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Seema Narain Ph.D.

University of Delhi, snarain@db.du.ac.in

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## Knowledge Production, Pedagogy and Research in IR: Perspectives from India

Seema Narain PhD  
Department of Political Science  
Deshbandhu College  
University of Delhi  
[snarain@db.du.ac.in](mailto:snarain@db.du.ac.in)

### Abstract

The implications of Eurocentrism in the production of historical and theoretical knowledge have been the subject of debates in multiple disciplines, including anthropology, history, and geography, yet in the field of International Relations (IR), an examination of the implications of Eurocentrism has, until recently, been little studied. Therefore, there is a critical need to revisit pedagogy and research in India to address this gap. This paper looks at knowledge production, pedagogy and research in India from the point of view of countering Eurocentrism in the IR discipline. It first discusses Eurocentrism and highlights the implications of Eurocentrism in the field of International Relations. This is followed by a critique of Eurocentrism mounted by scholars of IR. These form the benchmark for evaluating three premier institutions in Delhi, the University of Delhi, the Institute of Defense and Strategic Analysis (IDSA), and Jawaharlal Nehru University, in order to assess whether there are attempts to counter Eurocentrism. It is argued that sources of knowledge production of IR in India have to be complemented with knowledge sites that promote the development of Indian epistemologies in the IR discipline. The paper suggests that this can be done by revising the curriculum of the IR discipline at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels to include sites of Indian knowledge production. Think tanks can promote research and workshops that unravel the rich Indian traditional literature. The paper argues that there is a cogent case for mainstreaming indigenous literature in IR theory, looking particularly at Kautilya's Arthashastra. Specifically, this paper evaluates the University of Delhi, the Institute of Defense and strategic analysis (IDSA), and Jawaharlal Nehru University in order to assess whether there are attempts to counter Eurocentrism in the IR discipline through the revision of syllabi and reading materials in the university system, as well as research projects /workshops undertaken by research institutes to assist in the development of Indian epistemologies. Although a beginning has been made, the paper argues that there is a long way to go. There are both material and non academic restraints that have to be removed urgently.

**Keywords:** Eurocentrism, knowledge production, Indian epistemologies, parochialism, Western, non-Western.

While recognizing the ethnocentrism and western dominance of mainstream IR,<sup>1</sup> research and teaching in the Global South<sup>2</sup> will have to focus on countering this by filling the notable gaps. Professor Behera has portrayed the problem of poor conceptualization of IR in India succinctly under the title “Re-imagining IR in India” (Behera, 2010). The author states that “there is no Indian school of IR” (p. 92) and that the contribution to IR theory by Indian scholars depends upon what counts as “IR theory.” According to Behera, India cannot vindicate its geographical placement and historical experience by developing a separate IR discipline. Rather, it is crucial to reimagine the differential meanings of key IR concepts such as nation-state, nationalism, and sovereignty so that the discourse is more inclusive and more universally applicable. Behera gives her reasoning for these silences, using traditional IR in India as an example: “The structural reason why traditional IR in India has not, indeed, could not produce a non-Western IR theory is because it has fought that intellectual battle on a turf chosen by the West enforced . . . not just by its political and military might but . . . its all-pervasive discursive power” (Behera, 2010, p. 103).

Recent scholarship in IR is soliciting to challenge Western dominance and appealing for more space to voices from the Global South by highlighting from its context. Although not novel (dependency theory and post-colonialism have already challenged Eurocentrism), the uniqueness of recent efforts is that the more recent challenges are more encompassing and engage mainstream international relations theory (MIRT) as well as critical theory. They also attempt to reign in post-colonialism and Marxism (*e.g.*, Constructivism (Amitav Acharya), the English school (Barry Buzan), and Subaltern Realists (Ayoob). Calls for a non-Western IR theory floated in 2007 (Acharya, 2010) appealed for blending of ideas, voices, and experiences from the Global South (China included). Later, during the ISA 2015 presidential year, the calls escalated to appeals for a global IR which transcended numerous categories like non-Western, post-western etc. (Acharya, 2015). These calls have not asked for displacement of existing IRTs (Acharya, 2015).

That US scholarship has a disproportionate influence in the discipline of International Relations has been well documented by Stanley Hoffman (1977) Ole Weaver, and Amitav Acharya including Latin American and African scholars (Tickner, 2003; Acharya & Buzan, 2007; Tickner & Weaver, 2009; Acharya & Buzan, 2010; Mgonja & Makombe, 2009; Castro, 2011). Equally obvious and untenable is the marginalization and oversight of experiences from non-Western perspectives and locations, in IR scholarship. What do the silences on racism; slavery and colonialism tell us about the nature of IRT? The neglect of the ‘role agency’ of experiences from the Global South only trumps up the current charges of parochialism and ethnocentrism in mainstream IR discourses. (Wight, 1960; Puchala, 1997, 1998). However, while IR remains dominated by western scholarship, the problem that needs to be redressed is how the study of international relations can be made more inclusive of non Western perspectives and philosophies to widen the epistemological foundation of international relations with a view to make it genuinely international. This quandary becomes particularly acute as the decibel levels of the lamentations expressed by the international relations community from non- Western locations as well as Western academia have been rising surely but steadily (Acharya, 2011). Indeed, the challenge to mainstream IRT is universal.

