

# The Wages of Discipline: Rethinking International Relations as a Vehicle of Western Hegemony

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## ABSTRACT

In this paper, based on the keynote speech at the METU Conference on Rethinking International Relations, 15-17 June 2011, I argue that academic discipline functions as an extension of the class/state discipline on the population. Disciplinary division of labour in academia began when the classical political economy perspective, which had been turned into a political programme of the labour movement by Marx, was reformulated as marginalism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. International Relations (IR) after World War I was also turned into an academic specialisation, targeting, along with the Russian Revolution, the critique of imperialism. The third part of the paper discusses how the ostracism of Marxism has entailed deleting the crucial Kant-Hegel-Marx transition in philosophy from static antinomy to historical dialectics. As a result social science stagnates into a repetition of identical positions under new labels. What this entails will be discussed by taking the example of Andrew Abbott's argument about "syncretism". The paper concludes with a brief outline of a historical materialist alternative to the mainstream IR canon.

**Keywords:** *Western Hegemony, International Relations, Social Discipline, Academic Discipline*

## Introduction

The disciplinary organisation of academia as we know it today dates from around the turn of the twentieth century. Prior to the creation of a separate economics, sociology, and eventually, International Relations (IR), thinkers might focus on particular issues one at a time without entrenching within the same field for the rest of their careers. In the "pre-disciplinary" epoch, writers like the classical political economists (Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and Karl Marx) were still "polymaths who wrote on economics,

politics, civil society, language, morals and philosophy".<sup>1</sup> After 1870, however, economics split off as the tenets of classical political economy such as the labour theory of value (a concept developed by the ideologues of the ascendant bourgeoisie to contest the idea of inherited wealth) became part of the outlook of the working class.

Turned into a political programme of the labour movement by Marx, classical political economy was reformulated as marginalism, a subjectivist theory of choice which claims that economics is about subjects seeking to validate assets in the quest for maximum returns. Sociology then moved into place to cover the field of class relations abandoned by subjectivist economics; its origins go back to how states at the dawn of the modern epoch investigated their populations in order to control them. This material discipline, I will argue, within the context of academia was translated into intellectual disciplines. We will first look at this background, before turning to Woodrow Wilson's intervention in World War I and the Russian Revolution, which triggered a parallel development of a separate IR.

The anti-Marxist inspiration of the disciplinary organisation of the social sciences had the unintentional effect of proscribing the entire Hegel-Marx tradition, thus removing from social science the synthesis between materialism and idealism wrought by Marx. This has left social science, especially in the United States, with a body of thought that remains stuck in the pre-Hegelian understanding of antinomies (mutually excluding principles, like materialism and idealism); a position that goes back to Immanuel Kant. In the concluding part of the paper I will take Andrew Abbott's book, *Chaos of Disciplines*, as an example how this works out. Since US social science continues to spread across the globe, the ostracism of Marxism that was the result of successive "Red scares", is having a particularly regressive effect on social thought. A brief outline of a historical materialist alternative to the mainstream IR canon will illustrate the potential of overcoming this particular limit.

### **Social Discipline and Academic Discipline**

The idea of describing foreign societies goes back to the earliest travelers—Caesar and Tacitus, Ibn Battuta and William of Rubruck come to mind. But to systematically describe one's own as a means to control it, was a late invention. Zeisel dates the first true population survey to the English conquest of Ireland in 1641, when William Petty, one of the founding fathers

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<sup>1</sup> Bob Jessop and Ngai-Ling Sum, "Pre-disciplinary and Post-disciplinary Perspectives", *New Political Economy* (Vol. 6, No.1, 2001), p. 90.

of political economy and statistics, was commissioned to make an inventory of the social structure which he titled *The Political Anatomy of Ireland*.<sup>2</sup> A friend of Petty's, John Graunt, in turn discovered, on the basis of the mortality statistics which the English began keeping on a routine basis (not just in epidemics etc.) that various causes of death were distributed in constant proportions.<sup>3</sup> Foucault's "governmentality" argument is based on the idea that this interest in the statistical regularities occurring in the population was intended to control it, but not in a way that would stifle its movement and activity, which in the 18<sup>th</sup> century began to be understood as the source of wealth and power of the state. Of course, as with most of Foucault's writings, *who governs whom* is largely left in the dark. But there is no doubt that "discipline", his master concept, was prominently involved.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the increasing rivalries between Britain and its overseas empire on the one hand, and the absolutist states on the Europe continent on the other, fuelled the interest of their ruling classes in bolstering the population as a source of manpower for the national economy and the army. "Political economy" (literally, the "householding of the state, the polity") was the obvious framework for understanding the combination. The period following the French Revolution saw an explosion of statistical reporting on the lower classes in England. After 1815, factory inspectors produced biannual reports on working conditions to Parliament.<sup>4</sup> In hindsight one can discern that in the course of the nineteenth century, beginning with the secession of the United States and picking up after the defeat of Napoleon, nation-state formation in the Americas and south-east Europe increased the number of sovereign entities in which such "informed discipline" was needed.

The nation-state in this context crystallised as a container of population. The population represents both the key productive force of a society, and the object of its control by the state because it may rebel. The previous experience with statistics was now tailored into a key resource of state power. In the 1830s, the Belgian astronomer, Adolphe Quételet, applied quantitative measurement and probability theory to social statistics. His classic work, *Social Physics*, was published in French in 1835.<sup>5</sup> In 1853 Quételet chaired the first international statistics conference. Clearly the Enlightenment idea that self-interest leads automatically to harmony (via the market, via the social contract, via a republican peace treaty, or otherwise),

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<sup>2</sup> Hans Zeisel, "Zur Geschichte der Soziographie" in Marie Jahoda, Paul Felix Lazarsfeld, and Hans Zeisel (eds.), *Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal. Ein soziographischer Versuch* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1975 [1933]), p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> Michel Foucault, "Sécurité, territoire, population", in Michel Senellart (ed.), *Cours au Collège de France (1977-1978)* (Paris: Gallimard-Seuil, 2004), pp. 76- 69.

