents for the Court but a large part was private merchandise.[50] A still larger retinue of servants followed the embassy including a trumpeter and six soldiers, a clockmaker, four smiths, ten carpenters, thirty spadesmen and twelve hundred porters along with wagoners and drivers.[51] Given the size of the retinue, this was a major undertaking which is some indication of the importance the British gave the mission and the Emperor.

Early in the Embassy, Seerhaud made it clear that 'unless he had the Entire management of the Durbar he would not proceed' placing the Englishmen in a difficult situation. As interpreter, Seerhaud's role was essential to the party and his demands could not be dismissed without consideration.[52] He wanted to control the Embassy's access to court and to further this aim Seerhaud produced a letter from an Armenian Padree called Daniel, who claimed to be familiar with Delhi, in which the Padree offered his assistance to the Embassy and recommend two Mughals at court – Caundora (also spelt as Khan Dauran) and Salabat Khan – and that they could be approached only by other friendly Armenians. Upon entering Delhi in July 1715 they were

---

[45] Wilson. 1983. P.9
[46] Ibid.,
[47] Manucci. 1965. P.87
[48] Wilson. 1983 P.12
[49] Ibis. P. 8
[50] Irvine. p.46-47
[51] Wilson. 1983. P.7, 8, 275
[52] Ibid. P. 15

advised by another Padree and concerned with 'Aggrandizing their appearance' they scattered money as they entered the city thinking this was the local custom.[53] Surman reports that they were met by Salabat Khan who took them to Khan Dauran 'who received us very Civilly assuring us of his protection and good Services.' Surman continued 'The great favour Khan Dauran is in with the King gives us hopes of Success in this undertaking, He assures us of his protection and says the King has promis'd us great favours.'[54] The next day Surman records that he met 'his Majesty', refers to Khan Dauran as their 'Patron' and most tellingly 'We are Assured by our friends that the Vizier is only titular, the Executive power lying Chiefly in the other; So that' he explained himself to his superiors at Fort William that 'what we are now about to doe, is Entirely our Interest. For which reason Agreed that we first visit Khan Dauran; next, the Vizier; and Last of all Tuccurrub Caun.'[55] Seerhaud was able to win Surman's confidence by ensuring that the Embassy was received in Delhi and that his contacts were able to promise access to Court. In doing so, the British purposefully ignored the established rituals and protocols of the mansabdari system. It was to cost them dearly in terms of wealth and time.

Having established themselves, the British prepared their petition under the advice of Khan Dauran who was, wrote the Embassy to their controllers in Fort William, 'the main instrument of our affairs.' In addition, Surman wrote that 'the methods we are at present taking, is consistent and the advice & Councill of Zeyau-d-din Khan' who was introduced to the party by Khan Dauran.[56] Furthermore, Surman records that 'As for our business we were resolved not to go to the Vizier … as Khan Dauran himself directed.'[57] Under the advice of these two, the embassy made its first error. Instead of proceeding to meet the Vizier – who was the most powerful authority after the Emperor – the British paid visits to several minor officials. Under advice they agreed to deliberately insult the Vizier by first visiting his younger brother's deputy.[58] The consequence was that the requests of the British were not brought to the Emperor's notice. It is clear from the embassy's correspondence that the Emperor's mind was elsewhere at the time and in a desperate attempt to ensure that their party was not forgotten by the Emperor they

---

[53] Ibid. p.52; See also p.100 for the letters of introduction from the Padree
[54] Ibid. 1983 p. 54
[55] Ibid P.55
[56] Ibid p. 58
[57] Ibid p.126
[58] Ibid p. 63

resolved that 'our best policy is to be always near the King … that we might Even then negotiating our business.'[59]

In August 1715 the party prepared their petition for the Emperor in Persian not English. The petition was shown to an official who condensed the document and made other modifications without changing the tenor of the document.[60] On Khan Dauran's instructions the petition, along with a sizeable gift, was prepared to be delivered to the Emperor in November. A letter confirms that the main conduit for consultations between the British and Khan Dauran was Seerhaud – who had initially introduced the two parties to each other.[61] Mughal protocol demanded that the petition be handed to the Vizier and that he would forward it to the Emperor. The British instead chose to give the petition to Khan Dauran who was a deputy bakshi or treasury officer. Khan Dauran did submit the document in December but it was returned with the orders that it be examined and noted upon by the officers of the treasury.[62] For the first time Surman's diary records a hint of displeasure with the manner in which things have been proceeding. He writes 'for altho' our affairs are fallen into the Patronage of one of the most able men in this Court to dispatch them if He pleases, yet his dilatory method of proceeding is such as must make us pursue our designs with patience … .'[63] Surman was also informed that Khan Dauran required further gifts.[64]

After consideration, the treasury returned the petition in a most peculiar form. The key demands of the British were ignored – that is a firman regarding Bengal. The first article of the British petition requested a firman which would allow the 'English Company pay no Custom, in Indostan, Suratt Excepted.' There was no reply to this. On other points the treasury stated it had either no knowledge of the various matters or that it could not comment on particular demands because it fell outside the treasury's jurisdiction. So in response to the second article which stated:

> 'In Calcutta ye Company have a Settlement D: Calcutta, Govindpore, and
>
> Sootaluty (*dihi* Kalikata, Govindpur and Sutanuti); which 3 towns being near ye

---

[59] Ibid p. 64
[60] Ibid p.88
[61] Ibid p.93
[62] Ibid p.94
[63] Ibid p.96
[64] Ibid p.100

Factory, His deceased Highness Azzimuth Sha gave to be rented by ye Company. The rent of these 3 towns abovementioned, according to ye Kings books, amounts to 1194.14, and Something more; which is yearly paid into ye Treasury. We humbly petition, that ye renting off Severall other towns, that are near ye above towns; and whose rent amounts to near or about 800 rupees may be granted to ye Company, That the Rent shall be yearly, and duely paid into the Kings treasury by us; and that particular care shall be taken, to make them flourish.'

The reply from the treasury was:

.. The particulars off these towns are nott in ye books, neither were they given from the King. They have a Perwanna under Izzut Cauns Seal for them pursuant to Azzimuth Sha's Nishaun: By which it appears 3 Towns Culcutta &c. In ye purgunna of Ammerdabad, and Subaship of Bengall have been bought from Munoredutt & other Jemidars and a Bill off Sale obtained, when ye Daun off Bengall gave them possession. As for ye Other Towns we have nott their names by which to render An Account. The Duan may be wrote to, That An Account be sent to Court.'[65]

Faced with what can only be termed as bureaucratic opposition and certainly understood as such by the British – Surman comments that the Indians expected further gifts – they had no choice but to proceed with submitting their petition to the Emperor. This was returned swiftly and met none of the British requests.

Within days, a second petition was drawn up and sent to Khan Dauran for presentation. To make sure that it progressed, a series of presents were also enclosed with the document. This too was unsuccessful. The primary demand of a *firman*, Surman informed his superiors, 'By a mistake of the mutsuddys was omitted.' It could have been bureaucratic oversight. The diary does not dwell upon it. But it was the most important demand made by the British and one that required the authority of the Emperor. However, Surman was dealing with lower ranking officials who had neither the authority nor the power to grant what was wanted. It is therefore

---

[65] Ibid p.98

feasible to conclude that the omission was deliberate indicating that this was how the minions of the Mughal Court dealt with requests that it did not want to deal with.[66]

Faced with what amounted to a blockade the Embassy began to fester. The negotiators could not understand why they had not made any progress since in their minds they were being advised by powerful and influential Mughals. In their minds the English no doubt also felt that they were following Mughal practice and customs – not as prescribed – but as practice demanded it. Presumably, their breaking with Court protocol was not because they wanted to cause offence, after all the British were the petitioners, but because they thought that this was the manner in which business was conducted. Ultimately, Surman wrote with alacrity that when their chief adviser, Khan Dauran was 'put in mind of our Petition, He was very surprizingly asked what Petition? have I not done all your business … .'[67] Surman continued 'This strange forgetfulness made us in very pathetick terms inquire what we might expect after so many promises of having our business effected to our satisfaction when we had so long and patiently waited and been at so great an expense to be thus answered was very surprizing, and What we did not nor could not expect in the least.'

Learning from experience, Surman notes that:

> 'daily experience might convince us of the strange carriage and forgetfulness of
> that great man' and he received this 'further light, Viz.t that Khan Dauran had
> been advised by his own Mustsuddies, that it was not his business to perswade
> the King to sign our Petition contrary to what He had formerly desired, but
> that it was better to get signed upon it Cootbulmooluck whose business it was,
> as Vizier to advise the King what things were proper to be granted us, We find
> this was chiefly levelled against our Petition for Divy island and the ground
> round Calcutta now desired. We were in hopes that in case We could have got
> those Petitions granted us by the means of Khan dauran tht afterwards the
> Vizier would not gain say or at least by a little bribery it might have passed,
> there has been severall endeavours made to get an opportunity to speak with
> Khan Dauran so as to convince him but none has been procureable, We fear

---

[66] Ibid p.112
[67] Ibid p.124

the Petition in this interim may be gone in and will come out signed as beforementioned.'[68]

His prediction was correct. In March the Emperor returned the British petition for the second time with precise directions that it be submitted to the Vizier.[69] The advice was sound but the English would not take it and clung obstinately to their original and erroneous views. The next steps the British took were to fall back on an older stereotype – that the means to conduct business with the centre was thru bribery. The British therefore mounted a major campaign to win over various Mughal officials by buying them.[70] They attempted to bribe minor officials including clerks because, Surman thought the 'Duanny Writers, who att that time wrote what they pleased on Each Phird: According to which naturally flowed the Kings Assent or denyall.'[71]

Convinced that the means to negotiate was to bribe everyone, they did exactly the opposite of what the Emperor himself instructed them to do – deal only with the Vizier whose prerogative it was to deal with foreign embassies. In choosing to ignore the advice, the British became distracted, squabbled amongst themselves and attracted an even greater number of hangers-on keen to take advantage of the largesse of the British party. When the British next submitted their petition they again offered bribes. To the diwan-i-khailisah they offered seven thousand rupees; to the head clerk, Bhog Chand, ten thousand rupees; and to the subordinates twelve hundred.[72] Knowing the British were keen to buy people, the people responded by feeding them with favourable reports about the progress of their petition in the hope of extracting further payoffs.[73]

Not till July 15, 1716 did they discover that they had been deceived throughout the proceedings and that the treasury was no more favourably disposed towards them than before. Their requests for a *firman* had been refused. Instead what the minor officials had done was agree to the British petition but under the authority of a Husbul Hoocum which was very different from a *firman*. The latter carried weight throughout the Empire as it was issued directly from the Emperor. It was essential that the British have such a document because they needed to show it

---

[68] Ibid p.125
[69] Ibid P.123
[70] Ibid p.138-140
[71] Ibid p.140
[72] Ibid p.138-139
[73] Ibid p.114, 116, 118-120

to the various Mughal governors they dealt with in the far corners of the Mughal Empire. A Husbul Hoocum would not convince them.

As far as the servants of the Court were concerned, they of course were unable – by their own practice – to grant a *firman* unless the petitioner personally approached the Vizier who consented to receive him, consider his proposal and then order his bureaucracy to process the demand with whatever modifications he saw fit. Simultaneously, the junior Mughals the British were dealing with had no intention of giving up the handsome presents that were being distributed. In effect, the British were granted not a treaty as they wanted but simply an order which was understood by both the British and the Mughals as an entirely different type of document which lacked the binding powers of a treaty.[74] At wits end, Surman threatened to leave Delhi. At another point he thought of going to the Vizier, towards whom he had taken particular care not to offend, but still felt that he lacked any influence.[75]

Disgusted with their lack of progress, events in Western India came to the assistance of the Embassy. The governor of the port at Surat, Haidar Quli Khan wrote to the Emperor that the English were seriously discontented and that if they were not speedily satisfied they would withdraw and Surat would suffer a loss in trade and piracy. Always concerned with the state of the seas and the Western port – it was the main trading port with the Arab and European world and religiously significant because it was where the Haj departed from. The letters were delivered to the Emperor and also Khan Dauran. For four days nothing happened. Then suddenly the Embassy was granted access to Khan Dauran. This was the first time a member of the Embassy was granted a private meeting with Dauran.[76] The Embassy also records on the 27th of August – just days after the letters from Surat had arrived: 'Visited the Grand Vizier'.[77] Perhaps, Surman was embarrassed at making much more of the visit in his diary given that he had taken great pains in earlier letters to explain why he had not approached the Vizier directly.

Yet more delays led to further ructions within the British party and on November 9th, Seerhaud – who originally suggested the course of action that the party had been following for some 17

---

[74] Ibid p.156
[75] Ibid p.157, p.126
[76] Ibid p.166-167
[77] Ibid p. 167

months – 'confessed, that the Seal cannot be given, without our petitions First going to the Vizier, and receiving his perusal and Approbation.' The next day's entry records 'The Phirds (*firmans*) were all carried to the Grand Vizier from the Duanny, who according to his kind disposition, After perusing them, Ordered the Duan Colsa to carry them immediately to the King and get them Signed, which was done accordingly.' Surman added in the most casual of terms, 'For the Vizier as is usuall making a mark to petition, so his Majesty Signed his Assent to all that those papers contained.'[78] Yet the Vizier's role was not yet complete. Surman reported that:

> 'before they could proceed any farther there was a necessity to receive the Vizier's approval, accordingly it was carried there yesterday, and was received very candidly but pursuant to custom must again go to the King, but that there might be no loss of time the Vizier kindly ordered the Duan Colsa to carry them himself thither and get them signed, which was accordingly done, so I hope now they are pretty well passed, next Follows the Vizier's Signing and then we shall get the orders for drawing up the Phirmaund which as soon as received we shall Dispatch … .'[79]

Having finally accepted Mughal codes for petitioning the empire and following its customs, the British case was processed rapidly. The rapidity with which their case was being dealt with caught the Embassy off-guard. So much so that Surman wrote:

> 'We might have Expected the Vizier in whose power itt was, would have stop'd our business on this occasion or caused many delays the Sure way to squeeze a Sum of money, which must have been very larger. Butt he has behaved himself with far more generosity, Our papers no sooner reaching his hands, than they received dispatch; which encourages us to believe he will not be hereafter troublesome.'[80]

Yet the Embassy was not fully able to cast of its perceptions that the only way of conducting business was thru bribes. It was their perversely ignoring the consequences of their actions and falling back to their set belief that Khan Dauran and bribery were the two keys to unlocking the Mughal Court that caused the next set of delays which had nothing to do with the imperial *firmans* but the doctor in the British party. The Emperor, having benefitted from the doctor's

---

[78] Ibid p.180
[79] Ibid p.181
[80] Ibid p. 183

attendance, was loath to see him go. Yet again the British turned to Khan Dauran who proved himself ineffectual once again. Finally it was the Vizier who ensured that the doctor was free to leave.

Conclusions

Unlike the Chinese Empire, the Mughal Empire was conducting diplomacy with peer-empires and not just vassal states long before the English arrived. It meant that by the time of the English arrival the India possessed a sophisticated set of diplomatic practices which were motivated by what Nelson classed a 'faith' based consciousness. The Mughals also possessed a bureaucracy to operate within the diplomatic system of the time. It was this that the English sought to connect to and were, after some failures, able to with the Surman Embassy and surviving records demonstrate that the bureaucratic execution of Mughal diplomacy is remarkably similar to modern practice – down to official corruption.

What this Mughal practice of diplomacy does is challenge three notions. The first is Eisenstadt's idea that Europe is the origin of modern practices. Interconnected with that is Bull's assumption that the culture of diplomacy is weighted in favour of Europe. The actual practice of Anglo-Indian diplomacy was in fact weighted in favour of the Mughals. The English wanted to be assimilated into the Mughal system of conducting business. That the English were able to do so was due to there being nothing in the Mughal diplomatic canon which was cognitively new to the English. The English understood the principles of Mughal diplomacy. It suggests that though distinct civilizations, England and the Mughals had evolved similar means and conceptions of diplomacy. The differences were one of practice. These the English learnt. In short, the British were enthusiastic to imbibe the cultural repertoire of the Mughal Empire even if at first they were mistaken about its nature.

Anglo-Indian diplomacy also reveals the flaws in several other positions. In revising these positions the history of Mughal diplomacy also exposes the hollowness of the assumption of non-Western diplomacy cannot make any meaningful contribution to diplomatic theory. The

most significant challenge Mughal history poses is to Neumann's[81] argument that diplomacy is often understood as a 'third culture' which mediates between other cultures, with diplomatic culture being the intersubjective set of symbols and practices that make specific interaction possible. He starts with a distinction made by Taylor on consensus and intersubjectivity. Taylor writes:

> 'When we can speak of consensus we speak of beliefs and values which could be the property of a single person, or many, or all; but intersubjective meanings could not be the property of a single person because they are rooted in social practice. The actors may have all sorts of beliefs and attitudes which may be rightly thought of as their individual beliefs and attitudes, even if others share them […] But what they do not bring into the negotiations is the set of ideas and norms constitutive of negotiations themselves. These must be the common property of the society before there can be any question of entering into negotiation or not. Hence they are not subjective meanings, the property of one or some individuals, but rather intersubjective meanings, which are constitutive of the social matrix in which individuals find themselves and act.'

And Der Derian defines diplomacy as:

> 'Above and before all else, diplomacy is a system of communication between strangers, It is the formal means by which the self-identity of the sovereign state is constituted and articulated through external relations with other states. Like the dialogue from which it is constructed, diplomacy requires and seeks to mediate otherness through the use of persuasion and force, promises and threats, codes and symbols.'[82]

However, as the history of Anglo-Indian diplomacy reveals, there was no common diplomatic practice. No 'third culture' evolved out of the Anglo-Indian negotiations. Nor did there exist Taylor's 'society' whose common property was 'international society'. Indeed diplomacy may be constitutive of the international 'social matrix' that Taylor refers to and diplomacy is certainly a 'social practice' but the specific practices of Anglo-Indian diplomacy do not offer any 'intersubjectivity'. The 'social matrix' was a Mughal matrix which had been developed from

---

[81] Unpublished manuscript distributed by the author. Neumann. April 2008.
[82] Der Derian defines diplomacy as such. 1993. P.244.

Mughal-Ottoman relations amongst others. The English and the Mughals did not craft a new matrix. Instead the English, though sovereign representatives, not only practiced Mughal style diplomacy by negotiating for a Mughal *firman* and in doing so also acceded to Mughal law.

The corollary to the lack of any intersubjective meanings in the Anglo-Indian negotiations is that there was instead consensus. However, consensus, argues Neumann, is a result of semantic struggles between truth claims. In the practice of diplomacy with the Mughal's, Surman short-circuited the struggle by, ultimately, agreeing to following Mughal practices. In doing so, Surman was able to overcome the 'myth' of being able to buy ones way in the Mughal court which dated back to the time of Sir Thomas Roe. If a myth is a precondition for understanding[83] – the precursor to communicating which is the art of diplomacy according to Der Derian – then Surman's skill lay in overcoming that particular myth. In any case, the British arrived in Delhi seeking to operate within the 'social matrix' of the Mughals. They wanted to negotiate in the Mughal manner, follow Mughal customs and the entire point of the Embassy was to secure Mughal documents.

The Mughal interregnum saw the operation of a diplomatic practice which originated in an Islamic credo. These practices demonstrate that locals were familiar with diplomacy as an art and lays to waste the delusive myth of modernity spreading out of Europe. Yet under the Mughals the various notions of practice arising out of *dharma* were subsumed. This was to be compounded under the British who in their efforts to monopolise diplomatics in India went from acceding to Mughal law to assuming their mantle in 1857 and diplomatically incorporated independent Indian states into the British Empire. Unquestionably, the British spread themselves out throughout the Indian sub-continent. It is perhaps why the literature on diplomacy invests colonialism with such transformative power. It is to these transformations, engendered by the introduction of European modernity in the form of Western diplomacy that we turn to next.

ENDS

---

[83] Sahlins. 1981; Lincoln. 1989. 2002.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE DEATH OF DIPLOMACY

Introduction

Juxtaposing, in the manner of *ostranenie*, the literature on diplomacy with the fieldwork produced the problématique of whether the theory and practice of diplomacy existed in South-Asia before the entry of Europe. Approaching the problem genealogically, the previous chapters argued that not only did diplomacy exist in practice but that there was also a theory arising from a philosophy of action (*dharma*). However, the only way of finally resolving the controversy of where the logics of *today's* practice emerge from lies in investigating what actually transpired during the period of intercivilizational contact amongst actual practitioners – both Indian and British. It is to ascertain the actual impact of modern, European diplomacy upon the prevailing systems and peoples.

In performing this act of verification what emerges is that the British appropriated local practices. However they imbued local practices with a dynamic which was new. The literature suggests that the British introduced Western modernity. They did. It was the animating spirit, the dynamo of Western modernity, which insinuated itself into existing diplomatic practices thereby displacing *dharma*. The alien metaphysic was directly opposed to *dharma* which, though subsumed, had animated the Mughal state in the form of the non-Muslim personnel it relied upon. In contrast to *dharma* the European dynamic was one founded on a self/other binary divide. The idea was deeply embedded in Europe.[1] Hegel as the preeminent exponent of this metaphysic and one who played a decisive role in manufacturing 'India' in the European mind is quoted. He noted that:

> Each is for the other the middle term through which each mediates itself; and
> each is for himself, and for the other, an immediate being on its own accord,
> which at the same time is such only through this mediation. They recognise
> themselves as mutually recognising one another. [2]

At the centre of this conception is, of course, the self. The self knows itself not simply in terms of itself, or another, but the 'other'. Such a conception ripped apart the *dharmic* cosmos of an

---

[1] Rousseau was already conceptualizing alienation long before Hegel. See Lichtheim. 1968.
[2] von Hegel. 1977. P.112

undivided whole. If the rationale underpinning the Mughals was Islam and the glory of the divine thru its material manifestations then the underlying metaphysic underpinning British diplomacy was even more alien to the masses they encountered. In short, it was the 'othering' of India.[3] Hegel was explicit about how this was done, writing that 'as soon as he [a European] crosses the Indus, he encounters the most repellent characteristics, pervading every single feature of society.'[4] The Indus being a river in today's Pakistan where the people called Indic (from the river) lived. As Inden demonstrates, this repulsion was inherent to the dynamic of a metaphysic founded on 'othering' because it is a technique of the self, the European, to remove the depraved from within. It became the basis of the construction of the 'Orient,' a conceptual assumption, devoid of empirical evidence.[5] In terms of diplomacy it was not always like this. In Surman's time the dynamic was not of opposition, but tessellation.[6] That approach was abandoned due to 'othering' becoming organising principle for the British in India.

In terms of diplomacy the impact was the erasure of local diplomacy and the European interregnum saw what is inevitable of all practices motivated by binary logic systems: the extermination of the 'other'. The skewed nature of British society in India enhanced this binary logic. Predominantly mercantile and military, British society rendered the 'other,' i.e., the locals, as no more than a cash-cow and viewing them as irreconcilably alienated, as sub-human (if human at all) and therefore open to outright violence. This organised the practice of diplomacy. Prevalent notions of reciprocity and communication were erased by a new militarized-diplomacy. Secondly, Mughal diplomacy was an extension of the royal person. In British India diplomacy was also of the body – but founded on the irreconcilable separation of bodies. In short, the British not only ensured that diplomacy was conducted solely by themselves and for

---

[3] The notion of 'other' is fundamental to the academy and this organising category is central precisely because of the instrumental role it plays in shaping the academy's society's ways of perception. This is the perception of Western modernity. It is not a specifically British enterprise. 'The theme of "the Other" – and specially what constitutes the otherness of "the Other" – has been at the very heart of the work of every major twentieth-century Continental philosopher,' writes Richard J. Bernstein. See Bernstein. P.68; Gasché goes even further stating that 'Western philosophy is in essence the attempt to domesticate Otherness, since what we understand by thought is nothing but such a project.' See Gasché. 1986. p.101.

[4] Hegel. 1956. P.173. He was not the first to make a sharp and essential difference between India and Europe. His intellectual world derived from Johann Gottfried Herder and Friedrich Schlegel. See von Glasenapp. 1960. pp. 14-32; and Halbfass. pp. 86-103.

[5] Inden. 1986. P.401-446

[6] The insertion was real. In the 1780s one-third of British men were leaving all their possessions to local women but the figures rapidly fell as notions of race took hold. See Dalrymple.

themselves but also in opposition to a body of humanity – the locals. This construction was the European contribution. It was activated thru the ordering category of 'race'.[7] A symptom of a metaphysic expressed in the totalizing language of science. This then was the practical, biological and totalizing birth of the 'other'. The British contribution was no more. Their Raj operationalised its metaphysic thru the existing circuits of the Empire. Mughal practices continued but they were put to a uses unforeseen by their inventors. As Ali writes, 'the survivals of the Mughal Empire were subverted to a new use, and not employed to resurrect anything resembling the old Empire. That empire had its own inequities, but these, to be fair to it, were of a different form and content altogether.'[8]

This chapter will trace the actual processes of diplomatic contact thru the men who were at the leading edge of Anglo-Indian contact. Nelson's method reminds us that 'macro' concepts – colonialism, Britain, the 'other,' *dharma*, alienation – are only as real as the actual experience of human-beings in real 'micro' situations. Bottom up analysis can reveal macro concepts but their impact on international relations is only significant if the targets for analysis themselves are significant. This is why the entire project focuses on the makers of international politics. They provide the entry point into the concrete study of processes in an era nearly exhausted by a plethora of Indologists. This is why this chapter relies on extant work in particular Fisher, Eaton, Peers, Subrahmanyam, Alam and Dirks.

British rationales and their effects on local diplomacy

The extant work on British rationales in South Asia argues identifies two guiding principles: wealth extraction and a fundamental insecurity about the ability to do so. The former brought them to India which in turn produced a fundamental insecurity about the ability to perform it. Feeding each other, these two propelled the EIC into redefining diplomacy as it existed in India. Under the Company, diplomacy became a militarized tool which always carried the threat of war. It was perhaps even warped into a form unlike what was practiced in Europe. The purpose being neither to communicate or negotiate but to subjugate.[9] These rationales were enabled by

---

[7] Of course race is just another myth of Western modernity, historically contingent and constantly in flux. See Wilson. 2003. P.11; on the subjectivity of science in India see: Cohn. 1990. P. 224-54.
[8] Ali. 1975. p.396
[9] Tilly. 1975. P. 31; McNeill. 1982.

the metaphysic of the 'other' which sanctioned locals as alien, different and therefore beyond the usual codes of society.

It permitted wealth extraction to become the *leitmotif* of the British Raj. Terms such as the 'drain of wealth' and 'Annual Plunder' were mentioned as early as 1783 in *The Ninth Report of the Select Committee*.[10] In his study of the *Report*, Dutt's *Economic History of India* explicates the nature and size of this drain of wealth. Britain formalized its demands early on. From Bengal – where the Surman Embassy established a foothold – it took four forms. Termed 'articles of tribute,' they were: the 'investment,' which was the 'clear acknowledged Tribute from Bengal to England,' the 'direct Tribute' from the other British bases in India, private transfers and finally, the transfer of income from trade to England.[11] Clive's successor as Governor put the impact clearly:

> 'Whatever sums had formerly been remitted to Delhi were amply reimbursed by the returns made to the immense commerce of Bengal … How widely different from these are the present circumstances of the Nabob's dominions! … Each of the European Companies, by means of money taken up in the country, have greatly enlarged their annual Investments, without adding a rupee to the riches of the Province.'[12]

The economist Habib, using conservative calculations suggests that 'the tribute amounted to 9 percent of GNP – a crippling drain for any economy.'[13] Esteban in a careful estimate of net transfers between India and Britain between 1772-1820 writes 'seemingly negligible magnitudes in terms of national income can reveal their significance when placed in a meaningful context.'[14] In extracting tribute the British were in reality no different from other empires as Khoury and Kennedy demonstrate.[15] Yet the European insisted that they were different.[16] Their binary dynamic could have it no other way. Their identity required them to be ontologically different from Asians. Khoury and Kennedy write:

---

[10] Unmentioned were other British extractions which went not to the United Kingdom but to other parts of the world in service of the British Empire. For instance the Rs.6 million extracted from Oudh to Iraq. See Litvak. 2000.
[11] Guha. 1996. p.137-139
[12] Verelst. 1776. appendix p.117
[13] Habib. 1995. p.304
[14] Esteban. 2001. p.69
[15] Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Vol. 27, no.2, 2007. P.214
[16] Whereas there was actually continuity. See Marshall. 1987. 172.