This section delineates the core and the periphery contours in the IR discipline which is essential for its scrutiny. Analyzing the International Relations (IR) (international here is overextended to take account of an extensive variety of subject matter) discipline while situating it historically/temporally as well as looking at its dominant self-images, *e.g.* the major

paradigms, debates, levels of analysis, scope, main theories, research and teaching, it can be viewed at several levels. Firstly, the macro level or as some would put it 'the broad brush picture', including its dominant paradigms with its fixed epistemology, ontology and methodology. In other words, a body of settled knowledge (Hellmann, 2011) Secondly, a view of the micro picture/national/regional schools of IR. Thirdly, there are those who support the adequacy of mainstream theories and not the least, fourthly, those who charge recent attempts to broaden International Relations Theory (IRT) as mere 'emulation'. (Bilgin, 2008) The frequent labeling or relabeling of the discipline variously as interstate relations, trans-national politics or global studies are indicative of the enduring ascertainment of the boundaries of the discipline as well as its mutability. While the borders of the discipline remain permeable and fluid there seems to be a general consensus on a clearly defined and an established core. Although this categorization of the field is also challenged, at the same time it does concede to pluralism within the discipline centered on particularities while viewing IR from specific, individual and cultural experiences (Hellmann, 2011). The signal for inclusivity, revision/ change, adaptations, reimaginings and modifications are well taken from this aspect of IRT.

Although calls for making IRT more inclusive of non-western perspectives and experiences must be lauded one must be careful of nomenclatures that often give a dichotomous tone to the discipline. Increasingly, International Relations are moving towards a mounting polarization between the Western and non-Western IR in a world, which is steadfastly experiencing the pressures of globalization and integrative tendencies. (Acharya and Buzan, 2009). A cautionary note about the 'labels' and 'categories' is in order. The categories Western and non-Western are neither monolith nor homogeneous with differences persisting both within and between categories. (Walt, 1998). We are now confronted with a jamboree of categories and labels in IRT, for example the binaries-Western/non-Western and categories like post-western, post-colonial, Global South and now 'past western' (Bilgin, 2008). Most of these categories are contested and not sufficiently interrogated. For instance, does post western signal the end of western IRT? (Dunne, 2013). Is Kautilya an Indian Machiavelli or Machiavelli a European Kautilya? It is difficult to draw a dividing line between Western and non-Western categories as roots and influences in these categories may be a two way street! However, what should be debated is whether or not these categorizations as well as others detract from the makings of a more 'universal' IRT?

To a new student entering the IR field, the discipline, as it evolves, will appear more like a hemispheric contest as the current divergences between the West and the non-West suggest (Holsti, 1985). To my mind a dichotomous view is at odds in relation to a world that has shrunk to a "global village" and the pressures of globalization and integration are omnipresent. Within such an ontological milieu it is reverting to perceive of the IR discipline as a divided one. Disparateness not only breeds incoherence and inchoateness but it also detracts from the very 'disciplining' exercise of a discipline. Therefore, a more productive exercise for a serious scholar of IR will be to engage in a 'dialogue' and conversations between and within the West and the Non-Western categories and to move forward rather than ensuing a competition between the binaries. Recent studies have made such clarion calls for engagements within the discipline through conversations, dialogue and complementarities. In this vein it would be more appropriate to search for additional theories (rather than alternative ones) and epistemologies from the non-Western repertoire of sources to make IR more inclusive and to make its subject matter correspond to the title of the discipline (IRT).

### Implications of Eurocentrism

Hierarchy, ahistoricity and Western dominance of knowledge production are major implications of Eurocentrism in the International Relations discipline. Mainstream IR is extremely hierarchical in as much as it deals in relations between and issues of concern to great powers, the hegemon and the powerful in the global political economy. The smaller and weaker nations remain marginalized. IR's ahistoricity is exemplified by its relegation of the histories of colonialism, slavery and racism to the backburner. The discipline's parochialism is manifest in its primary focus— the West (Neuman, 1998; Gordon, 1987). This is evident in its treatment of war and conflict, international order and stability. Yet what constitutes war in IR is bounded. While centrally concerned with the two world wars in Europe, IR has paid little attention to the wars of colonial conquest in Africa or to the role of Europe's colonies during the two world wars despite Europe's dependence on their colonies in financial, material and human terms. Apart from the Vietnam War, IR has paid scant attention to the anti-colonial resistances (Gordon, 1987). While the Balkan wars of the 1990s sustained interest and focus, analysis of the major wars in Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Chad, the Congo, Liberia among others remained ignored. Additionally, in terms of its intellectual legacy the recognized disciplinary 'pundits' of mainstream IR consist of European—classical thinkers Thucydides, Machiavelli, Bodin, Locke, Hobbes and so on. In terms of knowledge production IR has been dominated by North American and European scholars. This leads to a distorted view of world politics and is irrelevant to many other parts of the world. This predicament needs to be remedied. IR should give an account of the world that is not Eurocentric or ethnocentric. Even though there are a number of competing conceptions of how things are, politics appears different from Latin America, the Middle East to the way it seems in Europe.

