

Report on WISC-IRIIS Exploratory Workshops New Delhi- January 2016

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The Idea

The objective of these workshops on ‘Alternative Cosmologies and Knowledge Systems in International Relations,’ was to think through ways of doing IR differently including a rethink of the very ‘idea of the international’ and, how to embark on this challenging journey in the immediate future to the long term. This entailed exploring an alternate set of resources and research tools that may not usually fit within the boundaries of the IR discipline as it stands as well as start new conversations between IR scholars, social historians, political and historical sociologists, cultural and political theorists and other everyday intellectuals.

The original idea of the workshop was to invite eight to ten scholars from around the world especially though not exclusively from the Global South. Later however, through mutual consultations with the WISC team led by Prof. Gunther Hellmann, this idea was expanded to involve many younger scholars. It was then agreed to hold two such workshops: first including the original set of scholars who had agreed to join this enterprise and for the second workshop, a fresh call for papers was issued by WISC and IRIIS in October 2015. Over next few months, we added the idea of holding a third workshop. This was done for two reasons. First, we wanted to make full use of the visiting faculty members and especially because Prof. Tamara Trownsell (along with Arlene Tickner and David Blaney) took the initiative of working out a training/mentoring workshop on the theme of ‘Inculcating Ontological Competence: Seeing the World/Cosmos through Multiple Ontological Lenses,’ for the benefit of many more young Indian faculty members and research students. Second, the focus, objective and structure of this workshop was very different as it offered an opportunity to workshop participants to find ways to consider and appreciate other ways of knowing and wisdom and the various realities generated through these forms of knowing, which historically have been discredited through the lens of Western-style academia. The idea was to generate awareness of one’s own embraced ontological lens and the assumptions that accompany it, the existence of other possible lenses, and the ability to move between such lenses.

The Team

Scholars approached (and, those who agreed) for the first workshop included Arlene B. Tickner, Professor, Universidad de los Andes, Columbia; Ashis Nandy, Senior Honorary Fellow, Centre for Studies of Developing Societies, India; Chih-yu Shih, Professor of Political Science, National Taiwan University, Taiwan; David Blaney, James Wallace Professor of Political Science, Macalester College, USA; Jayati Shrivastava, Professor, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India; Kosuke Shimizu, Professor of International Relations, Department of Global Studies, Ryukoku University,

Japan; Kuan-Hsing Chen, Professor, Graduate Institute for Social Research and Cultural Studies, National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan; Mario Blaser, The Canada Research Chair on Aboriginal Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada; Pinar Bilgin, Associate Professor of International Relations, Bilkent University, Turkey; Sandra Harding, Distinguished Research Professor, University of California, Los Angeles, USA; and, Tamara Trownsell, Chair, The International Relations Department, the Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador. Out of these, Kuan-Hsing Chen, Sandra Harding and Mario Blaser could not finally attend the workshop. The new members included Peter Vale, Founding Director of the Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Study and Professor of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg and Shirin Rai, University of Warwick along with of course, Gunther Hellmann, who represented the WISC.

As mentioned earlier, a call for papers had been issued for the second workshop and we got an excellent response from around the world. 45 applications were received from countries including India, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Turkey, Denmark, Phillipines, Kyrgyz Republic, United States, Nigeria, Germany, Brazil, Japan, Canada, Nigeria, Ecuador, Mexico and Columbia. Out of these eighteen applicants were selected though only fifteen could attend the workshops. These included: Vineet Thakur and Thapelo Tselapedi from University of Johannesburg, South Africa; Amya Agarwal, Manish Kumar, Deepshikha Shahi, Priya Naik and Muzzafar Hussain from University of Delhi, India; Anagha Ingole, JNU, India; Roberto Dominguez, Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts; Nassef Manabilang Adiong, founder of the Philippine International Studies Organization; Salvador Schavelzon, Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP); Ching-Chang Chen, the Afrasian Research Centre at Ryukoku University; Gennaro Ascione, University of Naples l'Orientale; Jarrad Reddekop, University of Western Ontario, Canada; Michael Liebig, the South Asia Institute (SAI), Department of Political Science, Heidelberg University; and Nancy E. Wright, Long Island University-Brooklyn, New York City. Peter Marcus Kristense, University of Copenhagen, Sam Okoth Opondo, Vassar College, USA and Zeynep Gulsah, Bilkent University could not attend due to unforeseen and unavoidable personal and professional pressures. And, Amaya Querejazu Escobari, Universidad de Los Andes and Pablo Fernando Orellana Matute, Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ), Ecuador could not participate due to lack of sufficient financial support.

