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VIOLENCE, HERMENEUTICS, AND POSTCOLONIAL DIPLOMACY

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Introduction

India's Foreign Secretary (FS, top diplomat), who became National Security Advisor (NSA) and is a third generation member of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), once stated:

> strategic discourse is not yet developed enough to describe what we face as reality around us. The use of concepts from other situations and interests bear little relation-ship to our unique circumstance. We need to develop our own concepts (Menon 2007).

Implicit in the explicit call to rethink International Relations (IR, the discipline) for Indian reality, is the denial of universal concepts. The import is astounding, for undermined is the hegemonic story of how *European* diplomacy became diplomacy, and the general narrative it arises from: modernity and modernization.

Clearly, the investigation of bureaucrats can result in two possible outcomes: dismissal, which amounts to a charge of either trickery or insanity; or taking the individual at their word and probing. Even if at issue is the minor one of the functionary's morality, determining it requires examining the official. Following this bureaucrat into the proverbial rabbit hole then, is unavoid-able. To do so is to map the Anglosphere's substance and limits, and to exceed them, by engaging the postcolonial not only as a temporal and spatial entity, but also capable of politics. Evidently politics is manifest in everyday practices. To interpret them in terms of practitioners, might reveal Indian politics to be generated by a rationality altogether different. Precisely that makes Henry Kissinger list the multitude of ways in which Indians are Westernised, only to bemoan: 'Americans have great difficulty in coming to grips with the way Indian leaders approach for-eign policy' (2001: 154).

To lay bare the rationale for postcolonial diplomacy, in this case in India, requires first baring diplomacy's rationale, which will form the first part of this chapter. Conflated with a peculiarly Anglo-Saxon and modern practice, its origins are Christian. Replicating Christianity's mission of delivering us to unity, diplomacy sanctifies itself as uniquely capable of doing so. This linear understanding of time is history, and it manufactures automatons lacking in *judgement*, for actors are only expected to unthinkingly progress through history. In the postcolonial world, moder-nity claims to have already replicated this process. Yet this violence of conversion continues, and

its vanguard is composed of *arriviste* analysts from the Global South who wage analytic–violence to convert the very rationality of postcolonials.

Yet this campaign actually suggests Indian diplomacy is altogether alternate. The next section therefore fabricates a heuristic capable of moving in a neutral fashion between rationalities, to avoid confirmation bias: Producer-Centred-Research (PCR). Inoculated against modernity, PCR eschews diplomacy's rationality by both recognising the postcolonial's ability to conduct politics and calculating this in their terms to produce not a modern analysis, but exegesis. PCR then, does not rely on the 'foundational knowledge of what constitutes IR': history. Rather, PCR upon 'creating alternative sites of knowledge construction', investigates them 'with an alternative set of tools and resources' (Behera 2007: 358).

The following section concerns the MEA, its denizens, and the extant analysis of nuclear diplomacy, for this topic is the only aspect of Indian foreign policy to be subjected to two analytical tools: Realist and Postcolonial. Deploying PCR makes palpable the entwinement of analytics in analytic–violence, by presupposing subjects to be ignorant and therefore denying them subjectivity. This is 'not a simple antithesis of knowledge. It is a state people attribute to others and is laden with moral judgement' (Hobart 1993: 1). Underpinning it is modernity's history, which is revealed to be a fabrication. Yet it still stands by ignoring Indians, denying them their practices, and denigrating them as irrational. Absurdly, the result is a vanishing subject, which warrants the contention: the metric for explicative success cannot simply be analytical coherence, for it pivots on analytic–violence.

Excavating their practices, and on their own terms, unveils coherence at the levels of the diplomat, the MEA and the state, which solidifies the claim for alterity. Moreover, these practices, when understood in practitioner terms, are pregnant with a plethora of scintillating possibilities unavailable to modernity. Alarmingly, also divulged are intimate relations, characterised by intensity, between all the elements of Indian diplomacy, and violence.

Modern diplomacy and the postcolonial

Violence is coded into modern diplomacy because it is the internationalization of European diplomacy and its axioms are anarchy and binarism. For IR, anarchy is 'the central fact of the international system and the starting place for theorizing about it.' (Bull 1966: 35). The presumption that there is no unity obligates modern diplomacy to pursue an end diametrically opposite: utopian unity. This is binarism and it makes of history the overcoming of anarchy, that is, emancipation from violence. To move towards this is to progress-through-history. History then is unilinear and it:

•   restricts progress thereby making it mono-directional and arterial;
•   denies diplomats judgement by confining calculations of interest within pre-set origins and ends.

The prime explicator of this is James Der Derian who replicates centuries of European thought to conclude that diplomacy is the mediation of alienation (1987). 'European diplomacy's logical frame of reference is that unity is the natural condition of social order, which should be restored through proper mediation among its divided parts' (Feldman 2005: 223–4). European diplomacy's frame is alienation because lodged deep in Western society is Christianity. It pre-sets alienation as origin in the Old Testament with the fall of man, that is, estrangement from God. This is universalized as the 'brotherhood of man' in the New Testament, the semantic shift making one man's origin everyone's. Hence we are all dependent on God's mediator: Christ (Der

Derian 1987: 51–9, 69). He legitimizes the Papacy, uniquely imbuing it with the power to unify us with God. With the end also pre-set, mankind has no need for judgment so no calculations of interest need be made. All that is possible is to unthinkingly move through linear time: history. To move forward is to progress-through-history and it has just one meaning: unity with God.