Part of the problem of Eurocentrism is methodological. The activity of producing knowledge is both social-scientific and material (conditions of possibility). Positivism privileges western ways of theorizing and practice in IR at the cost of the 'others'. The power/knowledge nexus has received extensive examination in the discipline of IR from critical perspectives. Knowledge is a social construction and reflects relationships between power, ideas and interests. Such has been the rejoinder to decades of positive hegemony when social-scientific knowledge was seen to be value neutral. It has been argued that it is indispensable to commence a more fundamental critique of the foundational categories and histories upon which most thinking of IR is premised. Attention not only to 'who speaks' but 'what' is spoken 'where' and 'when' is critical (Keyman 1995: 71, 94). The underlying inequalities in power relations will have to be exposed to respond to the western-centric hegemonic discourse. Bringing in the voice of the dissidents, marginalized and the 'others' is vital to the discourse of the powerful. The silencing, totalizing, universalizing discourse of the 'self' will have to be deconstructed to create room for the 'others' to speak from their cultural, political and historical contexts. Historicity, knowledge production from the indigenous repertoire and objectivity should be some of the responses to move towards a less Eurocentric and a more global IR. The responsibility of 'decolonizing' the discipline should rest on both Western and non-Western scholars since the problem are not simply about 'who' wrote but also 'what' has been written. The debates will then have to be intersecting and eclectic not parallel as recent calls have signaled. (Acharya, 2015)

The moot question then that should be asked is whether the non-Western scholars are working towards these goal posts? Or are the lamentations a mere cacophony of disgruntled voices? Can the University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University and IDSA, three premier

educational and research institutions) in India and institutionalized sights for knowledge creation through its research, teaching and curricula contribute towards this goal? Given the nexus between power and knowledge in the (Foucauldian sense) and the linkages established between research, teaching and policy making, is the IR syllabi of the University of Delhi and JNU well calibrated to meet this challenge? Is the IDSA, a premier think tank in Delhi able to develop independent research in unpacking the histories of indigenous knowledge? The Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project (The Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations) at The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia explain this relationship and the significance of theory on practice and teaching, restoring the inevitable Western bias in the enterprise of IR (Malinaik, Peterson, Tierney; 2012).

### **Major Issues and Contentions**

This segment will look at the major points of contention in the IR discipline enunciated by those IR scholars who mount the charges Eurocentrism in IR. The university systems and research institutes are important institutionalized knowledge-creating portals. They cater to a large pool of academic community engaged in teaching, learning and research. As such, this critique will form the benchmarks to evaluate whether the course curricula of the University of Delhi, political science programme paves the way towards decentering the IR discipline from its Eurocentric core. How can JNU and IDSA carry forward the project of non-Western IR to broaden the discipline and make it more inclusive of non-Western voices, ideas and philosophy? What suggestions can be made to fill the gaps in pedagogy and research that can enable knowledge production that will raise the visibility and cognitive salience of non-Western IR?

### **The major Contentions against Eurocentrism American Paramountcy**

In terms of dominant educational institutions and their productive power in terms of publications and influence the United States inhabits the most dominant position with European IR communities close on heels. (Malinaik, Oakes and Peterson, 2007). Holsti charges IR for being a “British-US intellectual condominium” reiterating the charge that “hierarchy... seems to be a hallmark of international politics and theory (Holsti, 1985). US hegemony is mirrored in how scholars in different parts of the world associate to it. In fact, for IR communities in some parts of the world recognition in the US are vital for professional advancement and many largely emulate the US model. Not only are the top journals of the field but also editors of key journals are drawn from the US. US scholars dominate ISA, the premier association in the discipline, with a slight advance in the attendance of European scholars but practically no change in the attendance of non-Western scholars relative to their western counterparts. This phenomenon can be explained by the continued hegemony of the west of international relations, through the centuries. This view of Behera, in *Re-Imagining IR in India*, has portrayed Eurocentrism succinctly (Behera, 2010). She argues that “IR is mainly concerned with power struggles among states. These are underpinned by two critical unstated assumptions: theorizing in IR means producing scientific knowledge and ‘Europe’ (later America) remains then covering, theoretical subjects of all histories (read IR); including the ones we call “Indian,” “Chinese,” “Korean,” and so on. With its constitutive ideas and practices rooted in the Eurocentric experiences and an abiding faith in the ‘liberating power of reason (logos) as it threw off the shackles of tradition (mythos) ‘traditional pasts’ got de-legitimized as a possible source of knowledge creation in IR”

(Behera, 2010 p. 99).

