

Contemporary South Asia (1998), 7(1), 27–42

Imagining an alternative politics of knowledge: subverting the hegemony of international relations theory in Pakistan

SOHAIL INAYATULLAH

ABSTRACT This article examines the dominance of the nation-state centred model in Pakistani social thought and practice. Breaking out of traditional accounts of strategy, security and sovereignty and the lenses from which Pakistani social and political space is currently constituted, its intention is to create alternative spaces for reflection and action. The article begins by engaging the debate on the changing nature of what constitutes appropriate knowledge in Pakistan. It then explores the links between culture, language and politics, before analysing the hegemony of the international relations strategic model of knowledge. The article concludes with a discussion of ways out of the strategic discourse, concentrating on the pivotal role of Pakistan's emerging social movements.

The social sciences in Pakistan have only recently begun to emerge.¹ Previously, most intellectual thought in Pakistan has been confined to moral evaluations and rhetorical philosophical discourses. Anecdotal evidence or the appropriate citing of a Persian couplet is often substituted for rigorous critical thought. The social science notion of correlation, a theory of causation, supporting empirical data, and an alternative more powerful explanatory theory as criteria for a good science are recent modern developments in Pakistan.

This modernist view of the most appropriate direction of knowledge development in Pakistan has been countered by the indigenisation of knowledge project wherein knowledge is placed in a historical and cultural context.² This has been articulated in a variety of forms. First, as participatory action research wherein the role of the intellectual is to learn from and work with that which he or she is researching, creating a spiral of knowledge accumulation and system trans-

Correspondence: Dr Sohail Inayatullah, Communication Centre, Queensland University of Technology, PO Box 2434, Brisbane, Queensland 4001, Australia (Tel: +61 7 3864 2192; Fax: +61 7 3864 1813; e-mail <S.Inayatullah@qut.edu.au > .

0958-4935/98/010027-16 © 1998 Carfax Publishing Ltd

formation.³ It has also come out as critical traditionalism, wherein the knowledge and social ecology that was South Asia is put forth as an alternative model to scientific managerial rationality and mullahist Islam or syndicated Hinduism.⁴ In more fetish forms, this critique of social science has come out as the Islamisation of knowledge project wherein science books are rewritten with *inshallah* after each formula (e.g. H₂O—inshallah).⁵ For critical traditionalists,⁶ however, this confuses paradigm with concrete data, making the logical fallacy of misplaced concretism. The paradigm gives guidance as how to conduct research, with what ethical guidelines and towards what end, and not as specific concrete statements. For example, the Quran should be read as a guide to ethics and the importance of holistic knowledge and not as a science text book (as many Islamic science proponents unfortunately continue to do).

The modernist position of an objective social science is under challenge from a range of other research perspectives as well. Marxist (challenging the power of capitalism as a regime of social organisation), Feminist (challenging the public–private division inherent in patriarchy), Islamic (challenging both the morality of state leaders and the sovereignty of the nation-state), and postmodern/poststructural (challenging any cohesive grand narrative of history, politics and truth) approaches have been in the forefront of this challenge. In any case, even before the social science model has been able to become ensconced in Pakistan (as it has managed to in the West), it is already under attack from the above positions. What these critical positions have in common is that the episteme (the particular historical era of a society as reflected by its knowledge practices) is central in bounding what we think and, more importantly, what we can think.

We argue that, while the above critical approaches are necessary for creating more satisfying social sciences that can explain, give insight and change the world, they should develop in accord with modern social sciences. The ability to locate the objective in cultural space should not lead to the elimination of modernist social science; causation, correlation, data and theory must be presented, and experiments must be replicable. But then, after that step, the framework for the entire experimental design must be explicated, its cultural bias, class relationship, source of funding and overall agenda in which the research project is part of must emerge. For example, in social research investigating contraception use in a village, merely providing data on usage is not enough. The entire overpopulation problematique—from the impact on nature, to the empowerment of women, to perspectives that see population as a resource and not as a liability as well as approaches that see population as a recent social category⁸ which have displaced other meaningful forms of grouping humans (such as community)—must be brought forth.

The strategic discourse—science as a reason for state, knowledge to be used for national integration and development—must thus have its potency reduced before an alternative social sciences can develop. A critical, layered approach⁹ to science must be articulated. This must be a dialectical process of the

presentation of facts and the context within which facts exist; the nature of scientific inquiry, the values of the researcher and the politics of the research institution that articulates these facts. Contexts and meanings that enliven facts must be presented. This does not mean to take a position that the empirical world is unreal or unchangeable with only God having agency as certain religious authorities would have us believe, but to nest the empirical within the social. It does mean, however, to contest the use of flat approaches to knowledge, particularly the strategic discourse.

If this is done, then Pakistan need not mimic the social sciences of the West. Rather, it could possibly leapfrog ahead and create the best of both worlds: rigorous social sciences in the context of the cultural bounds of Pakistan's unique Islamic and South Asian political-economic history; a subjective objective inquiry. This could then be a framework for others caught in similar dilemmas between ancient and modern, values and facts, religion and science. It will not be an easy task but it can be done. Without this type of approach, Pakistan will be neither able to develop rigorous social sciences nor a critical theoretical approach; rather a chaos of knowledge frames will remain. In this chaos, the benediction of the chief minister at every conference or book launch will remain far more important than the content of the conference or book. Knowledge fetishism will remain more important than knowledge creation. The strategic discourse, neorealist discourse, as argued below, will remain hegemonic with conspiracy theory far more persuasive than critical theory.