<sup>4</sup> Zeisel, op.cit. in note 2, p. 116.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 120.

was replaced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the idea that order requires intervention, an idea pioneered in Jeremy Bentham's writings in Britain. In Foucault's words, "The utilitarian philosophy has been the theoretical instrument which has supported the novelty of that period, the government of populations".<sup>6</sup>

On the continent, the sociology of Saint-Simon and Comte emerged in the same period as a science of society, likewise developed from the perspective of controlling it. Sociology was famously characterised by Gramsci as "an attempt to create a method of historical and political science in a form dependent on a pre-elaborated philosophical system, that of evolutionist positivism".<sup>7</sup> As class struggles in the centres of capitalist production became manifest in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, concern with what was going on in the popular quarters of the big cities proliferated. The Frenchman Frédéric Le Play in 1855 published *The European Workers*, based on data gathered on a tour of 15 countries. Its aim was to restore social peace after the July Revolt.<sup>8</sup> Statistics served to systematise the necessary information needed to exercise social control, but then only a stable society can be "measured" in this way in the first place. Indeed "statistical laws can be employed in the science and art of politics only so long as the great masses of the population remain... essentially passive".<sup>9</sup>

The dilemma that society on the one hand must be encouraged to be economically active, but simultaneously be controlled and kept *inactive* politically, especially once a working class movement came in sight, in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century elicited theories of society from which the concept of class struggle had been removed. Organic intellectuals of the ruling class such as John Stuart Mill in England developed an apologetic version of political economy that justified capitalist market discipline and private property. Mill proceeded on the assumption that the entrepreneur supplies his capital to society in an act of abstinence. This approach also built on certain ambivalences in the classical writers, which with the growth of the working class acquired a new relevance. Empire in this respect was seen as the high road of avoiding a domestic struggle with labour, and the British Empire certainly was seen in a liberal perspective. At the East India Company's Haileybury college (where Thomas Malthus held the chair of Political Economy), Adam Smith's injunctions against state intervention were

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<sup>6</sup> Foucault, op.cit. in note 3, p. 76.

<sup>7</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. and ed. Q. Hoare and G.N. Smith (New York: International Publishers [written 1929-35] 1971), p. 426.

<sup>8</sup> Zeisel, op.cit. in note 2, pp. 122-3.

<sup>9</sup> Gramsci, op.cit. in note 7, p. 428; Marx too at one point drafted a worker survey following the official French worker statistics method, obviously with a propagandist aim. The questions were published in the April 1880 issue of *La Revue Socialiste*, which had suggested the idea and 25,000 questionnaire were printed; Karl Marx, "Fragebogen für Arbeiter" 1880-1970, *Kursbuch*, (No. 21, 1970), pp. 9-14. Some preliminary results appeared in the journal but the project was abandoned.

a central tenet.<sup>10</sup> This did not suspend the dilemmas associated with the population being the key productive force of society, which should work but otherwise remain passive. Malthus looked at this problem in terms of a biomass which should be kept in proportion to the means of subsistence, and this line of population control was taken forward to sideline Marx's understanding of the people as an active force, engaged in class struggle.<sup>11</sup>

In his various writings and in *Capital* in particular, Marx had given a politically explosive twist to the labour theory of value of classical political economy. This theory, as indicated above, had been developed to articulate the bourgeois concern with having work, not birth, recognised as the source of wealth and property. With the rise of the working class movement, however, it became part of the clamour for a socialist society. The entire tradition of classical political economy of Smith and Ricardo thus became suspect, and Mill's conception of economics as entrepreneurial abstinence pointed the way for developing an alternative. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these various social and intellectual challenges became enmeshed with changes in the organisation of both the economy and of higher education. Hence a new concept of economics and the disciplinary organisation of academia developed in combination.

In the 1870s, the combined effects of on the one hand, the fact that the accumulated knowledge began to outstrip what a single individual could still master, and the rejection of Marxism (because of its political implications and the socialist programme) on the other, fostered a particular route of academic specialisation. Also, important structural changes in the capitalist class makeup were in progress at the same juncture. The growth of a class of inactive savers-investors, "rentiers", branching off from the classical owner-manager capitalist, also evolved into a support base for the theoretical repositioning of economics. For Marx, capital is a social relation, in which a self-propelling social force reproduces itself via an exploitative social relation with labour power. For Mill on the other hand, the capitalist is not a functionary of the overarching social relation but a *rational subject* who puts his capital to the best possible use, just as a worker does with labour power. This then led to what became the Marginalist Revolution of the 1870s.

The political nature of this reformulation, which remains in operation to the present day in neoclassical micro-economics, was never in doubt. Echoing earlier concerns expressed by Mill, Stanley Jevons warned in the 1870s that "erroneous and practically mischievous" ideas about political

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<sup>10</sup> Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 31-2.

<sup>11</sup> Foucault, op.cit. in note 3, p. 79.

economy were gaining ground and were “becoming popular among the lower orders”.<sup>12</sup> Hence in his view the term “political economy” should be replaced by “economics”.<sup>13</sup> By removing the adjective “political”, the idea that economic processes could be subject to social preferences and state intervention, thus was sidelined. Jevons actually sought to convey the idea that economic cycles were a natural process by claiming they were based on sunspots; hence the miseries capitalism entailed could not be blamed on its institutions or the class associated with them.<sup>14</sup> This was a radical instance of how the naturalisation of social and historical processes is at the heart of contemporary economics.

The academic codification of these changes followed in the remaining decades of the nineteenth century. On the European continent, Eugene Böhm-Bawerk famously titled his chief work of 1896, *Marx and the Close of his System*. In Böhm-Bawerk’s view, Adam Smith still had treated political economy in a spirit of neutrality, but his followers had failed to insulate themselves from class conflict.<sup>15</sup> In the United States, Frank Fetter warned that classical value theory had come “under pressure of radical propaganda”, whilst John Bates Clark, who had earlier signalled an interest in socialism, in 1891 formulated the idea of a naturalised economics in his claim that “What a social class gets is, *under natural law*, what it contributes to the general output of industry.”<sup>16</sup> Indeed “the desire to legitimate the capitalist market in the face of radical challenge was the major element in Clark’s thinking”.<sup>17</sup> In Britain, Alfred Marshall at Cambridge inaugurated economics as a science by reference to its use of rational, deductive method; in 1903 the university introduced a degree entirely devoted to economics.<sup>18</sup>

Recasting political economy as economics triggered a general movement towards disciplinary reorganisation in academia, especially in the United States. The immediate counterpart of the separation of a distinct, axiomatic economics (the axiom being that every subject is a self-interested, utility-maximising participant in the great game of market economy), was

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<sup>12</sup> Ronald Meek, “The Marginal Revolution and its Aftermath” [1956], in E.K Hunt and Jesse G. Schwartz (eds.), *A Critique of Economic Theory* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 88.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>14</sup> Davis, *op.cit.* in note 10, p. 222.