It has been seen that countries that rise in power get to chart out their own international relations. It has been hoped that the rise of Asia, in particular India and China will get them their own International Relations. In order to be genuinely globalize international relations, it would be more appropriate to go back both, temporally and spatially to take up empirical cases from areas that were hitherto neglected. Quite simply the challenge to Eurocentrism should be accompanied by making Asia and China the laboratory to test cases and verify theory as Asian concerns calibrate global priorities Attempts to recover knowledge from the Indian historical traditions should be reflected in the authorship of books, curricula and reading materials as well as research projects aiming to counter Eurocentrism in the home turf.

### **Paradigmatism**

Paradigmatic or preoccupation with the core features of the disciplines intellectual structure – Realism, Idealism Rationalism, Constructivism are the key organizing principle in IR. In teaching any introductory course in IR theory, more than half the semester is spent on paradigms. Although the disciple remain divided over methodology and epistemology there seems to be a general consensus to conceive of the discipline in terms of paradigmatic differentiation and the great debates. These are dominant self-images of western IR theory. However, a paradigmatic approach only reinforces the dominance of traditional IR. Recent scholarship however, has attempted to look at international relations beyond paradigms through analytic eclecticism which transcends the boundaries of paradigms (R Sil and Katzenstein, 2010).

### **IR and Modernity**

IRT is associated with modernity. Social sciences , its cognitive practices, methods and key assumptions emerged in the west as a response to its negotiations with the concept of the modern. Social theory in the west became the bedrock on which the edifice of disciplinary knowledge was built and communicated. Acknowledged social theorists like Marx, Durkheim and Weber have been germane to sociologists, political scientists and international theorists. IR in the west correspondingly emerged in response to modernity. Modernity quintessentially refers to a historical period associated with attitudes , practices and cultural norms related, temporally with medieval Europe. Modernity rejects tradition and embraces scientific and technological progress and has faith in rationalization and professionalism. It entails a shift from a feudalism to a market economy and the evolution of the nation state and its accompanying institutions (democracy or bureaucracy and the modern national army) and forms of surveillance. Political modernization in the west was accompanied by enduring conflicts, a quintessential aspect of the interaction between states. The concept of the ‘international’ was understood as that domain of interaction between states where peace and conflict where vital concerns and conflict was an enduring tendency. Social sciences in India also borrowed the methods and assumptions from the social theory of the west (that there exists a singular, western, linear model of modernity towards which other countries will conform, the archetypical western model) and conceived of the ‘international’ as articulated, validated and designed in the west. However, those who argued for different modernity soon challenged this linear notion of modernization like postcolonial, multiple modernities and alternate modernity (Chatterjee, 2011; Kaviraj, 2005) Lineages of

Political Society, Ranikhet: Permanent Black That, the question of the international is not sufficiently interrogated in India is evident from the tacit understanding that international relations in India begin only after independence of the Indian state. Questioning the international in India should include empirical research on the rich trajectories of the transformation of the Indian state from the ancient, medieval, pre modern to the post-colonial histories. However, because of limitations of space and the enormity of the study of the Arthashastra, this paper focuses on mainstreaming the text in IR, although the need for looking at other historical texts has also been highlighted.

**Language.** Language and academic infrastructure (example library resources) are the means through which we can gain access to knowledge of IR and its scholarship and literature. Observing the structure of IR, it is evident that what constitutes knowledge in IR, that is, conceptualization of its theories and concepts or knowledge production results from the institutional arrangements along disciplinary lines within universities. How is knowledge constituted and how different bodies of knowledge connect to each other in order to make up a discipline? Language also has a constitutive role in the making formation of a discipline. Language hierarchies are strong and are engaged for advancing particular kinds of knowledge. For example binary opposites (Western/non-Western). What passes off as "knowledge" also depends on what gets accessed and communicated through particular languages; communication structures for example, journals and academic infrastructure. Learning languages, particularly native and vernacular languages will therefore be instrumental in promoting indigenous epistemologies. English dominates IR: many important scholars are Anglophones, most major programs are in Anglophone countries, and the best journals are also, all in English. University syllabi, an important site for knowledge creation and language training in native and vernacular languages, translations in local language becomes an important tool to counter linguistic and disciplinary hegemony. One major reason for the lack of popularity and accessibility of indigenous literature is the lack of translations and knowledge of vernacular languages. This begs the question: do the premier institutions in question have state of the art language laboratories?

### **Indian perspectives on IR**

Recent assertive appeals to revert to the native sources while reimagining the study of IR with a flavour of the traditional literature such as Mahabharata, Panchatantra, Arthashastra, Kamandaka-neeti, and Shukra-neeti, etc. are closely associated to the discourse on the optimistic visions of the rise of India (Mattoo, 2012; Raja Mohan, 2009).<sup>3</sup> The discourse argues that the historical project is relevant for the discovery project. My argument is that IRT, as it is understood today has a certain time/space (spatial/temporal) dimension. So while we must unearth our historical roots and I dare say engage with the entire gamut of resources from the ancient, medieval, pre-modern and post-colonial roots to discover new insights from interstate and inter communities interactions. Change will have to come through our engagements with IRT while the discovery project is still in its embryonic stages. Change will have to come within and in relation to IRT. For there are those who support the adequacy of existing IRT and point out to the progressive integration of Asian states into the modern international system and therefore the staple features of IRT, e.g. hegemony, balance of power etc. are relevant in those contexts. Others argue that globalization has led to the diffusion of the Anglo/American cognitive style and therefore IRT can be stretched or adapted to specific contexts. For example,