Modernity thus need not be solely Western, as East Asian economies are showing us; rather, there can be a range of ways to be modern. Oppressive feudal and religious authorities can be challenged and broken without necessarily choosing a secular/statist future and thus becoming implicated in scientific managerial modes of rationality. The policy implications for educational institutions and research centres in particular would be tremendous with this alternative layered approach.¹⁰ But to do this, social scientists must be willing to place their work in an epistemic boundary (seeing knowledge not as universal but as part of modernity and Westernisation), and culturalists in various guises (*maulvis*, nationalists, ideologists, moralists) must be willing to subject their work to the rigours of analysis, debate and scrutiny. Both must be willing to enter a dialogue with each other wherein extremist positions of the scientific and the religious varieties would be open to critique from the other. Finally, structuralists who use class or gender as their point of departure must be willing to place their work within episteme *and* social science and have their ideological utterances of class and gender bias open to scrutiny, debate and empirical science.

Such a research approach remains novel since eclectic, dialogical approaches more often than not are coopted by economic perspectives (the bottom line of funding and survival), and nationalistic-strategic perspectives (so as to gain legitimacy from official bodies and be seen as working for the national cause). To begin to move towards an alternative method of inquiry, the connection between knowledge and power must be made and the real must be seen as

multi-level, as complex. This is not the simplistic statement that the more knowledge one has the more power one has, but rather—taking the poststructural and indigenous view—that truth is to some extent political, in the sense of being dependent on linguistic, spatial, temporal and personal dimensions. What this means is that politics is not merely about gaining a ministerial position but also about the nomination of particular versions of what is real, what is important and what is natural.

Language, power and knowledge

Borrowing from the recent poststructural (and what is self-evident to non-Western traditions since they are often bi-civilisational, knowing themselves and the West), we assert that knowledge is mediated by language.¹¹ Language is an evolutionary and culturally bounded practice; indeed, language *is* culture. There are no *a priori* categories from which to understand the Other; rather, our categories are bounded by the conventions of the particular historical epoch we live in *and* our own particular interpretations we give to it. Indeed, the idea of the Other changes in each epoch¹² (although one here could make the claim that the idea of difference—self/other, inside/outside and other such divisions—is fundamental).

Language, then, does not merely neutrally describe the world; rather, it participates in creating the world.¹³ This differs from modern social science which presents language as a neutral category, like a lifeless tool helping to get the job done. The *validity* issue between theory and data is left unexamined since language is considered transparent in its delivery of information. But, as we know, each culture ‘languages’ the world differently; each sentence privileges a particular world and word at the expense of other words and worlds.

In this poststructural shift, language is increasingly seen as opaque; not a neutral arbiter but a willing participant. This approach moves us out of universals and creates a process in which reality is a verb constantly in process, constantly being created by our daily actions, choice of politics and economics, and the frames of reference we inhabit. Indeed, through language we create the world. The sum of a range of language statements constitutes a discourse, a way of thinking, a way of knowing the world.

These ways of knowing the world, however, do not exist in horizontal space; rather, there is marked hierarchy. Along with a global division of labour there is a global hierarchy of knowledge with expert scientific knowledge at the top and local knowledge (often women’s experiences¹⁴ and views) at the bottom.¹⁵ Expert scientific knowledge is seen as objective and instrumental, capable of leading to the increased accumulation of wealth and solutions to pressing social problems, whether drug use or unemployment. Pakistan, of course, where social sciences have not developed as far as in the West, does not make the presumption that think-tanks can solve social problems; rather, statist actions in the form of government or military intervention are believed to be the lasting solution to

the problem of national development. Recently, social sciences in the West, acknowledging their failure to control the world as in the natural sciences, have begun the long and painful journey to find their rightful place in human knowledge. They no longer assume that all can be explained by the next theory. It is only physics and other natural sciences that maintain the hegemonic vision of a theory of everything which can be reduced to a formula.

Borrowing from chaos and complexity theory,¹⁶ social scientists are beginning to argue that it is the unleashing of creativity, of novelty, that is far more important than any particular universalisable solution to anything, whether the problem be poverty or violence. Subjective forces are thus constantly at play.

However, in the current division of objective and subjective, science and economics are seen as the most objective and women's experiences as the most subjective or primitive. Women's ways of knowing have either been derided by modernists or camouflaged by socialists claiming sameness.¹⁷ However, feminists 'argue that women know the world differently, indeed, they call for a feminist science that is holistic, non-violent, subjective in its objectivity and thus values-based and is, for example, focused on women's and children's health issues.¹⁸ Health becomes defined not as the personal, but as part of the social, as national health and global health, such that the environment, national security and energy use are seen as women's issues. This redefinition of health challenges the hegemony of the strategic international relations model of self, economy and state. Health becomes expanded and genderised allowing a health model to shed a new light on issues of national defence, security and economic development. As Mahbubul Haq (himself a recent convert from strategic thinking to more holistic theory), speaking of the conflict between Pakistan and India, writes: 'The desire for peace is strong on both sides of the border. They long for clean drinking water rather than for submarines or jet fighters'.¹⁹

From this women's perspective, far more important than the issue of national security is the consumption of tobacco-related products among Pakistani males²⁰ and the massive disaster looming as the current generation ages and *en masse* succumbs to cancer and other smoking-related illnesses. Kashmir, Afghanistan and other territorial and sentimental issues appear quite minor compared to the painful death of a large majority of Pakistani males in the coming 30 years. But smoking, as we might expect, remains a personal health issue and not a national issue. War with India and national integration/security confront as the 'real' challenges.

