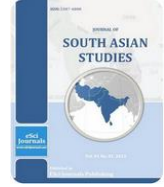




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## THE BASIS OF INDIA'S INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY AND POWER

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### ABSTRACT

Given the fact that Realism has been the established paradigm in international relations India has, on the one hand, planned its foreign policy in light of Realism. India has been compelled to plan foreign policy in light of Realism because of the impact of historical contingency: i.e. historical events, the force of events occurring in the global arena, and the impact that powerful external forces have on the theory and practice of international relations. Realism has also become a prominent factor in Indian international relations due to the impact of historical contingency on the regions in which India is in proximity and, in particular, India's policies regarding its interactions in the South Asian region. However, on the other hand, Indian IR scholars rightly regard Realism as a paradigm that prompts an agent to attempt the use of power to gain the relative advantage, it prompts mercantilism, plus it results in attempts at hegemony and neocolonialism. Thus, in terms of path dependency, Indian scholars are in principle inclined toward Liberalism. In addition, historically India established international legitimacy and a sense of power by promoting international relations on the basis of its principles: nonalignment, cooperation, peaceful coexistence, and the notion of interdependence.

This article argues that India's ability to create its own unique path to the future, to enhance its international legitimacy, and to gain superpower status in the near future is based on transcending historical contingency by means of turning path dependency into path creation. That is to say that given the reality of contemporary global politics India's place in the new world order will be based on its own power of will and self-determination, its inherent capabilities, and its ability to transcend historical contingency by means of path creation.

**Keywords:** Historical contingency, India's legitimacy, Path creation, Path dependency, *Sarva-bhauma*.

### INTRODUCTION

Any well-performing or well-functioning system bases its good practice on good principles. In order to continue to perform well, a system must base its practices on adherence to its fundamental operational principles. India's practice of international relations (IR), as well, has a principle base that grounds its practice. Consequently, in spite of the fact that Realism has been the dominant paradigm in IR, in terms of the practice of Indian IR the foundational principles upon which Indian IR is based inclines it toward a preference for Liberalism (e.g. mutuality – of a type which is also prescribed by Kantianism, Human Rights, peaceful coexistence, interdependence, and cooperation – of a type which is prescribed by Cosmopolitan Liberalism). Thus, on the one hand, India has been compelled to plan foreign

policy in light of the impact of historical contingency (e.g. in light of how the forces of historical contingency have influenced international affairs, how historical contingency has historically impacted the regions in which India is in proximity (e.g. Southeast Asia and The Asian-Pacific) and, in particular, because of how historical contingency influences the practice of international relations in the South Asian region.

However, on the other hand, because Indian IR scholars are rightly ambivalent toward Realism – because they regard it as the theoretical basis for an agent attempting to use power to gain the relative advantage, because it prompts mercantilism, plus it results in attempts at hegemony and neocolonialism – as early as the 1950's India established its international legitimacy and a unique new form of soft power by promoting international relations on the basis of its preference for Liberalism: nonalignment, cooperation, peaceful coexistence, and the notion of interdependence. In this

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way, India enhanced its international legitimacy and image by transcending historical contingency – by means of turning path dependency into path creation. This resulted in India creating a unique form of soft power and exerting its influence based on its moral power. However, this perspective on Indian foreign affairs increasingly faded into the background as India was continuously confronted by the force of historical contingency.

Path dependency is defined as the tendency for current decisions to be heavily constrained, if not determined, by an agent's prior commitment(s), stance, or position. That is to say that because prior conditions are influencing if not determining current conditions an agent's pre-established stance, position, and conviction is the basis upon which it decides how to deal with current conditions. However, in India's case in particular decisions about how to deal with current conditions were not only influenced by path dependency but constraints were also caused by external historical factors occurring in the global arena. Thus, decisions based on path dependency were altered due to the impact of historical contingency on India's practice of IR. For example, in terms of foreign policy, the fact that the Indian post-colonial movement was occurring at the same time as the Cold War had an enormous impact on India's decisions regarding its foreign policy.