'This conviction has its origins in European efforts in the nineteenth century and
before to contrast themselves with "Oriental despotisms," presenting their own
states and societies as progressive, liberal, and modern while portraying their
counterparts to the east as static, oppressive, and archaic.'[17]

Being better meant the locals were worse. They could be exploited and unlike local empires the
impact of the Europeans was relatively traumatic because they drained away wealth. Khoury
and Kennedy continue:

'The Raj coerced its subjects and squeezed wealth from them. India garrisoned
one of the largest armies in the world in the nineteenth century, a massive force
that differed markedly from the increasingly nationalized armies of Europe. Like
other agrarian empires the Raj relied mainly on land revenues. On various
occasions its demands pushed peasants to the brink of disaster, and beyond.[18]
The British also assessed "home charges" on India, an annual transfer of millions
of pounds to the British treasury.'[19]

The second expression of the binary logic was fear of the 'other'. Fear produced insecurity and
it became an 'empire of opinion,'[20] traced by Peers to Malcolm who wrote: 'The only safe view
that Britain can take of her empire in India is to consider it, as it really is, always in a state of
danger.'[21] Malcolm was indicative of British opinion. In 1845 it was said of him: 'No man …
better understood the habits and feelings of our subjects in that part of the world than Sir John
Malcolm.'[22] This fundamental and central insecurity dominated other officials who also believed
that the only method of dealing with their insecurities was to permanently rely on the army.
Munro, for instance, remarked that 'in this country we always are, and always ought to be
prepared for war'[23] and Metcalf echoed this, writing, 'the main object of all the Acts of our
Government [is] to have the most efficient army that we can possibly maintain.'[24] The 'empire
of opinion' argued that British domination rested not upon actual military prowess, but upon

---

[17] Khoury & Kennedy. 2007. P.214
[18] Davis. 2001.
[19] Bayly. 1988. P.116.
[20] Peers. 1995. P.9
[21] Malcolm. Vol. II. P.76
[22] [anon], 'The Military Constitution of our Indian Empire,' United Services Journal. (1845, no.3):p.237
[23] Munro to Canning, 14 Oct 1820. In Glieg. 1830. II. P.52
[24] Metcalf's memo, nd. (1815/16?) J.W.Kaye. Life and correspondence of Lord Metcalfe. London: Smith,
Elder and co. 1858. I. 442n

the conviction that the Indian people had of British omnipotence. One contemporary of Malcolm wrestled with defining this 'empire of opinion' and concluded that 'it is difficult to attach definite meaning, unless it be the opinion of our ability to crush all attempts at insurrection.'[25] A very similar definition was reached by Ochterlony who argued that he understood 'empire of opinion' to mean 'above all the Military strength of the Rulers, remains unexhausted and invincible.'[26] Ironically, though the British embarked upon a 'general offensive against Oriental governments', they simultaneously adopted what they considered to be the characteristics of those governments – specifically the premium placed on the military – in constructing their own systems of rule.[27]

This mentality produced the British 'garrison state' which Peers defines as a prevalence of the military within the decision making process, the prioritisation of the military in terms of resource allocation and placing the emphasis 'on using the threat or application (usually in a very public way) of military force as a means of securing political and strategic objectives.'[28] The potency of Anglo-Indian militarism derived from the cohesiveness and insularity of the British community in India. The military dominated this community. An estimate of the European population of India in 1830 lists 36,409 officers and soldiers, 3,550 civilian employees of the EIC, and 2,149 Europeans not formally attached to either the Company or the military.[29] Unlike Britain the only public opinion which counted in India was the tiny expatriate community and it was resolutely opposed to retrenchments.[30] 'The persistence of a militarized state in India was assured for as long as there was a consensus that British rule could never depend for its survival upon the willing cooperation or passive acquiescence of the Indian people.'[31] Hence, while there might not have been an officially sanctioned ideology of expansion, for much of the period up to 1858, institutionally, culturally, and ideologically there was a predilection for the use of force, and when this was coupled to the financial appetites of the burgeoning army there was often little alternative to expansion. This is not to say that conquest was inevitable. But as

---

[25] [anon]. United Services Journal. 1831.
[26] Ochterlony to Court, 1825 in Ochterlony. 1964. p.435
[27] Bayly. 1988. p.5
[28] Peers. 1995.
[29] Marshall. 1992. p.182
[30] Harline & Mandler. 1993. p.44-70
[31] Peers. 1995. P.244

one commentator reflected, 'During these sixty years India has had Governors-general of all qualifications and temperaments, yet very few of them have avoided war.'[32]

Since, 'the British were never in a position to subdue completely all potential threats, alliances were crucial and the army played a major role.'[33] Sanctioned by the Empire's *firmans* to the Surman Embassy, British rule in Bengal however rapidly assumed a binary logic. It meant 'an absolute government, founded not on consent but on conquest.'[34] The implication for diplomacy was its militarisation. The aim was to conquer the 'other' and the means was to capture the Mughal Empire and its provincial ruler's 'sovereignty'. Fisher notes that by the mid-eighteenth century virtually all of the regional courts of India *de facto* governed their states independently from the Mughal Emperor. Nevertheless, they remained nominally subordinate to his sovereignty. The rituals of these regional courts acknowledged Mughal sovereignty even as the Rulers themselves governed autonomously. This was why a regional Ruler dispatched a wakīl rather than an ilchī or safīr (a representative rather than a full ambassador who could only be dispatched by the Emperor).[35]

Sovereignty also serves to expose the fundamental impossibilities and corruption that the alien metaphysic produced in the British. Fisher notes that the Company developed a 'peculiar role ... with respect to both the British and the Mughal sovereigns and to other Indian Rulers.'[36] In 1772 the practice of operating within Mughal sovereignty was regularised when the Company formally acknowledged Mughal sovereignty. Yet, simultaneously the Company never considered giving up the British crown's sovereignty. They could not give up the latter because an identity founded on the 'other' required it to maintain the self. Instead of investing themselves in India, they chose deception and agreed that to make their dual sovereignty known would unnecessarily excite the people against the Company.[37] It was a plan of administering the

---

[32] Chapman. 1853. 180.
[33] Peers. 1995. P.8
[34] Stephen. 1883. See also Mehta. 2000.
[35] See 'Extraterritoriality: The concept and its application in Princely India'. Indo-British Review, 15, 2 (December 1988): 103-22
[36] Fisher. 1990. P.430
[37] Minutes of 18 November 1814, Bengal Secret Consultations [BSC] 18 November 1814, no. 19. Quoted in Fisher. 1990. P.430

country under what Clive called 'the masked system,' that is administering in the interest of the Company, while maintaining the sham sovereignty of the Mughal.[38]

Having corrupted the Company, the metaphysic also dehumanized the 'other'. It made the British all the more willing to break contracts, eschew diplomacy and resort to war with a people sanctioned as beyond the pale. The British breached Surman's contract and began to encroach on the local Mughal nawab Siraj-ud-Daula's sovereignty. As a British sea captain wrote:

> 'The injustice to the Moors consists in that, being by their courtesy permitted to live here as merchants we under pretence protected all the Nabob's servants that claimed our protection, though they were neither our servants nor our merchants, and gave our *dustucks* or passes to numbers of natives to trade custom free, to the great prejudice of the Nabob's revenue; nay, more, we levied large duties upon goods brought into our districts from the very people that permitted us to trade custom free, and by numbers of impositions … caused eternal clamour and complaints against us at Court.'[39]

It prompted the Nawab to capture the British Fort William in 1756. This was a bargaining counter to negotiate with the presumptuous EIC, not to eject them – after all they had been permitted to establish themselves because the Nawab's Emperor had granted a *firman* permitting it.[40] The British response however was unexpected. They retook it by storm and without negotiation. In doing so the Company 'adopted a basic psychological maxim about the conduct of war. This was always to force the pace and to seek battle with the "country" armies and never to reject it when offered by the other side.'[41] Within a few months, Clive went on famously to force a showdown at Plassey. The British military victory resulted in the Company replacing Siraj-ud-Daula with their own nawab, Mir Jafar. Though Plassey was no great battle in military terms, its political consequences were momentous for, though not intended at the time, the British victory eventually resulted in the British seizing the *diwani* – or the right of

---

[38] Fifth Report on East India Company Affairs. 1812. p.vii

[39] Captain Rennie. Reflections on the loss of Calcutta. 1756. India Office Records. British Library. Quoted in Dirks. P.4

[40] Bryant. April 2004. p.448

[41] Madras to Colonel Campbell, 14 April 1765, P/251/52, p. 291, OIOC; Colonel Muir to Hastings, 28 April 1781: "spirited Resolves and brisk Actions Generally serve better [in this country] than Slow Counsels and too Circumspect a Conduct," f. 81, Add. MSS 29119, BL; Quoted in Bryant. April 2004.

direct rule – in 1765.[42] With it, the richest and militarily most secure province in India passed into Company hands enabling it to bankroll the eventual conquest of the rest of the subcontinent.[43]

The practices sanctioned by the binary logic became hegemonic as the British elevated military power above and beyond diplomacy to subjugate the 'other'. Orme, a Company civil servant and the first military historian of the British in India, wrote in the 1760s: 'Inactivity or retreat in war is never in Indostan imputed to prudence or stratagem, and the side which ceases to gain success is generally supposed to be on the brink of ruin.'[44] Clive, the architect of the battle wrote in 1765: 'The Influence of the British Empire in India is founded in some degree on our effective Power but more perhaps on the Credit of former Successes and the Reputation of our Arms.'[45] It was this willingness to use military power to manage their insecurities which resulted in the British establishing themselves in Bengal. In doing so, the British sought to alleviate their insecurities in Bengal by using war to extract not just the powers of sovereignty, but sovereignty itself and to raise themselves to the level of a state.[46] Upon seizing the diwani, Clive wrote to inform the Directors that the Company now 'became the Sovereigns of a rich and potent kingdom,' not only the 'collectors but the proprietors of the nawab's revenues.'[47] A few years later Dirks notes that in 'elevating the Company to the status of a state, Hastings was concerned to declare British sovereignty over all of the Company's possessions, and to assert that "the British sovereignty, though whatever channels it may pass into these provinces, should be all in

---

[42] The treaty between the Company and Siraj-ud-daula of February 1757 permitted fortifying in Calcutta. Treaty with Mir Jafar on 15th July 1757 made Bengal responsible for financing British wars; Treaty with Mir Kasim of 27th September 1760 made the Company partners; Mir Jafar on 10th July 1763 specified Bengal's military contributions to Company; Treaty of February 1765 with Najm-ud-daula stated: I will only maintain such (troops) as are absolutely necessary for the dignity of my own person and government, and the business of my collections throughout the provinces. Quoted in Fifth Report. P. viii-ix

[43] Orme. History of the Military Transactions, 86–87; Hill, *Bengal, 1756–7*; Calcutta to Court, 14 July 1757, pp. 507–17, E/4/23, Oriental and India Office Collections. British Library. Henceforth OIOC. BL; "Major Corneille'sJournal of an Expedition to India in 1754," p. 162, MSS Eur. B215, OIOC; Gopal. 1963. P. 106.

[44] Orme, *History of the Military Transactions,* 278. Another ex-Company man suggested that the Indians were already beaten in their minds when faced by a successful general, such as Clive, because they believed that God was behind him: Scrafton. 1770. Pp. 115–16.

[45] To Colonel Caillaud, 17 November 1765, pp. 25–27, Clive MSS, 222, Nat. Lib. of Wales; See Bengal to Court, 20 March 1776, pp. 87–88, E/4/35, OIOC. BL.

[46] For a Mughal perspective on this period in Bengal see:Abdul Majed Kahn, The Transition in Bengal 1756-1775: A Study of Saiyid Muhammed Reza Khan. 1969,

[47] Quoted in Cohn. 1996. p.59

all.""[48] As Hastings encouraged in early 1773, the 'sovereignty of this country [be] wholly and absolutely vested in the Company,' and that he be the sole "instrument" of this sovereignty.'[49]

Within decades of their conquest in Bengal, the British metaphysic had become hegemonic and it demanded that the rest of India also be denied sovereignty. To secure their aims they relied on militarized-diplomacy. The difference with the Nawab's diplomacy was one of degree but it was momentous. The British injected into the local system, which relied on a show of force, a type of diplomacy indistinguishable from force. As noted, 'the Company in the later eighteenth century presumed that not only the Mughal Emperor but also many of the Indian regional Rulers with whom it dealt held sovereignty.'[50] By 1815, Hastings was saying that: 'In all intercourse, the Resident should consider himself as the Ambassador from the British Government to an acknowledged Sovereign.'[51] The purpose of these Ambassadors was not that of local diplomats. British diplomacy was not about a show of force to then discuss terms but the combined deployment of the military and diplomacy with the latter as a junior partner to totally subjugate the princely states. Fisher notes that as the:

> 'Company gained military ascendency over successive regions in India, its views
> on the sovereignty of the Indian rulers changed. Treaties with the Indian rulers
> transferred from them to the Company various rights normally held by a
> sovereign. Nevertheless, British practice often reduced some of these very
> 'sovereigns' to the de facto status of puppets or virtually confined them within
> their own palaces.'[52]

The British innovation was to introduce rationalities founded on the metaphysic of the 'other'. It played havoc with prevailing notions of diplomacy only because of the extent of its impact. This was possible only because the British were able to harness the Empire's diplomatic

---

[48] Dirks. P.185 Quotes Glieg, Memoirs of the life of the Right Honorable Warren Hastings, First Governor of Bengal. London. Richard Bentley, 1841, vol. 2. p.50

[49] Dirks. P.187. Quotes Rev. G.R.Glieg, Memoirs of the life of the Right Honorable Warren Hastings, First Governor of Bengal. London. Richard Bentley, 1841, vol. 1. p.290

[50] Fisher. P.442

[51] Political Letter from governor-General to Court of directors, 15 August 1815, Papers respecting a Reform in the administration of the … Nawaub Vizier…1st January 1808 to 31 December 1815 (london: EI Co. 1824), 853. Quoted in Fisher p.444

[52] E.g. Governor-General Dalhousie accepted the sovereignty of Indian Rulers even as he annexed their states in violation of explicit treaty rights. Governor-General's Minute of 18 June 1855, FPC, 28 December 1855, No. 319.

conduits to serve the metaphysic of the Raj. The British diplomatic apparatus was the Residency system. It absorbed, wholesale, local practices and talent. This was possible because of an initial tessellation between the Mughals and British indicating the multiple births of modern practices. Tessellation is forwarded as the category to describe early Indian and European practices because of the easy comprehension by Europeans of Indian practice. One such European was Correia, the secretary to the Portuguese Viceroy Afonso de Albuquerque. Correia quotes a Portuguese witness, amongst others, to describe the Mughal embassy at the Gujarati court. His chapter is titled: Como o Badur ouvio a embaixada do Rey dos Mogores, e a reposta que deu, e o que mais recreceu' i.e., 'How Bahadur listened to the embassy of the King of the Mughals and the answer that he gave, and what happened after.'[53] Correia's reports tally with the exchange of embassies and letters between Humayun and Bahadur Shah, noted both in Gujarati and Mughal chronicles, on the one hand, and in Portuguese chronicles, on the other.[54] Besides Correia, the exchange of letters is well attested in Barros and Diogo do Couto's *Décadas*. These letters are also confirmed by Indian historians: Chaube quotes the *Mirat-i-Sikandari*, and other sources and gives a summary of the letters[55] as does the Akbar Nama.[56]

From these early and near identical understandings of diplomacy the British developed the Residency system because it could be slotted into the existing Mughal system of ceremony and precedence.[57] The origins were twofold. Fisher notes that in Europe:

> 'the institution of permanent diplomatic missions had only developed during the early sixteenth century. Prior to that time, embassies had been exchanged between major European states but the cost and the regular 'disputes about precedence and ceremonial … led to the appointment of agents or *residents*, who were not entitled to the same ceremonial honours as ambassadors.'[58] The title 'Resident' continued in Europe till the end of the 18th century. Thus, when

---

[53] Correia, III. 1975. Pp. 587-591. See also Desoulieres. 1988.

[54] Akbar-Nama, I. See Blochmann. pp.294-5; Tabaqat-i-Akbari in Elliot and Dowson, pp190-1; Mirat-i-Sikandari, in Bayley's History of India … Gujarat, pp. 375 -81, who also quotes a collection of Persian letters in the British Museum.

[55] Chaube, pp. 238-9

[56] Akbar Nama. See Blochmann. pp. 294 to 296

[57] Fisher. 1991. P.49

[58] Satow. 1961. p.165; See also Fisher. 1984. p. 399.

agents of the Company were sent to reside at the courts of India's major princes

in the 1760s, the title of Resident fit their understanding of their own role.'[59]

This system did not differ to any extent that it was incomprehensible to the Mughals. In fact, it

fit into the prevailing Mughal cosmos which:

> 'likewise had diplomatic conventions and regulations to which the Company had
>
> to conform. Ambassadors were regularly sent from one sovereign to another.[60]
>
> At a lower lever, agents, wakīls were exchanged among high Mughal officials
>
> and were sent to represent a high official at the Imperial court in his absence.
>
> Since the Company accepted Mughal sovereignty in 1772, the designation of its
>
> representatives as Residents, translated as wakīls in the Persian, instead of
>
> Ambassadors, fit into Mughal practice as well.'[61]

The Residents were, therefore, to begin with diplomats as classically understood by both the

British and the locals. Islam's *Indo-Persian Relations* in describing Mughal diplomatic practices

notes the similarity between the Residency system as it developed in Europe with the system

which developed in medieval India, where there was no system of having permanent diplomatic

missions as is the case with modern states.[62] European observers of ancient Indian diplomacy

were able to comprehend it easily.

The Resident was thus – in theory – the diplomat of a power subordinate to the Mughal. The

Residency system was initially the diplomatic arm of 'a regional state, powerful but treated on

the basis of equality by other regional powers.' Early on, many of these Residents were

deployed at the request of local powers and on their part, many princes maintained wakīls in

Calcutta, Bombay or Madras to represent them.[63] The 'political line' served more as a diplomatic

body as understood by the locals than as the means for first militarized-diplomacy and then

indirect control over the regional states of India.[64] The British effectively terminated the equality

---

[59] Fisher. 1984. p.393

[60] Eg. Jahangir. 1968.

[61] Fisher. P.399-400

[62] Indo-Persian Relations. Pp.226

[63] Letter from Shuja uddaula, Bengal Secret Consultations 30 September 1772; Bombay Government to Lt. Col. Upton, 3 January 1777, Eur Mss. Addl 28987, British Museum; Arzee from Vakeel of Ranna of Gohad, Bengal Secret Consultations 6 December 1779, Commonwealth Relations Office; Governor General to David Anderson, 4 November 1781, Bengal Secret Consultations 10 December 1781, Eur Ms Addl 13612, British Museum. Quoted in Fisher. P.401

[64] Fisher P.401-02

and reciprocity afforded to all regional players operating under the umbrella of Mughal sovereignty. This transformation followed the Company's transformation from a body of merchants, to that of a regional power, to that of *primus inter pares* among India's rulers nominally under the Mughal Emperor to finally the transformation of local diplomacy by militarized-diplomacy which ultimately led to the cessation of local diplomacy as the British Raj seized sovereignty from the Empire. The process culminated in 1877 when the British seized sovereignty from the Mughals, Victoria, the British Queen took the title of 'Empress of India' and the new imperial rulers organized the Imperial Assembly.

Tessellation between Europe and India was not limited to understandings and conceptions. It took place in a multitude of ways. Most significant were the near identical staffing policies of the Raj and Empire. The inflection of Western modernity to the established order was race, the category applied to ensure locals could never hold policy making positions. Nevertheless, like the mansabdari system with its heavy reliance on military men the Company too relied on soldiers. The bulk of the Company's 'political'[65] officers came from the military and between 1823 and 1857 military officers made up the bulk of the Residents. The military reached its apogee in the late 1830s, early 1840s when some 80 annual offices were in military hands as opposed to some 30 in civilian.[66] In part this was because the supply of civil servants was less than military officers. But this was because many more soldiers were sent to India than administrators. On average, 37 writers (entry level appointment in the civil service) as compared to 258 cadets were sent from London annually between 1802 and 1833.[67] Unlike the Mughals who gained status from arms the British sent officers because they were cheaper than civil servants. '[W]ere it not for the explicit and repeated orders of the Court of Directors in London, far more officers would apparently have been appointed in the political and other lines of the civil service.'[68] In 1808, for example, 'The Court [of Directors] observed that altho' they had not absolutely prohibited the nomination of Military Officers to be public Residents they nevertheless should have great satisfaction in seeing those Situations occupied by Civilians.'[69]

---

[65] ''Political' meant diplomatic in the old East Indian Company lexicon, and a 'political' was a Resident, Political or Assistant Political officer employed in that line.' See Hogben. 1981. p.752
[66] Fisher. 1984. P.407
[67] Cohn. 1966. p.103
[68] Fisher. 1984. P.408
[69] Personal Records, 12:479, Commonwealth Relations Officer. See also Political Letters to Bombay 31 August 1804 and 29 August 1810, Eur Ms C.198, Commonwealth Relations Office. Quoted in Fisher. 1984.

Such directives ceased between 1812 and 1840 but expression of the Director's prejudice against military officers was later renewed. One of their complaints against Governor General Ellenborough (1842-44), and apparently a factor in his recall by the Court, was his large scale use of military officers in civil employment.[70] Overall, Fisher finds, between 1764 and 1858 the military made up 52.7 percent of the total annual offices of Resident and in the less prestigious office of Political Agent, 57.9 percent.[71]

Though the senior most positions were reserved for Whites, these men had next to no knowledge of European theory or training. They were however intent on learning local systems and practices. In terms of practice then, diplomacy remained a local affair though it was put to uses invented by the British. Residents learnt on the job, through their insertion into the prevailing diplomatic system. Fisher has found only one example in his analysis of the period from 1764 to 1858 of a member of the political line seeking to educate himself about the theory of international law and diplomatic practice. Residents did have libraries but on only one occasion did an officer express an intention to educate himself about his profession.

> 'It has long been my wish to form a collection for a Diplomatic Library … I have already pursued, I can scarcely say studied, a translation of Grotius (without notes); some Puffendorf with Barbeyrac's Commentaries; (the French Edition); Burlamaqui, Vattel, Marten, and Ward.
>
> Ward … is amongst Mr. Eliphinstone's books at Nagpore. I am aware that the most useful kind of work for a diplomatic character are the memoirs and correspondence of public ministers, and almost the only fund of practical knowledge on the subject – mere etiquettes and formalities may undoubtedly be reduced to rules in Europe, but books which treat of them can be of little use in India.'[72]

---

[70] Even though the total number of military in the service actually declined during his administration, Ellenborough regarded this as the major factor in his quarrel with the Directors, Ellenborough to Wellington 9 June 1842 cited in Broadfoot. 1888. p.195. See Ellenborough's letters to Claud Clerk dated 29 July 1842, 3 May 1843 and 16 April 1843 for his requent rewards of political posts for military officers, Claud Clerk Collection, Eur Ms D.538/39, Commonwealth Relations Office. Quoted in Fisher. 1984. P.409

[71] Fisher. 1984. P.411

[72] Richard Jenkins, Resident at Nagpur to Sydenham, 12 May 1810, Nagpur Residency Private Letter Book, Eur Ms E.111, Commonwealth Relations Office. Quoted in Fisher.

Finding 'themselves in a diplomatic world largely unfamiliar and alien to them'[73] the Residents found it more profitable to immerse themselves in the practice of Indian diplomacy rather than to rely on the textbooks of European theory. No matter how familiar they became, they could not manage the complex systems of the Empire and hence they relied on a crucial layer of diplomat intermediaries. They were the munshī (from Arabic, 'one who creates, produces, or composes'). A Munshī was not just proficient in Persian (the language of the Mughal Empire) and English, making him mediator and spokesman but was also a key personage in the formulation of tactics to further British policy.[74]

Excavating the role of the munshī in the diplomacy of British India is essential to understanding the nature of British modernity in South Asia. The task is complicated by the British subsuming Indians to the tactics of diplomacy and excluded them from policy. Hence the munshī rarely appears in the official histories of the day. However Fisher has compiled an extensive index of the identities and service records of 523 of them between 1764-1857 from which he concludes:

> 'it is clear how much the Company relied on this traditional Islamicized service
> elite in its efforts to gain mastery of the Persianate court ritual. By analysing the
> backgrounds of these Indian subordinates, it is clear that the prime qualification
> for appointment as Munshī was knowledge of the Persianate conventions of the
> diplomatic world of India.'

That munshīs were essential to the running of the British Raj is uncontested. What is of significance however is their cognitive capacity of so easily transferring from local masters to working for the British who self-defined themselves as fundamentally removed from the locals? It indicates that though the British saw a divided world, the locals did not. At the heart of this difference was one of perception. Though subsumed by the theologically driven Mughal state, *dharma* survived in the cultural circuits of the society and it was from here that the munshīs emerged, Persianised themselves and served the Empire. However, they never forgot their local cultural systems. What this meant in practice was that the Europeans metaphysic with its attendant forms of differentiation, actualized thru 'race,' was alien to the locals who saw the British as just another ruling body, one that could provide employment, no different from other

---

[73] Fisher. 1990. p.421
[74] Men such as Warren Hastings found them altogether indispensible. See Alam & Alavi. 2001. P. 13–14.

masters. If the local approach is the benchmark for 'rationalization' then Nelson was wrong to presume it was Europe which was rationalized.

The survival of *dharma* amongst the diplomats of the Empire can be found in their educational material. Munshīs were trained in a Persianate system, but operating in the subcontinent it was significantly modified. The educational matter, 'fell into a branch of knowledge that was regarded as secular, in the sense of being distinctly this-worldly and largely devoid of religious or theological connotations.'[75] It explained why a number of their authors and practitioners were non-Muslim locals.[76] The court too aided in the maintenance of *dharma*. It expressed itself in a secularised Islam in Akbar's court and a pragmatic view of the functions of rulership. Sovereignty, according to Akbar's son was a 'gift of God,'[77] not necessarily given to enforce God's law but rather to 'ensure the contentment of the world.'[78] Such ideas, scattered throughout Jahangir's reign document the Tuzuk and other sources, indicate continued acceptance of the legitimacy of temporal power, stripped of the theocratic trappings, in Indian Islamic political thought.

By the time of the Europeans the locals were practiced in not regarding the new with derision. In keeping with the contextual rationale of *dharma*, locals readily modified themselves to serve their own purposes under the Empire. The education material of the munshīs who Persianised themselves is testimony to this and given the long reliance on munshīs, such material pervaded the Mughal Empire.[79] One of these texts is with us today through Nurul Hassan who was Indian ambassador to Moscow. Alam and Subrahmanyam show that the use of Persian did not impede Hindus. 'Their achievements in the new language were soon recognized as extraordinary. Hindus had already begun to learn Persian in Sikandar Lodi's time, and 'Abdul Qadir Badayuni

---

[75] On the secular outlook of Emperor Akbar on matters relating to this world see Goswamy & Grewal. 1967; On Jahangir's secular outlook see Alvi. 1989.

[76] Alam and Subrahmanyam. P.61

[77] Quoted by Nizami. 1981. Pp. 174.

[78] Jahangir, Tazuk, vol. I, p. 15.

[79] In the reign of Aurangzeb there was the Nigarnamah-'I Munshi (Munshi's Letterbook) (See Hasan. 1952. P.258-263) concerned with how to train a munshī and what he ought to know. During Jahangir's period there was the Insha'-I Harkaran a book which was translated into English by the Company and printed as a model text for its own early administrators. See Balfour. 1781.

mentions a Brahmin (high caste Hindu) who taught Arabic and Persian in this period.[80] There was an ideal type of munshī and a passage from a celebrated letter written by Chandrabhan 'Brahman'[81] to his son explains it:

> 'The main thing is to be able to draft in a coherent manner, but at the same time good calligraphy possesses its own virtues and it earns you a place in the assembly of those of high stature. … And together with this, if you manage to learn accountancy [*siyaq*], and scribal skill [*navisindagi*], that would be even better. For scribes who know accountancy as well are rare. A man who knows how to write good prose as well as accountancy is a bright light even among lights. Besides, a munshī should be discreet and virtuous. I, who am among the munshī of the court that is the symbol of the Caliphate, even though I am subject to the usual errors, am still as an unopened bud though possessing hundreds of tongues.'

He then lists a full and coherent set of texts on statecraft and moralia, accountancy and epistolography, history and chronicles and poets both old and new. Munshīs also appreciated Persian renderings of local texts and traditions. Indeed many Hindu scriptures and other Indic texts were rendered into Persian and joined the cultural repertoire of the typical munshī.[82] Some were also written by Hindus.[83] The 'moral universe' of the Munshī can be explicated from their autobiographies and Subrahmanyam and Alam do this with reference to Munshī Nik Rai,[84] concluding that Nik Rai 'comfortably straddles a diversity of cultural and literary heritages,' and that this 'is a comfort that we shall find in later characters of the eighteenth century.' They mention 'composite culture,' since though operating in a Muslim world Nik Rai 'is of course

---

[80] 11'Abd al-Qadir Badayuni, *Muntakhab al-Tavarikh*, vols. 1 and 3 ed. Maulavi Ahmad 'Ali, and vol. 2 ed. Munshi Ahmad 'Ali and N. Lees (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1865–8), 323. Quoted in Alam. P.62

[81] A noted munshī, Hindu and rated only second to the *mir munshi* himself, Sheikh Abu'l Fazl ibn Mubarak. See Muhammad 'Abdul Hamid Faruqui, *Chandra Bhan Brahman: Life and Works with a Critical Edition of his Diwan* (Ahmadabad: Khalid Shahin Faruqi, 1966). Quoted in Alam and Subrahmanyam. P.62

[82] Compare Gopal bin Govind's preface to his Persian translation of the *Ramayana*, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Ms. Blochet, I, 22. Quoted in Alam and Subrahmanyam. P.63

[83] See Siddiqui. 1959. Pp. 282–7. This is only one of several similar texts; for another example, see Munshi Nandram Kayasth Srivastav, *Siya q n a m a h* (lithograph; Lucknow: Nawalkishor Press, 1879), and for a survey of such "administrative and accountancy manuals," Habib. 1999. P. 470–1.