Moreover, in Pakistan, women's issues—especially in recent times with the mushrooming of non-governmental organisations (NGOs)—while acknowledged, are ghettoised in the private sphere with the only escape that of electoral politics which, as Benazir Bhutto found out, force one back into traditional bureaucratic structures where transformation is all but impossible. There was no language for her to express an alternative politics for either statecraft or homecraft has been the grand division. It is only recently with efforts such as by the Edhi foundation and Akhtar Hameed Khan's Orangi project (and many other

similar efforts) that a third space for activism is emerging. But a new language for the imagination of politics in Pakistan has yet to be created.

Much of Pakistan's ethnic problems can be understood from this discourse view (of course, factoring in the particular social formation of the state—the links between the landlords, military and bureaucrats—as well). With language representing culture, ethnic movements desire to express themselves in their language so as to make the world more comfortable to themselves and so they can communicate what they see to others. The state, however, more concerned with national integration and uniformity insists on reducing difference, particularly linguistic difference, thus making the living of language a contentious issue. The reduction of difference is, of course, the hegemony of the dominant worldview: in Pakistan's case male, Urdu-speaking, Muslim and Punjabi and, more to the point, anti-Indian.

However, and this is the paradox, because of the straitjacket of the nation-state, ethnic groups more often than not desire to create sovereign spaces which in the long run reproduce the hierarchical social conditions they seek to escape. That is, once in power, they other others, creating not an eclectic culture with deep democracy and tolerant pluralism but rather reinforcing a game of revolving chairs with the structure of seating deeply hierarchical (and thus the deep and universal distrust of politicians and the political system).²¹ In this sense, one might take a more sceptical attitude towards the alternative knowledge and civil society social movements that are challenging state and market power since there is little evidence that they will follow a different path once their power over others increases. The model of each vying for hegemony instead of creating a plurality of knowledge games will most likely remain.²²

Part of the problem is that, in addition to the global division of knowledge placing science and economics on top and women below, there is a global national division of knowledge wherein the realities (including ethnicity), perspectives, theories and approaches that emerge from South Asia occupy a far lower space than the realities that emerge from the Harvard–Oxford–Sorbonne network. Thus, while male, Punjabi, Muslim categories of self might be oppressive nationally, in the global context (wherein the Third World is ontologically and epistemologically demeaned, with sovereignty not realised), these categories of self become fighting words and worlds.

However, instead of attempting to call into question the entire hierarchical paradigm of knowledge within the nation and in the world system and to build horizontal social structures (community development or participatory democracy and the ways of knowing that contextualise these efforts, for example), the task for most political activists and strategists is usually to move up the ladder and claim special access to the Objective and Powerful; in this case, the state. Imran Khan's quick transformation from cricket player (as skilful strategist) to health activist to politician exhibit this problem.²³ Instead of remaining and creating an alternative politics of society, Khan, either because of his own strategic inclinations (cricket captain) or because of safety and security concerns brought about through attacks on his hospital, became convinced that transforming Pakistan

can only happen through electoral victory. That winning an election will place him in the same confines that it did Benazir Bhutto has not dawned on him. He believes that he is more skilful. However, he misunderstands the structure of politics—of military/feudalism relations and the realist strategic knowledge paradigm—that in fact will make systemic transformation all but impossible. Instead of creating an alternative politics of service outside the state, since the state is seen as the route to personal and clan wealth, getting elected remains the prime goal. However, this strengthening does not lead to a more secure state with more human rights, deeper participation and more tolerance towards others: rather, the spiral of insecurity, of the need for law and order, of a worldview in which others must be inner and outer enemies only leads to more attacks on citizens (and then call for more strategy, law and order). Again, this is part of the failure of the knowledge paradigm and the lack of a language to express an alternative politics.

Subverting the dominant paradigm

Within this dominant neorealist discourse, all other constitutive perspectives are doomed. While the Islamic movement has tried to create a religious discourse in which truth is ascertained by correspondence to an original text or to a particular morality, it itself remains bounded by the nation-state paradigm and the intellectual field or the knowledge frame that strengthens it. Even the imagination of an *ummah* is impossible. Even as Muslim activists attempt to make Pakistan more Islamic they but strengthen the state; a state bounded by an alternative worldview, a distinctly modern and European worldview. This is the paradigm of the interstate system, the nation-state system, and the system of thought that sustains it, international relations (IR) theory.²⁴ Whether they run for office or engage in sectarian terrorism, the nature of the interstate system does not allow the creation of an *Ummah*. The result is that the Pakistani state is strengthened.

The reality of this is strengthened in knowledge creation. Most, if not all, Pakistani scholarship begins and ends with the nation-state. Indeed, debates in editorial pages, national conferences, research institutes and daily tea parties all focus on the relative strategic role of Pakistan with respect to India, USA, Iran and so forth. This has been called the politics of the card: who and when will the Afghanistan card be played, the Kashmir card ... metaphors of Pakistan such as 'front-line state' continue to locate Pakistan in this space. It is a type of metaphorical rigidity. Pakistan continues to concretise this paradigm, making it an unmoveable discourse, the very air and water of life. Even during the month of fasting, wherein other spaces are called for to move outside of the modern world, outside of power-politics, it is politics that perseveres. Statecraft does not disappear by such historic cultural practices, it appears. Much more is needed to evade the hegemony of the international relations paradigm in Pakistan and elsewhere.

