

THE STATE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN INDIA*

Md. Abdul Gaffar**

Abstract

Dominant perception of International Studies in India is of a discipline crawling its way through history in a state of inanition. Most of the experts of International Studies in India agree with such a conclusion. The factors seem to account for this dismal state of the discipline in India is the 'resistance to theory' that has been identified as one of the most formidable obstacle in the development of International Studies in India. The identity crisis emanates from a conceptual disorientation where a multidisciplinary area study is conflated with the discipline-oriented International Relations (IR).

The involvement of the state in the academic discourse has provided very little space for independent and critical work to emerge. There exists a close relationship between the International Studies in India and the state resulting from the fact that subject matter of former is 'state' itself. When it comes to decision making, practical experience is considered much more helpful to statesman than large volumes of scholarly work. Even if the state wants to engage with the academic community, it only seeks readymade policy capsules, which can be easily gulped rather than the painful internalisation of rigorous theoretical enquiry.

Academic enterprise gets particularly inhibited by informational frugality of the Indian state. This dimension also makes academics vulnerable as favours are only granted to those who are willing to participate in the designs of the state. In fact, Indian state has used the informational asset to colonise the discipline.

In this sense, the paper will examine the problems confronted by the students of international politics in India. Having related to Indian Universities, which offers International relations, it will address the problematic of lack of theory in IR. The paper also will attempt to locate the debilitated factors to the growth of International Studies in India.

Keywords: International Studies, India, Identity, Area Study, International Relations

* An earlier version of this article has published in Economic & Political Weekly July 11, 2015, 50 (28) 22-25. This version of the paper has been updated for JPS.

** The author is a Research Scholar at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. The author could be contacted at ab4ghaffar@gmail.com.

Introduction

The study of International Relations in India has come a long way since its introduction in 1955 at the Indian School of International Studies (ISIS). In the initial years ISIS was a part of Delhi University. It was merged with Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in 1970 as the School of International Studies (SIS). Since then, many other Indian Universities have introduced the discipline. Currently in India, international relations are taught at the postgraduate level in a number of universities: Jadavpur University, Mahatma Gandhi University, University of Hyderabad, Pondicherry University, Sikkim University, Central University of Gujarat, O.P. Jindal Global University, Manipal University, Symbiosis International University, University of Kerala and South Asian University.

This article is an exegesis on the problems of International Studies in India. It is not a survey of writings – a task that has already been massively done. It would be irrational in copying that existing endeavour. The *sui generis* element of this essay addresses itself to the continuing state of dissatisfaction from the perspective of a student – from the very recipients of knowledge rather than practitioners of pedagogy – which many scholars articulated in their writings.

To explain the malaise of international studies in India, the present paper takes the case of three premier universities in India which offers international relations as a separate field of study: Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jadavpur University and Sikkim University. This paper primarily emanates from the personal experiences as a student of international studies at the School of International Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University. The fundamental arguments, therefore in this paper emerged from several occasions of formal and informal discussions by the author with professors and friends, interaction with several scholars, email correspondence with the above mentioned universities concerning the dilemmas faced by the students of international relations and proliferation of international relations as an academic discipline in India. The paper makes an effort to enquire and examine this deplorable state of affairs.

‘International Studies’ (IS) and ‘International Relations’ (IR)/Politics have different meanings. The former is a more inclusive term. While International Relations/Politics refer predominantly to interstate relations, International Studies is a broader arena of study. One discussion notes that it is ‘the pursuit of almost any subject that involves (a) a country other

than the one in which the study is being done, and (b) any activity that crosses a national border' (Bajpai 1997: 19). However, the problem for International Studies in India is that the field of study is about the state and its relations with other states. Students of International Studies – like their cousins in Political Science – are therefore in an uneasy position. Like economists and sociologists, they are resources for the state. They might equally inform the policies of the state by their research and analysis. But the object of their analysis, and potentially of their criticisms is the state itself. This is not the case with economists or sociologists, for whom the primary objects of analysis and criticism – economy and society – are removed from the state and is indeed the object of state policies.