[84] Alam and Subrahmanyam rely on a single manuscript of Nik Ram's work, the text entitled *Tazkirat al-Safar va Tuhfat al-Zafar* (Account of Travels and the Gift of Success), copied by a Ram Singh, at the behest of Lala Hazari Mal, who may have been from the author's own family, on 10 Zi-qada AH 1146 (April 1734) in Hyderabad. See. Salar Jang Museum and Library, Hyderabad, Accession no. 4519, Mss. No. 7. Quoted in Alam and Subrahmanyam. P. 64

aware that he is not a Muslim, and that the story of Rama is part of his own heritage.' Simultaneously, Nik Rai admired and imitated the great Mir Munshī Sheikh Abu'l Fazl and he was surely not alone in this matter. Fazl had come by this time to stand for a point of view in which ecumenical learning and religious pluralism were given a high standing. 'A specifically Mughal political and literary tradition thus had come to exist by the mid-seventeenth century, one that differed from its Central Asian and Iranian counterparts. … The philosophical universe within which he [Nik Rai] conceives of all matters is impregnated with Persian, and with all the richness of the 'secular' tradition that Indo-Persian represented by the seventeenth century.'[85] The 'composite culture' of Nik Rai is clearly evidenced in his writings. Though steeped in Mughal culture, he remained enough of a 'Hindu' to find it distasteful that Aurangzeb, 'in consideration of matters external to spirituality … made a mosque from a temple'. With irony Nik Rao writes: 'Look at the miracle of my idol-house, o Sheikh. That when it was ruined, it became the House of God.'[86]

These munshīs, locals but operating within a Mughal political universe, under Mughal 'sovereignty' and in a cultural world 'impregnated' with the Persian language and customs were as Alam and Subrahmanyam note of a 'composite culture'. It was not to continue. The British replaced it with a two-tier society with themselves as the superior, in opposition to the 'other'. This was achieved by the British harnessing local practices. Foremost amongst these was intelligence, crucial to any diplomatic service but essential to a militarized-diplomacy. Yet even here, the British did not add anything to the Empire's repertoire.

All diplomatic systems have an intelligence-gathering component to them. It was no different for the Mughals and the British appropriated this system. Whole scale co-opting also meant that the British fell foul of the same problems which plagued the Mughals. The Anglicised system also rendered impossible aspirations and freedoms enjoyed under the Mughals. This denial of possibilities was the very opposite of what modernity is viewed as offering in the period by the academy. Once again, the impact of Western modernity was a regression.

The Mughal information gathering network was the akhbār nawīs which:

---

[85] Alam and Subrahmanyam. P.71
[86] Ibid., P.67

'from the Mughal period down to the twentieth century, [has] continued as the medium by which changing kinds of information have been gathered, conveyed, and presented. Each period has had its own definitions of information and its own role for the akhbār nawīs. The continuities and the changes in this office thus reflect the shifting political world of India for nearly five centuries.'[87]

The etymology of akhbār nawīs is the Arabic root kh-b-r, 'to know.' [It] came to denote: 'news, information, advices, intelligence; notification, announcement; report, rumour, fame; story, account.'[88] And nawīs means 'writer'.[89] Just as the Mughals drew upon extant forms but reformulated them to arrive at a definition of 'information' and the means to control it compatible with their own cultural and political values,[90] so too did the Company.

The origins of the system can be traced to the Ā'īn-I Akbarī which lays out detailed prescription for their use.[91] One type of akhbār nawīs was the flow of information from the provinces to the Mughal imperial centre. Here as well, Akbar established the original model.[92] However, the Mughal centre had to constantly modify its system because the writers got co-opted by the regions they reported on. First Emperors appointed sawānih nigār ('untoward events writer') to the provinces – apparently incognito.[93] Later this official took charge of the provincial postal system (dāk) thus revealing his official status.[94] … to assume the incognito function, Emperor Aurangzeb appointed khufya nawīs ('concealed writers'), to report directly to the court.[95]

---

[87] Fisher. 1993. p.82
[88] Steingass. 1973. p. 446.
[89] Fisher. 1993.
[90] This process largely reflected how the Mughals worked in general: building a distinctive patrimonial-bureaucratic empire by synthesizing elements from pan-Islamic institutions, imperial Persian models (especially from the Safawid court, established I50I), their own dynastic traditions from Central Asia, and the administrative forms they found in India. See Blake. I979.
[91] A'in IO of Book Two. We cannot know if Akbar's court diary functioned in exactly this way (since the Mughal archives have apparently not survived before the seventeenth century). Here I follow Blochmann's translation. See Blochmann. vol. i. pp. 268-9.
[92] Jahangir. 1909. pp. 247-8. Yusuf Husain Khan says Akbar established a waqi 'a nawis in each province from 1586, 'Seventeenth Century Waqai' in the Central Records Office, Hyderabad,' Islamic Culture 28, 3 Uuly I954): 460. For an excellent survey of the Mughal informa- tion systems seeJagdish Narayan Sarkar, 'Newswriters of Mughal India,' in S. P. Sen (ed.), The Indian Press (A Collection of Papers Presented at the 4th Annual Conference of the Institute) (Calcutta, 1967), pp. 10-45. Quoted in Fisher. 1993. P.50
[93] Siddiqi. 1972. p. 54.
[94] See Khan. 1924. p. 17I.
[95] Fisher. 1993. p.51

During the period of Mughal dissolution provincial governors made themselves hereditary rulers of their region. Regional courts modelled themselves on the Mughals and became local hubs in a network of political information. Each ruler extended his akhbār nawīs, wakīls, and other agents into the other major courts of the time. Further, each ruler posted akhbār nawīs in the territories under his control. Conversely, each court became the object of manipulation and scrutiny by the numerous akhbār nawīs and wakīls stationed there by rival and allied rulers. Thus, the modified institution of the akhbār nawīs reflected an altered political context.[96] The growing role of the English East India Company in India led to their becoming the target of the akhbārāt sent to the Maratha Peshwā (ruler). In 1775, the Peshwā's akhbār nawīs warned:

> The English chiefs have sent couriers to inspect the palaces and forts and all the
>
> country leading to the Deccan. After getting the information they intend at the
>
> end of the rainy season to march towards Jhansi and Kalpi. Please order your
>
> mokasadars ['official holding revenue shares from villages'] not to allow the dak
>
> of the English couriers to be posted anywhere; slay them wherever found.[97]

In 1779 an akhbār nawīs reported to the Peshwā that, 'Hasting … posted relays of palki-bearers [sedan chair carriers] to the number of 350 men, from Calcutta to Kotah.'[98] These intelligence systems were historically aware and updated old intelligence. Eight years later the Peshwā's newswriter reported the Company had upgraded the system: 'The English have set up a camel-post in the place of runners, from Lucknow to Delhi, in order to get the quickest news of the Emperor's Court and Sindhia's camp.'[99]

In establishing its own system of information gathering and dissemination, the Company subordinated the akhbār nawīs to the Residency system, itself produced by the tessellation between India and Europe. However, the British also ensured that locals were firmly placed below the British Residents. In the early days of its diplomacy, the Company simply adapted parts of the pre-existing pattern. It requested respectable Indians to attend the regional and Mughal Imperial courts as akhbār nawīs and wakīls, to compile or collect akhbārāt, and to represent its interests. The Company's orientation and needs were, however, different from

---

[96] P.53
[97] Sarkar. 1953. p. 88.
[98] Sewak Ram's letter from Calcutta 26 March I779, Sarkar, Persian Records, pp. 96-8.
[99] 5 Feb. 1787, ibid., p. 154.

those of other regional rulers. The main difference was in the creation and perpetuation of a two-tiered system whereby locals could never hold positions of authority.

In contrast the Mughal civil servant, influenced by the civilizational dynamic of *dharma* did not perceive in terms of a divided humanity. This explained their easy ability to transition into the service of the new power yet they clearly carried with them expectations and traditions going back to Mughal models. In I770, the Nā'ib Nāzim (Deputy Governor) of Bengal took it upon himself to instruct the Company as to the 'proper' forms for an intelligence agency:

> 'It is an ancient custom in Hindostan and has always been adopted by Emperors that whenever it was expedient to appoint officers of the crown upon any urgent business three persons selected under the officers, namely, the Darogha [manager], the writer of occurrences [wāqi 'a nawīs], and writer of reports [sawānih nigār] and besides this another channel of intelligence was secured by a proper distribution of hircarrahs [messengers] as a check upon the others that no connections might be privately formed or Partialities shown to particular people. The three public officers wrote a separate detail; and the hircarrahs kept a secret diary of the transactions of the officers. I would recommend that in the present case the same method be pursued, and three persons be appointed of good capacity who might not be influenced by prejudice or diverted from their duty by connections and friendships... .'[100]

The Company followed his advice and appointed the agents he nominated and placed great importance on information from locals.[101] If reports from a region diminished, the Company complained about it.[102] Another reason why Indians sought employment under the British is because they had jobs to offer. It appears that the Indians perceived the British as just another, not the 'other'. In 1782, one of the Emperor's high officials offered to shift his allegiance to the Company. Ghulām Muhammad Khān, who identified himself as the Manager of the Mughal Imperial Intelligence Office wrote: I am an old Servant of his Majesty and am employed by His

---

[100] Persian Corr., Trans. of Recd and Issued I770, no. 48, pp. 15-I6.

[101] Persian Correspondence, Translation of Persian Letters Received and Issued 1770, no.52. pp. 184-5

[102] E.g. To Vizier, 27 Feb. 1767, Persian Corr., Copy of Ltrs Issued 1766-67, no. 70, p. 30.

Majesty Shah Allum in giving him Intelligence received from every quarter of Hindustan. … I am desirous to engage in your Service.[103]

Each Resident maintained under him an intelligence service and 'Intelligence Office'. Their activities were clearly understood by the locals. The Poona court in 1795 objected to the Resident's appointment of a newswriter to that court. In the Resident's words, the proposed newswriter 'being an Intelligent person likely to give me valuable good Information ... the vague objections of the Durbar seem dangerous in Precedent as liable to an unlimited Extension.'[104] If one ruler could exclude a Company newswriter, so could they all. The Company therefore insisted on this appointment. A newswriters life was not an easy one. He was subject to severe pressure from the court on which he reported. The akhbār nawīs at Jaipur [wrote in the third person] should he be dismissed from the Company's service and protection: … the Court of yepoor will wreak its vengeance by imprisonment and seizure of his household, for opposing the orders and the acts *in general* of … that Government … .[105] The Company's intelligence services were also threatened by co-option. The Wazīr of Kabul proposed that the Company's newswriter in Peshawar share information with him. The Company immediately rejected this.[106] Additionally, an akhbār nawīs or other agent at Calcutta could obtain for a ruler valuable advanced word of the Resident's orders. In 1844, the Awadh ruler and his court, and even members of the Residency staff, learned the Governor General's secret instructions to the Resident before the Resident himself. The Resident complained:

> '[A] copy of this identical letter arrived at Lucknow three days before the original reached me and its contents were actually known to the King, Minister and one or two others before I was myself aware of them.... [M]y Head Intelligence Writer, previously to the perusal of the original, read out to me a letter which tallied with it nearly word for word.... '[107]

---

[103] This was his second 'petition' to the Governor General, the first having elicited no response. From Ghulam Muhammad Khan, 24 May 1782, Persian Corr., Trans. of Ltrs Recd, vol. 19, no. 25, pp. 55-7.
[104] Rsdt Poona to Gov. Gen. 21 Feb. 1795, FPC 23 March I795, no. I I.
[105] Humble Petition of Motee Loll, 4Jan. 1833, FPC 12 March 1833, no. 12.
[106] Rsdt Delhi to Secy to Govt, 9 July i815, FPC 26 July i815, no. 62.
[107] Envoy to King of Oude to Secy to Govt of India, Foreign Department, 31 Aug. 1844, FPC 5 Oct. 1844, no. 155.

From the 1700s to the seizure of sovereignty in 1858 diplomacy was inflected by the pernicious dynamic of Western modernity. It transformed a system of communication and negotiation into an extension of war, alienated a unified cosmos and rendered the possibilities of the Empire impossible. However, this was only possible by the British easily comprehending the basic principles of local diplomacy. What they had to learn was the style, but not its practice. Fisher notes that while Mughal forms and means persisted until the mid-nineteenth century and that their functioning apparently encountered similar problems of 'local collusion' which troubled the Mughal Empire. Essentially the systems remained the same and modifications were superficial. Adding Christian dates in addition to the Hijri dates to the akhbārāt for the British no more Europeanized India than did Indian numerals Indianize Europe.[108] Mughal diplomatic systems and tools were appropriated by the British but put to uses unforeseen by their inventors.

British Innovations to Local Diplomacy

Having inserted themselves into the diplomatic structures and practices of the Empire, the British attempted to innovate by imposing their cultural norms. They usually failed and Eaton's research is indicative. The EIC attempted to transform the notion of 'gift' and its place in diplomacy in India. Within a broad tessellation of the notion of 'gift' there were two views. In the prevailing Indian cosmos the 'gift' was used to form and maintain Mughal polity. Subordinates 'offered valuable tributes – *nazr,* and received in return *khil'at* – robes minutely graded in terms of rank and occasion from the wardrobe of the ruler, signifying a certain incorporation into the king's body as well as the body politic.'[109] Kingly charisma consisted in giving 'excessively' – kings styled themselves as the 'embodiment of hospitality.'[110] In contrast the Company viewed the inlaying of its employees into Mughal gift rituals with anxiety and suspicion. They saw 'these practices as bribery and extortion innate to 'Oriental despotism.''[111] At the heart of the matter lay the Company officials' abuse of the Mughal gift. In response to 'escalating charges of corruption,' the Regulating Act of 1773 barred British officials from

---

[108] Roberts. 1985. P.28
[109] Buckler. 1992; Gordon & Hambly. 2000. Quoted in Eaton. Fall 2008. P.819
[110] Mir Muhammad Taqi 'Mir,' *Zikr-i Mir: The Autobiography of the 18th-century Mughal Poet:Mir,* C. M. Naim, trans., Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 124. Here he refers to his patron Asaf ud-daula, *nawab* of Awadh, to be discussed below. See Brand. 1997. Quoted in Eaton. P.819
[111] McLane. 1993. p. 43.

receiving land, money, and jewels from Indians.[112] Under the 'reformed' gift regime, 'gifts [were] allowed . . . to have legal validity . . . only if they were given for reasons deemed satisfactory in British courts of law, which proposed new taxonomies of gifts and new ideas of political expediency.'[113]

Hastings' wanted to replace Mughal gifting with a type of gift, which in design and in symbolic value was English – the painted portrait. In Britain, portraits played a key role in strengthening kinship networks: two-dimensional images were believed to convey a certain presence of the absent donor through the mediation of likeness.[114] The dissemination of portraits extended to the diplomatic realm, and no ambassador quitted Britain without likenesses of the reigning monarch. While these canvases evoked his presence, they did not stand in for the absent sovereign (as in France), a practice that the British abhorred as 'despotic.'[115] In keeping with British tradition, Hastings' promoted *his own* portraits-as-gift because he 'believed that the British rulers of Bengal must conduct a foreign policy within a diplomatic system comparable to that of Europe,' he attempted to ground this in extant Indian notions of diplomacy as being 'face-to-face relations.'[116] To do so, Hastings supplemented English ideas of diplomacy with his interpretation of Akbar's munificent artistic practices. Ab'l Fazl recorded:

> 'His Majesty himself sat for his likeness and also ordered to have the likenesses
>
> taken of all of the grandees in the realm. An immense album was thus formed;
>
> those who had passed away have received new life and those who are still alive
>
> have immortality promised them.'[117]

Hastings ordered the translation of the sections on art from Akbar's chronicle, the *Ain-i-Akbari,* and he collected as many miniatures from Akbar's studio as possible and sent the English landscape painter Hodges to portray the forts, cities, and monuments from Akbar's reign. However, this practice had little to do with portrait-*exchange* and so Hastings attempted to import a radically new conception of gifting into extant practice.

---

[112] Eaton. P.819
[113] Dirks. 1992. p. 200.
[114] Lippincott. 1995.
[115] Eaton. P.820
[116] Marshall. 1999. p. 6.
[117] Blochmann. Vol. I. p. 115.

Instead of following Company orders to reform local custom, traditional custom became a means for locals to express diplomatic discontent with the Raj. In the 1770s Awadh was the target of British expansion. The nawab of Awadh Asaf ud-daula had threatened to write to George III if the Company did not reduce his payments, forcing Hastings to spend five months in the capital, Lucknow.[118] Shortly after Hastings' arrival the heir to the Mughal throne fled from Delhi to take refuge at Lucknow, where he sat to the English painter Zoffany, brought by Hastings, prompting Asaf to do the same.[119] However, Asaf quickly disposed of his portrait by giving it to a disgraced Company official, as a gesture of contempt for the Company's policy. The Governor-General left Lucknow having failed to reach a new agreement and horrified at the lavish entertainments Asaf had organized for him, which had the effect of increasing Awadh's debts to the Company.[120] Yet, in the eyes of one of the court's poets, this had been a fabulous epoch characterized by lavish gifting: "At the time of his [Hastings'] departure, the exalted *nawab* gave gifts to Hastings' men in such large numbers that no one could ever imagine. Every person of any note was given a horse, an elephant and a fine robe."[121] Asaf wanted to project the image of an exalted emperor who gives to his subordinates and allies in dazzling, *potlatch*-like public displays of munificence, but this contradicted Hastings' notions of parsimonious governance.

In contrast, continuities between the Empire and the Raj were more lasting. The incipient pan-Indianism of the Empire was spurred on by the perpetual insecurities of the Raj which had to extend itself to safeguard itself. As it expanded, it sought to gather information across India, frequently applying great pressure to obtain information at massive risk to the informants. From about 1775, for example, the Nawāb of Arcot sent akhbār nawīs to Calcutta.[122] Arcot had effective newswriters and informants in the courts of the Marathas, Hyderabad, and the Mysore rulers [and] news from hostile courts did not come easily. The Nawāb asserted that by

---

[118] Calendar of Persian Correspondence. 1911. vol. 5, 20 May 1781. Asaf wanted the Resident Bristow to be recalled; if Hastings did not comply, he also threatened to write to the British Prime Minister. Quoted in Eaton. P.827

[119] It seems to have been Zoffany's normal practice to take five or six sittings for a portrait, which was also continued at the court of Lucknow. See Hastings, *Diary,* Hastings Papers BL: Add Ms.39,879.

[120] Hastings Papers BL: Add Ms. 29,121, 3 May 1784.

[121] Mir Muhammad Taqi 'Mir,' *Zikr-i Mir,* p. 124.

[122] E.g. From the Nawāb of Arcot 28 Sept. 1775, Persian Corr., Copies of Ltrs Recd, vol. 4, no. i6, pp. 21-3. In sending such news reports to Calcutta, the Nawāb may have been trying to ingratiate himself with the Governor General so as to overrule the Governor of Madras, an explicit opponent of the Nawāb.

disclosing the intelligence he was putting 'the life of his newswriter … at stake.'[123] In fishing for information, the British cast their nets more widely than the Mughals and regional rulers had. A Company official urged Residents to report virtually everything about the world the Company was entering:

> The utility of collecting every possible information respecting the disposition, genius, talents, character, connections, views, interests, revenues, military strength, and even domestic history of those Princes or people, with whose affairs our own happens to be interwoven or related, either immediately or remotely, must also equally clear.[124]

In doing so, undoubtedly, the already peripatetic locals the British relied upon formed a new notion of the political-geography of India in a colonized globe. This extended to local rulers.[125] For the first time a series of princes mounted direct diplomatic initiatives to the British Queen in London. More than 30 direct embassies to the British court in London as a means of seeking recourse to the unfair practices of British officials in India. Though embarrassing to the British, local diplomatic missions to London were never forbidden. To do so would have denied the sovereignty which underpins diplomacy and which local rulers possessed before the British took them for all practical purposes. These 'counterflows' were of course minor to the diplomatic onslaught of the Company but in mounting their missions, locals learnt how to take advantage of European inventions such as printing by publishing cheap pamphlets to circulate their views and learnt how to lobby the bodies within the British parliamentary system. Some secured advantages for local rulers but they were subsumed by the Company's overriding rationale of militarily accruing sovereignty in India. It was within this new diplomatic consciousness of a colonized globe that the West's rationality of the 'other' achieved its zenith.

The achievements of 'othering' took two distinct forms: maintaining the racial purity of their own diplomatic service and subsuming all diplomacy to British diplomats. The rationale for the first axis was put forward in 1782 when the Commander-in-Chief of the Company's armies, wrote: 'At present, excepting at the Court of the Nizam, we are obliged to depend on Intelligence coveyed to us thro' black agents as the views of every other Power of Hindostan

---

[123] From the Nawab of Arcot, 3 Sept. i777, Persian Corr., Copies ofLtrs Recd, vol. 9, no. 2I, pp. 30-2.
[124] Soon after Richard Sulivan wrote this, he himself began a brief and controversial career as a Resident at Arcot and then Hyderabad. Sulivan. p. 31.
[125] See Fisher. 2004

and whose reports it is but too natural to suppose are calculated to suit their own Interests.'[126]

Others agreed, citing Indians lack of judgement and fidelity.[127] The old notion of local corruption first evidenced during the Surman Embassy continued. One Resident wrote '… it is vain to expect honesty from any Native Servant, who is not placed beyond the Reach of ordinary Temptation.'[128] Apparently no lessons about negotiating with locals had been learnt from 1717. This institutional racism plainly marked the Residency system. In 1791 the Resident at Nagpur died. Both his chief Indian assistant and the young British lieutenant – a purely military, non-political man – sought to assume the functions of the Resident. Each wrote independently to the Governor General asserting his right to replace the late Resident. The Governor General immediately decided to support the British lieutenant. The Indian, rather than allow himself to be demoted to the 'Character of Common News Writer,' resigned the Company's service.[129]

The second axis was the British slowly removing the function of political communication from the rulers' newswriters and representatives and transferring them to its Residents. Beginning in 1793, the Company eventually induced some fifty-five states to agree by treaty to channel all foreign political contacts through the Resident.[130] A typical treaty read: the ruler in question abjured any 'negotiation or political correspondence with any European or Native power without the consent of the said Company.'[131] On their part, rulers sought to avoid such restrictions on their foreign relations. Rulers clearly maintained akhbār nawīs in all the courts and states of interest to them, well beyond the power of the Company to prohibit.[132] In practice, however, the Company expected all states to observe this restriction from as early as the Resident could enforce it. In the case of Nagpur, for example, that Rājā would not conclude a treaty prohibiting all communication until 1826, yet the Company nevertheless forbade the

---

[126] Eyre Coote to Governor General in Council i6 Jan. 1781, Foreign Secret Con- sultations, 23 Feb. 1782, no. 7, IOL [hereinafter FSC]

[127] Sulivan. 1784. pp. 307-8.; Rsdt Delhi to Secy to Govt, 13 Oct. 1813, FPC, I June 18I6, no. 13. These views are repeated in Minute of Sir C. T. Metcalfe, 14 Dec. 1829, FPC 19 Dec. 1829, no. 22.

[128] Resident Hyderabad to Secretary to Government, 5 September 1816, FPC 28 September 1816, no. 15

[129] Lt James Davidson to Department Persian Translation, 16 Aug. 1791, Foreign Miscellaneous Series, vol. 52, Nagpore Residency, 19 April 1792, IOL.

[130] William Lee-Warner, The Native States of India (London, I9I0), p. 220.

[131] Aitchison. 1909.

[132] See Sardar Ganda Singh, 'Akhbarat-i-Lahaur-o-Multan,' Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission 21 (Dec. 1944): 43-6. Singh surmises from internal evidence that these akhbarat from Aug. I848 to Jan. I849 for Ahmadpur, Bahawalpur, Lahore, Multan, and elsewhere were written for the Maharaja of Patiala. They were found among other discarded papers from a collection of a Munshi in Multan. Their language is sympathetic to the English and hostile to the Sikhs opposing the English.

practice as early as 1813. While the Company thus did not literally forbid rulers from having a foreign policy, it simply insisted that all communication pass through its hands and meet its approval.[133] In practice it meant that the Residents could communicate with each other and coordinate their efforts while the princes were forbidden to correspond with anyone except through the Company.

The assumption of paramountcy in 1858, made the British the pre-eminent power in the land but the removal of military insecurities did not mean that non-Whites were allowed the old possibilities denied by Western modernity; nor were they permitted into the citadel of Western modernity. To allow in the 'other' would have undermined the entire project and the purity of the Political Line was assiduously maintained. This was in the teeth of opposition, for locals still did not think of the British as fundamentally alien. Locals remained untouched by the alien metaphysic and sought personal success, status, etc., thru the state regardless of what the state thought of the locals. Although locals were very slowly admitted into the ICS after the 1860s, they were specifically barred from the Residency system in 1877.[134] Locals were never seriously considered until the 20th century. In May 1918 the first local, Abdul Qaiyum was finally accepted into the Line after lifelong service as a support officer. His previous years of service meant that this would not cause 'an embarrassing precedent' as Qaiyum was to retire within 12 months.[135] Following him a number of locals were raised from the support ranks to the full service but only in 1925 did the first local, KPS Menon enter the Political Line from the ICS in keeping with standard practice for a British officer. His appointment did not open the gates to Indianization of the Political Line. As late at 1935 three Indians raised the issue of 'White colour' being a requirement for the Line in the Assembly. The reply was 'Not as far as I am aware'.[136] Hogben traces the reluctance of the British to Indianize the political line even on the eve of

---

[133] Secy to Govt to Acting Rsdt Nagpur, 15 Oct. 1813, FPC 15 Oct. 1813, nos 3, 4; Aitchison. Collection, 2. P. 519-27.

[134] Memo. D 233, 'Admission of a Native of India to the Political Dept', and undated 1918 note by H. W. Garrett, India Office, in L/P&S/I8; for a fuller account of the topic to I919, cf. Hogben. 1977; & Satakopan. I94I. p. 138.

[135] Telegram from Chelmsford, 2 May 1918, with No. 1914/1918, L/P&S/I 1/135.

[136] LAD, Q. 914, 2I March I935, S. Satyamurti, and Metcalfe's reply; Q. I469, 4 April I935, S. Satyamurti, and reply; Q. 1503, 4 April 1935, Sham Lal, and Q. 1504, Sham Lal and T. S. A. Chettiar, and replies; and Q. I505, 4 April 1935, Sham Lal, S. Satyamurti, T. S. A. Chettiar and Mohan Lal Saksena, and reply, ibid.

independence to 'a certain sense of racial or moral superiority' founded on the assumption that the locals 'lacked character'.[137]

Conclusions

Puri captured the processes described in this chapter when he wrote that:

> 'It can hardly be suggested that the British evolved their own administrative organisation independent and exclusive of the one they inherited. … [A] policy of *festina lente* was followed to enable them to understand properly problems connected with administration of people whose language, culture and tradition were entirely unknown to them. Many of the administrative institutions of the preceding ruling families were retained permanently, laws and usages left undisturbed, and reforms in administration postponed.'[138]

The tessellation was only possible because at the level of practice what the British encountered was no different in any meaningful sense to their own experience. The roots of diplomatic practice in India lay with the secularised Mughal polity which developed in an India of *dharma* making for a polity very different from, say, the Ottoman Empire. The Mughals limited themselves, by-and-large, to the secular and the temporal in their diplomacy, creating a body of knowledge 'this worldly'. In doing so, diplomacy relied on the prevalent notion that sovereignty though God given (as it had to be in a Muslim polity), was dependent on meeting requirements originating in this world. The implications for modernity are encapsulated by Subrahmanyam who argues that:

> 'it is of some importance to delink the notion of 'modernity' from a particular European trajectory (Greece, classical Rome, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and thus 'modernity' ...), and to argue that it represents a more-or-less global shift, with many different sources and roots, and-inevitably-many different forms and meanings depending on which society we look at it from.'[139]

At the level of practice, the evidence matches Subrahmanyam's reading. What little practical innovation in terms of diplomacy the British did perform was motivated by their metaphysics.

---

[137] Hogben. P.767
[138] Pure. 1975. P.iv.
[139] Subrahmanyam. Theory and History. (Article on Textures of Time). P.737

Of primary interest to civilizational analysis is the meeting of the metaphysic of 'othering' with *dharma*. This meeting had dramatic consequences for the future of diplomacy. If, as Nelson views it, that Europe's long gestation produced a 'maximum rationalization of intelligence' predicated upon 'substantial numbers of persons be[ing] legally empowered and psychologically disposed to carry on mental production at the highest level of operation without being called to a halt by disabling private or public inhibitions or barriers'[140] then surely the processes underway under the British was a 'regression'. Instead of transcending 'particularistic restraints of family, kin, caste and class and allow their minds to wander within 'neutral zones' provided by institutions free from political and religious dictate'[141] the Raj reinforced Mughal barriers (a militarized bureaucracy); deconstructed a secularized diplomatic service (the munshī was firmly placed in a secondary position) and introduced the all-encompassing notion of 'race' to create an impermeable biological barrier. Ultimately the Raj deleted diplomacy. At the centre of these innovations was the metaphysic of Western modernity and its ordering principles were not only regressive but it also presented the most significant challenge the metaphysic of contextual action. Whether binary-logic would finally overwhelm *dharma* at the moment of South Asia's freedom and infect the modernity of the Indian state is what the next chapter explores.

ENDS

---

[140]p.184, 187
[141] Nielsen. 2001. p.409

CHAPTER SIX: DIPLOMACY REBORN

My life is my message.