While totally eliminating this paradigm is obviously a faulty approach since Pakistan has not achieved any level of inner or outer security/sovereignty, the

challenge is to perceive its limitations, its inability to deal with other forms of knowing and power. See, for example, economic spaces of exchange and trade (including cyberspace) wherein identity is more fluid (as compared to nationalistic spaces where it is quite clear who one is), or Marxist strategies where identity is based on labour and not on nation, or cultural practices where gender, family and religious identity are far more paramount, or social science methods where knowledge is tested with causal variables often structural instead of assumed to be conspiratorial. The strategic model needs to be challenged so that spaces for other types of power can emerge. The politics of this essay and the hope of an alternative social sciences is to make the IR position—state power leads to justice, the only important unit is the nation-state, and the only important people are its functionaries, foreign secretaries, Presidents, Prime Ministers and the such—less dominant in our daily gaze.

Borrowing heavily from neo-classical economics in which we are but egoist individuals attempting to maximise our goals, the international relations model, the neorealist view, posits that self-interest and power are what makes the world go around. Certainly any social or religious movement that adopts the IR paradigm is doomed from the start. For example, Islam is a universal mission; placing it within a national context leads to contradictions between state and individual, between the universal and the particular, between integration and fragmentation. The state absorbs Islam creating a battle of moral utterances, who is truer than the other! Who best represents Islam? Those in power, of course, have the enjoyment of defining the particular Truth of the time while leaving the problem of representation untouched as a problem not up for grabs but settled in some earlier time or not to be discussed since this will raise issues of national security and sovereignty, 'law and order'. Islam as an eclectic cultural force (as the Malaysians are hoping to create)²⁵ for upliftment, for service to the poor, has certainly not caught the imagination. Instead, Islam as party politics has flourished, as has the creation of a national Islamic republic.

Making invisible

The most serious impact of the IR neorealist model is that it makes invisible other efforts. Other arenas of power, other configurations of the real are displaced and peripheralised by this view of the world; seen as trivial, idealistic, utopian or disloyal to the project of nationhood. The women's movement, in particular, is silenced. As feminists argue, statecraft is 'mancraft' concerned with zero-sum impositions instead of cooperative solutions.²⁶ Men as hunters and fighters must continue the battle of territory, either physical, intellectual or economic.²⁷ At the centre of this model is conflict and dominance and not the creative resolution of conflict, not the creation of gender partnerships, not the development of alliances. It is rank-ordering that is important. We should not then be surprised that it is men who dominate institutes such as Islamabad's Institute of Strategic Studies. And when women do gain positions, the structure of hierarchy is so deep that they immediately become 'maleised', equally

concerned with defining their job as a position of power over others or a battle for supremacy among bureaucracies. We also should not be surprised that strategy is defined in rationalist–instrumentalist terms with discussions revolving around grand issues of war and attack, of defence and bombs, of fear and enemies, of the problems of nations. The body becomes the site of this battle, with the nation the mother, the rivers the veins. The loss of a Kashmir, for example, is seen as amputation (for India) and death for Pakistan.²⁸

International relations as a discourse then merely re-presents the world, aping the worldview of nation-states, providing a filter where strategy is hegemonic. The view of women and their movements has no place in this world. They cannot be accounted for. Women remain imprisoned in the home, in the private realm.²⁹ While this might be a cultural preference, that the home is depoliticised, considered insignificant, is not. 'As a result, women, in all their diversity, are neither presented as political actors nor represented in international politics, they are overlooked.'³⁰ All sorts of NGOs and transnational voluntary associations are also overlooked, particularly the nascent peace movement and the ecological movement. Human rights organisations are often seen as agents of foreign countries since they are not strategic in the defence of human rights.

Pakistanis who associate with transnational organisations are considered too Western since funding is often foreign and their bases are not in Pakistan. While this is true for some organisations, many are thoroughly local with only inspiration drawn from similar foreign organisations. Bidhari (an Islamabad NGO), for example, is concerned with women's suffering in Pakistan even as it derives its inspiration from the global women's movement. The challenge, of course, is to use one's own historical language. For example, an environmental movement in Pakistan would be more successful if it drew its theoretical base both from the global environmental critique of industrialism *and* from the Quranic model of ecology (focused in *khalifa*, stewardship and on specific statements on how the environment and animals should be treated).

NGOs are seen either as part of a foreign conspiracy (as we might expect from the strategic discourse), or considered well-meaning groups attempting to change the world. Of course, the idea that power leads to justice has yet to succeed, but Pakistan continues to purchase capitalist and nationalist discourses (ways of seeing the world). Social movements concerned with equity, justice or culture or the environment are considered utopian, idealistic, or worse attempts to eliminate the state itself.³¹ But there are a range of positions and options entailing discussions of class, gender, economic units and the environment that better describe the world before us than the IR paradigm.

Options

Class is one option.³² Better still are perspectives that bring more complex models of differentiation. Those, for example, examine the history of types of structure—warriors, intellectuals, merchants and labourers. Macrohistorians, for example, consider political history as only one variable. Instead of merely the

history of those leaders that created a nation, more important is civilisational history or peoples' history. The history of poor people, of women, of children, of individuals who did not rise to fame; or grand economic history, of the long waves of accumulation and distribution and of the history of the spirit, of the challenges humans undertook, are all other ways to write the social.³³

Yet our scholarship, historiography being one example, focuses on the nation-state. It stands eternal before us. However, seen historically, is it but a particular creation of the conflict between a territorial hierarchical world empire and a ideational hierarchical world religion.³⁴ The nation-state is a modern creation, structured with justice within and injustice outside, order within and disorder outside, democracy within, power politics outside.³⁵ A world political community at the end of the Western Medieval era was then not a possibility, but with the breakdown of security and sovereignty through electronic technologies, travel, ecological disasters, nuclear weapons and the development of a world economy, alternative social and political formations are critical. Neither capital, radiation nor television frequencies see borders, nor are these borders easily captured by the IR paradigm.