<sup>15</sup> Maurice Dobb, “The Trend of Modern Economics”, in Hunt and Schwartz (eds.), *A Critique of Economic Theory*, *op.cit.* in note 12, p. 44.

<sup>16</sup> Fetter quoted in Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 177; Clark cited in Hunt and Schwartz (eds.), *op.cit.* in note 12, p. 16.

<sup>17</sup> Ross, *op.cit.* in note 16, p. 118

<sup>18</sup> Marie Scot, “Rockefeller’s Baby”: La London School of Economics et la recherche économique dans l’Angleterre de l’entre-deux-guerres’, in L. Tournès (ed.), *L’argent de l’influence. Les fondations américaines et leurs réseaux européens* (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 2010), p. 93.

sociology. If economics crystallised as an organic perspective of the rentier class, sociology took shape as the discipline of social control. Their concern was the empirical working class which was, or might pass, under the influence of Marxism. "The common polemical target of the thinkers of the Classical period was Marxism", writes Alvin Gouldner.<sup>19</sup> But the method was radically different. As Therborn puts it sociology developed into "an investigative instead of a dogmatic guardian of the ideological community" on which social cohesion is premised.<sup>20</sup>

Here we see how sociology in particular linked up with statistical control practices of older parentage. The nation-state provides the framework for the "ideological community", hence sociology is tied to the limits of the particular society in which it operates; French sociology has a different outlook from German sociology. Economics may be up in the sky, as universal truth, but the realities on the ground in each society demanded of sociology that it discover the particularities of the human mass that was to be active in the economy but passive otherwise. Ferdinand Tönnies in 1900 came up with the idea to link social statistics with sociology. Max Weber in the context of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* also planned such a survey but dropped the idea later.<sup>21</sup> After the First World War, the idea of sociographics, originally coined by the Dutchman, S.R. Steinmetz, was adopted in Germany; Tönnies in 1930 set up a working group to put it into practice, but the Nazi takeover put an end to it. The parallel election survey research undertaken by the SPD, the German Social Democrats, met the same fate.<sup>22</sup> However, the Nazis took to the idea of an empirical sociology and L. Neundörfer in 1943 founded a sociographic institute at the University of Frankfurt.<sup>23</sup> All this occurred at a time when conservative European scholars such as Robert Michels still rejected the idea that social relations could be measured.<sup>24</sup>

Controlling a nation's citizens, then, was not a matter of policing them through external observation and coercion, but was brought within the domain of a "disciplined" academia. "American sociologists... like the Durkheimians of the Third French Republic and the German sociologists

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<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Steven Seidman, *Liberalism and the Origins of European Social Theory* (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1983), p. ix.

<sup>20</sup> Göran Therborn, *Science, Class and Society. On the Formation of Sociology and Historical Materialism* (London: Verso, 1976), pp. 224-5.

<sup>21</sup> Zeisel, op.cit. in note 2, pp. 128-30.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Lazarsfeld, "Vorspruch zur neuen Auflage" [1960] in M.Jahoda, P.F. Lazarsfeld, and H. Zeisel (eds.), *Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal. Ein soziographischer Versuch* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1975 [1933]), pp. 12-3.

<sup>23</sup> Helke Rausch, "Allemagne, année zér? Dénazifier et démocratiser (1945-1955)", in L. Tournès, (ed.), *L'argent de l'influence. Les fondations américaines et leurs réseaux européens* (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 2010), p. 138.

<sup>24</sup> Zeisel, op.cit. in note 2, p. 138.

around the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*, were engaged in an effort to secure the national identity in the face of political and industrial transformation".<sup>25</sup> Using public opinion surveys and studies and statistical studies of social trends, sociology rather worked to subtly direct individual actions into channels where they contributed to the maintenance of the existing order—without overtly restraining them except in case of extreme deviance. "What society is struggling to accomplish," wrote G. H. Mead, "is to bring [the] social side of our conduct out so that it may, in some conscious way, become the element of control". The surveys simply allowed this control to be adaptive and flexible, obscuring, as Ross puts it, "just who was controlling whom."<sup>26</sup>

The disciplinary structure of academia, then, was centrally about disciplining society. Economics was the first to be lifted out of the comprehensive field of the social sciences, after which sociology took up the legacy of governmental social statistics. The process had its epicentre in the United States, paradoxically given that it was a relative late-comer compared to the established academic systems in Europe. These institutions, with their history that goes back to late Middle Ages, for obvious reasons were more resistant to disciplinary reorganisation, as they had their origin in theology and the study of the classics.<sup>27</sup> In itself, the disciplinary organisation of academia also added to the development of society's productive forces by fostering specialisation: it produced a "tendency to extend reflexive power by partitioning the natural and social order into manageable units which might then be more adequately understood and controlled".<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, the particular narrowness of the disciplines, each with their own terminology and provincial authorities, not just restricts understanding of the world in its fundamental unity. It equally eclipses any awareness of the role of "disciplined" academics in the broader context, replacing it by the facile arrogance of technocracy.

Obviously it is of great significance that a) academic discipline can be understood as the translation of social-political discipline into the world of learning; and that b) the spread of the disciplinary structure of academia translated the rise of the US as the dominant state-society in the global political economy. The American system is "held rigidly in place by dual institutionalization: on the one hand in an interuniversity labour market annually transacting tens of thousands of faculty and on the other in an

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<sup>25</sup> Ross, op.cit. in note 16, p. 255.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>27</sup> Jacques Le Goff, *Les intellectuels au Moyen Âge* (Paris : Ed. du Seuil, 2000 [1957]).

<sup>28</sup> Joseph A Camilleri and Jim Falk, *Worlds in Transition: Evolving Governance Across a Stressed Planet* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2009), p. 9.

intra-university curriculum annually “disciplining” millions of students”.<sup>29</sup> It has spread and continues to spread across the globe, achieving the same elsewhere. The separate constitution of a discipline of IR in this light is of particular importance.