The word 'progress' itself derives from the Christian *profectus*: perfecting the soul by unifying with God (Koselleck 2002: 235). The Papacy progresses enough to establish spiritual unity in medieval Europe, because people believe. Its demise is the Reformation, which marks the rise of judgement because the Papacy is undermined by the belief in man's direct ability to negotiate unification with God. Significantly, the will to unify remains, despite the fracturing of Christianity into Catholicism and Protestantism. This new-found belief in man's ability to unify results in Christian society fragmenting into states as they usurp the Church's role in delivering unity (Der Derian 1987: 51–66, 105–16).

Nevertheless, this is a splintering which necessitates the modern diplomatic system, and it is sealed by the Treaty of Westphalia's appropriation and reproduction of spiritual unity as an intellectual contract; i.e. an admonition to accept Westphalia's assumptions in order to mitigate violence. Embarrassingly, this heralds a new technology to realise unity – diplomacy – but also obliterates unity because diplomacy regularizes a religiously and politically fragmented Europe. This delusive notion is 'second order mediation' (Der Derian 1987: 127–8). In short, Europe displaces God, but not his logic: a pre-set origin and end remain. It means that the dawn of European judgement – the belief in man – is short-circuited by the maintenance of unilineal time. Though spirituality is abandoned because it failed to deliver unity as oneness with God, the idea of unity continues as an intellectual and diplomatic project. Its success makes for the 'culture of 'modernity' and it is, given its history, the 'culture of the dominant Western powers' (Bull 1977: 39).

Moreover, modern culture is 'rationality in the sense of action that is internally consistent with given goals [and] the modern diplomatic tradition embodies an attempt to sustain behaviour on this model.' Modern diplomacy then is a rationality. Its legatees are an 'elite culture, comprising the common intellectual culture of modernity' (1977: 39; 1984: 122). They are an exclusive club, a '*corpus Christianorum* bound by the laws of Christ' (Wight 1977: 128). His laws remain the 'essence of diplomacy … unchanged [because diplomacy is] always … promoting and justifying states' interests' (Berridge, Keens-Soper and Otte 2001: ix). Its calculation, in turn, remains insulated from judgement, for interest is simply a function of history. The calculation of interest is no more than the violence of assimilating all into the *corpus Christianorum*, that is, Westphalia.

Though anarchy is the origin for only Europe, its history demands an end predicated on incorporating all: unity. In short, the internationalisation of history. If the 'mutual estrangement of states from Western Christendom gives rise to an international diplomatic system' then 'the Third World's revolt against Western "Lordship" precipitates the transformation of diplomacy into a truly global system' (Der Derian 1987: 23). Hence, the seminal authors of diplomacy are, from Machiavelli to Kissinger, all from Christian societies. They have to be, because 'the modern world system … came into being in the Italian peninsula and reached its full expression in Europe'. As for diplomatic theory, it 'appeared at the same time as diplomacy began to assume its distinctively modern form in the late fifteenth century' (Berridge, Keens-Soper and Otte 2001: 1–2). Or so we are led to believe, for underscoring modernity's 'facts' is the tale of Europe as 'master' encountering the postcolonial and its restriction to four forms of mimicry which inexorably prove modernity's subjugation of postcolonial time. The forms are:

- outright capitulation;
- 'hybridity', introduced by anthropologists describing the 'mixture' of 'pure races' as mongrelized 'hybrids' (Duvernay–Bolens 1993; Kapchan and Strong 1999);

- 'cross-contamination' or the postcolonial's failure to mimic (Delanty 1995: 45–6);
- 'acculturation' or the postcolonial choosing to convert itself to protect itself from the West's violence (von Laue 1987: 43–5).

The capitulation thesis is dominant. Presumed is the casting of all postcolonial societies from a Western mould, making for an 'international cultural grammar of nationhood' (Löfgren 1989: 21–2). In one fell swoop, modern time is legitimized at the expense of all precolonial times and the practices they generate. Sequestering the past secures the present: diplomacy is born in Europe and internationalised, so nothing exists beyond history. The result is the globalisation of diplomacy as no more than the means to conduct violence now to free us from violence in the future. The abject submission and conversion of postcolonial India is most ably conducted by recent *arrivistes* to modernity. From India there is Dipesh Chakrabarty, for whom comprehending the postcolonial is 'impossible' without first taking on 'the burden of European thought and history' (2000: 4). Perhaps the vast amount of self-transformation required by Chakrabarty in taking on the 'burden' explains why he is limited to unearthing in terms of diplomacy, variations in anarchical-binarism (2002: xxi–xx). A variant of this is proffered by another Indian migrant, Dilip Gaonkar (2001: 14). Sudipta Kaviraj makes a similar argument for 'reflexivity' (2000: 138–40).

Less widespread is Charles Taylor's 'hybridity' thesis which destabilizes the West's pre-eminence by removing Eastern deviancy. The postcolonial organically subsumes itself to become 'modern' (1999: 169–73); in practice this is 'cross-contamination' or the intermingling of two masters understood as dense cultures. Investigated in India, via an 'interactional perspective' (van der Veer 2001: 3–8), it maintains modernity's diplomatic rationale but permits the postcolonial a role in crafting it. Reinforcing this is 'acculturation': the world is not made Western but chooses to be so. The West, exceptional thanks to its Christian roots (Parsons 1971: 29), discovers military technology which makes its diplomacy. The only way to challenge Western domination is to auto-assimilate or Westernize oneself. The result is 'Western political ambition and competitiveness become universal' (von Laue 1987: 4–6). In short, even when choice is permitted, postcolonial India cannot escape modernity as 'master', for its time organizes the world.