This article argues that given the present conditions in the new global order India's ability to create its own unique path to the future, to enhance its international legitimacy, and to gain superpower status in the near future is based on transcending historical contingency by means of path creation. Path creation, in the Indian case, is defined as incorporating four factors into a uniquely Indian theoretical model of IR: (1.) India's preference for Liberalism, (2.) the wisdom that is inherent in its heritage and history, (3.) its fundamental IR principles, and (4.) its understanding of what is transpiring in the present – i.e. Practical Realism. In other words, India enhances its international legitimacy and image by applying its principles toward developing a uniquely Indian perspective: e.g. using its geographical location as a center of convergence (Mukherjee, 2007), as the center for meditation, and networking to operationalize its preference for the fundamental principles of Liberalism: i.e. operationalizing a strategy for championing Human

Rights, cooperation, and peace.

This article proceeds by explaining a uniquely Indian approach to enhancing international legitimacy – which is, in fact, in line with current trends in the new global order that are shaped by the convergence and integration of information communication technologies. The new global order is the outgrowth of global interdependence and is shaped by digital networks that are increasingly integrated. This article explains a strategy that can be developed and employed by Indian scholars of political science, governance, and international relations as an approach to political science that is in line with current trends in political theory and philosophy, governance, and macro social science: e.g. a networking model for integrating the interests of the power elite, national political authorities, and the overall public. Fortunately, the current trends in the new global order are in line with The Digital India campaign that endeavors to put in place a co-creation of value approach to increasing public value, increase transparency, reducing corruption, and networking to integrate social resources to create greater benefits and satisfaction for a larger number of social stakeholders. In addition, the forces shaping the new forms of governance and political economy favour the promotion of a stronger sense of social solidarity and an increased regard for living in harmony with the natural order or, in other words, a greater regard for the natural law.

The following section of the article (section 2) describes India as a nation whose international legitimacy and power was initially considered to stem from its deep sense of wisdom; its cultural heritage, identity, and values; tolerance (i.e. its ability to manage diversity); adherence to its fundamental principles, and the integrity called for by its cultural values. The second section also includes an explanation of how and why Realism was a challenge to India's model of legitimacy and its principles and, in addition, why India was compelled to plan foreign policy considering Realism. The third section of the article explains revolutionary transformations within the current global order that are having an impact on the theory of political science and the way in which contemporary political science theory is applied in practice by an increasingly larger number of governmental authorities. Section four summarizes and concludes the article by highlighting the significance of theory in the practice of international relations– with a

special emphasis on Indian IR theory and practice.

### **THE BASIS OF INDIA'S INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY AND POWER**

This section of the article explains why the fulfilment of India's endeavour to gain superpower status requires reconciling the dichotomy between the historical trend for its practice of international relations to be determined by historical contingency rather than by self-determination. A rise to power based on self-determination –based on its own fundamental principles and on its ultimate convictions – would enhance its international legitimacy, contribute to developing a uniquely Indian perspective on IR theory and practice, and increase the prospect of a soft power approach to obtaining the position of a superpower. This would also result in enhancing its image as a liberal democracy, as a champion of Human Rights, and in promoting principles that prescribe how to increase social solidarity, and harmony with the natural order. In this respect developing a uniquely Indian approach to practising international politics would also address and contribute to resolving crucial internal problems at India's micro and macro levels as well as effectively managing external challenges that occur at the global level.

The fact is that for India to attempt to rise to power on the basis of Realism could be described as a risk that can only be managed safely by basing it on *game theory*. That is to say that given the nature of international relations India's rise to power based Realism (i.e. by appearing to amass power to assert its interests) necessarily poses a challenge to other actors in the international arena. This is because once India gains a certain level of power it will become a threat, according to the theory of Realism, and because, in accordance with the theory threats have to be controlled or eliminated violent conflict would be inevitable (Mershmer, 2003). Attempting to use force to promote or protect one's interests ultimately provokes a forceful reaction and given the nature of today's global arena hard power would ultimately result in lose-lose outcomes for all stakeholders. Thus, the best path toward rising to superpower status would be for India to adhere to its fundamental IR principles, by promoting peaceful coexistence, and by developing its potential as a convergence centre. In other words, India is better situated for developing a model of international relations that emphasizes interacting within global networks, a global network approach to gaining national security, promoting a model of dealing with extremism

that is line with the global fight on terrorism, and that promotes and protects the Human Rights of individual agents and sub-national groups.