− Gandhi.[1]

Introduction

The final controversy this project will tackle arises from Der Derian theorising that the moment of independence is the moment of victory of the 'othering' metaphysic.[2] It is at this moment when the non-Western world effaces its history and begins to operate along the principles of Western modernity. The aspiration of independence must be understood in such a reading as the moment of arrival, when a people transform themselves into a state and interact with other states through a diplomatic system. What actually came to pass in the state that became India was that it found itself with a bureaucratic system which can be traced to the Mughal Empire in terms of practice and familiar with notions of statehood and sovereignty even if they were understood as extensions of a royal body. These Mughal practices, modified by the British, were however expected to perform in a manner and put forward a type of policy which the inherited bureaucratic system was not designed for. To recap, the administrative apparatus India found itself though Mughal was reorganised under the British to continue more rapacious policies of extraction. The major British innovation was to totally de-Indianize this apparatus whose diplomatic arm remained sanitized of locals to the moment of independence. Yet, this bureaucracy was expected to perform a role and in a manner totally novel because it arose from the locals. This chapter will introduce this novel approach to international relations. It requires returning to the subsumed ideas of *dharma* because it was the founding category which the architects of modern Indian policy drew upon to formulate policy after, as Bajpai says, a

---

[1] Mahatma Gandhi. Message to Shanti Sena Dal, September 5, 1947(original in Bengali). In Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi. Downloaded from: http://www.gandhiserve.org/ Henceforth CWMG.
[2] Der Derian. 1987. p.23. As has been argued in Chapter II, this idea is located in a disciplinary position (Bull), in turn located in the literature on modernity.

millennia. Developed by Mahatma Gandhi, the tenets of this policy are non-violence and virtuous action for oneself because it is good. A benefit is that it can also be an example to both opponents and the uncommitted. The main proponent for these ideas was the first Prime Minister and India's diplomat par excellence, Jawaharlal Nehru. He was a vector because he drew upon a Gandhian legacy and put it into operation. It is argued, that the abiding influence on Nehru was Gandhi. Combined they crafted a foreign policy which can only be understood in terms of civilizational analysis – because the policy is deeply embedded in local notions of action, physical conditions and diplomacy. They came together as non-alignment which was the international application of what Gandhi called *satyāgraha* – a technique developed to fight the British. Ironically, the system was activated by a diplomatic machinery as old as Empire itself.

Non-alignment's application was affected by two early conflicts with Pakistan and China. They highlighted the principles of Indian international policy and the failures of the diplomatic system as inherited. Through an analysis of the two conflicts the chapter will argue that while Nehru kept with the tenets of non-alignment, there were two practical and complicating factors: gaining familiarity with how to operate through a bureaucratic apparatus and the transition to managing real power after Mughal and British rule. In terms of managing power, of operationalizing a local logic of managing power, India had to rely upon a class of administrators who though Indian had cut their teeth in the British bureaucratic apparatus. It meant that under Nehru decision making was highly centralized and scant regard was paid to contrary opinion. In the opinion of former Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh this is probably the reason why even in the 21st century 'IFS officers are loath to provide any opinion.'[3] Power, in Nehruvian times coalesced in the Prime Minister's office and it has remained there. The corollary is that the prime-meridian of Indian policy has remained non-alignment. Despite this, Indians and outsiders, academics and newspapers argue to the contrary. It raises another riddle which will be undone by explaining non-alignment as understood by the practitioners and demonstrate how it remains central thru the operation of nuclear policy. The chapter will conclude with an analysis of revisionist arguments about India's non-alignment as being specious by demonstrating that nuclear policy continues to keep with *satyāgraha* in the manner in which Gandhi developed and Nehru understood the term.

---

[3] Interview with Jaswant Singh.

Gandhi's innovations within a tradition of *dharma*

Dharma suffuses Gandhi's life. The word appears more than 3,500 times in his writings. This section will explicate a clear philosophy of action (including diplomatic action) that Gandhi articulated based on the Mb's notion of *dharma*. However, there is the charge, fashionable amongst post-Enlightenment scholars, that Gandhi's writings are a 'jumble,'[4] bereft of order. Reminiscent of the initial reaction of European scholars to the Mb – a text Gandhi drew on – the accusation is not new and hints at the unwillingness of scholars (largely foreign but many local) to accept Gandhi on his own terms. During Gandhi's life fellow-Indians upbraided him for falling short of the type of rationality which Nandy derides. Never alienated from the *texture* of his civilization, Gandhi operated on a distinctly local plane. He read the Mb as Indian diplomats today do. He wrote the Mb is, 'a profoundly religious book, largely allegorical, in no way meant to be a historical record. It is a description of the eternal duel going on within ourselves, given so vividly as to make us think for the time being that the deeds described therein were actually done by human beings.'[5] Such views led some to conclude that 'the ideal of truth is a Western conception … in the East, craftiness and diplomatic wile have always been held in much repute.'[6] Gandhi's response to such criticisms provides the *texture* to decode the purpose of his writing:

> 'At the time of writing, I never think of what I have said before. My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. … But friends who observe inconsistency will do well to take the meaning that my latest writing may yield unless, of course, they prefer the old. But before making the choice they should try to see if there is not an underlying and abiding consistency between the two seeming inconsistencies.'[7]

The key to unlocking this passage is Gandhi's use of the term 'truth'. Gandhi's 'truth' or 'underlying and abiding consistency' is what Hiltebeitel calls the highest *dharma* (henceforth *HD*) in the Mb. It is to know the *dharma* appropriate for the particular situation one is in.[8] In other words, a way of acting contextually. Such a system of action focuses on the self, requiring

---

[4] Markovits
[5] Sikhism. CWMG. Vol 33. P.31-32. p.32
[6] Oriental Ideal of Truth. p.227-231. p.227-229. CWMG. Vol.4 23 MAY, 1904 - 4 NOVEMBER, 1905 178.
[7] Conundrums. CWMG Vol. 76. p.355-359. p. 356
[8] Hiltebeitel. P.208

knowledge of the self[9] as located in 'time' and 'space,' awareness of the socially prescribed and learning – that is reflecting – on actual social reality.[10] Gandhi's original contribution was that he took *HD* and focused on the individual's morality and used this to introduce the ideal of non-violence which translated into *satyāgraha* in practice. Since individual morality was the underlying consistency of Gandhi's approach, it became the grounds for his engagement with the British. He chose this to protect himself from being infected by imperialism during his long and intense engagement with British imperialism. In short, Gandhi's opposition was to the very mentality of imperialism. For fellow Indians to want anything else implied:

> 'that we want English rule without the Englishman. You want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger; that is to say, you would make India English. And when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but Englistan. This is not the Swaraj that I want.[11]

The mentalities of imperialism which Gandhi countered were many. For our purposes two are consequential. One was the organisational principle of imperial society. This was 'race' which simultaneously stole individuality (by ascribing totalising, racial, characteristics) and fostered a false dichotomy or hierarchy between entire populations (based on misreading of Darwinian evolution).[12] The second was violence and the fear it produced.[13] Morality was Gandhi's means to counter both by creating a universalism of the particular based on resistance. It meant Gandhi could oppose imperialism without resorting to the techniques of imperialism. This contribution is what Nehru took from Gandhi and continues to define the foreign policy of India. The first test of this system was the invasion of Kashmir in 1947. That incident and the China war of 1961 both produced, through the medium of Nehru, a Gandhian response. Though important lessons were learned about the application of *satyāgraha* in the international context, the Indo-US nuclear deal essentially keeps to the same logics of diplomacy. The abiding influence of *dharma* on the logics of and practice of Indian diplomacy can only be explained thru Gandhi because he reintroduced it to the level of state-politics in India.

---

[9] Chapter 3. footnote 72
[10] Chapter 3. p.17-19
[11] I THINK. From HIND SWARAJ. CWMG Vol. 10. p.255
[12] See Banton. 1998. Of course race in itself was not a European invention (See Dikötter. 2008. India had caste – which might be interpreted as a type of racial view – but Gandhi laboured against caste oppression.
[13] See chapter 5.

In explicating Gandhi's thought a number of misinterpretations have to be managed but they themselves provide the means of investigating his thought. Though correct in calling Gandhi's thought 'contextual pragmatism' meaning that what goes is 'what is suitable … relative to the person, the circumstances, and the object,' Gier is incorrect to base this upon the view that although 'Gandhi expressed faith in eternal Truth, he always reminded himself and his followers that finite beings could only know finite truths.'[14] In arriving at this conclusion Gier makes a levels-of-analysis error. Gandhi's truth was perspectival but only at a particular level and this did not mean that Truth was beyond people. The means of making sense of Gandhi's thought *on his own terms* requires focusing on his own writings and the texts he referred to. One pre-eminent source – for *dharma* – is the Mb. Between 1905 and 1947 he directly refers to or quotes from the Mb nearly 300 times, translated entire sections of it, studied it and encouraged its study nationally. Gandhi's reliance on the text is an obvious *texture* to understanding him. It provides the context to locate Gandhi's thought.

Gandhi's notions were firmly grounded in the Mb's notion of *HD* which countenances a *dharma* for each age determined on the basis of the needs, aspirations and capacities of the individuals living in that age: in the age of truth the *dharmas* are different from the *dharmas* of the dvaparayuga, in turn different from the *kaliyuga*. *Dharma* is context specific leading Vohra to conclude: '*Dharma*, keeps changing in accordance with place and time. With the passage of time and change of conditions – material or otherwise, the prevalent *dharmas* go into oblivion and new *dharmas* take their place. There is no sanctity attached to the old or ancient in the Indian tradition.'[15] Gandhi drew upon this fluid civilizational notion of *dharma*, in an age of fixed certainties (religion, dogma and creed) and proactively sought to distance himself from them. Gandhi wrote that:

> 'One's dharma is a personal possession. One is oneself responsible for preserving it or losing it. What can be defended in and through a group is not *dharma*, it is dogma.'[16] *Dharma* is unlike religions because the sources of *dharma* are multiple. People could 'get it whether from India or Arabia'[17] because 'Hinduism … is ever evolving. It has no one scripture like the Quran or

---

[14] Gier. 2004. p.69, 79
[15] Jain. 2005. P.105
[16] Hindu-Muslim Unity. CWMG. Vol.24, P.324-327, p.325
[17] Some Reminiscences of Raychandbhai, CWMG. Vol. 36, p.467-477. p.475

the Bible. The Gita itself is an instance in point. It has breathed new life into Hinduism. It has given an original rule of conduct.'[18]

Neither was *dharma* an ideology because, like the Mb, he emphasized the authority of the individual. Gandhi noted that, 'there is no such thing as absolute morality for all times. But there is relative morality which is absolute enough for imperfect morals that we are.'[19] Gandhi was not after a static morality for 'all times'. Statements, especially of this type have led various authors to ascribe to him a lack of belief – such as Gier attributing perspectivalism to Gandhi and others, unfamiliar with the *texture* of Indian thought, even rendering him a postmodern![20] Gandhi did countenance, in the manner of the *HD* of the Mb where the individual's knowing and doing arises from context – rather than an external authority. It is the Mb, rather than Gandhi which is captured by Gier's 'contextual pragmatism' and from within this setting Gandhi improvised to create an 'absolute' – a *dharma* – for his age founded on his morality.

The emphasis on the individual however did not signal a break from society which remained fundamental to Gandhi as it was in the Mb where the individual was embedded in society. It was through society that Gandhi overcame the limited perspective of the individual and also found a means to find abiding truth. Gandhi wrote: '*Dharma* is a quality of the soul and is present, in every human being. Through it we know our duty to human life and our true relation with other souls. It is evident that we cannot do so till we have known the self in us. Hence dharma is the means by which we can know ourselves.'[21] Knowing oneself came before knowing one's relations – but the purpose was, as in the Mb, to navigate society, not break with it. Gandhi wrote:

> 'Dharma does not lie in giving up a custom simply because no reason can be given for it. On the contrary dharma consists in respecting the customs of the society of which one is part, provided these do not go against morality. … A person who gives up a practice because he cannot see any reason for its continuance is unwise and wilful.'[22]

---

[18] Teaching of Hinduism. CWMG. Vol. 69. p.419-420, p.420
[19] FAITH v. REASON, CWMG. vol. 77, p.154-156. p.155
[20] Rudolph & Rudolph. 2006.
[21] CWMG. Vol 36.
[22] Letter to Sumangal Prakash, CWMG VOL. 60, p.275-276

In addition, he specifically stated that to ignore society was a right which had to be earned by completely disengaging from society. Otherwise it was imperative to participate. He wrote:

> 'Today, the dharma of our times is to spin and so long as the sadhu is dependent on society for his daily needs, he must spread the dharma of the age by practising it. … It is a different matter, however, if he eats left-overs lying around, does not care to cover himself, and lives in some unapproachable and unseen cave away from society. He is then free not to observe the dharma of the age.'[23]

'Gandhi is not an absolutist, idealist or a theoretician but a man rooted in the ground reality of human condition and predicament. Unlike Kant he never loses right of the real complex 'lived' situations that human beings face in their day-to-day life,' writes Jain. However, he repeats Gier's error in arguing that Gandhi follows Kant and 'pleads for imperatives which are *categorical enough* for mortals like us whose life is not black and white but bears many hues of gray.'[24] Such a reading comes very close to asserting that Gandhi was no more than an opportunistic operator who cloaked his realism in the garb of traditional sayings. Such a reading cannot explain Gandhi because even if his activity was 'tactical' in de Certeau's sense, the tactic relies on a *metis*. For Gandhi this was the civilizational idea of *dharma* and all it implied.

Self-evidently aware of his *metis* and the age in which he lived and intent on transforming it, Gandhi sought to craft a *dharma* befitting his age. In short, Gandhi's approach was to tap into and convince his society to create an abiding truth whose sanctity arose from a meeting of minds. This was not to be abstract thought but applicable to concrete policy formulations. Gandhi's modification was to take the Mb's *dharma* and emphasize the morality implicit in it and secondly to introduce the notion of non-violence. These two components were necessary for Gandhi to realise his avowed aim to not only end British imperialism but to do it in a manner which did not mimic imperialism. Gandhi's aim was socio-political because he wanted to create a new political unit *and* a new social order. The political aspect was to replace imperialism with the 'sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority.'[25] His name for the political unit

---

[23] Discussion with a Jain "Muni" at Palitana, CWMG VOL.31, p.112-114, p.113
[24] Quoted in Jain. 2005. p.109-111
[25] Speech at Exhibition Ground, Faizpur. CWMG. Vol. 70. P. 2 - 235. P.232

was *Ramarajya* or 'the kingdom of God on earth.'[26] This had to be achieved in a very particular

manner because means mattered. He explained:

> If I want to deprive you of your watch, I shall certainly have to fight for it; if I
>
> want to buy your watch, I shall have to pay you for it; and if I want a gift I shall
>
> have to plead for it; and, according to the means I employ, the watch is stolen
>
> property, my own property, or a donation. Thus we see three different results
>
> from three different means.'[27]

The means Gandhi wanted were moral means – in short non-imperial means. It is here that the

social element of his enterprise becomes significant. Gandhi had to create a movement which

was true to his own morality in his fight against the British. It was a difficult task. He wrote: 'I

consider it to be man's achievement to harmonise *dharma* [meaning morality] and the ultimate

aim of life, truth and *swaraj*: *swaraj* and government by all, the welfare of the country and the

welfare of all. That alone is the path that leads to *moksha*, that alone is what interests me. None

of my activities are carried on with any other end in view.'[28]

There were two aspects to this harmonization entangled in Gandhi's conception of morality.

One was to nationalise his *dharma*. This of course had to be done without violence which

created its own set of issues. Secondly, he had to then combat a system predicated on violence

with non-violence. Essentially, for Gandhi non-violence was a personal 'article of faith' which he

felt was the 'agraha' (wish) of individuals and should be of the nation as a whole. A real

democracy, Gandhi believed, emerged from a 'personal liberation, an attitudinal revolution

within each citizen.'[29] It was this that Gandhi was aiming to perform.

Non-violence though central to Gandhian thought was not of local origins. It was in Nelson's

terms a product of intercivilizational contact. Non-violence, as Matilal argues, was 'derived, *pace*

his [Gandhi's] own comments, more from such Western sources as Tolstoy and Ruskin.'[30] Fully

cognizant that the British did not have a monopoly on violence, Gandhi wrote: 'Hinduism as it is

practiced today, or has ever been known to have ever been practised, has certainly not

---

[26] Independence. CWMG. Vol.90. p.327-328 . p.327

[27] Hind Swaraj. CWMG. Chapter. 16. Vol.10. p.245-315. P.287

[28] What is one's dharma? CWMG. Vol 46. p.296-298. p.298

[29] Dalton. I993. p.135-138

[30] Bimal Krishna Matilal shows that non-violence had an Indian lineage but that Gandhi did not draw upon it. See Matilal. 1980.. See also Lavrin. 1960.

condemned war as I do. What, however, I have done is to put a new but natural and logical interpretation upon … the spirit of Hinduism.[31] Leaving aside the social and practical manoeuvres required to achieve *Ramarajya* non-violently, we will consider the philosophical integrity of non-violence's introduction since it became a constitutive element of metaphysic being developed and adopted as the cornerstone of Indian foreign policy.

The degree of confusion surrounding Gandhi's notion of non-violence arises from a fundamental failure to locate Gandhi within his own *texture*. As Bilgrani states, it would be a 'spectacular misreading' to view Gandhi's non-violence from within the Western canon of searching for truth.[32] Indicative of the Western canon is Mill's *On Liberty*, which argues that truth is never something we are sure we have attained; We must therefore be made modest about our opinions and not impose them. Gandhi agreed with being modest about morality, but not because the truth of morality was in doubt. It was not. Gandhi, arising from the context of the Mb saw the self-reflecting individual in his particular context as most significant. Gandhi made the morality of the individual as *most* significant and used it to establish what Gier calls 'organic holism.'[33] In other words, Gandhi agreed with the Western tradition that morality was present in everyone and underpinned everything but arrived at it from a different epistemology and this had important ontological connotations: Morality for Gandhi was all pervasive not because of its uniformity; rather because morality is a quality present in every individual. Gandhi wrote, '*dharma* means morality. I do not know of any *dharma* which is opposed to or goes beyond morality. *Dharma* is morality practised to its ultimate limits.'[34] Morality was universal, but it was highly individualistic and not subservient to external authority. The 'seat of authority', Gandhi said 'lies here (pointing to his breast). I exercise my judgement about every scripture, including the *Gita*.'[35] What Gandhi did was to, in local terms, give pride of place to *antahkarana* or the individual's morality rather than *śruti* (revealed texts), *smrti* (traditions) and *ācāra* (expected conduct).[36] To put in the context of the Mb, what Gandhi did was take the central notion of the

---

[31] Teaching of Hinduism. CWMG. Vol. 69. p.419-420, p.420
[32] Bilgrami.
[33] Gier. 2004. p.41; Such conceptions would have been available to Gandhi from his own background, in particular the bhakti movement which was influential in Gandhi's home state, Gujarat. See Brady. 2001; Rangarajan. 1996.
[34] What is One's Dharma. CWMG. Vol. 46. P.296-298. p.296
[35] Discussion with Basil Mathews and others. CWMG. Vol. 70. P.113-117. p. 117
[36] See Bühler. 1964. p.30

individual in context and sought out the agent's conscience and argued that the agent's operations should be determined by the conscience. Gandhi's personal morality was 'truth and non-violence. While the end is truth, non-violence is the means of attaining it. In such matters, however, the means cannot be separated from the end. Hence I have written that truth and non-violence are the two sides of the same coin.'[37] In emphasizing morality, Gandhi kept with the centrality *HD* accorded to the individual. His innovation was to focus on the morality of the individual. As Ganeri writes:

> 'what is in question is not how the practice is made, but how it is made sense of, and that is what preserves each of the virtues involved as itself an intrinsic good. Gandhi was right to identify in the ideas of *satyāgraha* and non-harm a pair of pan-Indian intrinsic values that support each other in achieving stability under reflection. Philosophy, argumentation and the practices of truth are also arts of the soul, ways of cultivating impartiality, self-control, steadiness, modesty, toleration and patience.'[38]

This understanding of morality though radically different from the Western canon – was entirely in keeping with the Mb's *HD*. One Western response to Gandhi was that he was stuck in an Orientalist view of India being different.[39] Such an argument, of course, is nothing less than another attempt to reel Gandhi into the folds of the European canon. Gandhi was not different, in the sense that he was unrecoverable to Europe. He assumed exactly the opposite because Gandhi argued morality was absolute because the individual believed it. In doing so Gandhi kept with the Mb's focus on the individual acting contextually. This meant that the 'pervasive diffidence and lack of conviction in our opinions which is the character of the epistemology that Mill's argument presupposes, is entirely alien to Gandhi.'[40] In terms of action, Mill's lack of certainty meant one tolerates other moralities. In contrast, Gandhi was certain. It gave him the courage to act on his convictions. His conscience told him that non-violence was the moral path and so it became for him the means of securing *Ramarajya*. This is why Gandhi's conception of non-violence becomes essential. He explained that:

---

[37] What is One's Dharma. CWMG. Vol. 46. P.296-298. p.296
[38] Ganeri. P.235-236
[39] Fox. 1989. p.103
[40] Ibid., P.253

'Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of ahimsa. But it is its least expression. The principle of ahimsa is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill of anybody.'[41]

It meant that the moral being could not bear 'hostility to others or even criticise them; it only required that one not follow these others, if conscience does not permit it.'[42] In other words an ends free of criticism had to be accomplished without criticism. The alternative was resistance because unlike criticism it was moral (as Gandhi understood the term) and it was not totalizing in the sense of the Western tradition of moral philosophy.'[43] Resistance opposed but was not like criticism which actually did violence to the opponent. Unlike criticism, resistance is not an impurity of the heart, it does not get corrupted as easily nor does it breed hostility which inevitably results in other forms of violence. Resistance differed from criticism because it was devoid of implications of homogenizing universality because to criticise is the imposition of individual morality upon another. Resistance, on the other hand, arises from a disagreement in individual moralities but instead of attempting to either erase it (critique) or accept it (toleration) what is done is to simply resist the immoral. It was through resistance that Gandhi was able to harmonize his *dharma* with the aims of *Ramarajya*.

If philosophically Gandhi's approach is sound then the second act of harmonization he was attempting was to meld his *dharma* with the people, in short, the question of Truth as absolute for him, he now had to convince others (a process which also shaped him). Crucially, for Gandhi, 'Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness. Indeed, lying is the mother of violence.'[44] For Gandhi, in contrast to Bondurant's argument which is once again predicated on the supposed relativity of truth,[45] truth was absolute. However he could not impose his truth on others. The way of engaging the opponent was through resistance. The way of engaging those who did not consider Gandhi an enemy was for Gandhi to demonstrate his truth to them. This was essential because Gandhi was a humanist and creating a mass movement. It was impossible for him to close himself off. Gandhi's answer was to act virtuously, that is, in keeping with his morality of non-violence. This, like all virtues was not realisable in the real world. Gandhi wrote:

---

[41] Letter to Narandas Gandhi. CWMG. Vol.49. P.406-409. p.408
[42] Bilgrami, op. cit. P. 244
[43] Bilgrami. P.255
[44] War or Peace. CWMG Vol. 35. p.244-246. p.245
[45] Bondurant. 1958. Chapter II.

'A human being may keep perfect non-violence as his or her ideal and strive to

follow it as completely as possible. But no matter how near it he reaches, he will

find some degree of violence unavoidable, in breathing or eating, for instance.'[46]

Impossibility in practice however did not diminish the value of the ideal: 'The fact that perfect

non-violence is impossible to practise while one lives in this body does not vitiate the principle

itself.'[47] Pontara mistakenly remarks that 'Gandhi's rejection of violence in the solution of group

conflicts is in practice subject to so many qualifications that his whole position has to be sharply

distinguished from the traditional Western pacifist view.'[48] Gandhi's position was certainly not

Western pacifism. It was distinct and arose from totally different epistemological origins. He

expected his actions to convert the immoral to morality but if it did not the only effect was

Gandhi's disappointment since he never sought to prescribe to others what they ought to do. It

was not better but entirely distinct from the consequences of criticism.

So convinced was he of the desired response, that is, that humanity was unified, that not even

Hitler and Mussolini were beyond the veil. A questioner put it to Gandhi that Hitler and

Mussolini, 'are incapable of any moral response. They have no conscience and are impervious to

world opinion. Seeing that dictatorships are unmoral by definition, would the law of moral

conversion hold good in their case?' Gandhi's reply was that 'non-violence is based on the

assumption that human nature is one and therefore unfailingly responds to the advance of

love.' He added that 'these dictators' defy world opinion because none of the 'Great Powers can

come to them with clean hands' because of the 'injustice done to their people by the Great

Powers in the past.'[49] For Gandhi then, non-violence would always succeed because the world

was morally indivisible – in the sense that all had a sense of right and wrong – and in the specific

case of Hitler and Mussolini, their morality had not been activated because they were dealing

with immoral actors who themselves gloried in violence.[50] To effect a response one needed to

be virtuous. 'Goodness is a sort of mysterious contagion' writes Bilgrani. There were also some

---

[46] Problem of Non-violence. CWMG. Vol 35. P.323-324. p.323

[47] Letter to Ambalal Sarabhai. CWMG. Vol 36. P.28-31. p.30. See also: Letter to Premabehn Kantak. Vol. 56. p.263-267. p.267 and specifically a very idealistic portrayal of invasion: Triumph of Non-violence. Vol. 21. P.512-516. p.515

[48] Pontara. 1965. p.209

[49] Discussion with Christian Missionaries. CWMG. Vol 74 P.307-313. P.311-312

[50] The difference, if any, between fascism and imperialism (Germany and Britain) was not of kind but of degree argued Gandhi. See Statement to the Press. CWMG. Vol. 83. P.174-177. p.176

very utilitarian benefits to be reaped. For Klitgaard this is almost a Platonic lesson: acting virtuously leads to the greatest utility.[51]

The utility of Gandhi's philosophy lay in the practice of resistance based on absolute truth. Arising from a totally distinct epistemology (truth was perfect and realisable) it produced *satyāgraha* a form of violence – since it opposes – ontologically different from imperial violence. In practice *satyāgraha* meant resistance (not violence of the imperial variety) founded on the absolute morality of the practitioner and knowing that morality was universal since the aim of the action was to make the opponent abandon their immoral ways through Gandhi's example. The ontological difference between Gandhi's violence and imperial violence meant that *satyāgraha's* object was to – unlike any previous form of violence – always appeal to the heart.[52] It required a certain quality – morality – in the target. As Power notes, British attitudes made Gandhi's *satyāgraha* feasible.[53] Here was Gandhi's proof of the universal nature of truth. It might require intense action to tease it out, but it was possible. Gandhi's success was due to the British possessing, as Gandhi knew they did, the morality to realise their wrong. Klitgaard calls this sympathy and adds that for *satyāgraha* to succeed it requires the opponent to also be a 'maximizer' not an 'absolutist' because if the opponent can absolutely commit to defeating the *satyāgrahi* then the latter commits suicide.[54] These two reasons made Gandhi write: 'You cannot fast against a tyrant,' because 'it will be as a piece of violence done to him. You invite penalty from him for disobedience of his orders, but you cannot inflict on yourself penalties when he refuses to punish and renders it impossible for you to disobey his orders so as to compel infliction of penalty.' Gandhi concluded:

> 'Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a parent who drinks. I fasted to reform those who loved me. But I will not fast to reform, say General Dyer who not only does not love me, but who regards himself as my enemy.'[55]

Fasting, of course, was not the only tactic of non-violent resistance. With someone as intractable as Dyer there was only disappointment. However disappointment was not

---

[51] Klitgaard. 1971. p.143-153.
[52] Requisite Qualifications. CWMG. Vol.75. P.195-197. P.196
[53] Power. 1963 p.99-108. p.106-107
[54] Klitgaard. p.143-153. P.148
[55] Letter to George Joseph. CWMG. Vol. 27. p.225-226. p.225 Fasting in satyāgraha has well-defined limits.

something Gandhi feared. Nandy notes that the Mb ends in a sort of disappointment. Gandhi, wrote India's second President Radhakrishnan, 'knows that life at best is a long second best, a perpetual compromise between the ideal and the possible. The kingdom of God knows no compromise, no practical limitations. But here on earth there are the pitiless laws of nature. We have to build an ordered cosmos on the basis of human passions. Through effort and difficulty ideals struggle to realisation.'[56]

Life as second best however had much to commend it as far as Gandhi was concerned. Practically, there were Gandhi's pronouncements on Poland's resistance to Nazi invasion. For Gandhi, the Poles were non-violent though they did fight the Nazis. Non-violence was a virtue, it was right and it had to be practiced. The very fact that it arose from Gandhi's morality (or anyone with a similar morality) made any capitulation a betrayal of oneself. Gandhi found the Poles resistance non-violent not because it was minimal. He found it non-violent because it was a sacrifice in the service of the morality of non-violence. In an analogy Gandhi said:

> 'Haven't I said to our women that, if in defence of their honour they used their nails and teeth and even a dagger, I should regard their conduct nonviolent? … Supposing a mouse in fighting a cat tried to resist the cat with his sharp teeth, would you call that mouse violent?' Honour, was maintaining morality, oneself, and so Gandhi wrote, 'In the same way, for the Poles to stand valiantly against the German hordes vastly superior in numbers, military equipment and strength, was almost non-violence. … You must give its full value to the word 'almost'.

However, what was acceptable for Poland in the face of a massive aggressor was not for India. He warned that the size of India meant that Indians could not organize itself into an army because preparedness was synonymous with European exploitation. He wrote, 'if we take that path [to meet violence with superior violence], we will also have to choose the path of exploitation like the European nations.'[57] Though committed to a different path arising out of the dynamic of the civilization – it explains Gandhi's massive support base – Gandhian ideas were, by the time of the incipient state, also somewhat dated, not in terms of theory, but in practical terms.