## **US-Sponsored Nation-State Formation and International Studies**

The development of a dedicated discipline of IR accompanied the projection of US power in Europe under Woodrow Wilson. This concerned both the development of an expressly political IR, deployed (by implication rather than overt critique) against the political-economic, mostly Marxist theories of imperialism; and a Comparative Politics of nation-building that would rise to prominence in the era of decolonisation. Woodrow Wilson’s response to the Russian Revolution entailed the conscious adoption of a strategy of propagating the nation-state form as a container of democratic change, and this intervention would have long-lasting effects which still today play out in for instance the creation of Western-friendly regimes in e.g. the former Yugoslav and Soviet republics.

Wilson from an early date advocated the channelling of democratic aspirations into arrangements compatible with Western interests. “The East is to be opened and transformed whether we will or no; the standards of the West are to be imposed upon it; nations and peoples which had stood still the centuries through are to be quickened, and made part of the universal world of commerce and of ideas which has so steadily been a-making by the advance of European power from age to age”, Wilson argued, at the turn of the century, in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

It is our particular duty, as it is also England’s, to moderate the process in the interests of liberty; to impart to the peoples thus driven out upon the road of change... the habit of law... which we long ago got out of the strenuous processes of English history; secure for them, when we may, the free intercourse and the natural development which shall make them at last equal members of the family of nations.<sup>30</sup>

When Wilson was called upon to respond to the political crisis that struck Europe in the final stages of World War One, the president argued the case for US intervention in terms of a world of nation-states. In his address to the US Senate on 22 January 1917 he declared that national self-

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<sup>29</sup> Andrew Abbott, *Chaos of Discipline* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 128.

<sup>30</sup> Hans Kohn, *The Age of Nationalism, The First Era of Global History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968 [1962]), p. 131, emphasis added.

determination should be the guiding principle of any durable arrangement. Proposing that "the nations should with one accord adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world", Wilson laid down as the key principle "that no nation should seek to extend its polity over any other nation or people, but that every people should be left free to determine its own polity, its own way of development, unhindered, unthreatened, unafraid, the little along with the great and powerful".<sup>31</sup>

The theories of imperialism formulated by Hobson, Hilferding, and Rosa Luxemburg from the turn of the century had gained an extraordinary influence on popular thinking, and the human and material devastations of the Great War only added to their plausibility, as each of them had linked imperialism to war. With the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, Lenin's synthesis of Hobson and Hilferding, cast as a polemic against Karl Kautsky (whose projection of a (future) imperialist peace seemed particularly ill-conceived when published in 1914), inevitably obtained momentous resonance too.<sup>32</sup> There was no way that even the most brilliant attempt to refute it on its own ground, like Schumpeter's,<sup>33</sup> could be expected to roll back this influence (even though the Marxism of the Second and Third Internationals by then had regressed to the economic determinism that Marx had expressly sought to transcend).

Wilson's design of "making the world safe for democracy" aimed at imposing a particular neo-imperialist discipline on Europe by fostering new nation-states, especially on the perimeter of revolutionary Russia, a policy he pushed vigorously at the Versailles negotiations in which a peace was to be worked out. This practical policy would in due course engender an academic discipline in which the (open) nation-state was the supposedly natural constituent entity, and (nominal) sovereign equality the basis for its relations with others. "In emphasizing the sovereignty of the nation-state, the Versailles congress in large part conceded the existence of an already existing order of global power," Giddens writes. "It helped ensure that it would become a genuinely universal political form in the contemporary political world, both by the nature of the global reflexive monitoring which it advocated and furthered, and by its more substantive geopolitical prescriptions".<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Woodrow Wilson, *Die Reden Woodrow Wilsons* [bilingual edition published by the Committee on Public Information of the USA] (Bern: Freie Verlag, 1919), pp. 12, 14.

<sup>32</sup> Karl Kautsky, "Der Imperialismus", *Die Neue Zeit*, (2. Band, 1913-1914), pp. 908-922; V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism" [1916] *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, (Moscow: Progress, 1965).

<sup>33</sup> Joseph A. Schumpeter, "The Sociology of Imperialisms" in *Imperialism and Social Classes* (New York: Kelley, 1951).

<sup>34</sup> Anthony Giddens, "The Nation-State and Violence", *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Polity, 1985), p. 258.

Wilson's advisory body for elaborating this policy, nicknamed "The Inquiry", by several steps gave a push to the IR discipline. The Inquiry spawned the creation of the Institute of International Affairs, which in the post-Wilson US retrenchment then split again into separate US and UK bodies, the Council on Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, or Chatham House, respectively.<sup>35</sup> Walter Lippmann, the Inquiry's secretary, at the time was a key intermediary between the Wilson entourage in the US and the Rhodes-Milner Group in the UK, the historic ruling class bloc committed to seeking joint Anglo-American backing for the preservation of the British Empire.<sup>36</sup> The Carnegie charities, which shared this goal, then followed up with endowing dedicated chairs in IR.

The IR discipline as it took shape in the slipstream of the Wilson policy, as well as this policy itself, built on prior ideas on how to manage democracy nationally. According to David Easton, late in the nineteenth century Walter Bagehot in Britain and Wilson himself, then still a Princeton political science professor, found that around the formal structure of political offices and institutions there were all kinds of informal behaviour and organizations in which power over decision making might lie. Bagehot, Wilson, and others discovered them in the informal committees of their respective legislatures and in the political parties. Later scholars added interest or pressure groups to a growing list of informal institutions to be taken into account.<sup>37</sup>

The Council on Foreign Relations and Chatham House would eventually function in this sense, as informal exploratory and consensus-building bodies. Both the British and the North American ruling classes believed that political strategies should be well thought through before they were to be put into practice, in order to neutralise dissension within the ruling class but also to sideline or if necessary, incorporate potentially disruptive popular interests. Lord Esher (Reginald Brett), one of the key members of the Rhodes-Milner group (Quigley ranks him among the central "Society of the Elect"), expressly endorsed the idea of the pacifist author and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Norman Angell, that "it is the business of those outside politics to prepare the ground for the wiser politician".<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Laurence H. Shoup and William Minter, *Imperial Brain Trust. The Council on Foreign Relations and United States Foreign Policy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977).

<sup>36</sup> Carroll Quigley, *The Anglo-American Establishment: From Rhodes to Cliveden* (New York: Books in Focus, 1981 [1949]).

<sup>37</sup> David Easton, "Political Science in the United States: Past and Present", *International Political Science Review/Revue internationale de science politique* (Vol. 6, No. 1, 1985), p. 134.