The locating of the 'practice of the analysis of Indian diplomacy' within these paradigms of dependency (Datta-Ray 2013) is, however, belied by modernity's rearguard invention of 'cultural diversity' or the problem of precolonial remnants to be assimilated at a later date (Luhmann 1997: 151). Modernity's hubris is further undermined by its errors, as noted by a former FS (Srinivasan 2014). Most significant is how analysts miscalculate on their own terms when they encounter postcolonials. India possesses a rationality at the least different from that of Pakistan, claims an analyst, paradoxically, by recourse to the totalizing rationality of Realism to explain both Islamabad's and New Delhi's foreign policies (Ganguly 2001). In short, the claim to difference is stillborn for both are understood as followers of Realism! Another analyst makes the error of transforming Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister (PM) and architect of foreign policy, into being both Liberal and Realist. Astounding, for the two are ontologically incompatible (Chacko 2011). These mongrel arguments cannot suffice, because they impose modern time at the expense of their own analytic. Yet analysis persists.

Producer-Centred-Research

A hypothesis about why Indian migrant scholars and those resident in India, enclose India in modernity is offered from a much earlier migrant scholar. Thornstein Veblen sensed US academics assume their tiny group's way is universal, 'although it is evident to any outsider that it will take its character and its scope and method from the habits of life of the group, from the

institutions with which it is bound in a web of give and take' (1918: 4). In short, migrants buy acceptance in their new homeland by containing peoples left behind. Immigrant insecurities about their ability to mimic to integrate into the host nation feeds the assimilative project. As for those in India striving to cage Indians, the 'web of give and take' has extended itself, since Veblen's time, into the postcolonial space. In India, the most comprehensive productions of modern knowledge germinate in Western academies or arise from Western financial charity.

Avoiding the ruptures that scar the doxology that is analysis and its foundational notion of time as history, would necessitate an alternative hermeneutics. Its success rides on eschewing modernity's lexicon because it promotes narratives founded on a compromised time, regarding both postcolonial data collection and its interpretation. Such a method does not rule out of court, even before the trial has begun, the possibility of the postcolonial not being a function of modernity, yet is aware that despite Bull's *diktat*, rationality is no more Western than perception, thought or language (Ganeri 2001: 4). Contemplating such a possibility is to approach modernity's limits, which is precisely the threshold crossed via an altogether new hermeneutic: Producer–Centred–Research (PCR). Its defining insight and practice are:

- postcolonials may be made sense of in postcolonial terms; and
- that the objects most directly connected to the subject must be engaged, not silenced.

To take these in turn, PCR's insight makes for a style of searching devoid of the paternalistic sentimentalism that is Liberal, Marxist, Realist and Global History; the egocentric fantasia of the postcolonial and postmodern; or mechanistic notions of the world as a self-organizing and regulating ecosystem (Prakash 2000a, 2000b; O'Hanlon 2000; Barlow 1991). The failure of all three cliques to transcend history is evident in their politics, including the politics of research. The first set's categories apply to all to make for a politics of trusteeship that is really the imposition of European order. Postcolonial and postmodern analysis swings to the other extreme to make for a politics of hopelessly individuated subjects constantly sparring with one another (Lyotard 1984, 1988). The violence intrinsic to both camps is removed in 'Gaia' theories by rendering us apolitical by making us part of an automatically regulating ecosystem, cogs in a machine beyond our comprehension, let alone control. In short, the first flattens all politics to Europe's, the second returns us to Europe's political origins or anarchy, and the last takes us out of politics.

What this means in terms of India as subject, is exemplified by Ashis Nandy (1995). Commendably, he avoids the first error and transcends history by recognising Indians can only be made sense of in their own politics and he does so without rendering them apolitical. Nevertheless, Nandy undermines the very purpose of explaining Indians in terms of their own politics, by making his heuristic something totally alien to Indians until the 1920s: psychoanalysis. En masse, Nandy erases the 'superabundance' of textual and other political resources accumulated over at least 2,500 years and consistently utilised at every level of Indian society (Ganeri 2008: 553). Replacing them is a Western metric born at the tail end of colonialism and one limited to a tiny section of the population.

Like Nandy, PCR's insight does not deny politics, only the fact that it may be possible to move beyond modernity's history and all that that entails. Moreover, PCR also anticipates that political theory is not a craft exclusive to a handful of Westerners, but evident in postcolonial practice. Unlike Nandy then, PCR views postcolonials as 'authoritative sources', using them to interpret their practices instead of relying on Western intellectuals and their metrics, for instance, Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis (Halliburton 2004). The failure to do so is analysis. '[W]hen shit happens – events that defy conventional language, fit no familiar pattern, follow

no conception of causality – I [Der Derian] reach for Virilio's conceptual cosmology' (2000: 215). He will not reach out to the people who make shit happen, because that tacitly admits modernity is not 'master'. In other words, Der Derian and his *gurus* are 'shit'. Therein lies the precise recognition of practices that disclose a rationality altogether alternate: alterity. Its existence renders delusive the compelling and absolutely obvious nature of an all-time modernity as no more than pretence.