Increasing India's international legitimacy involves improving the image the people of other nations have of India and its ability to enrich, elevate, and enhance global existence. A global survey of over 26,000 individuals conducted by The Center for the Advanced Study of India at the University of Pennsylvania and in cooperation with The Nand and Jeet Khemka Foundation (2013) revealed that around one-third of people surveyed regard India in a positive light. However, about the same number of people regarded India in a negative light. The remainder of those surveyed did not see India as clearly positive or negative thus thought that it depends on whether one is thinking in terms of the promotion of Holistic well-being, an alternative approach to healing and medicine, perennial wisdom and literature, India's abundance of natural resources, and Bollywood or if one is thinking in terms of Delhi's air quality, how India scores on the global happiness index and the global corruption index, and the global ranking of its universities.

In a positive light, India is viewed as outstanding for cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy within itself is an alternative approach to international relations as well as an alternative form of diplomacy. It alters the established approach to foreign relations which was strictly based on interactions between officials by opening up a multi-track approach to international interactions and exchange that is inclusive of sub-national agents, their communication channels, and their media networks (e.g. artists – with a special emphasis on cultural artists, entertainers, scholars, athletes, Bollywood, and Indian cuisine). India is also seen in a positive light because of the wisdom inherent in its heritage and the impact this wisdom has had on other cultures and in elevating the human experience: e.g. yoga and Ayurveda in particular but also the wisdom inherent in its cultural worldview, cultural values, literature and philosophy, and the global impact of Buddhism. In fact, the wisdom aspects of India's heritage also play a role in cultural diplomacy. India is also noted for being either highly ranked or ranked as number one in the world in certain significant areas: e.g. its technological savvy, the number of mobile phone users, developing computer software, film production, and the production of several essential food items.

However, India is viewed in a negative light because many people in the world believe that the perennial nature of its wisdom is not apparent in the nature of its social activity. For example, ahimsa is a foundational principle in Indian culture which is apparent in terms of how the cow is treated (i.e. the cow is regarded as reflecting mother-nature or the feminine aspect of existence). But many people in the world believe that the female herself could also be considered as reflecting mother-nature or the personification of mother-nature. So many of the world's people wonder why ahimsa fails to apply when it comes to assaulting women. Something similar could be said about the respect held for Mahatma Gandhi and the principles he stood for. Yet there is little or no evidence that the foundational principles of India, which he wholeheartedly advocated, were adopted by Indian IR scholars and theorists as the basis for developing a uniquely Indian or Western IR theory. India's IR theory and practice and its foreign policy are personality-driven, strategically bold but tactically cautious, marked by realism, and recognizably Indian (Menon, 2016).

Thus, as this article argues, India would be more effective in distinguishing itself in a positive light in the international arena if its foundational principles were more clearly evident in its IR theory and practice. For example, the concept *Dharma* (i.e. law or obligations – as in one's duty to him/herself, one's duty to others, and the responsibility to pursue and promote the realization of *Moksha* is an essential aspect of social relations). *Dharma* stands out as an essential feature of Indian principles of governance and human relations. In addition, *Sarva-bhauma* – a Hindu variant for the Kantian notion of permanent peace, his vision of a League of Nations, and his idea of peaceful coexistence – is certainly a principle that is relevant to international relations. Equally relevant in terms of the current trends in today's global order is one of the earliest models portraying the power of networking that appears in history: the form of networking portrayed by the avatar Narada which is completely in line with the extent to which networking is believed to be the basis of power in today's world order. In other words, Indian international legitimacy would be enhanced by applying a dialectic approach toward resolving the dichotomy between its compulsion to practice IR in light of Realism and its preference for practising IR on the basis of its fundamental principles. By highlighting the conceptual

contributions to IR theorizing that are inherent in India's heritage Indian IR theorist would play a role in counterbalancing Realism with its own unique form of soft power. Soft power is defined as an agent's ability to reflect principles, traits, or characteristics that other agents admire would like to emanate, would like to become more heavily influenced by, and would like to pattern themselves after (Nye, 2007). In this respect, India's approach to international relations theory and practice would be regarded positively because it would reflect aspects of its culture, cultural values, its heritage, and its perennial wisdom that have enriched and elevated the human experience throughout history.