---

[56] Prabhu & Rao. 1967. p.xi
[57] Discussion with B.G. Kher and others. CWMG. vol. 79. p.121- 129. p.121-122

Gandhian theory in practice: Kashmir and China

In any case, India did not have the time required to seriously consider the alternative routes opened up by Gandhi. Within weeks of independence Pakistan invaded Kashmir and a few years later India fought a short and bitter war with China. The two events were a test of the *dharma* developed by Gandhi. The Indian response in Kashmir illustrated the operation of Gandhian foreign policy, kept with *dharma* however important lessons were learned about the application of such policy in the international realm. Kashmir demonstrated that in the moral response so essential to Gandhian action could not be expected. Yet, India persisted in viewing it as a universal. China was a more complicated test of *dharma*. The episode can only be explained in terms of a *satyāgraha* with the deep thought Gandhi's *satyāgrahas* required. The use of an outdated, colonial era bureaucracy also complicated the application of Gandhian strategy problematical. Though India emerged shaken and beaten Gandhian ways persisted because the two events forced India's leaders to formulate a practical means of applying Gandhian ideas. These themes were noted by Nehru himself when speaking on the two conflicts. He said:

> 'First of all, right at the beginning, after our independence there was a general background of our not spending too much money on the army … We decided to save money on defence and apply it to industrialisation … We hoped that the cease-fire in Kashmir (that is, 1st January 1948) would result in some kind of settlement and we saw no other country likely to attack us and so we decided to reduce the strength of our army.'[58]

Within the decade Nehru offered a 'no war' pact to Pakistan. Accepted in 1956, Nehru's speech to the Lok Sabah was justified: 'It is not by military methods or threats of war or by talking to each other from so-called positions of strength that we shall come nearer … We can develop strength in other ways, strength in friendship, in cooperation and through raising the standard of our people.'[59] But within a year his tone had changed. He acknowledged that 'Pakistan's mind was tied up with violence and hatred against India' but 'At any rate we are not going to reply in kind. We will continue to be friendly with them.'[60] Nehru also noted the difference between India's approach and the rest of the world when he said in 1962 'we are getting out of touch

---

[58] Lok Sabah Debates 22 August 1963
[59] Lok Sabah Statement 20 March 1956
[60] Nehru. 1958. Speech in Madras. Jan 31, 1957. p.230

with reality in the modern world, and we were living in an artificial atmosphere of our own creation.'[61] This was interpreted as administrative failure arising out of its alienation leading Nehru to clarify in 1963 that he meant:

> 'What I meant was that this world is cruel. We had thought in terms of carrying the banner of peace everywhere and we were betrayed. China betrayed us; the world has betrayed us. Our efforts to follow the path of peace have been knocked on the head. We are forced to prepare for a defensive war, much against our will'.[62]

For Gandhi the invasion of Kashmir was a test of his *dharma*. At the end of Empire, the King of Kashmir chose to be independent. Pakistan invaded Kashmir using armed tribals. The King's reaction was to transfer responsibility to a populist politician, Sheikh Abdullah who was viewed by Gandhi as the true representative of the Kashmiris. Abdullah asked for Indian help. India's response was that help would be conditional on accession to India. Abdullah agreed. The King signed the instrument of accession and Indian troops, after having fought for imperialism in one guise or another for centuries for the first time fought for *dharma*. They fought for *dharma* because they resisted the immoral actions of Pakistan. In Gandhi's terms Pakistan was immoral on two counts. Firstly, Pakistani violence was a total negation of *dharma* not because they were being violent. This would have been acceptable if it was to resist non-violence. However Pakistan used violence to destroy the virtue of non-violence. The objective to Pakistani raiders was to coerce Kashmiris.[63]

The second form of immorality was a challenge to a fundamental notion for Gandhi and it baffled Gandhi – indicating the conceptual limits of his *dharma* and the need to craft a *dharma* suited for post-independence India. Gandhi captured the notion best when he wrote: 'Truth is God.'[64] This was directly attacked when Pakistan denied playing any part in the invasion. This was a blatant untruth for Gandhi, indicating a total lack of *dharma* as he understood it. In brief, according to Gandhi morality was individual and Pakistan (for ease) was entitled to its morality and to act upon it. For Gandhi this was truth. However, the Pakistani's were not being truthful

---

[61] Lok Sabha Debates. Oct 25, 1962
[62] Lok Sabah Debates. 22 Aug 1963
[63] Speech at Prayer Meeting. CWMG. Vol 97. P.284-287. p.286
[64] Truth and khilafat, CWMG. VOL. 21, p.329-330, p.329

since they were lying about the use of raiders. Hence, it was not *dharma* according to Gandhi. As he said: 'If there are raids from outside the frontier of Kashmir, the obvious conclusion is that it must be with the connivance of Pakistan. Pakistan can deny it. But the denial does not settle the matter. … They keep saying that they want an amicable settlement but they do nothing to create the conditions for such a settlement.'[65] Sometime later he said, 'I can understand it if every outsider leaves Kashmir and no one interferes from outside or sends help or complains. But I cannot understand it if they (Pakistan) say that they themselves will remain in Kashmir but that others should get out.' This lack of understanding can be explained by Gandhi's history of *satyāgraha*. Till Kashmir his target was British imperialism. Gandhi's *satyāgrahas* had resisted the British whom he trusted to respond with the correct moral response and they, by and large, did not let him down. He applied the same approach to Pakistan, saying: 'Why should we not so conduct ourselves that any conflict between India and Pakistan becomes impossible? We must be brave and trust the Muslims. If later they violate the trust you can cut off their heads.'[66] Unfortunately they did.

Gandhi's attitude towards violence was complex. As shown by Klitgaard, Gandhi was violent in that he opposed British rule. However he performed a type of violence so removed from imperial coercion that it was relationally and ontologically non-violent. He did not disapprove of violence but the manner of its application and the rationality underpinning it converted it into something else. The quality of the action, arising from the context, made the difference. He categorically stated, 'I do not agree that the armed force our Government has dispatched to Kashmir has committed aggression there.'[67] Nevertheless he found it 'barbarous' that he had been put in such a position because he had to actually use, even if for what was no more than resistance, a type of violence which came very close to imperial violence.[68] No matter how distasteful he found it in practical terms, philosophically, there was no doubt that the use of the army was moral because it served morality. As always, Gandhi in keeping with *HD* was sensitive to the context. 'The simple fact is that Pakistan has invaded Kashmir. Units of the Indian army have gone to Kashmir but not to invade Kashmir. They have been sent on the express invitation of the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah. Sheikh Abdullah is the real Maharaja of Kashmir. Muslims

---

[65] Speech at prayer meeting. New Delhi, January 4, 1948 CWMG Vol. 98:6. p.169-172. p.170
[66] Speech at prayer meeting. New Delhi, January 2, 1948 CWMG Vol. 98: 6. p.159-161. p.161
[67] Speech at prayer meeting. CWMG Vol. 98: p.273-276. p.275
[68] Speech at prayer meeting. New Delhi, December 20, 1947. CWMG VOL. 98. p.85 68. p.84-86. p.85

in their thousands are devoted to him,' said Gandhi.[69] This chain of events assured him that the deployment of the Indian military was moral since the deployment enjoyed the sanction of both the King (the old regime perpetuated by the British) and the new populist Sheikh. As Gandhi's secretary Pyarelal wrote: 'It was therefore right for the Union Government to save the fair city by rushing troops to Srinagar. He [Gandhi] would not shed a tear if the little Union force was wiped out bravely defending Kashmir like the Spartan at Thermopylae.'[70] The analogy is not perfect but within Gandhi's philosophical approach, Indian resistance was. It was, in theory, precisely what was required. It was also why Gandhi would not shed a tear.

The befuddlement Kashmir caused Gandhi arose from the lack of a moral response from Pakistan. It became a deep sense of hurt for Nehru with the China war of 1963. Though the Indo-China war has been analysed repeatedly, Lamb and Maxwell will be considered as they are the orthodoxy, despite having arrived at the conclusions from differing angles, refer to the Indians own classified report on the conflict and draw on their experience of dealing with Indian bureaucrats.[71] The failing of their approach is not their detail about the conflict in particular but that they do not follow the direction their own evidence points. Rather, and inexplicably, they foist upon Nehru a Machiavellian mentality to explain events. After examining their claims, this section will explain the war in terms of Nehru's *texture* – by situating him in his own context in terms of personnel and his 'strategy'.

Lamb states that 'the official Indian interpretation of documents did not accord with what the documents in question actually said.' India's position was riddled with discrepancies which resulted in 'cartographical aggression' – a border, especially in the Aksai Chin region which bore little basis in the British position which independent India based its claims on. A 'senior official in the Indian High Commission in London,' to whom Lamb presented his findings in presumably 1962, 'could not have been less interested.' It is this which provides the context for Maxwell's analysis which essentially argues that India brought the war upon itself. From 1959 India refused to negotiate with the Chinese. The latter during the 1950s and 60s were able to craft a series of

---

[69] Speech at Prayer Meeting, CWMG. vol.98. p.112-115. p.113
[70] Pyarelal. 1968, vol I. p.502
[71] Most of these works are unwilling to take cognisance of local imperatives, instead foisting their own ideological lenses. For works approaching Indian international relations from a Cold War perspective see Rowland. Van Nostrand. 1967 and Kavic.

border agreements reproducing the old imperial borders with Burma, Nepal, Pakistan and even Mongolia. But not with India. Why? Both Lamb and Maxwell do not find India's legal case credible. Both forward a wealth of detail demonstrating that in Aksai Chin India dramatically misunderstood the historical position. Both then, inexplicable, forward the 'hypothesis' that it was because the Chinese claim on Aksai Chin – a section of Kashmir – would seriously weaken India's case against Pakistan and this made Nehru resort to occupying disputed territory – the Forward Policy. They conclude thus despite their research demonstrating Indian bureaucratic incompetence, not to mention Lamb's personal experience of Indian diplomatic, at best, disinterest. To ascribe this to Machiavellian villainy is not only unfair but a leap of the imagination and an imposition of an alien *texture* upon the actors.

The facts, as collected by Maxwell and Lamb point to a far more mundane explanation: a combination of misadventure arising from bureaucratic incompetence to put into effect a particular strategy which was Gandhian. Nehru, misadvised by his bureaucracy and perhaps because he himself was so committed to Gandhian ways was convinced of the morality of India's case and essentially launched a Forward Policy – marking out disputed territory with China thru troop deployments – which should be seen actually as a *satyāgraha*.[72] Nehru never expected war and completely underestimated Chinese resolve. 'Right up to the war, Nehru's perceptions were buttressed by the bureaucracy.'[73] Lamb himself comes very close to the ill-advice hypothesis when, speculating about the origins of the map of 1954 demarcating the border, he writes: 'Where did this border come from? Perhaps it was simply that someone in the Survey of India merely copied from some old and dusty file left over from British times and the product of British Russophobia.'[74] However instead of following the evidence both authors impose an alien ideology upon Nehru which cannot account for his overwrought emotions, his feeling of 'betrayal' – unless one is to assume that he was pretending (as the Lamb/Maxwell hypothesis would suggest). Maxwell assumes that Nehru encroached on Chinese territory because at stake was the sanctity of Kashmir vis-a-vie Pakistan. However, his explanation cannot explain why Nehru did not simply state this to parliament? Rather than impose a set of ideologies upon Nehru – with little explanatory power – the next section will highlight the

---

[72] Put into effect in 1961, Maxwell makes it clear that Nehru knew the army was incapable of fighting a war with China. P.199
[73] Acharya. 1996. P.382-393
[74] See also Sinha. 1979; p.61-62

defining characteristics of Nehru's foreign policy both in terms of policy and the implementation of that policy. In explaining Nehru in his own terms an alternative explanation will be provided: bureaucratic failure and a strategy which continues to shape Indian policy.

The reason Nehru had to clarify in 1963 that his notion of 'getting out of touch' did not refer to administrative disconnect is because this is what Parliament suspected. A foreign diplomat in Delhi said as much when he noted that, 'Only a few senior officers had access to the PM and this created "sycophancy, personal ad-hoc approaches, and mixture of amateurishness and subjectivity."'[75] These vices did not affect one officer who was the principle adviser on all foreign policy matters according to another senior officer.[76] He advised Nehru on the China crisis and whose response unmasks the personal failure of the latter in combination with the rest the rest of the bureaucracy. This combined with the strategy Nehru was following led to the war with China. The officer was Sir G.S. Bajpai. Variously characterised as a 'stooge'[77] of the British, he had clashed with Gandhi on personal[78] and political matters.[79] Questioned on the wisdom of employing such a man, a former Cabinet Secretary, writes Nehru's reply was: 'That may be, but almost before I have completed a sentence, the man produces a draft perfectly stating my views and conclusions. He does it so well that I then have merely to sign without even altering a comma.'[80] Bajpai was an independent voice. He had a history of disagreeing with Nehru. Bajpai was critical of India's foreign policy being confined to 'protestations of non-alignment in Cold War and to senseless chatter about colonialism, racial discrimination, etc.'[81] Bajpai, writes a former MEA officer, is 'remembered as the man of prescience who urged Nehru in 1953 to resolve the issue of an imprecise boundary with China as a matter of urgent priority, in the negotiations that led up to the 1954 Border Trade Agreement, advice that went unheeded

---

[75] Crocker. Nehru. A contemporary's estimate. In Maxwell. 1970. p.91
[76] Dutt. 1977. p.23-24
[77] Mathai. 1979. p.133.
[78] See 'Letter to additional secretary, Home Department, Government of India.' CWMG. Vol 84. p.22-24 & See A Letter. CWMG. Vol. 94. . p.351.
[79] Bajpai to Sapru [3 May 192I], Sapru Mss. Vol. III, B8. National Library, Calcutta Quoted Low. Feb. 1966. pp. 241-259. p.249
[80] Sahay. 2004. p.154. In fact Gandhi made the very same recommendation on the same grounds in 1947. See also A Letter. CWMG. Vol. 94. p.351 and Talk with Dr. Syed Mahmud. Vol.96. p.147-148.
[81] From Henderson to Secretary of State, top secret, DOS, NA (Washington), No. 825, 7 June 1950, p. 1. Quoted in Kesavan. 2003. p.250

because Panditji was fixated on a different strategy.'[82] Before turning to the strategy, the next section will outline the bureaucratic apparatus that performs the strategy.

The apparatus

With very limited experience of conducting diplomacy, India's foreign policy establishment was created from scratch. It was, for Nehru unsuited to modern India and the selection of personnel was a matter that vexed him. However at the same time, Nehru dominated decision making. As the Bajpai example demonstrates, the advice of officials went unheeded. Former ICS officers were incorporated not for their opinions but their technical skill and it was here that the errors of the China war can be traced to. Lamb speculates about why the changes were made to the Indo-China maps? Though willing to foist a complicated theory upon Nehru he is unwilling to ascribe it to simple bureaucratic failure. 'India has some of the hardest-working bureaucrats in the world, but has an abysmal record of serving the public,' says the Economist after following IAS officers during typical working days. Though limited to following the IAS the Economist concludes, 'All India's administration is inefficient.'[83] The conditions witnessed at MEA offices in New Delhi bear out the Economist's findings and gives credence to the notion that Nehru was misadvised by a bureaucracy working in sub-optimal conditions. The technical information provided by the bureaucracy convinced of the merits of India's case. The map changes were apparently made by the Home Ministry and hence, most likely, an IAS official. One can picture an Indian official, sitting in an office with heaps of files surrounding him in New Delhi. The office is about 30 feet by 20 feet. There are some shelves. His desk is of the plywood kind, edges peeling. Or some might have an old heavy desk made of teak badly in need of polish, scraped and worn after decades without any care. It is June. Everything is covered in dust because nothing stops the loo from blowing in the dry Delhi dust into his office. It is 35 degrees centigrade. All he has to cool himself is a table fan. This is not because he does not feel the heat. Six months ago when he was allotted this office during the cold winter he knew summer would come. Knowing it he filed an application for an air-conditioner. It was still being processed. But in other ways he was lucky. His office has an attached bathroom with a bathtub. It is full of files. The taps might drip but that has been going on for decades. They have been dripping onto the

---

[82] Rana. 2005. p.xvii
[83] India's civil service. Battling the babu raj. The Economist. March 6, 2008.

rotting files for decades. Cockroaches scramble between them. This is not an approximation but the description of offices of Indian diplomats as experienced by the author. Parts of it are drawn from interviews with diplomats. This is what 'should be written about,' says a diplomat. 'Write about it. Write about the fact that you've been sitting here for one hour and I've asked for tea for us three times. Write about our conditions of service.' The tea finally arrived half an hour later as the interview was concluding. Is it too much to suppose that a diplomat working in such conditions would resort to duplicity or just get done whatever has to be done with the minimum of effort and fuss? Of course senior officers would not occupy such offices, but neither would senior officers be scrambling through archives and pouring over maps.[84]

At the birth of India, diplomacy within India had been eliminated and there were just a handful of locals experienced in conducting diplomacy on behalf of British Empire. The Resident system was, upon independence, a system backward, authoritarian and exploitative in style. The authority of the Resident was supreme and it was a veiled dictatorship and authority was finally exercised.[85] It was from this system that the bureaucratic apparatus to conduct foreign policy had to seek its practitioners. These members of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) had some 600 locals because it had been Indianized, unlike the Political Line. Of the 600 some 100 opted for Pakistan.[86] These, along with some new recruits made up the foreign policy establishment of independent India. Their contribution was limited to enacting the orders and direction of Nehru – their contribution to the philosophy of policy was nil. Nehru's views before independence was that 'Of one thing I am quite sure … that no new order can be built up in India so long as the spirit of the ICS pervades our administration and our public services … the ICS and similar service must disappear completely, as such, before we can start real work on a new order.'

Upon becoming Prime Minister, Nehru said that the 'services were fossilised in their mental outlook. They were wedded to bygone and obsolete methods and refused to move with the times … It remains to be seen how long we can function in these circumstances. The experience of the past three or four months has shown us that the conduct and attitude of the officers has not changed.'[87] However, Nehru persisted in attempting to reform what he variously called the

---

[84] Visits to the offices of junior level officers of the MEA. Unattributable conversations with two officers.
[85] Panikkar. 1927, p.90-122.
[86] Saxena. 1990. p.4
[87] The Indian Annual Register. July-Sept. 1946. pp. 289-90

'spirit' and 'attitude' of these men. One of his targets was the strictly hierarchical order under the British. He noted that 'checking and constant supervision are necessary' but added that 'To hold up work for petty sanctions from distant authority is not only to delay but to waste money and energy. It is not sufficiently realised that time in this context is money.'[88] He emphasized that 'Constant supervision is, of course, always necessary, but in a way so that it does not impede work'.[89]

However when it came to policy making, Nehru as PM and Foreign Minister was above all else. It became the defining characteristic of Indian diplomacy. It appears, as the Bajpai example with China demonstrates, Nehru was unwilling to take note of any opinions which did not match his. A Cabinet Secretary writes, 'In the field of defining policies, the Prime Minister's role has been overwhelming. Take foreign policy. It was his special genius to establish that, in the circumstances of his time, non-alignment was the right policy of India. In this he was far in advance of his advisors. If he had followed the advice of people around him, India would have started as an aligned State … . Of our foreign policy, it may truly be said he was both the architect and the main implementer.' If with Nehru a new policy formulation totally removed from the ICS considerations of the old order was introduced, it also had unintended consequences. 'One result of this was that External Affairs Ministry did not get into the habit of producing situation reports stating the considerations, analysing them and presenting options. There was a marked tendency to wait for the word from the PM himself.'[90] An ICS officer who worked for sometime as Nehru Principle Secretary notes that the PM never held it against the officer that he was a member of the old order, 'But I think it would be correct to say that while he was most kindly and considerate to many of us in the service as individuals, he did not think of us, as a class, as being particularly distinguished. We were there to do a job of work. Some of us were good and some mediocre, but we were not people with whom it was appropriate for him to discuss the pros and cons of the kind of problem that was thrown up to the Prime Minister of India. In other words … one did not get the impression that one had any share in the making of decisions.'[91] Even a cabinet colleague from the first cabinet writes, 'My five years

---

[88] Jawaharlal Nehru and Public Administration, 1975, p.49.
[89] Nehru, Letters to Chief Ministers, Vol. I, op.cit., pp 493
[90] Sahay. P.157-158
[91] Iyengar. 1967. p.38-41

experience in the Cabinet [was] that no one would say a word against Nehru. … and even Cabinet members dared not oppose him, let alone the civil servants.'[92]

The acute centralization of foreign policy matters is reflected to this day, having become a defining feature of India's foreign policy establishment. The effects of centralization have cascaded within the MEA. Dayal, an MEA officer under Indira Gandhi describes how the foreign intelligence service – RAW – was established. 'One day the Director, RN Kao, came to me with a brief typewritten note and asked for my signature … the request was made casually, as though it was a matter of minor routine. But one glance at the paper took me aback. [it said new service for external intelligence and that the EAM should include the names of the operatives to ensure cover …] When I asked when the decision was taken I was told blandly that it had been taken by the PM! It seemed extraordinary that a far reaching decision which so obviously and intimately concerned External Affairs should have been taken without a word of consultation with that Ministry.'[93] As far as input into policy making – even within the non-aligned paradigm – it was as late as 2004, MEA officers state, when chiefs of territorial divisions began to actually make decisions rather than offer a range of options to Foreign Secretary Saran.[94]

Towards the end of his administration Nehru is reported to have said that his greatest failure was to de-colonize the mentality of the administration. Vittachi writes, Nehru said gently 'I failed to change this administration. It is still a colonial administration.'[95] The impetus Nehru provided was realised only after his death. What was required was to introduce into the colonial era bureaucracy locals. These locals had to understood not as the Anglicised products of the major Indian cities but as hailing from the majority of the population, those disempowered not only under the British but by millennia of local beliefs and practices revolving around notions of impurity and caste. Though the process began in 1951 – with reservations for groups designated SC/ST – it took a great deal of time for its effects to be felt because even amongst the reserved categories, frequently it was the elite from these groups who entered the services. It was only in 1979 that candidates were allowed to take the entrance exams for the civil service in any Indian language. With it, the services were opened to a mass of people who had been excluded from

---

[92] Gadgil. 1968. pp. 83,84, 182
[93] Dayal. 1998. P.594
[94] Interview with member of PM's office.
[95] Vittachi. 1987. p.22-23

positions of authority.[96] Major changes followed. The most momentous being the broadening of positive discrimination to 50 percent in 1992 by the Mandal Commission. In November 2006 the total strength of the MEA was 599 out of which some 175 came from the positive discrimination categories.[97] The social transformation of the MEA did not however have any effect on strategy and it is this we now turn.

The strategy

This section will outline the philosophy of Indian foreign policy in the words of its architect and foremost exponent. Nehru said his strategy was entirely within Gandhi's philosophy. In Nehru, India brought this politics to the international arena and ever since it has led to a host of misunderstandings and confusions which plague not only those who engage India but Indians themselves. Within a year and a half of independence Nehru reminded parliament that:

> 'we were bred in a high tradition under Mahatma Gandhi. That tradition is an ethical tradition, a moral tradition and at the same time it is an application of those ethical and moral doctrines to practical politics. That great man placed before us a technique of action which was unique in the world, which combined political activity and political conflict and a struggle for freedom with certain moral and ethical principles.'

After explaining how no one could live up to his example, Nehru said 'we have to keep in mind those very ideals to which we have pledged ourselves so often.' These were the ideals of non-violence and truth, Gandhi's 'article of faith' and Nehru made, amongst others, two points. One that 'we should do our utmost to live up as far as we can to that standard, but always judging a problem by the light of our own intelligence; otherwise we will fail.'[98] In short, Gandhi had inculcated in Nehru non-violence as an 'article of faith' and the notion of moral self-reflection employing non-violence as a means of conducting policy. Nehru made the point in his autobiography. 'What is truth? I do not know for certain, and perhaps our truths are relative and absolute truth is beyond us. Different persons may and do take different views of truth, and

---

[96] Hota. UPSC. P.5

[97] Lok Sabah Unstarred Question No. 1209. Answered on 29.11.2006. Appointment of High Commissioners/Ambassadors.

[98] Nehru. Meeting Ground. Speech in the Constituent Assembly (Legislative), New Delhi. March 8 1949. Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches. 1963

each individual is powerfully influenced by his own background, training and impulses. So also Gandhi. But truth is at least for an individual what he himself knows to be true.'[99] In keeping with Gandhi's notion of the individual being highest, Nehru added, 'God we may deny, but what hope is there for us if we deny man and thus reduce everything to futility?'[100] Nehru, like Gandhi, never articulated a theory of international relations. Perhaps it was inimical to someone who believed in the individual's morality and that to inflict criticism on it was a form of violence to do so. Nevertheless, his situating himself within Gandhi's system and forwarding it provides clues to the strategy of Indian international relations.

Nowhere is this more evident than in an interview conducted by Karanjia.[101] Urbane and anglicised, he spoke of a 'people of my way of thinking' who 'consider his [Gandhi's] philosophy to be somewhat confused and unscientific.' Karanjia, as a representative of unconfused men of science, views Nehru as belonging to the same camp and states that Nehru paid lip service to Gandhi and upon independence that influence ended. Karanjia says: '… the Gandhian era ended with the assumption of political power by the Congress. The year 1947 ushered in what is universally hailed as the Nehru epoch of our country. Should I be right in the inference that from Freedom onwards, you used the Gandhian means to serve the Nehru ends … most importantly, your insistence on a foreign policy based on World Peace and Non-alignment?' In a reply which must have confused Karanjia, Nehru mounted a point-by-point refutation. Karanjia was totally wrong, Nehru said:

> 'You are wrong in using words like the Nehru epoch or the Nehru policy. I would call ours the authentic Gandhian era and policies and the policies and philosophy which we seek to implement are the policies and philosophy taught to us by Gandhiji. There has been no break in the continuity of our thoughts before and after 1947, though, of course, new technological and scientific advances since have made us re-think in some ways and adapt our policies to the new times. But here also Gandhiji was in many ways prophetic. His thoughts and approaches and solutions helped us to cover the chasm between the Industrial Revolution and the Nuclear Era. After all, the only possible answer to the Atom Bomb is non-violence. Isn't it?'

---

[99] Nehru. 1960. p275.
[100] Ibid. p.412
[101] Karanjia. 1961. P.22-24, 25

To Karanjia's point that Nehru had 'gone beyond non-violence to the discovery of a more positive solution to this threat of the atom bomb in Panch Sheel or the Doctrine of Peaceful Co-existence,' the reply was:

> 'All that was inherent in Gandhism. In fact, this approach of *Panch Sheel*, co-existence, peace, tolerance, the attitude of live and let live, has been fundamental to Indian thought throughout the ages and you find it in all religions. Great emperors like Ashoka practised it and Gandhiji organised it into a practical philosophy of action which we have inherited. There was no place for the 'cold war' in Ashoka's mind, and Gandhiji gave the world the most practical substitute for war and violence by bringing about a mighty revolution with the bloodless weapon of passive resistance. The most important thing about our foreign policy is that it is part of our great historical tradition. Do you know the story of Chanakya?'

Nehru narrated how after King Chandragupta was only able to put down a rebellion under the directions of his Chief Minister Chanakya. Asked by Chandragupta on what to do next Chanakya said he should be replaced with a new Chief Minister – the leader of the rebels – for this was the only way to restore peace and goodwill. Nehru cited this an example of coexistence. Left unsaid is the implicit notion of self-sacrifice in the story. Finally, Karanjia expressed the 'conviction amongst progressives that Gandhiji broke and emasculated your earlier faith in scientific Socialism with his sentimental and spiritual solutions,' to which Nehru replied:

> 'Some of Gandhiji's approaches were old-fashioned, and I combated them, as you know well enough. But on the whole it is wrong to say that he broke or emasculated me or anybody else. Any such thing would be against his way of doing things. The most important thing he insisted upon was the importance of means: ends were shaped by the means that led to them, and therefore the means had to be good, pure and truthful. That is what we learnt from him and it is well we did so.'

Evidently, Nehru sees himself as a product of Gandhi of whom Dallmayr writes: 'Neither his engagement for the poor nor his cultivation of 'weak' virtues kept Gandhi away from politics or from political struggle. Like the 'meek' he was non-submissive and unyielding, as well as calm and frequently cheerful; he was particularly unyielding when dealing with abusive and oppressive political power. In his struggle for independence, Gandhi did not shrink from

inserting himself in the thick of politics – but a politics of a different kind, carried on in a different register, at odds with and in defiance of power politics.'[102] This could be a manifesto for Indian foreign policy. It also explains Nehru's anguish and sense of betrayal which in combination with having been misadvised on the China border is an explanation in keeping with the history of India's leaders rather than an imposition of alien ideology. Neither does an explanation aware of local *texture* fall need to speculate – in this case India supposedly demanding Aksai Chin to legitimise Kashmir vis-a-vie Pakistan.