Deploying PCR is to engage the subject in terms of its rationality. Understood as 'an ideas toolkit' (Wilkening 1999: 705–6), rationality is not only 'a phenomenon to be accounted for' but also 'one that accounts' (Friedman 1994: 27). These 'macro' categories are expressed in real life micro-sociological situations (Durkheim and Mauss 1971: 812). Modernity then, is operationalised by its own 'tool kit', and if used by postcolonials, then proves their containment in history. It, of course, cannot order a PCR that might deal in different times. It is to inoculate PCR against history, that its characteristics have been delineated. Hence, the question is not Max Weber's, 'Why has only the West produced cultural developments of "universal significance and value"?' (1958: 13–31) that propels PCR, but the reverse: What is the postcolonial present and has it been sequestered by history?

The answer lies in micro-sociological research which is consistently made sense of in terms of the producer's rationality. The objects for research are naturally determined by the subject. Since this PCR seeks postcolonial diplomacy's rationality, the objects are all that comprise such a state's diplomacy. In other words, PCR truly entertains the possibility that the postcolonial may not be a capitulation to, or a hybrid of, modernity, but may be animated by a different time altogether. Indian diplomacy may therefore play a politics incalculable in modernity's lexicon, in a manner unencumbered by its certainties and to realise goals indecipherable. Determining them requires research not in terms of modern metrics – in any way or form – but in terms of the practitioners themselves. This is what makes the conduct of PCR not analysis, but exegesis, for what might be unearthed in terms of rationality is alterity.

Hermeneutics beyond modernity

Deploying PCR in the postcolonial, in the first instance, clarifies the analytic-violence lodged at the empirical core of modern analytics: Realist and Postcolonial. Both parrot the same linear history: an immature India learns the costs of its idealism and matures to mimicking modernity by imperfectly speaking the West's language of nuclear diplomacy, Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) or deterrence. This is sometimes termed '*ad hocism*' (Kumaraswamy 2004). India began 'mimicking the once-derided big powers' (Perkovich 2001: 505). This popular story is regurgitated by Indians in modernity's employ (Raja Mohan 2003: xxii). For Realists then, India's capitulation to their analytics and its replication, is progress-through-history. Yet Indian practice defies categorization, and so Indian permutations of Realism are sought (Paul 2010). In other words, ruptures in Realist analysis turns them to account for India in terms of 'hybridity', 'acculturation' and 'cross-contamination' and condemn India for being no more than an incompetent simulacrum.

Indian diplomacy is also subject to analytic-violence by postcolonial analysts, despite their 'ambivalence' heuristic. It politicizes the material to argue that meaning cannot be fixed. The position was first deployed by Itty Abraham (1998) who tried to further corral Indian diplomacy into 'ambivalence' a decade later with an edited volume (2009). Around the same time appeared Karsten Frey's monograph on Indian nuclear policy (2006). All three works utilise 'ambivalence' to argue that the atom is for development or security. The result

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is that what for Realists leads to an inept maturity becomes for Postcolonials, regress. New Delhi is disdained as infantile and incapable of managing the atom, for Indians succumbed to the atom's violence. In short, and just like Realists, Postcolonial claims ride on imprinting history on India. However, 'ambivalence' makes Postcolonials decry India's mimicry as irrational.

PCR not only illustrates how analytic-violence is used to commandeer Indian reality, but also how modernity's claims are at best tenuous at a foundational level: history. A hint of history's unravelling lies in modernity's self-proclaimed history in India. The claim – a subset of the modernization thesis – that diplomacy was imposed upon India by the British, is ironically undone by their own records. These illustrate that the British, far from imposing themselves, sought to tessellate into the existing order, the Mughal Empire. The precursors of the British state in India, the East India Company (EIC), achieved this in 1717. Tessellation continued till 1857, when the EIC's Indian troops mutinied in favour of the Emperor and as a result, the British wrested away his sovereignty. The proclamation of the British Queen as Empress of India in 1877 completed the process (Datta-Ray 2016).

The intervening years saw the British appropriate wholesale Mughal diplomatic systems and personnel. Both were undoubtedly modified and globalized, but this was in keeping with the tenor of processes from Mughal times. The only authentically British contribution was to sequester, on the basis of 'race', all executive positions. Only in 1918 was a token 'native' (the word Indian being reserved for whites in India) permitted to become an executive – for one year. Racial manipulation meant that at independence, natives had almost no experience of modern diplomacy (Fisher 1984, 1990, 1993; Hogben 1981). The newly founded state's diplomatic apparatus was thus populated by a *milieu* which only knew diplomacy at a remove. In short, British-India's model was not diplomacy as invented in Europe and in any case, it was unfamiliar to Indians.

While the turn away from this compromised history of modernization is facilitated by PCR, its true import lies in the immediate abrogation of Europe's role in ordering Indian diplomacy now. An inkling of history's, and hence modernity's, irrelevance, are the multiple narratives of the MEA, by the MEA, and for itself. There are three parsimonious origin stories. For probationers – new entrants, nearly all of whom will become ambassadors – there is an 'introduction' which claims the origins in the 'Secret and Political Department' in 1842 (Ministry of External Affairs n.d., slide). For the public, the date is 1783 when the 'Foreign Department' was created (Ministry of External Affairs n.d., Indian Foreign Service). For researchers, the date is pushed to 1756 by the institution's Historical Division, to a 'Secret Committee' of the British East India Company (EIC) established in Bengal (IFS Officer 2; Ministry of External Affairs n.d., documents).