Mohammed Ayuoob's concept of *subaltern realism*. Change is also imminent with the growing appeal of theories like constructivism, feminism and post colonialism, which are sympathetic to Non Western IR. Change will come from within and in relation to IRT, whether it evolves through the discovery project or adaptations from within. Non-western perspectives have to be socialized within the framework of mainstream international relations theory. The answer lies not in black or white but in shades of grey. A metamorphosis of IRT will come about with the testing of empirical cases from the hitherto unexplored areas if only to prove the adequacies or inadequacies of IRT. Testing, experimenting and modifying (e.g. Amitav Acharya's concept of norm localization in the East Asian context) are not only going to make IRT more relevant but reiterate its evolutionary quality. Change will come about as a result of tensions between universalism and specificity. In view of this IRT should not be viewed as a monolith or an immutable edifice. Is Delhi University a well-equipped laboratory to test empirical cases?

### **A case for Indian IR: Arthashastra and indigenous literature**

George Tanham, the American author opened up a Pandora's box when he alleged in an essay that Indians lacked in the tradition of strategic culture. This charge was vociferously countered by Indian scholars who charged that India had a rich legacy of strategic thinking quoted in respected ancient texts like the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Arthashastra, Thirukural and the Panchatantra spanning over different ages. The Cholas, Marathas, Rajputs and Mughals were skilled at statecraft and warfare and strategically inclined it was stated.

However, it needs to be reiterated that there is a dearth of any genuine and systematic study of Indian ancient texts from the point of view of identifying the main ingredients of Indian strategic thought. None of the above mentioned Indian texts are part of the discourse on international relations. Kautilya is little known unlike Plato Aristotle and Machiavelli who are extremely popular. This, considering that Arthashastra is a vast treatise on statecraft, diplomacy, war, intelligence and precedes Machiavelli's Prince. Paucity of knowledge of vernacular languages as well as lack of knowledge of Sanskrit is the main obstacle to mainstreaming these texts into the IR syllabus or discourse; authentic translations of these texts are not available. Archival sources have not been sufficiently tapped. But more significantly, the Indian educational system has not placed emphasis on the exploration of the rich Indian traditions in strategic thinking.

### **Mainstreaming the Arthashastra.**

Arthashstra has been written in Sanskrit by Chanakya or Kautilya ,around 321BC in Magadha. The book deals at length with matters of state, society, economy, administration, law and justice, internal security, defense, diplomacy, foreign policy and warfare (Rangarajan,1992). The Arthashastra is a useful guide of instructions for kings. It is a repository of knowledge on how to run a state and the text is both normative and empirical. The king is laid lofty principles— his happiness is synonymous with the well-being of his subjects and offers them yogakshema, i.e. security and well-being. The Arthashastra was written amidst a period when the subcontinent was divided into a number of small states that were mutually hostile to each other. Therefore, it was necessary for a king to not only offer protection to his state while dealing with hostile kings but also expand territorially. A king had to manifest qualities of profound intellect, a strong leadership and have a penchant to educate himself in the sciences.

In the scope of statecraft developed in the Arthashastra, mention can be made of three dimensions that would be relevant even today. The saptanga theory of state alludes to seven prakrits or elements of the state. These are king, his minister, the country, the fortified city, the treasury, the army and the ally. The theory of the “circle of kings” or the rajamandala theory is fundamentally a depiction of alliances a king has to engage with friendly states to deal with the enemy state as well as his friends. The Arthashastra also delves into three kinds of powers, namely, the power of knowledge, power of treasury and power of army. Four kinds of wars are described: the kutayudha (tactical fighting), mantrayudha (diplomatic war), prakashayudha (open war) and tushnim yudha (secret agents’ war). The treatise is particularly rich military strategy and focuses on the army’s composition, war preparedness and war fighting. The role of intelligence and craft of spying is well-developed and can teach a trick or two to modern spymasters (Rangarajan 1992),

Agreeably, the relevance of Arthashastra is debatable and its applicability to contemporary conditions, literally, is questionable. However clearly, Arthashastra is undisputedly premised on the human mind and aspects of it are universally applicable ++. For example, its counsel on the duties of the king and leadership qualities are pertinent for today’s leaders as well. The shadgunya provides a clear basis of foreign policy and the seven measures of state refer to components of national power. There is need for a critical investigation of the Arthashastra with an objective of making it relevant to today’s conditions. There is a need to engage in a comparative analysis of Arthashastra with other texts such as China’s Sun Tzu’s and Machiavelli’s Prince, Morgenthau’s Politics among nations and other Indian texts. Comparative studies would bring out the true importance of the Arthashastra and also locate it in the corpus of Indian strategic thought.