These new developments are not easily explainable or categorisable. The idea of humanity for one exists outside of this paradigm; it is impossible to achieve within the IR model. This is especially so for the case of various social movements and NGOs. Many of these are global and local in scope, united by an alternative vision of the moral, of the future; attempting to find alternative solutions to the problems of economic growth and social distribution, of the individual and collective, of the universal and particular, of integration and fragmentation, of male and female, of small and large, of the short-range and the long-range future, to mention a few of the paradoxes of the modern worldview.

But these efforts are easily marginalised when formal or official power is sought, when the unit of analysis switches from local or world community to the categories of a world interstate system of nations. Cooption results. For example, even as functionaries of nation-states talk of peace, they make invisible groups and individuals who work at the individual, regional and planetary level for peace (and the spiritual, mystical level as well). What is reported in the press are the official signing of peace documents. The months of little events, peaceful marches, people-to-people contact between warring states, the movement of goods and services and heroic acts of courage by individuals are all lost as stateleaders walking on red carpets and interviewed on CNN can finally declare peace (with the ultimate act being the awarding of the Noble Peace Prize). National frames of reference and the great men that live in them—Jinnah and Nehru, for example—displace other histories. Even as attempts to envision other futures are developed, these futures remain only as alternative configurations of nations. The future as another place outside of this paradigm is rarely attempted, and when it is, it is easily marginalised as utopian, meaning impossible, not realisable, not able to solve the contradictions before us. The future is seen in strategic terms with an appropriate study of the future being that of global modelling and not, for example, of examining how Pakistani time is different

from Western time³⁶ or of investigating how particular images of the future have lost their currency with the statist vision of Pakistan. Only politics as strategy—as rational instrumentality—looms ahead.

As might be obvious, class too as a category is made invisible by IR theory. Pakistani social science rarely analyses structures of exploitation of the global division of labor that makes national sovereignty problematic.³⁷ Discussions merely restate battles between nations. Even though the nations themselves might change over time, the paradigm remains. The Other is the Great Satan or a terrorist state or an Evil Empire or a Backward Colony. The paradigm is so strong that labour is patriotic to its own nation instead of seeing its links with global labour. Labour remains invisible of its own universality; rather, it stays in a national framework, unable to see transnational links. Structure as nation dominates over economic or cultural structures.

It was this theoretical problem that doomed the socialist nations as it has the Islamic *ummah*. Within the context of the interstate system, socialism is impossible. Socialism merely became a nation-building game, a grand battle of ego, which ruined itself internally through military spending. Islam as a universal enterprise, too, has been similarly ruined in its battle against the US in that it has maintained its strategy at the level of the nation-state and the interstate system. Cultural dimensions, spiritual dimensions, community economic dimensions and social dimensions that travel at the edges of IR are rarely attempted. Indeed, it is only the economic realm that has broken out thus allowing Immanuel Wallerstein, for example, to argue that the interstate system exists underneath the world economic system, capitalist in origin and based on expansion and a global division of labour. Of course, it is the pervasiveness of the capitalist system as well that mitigates against any Islamic community. We should not forget that the profits of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries did not go into South–South projects (industrialisation, community development, or an alternative regional economy): rather, they went directly back to Wall Street where profits would be higher.

Thus, instead of macro-structural³⁹ analyses which show deep patterns of hierarchy, of history, of grand social change—as with the works of Ibn Khaldun and his cyclical theory of change or Pitirim Sorokin and his pendulum theory of change between material and ideational systems—we remain in national analysis, unable to notice the similarities in historical development, unable to notice other variables of change.⁴⁰

Nuclear discussions

The most obvious and sensitive example of IR thinking in Pakistan concerns nuclear policy debates.⁴¹ Placed in a binary analysis. Us against Them, the class dimensions, the environmental dimensions, the safety and healthy dimensions, the human dimensions, the broader spiritual dimensions are not attempted. Attempts to enter these separate spaces lead to one's marginalisation (or worse,

are considered treasonous) since one no longer speaks for any particular nation but for humanity as a whole.

Unfortunately, attempts to speak from this alternative arena are often mere moral utterances, calls for peace and the such with little analysis or consequences of the neorealist paradigm as a whole which frames these discussions of nuclear policy. One then is either a dreamer or an idealist; that is, unimportant and trivial. If one insists, then one is unpatriotic since one's actions will lead to a downward movement on the staircase of nation-states. Pakistan is afraid of its own potential peace movement since that might become a comparative advantage for neighbouring nations. Indeed, among the reasons why the peace movement is nearly non-existent in Pakistan is precisely because such a movement would challenge Pakistan's existence as a place that has integrated itself through power politics, through the politics of hate-the-Other. It is this identity that gives it unity. More than anything else, fear and hate of India has sustained the imagination of Pakistan as a nation.⁴² Whether Pakistan could survive if India went the way of the USSR is doubtful. This is partially true of India as well (through its self-definition is more historical, regional and global). Given these two countries respective location in geographical and intellectual space, it is not surprising that the IR field has become the dominant model at the expense of any notions of community. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation after all, is comprised of nations, not other categories such as movements, ethnic groups, villages, labourers or art associations. In meetings, each nation sees itself in the mirror of the other and runs back to its capital full of fear and importance. It is from this insecurity that calls are made for more sacrifices by the people so that justice through power can be attained. Of course, this is not to trivialise the weight of the past, the blood-spilling of Partition, but even that event has been appropriated by the IR paradigm as ideological fodder for nation-building. The many histories, the many interpretations of that event, are not available; rather, staying within the model of One History, One Leader, One Text, the intellectual battle remains to write the definitive history of Pakistan. An analysis of the many histories and research into the politics of who gains or loses, who gets to speak and who is silenced by any particular history are rarely attempted.