<sup>38</sup> Jaap de Wilde, *Saved From Oblivion. Interdependence Theory in the First Half of the 20th Century* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1991), p. 88.

Informal policy planning thus would protect politicians from being engulfed by popular emotions.

The proliferation of chairs in IR in US and British universities in the 1920s and 1930s established the new discipline as the most Western, indeed Anglo-American academic specialisation—a latecomer compared to economics and sociology, which were also more diverse in national origins. In this period, the dominant ideological framework of the discipline was Wilson's project, what we now would call "global governance"—centred on open nation-states and sovereign equality, conceived as the most conducive format for a lasting peace. The second aspect of the Wilson package, free trade and capital movements, was equally important but not part of the discipline. Edward Hallett Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis* remains the classic rendition of the conflation of Western discipline and the crystallisation of IR as an academic discipline.<sup>39</sup>

In the 1930s, a flow of European scholars, refugees from the Nazi regime, added the "realist" counterpoint to Wilson's world order idealism, as men like Hans Morgenthau and others brought the authoritarian, state-centric legacy of Max Weber and Carl Schmitt to the United States. However, the overarching "idealist" framework would not be displaced by this influx. For whilst Cold War realism was hegemonic in IR when it came to thinking about relations with the Soviet bloc, Wilsonianism reigned supreme in the domain of formulating a response to the pressures of emancipation on the part of aspiring governing classes in the European colonies. Indeed in order to outflank socialist aspirations in the colonies and potential involvement of the Soviet Union, the United States moved to keep control of the post-1945 decolonisation process. Comparing the handover of power to the Congress in India and the Muslim League in Pakistan to Marx's characterisation of the English and French revolutions as instances of a broader European process, Ajit Roy concludes that "the transfer of power of August 1947 was not merely a local affair", but laid down "a broad model for the political evolution in other dependencies."<sup>40</sup>

From Roy's analysis, the conclusion emerges that decolonisation, like all or most previous instances of nation-state formation under Anglo-American auspices, was a matter of a class compromise between the Western ruling classes and aspiring governing classes in the newly independent states. This was seen from the perspective of creating a liberal world in the Wilsonian mould, the triptych of peace-democracy-market that

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<sup>39</sup> Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (New York: Harper & Row, 1964 [1939]).

<sup>40</sup> Ajit Roy, "Revolution by 'Consent': Indian Case Study", in Ajit Roy, *Contemporary India—A Perspective* (Bombay: Build, 1986), pp. 29-30.

goes back to Adam Smith and which still inspires Anglophone social science and its supporting structures.<sup>41</sup>

From the liberal Anglophone angle the transformation of non-Western societies thus required the identification of client governing classes to whom new nation-states could be entrusted on the condition of creating entities that remained open to Western political and economic influence. As an academic discipline, a Comparative Politics of modernisation evolved as a covering science for the process. A vast research project, "Labour Problems in Economic Development", financed by the Ford Foundation, took on the task from 1952 on. Many of the big names of post-war Political Science, International Relations and Comparative Politics established their credentials in the context of this programme. "If ever an academic project established intellectual hegemony by the sheer scale of its operation, this was it," writes Anthony Carew. "Taking as a starting point the supposed universal logic of industrial society, much of the research worked from an assumption that the ideal society was the "managed", "open", "affluent" capitalist society of the Western world which had reached its apogee in the United States".<sup>42</sup>

Thus the disciplines in the field of international studies as we know it today, IR and Comparative Politics, emerged in the slipstream of the two great US "disciplinary" interventions in European and world history, both of Wilsonian inspiration. Cast as sub-disciplines of Political Science in the American order of things, they continue their spread across the globe to this day. IR and Comparative Politics in this sense are academic expressions of a material discipline which the West imposes on the rest of the world. Even when more and more reservations are expressed globally concerning the aggressive, warlike turn of Anglo-American foreign policy in the new millennium, the academic disciplines which legitimise the broad framework from which it is undertaken, continues to spread. To be counted as serious, universities in the world introduce students to IR by juxtaposing Wilsonian idealism and Schmittian realism. However, as I will illustrate in the concluding section, a social science which in the process of disciplinary organisation has also discarded a crucial component of modern social thought, cannot take the step that would allow it to become relevant again for the contemporary world.

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<sup>41</sup> Ludovic Tournès, "Introduction Carnegie, Ford, Soros: Généalogie de la toile philanthropiques", in Ludovic Tournès, *L'argent de l'influence. Les fondations américaines et leurs réseaux européens* (Paris : Éditions Autrement, 2010), p. 9.

<sup>42</sup> Anthony Carew, *Labour under the Marshall Plan. The Politics of Productivity and the Marketing of Management Science* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), pp. 196-197.

## **Assimilating the Historical Materialist Legacy**

The disciplinary structure of academia, which took shape in the US and spread from there to Europe and Japan and beyond, for over a century has been applied in training new generations of cadre in the particular mould of disciplinary thinking and setting norms for society at large. In the hegemonic North American academic system, the absence of a market for public intellectuals makes the disciplinary structure indispensable for academics and vice versa (being an academic means being in a discipline). One result of this that "in most substantive areas there is what to outsiders seems like an amazing lack of reciprocal knowledge".<sup>43</sup>

The compartmentalisation of thinking about society into disciplines has the effect of confining creativity to sub-fields of social development and removing the comprehensive historical dimension from them. However, as Peter Bratsis points out, "A social compulsion must be understood in its totality, as a product of a totality of practices not limited by the typical academic boundaries and departmental subfields."<sup>44</sup> Instead, "measurement" of the separate aspects of social life and a limited imagination for possibilities of change have made academia inhospitable to any sort of comprehensive critique of contemporary society. Over-emphasis on method in turn blocks the dissemination of even the narrowly conceived understanding of social processes beyond the university. "It was the regression of the sociologists and others into their methodologically correct analyses of data that left the task of giving general interpretations of [modern] social life" to others.<sup>45</sup>

Turning academic disciplines into as many conveyor belts for the mass production of boxed-in ideas and a middle-brow cadre inculcated with them, has worked well for maintaining the social order but has damaged the vitality of intellectual life. It should be perfectly obvious, then, that the organisation of academic work into separate disciplines has "much less to do with the requisites of intellectual production than ... with Taylorizing academic labour and standardising curricula so as to increase the "efficiency" of higher education and decrease the power of faculty by making them much more interchangeable."<sup>46</sup>

This is not confined to the social sciences either. James Lovelock, the author of the Gaia theory in geophysics, argues that the late discovery of global warming was the result of the fact that "science... was handicapped in

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<sup>43</sup> Abbott, op.cit. in note 29, pp. 142, cf. 130.