In the popular lexicon of International Relations, Kautilya is compared with Machiavelli for ruthlessness and unethical conduct. Arthashastra was deemed to be too amoral to associate it deeply with modern India’s strategic thought, which was ensconced deeply in morality. Again, there have been criticisms alleged against placing Arthashastra in this vein by many scholars who, indeed, consider it an oversimplification of Kautilya. This perception must be rectified. The Arthashastra is a timeless treatise on international relations and a repository of knowledge on how to run a state. Order is synonymous with welfare and is related to welfare, peace and prosperity of the people. Yogakshema has overtones of good governance. These variations of yogakshema are absent in the Western discourse while defining interstate relations in IR. This places it on a higher pedestal in texts dealing with the theory of the state. Boesche describes it as being more Machiavellian than Machiavelli with the Machiavellian prince being moderate compared to Kautilya’s king! This (mis)reading has been critiqued by Liebig who claims that ‘eigenvalue’ has a tempering effect with its strong sense of economy and well being of the subjects (Liebig, 2014). The KA’s relevance is pointed out by scholars who maintain that human nature, politics and statecraft have not changed much (Gautam, 2012; 2013). The distrust among states, the pursuit of own interests, intentions and capabilities still persists.

Its most quintessential feature is its theory of the international system called the circle of states or rajmandala. The Arthashastra is premised on the principles of statecraft akin to that of the Machiavellian Prince - that the reasons of the state legitimize its policies regardless of its ethicality. This drive for power is ensconced in human nature and power maximization is associated with the notion of hegemonic stability of classical realism and the brand of realism associated with Henry Kissinger. There is a need to evolve a vocabulary of statecraft, diplomacy, power and conflict from the indigenous literature and to study cases from the western

repertoire systematically, to establish the universality of the precepts from Arthashastra and other indigenous literature. The need of the hour is to include them as part of the university curricula. A new Arthashastra for contemporary geopolitical realities should be evolved. This will also establish its contemporary relevance, as well as engage indigenous literature in a dialogue with the western sources. It will enhance the salience of indigenous literature within the frame work of IR theory. Comparing with western texts like Machiavelli's prince or Morgenthau's politics among nations is also critical to draw out similarities as well as differences. It would be insightful to unearth evidences to establish, if any, links between the texts to discern if there was some borrowing of ideas from for example the Arthashastra which precedes Machiavelli! This could be a wake up call for the Indian University system. However, is anybody listening?

### **The state of the IR discipline: Perspectives from India**

A revisiting of the pedagogy of International Relations in India is not just required but is seminal to the very future of this discipline restricted as it is by non-academic factors. There is an urgent need to take a critical look into the state of the discipline in India and the need for balancing the dominance of western theories by introducing Indian thought on the subject. One way of materializing this can be through the educational and research institutions. For example, this can be done by revising the curriculum of the IR discipline at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels to include sites of indigenous knowledge production. IDSA, a premier think tank based in New Delhi can conduct research/workshops on developing indigenous knowledge to infuse with IRT.

At this point it becomes pertinent to evaluate the pedagogical and research work of the premier institutions in India to see if it counters some of the challenges posed by Eurocentrism and addresses the contentions raised in the debates between and within Western and non-Western categories. Agreeably the problem is structural as is corroborated by Behera, "The structural reason why traditional IR in India, has not, indeed, could not produce a non-Western IR theory is because it has fought that intellectual battle on a turf chosen by the West enforced, as they were, not just by its political and military might but more important its all-pervasive discursive power" (Behera 2010,p.103).

However, only in part. There are several non-academic and material factors that restrict the evolution of IR as a robust discipline in India. The disciplinary location of international studies in India in terms of the conflation of multidisciplinary Area Studies with disciplinary International Relations, turf battles, poor infrastructure, insufficient funds, institutional inertia, politicization, outdated curriculum, lack of qualified teachers are some of the reasons for the stunted growth of IR in India. The School of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University was established in 1970 and IR is a separate field of studies. However, the focus of the discipline is about the state or relational studies. Besides, the conflation of area studies with disciplinary IR stunts the growth of critical work in IR. In a single semester insufficient time is spent teaching IR theory. In fact there is an aversion for IR theory.

The boundaries between Political Science and International Studies have yet to be demarcated lending itself to academic parochialism and often prejudices against IS, whereas Political Science as a discipline is considered superior to the 'sub discipline' IR. This kind of a disciplinary jumble is reflected in the turf battles between the disciplines and the degrees awarded by Universities. JNU grants a Master's degree in 'Politics' for those who specialize in International Relations and the University of Delhi has yet to have a separate department of

International Relations. International Relations is integrated with political science at the University of Delhi. Often, the biases are reflected in academic recruitments with preference meted out to those with degrees in Political Science.