As with many of the other nations of the world that experienced being colonized, the two World Wars, and the Cold War India's chosen path to future growth might have been guided by its preference for a culturally-based and principled approach to social solidarity, managing its extensive diversity, and to peaceful relations with others if not for the impact of Realism. Realists believe that each social agent is basically a threat to the other (Hobbes). This fact is especially evident at the global level because there is no structure for enforcing law and order thus the international arena is anarchic. In addition, Realists believe that human nature will inevitably manifest itself in social relations and exchange that is based on a competitive struggle between the self and others that inevitably results in the others perpetually posing a threat. Realists assert that individuals and social units are basically engaged in an ongoing competitive struggle over scarce resources which inevitably results in a conflict when one agent interferes with the interests of another social agent. Because of the threat that other agents pose the wisest thing for a social agent to do is amass power (e.g. primarily economic and military) to protect and assert its interest, control threats, or even use power to eliminate them. In sum, according to Realism, *"Individuals' behaviour is explained in terms of their self-interests in a material world of threat and violence. Social order is seen as being founded on organized coercion"* (Collins, 2008). Thus, Realism is not in line with India's foundational principles nor does it reflect the way in which Indian culture views human nature, the nature of social relations (at any level including the macro), and the nature of existence – which results in a discrepancy between principle(s) and practice.

Realism was regarded as the established paradigm in

interstate relations from the dawn of civilization up until the end of World War One. After the horror of The First World War, there was a worldwide agreement never to repeat such a global catastrophe, such mass destruction, and such violence. Subsequently, following World War One Liberalism Displaced Realism as the preferred paradigm for international relations (e.g. The League of Nations was instituted as part of a concerted endeavour to promote global cooperation). It was at this point in time that schools of international relations were opened in universities around the world and scholars began to theorize on how to use state of the art macro social science knowledge to create a peaceful global future based on institutionalized global cooperation. It was also during this time that Indian reformers and social scientists prescribed a strategy for an independent India that would be structured socially, politically, and economically on the basis of a liberal social democracy. However, with the outbreak of World War Two followed by the Cold War Realism was able to re-assert itself as the dominant paradigm in IR. That is to say that the resurgence of Realism was occurring at the same time in which India was in the process of establishing independence and attempting autonomy. Thus, decisions about the most effective way to manage internal affairs, growth and progress, and decisions about foreign policy were influenced by historical contingency. At the same time that India would have liked to focus on celebrating its independence, during the same period of time that it was involved in post-colonial endeavors, when it was discerning how to implement the vision and principles that inspired the reform and independence movements, and when it was attempting to established autonomy (e.g. *purna swaraj* – complete independence) the Cold War produced a bipolar global arena sparked by ideological warfare (i.e. contrasting ideas on how to protect and promote liberty, freedom, and self-determination and how to eliminate threats to liberty, freedom, and self-determination). At the same time, the bipolar stand-off resulted in the need for the two superpowers to compete for access to the world's natural resources that each desperately needed to increase its economic and military power. Because the Cold War involved two contesting strands of hard power vying for being the primary influence over the direction a developing country would take regarding development, modernization, and political economy nations were not able to be entirely autonomous in their

planning (Baran, 1973).