Disciplinary Barriers

International Studies scholars face at least three dismal problems of the discipline in India. First is the 'resistance to theory', one of the most formidable obstacles in the development of International Studies in India (Basrur 2009: 105-106). Theory constitutes the intellectual spine of any discipline. Disciplinary development is fundamentally linked to theory whether it is in Natural Sciences or Social Sciences (Paul 2009: 129-135). Theoretical 'questioning' has been characterised as 'snobbish' or something similar to what Bajpai (2005: 29) refers as 'armchair intellectuals' tended to incline towards utopian idealism far from reality at the ground. In this sense, theoretical arguments are categorised as 'bad' and that does not have significant relevance in developing countries like India. Thus, 'theory' which is perhaps the lifeline for problem-solving in any academic discipline is converted merely into a perplexing and speculative endeavour.

Second, International Studies in India suffers from an identity crisis (Algappa 2009: 14). This crisis emanates from a conceptual disorientation, where multidisciplinary area studies are conflated with the discipline-oriented International Relations (Rana and Mishra 2005: 14-16). Such a misconception is a fundamental fallacy of area studies in India. Area studies is a multidisciplinary enterprise where a number of academic disciplines interact with each other to understand an area better, International Relations (IR) being one of them (Sahni 2009: 53-55). The intellectual muddle of International Studies in India allows area studies to be reduced to international relations and vice versa.

Third, involvement and unethical intervention of the state in the academic discourse has provided very little space for independent and critical work to emerge. Thus as Bajpai (2009:

125-126) candidly puts, there is a close relationship between the International Studies in India and the state, as the subject matter of the former is the state itself.

Barriers to Practice

There are three limitations for international studies to follow (Bajpai 2005: 23-30). First, there is little concern for the discipline in official circles since the 'agents of the state' (diplomats) presuppose their perceived closeness to the state as the valid parameter of their knowledge of the same. When it comes to decision making, practical experience is considered much more helpful to statesmen than large volumes of scholarly work. Even if the state wants to engage with the academic community, it only seeks readymade policy capsules, which can be easily gulped rather than the painful internalisation of rigorous theoretical enquiry. Second, in the Indian setting, the state has been quite successful in co-opting the academia into its own mechanics and machinations. Collaboration with the state has led to an uncritical acceptance of political realism as the 'submerged theoretical base' of IS. Third, the state is the proprietor of its own history. It has the right to distribute knowledge in the public or keep the information private. Academic enterprise gets particularly inhibited by informational frugality of the Indian state. This dimension also makes academics vulnerable as favours are only granted to those who are willing to participate in the designs of the state. According to P.R. Kumaraswamy (2004: 28-29):

Even when official documents are declassified in other countries, there is a general reluctance among the Indian academia, especially those specialising on foreign, to take cognisance of them. The apathy towards declassified Russian documents following the disintegration of the Soviet Union is a classic example. Despite the long political, economic, and strategic ties between the two countries, primary work on Indo-Soviet relations are still limited and secondary. Declassified Soviet documents, for example, reveal how senior communist leaders periodically sought and obtained financial contributions from the Soviet Union for their party's activities in India.

Another thing worthy to note is the limited availability and sometimes complete absence of archival materials in international studies research. This is one of the hurdles faced by students of IS. For example several important documents concerning India's affairs in the world are classified in the name of security and integrity by the state. Such control by the state has created in India a flawed regime of 'consumers of information rather than producers' (Gautam 2011: 16). In fact, Indian state has used the informational asset to colonise the discipline (Behera 2008:3).

Again the sorry affairs of IS in India can also be attributed to the conduct of certain think-tanks. Most think tanks in India, one way or the other tend to incline towards political parties or the state and hence, compromises any credible rationale output. In relation to stunted growth of military history, which is supposed, to be in the realm of international studies, Gautam (2011: 18) writes, ‘with a plethora of think-tanks, one would have expected a clamour of voices calling for a systematic approach to be taken towards record management, declassification, and access to data’. He also asserts that the Indian government’s bureaucratic hurdles also delayed in the declassification the data for public discourse.

Research Training

Over time, the neglect of theory has been institutionalised. For example, the course work for a master of arts (MA) in international relations offered at School of International Studies in Indian Universities. In a single semester, effectively no more than 40 classes, the whole range of international relations theories, from realism to post-modern approaches has to be dealt with. The size of the class is enormous: more than 100 students take the theory course as it is compulsory requirement to complete the programme. Moreover, students in MA come from all disciplinary backgrounds, and therefore, cannot be expected to be grounded in political theory or international relations.