<sup>44</sup> Peter Bratsis, *Everyday Life and the State* (Boulder, Col.: Paradigm, 2006), p. 113.

<sup>45</sup> Abbott, op.cit. in note 29, p. 146.

<sup>46</sup> Bratsis, op.cit. in note 44, p. 113.

the last two centuries by its division into many different disciplines, each limited to seeing only a tiny facet of the planet, and there was no coherent vision of the Earth."<sup>47</sup> We can safely say that the disciplinary organisation of academia, whatever initial productive effects it may have had earlier in the twentieth century, today is becoming an evident break on the further growth of knowledge.

When large human populations interact across a finite planet at high levels of social and organisational complexity, the notion that they can successfully manage their affairs through neatly partitioned governance arrangements begins to break down... *The compartmentalising mindset... was part of the larger conceptual and organisational framework that once empowered the modern epoch, but now exposed the limits of its efficacy.*<sup>48</sup>

However, "the magnitude of centripetal disciplinary forces remains enormous", and "initial canons are still taught in most departments in most disciplines".<sup>49</sup> The alienating effect of introductions derived from disciplinary conventions respectful of the prohibition on historical materialism and stuck in pre-Hegelian antinomy. This certainly holds for IR's introductions into the antinomy of idealism and realism, with which the standard first-year undergraduate course will open. Never mind that relations with foreign communities as a result of migration and media exposure are part of daily experience for everyone, and students enter university with urgent questions concerning these relations. Idealism and realism it will be!

Let me now briefly review how Andrew Abbott, whom I have already quoted a few times, interprets the stagnation resulting from the disciplinary structure of academia. Abbott discerns a continuous return to the same themes, an endless rediscovery of the same approaches under new labels. "The last truly great change in the social scientific imagination was the extra-ordinary era that came to an end around the First World War"—the era of Marx, Freud, Weber, Durkheim and the classical economists.<sup>50</sup> However, rather than investigating the precise nature of the "truly great change" and what happened to it subsequently (it cannot have been the collective work of all of them, and neither were they all discarded to the same degree), Abbott not only identifies himself as a neo-Kantian (he lists his sources beginning with Cassirer<sup>51</sup>) but within a few pages has become stuck in the very antinomies of the old master.

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<sup>47</sup> James Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2007), p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> Camilleri and Falk, op.cit. in note 28, pp. 10-11, emphasis added.

<sup>49</sup> Abbott, op.cit. in note 29, p. 151.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 152.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

Kant's philosophy is based on subjective reason (the neo-Kantians, including Max Weber, in this respect held on to the original Kantian point of departure). Abbott offers a perfect example of how an argument that stops short of repeating the step from Kant to Hegel, runs into exactly the contradictions that Kant solved by resorting to moralism and pragmatism. In his day, that was certainly an unrivalled philosophical edifice and the sage of Königsberg was universally recognised as the greatest spirit of his age. Today, however, the Kantian principles are in many ways retrograde as they have been effectively criticised and transformed into subsequent philosophical systems which solve problems before which Kant still had to retreat.

This is how the original argument goes. The individual subject, endowed with an inborn reason, discovers that this reason does not provide him/her with the ability to decide the ultimate questions of human existence. As demonstrated in Kant's chief work, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, whether man is free or determined, whether the universe is finite or infinite, etc., are questions which can be convincingly answered either way. In tackling such questions, thought (reason) oversteps the boundary set by empirical observation, and moves into the realm which is beyond certainty, and hence is variously covered by religion and morality and by practical judgement. Thus the rational subject is assigned two more forms of making sense of the world besides the intellect—practical and moral, for each of which Kant wrote separate "Critiques".

The split between the mode of facts and the mode of values that Kant posited, for Abbott, remains a foundational point of departure. "What Kant put asunder few indeed have reunited".<sup>52</sup> Hegel however did just that. Rejecting Kant's conclusion that there is an area out of bounds for pure reason, he claims that what supposedly lies at the other end of what is perceived by the senses (the "thing-in-itself", the *Ding an sich*), is also a product of thought—what else could it be? "These very things, which are supposed to stand on the other extreme beyond our thought, are themselves things of the mind...the so-called thing-in-itself is only a mental figment of empty abstraction".<sup>53</sup> The Kantian *antinomies*, mutually exclusive oppositions (free/determined, finite/infinite...), thus are within the realm of reason, not beyond it. Logical contradiction is not a sign that beyond identity, there is no reason; rather, reason relies for its realisation on contradiction because only through contradiction, thought moves forward to complete rationality. It is not enough to merely establish what is empirically

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>53</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Wissenschaft der Logik", in V.I. Lenin, *Philosophische Hefte* Vol. 38 (Berlin: Dietz, 1973), p. 83.

evident. Compared to contradiction, "*identity* is merely the determination of the simply immediate, the dead being; [contradiction] however is the source of all movement and liveliness; only insofar as something contains a contradiction within itself, it moves, has drive and activity."<sup>54</sup> Reason does not have its starting point in the human subject, but is inherent in the world. The human subject in its quest for freedom merely brings to light this objective rationality. "What is rational, is real, and what is real, is rational."<sup>55</sup>

Spinoza already prefigured this step from a subjective to an objective standpoint, but Hegel adds the historical dimension of a humanity which becomes aware of its own condition through a long, arduous process, in which successive civilisations take it upon themselves to reach the next stage. Like Spinoza, however, the ultimate rationality with Hegel continues to reside in a spiritual realm, so within philosophical idealism. With Marx, however, the historical process is placed in the material domain again. Materialism has a history of its own, and argues that all that exists emanates from nature, even the most abstract thoughts. Ludwig Feuerbach, the last great materialist to influence Marx's generation, famously held that religion is an effect of the inner nature of humans, just as fire brings out the chemical composition of the burning material. Marx combines the materialist standpoint that humanity and all that it produces, emerges from nature, with Hegelian dialectics: humans face an initially overwhelming naturalness outside and inside themselves, but through struggle succeed in mastering the forces of nature, thus moving from one epoch to the next. In the process, their social structures differentiate into class societies organised around the labour process. The "civilisations" of Hegel's philosophy of history becomes *modes of production* in Marx.