The University of Delhi's undergraduate programmes underwent semesterisation in 2011. This was accompanied by a long overdue revision of the IR syllabus after a gap of fifteen years. The earlier syllabus consisted of a descriptive narrative of the diplomatic history (Europe) between the World Wars up until the Cold War, without any critical enquiry. The revised IR syllabus (2012) for the first time introduced the mainstream theories of international relations, world history from 1919 to the end of Cold War, Soviet disintegration and emerging centers of power. It also introduced global politics with a focus on globalization and the globalization of issues like nuclear proliferation, terrorism, environment and human security. A major part of the session focuses on teaching the main paradigms of IR representing the positivist school/ MIRT. The other half is spent on world history focusing on events in Europe. The syllabus throws no insight on Indian or non-Western perspectives. Such a syllabus is not of much relevance for disciplinary growth nor does it inspire thinking from the Indian IR perspectives, a gap bemoaned by appeals to develop Indian IR. The reading material is biased towards western sources with practically no reading from Indian literary sources. Western authors, using western paradigms, methodologies, epistemologies and ontology, author all the readings.

The Four Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP) syllabus of the University of Delhi which has been rolled back, was a much more relevant and an innovative syllabus, but fell victim to turf battles and university politics. This was because although the better half of the paper is spent teaching MIRT, two theories that challenge the positivist school and are sensitive to the concerns of non-Western IR to some extent, constructivism and feminism were introduced. However, even these theories have their roots in western traditions. Having first set a framework of understanding Western IRT, the second half of the syllabus introduced Eurocentrism and philosophies of some Indian thinkers, like Kautilya and Tagore. However these will be studied against the backdrop of mainstream IR theories with the advantage of first mover legacy. In that sense it places the cart before the horse. The reading material is a departure from the previous syllabus as it introduces reading literature from Indian sources as well.

The introductory section of the course titled "Perspectives of International Relations" of the FYUP syllabus very appropriately commenced with a section on the emergence of the pre and post –Westphalia states system in a section titled History and IR. The reading material is a good mixture of western and Indian traditions. However, since this FYUP programme has been rolled back our students remain in denial of debates on Eurocentrism or those between and within the Western and Non-Western categories. Readings on Kautilya and Tagore have been removed leaving no opportunity to the young minds to internalize Indian traditional strategic thought. As Kanti Bajpai argues: "Rising powers seem to get the IR they need." However he admits: "there is nothing inevitable about good IR as a response to the growth in national power. (Bajpai 2009). The Government of India through its concerned ministries like the MEA and the HRD together with UGC need to take concerted action to address the lacunae in the educational system. Adequate grants must be made to the University of Delhi to streamline its academic infrastructure, recruit new faculty and provide funding for field trips and state-of-the-art language laboratories. The University of Delhi caters to a predominantly Hindi speaking constituency of students with no translations of IR classics or translations of Sanskrit translations available. To make the classics or other reading materials accessible to the Hindi medium students a systematic translation programme is the need of the hour. IR programmes to be productive of

Non-Western perspectives has to include, apart from regular up gradation of the IR syllabus, integrating disciplinary IR with, area studies which is languishing, language skills in native and vernacular languages to be able to provide accessibility to reading materials to wider student community and enable access to the Indian traditional literature as well. For a more inclusive IRT accessibility to the rich Indian traditions are essential through translations and reproduction in regional languages. We do not have regional language experts who can read, write or speak Pashto or Baluchi. Neither do we have language experts proficient in Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Persian or Dari. Additionally, absence of an ambitious translation programme, IR has not been mainstreamed as a discipline even in a premier institution like the University of Delhi. This is important to be able to talk across cultures and step out of the 'silo' culture. University of Delhi should have an independent International Studies programme to motivate the development of IR theories. This should be naturally accompanied with a systematically designed research agenda on evolving perspectives from the global south with its epistemology and ontology. This would be an important step towards rejuvenating the growth of International Relations in India. Lack of an institutionalized platform for the articulation or engagements with other academics in India and abroad is another lacuna. Only recently India has seen the establishment of an All India International Studies Association (AISA) that establishes a fraternal relationship with the International Studies Association (ISA), the principal global body of IR scholars.<sup>4</sup> As a premier University the Department of political science does not have a single high quality refereed /peer reviewed journal. Although earlier a journal of political<sup>[11]</sup> science titled, 'Teaching Politics' existed there have been no attempts to revive it. The discipline is crippled further due to the lack of language laboratories. Efforts to make for a more inclusive IR will have to trickle down to text books, university curriculum and research. These would be the laboratories where work on unearthing the rich histories to develop Indian thought will be done. The reading list of the University of Delhi's undergraduate international relations paper does not have a single text book authored by a scholar from the Global South. The text books are dominated by the western authors like Hedley Bull, Waltz, E.H Carr, Baylis and Smith, Ken booth, Keohane and Nye and others. Kautilya and other texts from the Indian traditions do not form part of the syllabus. The TRIPS model suggests linkages between research, teaching and policy making. Yet the debates on Global South issues seem to have no impact on the academic curricula, pedagogy or research in India.