Nehru's strategy was Non-Alignment.[103] It meant the right to follow an independent foreign policy (in a world of Cold War blocks) and the policy had to be moral. Morality quickly became to be understood as an end to discrimination (arising out of the experiences of racism under the British) and non-violence. This was the *dharma* of an age where discrimination and violence was, from India's perspective, rife. It was not much changed from Gandhi's struggles. 'What is insufficiently appreciated is the influence of Mahatma Gandhi's thinking and philosophy on India's foreign policy,' writes Sikri a top-ranking officer who resigned from the MEA, reiterating India's first Foreign Secretary's ideas and the first National Security Adviser's ideas.[104] 'The essential elements of Gandhi's philosophy were the concepts of non-violence, the importance of the moral dimension in the conduct of men as well as nations, and *satyāgraha* or the struggle for truth, compassion and justice. All these principles continue to influence India's foreign policy even today.'[105]

To recap, it has been argued that Gandhi developed his notion of *dharma* from his reading of the Mb which provided a theory of pragmatic contextual action for the individual. Gandhi

---

[102] Dallmayr. 2004. p.188-9.

[103] For Nehru's explanation of this see Appadoria (ed.) 1982. The following speeches are especially relevant for the Gandhian influence on Nehru: The Prime Minister's Statement on Foreign Policy. 7 September 1946; The Prime Minister on the ideal of one world. 22 January 1947; The Prime Minister on the Implications of non-alignment. 4 December 1947; The Prime Minister's statement that non-alignment 'can only be a policy of acting in accordance to our best judgement. 9 December 1958; The Prime Minister on Racial Equality. 22 March 1949; The Prime Minister on means and ends. 20 December 1956.

[104] See Menon. 1965. p.272; Dixit. 2004. P.34. On p.50 he writes: 'Mahatma Gandhi imparted impulses against realpolitik as a factor in foreign policy decisions. All this was underpinned by his conviction that ends did not justify means, and that world peace and stability could only be achieved on the basis of the moral terms of reference of justice, fair play, abjuring the use of force, mutual respect and mutual cooperation. In a manner, he provided a conceptual framework on the basis of which the five principles of peaceful coexistence and the ideology of nonalignment emerged in later years.

[105] Sikri. 3 January 2008.

emphasized the morality of the individual and made non-violence a tenet. Non-violence however did not condemn the use of force. It could be used to defend oneself. Gandhi's main contribution was on how this force was to be used. This abhorred even criticism since that would be an imposition of oneself on another. Force was to be used as resistance which in turn was based upon exemplary conduct and a universal notion of morality – the opponent was to be convinced of their error through the resister's virtuous conduct and the opponent was expected to accede to the resister's demands thru a moral response. This is what Nehru brought to the international scene upon India's independence. In practice, India resisted apartheid and imperialism internationally while within implementing positive discrimination as a means to end discrimination within. The ability of this model to explain Indian foreign policy will be examined in the next section with reference to nuclear policy. It has been chosen because it provides a fertile ground to investigate Gandhian theory in practice.

Strategy in practice: Indian Nuclear Policy

It is the contention of authors – academic and policy – that the passage of time has eroded the Gandhian values underpinning non-alignment.[106] India's nuclear program in particular is taken as a signifier of this. It is argued that this is incorrect. Understanding nuclear policy is only possible in terms of *satyāgraha* as it was developed and enacted by Gandhi. In short, non-alignment was the international application of that Gandhian idea. This section will demonstrate that Indian nuclear policy has kept within the parameters – with one notable exception – of the Gandhian way in terms of both morals and virtue. However, the onset of a nuclear world required the crafting of a *dharma* befitting the age. This section will outline the background of Indian nuclear diplomacy and then focus on the chief architect of the dharma for a nuclear age, Subrahmanyam, a man fundamentally misunderstood as a 'hawk' and close with the nuclear doctrine he developed.

India's nuclear diplomacy is redolent of Gandhian *satyāgraha*. Decades before US President Barack Obama's call for disarmament, India resisted nuclear weaponisation and offered numerous plans to prevent both horizontal and vertical proliferation. At the centre of Indian efforts were the twin pillars of ending nuclear diplomacy (the Cold War's Mutually Assured

---

[106] Bajpai. 2003

Destruction) and ending nuclear apartheid – that is the West's insistence that only certain countries could legitimately possess nuclear technology and weapons. Simultaneously this meant that till the West renounced its policies and the gradual creeping expansion of nuclear weapons was terminated India was under threat. This was not a new experience since Indians were at the receiving end of real violence till very recently. The difference between resistance against the British and resistance to nuclearisation in a weaponised world was that the latter threatened Indians with extinction since India lacked any deterrence. Fully aware of this threat, India persisted in resistance which took many forms.

Within a decade of independence India was the first country to suggest a 'Standstill Agreement' calling for the suspension of nuclear testing. India did have a nuclear energy program. When India's Atomic Energy Commission was set up in 1948 Nehru insisted that the program was for 'the welfare of the people of India and other peaceful purposes.' In 1957 he said 'No man can prophesy the future. But I should like to say on behalf of any future Government of India that whatever might happened, whatever the circumstances, we shall never use this atomic energy for evil purposes. There is no condition attached to this assurance, because once a condition is attached, the value of such an assurance does not go very far.'[107] There was no material response to India's position.

Nehru stuck to his convictions to his end. Days before his death in May 1964 he said, 'We are determined not to use weapons for war purposes. We do not make atom bombs. I do not think we will.'[108] The situation changed in October 1964 when China tested its first nuclear weapon.[109] The immediate response was in keeping with Nehruvian policy of resistance. The resistance to go nuclear in the face of an increase in threats clearly came from within.[110] In 1965 India proposed a treaty 'To Prevent the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons' five years before the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT). India did not sign this because to do so would require sacrificing its moral stance against discrimination. Secondly, key Indians were also aware of the immorality of the NPT. The US, argued Subrahmanyam – the architect of Indian nuclear policy – in 1981, clandestinely supported Israel and South Africa in developing the bomb. Similarly, Japan

---

[107] Nehru's statement at inaugural of Aspara, India's first nuclear reactor, at Trombay on 20 January, 1957
[108] Quoted in Mirchandani. 1968. p.23
[109] Lewis & Xue Litai. 1988
[110] P.185

and the Federal Republic of Germany were what he calls crypto-nuclear weapons states.[111] Given its bias, the NPT made no move to provide a space for India's demand that the dissemination of nuclear weapons in any form be stopped and that the nuclear powers should move towards total disarmament.[112] The NPT divided the world on a temporal metric – simply stating that all who had tested a weapon by 1970 were nuclear powers but this became the legal anchor for a global nuclear regime 'increasingly legitimated in racialized terms.[113] Gusterson argues that this is based on a profoundly Orientalist discourse where 'we' (the West) are rational, disciplined, while 'they' are the mirror opposite. In policy terms it translates into Indians being viewed as wasting scare resources on weapons development even though India spent just 2.8 percent of GDP as opposed to the US's 4 percent and that deterrence will be unstable in the third world, i.e., the dominant discourse assumes that leaders in the Third World make decisions differently than their counterparts in the West (after an analysis of flight times). Gusterson's intention is to show the binary representation of 'us' and 'them' which permeates Western nuclear rhetoric. However, in a sense the rhetoric is justified – just not when they arise from the assumptions on which analysts and policy makers in the West base their judgements. There is a difference between India and the rest because of the overtly moral nature of India's position. India argued that the world should disarm as a matter of principle and continues to make the argument. Making such an argument, of course, requires virtue, i.e., not developing a nuclear capacity oneself.

India's test in 1974 termed a 'peaceful explosion' was not viewed as such by the rest of the world.[114] The same charge of Machiavellian politics was made of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as had been of Nehru's China campaign. The test was, as Dayal attests, a solo affair, hardly reflecting any concerns of the administrative apparatus. Dayal writes, 'There were no policy papers nor had there been any discussion on this crucial matter [nuclear policy] in the External Affairs Ministry.' Dayal writes that he had suggested drawing up background papers, Mrs. Gandhi agreed but on the appointed day for the discussion Mrs. Gandhi glowered, asking who

---

[111] Subrahmanyam. 1981.

[112] See Government of India. Disarmament: India's Initiatives. 1988

[113] Gusterson. P.24

[114] This was despite the fact that the IAEA had held four technical conferences on PNE technology. The United States too supported PNE at the UN. Year Book of the United Nations. 1971. p.78; Even the claim of a key scientist that a bomb was tested does not negate the PNE hypothesis. A nuclear explosion, is after all, an explosion and therefore similar to a bomb. See Sengupta. October 17, 1997, p. 14

had authorised their preparation. 'I tried to refresh her memory, but she would have none of it. She said something about a 'national decision', but we were not aware of any national decision or even debate in Parliament on the sensitive issue. At least three of us [defence, finance and foreign secretaries] were greatly puzzled at our summary and inexplicable rebuff for carrying out what we conceived to be our assigned duty.'[115] Dayal's report of the circumstances leading up the explosion are in keeping with Hyman's contention that the decision to take such a step has a lot to do with 'the hearts of state leaders themselves.'[116] There was no follow-up to the test, no will to power.[117] Mrs. Gandhi returned to her father's path. She publicly denounced deterrence as 'untenable'[118] and there was no attempt to even incorporate nuclear weapons into strategic policy. It was, at first glance, 'ad hocism,' writes Kumaraswamy, arising from constant revision in the international nuclear situation.[119] However, while the decision was personal, the mistake is to assume it was ad hoc. Mrs. Gandhi had attempted to ensure that India's safety against nuclear diplomacy – that is Western style MAD diplomacy. She dispatched a senior pro-Western diplomat, Jha, to Moscow and Washington in 1967 to discuss a guarantee to deter India ever falling victim to the diplomacy of MAD. Jha failed.[120] After two decades (at least) of living under a nuclear threat, Mrs. Gandhi made (what was to an extent) a show of strength. It was also for public consumption – for while Gandhian notions and her father's notions coloured the Indian elite there is no reason to expect it to similarly tint the bulk of the population.[121] The next Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi's nuclear policy was also remarkable in its orthodoxy – 'he was genuinely against the bomb' states Gandhi's scientific adviser[122] and his 'first international act was to launch the Six Nation Five Continent Appeal for nuclear disarmament at a summit meeting, in New Delhi in January 1985.' In 1988 Gandhi offered an 'Action Plan for Ushering in a Nuclear Weapon-Free and Non-violent World' of which a former Foreign Secretary writes 'It [such an order] envisions a world without hate, fear and confrontation, a world which is a true

---

[115] Dayal. 1998. p.588-9
[116] Hymans. 2006. P.7
[117] See Mansingh. 1984. & Sen Gupta 1984.
[118] Pande. 1989. p.363
[119] Kumaraswamy. p.22
[120] See Noorani. July 1967. pp. 490-502.
[121] The threat from China and Pakistan was overwhelming. Indira Gandhi told a foreign ambassador on 1 July, 1968: "With China on India's back, and Pakistan lurking on the sidelines, I foresaw no alternative but to keep open our option on the production of nuclear weapons.' The decision was not ideological, simply ensuring security. Of course it is possible to question her understanding of 'security'. See Indira saw no option but to go for N-weapons. New Delhi. 5 July
[122] Chengappa. 2000. p.304

democracy of nations. This, in Rajiv Gandhi's own phrase, is 'India's millennial concept of the world as a family'. This vision of a new world order is a spiritual vision, not unlike Jawaharlal Nehru's but closer, it seems, to Mahatma Gandhi's vision of the world.'[123] It was closer to Gandhi, who had in the context of independent India encouraged the use of force but only defensively. Having seen the failure of his predecessors to ensure security through disarmament and then through a guaranty in a world predicated on nuclear annihilation Rajiv Gandhi began the process of weaponisation in 1983.[124] It came nearly twenty years after the 1965 war with Pakistan when 100 parliamentarians wrote to the then PM calling for India to weaponize.[125] Their letter was provoked by the Chinese threat to open a second front to protect Pakistan.

Despite the clear and present danger of nuclear attack, till 1983 India persisted in classic *satyāgraha*. India resisted nuclearisation and its diplomacy was, perhaps due to its centralization in the office of the Prime Minister also consistent. The decision to weaponize came after some 40 years of opposition in a world scenario which had, from India's perspective rapidly deteriorated – Pakistan had refused to respond and China had gone nuclear. Weaponisation, writes Subrahmanyam, followed Gandhi's repeated attempts to craft a means of, at the least, reigning in nuclear weapons.[126] In 1998 India conducted its second test prompting the question: Did this mark a clear shift in policy? Basrur in an analysis of the key writings of the Indian nuclear weapons elite – policy makers – concludes that 'nuclear weapons are viewed with less doubt and suspicion than in the past, though their limitations are acknowledged. They are certainly not privileged as the principal providers of the nation's security, which is widely seen in economic and social terms.'[127] Nearly half of the members of the strategic elite interviewed did not consider nuclear retaliation necessary even in response to a minor nuclear attack. 'This presents a remarkable picture of restraint in the face of grave provocation.' A restraint which was formalized and institutionalized in the nuclear doctrine of 1999 and it is argued originating in Gandhian thought. This made India the first country to renounce the right to a nuclear first strike. It was not a position of ambiguity as adopted by Israel and later Pakistan but one founded squarely in the Gandhian paradigm and the doctrine transformed the nature of nuclear

---

[123] Rajiv Gandhi's worldview. Ed. by M.Rasgotra. Vikas. New Delhi. 1991.
[124] From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report. 2000. p.205
[125] Time for A-bomb – Say 100 M.P's. Indian Express. September 23, 1965. p.1
[126] Subrahmanyam. 1998. P. 26-53. p.44
[127] Basrur.

diplomacy at the time. Following New Delhi's pronouncement, China also stated it would not use nuclear weapons in a first strike.

The responsibility for this subtle shifting of nuclear violence which transformed the nature of violence in a nuclear world lay with K. Subrahmanyam. In a recent *festenschrift* , Subrahmanyam is presented as an arch-realist. Indeed most of the chapters view some sort of polar divide between idealism and realism. It is perhaps explainable by the zeal of his students. However, it would be far more appropriate to view Subrahmanyam in his own terms. To return to him his *texture* makes it apparent that he does not perceive the world in such stark terms and that in him one can find a clear line of continuity with Gandhi in the form of the *dharma* of acting contextually but emphasizing morality and non-violence. Subrahmanyam writes:

> 'A future [security] strategy has to be based on a vision of non-violence, a time-bound programme towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, turning away from conflictual to co-operative approaches among the nations of the world and among peoples within the nations of the world. There are no alternatives to such a strategy. Either humanity unites to survive, or it is bound to face a bleak future. The strategy of a non-violent and nuclear-free world has no alternative, if future generations are to survive in conditions of sustainable development. We of this generation have a stark choice before us. Either we become saviours of our posterity or its executioners. Either we opt for life or shatter the future of mankind. Let us opt for life.'[128]

The error of Subrahmanyam's followers is that in their eagerness to co-opt him into their binary view of the world – something that Gandhi assiduously avoided and Nandy criticises many current Indians for acting on – they have rendered the man a caricature.

Subrahmanyam's complexity and Gandhian thoughts are easily extricable. Subrahmanyam writes that Gandhi taught 'violence was better than cowardice,' that is, 'he preferred non-violence as the best method of conducting the struggle against domination.' In keeping with the lessons Gandhi and Nehru learned in Kashmir – that a moral response is only possible in certain situations – Subrahmanyam writes that 'non-violence as a resistance strategy had to be on a case-by-case basis: it cannot be treated as universally applicable against all aggressions in the

---

[128] Subrahmanyam. Alternative Security Doctrines. p.85

world.' Non-violence is the ideal which can be realised, as it was under Emperor Ashoka. However, 'Today the globe has shrunk to a small space station earth … So it is not just a non-violent state that we should aim at but a non-violent globe.' This is why the 'responsibility for giving the lead towards peaceful co-existence and a nuclear-weapon-free world lies with the industrialized nations … The starting-point must be eliminating the ultimate symbol of violence – nuclear weapons.'[129] Arising from such a *weltanschaung*, Subrahmanyam's nuclear doctrine is significant because it permitted India to find a means of protecting its own *dharma* in the wake of a history which exposed the nuclear powers as unwilling to either renounce their weapons or to offer India a guaranty of no-use. In return India always offered, indeed, did not engage a nuclear weapons program for decades, living under the threat of the bomb of not just the US and USSR but also China – a country with whom a war had been fought. For decades, India practiced virtue – by setting an example to the world by not engaging in a nuclear weapons program. Finally, in the face of both discrimination Gandhian virtue was lost with weaponisation. A sense of double standards is integral to understanding this shift. As an Indian Foreign Secretary said: 'The white man has it, it's safe in his hands... the yellow man has also come along because he's been cooperating with the white man, it's safe in his hands. But the brown man is not good enough to guard and hold these weapons. This is the mentality of nuclear apartheid, which they've been promoting for some time.'[130] An alternate view, Subrahmanyam's perspective, is that the decision to weaponize was symbolic of having the courage to defend oneself in the face of overwhelming odds. This defence is not based on either MAD diplomacy, not even on the prospect of responding in kind to a small nuclear attack. India, due to Subrahmanyam, has stated that it will only respond with a nuclear strike against a major attack and that the response will be disproportional – disproportionally smaller, many times smaller.

Conclusions

This chapter has brought together the two strands that compose diplomacy thru the medium of history. They are the philosophy of diplomatic action (the philosophy underpinning policy) and its practical implementation. Intellectually, it is not just modern Indian diplomats who refer to

---

[129] Ibid. P.84-85

[130] Brown Man's Burden. Sunil Narula Interviews M.K. Rasgotra. Outlook India. May 10. 1999.

the Mb to orient themselves. Gandhi did so too but his intellectual contribution is more profound: he drew on the Mb's philosophy of contextual action and emphasized morality as both a means of connecting him to the cosmos and as a means of producing change in the world. Gandhi also introduced the concept of non-violence as the ideal means for producing change. These ideas were first put to the test internationally with Kashmir where Gandhi realised that morality could not be always relied upon (as he himself had noted it could not be relied upon with certain Englishmen). These teachings of Gandhi were internalized and operationalised by Nehru. He attempted to put into practice a Gandhian philosophy of international politics but relied upon a bureaucratic system, a diplomatic system, developed by the Empire and animated by the Raj. It was here that the colonial legacy of bureaucratized decision making encountered Gandhian philosophy. The results were not optimal. Gandhi's systems required localized study – that is a deep familiarity of a particular situation – before launching a campaign to rectify a particular wrong. This was not possible with a bureaucratized system. The failures of such a system became apparent in the China war. Here Nehru was both misadvised by a bureaucracy which presumably had become alienated from the purpose it was meant to serve and by Nehru's inability to accept advice when it did not match his own perceptions.

The second strand of Indian diplomacy analysed was nuclear as an example of classic Gandhian action. Essentially, India attempted to realise the ideal of disarmament and to that extent acted virtuously – in accordance with the *texture* of Gandhian thought – till weaponisation in 1983. Throughout its history, India acted in accordance with stated principles, did not take part in discriminatory treaties and therefore broke no international agreements. The process began under Nehru when India adopted nuclear technology for its scientific and economic benefits in the *longue durée*. Simultaneously India made the first calls for nuclear disarmament and after repeated attempts at securing this objective through resistance failed sought a nuclear guaranty from the superpowers. None was forthcoming. India's seeking such assurances was due to the world having been shrunk to a small space station and due to having to live under the shadow of a nuclear armed nations including China. India's first nuclear test was a loss of virtue – India no longer set an example to the world and thus immeasurably weakened its moral position. However, this was not a break with the Mb's *HD*. Neither was it in any manner contrary to 'truth' which Gandhi said was even more important than non-violence. Key members of the

Indian elite viewed significant not the test, but the weaponisation in 1983. That this followed after two decades of the Chinese bomb is in itself significant from a Gandhian perspective of resistance. What animated the decision to weaponise was an impossible calculation: nuclear annihilation or non-violence. Though that principle was sacrificed, the decision was made in the Mb's terms of contextual action. In the aftermath of the 1998 tests India once again broke new ground by de-linking its diplomacy from nuclear weapons with a unique nuclear doctrine where India unilaterally gave up the right to first strike. In terms of diplomacy what this meant is that India never practiced nuclear diplomacy. In terms of *dharma* India's actions were based on a total belief in the truth of its actions. It sought to convert the rest of the world and failed. In the process India never attempted coercion (of course nor was India able to). However, the real indicator that India was not – and continues to abhor – coercion as a matter of principle in its diplomacy is the sanctity accorded to the notion of no-first-use now that India is in a position to coerce thru nuclear weapons. Indian resistance-diplomacy was always under the direct command and control of the Prime Minister which is where all decisions were made, sometimes without any reference to the MEA. Indeed the nuclear doctrine emerged from a group of outsiders, not MEA officials. This does not necessarily imply that the MEA is today irrelevant to questions of policy or that diplomacy is limited to resistance. The next, and concluding section, will return to the 123 Agreement and diplomacy of deconstruction.

ENDS

CONCLUSIONS

This project's argument is founded on the assumption that the student of IR cannot fully understand what IR professes to study – i.e., the international system – without actually going out and investigating the world of diplomacy. This needs to be done on the terms of the protagonists because they are the ones who produce international politics. However, this is not enough. The tropes and practices of the protagonists also need to be juxtaposed with the significant corpus of histories and theories of international and social relations that Europe has produced. This is not just to verify the discipline's texts but to deploy the insights of disciplinary texts to excavate and order the raw matter that investigations of the field produce. The literature can also serve to identify the main ruptures between itself and the empirical data. In doing so, the literature helps identify the more significant avenues for exploration. Finally, these explorations require investigation historically if the aim is to understand not just what is happening today, but how it became possible. These are the aims of this project.

The researcher entered the field and collected raw data. It was collected in a very particular way, through the use of *texture*, i.e., sensitivity to the signals and signs implanted in texts and also produced reflexively within engagements between people and situations. These can be gauged by the engagement between the researcher and the GoI. For instance, access would never have been granted if the researcher was not a known quantity in familial terms to the GoI. Officers would not have been willing to speak to a foreigner, or even to an Indian outsider – why is beyond the scope of this project. The raw data had certain implications which ran counter to the literature's established position that diplomacy – in theory and practice – originated in Europe. This was not just a controversy about petty origins, implicated in it was the nature of the modern world and the rationale underpinning decisions which directly affect hundreds of millions of humans. So fundamental is the rupture between the literature and practice that what was required was the creation of an analytical space which could contain the possibilities rendered impossible by the discipline. Those are that modernity may also have extra-European origins and that these may contain possibilities un-theorized by the discipline.

Upon creating the analytical space, by deploying civilizational analysis, the project proceeded to populate the space in three ways. All three had a common origin: the present. The first way was

the exploration of the field, and the findings were presented in the context of the literature for reasons outlined above. This act of *ostranenie* raised significant lines of enquiry. First, the theoretical foundations of modern practices and, second, the practical origins of the MEA. For an investigation interested in the *weltanschauung* of the protagonists the project relied on the agents themselves to provide the lines of enquiry. These were not provided overtly but arose without provocation from the *textures* of everyday life which though prevalent are only notable to the attuned observer.

The first step was to identify theoretical underpinnings: the chapter on the Mb argued that detailed stories about diplomacy existed in the Indian imagination for at least 2,500 years. These were implanted in a theory of action, *dharma*, which is user-centric and premised not on an 'other' but on an inextricably intermeshed world. It is a world not of alienated actors attempting to overcome each other, but a crowded world where though one attempts to improve one's position one does so by causing minimal inconvenience to others while doing so. In the Mb, *dharma* is about knowing what is right in a given situation. The actor bases the decision on personal motivation and societal norms, but as the terminal story in the Mb – about the dog entering heaven – demonstrates, ultimately, it is the individual who just manages to ease ahead of society in the calculations underpinning action. The calculations are required because the world is viewed as inextricably interconnected, which means that the actor's actions resonate universally. The Mb's diplomacy is conducted within this theory of action. The chapter also demonstrated how the ideal of the god-man Krsna is never realisable, a parable for realising the reality of the divine.

Though the Mb continues to animate the cultural circuits of Indian civilization, it was subsumed by Mughal norms during the moment of first diplomatic contact between India and Europe. This era requires investigation because the literature invests it with significance: the coming of modernity and the shaping of today. In contrast to the literature on modernity, chapter four demonstrates that it was actually the British who slotted themselves into well-established local diplomatic practices. These were secular despite being practiced by an Islamic regime. It is argued that this secularization of the Mughals was due to their operating in a land of *dharma*. However, this period was not to last and the next chapter explores what actually happened during the British interregnum both in terms of theory and practice.

Chapter five argues that what the British exported to India was their metaphysic of 'othering'. This was directly contrary to *dharma*. However their metaphysic was activated thru the already existing diplomatic circuits of the Mughal Empire, including its personnel. It is argued that locals who had survived in a generally secularized regime – though not totally free from Muslim religious fundamentalism as Nik Rao's broken temple reminds us – did not perceive the British as irreconcilably alien. In fact, noting the demise of the Empire and the rise of the Raj, locals offered their services and expected to rise to the top of their profession under the British. The British metaphysic precluded this. It treated India and Indians as the 'other'. This meant that locals were excluded from diplomacy while the nature of diplomacy was fundamentally transformed from an activity designed to communicate to avoid war to one which relied first on war and then turned to negotiations. In short, local diplomacy was exterminated.

Such events are taken by the literature as evidence that Indian modernity was directly transplanted from Europe. However, as this project has argued, in terms of actual practice, the British appropriated local systems and the personnel of diplomacy. They used this to activate their metaphysic of 'othering'. Hence the European input into India was the metaphysic of their modernity, 'othering', rather than any practical conception or organization. Of course, the European metaphysic was fundamental because it ordered society in terms of race which had significant consequences for Indian modernity. Exploring these requires investigating, yet again, in terms of the key Indian personalities, what happened at the time of independence.

The final chapter attempts to do this by relying on the wealth of material India's preeminent diplomats and bureaucrats have left behind. The chapter presents Nehru and Gandhi to argue that, as the protagonists themselves say, modern Indian foreign policy is rooted in ancient notions of *dharma*. The reason for this was Gandhi, whose understanding of *dharma* was a result of his intensive study of the Mb. But Gandhi modified the concept by emphasizing the morality of the actor and decreeing that the individual's morality ought to be guided by non-violence and truth. This was a radical step for the philosophy of *dharma*. The rest of the chapter evidences the working of the mentality in practical terms. At the birth of India the bureaucratic system, which had performed along the impetus of 'othering' until then, was required to perform along totally new lines. This was a Gandhian foreign policy and its implementation by a

residual system. Pakistan's invasion of Kashmir and the India-China war demonstrated, it is argued, the conceptual limits of Gandhian thought, and also played a definitive role in adapting Gandhian *dharma* to contemporary political challenges. The transformations are explored in terms of not just the key players but also the bureaucracy to expose how mentalities were put into practice. The main finding was the centralization of Indian foreign policy decision-making in the PM's office. The centralization is further evidenced in the rest of the chapter which explores Indian nuclear policy because of the inherent tension between weapons of mass destruction and India's long-standing ostensible commitment to non-violence and disarmament.

It is argued that Indian nuclear policy was premised on Gandhi's *satyāgraha* – that is violence but radically different from the types of violence used by the imperial powers. It required disarmament as an ideal and India pursued this at every international forum as well as independently, but without any success. The rationale was not provided only by the threat of nuclear coercion but also because it was a fundamental matter of principle. In this, policy reflected Gandhian thought. However, experience with Pakistan and China also helped to modify Indian policy. So far as Pakistan was concerned, India learnt that the time it took to produce the desired response from an adversary might be too long. In a nuclear world the risk was annihilation. This was brought into relief by China's weaponisation in 1964. Despite this, India persisted in *satyāgraha* until 1983 when the decision to weaponise was taken. In short, India lived under a nuclear threat for 19 years without the safeguard of Mutually Assured Destruction. When India did weaponise, the decision was taken, it is argued for two reasons. First, the established nuclear weapons states used these weapons as an integral part of their diplomacy, thereby opening India to the possibility of nuclear coercion. Second, India was unable to cope with the threat of nuclear annihilation posed by its nuclear armed neighbour with whom a war had been fought and with whom vast swathes of borderland was in dispute. However weaponisation did not signal the demise of Gandhian notions. As the section on Subrahmanyam, the architect of India's nuclear doctrine demonstrates, India was the first country to give up the right to a nuclear first strike. In doing so, India removed the nuclear factor from its diplomatic arsenal. Effectively, India never relied on nuclear diplomacy. The only reason for maintaining what is called a Credible Minimum Deterrence is to provide a nominal protection against a nuclear first strike. In adopting such a position, India kept faith with the tenets of *dharma* – always acting with full awareness of the world but not acceding to the world

if it contrasted with the first principles Gandhi introduced. Essentially, India never claimed to be non-violent. What Indian policy reflected was the urge to reap benefits while minimizing the impact on others.

Negotiating dharma

In closing, the project returns to the 123 Agreement to argue that Indian nuclear policy arises from the highly localized logics and practices uncovered in the preceding pages. These encompass Indian society. Yet, if the treaty arose from the nation's *dharma,* why was it opposed? The opposition of the ruling Congress party's major political rival, the BJP, did not indicate any difference in opinion. Rather, it was a case of sour-grapes – the BJP which had initiated the process did not want the Congress to reap the benefits. Testimony to this is provided not only by the acceptance of the deal by the BJP Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh[1] but also by the action of the BJP National Security Adviser and former MEA officer Brajesh Mishra[2] who broke ranks with his party to support the deal as negotiated by Congress. In other words, politically the deal was not really opposed by any major party.

