REVIVAL OF INTEREST:

THE THEORY OF E. H. CARR

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Abstract

In 1939, Carr wrote his seminal work *Twenty Years Crisis: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*. At first, the work was criticized by both the liberals and the realists but specialized interest in Carr's theory faded for about 50 years after that. Yet, there has recently been a revival of interest in Carr's work. This thesis is an attempt to explore the recent growth of interest in Carr.

The thesis asks "Why is there a disagreement among International Relations scholars about the theory of Edward Halett Carr?" A debate is not the problem here. Rather, the question is: Why after 50 years of silence, has there been a revival of interest in Carr's theory? Which aspect(s) of his theory are being discussed recently and why? Finally, how can students of International Relations benefit from Carr's theory and the recent debate?

The thesis argues that after the end of the Cold War, the need to explain change in international relations was the main cause of the revival of interest in Carr's theory. The end of the Cold War revived interest in change. So, Carr's dialectic between 'what is' and 'what ought to be', his arguments on the social conditioning of thought and the changing nature of international politics became more relevant. As a result, this thesis also argues that the debates on Carr's theory after the end of the Cold War are somewhat closer to an accurate reading of the *Twenty Years' Crisis*.

To support these arguments, the first chapter follows the recent interest in Carr's theory and summarizes the debates. The second chapter discusses the main message of Carr and tries to show how his theory focused on a dialectic theory of change, the relativity of thought and the social and historical conditioning of thought. Finally, the thesis attempts to evaluate the debates in the light of the reading of Carr.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Carr's theory has always been deemed important in International Relations. He is thought in theory of International Relations lessons among the founders of the discipline and realism, its dominant paradigm. So, interest in Carr never faded so as to forget his name completely. Yet, during the Cold War Years, apart from a few articles, no one really considered what Carr was saying in his own terms. This was partly because Carr was a peculiar thinker who defied easy definitions. This work is an attempt to explore the answers to these questions: Why had Carr's theory been largely ignored until the 1990's and why was a sudden revival of interest in the theory of Carr after 1990's? This work argues that the end of the Cold War created perfect historical conditions for International Relations scholars to start thinking about various aspects of change and this lead to the revived interest in Carr's work. The transformation of the international system forced the International Relations scholars to consider questions about change and this tuned them to the dialectic aspect of Carr's thinking and his thoughts on change in international politics.

1.1 Reactions –Silence and Renaissance

After the publication of *Twenty Years Crisis,* the immediate reactions to Carr's theory were similar both from the liberals and the realists both of whom Carr criticized. Both disliked Carr's relativism and his criticisms. Morgenthau criticized Carr's moral relativism and he even called Carr "a Machiavelli without *virtu.*" (Morgenthau 1948, 129, 134) Norman Angell and Alfred Zimmern, both believed the *Crisis* would be harmful due to its 'moral nihilism.' (Wilson, Responses 2000, 166-167) The book was also seriously criticized by Susan Stebbing, Arnold Toynbee and others. After the immediate reactions, silence followed.

The period of silence was sliced roughly by a single article per decade on Carr's theory. In his article Hedley Bull, treated Carr as a classical realist

and dismissed his theory as no longer useful because according to Bull the basic theme of *Crisis* was that the nineteenth century international order, morality and laws had collapsed and that interwar international organizations failed to see this. For Bull, this lesson was no longer needed in IR. (Bull 1969) In 1967, Whittle Johnston claimed that Carr had two theories and that they were inconsistent. (Johnston 1967) About a decade later Graham Evans refuted Johnston's thesis by showing that these two theories fell under a single central theme. (Evans 1975) Finally, during the 80's Michael Joseph Smith provided one of the deeper criticisms of by emphasizing the lack of depth in Carr's relativism. Smith found Carr's "sociology of knowledge" somewhat "crude" and he criticized Carr for claiming to know the morality of "the man in the street". (Smith 1986) Apart from these, the period was marked by lack of interest in Carr's work.

After the end of the Cold War, however, the literature on Carr's theory exploded. The number of scholarly articles on Carr's theory increased dramatically. Since 1991, several articles have been written by scholars such as Ken Booth, Michael Cox, Paul Howe, Andrew Linklater, Tim Dunne and Vendulka Kubalkova, Peter Wilson, Lucian Ashworth, Sean Molloy and others. In addition, two biographies of Carr's life and works were written by Jonathan Haslam and Charles Jones. Finally, two edited books, *The EightyYears' Crisis: International Relations 1919–1999,* a Special Edition of the Review of International Studies dedicated to Carr and *E. H. Carr: A Critical Appraisal,* a work that compiled analysis on different aspects of Carr's theory were published. Both works had several articles related to the theory of Carr.

This thesis seeks to explore the revival of interest in Carr and argues that this revival was due to the change in international relations and its implications. The end of the Cold War created interest in the societal sources of change and this made the many points in Carr's theory more relevant. This thesis also argues that one of the main reasons of the revived

interest in Carr is his ability to explain change. This ability stems from his dialectic method. Through the influence of Mannheim and Marx, Carr created the dialectic between reality and utopia or realism and utopianism. The dialectic represents the constant struggle between forces that strive for change and those that strive to keep the existing order in international relations. Theoretically there is a similar struggle between theories that try to explain 'what is' and theories that try to explain 'what ought to be' and there is an ongoing conversation between them. Carr also added his ideas on the social conditioning of thought to this dialectic and presented "sociology of knowledge" as the new science for IR. His dialectic theory of change, thus, became more relevant because the direction of discipline itself turned towards questions other than security, defense and conflict. After the end of the Cold War, the discipline needed to explain change in international order and Carr had already created a theory that would explain change in international politics.