Participants for the third workshop were also selected on an open, competitive basis. These included Priya Naik, Amya Agarwal, Manish Kumar, Alisha Dhingra, Rityusha Mani Tiwary, Tusharika Deka, Megha, Meghna Kajla, Pawan Kumar and Ngoru Nixon from University of Delhi; Anagha Ingole, Madhumita Das, Shaheli Das, Maheeka Nanda, Khatija Khader, Ektaa Jain and Dipti Tamang from JNU; Surinder Mohan from University of Jammu, Ratan Kumar Roy, Dev Pathak and Masih Ullah Khan from South Asian University, Tshering Chonzom Bhutia, Institute of Chinese Studies; Nassef Manabilang Adiong, founder of the Philippine International Studies Organization; Salvador Schavelzon, Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP); and Jarrad Reddekop, University of Western Ontario, Canada; and Gennaro Ascione, University of Naples l'Orientale.

First Workshop

Conceptually, the workshop was divided into three parts. It began with an open brainstorming on how to redefine ‘the idea of the international’ and, in light of those deliberations, how individual scholars viewed their own research followed by a discussion on their paper presentations. It concluded with a debate on identifying the next steps for this collective thought experiment. The workshop participants discussed their respective ‘discomforts’ with various aspects of IR’s disciplinary training, the limitations of its methodological tools, pedagogical practices and most importantly, its claims of boundary making and maintenance. These were discussed at length in terms of how they have shaped the discipline of IR thus far and how to address the consequent challenges arising from therein. Some key points made were as follows:

- i) On the issue of pedagogy, an important imperative in teaching or preparing IR syllabi is to teach ‘inclusive IR’ in a way that goes beyond the parochial limits of the US and indeed equips the students to better understand their respective and diverse local socio-political realities.
- ii) The ‘alternative’ in IR requires alternate vocabularies and eventually, its important to think of this project in trans-disciplinary rather than inter-disciplinary terms.
- iii) The search for an alternative calls for ‘humanizing’ the IR especially since the mainstream (read realist) IR approach is somewhat “absurd, de-humanized and immoral” (Nandy).
- iv) The search for an alternative could also imply creating more categories or nouns or perhaps how people looked at those nouns.

Overall, the workshop addressed a whole gamut of issues ranging from problems arising from methodological nationalism to taking multiple ontologies into account while theorizing IR; the linguistic turn in IR and yet its limitations arising from a certain inability to go beyond the human language; the dilemmas arising from the need to incorporate various non-western sources of knowledge albeit without inviting the charge of this becoming a ‘nativist’ enterprise; critically engaging with the truth claims of IR and challenges of theorizing IR by drawing from the everyday experiences along with many such issues.

Following is the list of papers presented at the first workshop.

1. Arlene Tickner & David Blaney, ‘Worlding the World as Pluriverse’
2. Kosuke Shimizu, ‘The Moment of Post-Western: International Relations and the Eternal Present’
3. Tamara Trowsell, ‘Lenses, Images, Fruits and Order of Appearance: A Working Conceptual Framework and Lexicon for Philosophical Ontology’
4. Gunther Hellmann, ‘The Ends of IR Theory and the Linguistic Turn (Half Way Around)’

5. Pinar Bilgin, 'Security in the International'
6. Jayati Shrivastava, 'Of Prisons and Native Predicament of Knowing International Relations: Interrogating the Binary of the Self and the Other'
7. Peter Vale and Vineet Thakur, 'Imperialism by Other Means'
8. Chih Yu Shih, 'International Relations of Post- Hybridity: Dangers and Ptentials in Non- Synthetic Cycles'
9. Navnita Chadha Behera, 'Mapping the Embedded Pluralities: Societal Bases of Political Authority in the Indian Traditions'

The first workshop concluded with a decision by all the participants to collectively write and publish a research article in one of the ISA Journals on 'Re-imagining the International: Just Do It'.

Second Workshop

This workshop carried forward the exercise by engaging a much wider group of scholars, most of who were at different albeit early stages of their academic careers. After introducing the overall thematic focus and purpose of the exploratory workshops and, briefly sharing the highlights of the first workshop, the main task was to provide a platform for these scholars to take the lead and set the pace for further deliberations. While there was much common ground between the first two workshops in terms of conceptual puzzles and problematics that were addressed, the format and the purpose of the second workshop was to provide detailed inputs, critiques, constructive suggestions from the 'senior scholars' as much as indeed from their peer group, which produced a highly supportive and vibrant dialogue. Papers presented at this workshop included:

1. Vineet Thakur, 'The Question of Race in the Origins of International Relations'
2. Amya Agarwal, 'Providing an Alternative Epistemological Standpoint to Study Gender and Conflict in International Relations'
3. Dr. Roberto Dominguez, 'Global IR: "De-othering" IR in Latin America'
4. Manish Kumar, 'Revisiting Sovereignty: A non-Western Perspective'
5. Nassef ManabilangAdiong, 'Comparative Conundrum between Nation-State and Muslim Governance'
6. ThapeloTselapedi, 'Colonial Constructions of 'the International''