Consequently, as India was discerning how to apply its inherent wisdom to effectively manage its domestic affairs and foreign relations there were forces, circumstances, and events occurring in the global arena that were compelling India to consider the advantages of hard power as a means of protecting its interests and managing its security challenges (e.g. border issues with China and territorial claims over Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan). At the same time the bi-polar standoff was tending to place developing countries in the position of having to clarify which superpower it would rely on to play a part in planning its social-economic development; for development aid, loans, and knowledge/technology transfer; and plus, from which superpower to rely on for the acquisition of military supplies. Such decisions were influenced by internal and external pro and anti-Western movements, by pro and anti-Marxist movements and, in India's case in particular by pro-unification movements based on identifying with Indian culture and values, on the one side, and by resistance movements based on an inability to identify with the Indian heritage on the other side: e.g. separatists groups and sub-national social groups inclined toward Maoism. Thus, factors related to global affairs were impacting India's internal affairs (Motta & Nilsen, 2011; Baran, 1973; & Frank, 1969).

This means that at the same time Indian officials were attempting to implement a uniquely Indian approach to growth and progress the basic assumptions of Conflict Theorists were increasingly evident as playing a role in India's internal and external affairs. Conflict Theory was emerging as a new theoretical field of inquiry at, more or less, at the same time as India's postcolonial movement. Consequently, conflict theorists proclaimed that underlying Indian social action (i.e. social relations, interactions, social movements, and social exchange) is an ideological realm which is manifest as a commitment to particular and distinctive beliefs, customs, worldviews, identities, values, and religion. This underlying ideological realm impels social agents to struggle to protect and assert their ideological commitments by using whatever power means are available to them (Collins, 2008). This forced Indian officials to realize that they were not only increasingly confronted by power struggles at the micro and macro levels and threats to its territorial integrity but are, as well, faced with threats to the very structure of India's

state system that were all connected with various forms of ideological warfare (Mack & Snyder, 1957: Coser, 1957). After India's struggles with its internal conflicts, its struggles with threats to its territorial integrity, with its external security challenges, and in the aftermath of its armed conflicts India was compelled to consider that "A nation's vital interests, in the ultimate analysis, can only be preserved and enhanced if the nation has sufficient power capabilities at its disposal" (Pant, 2011). Consequently, India adopted the approach to strategizing prescribed by *Kautilya* in his *Arthashastra*: e.g. employing a mixture of hard power to assure an abundance of the economic and material capabilities needed if and when conditions call for utilizing the military while, at the same time, trying to maintain its image of moral authority.

#### **HOW THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE GLOBAL ORDER IMPACTS INDIA AND VICE VERSA?**

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century was drawing to a close national political authorities, experts in international relations, political scientists, and global political economists all recognized that with the prior industrial age evolving into a new world order increase the ability to exercise power at the various levels of social action requires "Constituting network(s) and programming/reprogramming the network(s) in terms of the goals assigned to the network; and the ability to ensure the cooperation of different networks by sharing common goals and combining resources, while fending off competition from other networks by setting up strategic cooperation" (Castells, 2011). In fact today, more than ever, "What we are witnessing is the irreversible sharing of sovereignty in the management of major economic, environmental, and security issues" (Castells, 2010). That is to say that India as a sovereign state, like all other social units at every level of today's *globalized* world, is increasingly finding itself enmeshed in an interconnected global web in which power is based on mediating or facilitating the channels through which the ultimate commitments of an otherwise diverse public can be integrated (Castells, 2011; Mannheim, 1979; Mann, 2005).

The contemporary world order is characterized as a newly digitized version of networking that is increasingly becoming institutionalized network systems that play an essential role in integrating the otherwise disparate forms of global political, ideological, normative, and political economic social action.

"Networks are structures of interdependent multiple organizational" or multiple institutional actions" (O'Toole, 1997; Frederickson et al., 2012). Thus, as global networks become more integrated it becomes increasingly apparent that the networks are re-defining the notion of power and power relations (Castells, 2007; Casmir, 1994). This impels Indian political authorities to realize that the new world order is triggering globalized networked phenomena that integrate the interests, desires, and norms of those who engage in the network: The World Trade Organization, G-7 (or 8), International Monetary Fund, an environmental or energy summit, or even international corporations (Huddleston, 2000). Indian authorities are realizing that its power in the new global arena is determined by the role it plays in structuring, facilitating, and mediating this new form of power.