Indian universities have no provision for remedial classes and tutorials for PhD students – unlike foreign universities where students regularly take remedial courses. Faculties, especially those who teach theory, are over-burdened since they have teaching assignments for MPhil and also to guide research students. Such a state of affairs does not allow students to fully engage with theory and develop a lasting interest in theory. On the other hand, faculties hardly have any time and energy to push students towards theory. Thanks to the institutionalised environment of theoretical neglect, by the end of the second semester, most of the students turn to area studies as a convenient career strategy rather than to more theoretically-oriented optional courses such as gender studies, peace and conflict studies, national security, and disarmament studies.

It is good a step that some positive initiatives have emerged in the recent times. Jadavpur University has made it mandatory to induct the scholars possessing Junior Research Fellowship (JRFs) in teaching programmes. Sikkim University followed suit. It’s quite

fortunate that recently the Jawaharlal Nehru University has also provided this provision so as to encourage a 'teaching-learning' methodology in academic research.

In the Libertarian system of education, teachers and students are co-producers of knowledge in which both are simultaneously teachers and students. Here, knowledge emerges through conversation, invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing hopeful enquiry human beings pursue in the world with each other. However, the problems in Indian international relations owe to what Paulo Freire said on banking system of education when he mentions:

Education becomes an art of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is a depositor. In this hierarchical system, he argues the binaries of knowledge production and knowledge consumption are very clear and the scope of action allowed to the student extends only so far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits....and thus knowledge becomes only the reproduction of a monologue; mimicry (quoted in Thakur 2012).

Again, international studies welcomes all students regardless of his/her disciplinary backgrounds to its MPhil programme. This has created confusion in the methodological understanding of the study, which is a mandatory coursework in MPhil and PhD programmes. Hence, students cannot develop the required methodological knowledge since they have not had an interest with theoretical engagement. This poor methodological skill of the students as well as the faculty is a major problem in the study of International Studies in India (Bajpai 2009: 116).

In the academic narcissism of 'publish or perish', Indian universities are lacking far behind. Unlike foreign universities, no Indian university has its own press. Thus, thousands of MPhil dissertation and PhD thesis remained unpublished for wider readership. This undermines the scholars of international studies in India even though their writings are of high standard with potential relevance. Bajpai (2009: 113) quite interestingly sums up this sorry state of affairs as, he says 'that there is *not enough* of it given the challenges facing India and given the size of the country and its university system'. In recent years, this has become a serious issue after the UGC has introduced academic performance indicators for recruitment in teaching positions in universities and colleges.

Theoretical Training

Theory is the very bloodline of any discipline. Theory makes us more self-conscious about something we do accidentally and continuously. It represents a specific reflective activity that

helps us focus on assumptions and concepts and our lines of interpretation. Theory is a universal action. Bajpai (2009: 114) says, ‘the more theoretically-conscious research we produce, the more our work can be comprehended, challenged and affirmed.’

However, engaging with theories, which speak of a world out there, is difficult for Indian students for a number of reasons. First, talking about something that is very abstract seems a luxury; when as students of developing countries have more pressing concerns. Second, theory is difficult to understand. Because of its abstract nature, theory does not relate to common sense. Third is the issue of language. If thinking about the abstract world is a problem, it is even more problematic to engage with it in concepts, which are not framed in the first language of most students. Concepts obviously become fuzzy. A very simple way to look at how the language barrier is almost impossible to cross would be to look at how many people who came from a Hindi-medium background end up doing something on theory. Finally, international relations do not speak of us. The theoreticians and statesmen we follow in international relations do not speak of us. International relations is still, to a great extent, an American worldview. As a student, one associate more with say a Gandhi, or a Nehru, or a Fanon, who speaks of our condition. It is difficult to relate to say a Woodrow Wilson or a Winston Churchill.

Institutional Infrastructure

Another reason for the non-proliferation of international studies is the absence of documentary materials in most of Indian university libraries. As a general rule, Indian universities lack sufficient research materials – newspapers (Indian and foreign), texts of speeches of official and non-official spokespersons on foreign policy, parliamentary proceedings, documents on political parties and so on. There is even a lack of proper teaching materials and textbooks in English language as well as in translations in other major Indian languages. Another serious drawback is the near absence of defence and strategic studies. This is partly due to the unnecessary secrecy of the Indian government and the Ministry of Defence on these matters. Although some centres have opened up for the study of defence and strategic matters, practically most of the study, research and publication on these subjects are done outside the university system.¹

¹ For example these studies are done by institutions like the Institute for Defence and Strategic Analysis (IDSA), New Delhi and so on.