7. Salvador Schavelzon, 'Ontologies, Cosmopolitics and Systems of Knowledge in Bolivia and Latin America'
8. Jarrad Reddekop, 'Political Thinking Across Ontologies?'
9. Chin-Chang Chen, 'Can Confucian Diplomacy' Exist in Westphalian International Relations? Rethinking the Republic of Korea's Belated De-recognition of the Republic of China'
10. Anagha Ingole, 'Faith and Reason in International Political Thought: Does Science affect the Ontology of IR?'
11. Muzzafar Hussain, 'The Mawdudi's Alternative: Individual and Global Transformation'
12. Priya Naik, 'All the Kings Men: Regal Ministers of Eclipsed Empires'
13. Nancy E. Wright, 'Narrowing the Margins, Filling the Page: Exploring Diversity in Empire and Diplomacy'
14. Michael Liebig, 'Back to the Future: The Relevance of Kautilya's Arthashastra for IR theory'
15. Deepshikha Shahi and Gennaro Ascione, 'Advaita and the Scientific Foundations for IR Theory: A Geohistorical Perspective'

At the end of the workshop, all participants debated a range of options in carrying this work forward. Most importantly, the group coined a name for itself: ***The Delhi Group: A Forum on IR in the Global South***. Several suggestions including launching a website, publishing an edited volume, and a special issue of a journal to writing individual blogs were discussed. Its important to note in this regard that a website to this effect has already been launched at the url: <http://delhigroup.net/>

Third Workshop

This workshop was primarily conceived and conducted by Prof. Tamara Trownsell with support from David Blaney, Arlene Tickner, Navnita Chadha Behera, Jayati Shrivastava and, in part, from Prof. Sanjeev Kumar of Delhi University. The workshop succeeded in facilitating its participants negotiate a sharp learning curve by making them face their own ontological assumptions in a way, which they had perhaps never experienced. Through group discussions and self-experimentation, they learnt how such ontological assumptions inform their diverse ways of knowing and a

basic grasp of how these give shape to one's particular conceptualizations of knowledge/knowing.

Funding Support and Collaborations

WISC had provided a grant of 10,000 Euros for the Exploratory workshops, 81% of which was used for providing travel support to international participants and 19% for meeting local expenses. A detailed break-up of these figures are provided below. In addition to IRIIS's own resources, we raised financial support worth approx 6500 Euros (Rs.4.5 lakhs) from local sources. The Maulana Abdul Kalam Institute of Asian Studies, based in Kolkata provided a grant for Rs. 2.5 lakhs and the Indian Council for Social Science Research gave a grant for Rs. 2 lakhs for these workshops. The third workshop, it may be noted, was organized in collaboration with the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi.

Acknowledgements

IRIIS would like to record the support of its Research Associate, Ms. Amya Aggarwal for completely handling all organizational responsibilities regarding these workshop. Research students including Manish Kumar, Muzzafar Hussain and Surinder Mohan took up the cudgels for rapporteuring, Niyati and Radhika provided much needed logistical support. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support extended by Naseef, one of our delegates to set up and start the website for the Delhi Group.

Annexures:

- a) Budget Break-up of WISC Grant
 - b) List of Participants for the First Workshop
 - c) List of Participants for the Second Workshop
 - d) List of Participants for the Third Workshop
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Budget Break-Up:

Amount given by WISC: 10000 Euros= Rs. 7,06,000

Travel Grants given:

Name of Participant	Travel amount requested	Travel amount given
Gennaro Ascione	700 Euros	500x RS.71.5= Rs 35750
Dr. Roberto Dominguez	500 Euros	400x71.5=Rs 28,600
Thapelo	887.45 Euros	750x71.5= Rs 53,625
Salvador Schavelzon	1600- 1800 Euros	1500x71.5= Rs 1,07250
Jarrad Reddekop	1050 Euros	900 x 71.5= Rs 64,350
Nassef Manabilang Adiong	800 Euros	600x 71.5= Rs 42,900
Arlene Tickner	1600 USD	1400 US\$= Rs 91,591
David Blaney	500 USD	470x71.5=Rs 33605
Tamara Trowsell	2050 Euros	1352x71.5= Rs 96668
Total		554,339

First Workshop Participants

S.No.	Name	University Affiliation
1.	Gunther Hellmann	World International Studies Committee (WISC), Germany
2.	Arlene Beth Tickner	Universidad de los Andes, Columbia
3.	Tamara Ann Trownsell	Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador
4.	Peter Christopher Julius Vale	University of Johannesburg, South Africa
5.	Pinar Bilgin	Bilkent University, Turkey
6.	David Blaney	Macalester College, Minnesota, U.S.
7.	Navnita C. Behera	Department of Political Science, University of Delhi
8.	Jayati Shrivastava	JNU, Delhi
9.	Kosuke Shimizu	Ryukoku!University, Japan
10.	Ashis Nandy	Centre for Studies on Developing Societies
11.	Chih-yu Shih	National Taiwan University
12.	Shirin Rai	University of Warwick