Hegel solved the limits of Kantian subjectivism by historicising Reason; Marx replaced Hegel's teleological, ultimately mystic concept of rationality by successive types of society arising on the basis of modes of production. I find it hard not to see in this stepwise transition a decisive breakthrough in human thought, and Marx's contribution as the "Einstein moment" that overturns the entire prehistory of philosophy. Certainly it was this sort of comparison that Albion Small, the founding father of US sociology, had in mind when he predicted in 1911 that in the future Marx would be thought of as the Galileo of the social sciences.<sup>56</sup> But that was before the Russian Revolution and the Cold War.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 128-129.

<sup>55</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (ed.), *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Frankfurt: Ullstein, 1972 [1821]), p. 11.

<sup>56</sup> Abbott, op.cit. in note 29, p. 64.

To what extent Marx's synthesis between idealism and materialism was a revolutionary rupture comparable only to Einstein's relativity theory, is perhaps also confirmed, by default, by the overwhelming failure of subsequent Marx-isms to assimilate it entirely. Engels, Lenin, the Second International, Soviet Marxism and Trotskyism, all in their own way contributed to guiding the historical materialist legacy back to one of its two constituent elements, (naturalistic) materialism (a less prominent regression went back to the original idealism). Inevitably these Marxisms, marginalised from academia, have tended to become rigid and doctrinaire, entrenched in formulaic positions which often have not changed for a century. Turning historical materialism into a materialist theory of economic causation, something which Marx expressly criticised, thus reduced its scope again. A historical materialist analysis why this is so, would point to the fact that Marxism took hold as a doctrine in late-industrialising countries; this gave its arguments an economic-deterministic inflection, in the way Gramsci wrote about *Capital* being read in Russia as a book about economic growth.<sup>57</sup>

Abbott gives the example of how the stunted development of Marxism was the result of isolation from the academic mainstream. Having been ostracised early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, US Marxists made a return as the "corporate liberals", who decoded US liberalism as the liberalism of the large corporations. Their work was "materialist, sometimes to the point of economic reductionism". The next wave of Marxist thinking that emerged on the margin of US academia, what Abbott calls the "mixed materialism of Althusser and Poulantzas", did not suffer to the same degree from those shortcomings, but since Marxism existed outside the mainstream, in these corrections as in other debates, "Marxists tended to speak more to themselves than to outsiders", so theoretical development occurred *within* that particular strand rather than in synthesis with the mainstream, because for mainstream social science overcoming economic reductionism was not an issue.<sup>58</sup>

Marxism is still a marginal current in academia today, if not anathema altogether. As we saw, the disciplines of economics and sociology took shape in what was essentially an effort to sideline it from academia, whilst IR had the theories of imperialism, dominated by (economistic) Marxists, in its sights. Yet as little as Einstein, Marx doesn't have all the answers either. There are good grounds for claiming that there are real problems with Marx's theory of class, that he was still a hostage to the problematic of classical political economy and that many aspects of historical human existence in his analyses recede behind the economic aspect as a result, etc. Nevertheless Marx transgressed the critical boundary between idealism and

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<sup>57</sup> Antonio Gramsci, "The Revolution against 'Capital'", in *Selections from Political Writings 1910-1920*, trans. and ed. Q. Hoare, (New York: International Publishers, 1977).

<sup>58</sup> Abbott, op. cit. in note 29, pp. 25-26.

materialism, a problem that philosophy prior to him had not been able to solve although it came close in the case of Hegel.

Abbott may be taken as the example of what happens if one proceeds as if this crucial chapter of the history of philosophy was never written. "The model of social scientific knowledge", he observes, "is... not progressive in the usual sense, although it does admit the loose criterion that "better" knowledge is knowledge that fills the space more completely".<sup>59</sup> So there exists a specific blockage which confines social science within a particular set of limits. These limits are the result, I argue, of the failure of mainstream, especially US, social science to assimilate and build on the philosophical breakthrough that produced historical materialism. If that is blotted out for political reasons, the sociological mechanisms associated with the disciplinary structure, gatekeeping etc., will ensure the endless repetition of the same under new labels.

By developing his own alternative interpretation, Abbott illustrates to what extent Hegel's transcendence of Kant's antinomies and Marx's synthesis between idealism and materialism are at issue here and represent the real threshold. Having established that the sociological study of stress got stuck in a duality of meaning (viz., of the phenomenon of stress), he proposes to treat this antinomy as a "syncretism", Greek for "putting together things that are normally opposed", etc. "A syncretism involves both points of view at once".<sup>60</sup> And so on and so forth. In the footnote to this passage the author apologises for introducing a new concept, but who else but Hegel are we talking about when Abbott proclaims that "what syncretism allows is movement... into a whole new dimension."<sup>61</sup> And let it be clear, here we are not dealing with an anti-Marxist at all, but simply with somebody who has not assimilated into his own thinking the particular transformation that Marx achieved and therefore has to invent it again himself.

Abbott keeps ending up with the same contradiction and keeps circling around it, avoiding (again unintentionally I would argue) the obvious references that allow him to confront it head-on. Movement and progress instead must be reconstructed from playing with the logical antinomies which he takes as his starting point, e.g., "constructionism fares best when it works in alternation, getting realism out of the holes in which it often finds itself".<sup>62</sup> This can be applied straightaway, using the same terms in fact, to IR, in which contemporary "constructivism", the latest instalment of the idealist pole in the antinomy, with IR realism (which is materialist).

Let me conclude therefore with a brief summary of how I think Marx's crucial contribution to the philosophy of social science can be taken forward into this domain. Although he never elaborated on the topic at length, Marx

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

towards the end of his life actually began exploring the idea that humanity does not exist in the abstract but only as particular historical communities. In the *Grundrisse*, the sketches for *Capital*, there are some tentative statements about communities encountering others as a field of inquiry in its own right, and his ethnographic notebooks took the matter further.<sup>63</sup> These notes eventually provided Engels with the material for his *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, a work which was less concerned with foreign relations. Others built on these starting points without developing an integral theory yet.<sup>64</sup>

The first step that a historical materialist interpretation must take, is to recognise that the present is not the endpoint of past attempts to reach it (in the way of Fukuyama's "End of History"), but itself a historical process. Hence international relations in the sense of inter-state relations must be historicised too. Marx's analysis of modes of production here provides a fruitful starting point. By this concept, he intends to de-naturalise the capitalist economy and demonstrate that there have been other modes of production in the past, just as there will be in the future. If we look at international relations in this way, we can make a comparable claim and say the same about *foreign relations*, the relations between communities occupying separate spaces and considering each other as outsiders. International relations theorised by IR, would then represent one particular historical form of a longer and more diverse set of foreign relations, a *mode* of foreign relations.