Lack of funds and infrastructure has severely impeded the growth of the field of international relations. State funding for higher education is highly centralised in the University Grants Commission (UGC), which is selective. It is driven by political imperatives of distributive equity and often reflects the priorities of the ruling party. Given the vast scope of its responsibilities, the UGC is bound to be bureaucratic and arbitrary in its allocations. The Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) operates under similar constraints. There are virtually no alternative domestic sources of academic funding in India.

In such an apathetic environment, most students in research do not do fieldwork. The time period allotted for fieldwork in international relations studies in India is a serious problem. Only JNU makes fieldwork a requirement. The maximum time allotted for fieldwork is just fourteen days for a doctoral student. That is too little to access the materials required for research. A student of International Studies discipline, who has to use archival materials for research, cannot do so in these fourteen days. Moreover, he/she going to a new environment and exploring new areas requires time. There is also no institutional funding for students to support his/her research in a foreign land.

Employment Scarcity

A wider acceptance of IS as a separate discipline came only in the post-Cold War period. With the realisation and increasing significance of the study, IS became the bloodline of study of polity and society. The emergence of certain phenomenon such as terrorism, Islamophobia, climate change and gender equality at the international level further widened the scope of the discipline. These factors gave a tremendous influence on the proliferation of IS across the world. That was the time when India became an emerging power and started to play a prominent role in the international affairs in various international forums. Though there is a growing relevance of international studies to politicians, policy planners, bureaucrats, political analysts and other machineries of the state, the status of international studies remains stagnant in India. This is indeed a major problem for India because if India wants to play a decisive role in the international affairs, it is extremely necessary for India to analyse the contemporary issues in international relations.

Disciplinary Disparity

Another reason for the sorry affairs of IS in India is the conflicting Political Science-IS dichotomy. Traditionally, in India international relations was taught as a sub-field within the

realm of political science. Though the relevance of IS is widely recognised across the world in this era of globalisation, in India IS is given the step-motherly treatment. There is still a superiority complex on the academics of social sciences particularly from political science. Though, the notion that IS being a sub-field and had to rely on political science is in fact archaic with the emergence of multi-disciplinary approaches, the social science academia in India still lingered upon the traditionally 'separated' scheme of study. This is contrary to the rigorous acceptance and encouragement of IS as a significant area of study in developed countries.

For example, the mushrooming rise of IS in universities across China had a significant role in the emergence of China as a rising power in the international arena. According to Chatterjee (2011), rising China is 'investing liberally in international relations to train experts, who will make sense of the responsibilities that come with the assumption of a global role'. Therefore IS widely recognised in the developed countries and most universities have taken several steps accordingly. For example, in several universities, the erstwhile department of political science are renamed into a more inclusive name such as Politics and International Relations.

However, in the case of India, these two disciplines are yet to be demarcated. Although there is a clear epistemological distinction between the two, most Indian academics often categorises as adjoining twins with political science at the upper hand or sometimes considered complimentary to each other. This complimentary notion is clearly visible in the faculty appointments in Indian universities where those with the political science were given more preferences from those with the IS. Chatterjee (2011) argued that there is 'academic parochialism and prejudices displayed against its students'. Therefore this partial notion within the social science academia is a major reason for underdevelopment of IS in India.

In this context let's take a few developments in the emergence of IS in India. In 2011, Jadavpur University scrapped its 51 years old M.A course in International Relations (IR) and replaced with M.A in Political Science and International Relations. According to *The Telegraph* dated April 14, 2011, the move to scrap the course had started in 2009 after the West Bengal College Service Commission's declaration of not to approve and consider masters' degree in IR from Jadavpur University on par with those who have completed MA in Political Science from other universities. That was an apprehensive move for many of the students studying international relations. Though there was no official order to nullify M.A degree in IR, anecdotal evidence suggests the unfairly treatment to those degree holders in IR,

because of the preconceived notion that those with IR background were incapable to teach the traditional Political Science papers.

In this scenario, Chatterjee (2011) notes that circumstances play a significant role in adapting the disciplines and directs to an earlier adjustment carried out by the School of International Studies (of JNU) for their own masters course in international relations to make it more tangible to demands of being considered equivalent to the Political Science training. This kind of unfairly treatment is similarly faced by students of MA in Politics (With Specialisation in International Studies) at the School of International Studies, JNU. Even though as JNU clearly stated that two M.A. degrees of the University that is M.A. Politics (With Specialisation in International Studies) and M.A. Political Science be treated at par and should be constituent of a common pool for the purpose of NET/JRF examination in the field of Political Science,² other universities like the University of Delhi seems not ready to absorb those with the IR background.