In general, what are needed are efforts to build international links, to build regional and planetary visions. Within the context of the nuclear debate, we need to show hegemonic aspirations of a particular nation and to find ways to escape their expansion through enlarged definitions of security: defensive defence, economic development, neutrality, cultural power, international links.⁴³ The recent end of the Cold War and economic expansion in the West and in East Asia provide a capitalist challenge to the strategic discourse in Pakistan. As Imtiaz Alam writes:

The choice is not between trade and not to trade. Nor is it between the strategic agendas and economic benefits, as the so-called strategists blinded by 'security concerns' like us to forget everything else for their pretentious 'affection' for the bleeding kashmiris. It is,

rather, between the economic future of the region and a cold war between the 'two lead nations' that has more than a billion people of South Asia as hapless hostage to the militaristic whims of parasitic institutions.⁴⁴

And in *The Herald*: 'Despite the emerging parameters of a new foreign policy discourse in civil society, Pakistan's official security culture remains trapped by the jacket of cold war paradigms'.⁴⁵

Transforming representations of reality are far more meaningful strategies, albeit difficult to achieve. This entails calling into question the groundplan of our various discourses, of our frames. But it is not difficult to revert our gaze back onto ourselves. It is the state that dominates our vision. For social movements (in all their guises) involved in changing the planet and concerned with Pakistan's future capturing state power will be an elusive goal, for this category is exclusive; once captured it undermines one's own effort for the world exists in an interstate system. What is needed are new metaphors, a new language of knowledge and politics in Pakistan so the people do not remain hostage to structures that only ensure the continuation of a military and feudal bureaucracy. What is needed is a strong, layered social science that rigorously examines and challenges the frequent attempts to create a politics of fear, of 'unless we sacrifice for nuclear weapons or increased arms buildup, they will come and destroy us'. It is this binary strategic thinking that is necessary to hold a nation together when economic sovereignty and cultural sovereignty are ever so problematic.

A way out: edges and borders

Is there way out then? The task is not to eliminate IR theory but to displace it with a multiplicity of alternative politics in a variety of places. Ethnic movements to be successful need to move in that direction. Women's groups must be universal as must social service groups. The nation-state is a recent invention, the winner of the battle between world *ummah* or church and world empire. It is not a universal and in the long run will disappear as other political formations have. Creating practical social, economic and artistic links between individuals and communities and envisioning alternative visions in and outside the realm of politics is one way to prepare for the nation's demise (and the paradigm that sustains it). What are needed are a range of efforts: local economic development, alternative education and knowledge practices, preventive health, women's issues and workers' cooperative movements. These various local efforts then need to be linked at national, regional and global levels creating layered sovereignties. This statement should not, however, be seen as somehow against the Pakistani nation; rather, a strong and independent global civil society going far beyond Western definitions of civil/state and closer to the Islamic ideal of the *ummah*—that is, including the spiritual, the environment, the larger and deeper family—helps fulfil its deeper ideals.

The contradictions of the modern nation-state are ever more apparent to ever

more people. Democracy for one is fine within the national level but global democracy remains impossible. Travel within nations is possible but global travel remains blocked by visas and passports. The nation-state has eliminated all other political actors. But there are other actors; cosmology, class, collective psychology, gender, community alliances, non-governmental alliances, individuals and humanity to name a few. Self-interest and the desire to dominate is one but not the only motivating factor for humans. Identifications with territory, with race, with an imagined place like the nation (again which exists because it creates a division of exclusiveness and inclusiveness based on a common enemy) are but parts of the puzzle.

To conclude, the theoretical task of this article has been to link truth with power, to argue for a pluralistic epistemological framework, an alternative social science, and suggest that the nation-state and IR theory is not neutral but that it privileges categories and analysis that deny politics, that deny other categories of the real. In the final analysis it but supports a uni-dimensional reality, a reality which-if our goals are economic development, cultural enrichment, long term peace, equality and justice is denied. For intellectuals most significantly, the IR and nation-state model limits our understanding of the world that increasingly does not make sense within the IR framework. Understanding this world might only begin if we remove ourselves from our present understanding and stand elsewhere. Much is at stake in this realignment; not merely discourse but the hard reality of human suffering and how we in all our multiplicities understand and act on this suffering.