Power is one of the most fundamental issues in interstate relations, since relationships are defined around values and institutions, and what is valued and institutionalized is defined by power relationships (Castells, 2009). In international relations theory power is generally defined as the ability for social agent A to influence social agent B in a way that creates outcomes that favour the interests, values, and desires of agent A. Conflict between interstate actors occur when agent B begins to resist agent A's influence. However, engaging in common goals; interacting on the basis of shared values and principles; and employing the power of networking to frame issues, set agendas and motivate action is a form of conflict management and reduction. Thus, there is increased interest in the role of networking in international relations, in the theory and practice of conflict management, and as a means of promoting peaceful coexistence.

Networking and communication networks are having a revolutionary impact in that "On the one hand they are blurring technological, economic, political, and cultural boundaries. On the other hand, global networking has created immense new moral spaces for exploring new communities of affinity (Tehrani, 1997). Thus, information communication technology blurs the boundaries between IR theories- which means that accurately analyzing what is going on in human interactions, communications, exchange, and transactions requires a more inclusive theoretical approach. This provides an opportunity for Indian IR theorists to simultaneously make a unique contribution

to IR theory and practice while, at the same time, act as a vanguard in heralding significant new variations in cooperative behaviour that exists in conjunction with the emerging new global order. (Acharya, 2014). "What drives theoretical developments in IR, including studies in security and peace-building, is to a large extent debates on epistemology, methodology and the choice of research focus. A distinctive and recurring feature of the debates is the dichotomy between the hard positivist understanding of theory which dominates in the US, and the softer reflectivist understandings of theory" (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).

Advances in information communication technology and their application to intrastate and interstate social action is demanding are an assessment of both theory and practice – due to technology's "Impact on the threats, vulnerabilities and the (in)stabilities of strategic relationships" (Bozeman & Hansen, 2009). But also, because networking changes the nature of how knowledge is generated and how power relations are formed thus initiates new perspectives on epistemology, methodology, and what research focus is best for predicting and controlling phenomena that impact global relations. Thus, social networking as a form of knowledge and power generation that represents a movement toward global digital institutionalism that also challenges Indian IR theorists to undertake a more comprehensive analysis of the impact of technology (e.g. communication media and technologies in particular) on global relations. In this respect global digital networking is not only integrating the relationship between the various social sciences but also reducing the "frontier zone" between Realism, Liberalism (Idealism), Constructivism, Critical Theorists, Feminists and Poststructuralists.

Establishing India's place in the new world order involves determining how its arsenal of power attributes, capabilities, and its component strengths can best be utilized in the emerging network society. That is to say that the nature of the emerging world order provides the potential for India to mediate the process of convergence by means of networking in such a way that the significance of its concerns, experience, and principle commitments are core to the concentric network circles in which India operates. In this respect India's fundamental ideal principles that advocate cooperation and peace-building counterbalance its hard power capability and acts as an alternative means of addressing

and fulfilling its interests. That is to say that India's networking capabilities, within themselves, become a source of power with which India mediates or facilitates networks that promote the equal rights of all national participants, mutual respect for the interests of the national participants, and multilateralism (Global Public Policy Institute, 2016). The application of such networking alters the Realist perspective on shaping global reality by allowing for inclusiveness of a Constructivist perspective on co-creating social reality (Miller, 2015; & Escobar, 1995 & 1998).

The networking concept developed into a theory of how to exercise political authority; a theory of governance; as a theory regarding how to reconcile the difference in the interest of powerful elite, political authorities, and the overall public; and as a theory for how to globally institutionalize Liberalism – thus how to engage in international political community building (Haas, 1972). As the theory developed international relations specialists also recognized that networking is an alternative form of establishing national security. In this respect, national security is regarded as increased to the extent to which agents are able to establish networks of cooperation, constructive exchange, cultural diplomacy, and peace-building. "Security refers to the structures and processes within human society, locally and globally, that work towards the reduction of the threats and risks" (Booth, 2007). Networking to establish national security on the basis of peaceful cooperation is rooted deeply in the Indian ethos and has for thousands of years pronounced a principle-based challenge to regressive and dogmatic ethnocentrism, sceptical materialism, and aggressive militarism (Sen, 2005).