This sheer prejudice is similarly meted to the students of IS at Sikkim University. M.A. in International Relations/Politics was started in 2008 under the School of Global Studies in Sikkim University. Later the discipline was renamed into MA International Relations in 2013 and brought under the School of Social Sciences.³ In the same year 2013, Sikkim University established a new Department of Political Science by abolishing the School of Global Studies that left students of IS high and dry. This kind of inconsistency and high handedness on the part of academic institutions is a major problem face by IS students. In conversation with a PhD student from Sikkim University who studied international studies lamented the current administration of the University for obliterating of international relations.⁴

On another occasion, in 2012 in the ad-hoc lecturers recruitment, the Ministry of Human Resources and Development Department (MHRDD), Government of Sikkim debar IS students from appearing the recruitment process even though their applications were already accepted.⁵ And not a single student with the IS background who got selected. This problem is widely prevalent in other Public Service Commission across India, which acts as the

² This report was passed in JNU Academic Council meeting held on January 8, 2003.

³ Excerpts from an interview with a PhD student who did M.A. International Relations/Politics from Sikkim University.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ In 2011, there was no such restriction. In the 2011 ad-hoc recruitment, majority got selected from international studies students.

recruiting agencies for Trained Graduate Teachers (TGT), Post Graduate Teachers (PGT) and Assistants Professors in various colleges and universities. This is similarly visible in other universities and recruiting agencies such as NEHU, Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim, Assam, and Manipur so on and so forth. Therefore students of IS across India are facing a dilemma despite having various High Courts' rulings⁶ that the subject of Political Science and International Studies are inter-changeable and inter-related and a candidate who possesses Master's degree in International Studies is eligible as assistant professor in Political Science and vice-versa.

Here it can be noted, in various leading universities across the world, there is not such barrier in the selection of teachers based on his/her parent subject of training. There is ample number of scholars of repute who teach disciplines other than her parent discipline. This became widely practices in different universities especially after the emergence of interdisciplinary approach in academic realm. There are many distinguished scholars who did their training in literature and teach politics or something else and their writing are as widely cited as those by the scholars of Political Science. Parochialism operates in India with a sense of oppression and punishment. It is blasphemous for a student of English, Economics graduate to study international studies or for a student of political science to take up a course on North East Studies. Though free ideas are shared and celebrated in the galleries of power and academic decision-making, the reality is just the opposite. Chatterjee (2011) rightly says 'all disciplines are at war and parochialism has emerged as the rule of survival'. In this sense, in Indian, academia inter-disciplinary knowledge is still at the initial stage.

Two Schools

Why is IS in India in a state of theoretical penury? There are two schools of thought.⁷ The first school locates the cause in the history, culture and practices of the IS (Bajpai 2009: 123). After independence, India, in general, and international relations scholarship, in particular, turned inwards. This inward turn was informed by a sense of historical and social exceptionalism, which quickly turned into parochialism. The lack of interaction with the rest of the world, especially the West, led to intellectual stagnation and an absence of self-

⁶ Kerala High Court came up with a verdict in favour of IR in 2007 and a similar verdict was given by Calcutta High Court in 2012.

⁷ There is some overlap between the two schools when it comes to reasons behind neglect of theory in ISIS. Therefore, classification is based upon the point of focus. Whereas the first school stresses mainly on the internal factors for the neglect of theory, the second school's primary focus is the historical construction of international relations theory and its gate keeping practices.

reflection. Moreover, the role of state in prioritising the discourse of policy studies over theory explains why theory gets the cold shoulder in Indian academic settings. The proximity of the Indian state with the discipline and the consequent neglect of theory over policy studies fits Acharya and Buzan's (2010: 21) hypothesis quiet well: 'the more closely linked the study of IR is to government and foreign policy establishments, the less theoretical it is likely to be.'

Arguing in the same vein, Paul (2009) situates the reasons for neglect of theory in perceptions that international relations is a Western enterprise; it traces the serious neglect of theory to the Nehruvian era and to the decline in relationship with the West, especially the US during the Cold War. Socio-cultural factors such as neglect of social sciences and over-excessive obsession with engineering and technology limit the 'talent pool' of students. The absence of the 'publish or perish culture,' merit-based promotions and good library facilities in Indian institutions inhibits the growth of a culture of rigorous research. The hold of the bureaucracy on the academic enterprise further complicates the picture.