Notes and references

1. Inayatullah, 'Social sciences in Pakistan: an evaluation', *International Social Sciences Journal*, No. 122, November 1989, pp 617-633. Also see, S.H. Hashmi (ed), *The State of Social Sciences in Pakistan* (Islamabad: Quaid-I-Azam University, 1989).
2. See, Syed Farid Alatas, 'On the Indigenisation of Academic Discourse', *Alternatives*, Vol 18, No 3, 1993, pp 307-338.
3. The efforts of Akhtar Hameed Khan in the Orangi project in Karachi are an excellent example of this. See the efforts of Orlando Fals Borda for the theoretical underpinning of this.
4. The writings of Zia Sardar on the futures of Islam and Ashis Nandy on knowledge and violence in South Asia are excellent examples of this. See Ashis Nandy, *Science, Hegemony and Violence* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993). In Ashis Nandy, *The Tao of Cricket* (Delhi: Penguin, 1989), he examines the premodern in the modern, Victorian culture and the Indian response to England. For Nandy, cricket is an Indian game accidentally invented in England. If cricket becomes part of the State, quick time, and commercialism, that is, the battle to win, than India will have lost, as it will have entered a unilinear theory of history and future. Also see, Ashis Nandy, *Tradition, Tyranny, and Utopias* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987). For works by Sardar, see Zia Sardar, *Islamic Futures. The Shape of Ideas To Come* (London: Mansell, 1985). Finally there is Antony Copley, 'Indian secularism reconsidered: from Gandhi to Ayodhya', *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol 2, No 1, 1993, pp 47-66.
5. Pervez Hoodbhoy in his *Islam and Science: Religious Orthodoxy and the Battle for Rationality* (London: Zed Books, 1991) and in a series of articles for *Newsline* has presented a devastating critique of Islamic attempts to relativise the project of modern science. He argues that this has led to a dark ages in Muslim thought and in the development of science and technology in Muslim nations. While I agree with his policy recommendations, his argument that science is objective and other systems of thought as mere ideology strikes me as missing the point. He is too much a modernist unaware of the episteme of science itself. How to have both seems to be the more important task. See also 'Heaven only knows what comes next in Pakistani science', *Wall Street Journal*, 13 September 1988, p 26.

6. See Zia Sardar, 'Islamic science: the way ahead', *Journal of Islamic Science*, July–December 1996, pp 57–88.
7. In Pakistan, whether the research is secular or religious oriented.
8. See Michel Foucault, in: Paul Rabinow (ed), *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).
9. For more on this, see Paul Wildman and Sohail Inayatullah, 'Ways of knowing, civilization, communication and the pedagogies of the future', *Futures* (Vol 28, No 8, October 1996), pp 723–740. Also see my 'Poststructuralism as method: towards a spatial theory of temporality' (forthcoming) and 'Methods and epistemologies', in: Richard Slaughter (ed), *The Knowledge Base of Futures Studies: Foundations*, Vol 1 (Melbourne: DDM, 1996), pp 187–203.
10. For example, scientists ridicule the idea of rewriting textbooks so as to include the phrase 'inshallah' after every formula. Perhaps a notation in new editions might suffice or a preface at the beginning of the book asserting that while at the absolute level Allah might be the creator of all at the relative level hydrogen and oxygen can mix to create water without any intervention from the Cosmos. Culture is important but there are instances when it needs be held in abeyance. The point is that there are ways to deal with these problems if we loosen our epistemological framework and call for many epistemes.
11. See, for example, Michel Foucault, *The Order Of Things* (London: Tavistock, 1970) and Michel Foucault, in: Colin Gordon (ed), *Power/Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).
12. However, we can make a claim that there are certainly evolutionary structural 'universals' such as inside/outside, which is central to any identity formation, i.e. self–other. We can only be part of Pakistan, for example, in the context of not being India. For more on the general thrust of this argument, see, R.B.J Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
13. See, Michael Shapiro, *Language and Political Understanding* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981) and Michael Shapiro (ed), *Language and Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1984), and, of course, the class, Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).
14. See Robina Saigol and Afiya Shehribano Zia (eds), *Locating the Self-Perspectives on Women and Multiple Identities* (Lahore: ASR Publications, 1994).
15. For more on this, see, Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986).
16. See, Zia Sardar and Jerome Ravetz (Guest Editors of Special Issue) *Complexity: Fad or Future*, *Futures*, Vol 26, No 6, 1994. Also see, Peter Allen, 'Coherence, chaos and evolution in the social context', in *Coherence and Chaos in Our Uncommon Futures* (Türkü, Finland: World Futures Studies Federation, 1993), pp 11–22.
17. See, Kathy Ferguson, *The Man Question: Visions of Subjectivity in Feminist Theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
18. The basic feminist science position is almost identical with the Islamic science position as articulated by Zia Sardar and others. See Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993). See the brilliant Bonnie Spanier, *Impartial Science: Gender Ideology in Molecular Biology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).
19. Mahbubhal Haq, 'Burying the bitter legacy', *The Herald*, August, 1996, p 33.
20. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that smoking-related deaths are expected to rise from 3 million to 10 million world-wide in the next century. Most of these will come from China and South Asia. See the website: <<http://www.detnews.com/menu/stories/49374.htm>>. Figures for Pakistan are not yet available.
21. Talat Aslam and Hasan Zaidi, 'What do Pakistanis really want—fifty years, fifty questions', *The Herald*, January, 1997, pp 139–192. To the question, do you think politicians are corrupt, 95% responded in the positive.
22. Mustapha Kamal Pasha, 'Security as hegemony', *Alternatives*, No 21, 1996, pp 283–302. Pasha takes such a sceptical position towards the celebration of civil society in South Asia. He argues that civil society is unlikely to become an independent arena, rather it will continue to reinscribe the state. Intellectuals and scientists will continue to nurture and legitimise development and security.
23. For more on sport and war, see Michael Shapiro, 'Representing world politics: the sport/war intertext', in: M. Shapiro and J. Der Derian (eds), *International/Intertextual Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Lexington Books, 1989) pp 69–98.
24. In opposition, El-Affendi argues that Islam can easily cohabit in a range of political spaces. One can be loyal to community, nation, region and the larger Muslim *ummah*. See Abdelwahab El-Affendi, *Who Needs an Islamic State* (London: Grey Seal, 1992).
25. See Anwar Ibrahim, *Asian Renaissance* (Singapore: Times Centre, 1996).
26. See Jan Jindy Pettman, *Worlding Women* (New York: Allen and Unwin, 1996).
27. See Riane Eisler, *Sacred Pleasure* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996). See also Cynthia Enloe, *The*