It is at this juncture that PCR's aim of treating Indians as capable of not only politics, but also understood on its terms begins to be realised. Analysts, no doubt, will be exasperated by a people aspiring to modernity for so long still being confused by history. On the other hand, PCR is blasé, for it is inoculated against presuming everything is modern. Nevertheless, all three stories deposit the MEA in modernity, which enhances the incongruity of origins (as opposed to origin, even if its history was truthful) so important to modernity. Rather than dismiss this as error as modernity does by presuming history, PCR turns to the subjects to explain. A probationer, upon being pressed, unscrambled the narratives, but in terms of a purpose, and means, inexplicable to modernity's history. What it amounts to is a glimpse of alterity:

> You see, we are secular. So a secular history cannot create a timeline going back further. We are so riven with all kinds of things but we are here. This kind of story then

becomes the best way of … you know … maybe of not causing any problems [today].
… So for the purposes of an introduction it worked' (IFS Probationer 2).

Similar comments were made by others (IFS Probationer 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16 and 20). To view the past as they do converts the MEA's pronouncements from a morass of confused steps into history, to a balm soothing the multitude of differences within the MEA including, but not limited to, racial, religious and social. This is also the moment where modernity's hubris is exposed, for it is no more than a technology to further alterity. This is because Indians employ modernity's secularism. An outgrowth of Christianity, secularism is homogeneity and of the same order which leads to diplomacy: both restrict difference by an underlying intellectual contract (Connolly 1999: 19–25; Taylor 2007).

The MEA in appropriating this modern tool shears away the contract. Instead of assimilative violence flattening all intellects into history, secularism is employed to instead manage a present whose hallmark is a variety of intellectual categories and tangible differences from the past. Pre-modern categories do not just persist; they are perpetuated to proliferate at the very centre of a state presumed modern. Moreover, the probationer's progress rejects history, by making the field of reflection and action the present. Despite utilising modernity, it manifestly is not promoted. Combined, these throw into disarray Realism for the very history upon which it posits Indian learning is refuted by modernity's history, and then by it being altogether ignored, for a diplomat's purpose is to calculate in terms of the present to delete violence now. Finally, that this is achieved by an annexation from modernity but to promote another purpose indicates a motivating rationality altogether different: alterity.

The case for alterity is reinforced by the diplomat's very unmodern use of secularism being replicated at an institutional level, by the MEA itself. Rather than being distracted by the past or future, the MEA, like the diplomat, is also engrossed by the present. Hence, the MEA does not reproduce its past and so foregoes the security of insulating itself from the challenges of the present. The MEA began as an elite organisation, but now hazards itself by incorporating people from the bottom of global society, and is castigated for lacking diplomatic, read Western, qualities. The MEA's metamorphosis is measureable in longstanding policies of positive discrimination. Founded on classifications of destitution, the state lowers barriers to entry for, literally, the other half (Indian Constitution: Article 340; Mandal Commission 1980; Supreme Court 1992).

Accordingly, the MEA is no longer the playground of former princes and the *Ingabanga* or the *crème de la crème* of the Anglicised elite, as it was following independence in 1947 (Datta-Ray 2005). Then, royalty – the very pinnacle of the colonial regime – sought the IFS because it was invested with the capacity to replace lost royal status. The IFS was the 'last bastion of the brown *sahib*' where the non-Anglicised were 'despised and kept at a distance to avoid offending the prime responsibilities of their masters' (Laiq 1999). Knowing this, Nehru slotted royals into the IFS to provide 'psychological and political rehabilitation for erstwhile rulers,' wrote the man tasked with dissolving the princely order (Menon 1956: 204). By the 1960s, numbered were the days of royals like the *Maharajah* of Alirajpur. As High Commissioner to Singapore he acquired a reputation for 'messing things up', according to Singapore's former Chief of Staff (Datta-Ray 2009: 125–9).

Alirajpur's kind and the *Ingabanga* were substituted by the beneficiaries of positive discrimination. In 2014 the latter constituted 37 per cent of MEA staff (Kaur 2014). Their growth is attested to by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs chastising the MEA's incompetence in English (2016). This is a truism. In 2010 the *Times of India* published a report

titled: 'Lessons in English for today's diplomats' (16 January 2010). It is testimony to the success of the institutional use of secularism in a way unimagined by modernity, that the MEA continues to function in the face of such dramatic and self-inflicted change.

Appreciating the risk, and the magnitude, of the change the state willingly inflicts upon itself by eschewing a monochrome elite to instead actively incorporate India's technicolour diversity, obliges the contemplation of a non-Westernised diplomatic biography. Its consonance with the MEA's practices makes for a coherence indicative of rationality alternate. Both are exemplified by the biography replicating the MEA's risk-taking to overcome a *leitmotif* of unspectacular violence by spectacular incitements to violence that play havoc with the self. In contrast to modernity's outward violence, Indians direct it inwards, into themselves, like the MEA. Similarly, purpose is directed not by history, but to terminate the everyday suffering scarring the biographies of nearly all Indian diplomats.

Typical is an officer whose parents' combined monthly salary in the mid-1990s, was 'around Rs. 5,500 [USD 130]' (Reserve Bank of India Historic Exchange Rates n.d.). This supported four people, putting them at the *World Bank's* poverty line of one US dollar per day. The reality of hovering around the poverty line is discernible in their abjuring luxuries, such as bus travel, unless absolutely necessary. His deprivation was also geographic, linguistic and educational. His grandparents were forest nomads, but his father lives in a village. Born in the 1980s, his district remains scarred by insurgency: 50,000 out of 1,200,000 live in concentration camps. He first watched television aged 18 in the third town he lived in and accessed despite near impenetrable forest, via a road built in the late 1980s, which remains 'impossible' to traverse during the monsoons. He attended three schools as only primary education was available at his village. His mother, who was 'very special' for being literate and from 'a better, plains family where there were schools,' brought formal education to her husband's village. Before her arrival, the 'school [was] on paper' [that is, no school existed because state funds for building and running the school continued to be illegally siphoned away]. He continued: 'Only 10 or 20 per cent' of the village's primary schoolchildren transition into secondary school because there are no teachers for the alien language of instruction: Hindi. He gambled his family's scant resources on secondary school, but failed: there were no teachers. Hence the third school, which only lacked science teachers. 'My area was a punishment post. … There was violence.' Aged 13, '10 to 30 policemen died' there. Out of 90,000 people in his 'home-place', he was 'the sixth person' to complete school. He graduated because he taught himself while living as a 'paying guest in the house of a friend of a friend.'