In this respect India enhances its place in the emerging world order by theoretically contributing to broadening the approach of Realism as its strategy for international relations by developing a theoretical model for Practical Realism: insisting on multilateralism, mediating power relations within the new global networks with its digital savvy, employing its cybersecurity expertise as a form of cooperation and cultural diplomacy, and eliminating the flaws in its extensive Digital India Programs that it reflects India in its best light (i.e. applying what it has learned from its experiments in social networking in its domestic affairs as a model for engaging in global networking), and using its networking expertise to promote democratizing UN decision-making processes – which would work best by obtaining a seat on the

security council) (Mahbuhani, 2008). In addition, India's status in the global arena continues to rise as it continues to play a key role in promoting a global alliance to fight terrorism and, in addition, coordinating a response to the world's environmental and climate change challenges. India, in this respect would contribute to transforming the very nature of how international relations are conducted by broadening the scope of its own approach to foreign affairs, by openly professing a value-inclusive epistemological perspective on IR theory (i.e. inclusive of its own cultural values and heritage, of the value humanity places on nature, and the value of equality), and by promoting the prospect of win-win outcomes in international transactions as opposed to the win-lose (i.e. competitive advantage) outcome that dominated the last century (Fisher & Ury, 1983).

### CONCLUSION

India, at times, has had its intention to establish itself as an autonomous sovereignty constrained due to factors related to historical contingency. Historical contingency has also compelled India to engage in foreign relations on the basis of Realism although in principle it prefers Liberalism (i.e. Idealism) as an approach to human relations and social action. However, there is increasing recognition by Indian governmental authorities and experts of international relations that the newly emerging world order provides enormous opportunity for India to transcend historical contingency by transforming path dependency into path creation. If India adopts the path creation approach to international relations it would in effect find itself playing a central role in mediating the transactions of agents whose interactions are based on "An ensemble of implicit and explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a certain area of international relations" (Keohane, 2006).

This article has argued that there are revolutionary developments in political theory, theories of political economy, and governance that is complementary with the foundational principles of Indian Idealism. The emerging international arena is characterized as a new multi-polar order that is more inclusive, representative, and legitimate. However, making the best use of the possibilities that the new global order provides requires developing new theoretical and conceptual tools and clarifying the factors that empower international relations experts with the ability to effectively act as mediators in

networks that "Coordinate and even harmonize national government action while initiating and monitoring different solutions to global problems" (Slaughter, 2004). In fact, according to analyses of the new world order by experts in international relations and international political science the new ways of thinking about and practicing IR is triggered by developments in networking (e. g. informational communication technology, telecommunications, and social media) that provide a new way of generating power thus spark new conceptualizations of the nature of power and the nature of power relations (Miller, 2014). Networking is a means by which Indian experts in international relations can exercise power – in terms of asserting influence – to mediate interactions within networks that reflect a digital form of institutionalism.

In this respect, there should be a corresponding development in the theory and practice of Indian IR that is congruent with new developments in the global order and with its own foundational principles. That is to say that India's image of international legitimacy and of obtaining an elevated power status is based on developing the new theoretical and methodological tools that enable it to shed the constraints of historical contingency and of reactionary utilitarian expediency that accompany Realism. This would mean that India establishes its path into the future by means of path creation. Thus, Re-imagining IR in the Indian context involves broadening the theoretical and methodological basis of its analysis from Realist exclusiveness to include not only military and economic consideration but, as well, the social, cultural, value, and ideological aspects of what shapes relations between the world's peoples (Behera, 2008). In this way India would be integrating the various trends that characterize its approach to international relations into creating what this article has referred to as Practical Realism: messianic Idealism; Realism; a preference for autonomy, non-interference, and a stance exemplifying its moral authority; and reactionary responses to the forces of imperialism, mercantilism, and historical contingency (Pande, 2017).

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