### **Quantitative research and methods**

The importance of research in quantitative data and methods cannot be understated. Its significance is underscored in teaching, research and in policy making. Methodologically it is appropriate both for theorizing and empirical analysis. Its importance for comparative methods cannot be understated. Neither the University of Delhi nor JNU impart any training in quantitative research and methods either in its undergraduate or post graduate teaching programme, a critical deficiency in the academic programme. Unqualified staff and an out dated syllabus account for this major gap. How can these omissions be addressed in the long run by the university is the more important question!

Most think tanks in India also tend to incline towards political parties or the state. Strategic Studies is shrouded in secrecy therefore most of it is done outside the University system e.g. IDSA. It is this 'silo' culture which operates when each stakeholder operates in singular fashion without any truck with other stakeholders working on similar themes and interests. Hence, unlike the United States or even China lately, International Relations scholars in

India are 'boxed' into their respective institutional affiliations. A revolving door where academicians become policy practitioners or consultants or think-tankers before reverting to academics does not exist in a system where each institution behaves in an exclusive manner. Hence, institutional fiefdoms have become the norm. In light of the recent yet burgeoning importance of indigenous historical literature like Kautilya's Arthashastra, think tanks like IDSA have attempted to revive the discourse on Kautilya's Arthashastra. A series of intensive workshops have been held on analyzing, consolidating and spreading ideas and concepts relating to strategic thought in Arthashastra.<sup>5</sup> Attempts have been made to develop its strategic vocabulary and relate it to indigenous strategic literature, its internalization and spread in the strategic domain. Themes of seminars and workshops have concentrated on foreign policy, intelligence war and internal security and how they relate to contemporary times. However, it is important to export these debates beyond the national and regional borders and to universalize or compare concepts with IRT. Whereas scholars point out how IRT is not applicable to our politics, culture and economic problems it is important to move outside our national boundaries or face similar charges of ethnocentrism the critics are challenging. Perhaps the main drawback is India's *world view*. India's strategic interests reflect all of India's interests or just New Delhi's! The rest of India is either strategically not inclined to participate or has no clue what strategic security and international relations are. This undoubtedly does not enhance India's strategic perception. In an effort to introduce the teachings of the Arthashastra in Indian security and strategic studies, the Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses has recently published some works on it and identified Indian and foreign scholars engaged in a deeper study of the text. There is a renewed interest in the Arthashastra and other indigenous literature. The text is being introduced in training courses for soldiers and diplomats. However, there is no systematic effort on the part of the establishment to revive traditions of Indian strategic thought and answer the ridiculous charge that we lack a culture of strategic thinking.

### **The Way Ahead**

The stunted growth of the IR discipline in India is due to several factors: system wide, institutional, disciplinary and leadership related. Even the most essential texts of IR, either from the west (For e.g. Kenneth Waltz's Theory of International Politics) or even from the Indian traditions like Kautilya's Arthashastra, are not available in university libraries. This is in sharp contrast to the development and growth of the IR discipline in China where the evolution of the discipline began in the late 70's and 80's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when China began to open up to the rest of the world. In contrast, China — a late-starter — is doing more than just catching up. International Relations as a discipline began to develop since the late 1970s and early 1980s, when China started to open to the rest of the world. Today, all the major schools of thought in IR (Marxism, Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism) are robust in China as a result of a pioneering translation programme led by Renmin University of China. In addition, the Chinese IR community has ambitions to launch a Chinese IR theory by introducing more traditional concepts like Tianxia, Datong, and Zhongyong or the (middle course) (representing moderation and objectivity) (Qin, 2016). All this in the hope of introducing a Chinese paradigm. It is essential to highlight that India's inability to evolve an erudite and a holistic comprehension of the world outside may have grave consequences than merely stultifying the discipline. It may well inhibit India's ability and potential to impact the international system.

### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The two major theories, Realism and Liberalism are mainstream theories of IR. They qualify as theories that are considered mainstream theories that are positivist and based on state centric analysis. Constructivism is also increasingly considered mainstream.

<sup>2</sup> The term Global South is referred to the countries of Africa, Latin America and developing Asia. Now, there is a greater visibility of global south issues at international conferences, although the international component of ISA conferences is weak. International Studies Association (ISA) now has a caucus on global south, which is due to meet in Singapore in 2015. Today we have panels such as this one, focusing entirely on Euro centrism.

<sup>3</sup>Mattoo in a newspaper article surmised that given India's rising influence and self-confidence of Indian IR intellectuals, revival of ideas from Indian past will be essential to guiding its future, Raja Mohan seconded that strategic thought from Asia's past is likely to return to the centre stage and as it (India) becomes more important for world politics in the twenty-first century, India would do well to revisit its own realist tradition so soundly reflected in the Mahabharata, Panchatantra, Arthashastra. While calls for nativism, indigenism must be cautious against falling into the trap of self centrism or becoming self-serving, if IR programs in Asia retain their attachments to both the state and the policy-making process, basic IR theory will likely maintain its western centre. Kanti Bajpai states that scholars who were overtly critical of the state and its policies might find their access to the state-owned information denied making the discipline prone to colonization by the state. (Bajpai 1995:15)

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