Next he wanted to enrol at university, which required an application form. He asked the bus driver (who drove a bus once a day to the nearest town, 12 hours away) to get the form, but the driver kept on changing so he never got it. This uncertain route was also the way to get books. Having saved earlier state scholarships – Rs. 6,600 [USD 156] per annum, for three years, and a Rs. 1,500 [USD 35] book grant – he could afford university. This despite knowing that racial, or caste, violence would be wreaked upon him. Inevitably, physical abuse followed, culminating in his ejection from the hostel. Intriguingly the violence incited him to seek it out. 'I decided to take it as a challenge,' he said and paid the price: loss of 'self-esteem' because his racist compatriots ostracised him. Finally, he got a job, but spurred on by a will to eradicate his suffering, he gained admission to a postgraduate course. Yet again, he gambled all and lost. Having to pay the fees in advance, combined with his position near the bottom of global society meant he, 'needed a loan and had to apply from my home-place. That meant taking leave from work. So I went to my village and was told that to apply … I had to go to the district HQ; there they didn't know anything. But having exceeded my leave, I lost my job' (IFS Probationer 21).

The intriguing enigma of diplomats and the MEA putting themselves in harm's way, is neutralised by PCR for it recognises that actors may, contra modernity, possess judgement.

Moreover, PCR identifies that the field for calculation is resolutely the present as the sum total of everything, and the purpose is to overcome violence now. Its calculations do not ignore the past, only history; do not repose faith in the future, but the present; and do not generate more violence by countenancing violence, but rather seduce it to quell it by internalisation. To license Postcolonials to theorize themselves permits another discovery: an uncommon courage. Its extent is only indicated in this biography, for to become a diplomat involves an altogether different scale of violence and hence amplified courage, in that it is generated by the weakest members of global society (Datta-Ray 2015: Chapter 2). Courage accounts for such people's successful incorporation into the MEA since at least 1964 (Haksar 1992, 1994), and is also testimony to the institution's mettle. Such courage, unavailable to modernity's automatons, gives further credence to the case for alterity.

In addition to modernity's analytic-violence being used to prop up a compromised history and the practices inimical to modernity that PCR unearthed, are the practices which totally refute modernity by altogether eradicating history. One such impossible possibility is progress as return. New Delhi's Regional Passport Officer – in charge of issuing passports – briefing probationers spoke frankly in advising:

> a lot of you will come from … real India not Delhi, and will want to go back. A lot of the work you will do will be … quite pointless. But becoming a Regional Passport Officer can give you something real. You don't have to go abroad. You can be posted in your part of India. You can actually help people from your place (IFS Officer 19)!

What is refuted is progress-through-history. Indicative is Western anthropology's claim that progress is to move from rural to urban (Osella and Gardner 2003). This officer reiterates the widely held notion that progress is without doubt movement, but it involves returning to one's origins albeit in a new form (an officer) and to help one's fellows – understood as a linguistic group rather than 'Indian' – realize their desire to migrate away from India. In doing so, the officer discards the entire rubric of history.

Given the MEA's and diplomat's multivalent and omnidirectional practices of progress predicated on overcoming tangible violence by embracing it, it is hardly surprising that this makes for the Indian state's negotiation style. The state's mobility is also geared by progress calculated and realised in the present. This frees mobility from its modernist cage of moving towards a terminal, but transforms it into bringing the terminal to the origin. Unaccountable by history, such mobility demands alterity. Only it explains India's nuclear negotiations in 2007 with the US. The purpose was freedom from the violence of energy deprivation, and at stake was assimilation which in matters nuclear amounted to becoming a part of the international nuclear community. Preventing it was an infrangible condition amounting to exceptionalism and established by Indian PM Dr. Manmohan Singh: some reactors had to be beyond IAEA inspections (2006: 471; 2006: 446). In keeping with Dr. Singh's directive, his negotiators successfully limited IAEA surveillance to civilian, not military, reactors, and secured the right to build new military reactors (Ministry of External Affairs Vienna 2008). The creation of India-specific IAEA safeguards stymied assimilation into the international nuclear community, by readjusting it to the already existing Indian self.

This is baffling for history, because it makes the terminus contingent on transmuting one's original self. India did not progress-through-history towards the international nuclear community, and so did not partake of Realism's learning curve. Yet the purpose of ending the violence of energy deprivation by providing Indians with energy was realised with the 123 Agreement,

and it was achieved without outward violence. Indeed, that was proscribed (Foreign Secretary's Note 2007). In its absence Dr. Singh and hence the state, resorted to immense courage because India risked engaging the lone superpower in not acquiescing to its power but demanding an exception, and in so doing, aggravated the global nuclear architecture crafted since the Second World War. Compounding the danger was the risk of failure internationally and its consequent, political humiliation for the PM at home. In short, the MEA's and its diplomat's quotidian calculations founded on the present and for the present were repeated by the state. So too was the tempting of violence upon oneself to eradicate violence.