In India, international relations theory also suffers from institutional discrimination. According to Sharma (2009), the institutional growth of international relations in India has been skewed in favour of area studies over the pursuit of the sub-discipline of international relations theory. This is manifested in the growing number of area studies centres across Indian universities vis-à-vis schools dealing with the sub-discipline of international relations.

The overall picture drawn by the first school suggests that the reasons for the absence of theory in international studies in India lie within; in the historical, cultural, social and political characteristics of Indian international relations. However, there is a second school of thought, which considers the West-centric character of international relations as the real problem. Western dominance of international relations theory, argues this school, is the primary reason why Indian international relations has been negligent to theory to the point of being anti-theorist.⁸

⁸ According to Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan (2010: 6), the mainstream IR theory dominates the discipline in two interrelated ways. First, the origin of most mainstream IR theory can be located in western philosophy, political theory, its history as well as its social milieu. Second, the framework of world history 'which weaves through much of this (mainstream) theory' is exceptionally Eurocentric. Using a world historical perspective, Buzan and Little argue that mainstream IR theories suffer from five 'fundamental and interdependent shortcomings'. These are 'presentism, or the tendency to view the past in terms of the present; a historicism, or the insistence that there are trans-historical concepts that allow us to identify universal regularities; Euro centrism, or the privileging of European experience in our understanding of international relations; anarchophilia, or the propensity to equate international

Self-reflection

If asked to locate one factor that has debilitated the growth of international studies in India, one will point to 'lack of self-reflection.' The stilted growth of the discipline is a direct result of years of what Thomas Kuhn would call 'Normal Science:' mute acceptance of unqualified assumptions and quotidian practices of knowledge where comfort in established truths becomes a virtue and critical investigations a liability. But unlike the scientific revolutionaries who break the monotony of 'Normal Science' in the Kuhnian narrative in a dramatic fashion, the change in the tenor of international studies in India will be a gradual process. The good news is that the process is underway. The evidence lies in the sudden spurt in literature delving on the historical origins, misdirected processes, contemporary challenges and future trajectories of Indian international studies (Bajpai 2005: 34).

Conclusion

Today, the space to discuss international relations is not restricted to a handful of bureaucrats, but a number of actors – the media, business communities, non-governmental organisations and lobbying groups – actively participate in the international relations discourse in the country. Economic liberalisation and coalition politics have further dented the power structures in New Delhi. Breaking the shackles of conformism, these actors demand new models and concepts to develop a better understanding of the world. This, in turn, has spurred the Indian academia. The response to the Indo-US nuclear deal was a classic example. The withering of the state is not only from inside. Forces such as globalisation and regionalisation have made the academia less dependent upon the state. In turn, the challenges, which these processes manifest, have made the state extremely vulnerable. The novelty of process has motivated the state to be more open to different interpretations and suggestions from the academia.

Moreover, the post-positivist turn – or in Lapid's (1989) famous exposition 'the coming of the third debate' in the discipline of international relations – has changed matters. The dominance of the positivist enterprise within the Western model of international relations is slowly eroding. Even the West is more disposed to accept what David Blaney and Inayatullah (2008) call the 'International Relations from Below'. The third debate has provided both the language

relations with existence of an anarchic system; and state-centrism, or the preoccupation with the state at the expense of other international actors' (2010: 197).

of dissent as well as attentive audience to scholars whose voices were unheard in the domain of what Behera (2008) calls 'traditional IR'. Though Behera claims that the post-positivist turn in international relations has left South Asia – by logical extension international relations scholarship in India – untouched, it is important to note that critical voices such as his own find the terrain much more hospitable today than a decade earlier. Today a critical mass of post-colonial, feminist, critical and postmodern scholars are actively participating in Indian international relations. This 'positive development' has led to 'a spurt of critical reflectivist accounts on whole range of themes' (Mallavarapu 2005: 9). Critical pedagogy and research will take some time to establish itself in Indian international relations but looking at the current trends, the gestation period may not be long.