Second Workshop Participants:

S.No .	Name	Designation	University Affiliation
1.	Deepshikha Shahi	Assistant Professor	University of Delhi, India
2.	Gennaro Ascione	Research Fellow	University of Naples l'Orientale, Italy
3.	Dr. Roberto Dominguez	Associate Professor	Suffolk University, U.S.A.
4.	Nancy E. Wright	Adjunct Professor of Political Science	Long Island University-Brooklyn, U.S.A
5.	Thapelo Tselapedi	PhD student	University of Johannesburg, South Africa
6.	. Michael Liebig	Lecturer	Heidelberg University
7.	Salvador Schavelzon		Federal University of Sao Paulo, Brazil
8.	Priya Naik	Assistant Professor	Zakir Husain Delhi College, University of Delhi, India
9.	Anagha Ingole	PhD Candidate	JNU, India
10.	Jarrad Reddekop	Research Associate/ Associate Fellow	Weatern University/ University Of Victoria, Canada
11.	Amya Agarwal	PhD Candidate	University of Delhi, India
12.	Manish Kumar	PhD Scholar	University of Delhi, India
13.	Vineet Thakur	Post Doctoral Research Fellow	University of Johannesburg , South Africa
14.	Muzzafar Hussain	Assistant Professor	University of Delhi, India
15.	Nassef Manabilang Adiong	Co-founder of Co-IRIS; Founder of PhISO, and PhD Candidate at METU	International Relations and Islamic Studies Research Cohort (Co-IRIS), Philippine International Studies Organization (PhISO), Middle East Technical University (METU, Ankara), and Alliance of Civilizations Institute (Istanbul).
16.	Ching-Chang Chen	Associate Professor	Ryukoku!University, Japan

Third Workshop Participants:

S. No.	Name	Designation	Affiliation
1	Salvador Schavelzon		Federal University of Sao Paulo, Brazil
2	Priya Naik	Assistant Professor	Zakir Husain Delhi College, University of Delhi
3	Anagha Ingle	PhD Candidate	JNU
4	Jarrad Reddekop	Research Associate/ Associate Fellow	Weatern University/ University Of Victoria
5	Amya Agarwal	PhD Candidate	University of Delhi
6	Manish Kumar	PhD Scholar	University of Delhi
7	Nassef Manabilang Adiong	Co-founder of Co-IRIS; Founder of PhISO, and PhD Candidate at METU	International Relations and Islamic Studies Research Cohort (Co-IRIS), Philippine International Studies Organization (PhISO), Middle East Technical University (METU, Ankara), and Alliance of Civilizations Institute (Istanbul).
8	Zeynep Gulsah Capan	Post Doctoral Student	Bilkent University
9	Ektaa Jain	PhD Research Scholar	JawaharLal Nehru University
10	Dipti Tamang	PhD Research Scholar	Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies in the School of International Studies, J.N.U.
11	Madhumita Das	PhD Research Scholar	JawaharLal Nehru University
12	Tusharika Deka	Program Executive and Partnership Alliance (EP)	University of Delhi, South Campus
13	Surinder	Doctoral candidate and Assistant Professor	Department of Political Science, University of Delhi and Department of Strategic and Regional Studies, University of Jammu
14	Alisha Dhingra	Assistant Professor	Department of Political Science, University of Delhi
15	Rityusha Mani Tiwary	Assistant Professor	Bhagat Singh College, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi
16	Ratan Kumar Roy	Research Scholar	Department of Sociology, South Asian University
17	Dev Pathak	Assistant Professor	Department of Sociology, South Asian University

18	Megha	Doctoral candidate	Department of Political Science, University of Delhi
19	Pawan Kumar	Assistant Professor	Kalindi College, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi
20	Tshering Chonzom Bhutia	Associate Fellow	Institute of Chinese Studies
21	Shaheli Das	PhD Research Scholar	Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University
22	Masih Ullah Khan	PhD Research Scholar	Department of International Relations, South Asian University
23	Maheeka Nanda	Research Scholar	Centre for International Politics Organisation and Disarmament (CIPOD), School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University
24	Khatija Khader	PhD Research Scholar	Centre for International Politics Organisation and Disarmament (CIPOD), School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University
25	Ngoru Nixon	Assistant Professor	Department of Political Science, University of Delhi
26	Meghna Kajla	M.Phil Student	Department of Political Science, University of Delhi