That such practices are manipulated into history by Realists undermines the discipline of IR, but perhaps its death knell is sounded by Postcolonials actively retreating from what they seek to illuminate: the state. Postcolonials presume the state a result of history and hence modern, and use this as an excuse from actually researching practitioners (Abraham 1998: 4–5). Lofty claims to 'understand nuclearisation through the lens of socio-cultural and historical analysis' are hollow because precisely that is denied to the state (Roy 2009: 114). Instead, bureaucrats are rendered 'protagonists of rationality', inexplicably presumed Western. This is phenomenal, for the claim is either that bureaucrats are impervious to the logics, thoughts and practices of their society, or that they totally divest it every time they begin work (Kaur 2009). In short, the political culture of the state is *a priori* presumed disconnected from the society that produces it.

The result are claims that necessarily must silence practitioners, for they cannot be contained by history. Hence, India's nuclear diplomacy supposedly oscillates between security concerns (or materialism) and 'moral exceptionalism' (Frey 2006: 197) and the 'major casualty of the nuclear dream shared by India and Pakistan is peace' (Ramana and Rammanohar Reddy 2003: 23). Both claims are astounding. The first eliminates Nehru's writings on the morality of nuclear security and his foundational role in combining security and morality to the extent of not selling nuclear material to the US for food, in the midst of famine, because it would further global insecurity (McMahon 1987: 374; Datta-Ray 2015: chapter 6). Deleted too is the entire sequence of peaceful overtures spanning decades by the tag 'unrealistic', rendered irrational then is the work of an entire MEA section, DISA or Disarmament and International Security Affairs (Frey 2009: 195–212).

The proactive misconstruing of the state abounds, even when it comes to mundane practices such as secrecy. Common to any state's nuclear program, secrecy is an uncontested subject for Realists and India must practise it to become modern (Morgenthau 1967: 142–143). Since India does, Realists are silent about it. Postcolonials are not, because 'ambivalence' adds to secrecy the dimension of being detrimental. In India, Postcolonials find secrecy weakens the very ideal that nuclear weapons safeguard: democracy (Ramana 2009: 41–67). For Realists secrecy is intrinsic to deterrence, but for Postcolonials, secrecy is the succumbing to the atom's violence. Both subsume postcolonials to history, but does it hold?

The answer lies in a range of sources that present, not mould, practitioners. Sunanda K. Datta-Ray inadvertently sheds light on the question. Conversing with a top general, the FS and the PM, Datta-Ray concludes that secrecy can only be made sense of in terms of broader sensibilities that manifest themselves in issue-based practices (2002: viii–ix). The entire state is certainly not secrecy-obsessed. Dr. Singh repeatedly spoke for 'declassification' and critiqued bureaucratic secrecy as PM (*Indian Express* 18 April 2006). In conversation, he recounted with admiration American openness. President George W. Bush introduced him to White House staff including some of Indian origin. Rhetorically, Dr. Singh asked: 'If they can be so open, why cannot we?' (12 October 2009).

Patently at work in the corridors of power is not Realism's obsession with secrecy. Meanwhile, Postcolonial's ordering secrecy as a threat to democracy cannot explain the continuing

contest between Dr. Singh and his bureaucrats. Nor can either tool account for Dr. Singh's audacity, for what openness amounts to is a temptation to the violence of investigations of his very self. Escaping these awkward impositions requires permitting the practitioners of secrecy their rationality. Doing so lets slip that the practice of secrecy is not inimical to democracy but delivers it. One of my encounters with secrecy was to be denied travel with diplomats to Bombay. FS Shivshankar Menon's email explained, 'some of these programs [were] only open to government servants' (2007). On their return, in conversation innocuous to the point of banality, I wondered about their stay, sightseeing, the ocean [I knew some had never seen it]. I also asked if they visited the nuclear facility, limiting my inquisitiveness to 'what it was like?' No replies were forthcoming. One muttered 'national secrecy', as if that were an explanation. Another expanded, bureaucrats take an oath, which they embrace as the denial of some Constitutional rights – such as free speech (IFS Probationer 16; Indian Constitution: Article 309). This wall of silence was however punctured by another probationer. She giggled, 'they don't want to talk about it because it gives them status(!)' and added:

> I was talking to one of the [nuclear] scientists and he was saying … "Why for all this secrecy? It's just to hide incompetencies here. And as for this national security business … we use all these private contractors and all their records are public. If any Chinese want to find out what we do, all they have to do is go look at the private company's records!" These peoples' [the probationers] heads are spinning now with all this secrecy (IFS Probationer 23)!

The quote provides an avenue to interrogate the state by illuminating a hidden metre. Possibly a Weberian attempt to insulate oneself from critique (1958), secrecy is certainly a means to display bureaucratic status. Secrecy becomes a technology of differentiation from the bulk of the citizenry, to negate the violence of low status which engulfs the MEA's denizens from pre-bureaucratic times. Low racial and economic status is only partially managed by newly acquired job status. It requires bolstering and bureaucratic secrecy does the job by enabling and empowering, by deleting violence, which is, after all, democracy's purpose. Neither Realist nor Postcolonial accounts suffice, because secrecy's purpose is neither to safeguard nor undermine democracy, but to deliver it.