Secondly, both BJP and Congress followed a negotiating pattern in keeping with the highly centralised approach to policy from Nehruvian times. Decision-making continues to reside with the Prime Minister as was made clear during the 123 negotiations. An officer who objected to negotiations with the US and was in line for the top slot in the MEA was not given the position. He resigned, went public and in a fit of pique accused the PM of a range of offences about the selection and promotion of officers.[3] PM Manmohan Singh, under whose watch the 123 was signed, responded during an informal conversation by saying quite simply, 'But Deep it is the prerogative of the PM to appoint his Foreign Secretary.'[4] The PM appoints who he sees fit not just in terms of ability but also in terms of *texture*, knowing the *dharma* of the age. This centralization in policy-making applied to the BJP too. Jaswant Singh, the BJP negotiator, was assisted by MEA officers but, as he laments the bureaucracy is loath to provide direction. They

---

[1] Jaswant Singh in conversation with author. New Delhi. 26 May 2008
[2] Brajesh Mishra in conversation with author. New Delhi. 6 June 2007
[3] Sikri. March 28 & 29, 2007
[4] Manmohan Singh in conversation with author. New Delhi. 21 May 2008

appear happy to abdicate all responsibility for decision-making in favour of the politician though they are capable drafters and negotiators.

Ultimately, the consensus for the deal arose out of the notions of poverty, *jugar* and status identified in Indian diplomatic society. The manner of manoeuvring was classic *dharma* understood as negotiating one's way thru a crowded world without causing offence, that is creating, 'strategic space. Our diplomacy is to create the room for us to manoeuvre,'[5] for example voting with the US against Iran at the UN during the negotiations to enter the nuclear world. The means of negotiating was *jugar* – making do in the face of overwhelming US diplomatic resources and the motivations were poverty and status. India sought to maximise its rising capital in the US to fulfil its own requirements. These requirements arise, in the case of India, not out of any ideology but rather from the twin events which motivate the private lives and career choices of the men and women who join the MEA. Poverty and status are not confined to the individuals who comprise the MEA. They also motivate the operations of the nation-state – in fact they have to if any political party is to remain in power.

The rationale for the deal was twofold: first the sense of inferiority stemming from British racism and perpetuated through nuclear diplomacy and apartheid, and, second, the idea that nuclear technology is the means of overcoming the massive poverty that afflicts everyday India. Hence, status and poverty. The agreement unlocks thousands of technologies the US has placed on its 'Entity List' and to which India was denied access because they are classed 'dual use' and may be used for military purposes.[6] Essentially, the deal marks the birth of a 'knowledge economy' where India will be able to access existing technologies and perform research and development. The objective? India wants to become in R&D what China is in manufacturing.[7] With cheaper labour costs India expects to be able to undercut the West. An additional perceived advantage is that while demand for manufactured goods is susceptible to economic considerations, technology is far more resistant to market fluctuations. But all of this depends on getting access to the latest technologies which means accessing the US Entity List. That is why the nuclear issue was seen as vital. It was perceived as essential to help hundreds of millions of people escape

---

[5] Shiv Shankar Menon. Interview.
[6] Datta-Ray. Nuclear Deal Marks Birth of the Knowledge economy. South China Morning Post. October 7, 2008. P.A11
[7] Datta-Ray. Positive Energy. DNA. 1 October, 2008. P.14

from poverty. Secondly, it was also an emotive issue that resonated with a sense of injustice – made palpable by the simple fact that India is denied technologies. In short, the nuclear issue was chosen as the vector for foreign policy because it met the two age-old considerations underpinning Indian thought: poverty and injustice.

Finally, to return to the most significant aspect of the argument, India operates a diplomacy not of 'othering,' overcoming the 'other' or of producing a 'third culture'. Rather it is one of empathy, of knowing the negotiating partner. In short India, it has been argued does not negotiate with an 'other' but another, and one essentially much like itself. A lead Indian negotiator says:

> 'In a negotiation you have to always remember there is someone else. You have
> to think of them. If you do not think of them and ... say ... you are able to force
> your view upon them then your agreement won't last. A successful negotiation
> is when both parties are satisfied. There is give and take. So remember. Think of
> the other party.'

Implicit in the statement is that the starting assumption in the Indian *weltanschauung* is not that the world is populated by alienated individuals. On the contrary, it is quite possible to entertain an opposing party's ideas and adopt its position. *Dharma,* which argues that one's position in the world determines one's attitude, underlies this position. Self evidently different players have differing positions but this does not mean that any position is incomprehensible to other players. The diplomat's duty is to empathise. This played itself out in a process of give-and-take in the 123 negotiations because both parties understood that to successfully conclude the agreement, there were certain positions on which either party could not, for a variety of reasons, give ground.

Central to India's position was the requirement that some of its reactors are never opened for international inspection. It amounted to Indian exceptionalism which was to be realised thru engagement. However, Indian negotiators were flexible on some points, which they were not on the question of inspection. India is now the only entity permitted to segregate its nuclear programme into civilian and military components. India is also allowed to build new military reactors as, and when, deemed necessary. As for inspection, IAEA officials will have access to civilian reactors. The right to reprocess spent fuel under India-specific IAEA safeguards

addresses another key concern. It ensures that India benefits from the additional energy potential in spent fuel and addresses international concerns about material being siphoned off for military applications.

An area where the US was unwilling to give ground was on testing – a right India insisted on maintaining. The solution was to craft a means to address both positions. Initially, the US demanded an explicit Indian commitment to maintain its self-imposed nuclear moratorium which India thought was tantamount to surrendering a sovereign right. Responding creatively to this hurdle, negotiators – working in tandem with US representatives – formulated the key Article 14 of the agreement which states:

> 'The parties agree to carefully consider the circumstances that may lead to termination or cessation of co-operation. They further agree to take into account whether the circumstances that may lead to termination or cessation resulted from a party's serious concern about a changed security environment or as a response to similar actions by other states which could impact national security."[8]

In short, an Indian test will not automatically lead to the agreement being terminated. It will however initiate a round of negotiations to ascertain whether the broader political and security situation justified the test. If India can convince the US that this is the case, then the US will not terminate the agreement and ask for the return of nuclear equipment and fuel. As India's modernization hinges on this equipment, it also has a vested interest not to test.[9] In short, the agreement moves on the principle of neither overwhelming nor absorbing and deleting the 'other'. There is in the Indian conception no, 'other', simply differently located individuals attempting to deal with each other while causing the minimum of friction.

As the two examples above demonstrate, minimizing friction was as much an Indian as an American imperative. It is beyond the scope of this analysis to speculate on US compulsions.[10] But the argument is that India acted in this manner because its *dharma* enjoins it to carefully

---

[8] See the full text of the Indo-US 123 Agreement at
http://meaindia.nic.in/pressrelease/2007/08/03pr01.pdf
[9] Datta-Ray. Test Match. In South China Morning Post. 9 August, 2007. P.A13
[10] Several commentators suggest it is because the US wants to cultivate India to play the old game of containment, the target this time around being China. See Singh, J. p.382.

navigate a crowded world full of people much like itself. Familiarity with cultural norms is useful in this exercise but not essential. In fact, the native's knowledge of what is supposed to be the prevalent culture might even be a handicap. An incident during Indo-US negotiations explicates the point. Secretary of State Madeline Albright commented that India had 'dug itself into a hole' provoking the charge of cultural insult from the Indian Foreign Minister who said, 'I must point out that, civilisationally, we, in India, do not dig holes to bury ourselves, even metaphorically speaking. Therefore this observation exemplifies yet another fundamental lack of comprehension about the Indian state and about addressing Indian sensitivities.'[11] Indians, of course, burn their dead and the means to avoid such friction, it has been argued, is for the discipline to familiarize itself with the actuality of the protagonists in international relations today.[12]

ENDS

---

[11] Talbot. P.82

[12] 'Dig yourself into a hole' stems from a common biblical metaphor, for example, in Jeremiah 18:20 we find: 'they have digged a pit for my soul'. See "dig" The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms. Ed. Judith Siefring. Oxford University Press, 2004. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. 14 October 2009.
See: http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t35.e691

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abu-Lughod, J. L. Before European Hegemony. New York: Oxford University Press. 1989.

Acharya, A. & B. Buzan. Why is there no non-Western international relations theory? An introduction. In International Relations of the Asia-Pacific, Vol. 7. p.287-312, 2007.

Acharya, A. Prelude to the Sino-Indian War: Aspects of the Decision-making Processes during 1959-62. In China Report, 32. p.382-393. 1996.

Ackermann, B. A. We the People. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1991.

Amin, S. Eurocentrism. New York: Monthly Review Press. 1989.

Aitchison, C.U. A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads. 14 vols. Calcutta. 1909.

Alam, M. & S. Alavi. A European Experience of the Mughal Orient: The I'jaz-i Arsalani (Persian Letters, 1773-1779) of Antoine-Louis Henri Polier. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2001.

Alam, M. & S. Subrahmanyam. The making of a mushi. In Comparative studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Vol. 24. No. 2. Pp. 61-72. 2004.

Alvi, S. S. Religion and State during the Reign of Mughal Emperor Jahăngĭr (1605-27): Nonjuristical Perspectives Studia Islamica. No. 69. pp. 95-119. 1989.

Altekar, A. S. State and Government in Ancient India. 3rd edition. Motilal Banarsidass. 2001.

Amir, S. & A. Tiryakian & E. Tiryakian. Eds. Rethinking Civilizational Analysis London. Sage Publications. 2004.

Anderson, M. S. The rise of modern diplomacy. 1450-1919. London: Longman. 1993.

Appadorai, A. Dilemma in foreign policy in the modern world. New York: Asia Publications House. 1963.

Appadoria, A. Ed. Select Documents on India's Foreign Policy, 1947-72. Vol. I. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1982.

Appadorai, A. & M.S. Rajan. India's foreign policy and relations. New Delhi: South Asian Publications. 1988

Arnason, J. P. Civilizations in Dispute: Historical Questions and Theoretical Traditions. Leiden: Brill. 2003.

Arnason, J. P. Understanding Intercivilizational Encounters. Thesis Eleven. No. 86. 2006.

Ashley, R. The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space: Toward a Critical Social Theory of International Politics. In Alternatives 12. no. 4. pp.403-34. 1987.

Athar A. M. The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case. In Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 9. no. 3. p. 385-396. 1975.

Aziz, A. The Mansabdari System and the Mughal Army. Delhi: idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli. 1972. Ball , T. Reappraising Political Theory. Revisionist studies in the history of political thought. New York: Oxford University Press. 1995.

Bagby, P. Culture and history. Prolegomena to the comparative study of civilizations. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1963.

Bajpai, K. Indian conceptions of order and justice: Nehruvian, Gandhian, *Hindutva*, and Neo-liberal. In Order and Justice in International Relations. Ed. by R. Foot, J. Gaddis & A. Hurrell. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2003.

Bajpai, K. International Relations in India. Bringing theory back home. Hyderabad: Orient Longman. 2004

Balfour, F. Ed. and trans. Insha'-I harkaran. Calcutta: Charles Wilson, 1781.

Banton, M. Racial Theories, 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1998.

Barnett, M. & M. Finnemore. Rules for the world. International organisations in global politics. Ithica: Cornell University Press. 2004.

Bartelson, J. A Genealogy of Sovereignty. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Basrur, Rajesh. Nuclear Weapons and Indian strategic culture. In Journal of Peace Research. Vol. 38. No. 2. Pp. 181-198. 2001.

Bayly, C. A. Indian Society and the Making o the British Empire. New Cambridge History of India. Vol. 2. no. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1988.

Behera, N. C. Re-imagining IR in India. In International Relations of the Asia-Pacific. Vol. 7. p.341-368. 2007.

Bergmann, M. S. Reflections on the history of psychoanalysis. In Journal of the American Psychoanalytical Association. Vol. 41. no. 4. p.929-955. 1993.

Berman, M. All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity. New York. Penguin Books. 1988.

Bernal, M. Black Athena. Vol. I. London: Vintage. 1991.

Bernstein, R. J. The new constellation. The ethical-political horizons of modernity/postmodernity. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Berridge, G. R. Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissenger. New York. Palgrave. 2001.

Berridge, G. R. & A. James. A Dictionary of Diplomacy. New York. Palgrave. 2001.

Bilgrami, A. Gandhi's Integrity. The philosophy behind the politics. In Debating Gandhi. A Reader. Ed. by A. Raghuramaraju. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2006

Birdwood, G. & W. Foster. The First Letter Book of the East India Company. London. 1893

Blake, S. P. The Patrimonial- Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals. In Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 39. No. 1. Pp. 77-94. Nov. I979.

Blaut, J. M. 1492. The Debate on Colonialism, Eurocentrism and History. New Jersey: Africa World Press. 1992.

Blaut, J. M. Colonizer's Model of the World. London: Guildford. 1993.

Blochmann . H. The Ain-I-Akbari by Abu L-Fazl Allami, translated from the original. 2nd ed. Mushiram Mahoharlalal Publishers Ltd. New Delhi.

Blondel, E. The Question of Genealogy. In Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals. Ed. by Richard Schacht. London: University of California Press, 1994.

Bohman, J. How to Make a Social Science Practical: Pragmatism, Critical Social Science and Multiperspectival Theory. In Millennium Journal of International Relations, vol. 31, no. 3, p.499-524. 2002.

Bondurant, J. V. Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958.

Bowden, B. The Ideal of Civilization: Its Origin and Socio-Political Character. In Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy. Vol. 7. No. 1. Pp. 25-50. 2004.

Brady, R. An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hinduism. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. 2001.

Brass, P. R. How political scientists experienced India's developmental state. In Experiencing the state. Ed. By L. I. Rudolph & J. K. Jacobsen. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2006.

Brand, M. The Vision of Kings: Art and Experience in India. Canberra: Australian National University Press. 1997.

Braudel, F. A History of Civilizations. New York: Penguin. 1993.

Broadfoot, W. The Career of Major George Broadfoot. London. John Murray. 1888.

Brockington, J. The Sanskrit Epics. Brill: Leiden. 1998.

Brodbeck, S. Krsna's action as the paradigm of asakta karman in the Bhagavad Gita. In Cracow Indological Studies. Vol. 4/5. Jagiellonian University Institute of Oriental Philology. 2nd International Conference on Indian Studies Proceedings. Ed. by Renata Czekalska & Halina Marlewicz. Ksiegarnia Akademicka. Krakow 2003.

Brodbeck, S. Calling Krsna's bluff: Non-attached action in the Bhagavadgītā. In Journal of Indian Philosophy. Vol. 32. Pp. 81-103. 2004.

Bryant, G.J. Asymmetric Warfare: The British Experience in Eighteenth-Century India. In The Journal of Military History Vol. 68. Pp. 431–69. April 2004.

Buchanan, I. Certeau and Cultural Studies. In New Formations. no. 31, pp. 175-88. 1997.

Buckler, F. The Oriental Despot. In M. Pearson (ed.). Legitimacy and Symbol. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 1992.

Bühler, G. The Laws of Manu. Motilal Banarsidas. 1964.

Bull, H. The Anarchical Society. A study of order in world politics. London: Macmillan. 1977.

Bull, H. & A. Watson. The Expansion of International Society. New York: Oxford University Press. 1985.

Burke, P. Overture. The New History: Its Past and its Future. In New Perspectives on Historical Writing. 2nd ed. (ed. Peter Burke). Cambridge: Polity Press. 2001.

Burke, P. Context in Context. In Common Knowledge. Vol. 8. No. 1. 2002

Buzan, B. & R. Little. Why International Relations Has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to do About it. In Millennium: Journal of International Relations. Vol. 30. no. 1.2001.

Calendar of Persian Correspondence. In Imperial Archives Series. vol. 5. 20 May 1781. 1911.

Cassirer, E. Language and Myth. Transl. by Susanne K. Langer. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1946.

Castoriadis, C. The Imaginary Institution of Society. Cambridge: Polity Press. 1987.

Chakrabarty, D. Habitations of modernity: essays in the wake of subaltern studies. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. 2002

Chakrabary, D. Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial thought and historical difference. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2007.

Chapman. India and Its Finances. Westminster Review 4. Pp. 192. 1853.

Chengappa, R. Weapons of peace: The secret story of India's quest to be a nuclear power. New Delhi: Harper Collins. 2000.

Cherian, J. China Bogey. Frontline. Vol.26, Issue 21, Oct.10-23, 2009. (http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/stories/20091023262103700.htm)

Cohen, R. Putting Diplomatic Studies on the Map. In Diplomatic Studies Programme Newsletter. May 4, 1998.

Cohn, B. Colonialism and its forms of knowledge. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1996. Consideration on the Native Army and General Defence of India. United Services Journal. Vol.7. no.1. 1831.

Cohn, B. S. Recruitment and Training of British Civil Servants in India, 1600-1860. In Asian Bureaucratic Systems Emergent from the British Imperial Tradition. Ed. by R. B. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Commonwealth-Studies Center. 1966.

Cohn, B. S. An anthropologist among historians and other essays. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1990

'Consideration on the Native Army and General Defence of India.' United Services Journal. 7(1831):1

Constantinou, C. On the Way to Diplomacy. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1996.

Correia, G. Lendas da India. Ed. Felner. Rev. Porto: Almeida. 1975.

Cox., R. W. Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory. In Millennium: Journal of International Studies 10, no. 2. Pp. 126-55. 1981.

Cox, R. W. Civilizations and the Twenty-first Century: Some Theoretical Considerations. In International Relations of the Asia-Pacific. Vol. 1. Pp. 105-30. 2001.

Cox, R. W. Thinking about Civilizations. In Review of International Studies. no. 26. Pp. 217-34. 2004.

Crawford, L. & V. Shklovskij. Différance in Defamiliarization. In Comparative Literature. Vol. 36, No. 3. pp. 209-219. 1984.

Creel, A. *Dharma in Hindu Ethics.* South Asia Books. 1977.

Dahlman, J. Das Mahabharata als Epos und Rechtsbuch. Berlin: FL Dames. 1895

Dahlman, J. Genesis des Mahabharata. Berlin: FL Dames. 1899.

Dass, D. Ed. Sardar Patel's Correspondence. Ahmedabad. 1973

Dandekar, R.N. The Mahabharata: Origin and Growth. University of Ceylon Review. Vol. 12. no.2. 1954.

Dallmayr, F. Western Thought and Indian Thought: Comments on Ramanujan. Philosophy East & West, no. 3. p.291-305. 1990.

Dallmayr, F. Peace Talks – Who Will Listen? University of Notre Dame Press. 2004.

Dalrymple, W. Assimilation and transculturation in eighteenth-century India. A response to Pankaj Mishra. In Common Knowledge 11:3. Duke University Press. P. 445-485.

Dalton, D. Mahatma Gandhi: Nonviolent Power in Action. New York: Columbia University Press. I993.

Dandekar, R. N. The Mahabharata: Origin and Growth. In University of Ceylon Review. Vol. 12. n.2. 1954.

Datta-Ray. D. K. Singh gets nuclear deal despite the horse trading. In South China Morning Post. P.A15. 8 July, 2008.

Datta-Ray. D. K. Prime Exemplar of Courage. In The Straits Times. 10 July, 2008.

Datta-Ray. D. K. Test Match. In South China Morning Post. P.A13. 9 August, 2007.

Datta-Ray. D. K. Raising India's pulse without selling its soul. In South China Morning Post. 13 August, 2008.

Datta-Ray. D. K. Dawn of India's brave new nuclear world. In South China Morning Post. P.A14. 9 September, 2008.

Datta-Ray, D. K.Nuclear Deal Marks Birth of the Knowledge economy. In South China Morning Post. 7 October, 2008. P.A11

Datta-Ray. D.K. Positive Energy. In DNA. 1 October, 2008. P.14

Datta-Ray, S. K. Waiting for America. India and the US in the new millennium. India: Harper Collins. 2002

Datta-Ray, S.K. Lee Kuan Yew's mission India. Singapore: ISEAS. 2009.

Dayal, R. A Life of Our Times. India: Orient Longman. 1998.

de Certeau, M. & F. Jameson & C. Lovitt. On the Oppositional Practices of Everyday Life. Social Text. no.3. pp. 3-43. 1980.

de Certeau, M. The writing of history. Trans. By T. Conley. New York. 1988.

de Certeau, M. The practice of everyday life. University of California Press. 2002.

Delanty, G. Civilizational Constellations and European Modernity Reconsidered. In G. Delanty. ed. Europe and Asia beyond East and West. New York: Routledge. 2006.

Der Derian, J. Antidiplomacy: Spies, Terror, Speed, and War. London: Blackwell. 2001.

Der Derian, J. On Diplomacy. A Genealogy of Western Estrangement . Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1987

Desoulieres, A. Mughal Diplomacy in Gujarat (1533-1534) in Correia's 'Lendas da India'. In Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 22. No. 3. Pp.433-454. 1988.

Dikötter, F. The racialization of the globe: an interactive interpretation. In Ethnic and Racial Studies. vol. 31. No. 8. Pp. 1478 – 1496. 2008.

Dikötter, F. Things Modern. London: Hurst Publishers. 2007.

Dikötter, F. The age of openness. China before Mao. University of California Press. 2008.

Dimock, Jr., E. C. Introduction. In The Literatures of India. An Introduction. Ed. by Dimock jnr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1974.

Dirks, N. B. From Little King to Landlord. In Colonialism and Culture. Ed. By N. Dirks. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 1992.

Dirks, N. B. The scandal of empire. India and the creation of imperial Britain. Harvard University Press. 2006.

Disarmament: India's Initiatives. Government of India. New Delhi. Ministry of External Affairs. 1988.

Dixit, J.N. Across borders. Fifty years of Indian foreign policy. New Delhi: Picus Books. 1998.

Dixit, J.N. Makers of India's foreign policy. Raja Ram Mohan Rao to Yashwant Sinha. India: Harper Collins. 2004.

Doniger, W. & J. D. M Derrett. The Concept of Duty in South Asia. Eds. London: SOAS. 1978.

Doniger, W. Many Gods, Many Paths: Hinduism and Religious Diversity. Religion and Culture Web Forum. Feb. 2006.

Dunham, J. Manuscripts used in the Critical Edition of the Mahabharata: A Survey and Discussion. In Essays on the Mahabharata. Ed. by A. Sharma. Leiden: E. J. Brill. 1991.

Durkheim, E. & M. Mauss. Note on the notion of civilization. In Social Research. 38. No. 4. P. 808-813. Trans by B. Nelson. 1971.

Dutt, S. With Nehru in The Foreign Office. Calcutta: Minerva Associates. 1977.

Duvernay-Bolens, J. Un trickster chez les naturalists. La notion d'hybride. In Ethnologie Francaise. Vol. 23. no.1. p.144-152. Jan-March 1993.

Eaton, N. The art of colonial despotism. Portraits, politics, and empire in south India. 1750-1795. In Cultural Critique. No. 70. Fall 2008.

The Economist. India's civil service. Battling the babu raj. March 6, 2008.

Eisenstadt, S.N. Revolutions and the Transformation of Societies. New York: Free Press. 1978.

Eisenstadt, S.N., European expansion and the civilization of modernity. In Expansion and Reaction. Ed. by H.L. Wesseling. Leiden: Brill. 1978.

Eisenstadt, S.N. Cultural Traditions and Political Dynamics. British Journal of Sociology. No. 32. pp.155-181. 1981.

Eisenstadt, S.N. Comparative Liminality: Liminality and Dynamis of Civilization. In Religion vol. 15. Pp.315-338. 1985

Eisenstadt, SN. Frameworks of the Great Revolutions: Culture, Social Structure, History and Human Agency. In International Social Science Journal. Vol. 133. Pp.385-401. 1992.

Eisenstadt, S.N. and B. Giesen. The construction of collective identity. In European Journal of Sociology. Vol. 36. No. 1. Pp.72-102. 1995.

Eisenstadt, S.N. Multiple Modernities. In Daedalus. Vol. 129, no. 1. 2000.

Elias, N. Introduction: A Theoretical Essay on Established and Outsiders. In The Established and the Outsider: A Sociological Enquiry into Community Problems. Ed. by N. Elias & J.L. Scotson. London: Sage. 1994.

Errington, F. & D. Gewertz. The individuation of tradition in a Papua New Guinean modernity. In American Anthropologist. Vol. 98. No. 1. Pp.114-26. March 1996.

Esteban, J. C. The British Balance of Payments, 1772-1820: India Transfers and War Finance. Economic History Review. Vol. 54. No. 1. 2001.

Faruqui, M. A. Hamid. *Chandra Bhan Brahman: Life and Works with a Critical Edition of his Diwan.* Ahmadabad: Khalid Shahin Faruqi. 1966.

Faubion, J. D. Modern Greek Lessons: A primer in historical constructivism. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1993.

Fifteenth Report. Standing Committee on External Affairs. 2006-07. 14th Lok Sabah. Lok Sabah Secretariat.

Fisher, M. H. Indirect Rule in the British Empire: The Foundations of the Residency System in India (1764-1858). In Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 18. No. 3. pp.393-428. 1984.

Fisher, M. H. Extraterritoriality: The concept and its application in Princely India. In Indo-British Review. Vol. 15. No. 2. Pp. 103-22. December 1988.

Fisher, M. H. The Resident in Court Ritual, 1764-1858. In Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 24. No. 3. Pp. 419-458. 1990.

Fisher, M. H. Indirect Rule in India. Residents and the Residency System, 1764-1858. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1991.

Fisher, M. H. The Office of Akhbār Nawīs: The Transition from Mughal to British Forms. In Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 27. No. I. p.45-82. 1993.

Fisher, M. H. Indian Political Representations in Britain during the Transition to Colonialism. In Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 38. No. 3. Pp. 649–675. 2004.

Fitzgerald, J. L. India's Fifth Veda: The Mahabharata's presentation of itself. In Essays on the Mahabharata. Ed by. A. Sharma. Leiden: E. J. Brill. 1991.

Flood, C. G. Political Myth. London: Routledge. 2002.

Foster, W. England's Quest of Eastern Trade. London: C.A. Black. 1933.

Foucault, M. Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. Trans. By A. Sheridan. London: Penguin, 1979.

Foucault, M. Prison Talk. In Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge. Ed. by C. Gordon. London: Harvester. 1980.

Foucault, M. Nietzsche, Genealogy, History. In The Essential Works of Foucault. Vol. 2. Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology. Ed. by James D. Faubion. London: Allen Lane. 1998.

Fox, R. G. Gandhian Utopia: Experiments with Culture. Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.

Frank, A. G. ReOrient. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1998.

Frawley, D. Hinduism. The eternal tradition (sanatana dharma). Delhi: Voice of India. 1995.

Freud, S. The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement. Trans. by A.A. Brill. Nervous and Mental Disease Monography Series. No. 25. New York: Nervous and Mental Disease Pub. Co. 1914. (trans. 1917).

From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report. New Delhi: Sage. 2000.

Gadgil, N.V., Government from Inside. Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan. 1968.

Gandhi, Mahatma K. Complete Works of Mahatma Gandhi. 98 volumes. Publications Division. Government of India. New Delhi.

Ganeri, J. The concealed art of the soul: Theories of the self and practices of truth in Indian ethics and epistemology. USA: Oxford University Press. 2007

Ganeri, J. Contextualism in the Study of Indian Intellectual Cultures. In Journal of Indian Philosophy. Vol. 36. Pp.551–562. 2008.

Gaonkar, D. P. Alternative Modernities. Duke University Press. 2001.

Gasché, R. The tain and the mirror. Derrida and the philosophy of reflection. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1986.

Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Cultures. Basic Books. 1973.

Gier, N. F. The virtue of non-violence. SUNY Series in Constructive Postmodern thought. Albany: State University of New York Press. 2004.

Ginzburg, Carlo. Making things strange. The prehistory of a literary device. In Representations. No. 56. Special issue. The new erudition. P. 8-28. Autumn 1996.

Gladwin, F. The Persian Moonshee. Calcutta: Chronicle Press. 1795.

Glasenapp, H. Von. Das Indienbild deutscher Denker. Stuttgart: K. F. Koehler, 1960.

Glieg, G.R. Munro to Canning, 14 Oct 1820. In The life of Major General Sir Thomas Munro. London: Colburn and Bentley. 1830.

Goody, J. The East in the West. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1996.

Gopal, R. How the British Occupied Bengal: A Corrected Account of 1756-1765 Events. London: Asia Publishing House. 1963.

Gordon, S. & G. Hambly (eds.) Robes of Honour: The Medieval World of Investiture. New York: St. Martin's Press. 2000.

Goswamy, B. N. & J. S. Grewal. The Mughals and the Jogis of Akhbar. Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studied. 1967.

Government of India's note to IAEA. See: http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/2008/infcirc731.pdf.

Gran, P. Beyond Eurocentrism: A New View of Modern World History. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press. 1996.

Guha, Ranajit. A Rule of Property for Bengal: An essay in the idea of permanent settlement. Durham:Duke Uni. Press. 1996.

Gusterson, H. Exploding Anthropology's canon in the world of the bomb: Ethnographic writing on militarism. In Journal of Contemporary Ethnography. Pp.59-79. 1993.

Habib, I. Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perception. New Delhi: Tulika Publishers. 1995.

Habib, I. The Agrarian System of Mughal India. 1556–1707. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1999.

Haksar, A.N.D. Shine off the Foreign Service. In Hindustan Times. New Delhi. August 16 1992

Haksar, A.N.D., Mandalisation and the Foreign Service. In The Pioneer. New Delhi. Sept 4 1994.

Halbfass, W. Indien und Europa: Perspektiven ihrergeistigen Begegnung. Basel: Schwabe.

Hamilton, K. & R. Langhorne. The practice of diplomacy: its evolution, theory and administration. London: Routledge. 1995.

Halliburton, M. Social Thought & Commentary: Gandhi or Gramsci? The use of authoritative sources in anthropology. In Anthropological Quarterly. vol. 77. no. 4. Pp.793-817. 2004.