A student wanting to find herself within the discipline should recognise that the world looks very different from different parts of the world. International relations cannot be studied without investigating the questions of race and slavery. There are clear differences in what international relations means in the traditional centres of knowledge production in the field (North America and Europe) and what it means for the Global South. The issues that the Global South would be interested in are different from the ones in the North. Also, some issues affecting the North are different from how they affect the South. Migration, climate change and terrorism pan out in different ways with different ramifications in different locations. Within the Global South also, there are different ways in which the world is interpreted. For someone fighting against the French in Algeria, as Frantz Fanon did, violence and revolution were connected in a different way compared to someone sitting alongside Gandhi in India.

In all likely scenarios, there is no one particular way of reviving the discipline of international studies in India. However, the wave of progressive self-reflection will make sure that the quest continues. Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) should persuade the UGC to promote the discipline across the country. It is not only useful for the Ministry as a backup for its own policies but is also in the larger interests of the country. The Ministry can assist the UGC/ICSSR to expand the existing centres both financially and otherwise. They also can encourage foreign missions to exchange scholars in order to gain depth of knowledge. In this regard, the recent announcement for recruitment of consultants by the MEA is a positive development. This longing move will definitely enrich the discipline in the coming years.

Lastly, maintaining good institutions and promoting specialised inquiries are collective responsibilities of the academic community as a whole. The constant denials of IS students with regards to the nomenclatural differences in the name of the degree is a major problem in the study of IS. The inconsistencies and difference among universities in India is another primary concern. Apart from that, factors like lack of archival sources and other research materials fundamental to do a research posed a big question in IS. Therefore, there is an urgent necessity from all the stake-holders to carefully look at the problems so that a formidable solution can be achieved.

References

- Acharya, A. and B. Buzan. (2010). Why There is no Non-Western International Relations Theory? An Introduction. (Ed.). *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives from South Asia*. New York: Routledge.
- Algappa, M. (2009). Strengthening International Studies in India: Vision and Recommendations. *International Studies*, 46 (1&2), 7-36.
- Bajpai, K. (1997). International Studies in India: Bringing Theory (Back) Home. In M.S. Rajan (Ed.). *International and Area Studies in India*, New Delhi: Lancer Books.
- _____. (2005). International Studies in India: Bringing Theory (Back) Home. In K. Bajpai and S. Mallavarapu (Ed.), *International Relations in India: Bringing Theory Back Home*. New Delhi: Orient Longman.
- _____. (2009). Obstacles to Good Work in Indian International Relations. *International Studies*, 46, (1&2), 109-128.
- Basrur, R. M. (2009). Scholarship on India's International Relations: Some Disciplinary Shortcomings. *International Studies*, 46, (1&2), 89-108.
- Behera, N. C. (Ed.). (2008). *International Relations in South Asia: The Search for an Alternative Paradigm*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Blaney, D J. and N. Inayatullah (2008). International Relations from Below. In C. Reus-Smit and D. Snidal (Ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*. New York: Oxford, 663-74.
- Chatterjee, S. (2011). Global Windows. *The Telegraph*, April 21.
- Gautam, P.K. (2011). The Need for Renaissance of Military History and Modern War Studies in India. *IDSIA*, Occasional Paper No. 21, 1-36.
- JUT weaks Course to Open Job Option. *The Telegraph*. April 14.
- Kumaraswamy, P.R. (2004). National Security: A Critique. In P.R. Kumaraswamy (Ed.). *Security Beyond Survival: Essays for K. Subramanyam*, New Delhi: Sage.
- Lapid, Y. (1999). The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory on the post-Positivist Era. *International Studies Quarterly*, 33, 235-264.
- Mallavarapu, S. (2005). Introduction. In K. Bajpai, and Siddhartha Mallavarapu (Ed.). *International Relations in India: Bringing Theory Back Home*. New Delhi. Orient Longman.
- Paul, T.V. (2009). Integrating International Relations Studies in India to Global Scholarship. *International Studies*, 46 (1&2), 129-146.
- Rana, A.P. and K.P. Mishra (2005). Communicative discourse and Community in International Relations in India: A Critique. In K. Bajpai, and Siddhartha Mallavarapu (Ed.). *International Relations in India: Bringing Theory Back Home*. New Delhi: Orient Longman.

- Sahni, V. (2009). The Fallacies and Flaws of Area Studies in India. *International Studies*, 46 (1&2), 49-68.
- Sharma, D. (2009). Mapping International Relations Teaching and Research in Indian Universities. *International Studies*, 46 (1&2), 69-88.
- Thakur, V. (2012). A Student's Perspective on Learning IR in the South. Notes from the Speech delivered in the School of International Relations, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on August 31.