Modernity's self-inflicted misunderstandings, silencing, and branding of the postcolonial state as irrational, motivated by the will to order the globe, in actuality imperils itself. Analytics cloak what ought to concern those engaging India: the diplomat's, the MEA's, and the state's licentious soliciting of disaster. The temptation of violence might well be an escalating seduction, evocative of the diplomat's gambles, which ultimately risks, and loses, everything. To court disaster at the level of the state raises the policy issue of how modernity ought to engage India in a responsible manner? The answer demands determining India's appetite for violence. Instead, there are frivolous debates and they occur even when modernity's and the state's categories coincide.

Two such categories are status and prestige. Realists state 'prestige and status' have nothing to do with India's nuclear programme, which arises from a long lesson in *real politic* (Ganguly 1999: 171–2). In other words, Indians learnt superpower deterrence to manage its own region, that is, China and its proxy, Pakistan. Both had been aggressors, and Beijing, which weaponised the atom prior to India, subsequently also clandestinely proliferated the technology to Pakistan (thereby violating the Non Proliferation Treaty). 'Beijing has consistently regarded a nuclear-armed Pakistan as a crucial regional ally and vital counterweight to India's growing military capabilities,' testified the CIA's Director in 1993 (Datta-Ray 2009: 41). In contrast to Realists, Postcolonials chasten India for being awed by a 'nuclear myth' (Frey 2009: 196): nuclear weapons

are totems of status, obligatory signifiers for 'legitimate, modern states' (Sagan 1996: 74). Myths of course are irrational, and when connected to the nuclear, abhorrent.

Yet obstinate reality remains – which is that which is excluded, misrepresented or silenced by modernity's readings – as policies resolutely about status but inimical to modernity's nuclear status. Its status is defined by the Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) policies of the superpowers, but India's policies are No First Use (NFU) and Credible Minimum Deterrence (CMD). These make for a different status altogether, because NFU and CMD deliberately imperil over a billion people by exposing them to the threat of a pre-emptive nuclear assault which no country has hazarded since the advent of the bomb. This throws modernity into disarray. Realists cannot account without analytic-violence: repeating that without Western style deterrence, Indians remain improper moderns. Meanwhile, Postcolonials cannot explain why India seeks status but uses it in ways that are different from what Postcolonial scholarship views as legitimate. Remarkably, both renditions miss the Indian habit of tempting violence on the grandest scale imaginable by choosing to live in the shadow of nuclear *power politics* without the security of MAD and all that it entails for global security.

A consequence of the conduct of exegesis then, are possibilities that might invigorate both the academy and the practice of diplomacy. These include:

- the negation of history and progress-through-history but not at the expense of the past or progress;
- progress as the exercise of judgment to calculate interest and in terms of the *present* to relieve it of violence;
- discerning progress' borrowings from modernity, but not to promote it;
- limiting violence by recognising that progress' hand-maiden are the temptations to a violence unlike modern violence. It is directed outwards, whereas Indian violence is directed inwards, which nevertheless risks practitioners and those they engage; and
- renewing the discipline by surmounting Realism's intellectual dead-ends and Postcolonial work's closure.

In short, modern narratives are riddled with fissures which a fraying discipline disciplines with analytic-violence. In contrast to the discipline's undermining, by its own analysts, PCR recognises analytic-violence as moments of analytic failure arising from the cry of mimicry and as impossible to manage via hybridity, cross-contamination or acculturation. Rather than annihilate practices that cannot fit history, PCR ejects modernity altogether to perform micro-sociology, which crucially, is interpreted in subject terms. The implications are not limited to restoring the subject, identifying risks to the international community, and renewing the discipline, but catalyses the academy. For instance, PCR challenges sociology's foundational claim, propounded by Area Studies, that India's political dynamo is primordial or instrumental nationalism (Smith 1986; Chatterjee 1986). Undercutting the first is the MEA not projecting an artificial cultural unity into the past, present or future. Nor are the MEA's denizens manipulated by an elite; instead they escape everyday and unspectacular violence, to improve their present.

Conclusions

In tracing modernity's rationality apparent is unending violence against the postcolonial from the imposition of a fabricated history to its maintenance via various technologies of control. This violence continues because, though a *bona fide* member of the diplomatic system and internationally engaged, India's calculations, conduct and purposes are redolent of alterity. It is

pedestrian to say so, but only if the postcolonial conduct of politics is measured on postcolonial terms. Instead, the assault by a sententious modernity seeking to reform a recalcitrant India renders it subaltern for it is 'denied the lines of social mobility' (Spivak 1988). These are unambiguously not modernity's, but moderns actively choose to misunderstand India's mobility as failures on the road to modernity. It cannot be so, for the moves by diplomats, the institution, and ultimately the state, are all iterative of each other. Not only are they all treading the same path, but it is patently devoid of predestination, for progress arises from the same space it seeks to convert: the here and now, and not history. It is this that vouchsafes the notion of an alternate judgement, for interest is calculated not linearly as is the case for moderns, but contextually.

The preponderance of such practices at every level of Indian foreign policy buttresses the position that New Delhi's foreign policy is propelled not by modernity but an altogether different rationality. Its contours need further gauging for they may disclose further possibilities beyond history. Unearthing these opportunities calls for not censorious modernity, but many more deployments of PCR to grasp alterity. Doing so revives the academy and reduces global insecurity for, as PCR also discovered, all the elements of Indian diplomacy knowingly imperil themselves. This remains an untheorized risk within and without: citizens depend on the state to relieve them of violence now, while modernity depends on the nation-state construct as a means to relieve all violence in the future. Beyond contention for both rationalities then, is caring for the nation-state. It is precisely this that makes it imperative to know specifically how adept New Delhi is at internalising the consequences, and the extent, of its taste for violence.

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