- Morning After: Sexual Politics and the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
28. For one reference of this position—there are hundreds—see Ikram Azam, *Pak Geopolitics* (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 1992). For a critical view, see, Sankaran Krishna, 'Cartographic anxiety: mapping the body politic of India', in: M. Shapiro and H. Alker (eds), *Challenging Boundaries: Global Flows, Territorial Identities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) pp 193–216.
 29. See, for example, Chris Kynaston, 'The everyday exploitation of women: housework and the patriarchal mode of production', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol 19, No 3, 1996, pp 221–237. Also see, Lois Bryson, 'Revaluing the household economy', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol 19, No 3, 1996, pp 207–219.
 30. Anne Sisson Runyan and V. Spike Peterson, 'The radical future of realism: feminist subversion of IR theory', *Alternatives*, Vol 16, No 1, Winter 1991, p 71.
 31. The worst case example of this, however, is of the communist project: an attempt to create a stateless nation that led to a nationless state.
 32. The classic neomarxist perspective on Pakistan remains Hassan Gardezi and Jamil Rashid (eds), *Pakistan: The Unstable State* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1983).
 33. See S. Inayatullah, 'Dynamics of history', *New Renaissance* Special issue on 'Rethinking history to create alternative futures', Vol 7, No 1, 1997, pp 26–28.
 34. R.B.J. Walker and Saul Mendlovitz, *Contending Sovereignties* (Boulder, CO: Lynce Rienner, 1990).
 35. See R.B.J Walker, 'Security, sovereignty and the challenge of world politics', *Alternatives*, Vol 15, No 1, 1990, pp 3–28.
 36. For more on this, see Sohail Inayatullah, 'Mullahs, sex, and bureaucrats: Pakistan's confrontations the modern world', in: D. Petraglia-Bahri and M. Vasudeva (eds), *Between the Lines: South Asians In/On Postcoloniality* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996) pp 121–136.
 37. Naem Inayatullah and David L. Blaney in their article, 'Realizing Sovereignty', *Review of International Studies*, Vol 21, 1995, pp 3–20, write that 'Third World states tend to be among the strongest supporters of the preservation and strengthening of the society of states and the principle of sovereignty central to it.... For the Third World, sovereignty is neither irrelevant nor a malevolent force, but an unrealized goal', p 5.
 38. See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Politics of the World Economy* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
 39. See Johan Galtung and Sohail Inayatullah (eds), *Macrohistory and Macrohistorians* (London: Praeger, 1997).
 40. Again this does not mean that we are to totally avoid the nationalistic–strategic discourse but rather to historically contextualise the idea of 'nation'. Galtung does this well, for his example, when he shows similarities between the rise of the European Community and the rise of India as military powers. Showing how each uses myth and culture to create a politics of dominance and expansion, he reminds us that: 'One thing we know: hegemonial systems, sewn together seamlessly with an impeccable logic, do not work in the longer run but lead to decline and fall' (p 928). See, Johan Galtung, 'On the way to superpower status: India and the EC compared', *Futures*, Vol 24, No 9, 1992, pp 917–930.
 41. See Inayatullah, 'The Nuclear arms race between superpowers: some lessons for Pakistan and India', Research paper. Available from Inayatullah, 3, St. 18, F. 7/2, Islamabad, Pakistan. The author argues that the arms race bankrupted the former Soviet Union as it is and will continue to bankrupt South Asia, especially Pakistan. For an excellent discussion of gender and strategic metaphors, particularly in the nuclear context, see Saba Gul Khattak, 'Security discourses and the state in Pakistan', *Alternatives*, No 21, 1996, pp 348–353. Khattak writes that 'the discourse of nuclear power blatantly uses sexual metaphors ... it relies heavily on gendered symbol, to produce gendered nationalism and patriotism' (p 348).
 42. For an unconventional Indian view on Pakistan, see, D.H. Butani, *The Future of Pakistan* (Delhi: Promilla, 1984). Butani's central thesis is: 'They (Pakistanis) hate us because they love us. They want to fight with us because ultimately they want to be united with us. Their conscious ego is in conflict with their subconscious id' (p 1). And: 'The two governments of India and Pakistan (are) bound to be either in perpetual conflict or perpetual conference' (p 247). Butani's ideal future for the subcontinent is an India–Pakistan confederation based on joint defence capabilities and a commonmarket. A joint research organisation would begin the task of breaking the perpetual conflicts and beginning the perpetual conference.
 43. Johan Galtung's works have been devoted to this effort. See his six volume series, *Essays in Peace Research* (Denmark: Christian Eglers, 1989).
 44. Imtiaz Alam, 'South Asian trade without politics', *The News*, May 13, 1997, p 7. Alam reminds us that South Asia only accounts for 1% of world trade, p 7.
 45. 'Peace Plan from Washington', *The Herald*, August 1996, p 27.