The perspective of foreign relations, then, is a way of historicising and de-naturalising an orthodoxy that posits itself as the normal, self-evident shape of things. As with modes of production in the case of the naturalised understanding of capitalist market economics, modes of foreign relations open up the sovereign equality self-image that the discipline of IR projects as the normal state of affairs. Both sets of modes have their common anchoring in a level of exploitation of (inner and external) nature, a process of socialisation (Marx speaks of the development of the productive forces) which shapes not only the natural substratum but also transforms the human community undertaking it. From the dawn of historical humanity to the present, communities have organised themselves along the lines of particular (combinations of) modes of production. These have allowed the further development of the productive forces, up to a point where the particular relations of production become an obstacle for further

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<sup>63</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse. Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)* [intro. and trans. M. Nicolaus, [written 1857-58] (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1973); Marx, *Die ethnologischen Exzerptheft*, ed. and intro. Lawrence Krader; trans. A. Schweikhart (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1976).

<sup>64</sup> Andrew Linklater, *Beyond Realism and Marxism. Critical Theory and International Relations* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990). Kevin P. Anderson, *Marx at the Margins. On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

development. The organisation of academia through separate disciplines, in that sense has reached the limits of its contribution in our epoch.

In the same way, communities have engaged in foreign relations, which equally come about involuntarily, in the process of encountering other communities and societies. In those encounters, communities/societies must prove their ability to sustain themselves by the level of development of the productive forces they control. The same sequence that we have seen in the evolution of modes of production, which in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for the first time saw the painful and contradictory experiments with consciously shaping new relations of production in the form of the centrally planned economy, were also evident in foreign relations. The dynamic of pressures to move towards a different pattern of relations through struggle, and eventually reaching the stage of consciously re-engineering relations hitherto shaped involuntarily—applies to foreign relations too; conflict and war here take the place of the revolutions which mark, like tectonic movements, the shocks of adjustment to a new mode. But then, no revolution ever occurred without war.

Productive forces are not to be confused with “the economy”, although the term suggests otherwise. The cultural level, the sense of purpose, and the dedication of a community are the central resources that it draws on—each aspect an element of its natural make-up transformed into something the community is conscious of and which it can apply to particular goals. Hence Marx’s claim that the community itself is the “first great force of production”.<sup>65</sup> The idea of “power”, so central in political science, flows from this insight. It also points to the test of wills (ultimately, war, but not only war) between different communities/societies that opens the way to new types of foreign relations, and ultimately, to overcoming “foreignness” itself.

Foreign relations involve three forms of collective, reciprocal action: the *occupation of (social) space*; the *protection* of the occupation; and the regulation of *exchanges* (goods, services, people) with other communities. Modes are not historical phases (although they have a historical reference in a level of development of the productive forces); they usually exist only in combination (the process of *articulation*).<sup>66</sup>

Today’s foreign relations can be best understood as stuck on a threshold between sovereign equality and global governance, from where it is difficult to see a peaceful way forward in the current circumstances. IR is the ideological articulation of that particular blockage. If we take global governance as the mode built around functionally differentiated sovereign spheres, multilateral police action for protection, and the integration of all aspects of exchange (economic and cultural “globalisation”), we can see that

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<sup>65</sup> Marx, op.cit. in note 63, p. 495.

<sup>66</sup> Pierre-Philippe Rey, “Klassentegenstellingen in verwantschappelijke maatschappijen”, trans. From French, *Te Elfder Ure* (Vol. 26, No. 3, 1983), pp. 578-603.

it remains mortgaged by the West's supremacy in world affairs. Western-based capitalism likewise occupies the commanding heights in the comprehensively understood global political economy. The contradiction here is that nominally the world is organised under a different mode, that of *sovereign equality* (characterised by territorial sovereignty, protection by popular armies, and international economic relations).

Above I already noted that the states organised in the sovereign equality grid are in fact increasingly operating under a global governance regime projected by the West led by the US. This regime demands of them that they organise themselves as open nation-states, accessible politically and economically by outside forces. They also in most cases are not remotely "national" states in the first place, but congeries of communities whose foreign relations are still organised along tribal and quasi-tribal lines, cut through by nomadic/sedentary dividing lines, and mobilised by religious universalisms which again defy any boundaries drawn between states. These older modes of foreign relations, too, have their own ways of occupying space, organising protection, and regulating exchange.<sup>67</sup>

The nation-state form imposed by the West "historically required the forceful silencing of alternative forms of socio-political belonging", and "regulatory regimes of the new *international* order have tended to increase the tension between the individual and the state... from minimum intrusion into the individual sphere to total control of it."<sup>68</sup> The incompatibilities and conflicts which result from the other modes being forced into the territorial state (e.g. the nomadic transhumance between the Sudan and South Sudan currently in the process of secession) itself often works to bring in more developed states via global (or supranational) governance.

The point is that if foreign relations are understood from this historicising perspective, rather than forced into the state-centric framework of IR, we get a far more accurate view of the processes involved, one that is historically open-ended. What is urgently needed today is a comprehensive global political economy approach which covers, not only the political and economic aspects of the evolution of world society, but equally the philosophical armoury with which they can be properly understood.

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<sup>67</sup> This has been elaborated in Kees van der Pijl, *Nomads, Empires, States and The Foreign Encounter in Myth and Religion* [Vols. 1 and 2 of *Modes of Foreign Relations and Political Economy*] (London: Pluto Press, 2007 and 2010).

<sup>68</sup> Renk Özdemir, "Population Exchanges of the Balkans and Asia Minor at the *fin de siècle*: The Imposition of Political Subjectivities in the Modern World Order", in G.K. Bhambra and R. Shilliam, (eds.), *Silencing Human Rights, Critical Engagements with a Contested Project* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 150, 162.