Harline, P. & P. Mandler. From Fiscal-Military State to Laissez-Faire State, 1760-1850. In Journal of British Studies, vol. 32. Pp. 44-70. 1993.

Harraway, D. Situated knowledges. The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. In Feminist Studies. Vol. 14. No. 3. p.575-99. 1989.

Hasan, S. N. Nigar Nama-i-Munshi: A valuable collection of documents of Aurangzeb's Reign. In Proceedings of the Indian History Congress. 15th Session. Gwalior: Indian History Congress. p.258-263. 1952.

Hegel, G.W.F. von. The Philosophy of History. Trans. By. J. Sibree. New York: Dover. 1956.

Hegel, G.W. F von. Phenomelogy of the spirit. Oxford University Press. 1977.

Hiltebeitel, A. The Ritual of Battle: Krishna in the Mahābhārata. Ithica: Cornell University Press. 1976.

Hiltebeitel, A. Rethinking the Mahābhārata. A readers guide to the education of the Dharma King. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2001.

Hoffman, J. Reconstructing diplomacy. In British journal of politics and international relations. Vol. 5. No. 4. Pp. 525-542. November 2003.

Hogben, W.M. First Steps in the Indianization of the Indian Political Service. In South Asia: Perspectives and Dimensions. Ed. by. S. P. Wakil. CASAS. 1977.

Hogben, W. M. An Imperial Dilemma: The Reluctant Indianization of the Indian Political Service. Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 15. No. 4. pp.751-769. 1981.

Hollis, M. & S. Smith. Explaining and Understanding International Relations. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1990.

Holzner, B. The Civilization Analytic Frame of Reference: Benjamin Nelson and the Foundations of Cultural Sociology. Comparative Civilizations Review. Vol. 8. Pp. 15-30.

Hopgood, S. Socialising IR. GSC Quarterly 10. 2003.

Hopgood, S. Keepers of the Flame.

Hota, P.C.. Constitutional Status of the UPSC and its impact on the public services. UPSC. Platinum Jubilee Souvenir. 1926-2001.

Hoy, D. C. Nietzsche, Hume, and the Genealogical Method. In Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: essays on Nietzsche's Genealogy of morals. Ed. by R. Schacht. Berkley: University of California Press. 1994.

Hutton, C. M. Linguistics and the Third Reich: Mother-tongue fascism, race and the science of language. London: Routledge. 1999.

Hymans, J. E. C. The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions, and Foreign Policy. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2006.

Inden, R. Orientalist constructions of India. In Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 20. No. 3. P.401-446. 1986.

The Indian Annual Register. Vol II, Calcutta, The Annual Register Office. July-Sept. 1946.

Indo-US 123 Agreement. See: http://meaindia.nic.in/pressrelease/2007/08/03pr01.pdf

Indo-US Separation Plan. See: http://www.dae.gov.in/press/sepplan.pdf

Inkeles, A. & D. H. Smith. Becoming Modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Countries. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1974.

Irvine, W. The Later Mughals. In Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. LXXII. I. Pp.46-47. Calcutta: Bishops College Press. 1907.

Iyengar, H. V. R. Administration in India. A historical review. Bombay: Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan. 1967.

Jahangir. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, or Memoirs ofJahangir. From the First to the Twelfth Year of his Reign. Trans. By A. Rogers. Ed. by H. Beveridge. London. 1909.

Jain, P. Mahatma Gandhi's notion of dharma. An explication. In Dharma. The Categorial imperative. Ed. By A. Vohra, A. Sharma & M. Miri. New Delhi: DK Printworld. 2005.

Jaspers, K. The Origin and the Goal of History. London: Routledge & Kegan. 1953.

Jones, E. John Lingard and the pursuit of historical truth. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press. 2001.

Joseph, G. G. Crest of the peacock: Non-European roots of mathematics. New York: Penguin. 1992.

Kakar, Sudhir. The inner world. A psychoanalytic study of childhood and society in India. Oxford University Press.

Kalb, D., M. van der Land, R. Staring, B. van Steenbergen & N. Wilterdink. The ends of globalization: Bringing society back in. New York: Rowman & Littlefield. 2000.

Kangle, R. P. The Kautilya Arthasastra. Part III – a study. Bombay University Press. 1965.

Kanth, R. Against Eurocentrism: A Transcendent critique of Modernist Science, Society, and Morals. New York: Macmillan. 2005.

Kapchan, D. A. & P. T. Strong. Theorizing the hybrid. Journal of American Folklore. Vol. 112. no.44, pp.239-53. 1999.

Karanjia, R.K., The Mind of Mr. Nehru An interview by R.K. Karanjia. George Allen & Unwin, London, 1961.

Karnad, B. Nuclear weapons and Indian security. The realist foundations of strategy. India: Macmillan. 2002.

Kavic, L. J. India's Quest for Security. Defence Policies, 1947-1965. Berkeley, Los Angeles. University of California Press. London. Cambridge University Press. 1967.

Kaviraj, S. Contributions to Indian Sociology. Vol. 18. Pp. 136-138. 1984

Kaviraj, S. Modernity and Politics in India. In Daedalus. Vol. 129. No. 1. P p.137-162. Winter 2000.

Kaye, J.W. Metcalf's memo, nd. (1815/16?). Life and correspondence of Lord Metcalfe. London: Smith, Elder and co. 1858.

Kesavan, K.V. Nehru, Henderson and the Japanese Peace Treaty. In International Studies. Vol. 40. Pp. 247-263. 2003.

Khan, A. M. Mirat-i-Ahmedi, Supplement tr. Syed Nawab Ali and Charles Norman Siddon. Baroda. 1924.

Khan, A. M. The Transition in Bengal 1756-1775: A Study of Saiyid Muhammed Reza Khan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1969.

Khanna, P. IAS topper wants rural India posting. In Asian Age. New Delhi. May 18, 2001.

Khoury, D. R. & D. Kennedy. Comparing Empires: The Ottoman Domains and the British Raj. In the Long Nineteenth Century Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Vol. 27. No.2. 2007.

Kissinger, H. Does America Need a Foreign Policy? – Towards a diplomacy for the 21st century. New York: Simon & Schuster. 2001.

Klitgaard, R. E. Gandhi's Non-Violence as Tactics. In Journal of Peace Research.vol. 8. Pp.143-153. 1971.

Kumaraswamy, P.R. National Security. A Critique. In Security beyond survival. Ed. by P.R.Kumaraswamy. Sage. New Delhi.

Laiq, J. Opinion. Diplomatic Impunity. In Outlook. Mumbai. 27 Sept. 1999.

Latham, A. The role of culture and identity in Indian arms control and disarmament policy. In Cross-cultural dimensions of multilateral non-proliferation and arms control dialogue. Nonproliferation, arms control and disarmament division. Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade. Pp. 103-125. 1997.

Latouche, S. The Westernization of the world. London: Polity Press. 1995.

Lavrin, J. Tolstoy and Gandhi. In Russian Review, Vol. 19, No. 2. pp. 132-139. Apr. 1960.

Lee-Warner, W. The Native States of India. London. I9I0.

Lerner, D. The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press. 1958.

Lévi-Strauss, C. The Savage Mind. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1966.

Lewis, J. W. & Xue Litai. China builds the bomb. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. 1988.

Lichtheim, G. Alienation. In International Encyclopedia of the social sciences. Ed. By D.L. Sills. Vol. 1. The Macmillan co. and The Free Press. 1968.

Lincoln, B. Discourse and the Constitution of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1989.

Lippincott, L. Expanding on Portraiture: The Market, the Public and the Hierarchy of Genres in 18th-Century Britain. In The Consumption of Culture: Image, Object, Text. Ed. By A. Bermingham & J. Brewer. London: Routledge. 1995.

Litvak, M. A Failed Manipulation: The British, the Oudh Bequest and the Shii Ulama of Najaf and Karbala. In British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. Vol. 27. No. 1. p.69-89. 2000.

Lok Sabah Unstarred Question No. 1209. Answered on 29.11.2006. Appointment of High Commissioners/Ambassadors. See MEA website.

Lok Sabha Debates. Publications Division. Government of India. Published annually.

Low, D. A. The Government of India and the First Non-Cooperation Movement – 1920-1922. In The Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 25. No. 2. pp. 241-259. Feb. 1966.

Luhman, N. Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft, Bd. 1-2. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. 1997.

Luhman, N. Soziologische Aufklärung, Bd. 2. Opladen: Westdeutschen Verlag. 1975.

Mackenzie Brown, D. The White Umbrella: Indian Political Thought from Manu to Gandhi. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1953

Mahon, M. Foucault's Nietzschean Genealogy: Truth, Power and the Subject. New York: State University of New York Press. 1992.

Malcolm, J. The Political History of India.

Manucci, N. Storia Do Mogor or Mogul India. Trans. By William Irvine. Vol. I. Calcutta: S.Dey. 1965

Mansingh, S. India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy 1966-1982. New Delhi, London: Sage. 1984.

Mantena, R. The Question of History in PreColonial India. In History and Theory. Vol. 46. pp. 396-408. October 2007.

Markey, D. Developing India's foreign policy 'software'. Asia Policy. No. 8. Pp. 73-96. July 2009.

Markosian, N. A Defense of Presentism. In Oxford Studies in Metaphysics, Vol. 1. Ed. by D. Zimmerman. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2003.

Markovits, C. The Un-Gandhian Gandhi. Life and afterlife of the Mahatma. London: Anthem Press. 2004

Marshall, P.J. British Immigration into India in the Nineteenth Century. In European Expansion and Migration. Ed. by P.Emmer & M.Mőrner. Leiden: Brill. 1992.

Marshall, P. J. The Making of an Imperial Icon: The Case of Warren Hastings. In Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History. Vol. 27. No. 3. 1999.

Mathai, M.O. Reminiscences of the Nehru Age. Delhi: Vikas. 1979.

Matilal, B. K. Review of The Jaina Path of Purification by Padmanabh S. Jaini. In Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. University of London. Vol. 43. No. 3. pp. 612-613. 1980.

Maxwell, N. India's China war. Bombay: Jaico. 1970.

Mazlish, B. Civilization in Historical and Global Perspective. In International Sociology 16, 3 (September). Pp. 293-300. 2001.

Mazlish, B. Civilization and Its Contents. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 2004.

McGrath, W. Freud and the force of history. In Freud and the history of psychoanalysis. Ed. by T. Gelfand, J. Kerr. Hillsdale, NJ and London: Analytic Press. 1992.

Mehta, J. L. Essays in Interpretation. In The Discourse of Violence in the Mahabharata. Indian Council of Philosophical Research. 1990.

Mehta, U. S. Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2000.

Menon, K. P. S. Many Worlds. An autobiography. London: Oxford University Press. 1965.

Menon, K. P. S. Changing Patterns of Diplomacy. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. 1977.

Menon, VP. Integration of Indian States. Hyderabad: Orient Longman. 1956.

Mercer, J. Rationality and Psychology. In International Organization 59. pp. 77-106. Winter 2005.

McLane, J. Land and Local Kingship in 18th-century Bengal. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1993.

McNeill, W. H. The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since AD 1000. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1982.

Miall, D. S. & D. Kuiken. Foregrounding, Defamiliarization and Affect: Response to Literary Stories. In Poetics 22. P. 389–407. 1994.

Miall, D. S. & D. Kuiken. Shifting Perspectives: Readers' Feelings and Literary Response. In New Perspectives on Narrative Perspective. Ed. By W. van Peer & S. Chatman. pp. 289–301. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 2001.

Miall, D. S. & D. Kuiken. A Feeling for Fiction: Becoming What We Behold. Poetics 30: 221–41. 2002

Mike D. Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World. New York: Verso. 2001.

Miller, D. Modernity: An ethnographic approach. Oxford: Berg. 1994.

Ministry of External Affairs Website. Accessed on 20 June 2009. See: http://meaindia.nic.in/

Mirchandani, G.G. India's nuclear dilemma. New Delhi: Popular Book Services. 1968.

Misra, B. B. The Bureaucracy in India, An historical analysis of development up to 1947. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1977.

More, S. S. Krsna. The man and his mission. An enquiry into the rationale of inter-relationship between Krsna's life, mission and philosophy. Pune: Gaaj Prakashan. 1995.

Mozaffari, M. Globalization and Civilizations. New York: Routledge. 2002.

Naim, C. M. (trans.). Mir Muhammad Taqi 'Mir,' Zikr-i Mir: The Autobiography of the 18th-century Mughal Poet:Mir. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1999.

Nandy, A. The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1983.

Nandy, A. Cultural Frames for Transformative Politics: A Credo. In Political Discourse: Explorations in Indian and Western Political Thought. Ed. By B. Parekh & T. Pantham. New Delhi: Sage. 1987.

Nandy, A. History's Forgotten Doubles. In History and Theory. Vol. 34. No. 2. Theme Issue 34: World Historians and Their Critics. May, 1995.

Nandy, A. Dissenting Knowledges, Open Futures: The multiple selves and strange destination of Ashis Nandy. Ed. by V. Lal. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2000.

Narula, S. [1] Brown Man's Burden. Sunil Narula Interviews M.K. Rasgotra. In Outlook India. May 10. 1999.

Nath, R. Military Leadership in India: Vedic Period to Indo-Pakistan War. New Delhi: Lancer Books. 1990.

Naxals biggest threat, says PM. In Economic Times. 16 September, 2009.

Nehamas, A. Nietzsche: Life as Literature. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1985.

Nehru, J. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru. 2nd Series. Publications Division. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Government of India. 1958

Nehru, J. The Discovery of India. Garden City, NY: Doubleday. Anchor edition. 1960.

Nehru, J. Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches. Vol 1. & Vol 3. Publications Division. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Government of India. 2ND Ed. Oct. 1963.

Nehru, J. Jawaharlal Nehru on public administration. New Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration. 1975.

Nehru, J. Letters to Chief Ministers. 1947-1964. Vol. I. 1947-1949. USA: Oxford University Press. 1988.

Nelson, B. Sociology and psychoanalysis on trial: An epilogue. In The Psychoanalytic review. Vol. 49. No. 2. Pp. 144-160. 1962.

Nelson, B. Civilizational Complexes and Intercivilizational Encounters. In Sociological Analysis. Vol. 34. No. 2. Pp. 79-105. 1973.

Nelson, B. On the Roads to Modernity: Conscience, Science and Civilizations. Selected Writings. Ed. Toby E. Huff. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield. 1981.

Neumann, I. B. To be a diplomat. In International Studies Perspectives. Vol. 6. p.72-93. 2005.

Neumann, I.B. Are Modern Diplomacy's Christian Roots a Threat to Its Sustainability? Draft Paper for Beijing Peace Research Conference. April 2008.

Nicolson, H. Good Behaviour: Being a study of certain types of civility. London: Constable. 1955.

Nicolson, H. Diplomacy. New York: Oxford University Press. 1964.
Nielsen, D. A. Natural Law and Civilizations: Images of "Nature," Intracivilizational Polarities, and the Emergence of Heterodox Ideals. In Sociological Analysis. Vol. 52. No. 1. Pp.55-76. 1991.

Nielsen, D. A. Three Faces of God: Society, Religion and the Categories of Totality in the Philosophy of Emile Durkheim. Albany: SUNY Press. 1999.

Nielsen, D. A. Rationalization, Transformations of Consciousness and Intercivilizational Encounters: Reflections on Benjamin Nelson's Sociology of Civilizations. In International Sociology. Vol 16. No. 3. Sept. 2001.

Nietzsche, F. On the Genealogy of Morals. Trans. By W. Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale. New York: Random House. 1967.

Nietzsche, F. Ecce Homo. Trans. By W. Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale. New York: Random House. 1967.

Nietzsche, F. Twilight of the Idols. Trans. By R.J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin. 1968.

Nietzsche, F. Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality. Trans. By R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1982.

Nikhilananda, Swami. The Realistic Aspect of Indian Spirituality. In Philosophy East and West. Vol. 9. No. ½. Preliminary Report on the Third East-West Philosophers' Conference. Pp. 64-66. Apr. - Jul. 1959.

Nizami, K. A. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli. 1978.

Nizami, K. A. The Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire: Genesis and Salient Features. In Islamic Culture. Vol. 55. No. 3. July 1981.

No Chinese military bases in Indian Ocean. In Indian Express. 11 September, 2009.

Noorani, A.G. India's Quest for a Nuclear Guarantee. Asian Survey. Vol. 7. No. 7. Pp. 490-502. July 1967.

Ochterlony, D. Selections from the Ochterlony Papers (1818-1825). In the National Archives of India. Calcutta. University of Calcutta. 1964.

Oriental and India Office Collections. British Library

Owen, D. Maturity and Modernity: Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault, and the Ambivalence of Reason. London: Routledge. 1994.

Owen, D. Nietzsche, Politics, and Modernity: A Critique of Liberal Reason. London: Sage. 1995.

Pande, B.N. Indira Gandhi. New Delhi: Publications Division. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. 1989.

Panikkar, K. M. An introduction to the study of the relations of Indian states with the Government of India. London: Martin Hopkinson. 1927.

Parsons, T. Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives. Englewood Cliffs. NJ: Prentice Hall. 1966.

Parsons, T. The System of Modern Societies. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Free Press. 1971.

Peers, D. M. Between Mars and Mammon Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in India, 1819–1835. London: I. B. Tauris. 1995

Pinkerton, J. A General Collection of Voyages and Travels. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, & Orme. vol. iii. 1811.

Pomeranz, K. The Great Divergence. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 2000.

Pomper, P. World History and Its Critics. In History and Theory. Vol. 34. No. 2. Theme Issue 34: World Historians and Their Critics. Pp. 1-7. May, 1995.

Pontara, G. The Rejection of Violence in Gandhian Ethics of Conflict Resolution Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 2, No. 3. pp. 197-215. 1965.

Power, P. F. Toward a Revaluation of Gandhi's Political Thought. Political Research Quarterly 16; p.99-108. 1963

Prabhu, R. K & U. R. Rao. The mind of Mahatma Gandhi. Navajivan publishing house. 1967.

Pranab assails Rice remarks. In The Hindu. 30 June, 2007.

Preus, S. Explaining Religion: Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud. New Haven. 1987

Puchala, D. J. International Encounters of Another Kind. In Global Society. Vol. 11. No. 1. Pp. 5-29. 1997.

Puri, B.N. History of Indian administration. Vol. II, Medieval period. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. 1975.

Pyarelal. Mahatma Gandhi: The last Phase. Vol. I. Ahmedabad: Navjivan Publishing House. 1968

Ramusack, B. N. The princes of India in the twilight of empire. Dissolution of patron-client system. 1914-1939. Columbus: University of Cincinatti. 1978.

Rana, K. S. The 21st century ambassador. Plenipotentiary to the chief executive. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2005.

Rana, K. S. Asian diplomacy. The foreign ministries of China, India, Japan, Singapore and Thailand. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 2009.

Rangarajan, H. Ramanua Sampradaya in Gujarat. A historical perspective. Bombay: Somaiya Publications. 1996.

Rao, V. N. & D. Shulman & S. Subrahmanyam. Textures of Time. Writing history in south India 1600-1800. Editions du Seuil. 2003.

Rao, V.N. & D. Shulman & S. Subrahmanyam. Forum: Textures of Time. A pragmatic response. In History and Theory. Vol. 46. Pp. 409-427. 2007.

Rasgotra, M.(ed.). Rajiv Gandhi's worldview. New Delhi: Vikas. 1991.

Ray, B.N. Tradition and innovation in Indian political thought. New Delhi: Ajanta. 1998.

Rehatsek, E. A Letter of the Emperor Akbar Asking for the Christian Scriptures. In The Indian Antiquity. pp. 135-139. April 1887.

Renick, M.S. Akbar's First Embassy to Goa: Its Diplomatic and Religious Aspects. In Indica. Vol. I. pp. 46-47. 1970.

Roberts, J. M. The Triumph of the West. London: BBC Books. 1985.

Roe, Sir Thomas. The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India. London: Oxford University Press. 1926.

Rosaldo, R. Culture and Truth. The remaking of social analysis. Boston: Beacon. 1989.

Rowland, J. A history of Sino-Indian relations. Hostile co-existence. Princeton, N.J., Toronto, London: Van Nostrand. 1967.

Rudolph, L. I. & S. H. Rudolph. Postmodern Gandhi & Other Essays: Gandhi in the World & at Home. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2006.

Rumbold, Sir Horace. The War Crisis in Berlin July-August 1914. 2nd edn. London: Constable. 1944.

Sahay, V. Nehru as first Prime Minister and his impact on public administration. In Jawaharlal Nehru and Public Administration. Ed. By P.L. Sanjeev, R.K. Tiwari. Indian Institute of Public Administration. New Delhi. 2004.

Sahlins, M. Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. 1981.

Sahlins, M. On the anthropology of modernity; or, some triumphs of culture over despondency theory. In Culture and sustainable development in the Pacific. Ed. By A. Hooper. Canberra: Asia Pacific Press. 2000.

Sarkar, J.N. (ed. & trans.) Persian records of Maratha history. Vol. I. Delhi Affairs. 1761-1788. Newsletters from Parasnis Collection. Bombay: 1953.

Sarkar, J. N. Newswriters of Mughal India. In The Indian Press (A Collection of Papers Presented at the 4th Annual Conference of the Institute) Ed. by S.P. Sen. pp. 10-45. Calcutta. 1967.

Satakopan, R. The Indian Political Services. In The New Review. Vol. 13. P.138. I94I.

Satow, Sir Ernest. Satow's Guide to Diplomatic Practice. 5th edn. Ed. by Lord Gore-Booth. London. New York: Longman. 1979.

Saurette, P. "I Mistrust All Systematisers and Avoid Them": Nietzsche, Arendt and the Crisis of the Will to Order in International Relations Theory. In Millennium: Journal of International Studies. Vol. 25, no. 1. Pp. 1-28. 1996.

Saxena, A.P. Nehru on Administration. New Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration. 1990.

Schrift, A. D. Nietzsche's French Legacy: A Genealogy of Poststructuralism. London: Routledge. 1995.

Scott, J. C. Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 1998.

Scrafton, L. Reflections on the Government of Indostan with a short sketch of the History of Bengal from 1739 to 1756. London: G. Kearsley. 1770.

Seligman, A. B. The comparative studies of utopias. Christian utopias and Christian Salvation: A general introduction. & The Eucharist sacrifice and the changing utopian moment in post reformation Christianity. In Order and Transcendence. Ed. A. B. Seligman. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1989.

Sengupta, A. Scientist Says Bomb Was Tested in '74. India Abroad. Pp. 14. October 17, 1997.

Sen Gupta, B. Nuclear Weapons? Policy Options for India. Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. London: Sage. 1984.

Sharma, A. Of *śūdras, sūtas, and ślokas: Why is the* Mahābhārata pre-eminently in the anustubh metre?In Indo-Iranian Journal. No. 43. Pp. 225–278. 2000.

Sharp, P. For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations. International Studies Review. Vol.1. No.1. p.33-57. 1999.

Shils, E. Primordial, personal, sacred and civil ties. In Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology. Ed. by E. Shils. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1975.

Shinoda, H. Conflicting Notions of National and Constitutional Sovereignty in the Discourses of Political Theory and International Relations: a Genealogical Perspective. Ph.D. diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, 1998.

Shinoda, H. Re-examining Sovereignty: From Classical Theory to the Global Age. Basingstoke: Macmillan. 2000.

Shklovsky, V. Theory of prose. Trans by B. Sher. Elmwood Park. Ill. P.7-12. 1990.

Siddiqi, M. Z. The Intelligence Services under the Mughals. In Medieval India: A Miscellany, vol. 2, London. 1972.

Siddiqui, N. A. Khulasat-us-Siyaq. In Proceedings of the Indian History Congress. 22nd Session. Gauhati: Indian History Congress. 1959.

Sikri, R. Foreign Secretary Controversies. In The Asian Age. March 28 & 29, 2007.

Sikri, R. Mahatma Gandhi's Influence on India's Foreign Policy. In The Legacy Of Gandhi: A 21st Century Perspective. ISAS Insights. No.25. Singapore. 3 January 2008.

Singh, H. The Mughals of India. Blackwell: Oxford. 2004.

Singh, J. A Call to Honour. In Service of an Emergent India. India: Rupa & Co. 2006.

Sinha, M. China: Making and Unmaking of Nehru's Foreign Policy. China Report. Vol. 15. Pp. 51-64. 1979.

Smith, R. Reflections on the historical imagination. History of the Human Sceinces. Vol. 13. No. 4. Pp.103-108. 2000.

Smith, S. Of Diplomats and Their Chroniclers. In Virginia Quarterly Review 71, No.4. 1995.

Smith, S. The Self-Images of a Discipline: A Genealogy of International Relations Theory. In International Relations Theory Today. Ed. by K. Booth & S. Smith. Cambridge: Polity Press. 1995.

Spivak, G. C. The Rani of Sirmur. In Europe and its Others. Vol. I. Ed. by F. Barker, P. Hulme, M. Iversen & D. Loxley. Colchester: University of Essex. 1985.

Spybey, T. Globalisation and world society. London: Polity. 1995.

Srivastav, Munshi N. K. *Siya q n a m a h* (lithograph). Lucknow: Nawalkishor Press, 1879

Stanley, M. Social Development. New York: Basic Books. 1972

Steingass, F. A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary. New Delhi, 1973.

Stephen, J. F. Foundations of the Government of India. In Nineteenth Century. Vol. 80. Pp. 541–68. 1883.

Sternberg, Y. Modernity, Civilization and Globalization. in Identity, Culture and Globalization Ed. By E. Ben-Rafael & Y. Sternberg. Pp.75-92. Leiden: Brill. 2001.

Subrahmanyam, K. Nuclear Myths and Realities: India's Dilemma. New Delhi: ABC Publishing House. 1981.

Subrahmanyam, K. Alternative Security Doctrines. In Review of International Affairs. Vol. 41. No. 954. Pp. 16-23. 5 Jan. 1990.

Subrahmanyam, K. Indian Nuclear Policy - 1964-98 (A Personal Recollection). In Nuclear India. Ed. by J. Singh. New Delhi: Knowledge World. 1998.

Subrahmanyam, K. Non-alignment anyone? Indian Express. July 5, 2007. See: http://www.indianexpress.com/news/nonalignment-anyone/203885/

Sukthankar, V. S. The Mahābhārata. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. 1970.

Sulivan, R. J. An Analysis of the Political History of India: In Which is Considered the Present Situation of the East and the Connection of Its Several Powers with the Empire of Great Britain, 2nd enlarged edn.. London, 1784.

Talbot, S. Engaging India. Diplomacy, Democracy and the Bomb. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. 2004.

Taylor, C. Two Theories of Modernity. In Public Culture. Vol. 11. No. 1. Pp. 153-174.

Tehranian, M. Rethinking Civilization: Resolving Conflict in the Human Family. New York: Routledge. 2007.

The Indian Annual Register. July-Sept.. Vol II, Calcutta: The Annual Register Office. 1946.

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms. Ed. By J. Siefring. Oxford University Press, 2004. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. 14 October 2009.
See: http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t35.e691

Tickner, A.B. Seeing IR differently: notes from the third world. In Millennium Journal of International Relations. Vol. 32. No. 2. p.295-324. 2003.

Tilly, C. The Formation of the Nation States in Western Europe. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1975.

Time for A-bomb – Say 100 M.P's. Indian Express. September 23, 1965

van der Veer, P. Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain. Princeton University Press.

Varma, P. K. The bureaucratic bazaar. Uncivil service. In The Pioneer (Foray). New Delhi. August 6 2000.

Verelst, H. View of the Rise etc., of the English Government in Bengal. London. J.Nourse. 1776.

Veyne, P. Did the Greeks believe in their myths? An essay on the constitutive imagination. Trans. By P. Wissing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1988.

Vico, G. The New Science of Giambattista Vico. Ed. By T. Goddard & M. H. Fisch. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 1984.

Vittachi, V. T. The Brown Sahib Revisited. Calcutta. 1987.

Vogelin, E. Enlightenment and Revolution. Ed. by J. H. Hallowell. Durham, N.c.: Duke University Press. 1975.

von Laue, T. The world revolution of Westernization: The twentieth century in global perspective. New York: Oxford University Press. 1987.

Weber, Max. Author Introduction. In The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Trans. By T. Parsons. New York: Scribners. 1958.

Wedel, J. R. & C. Shore & G. Feldman & S. Lathrop. Toward and Anthropology of Public Policy. In The Annals of the American Academy. AAPS. 600. July 2005.

Whinnom, K. Linguistic hybridization and the special case of pidgins and creoles. In Pidginization and creolization of languages. Ed. By Dell Hymes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1971.

Wight, M. Why Is There No International Theory? in Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics. Ed. By H. Butterfield & M. Wight. London: George Allen and Unwin. 1966.

Wilkins, Sir. C. & W. K. Firminger. Fifth Report on the affairs of the East India Company. From the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company. London: Black, Parry, & Co. 1812.

Wilson, C.R. The Early Annals of the English in Bengal. The Bengal Public Consultations for the First Half of the Eighteenth Entury. Vol. ii. Part. ii. The Surman Embassy. The Asiatic Society. Calcutta. Republished: Bimla Publications House. 1983.

Wilson, J. E. Review: Taking Europe for Granted. In History Workshop Journal. No. 52. Oxford University Press. pp. 287-295. Autumn, 2001.

Wilson, K. Island Race. New York: Routledge. 2003.

Wolf, E. C. Europe and the people without history. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1982.

Year Book of the United Nations. 1971.

Young, R. J. C. Colonial Desire: Hybridity in theory, culture and race. London: Routledge. 1995.

ENDS