1.2 What Did Carr Say?

It is not easy to frame Carr in a single theoretical paradigm. The difficulty of trying to place Carr in a single paradigm has perhaps been most strikingly expressed by Vendulka Kubalkova in his article Twenty Years' Catharsis: "Carr has been seen as the forefather of realism, of the 'post' movement as well as a 'proto constructivist'... ...This means that were he alive, Carr could do a circus act in International Relations conferences by sitting alone at a roundtable discussing three positions at the same time." (Kubalkova 1998, 25) Indeed, different scholars have placed Carr's theory into different frames. However, a close reading of Carr reveals that the subtitle of his book: "an introduction to the study of international relations" meant the introduction to "sociology of knowledge", a method that analyzes change. Therefore, this thesis argues that the "sociology of knowledge" adapted from Mannheim inherently meant that Carr aimed to study international politics in constant change.

Carr's theory analyzes change in international politics through a dialectical historical process. Carr begins his argument by asserting that all forms of political thinking are historically and socially conditioned. So, ideas and solutions that are viable in a certain age may not be meaningful in another. Due to the "conditioned nature of all thought", Carr recommends both politicians and political scientists to use a mode of thinking that constantly checks the relative nature of their own thinking. He asserts that politicians and political scientists need to use "sound political thinking" and he reaches the conclusion that "sound political thinking" is possible only by finding a compromise between the two extremes: "utopianism" and "realism". Consequently, Carr proposes his new method of sound political thinking: "Sociology of Knowledge". He defines this as the new science which follows historical progress in international politics by analyzing the "relative and pragmatic character of thought." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 92, 93) The dialectic between "realism" and "utopianism" and Carr's focus on historical progress made his science a theory that attempted to calculate the factor of change in international politics. It has also made the text somewhat difficult to access. This is another reason why it would be rediscovered by international relations scholars after the end of the Cold War.

The link between Carr's theory and change becomes more apparent once the origin of his ideas is examined. Firstly, Carr was greatly influenced by Karl Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, ix, x) In fact, the dialectic between "ideology" and "utopia" in Karl Mannheim's work "Ideology and Utopia" is the source of Carr's dialectic between the progressive and the conservative forces in international relations. Just as Mannheim's "ideology" and "utopia" represent the opposing forces in societies, Carr's "utopia" and "realism" represent the opposing forces in international relations and also schools of thought in theory of International Relations. The opposing forces in international relations are the nations who want to maintain the status quo

because it favors them and the other nations who want to change it. The opposing forces in the study of international relations are between "utopians" and "realists". Utopianism 'makes political theory a norm which political practice ought to conform' and realism assumes that 'there is no other good other than the acceptance and understanding of reality.' (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 12, 21, 53, 79, 85, 87) Change according to Carr occurs due to the dialectic and the constant struggle between 'what is' and 'what ought to be.'

Besides, Carr's methodology was adopted from Mannheim who recommended "sociology of knowledge" for studying society in a constant process of change, or progress. (Mannheim 1979, 178, 179) Similarly, Carr recommended "sociology of knowledge" for studying historical progress. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 67) Finally, both Mannheim and Carr thought that historical/political progress made moves like a wave as conditions swung between the opposing forces. This wave-like motion represented the dialectic progress of history.

1.3 Debate on Carr

Today, Carr's theory is relevant due to the changes in world politics. When Carr applied Mannheim's "Sociology of Knowledge" and Mannheim's dynamic understanding of Ideology and Utopia to International Relations, Carr's analysis led to a theory of the changing nature of in International Politics. This is an IR theory that models how change occurs. Therefore, in a fast changing world, the formerly overlooked components of Carr's theory and his attempt to analyze the changing nature of world politics may be essential to our understanding. Therefore, it is meaningful to have debates on Carr. However, some of these debates are more fruitful than the others.

The debate whether Carr is a realist or not is not necessarily fruitful. Firstly, the realist part of Carr's argument or namely the part of his argument where he deals a devastating blow to utopian thinking is clearly

understood by students of international relations and it does not require much debate. Secondly, this part of the debate may blur some of the intricate components of Carr's thinking. If the students of international politics think of Carr as a classical realist, they may miss the part of his argument on the relativity of all thought (whether realist or utopian) and they may also miss his application of "sociology of knowledge" to the worldview of an era and its implications for today.

The debate on what Carr really meant or attempts to read him in his own terms seem to be more meaningful today. To begin with, as mentioned above, Carr's theory presented a method for the analysis of transformation in international politics. A method like this will be relevant whenever there is a change in international system. Also, Carr's warning that the worldview of an era may not be applicable to another one is also worth noting in our period. We may need to read this era of international politics in its own merits. Reading it through Cold War lenses may prove disastrous. In addition, his recommendation of applying "sociology of knowledge" to understanding world politics may be useful. It may offer a method for deciphering how power and interest are reflected in the discourse of the era.

A deeper level of Carr's argument, the part where he argues that "sociology of knowledge" can also be applied to International Relations is also worth noting. The debate on what International Relations is and how research in International Relations should be conducted is an ongoing debate. The International Relations discipline seems to be obsessed with this debate. This makes Carr's recommendation very relevant even today. If all human ideas and worldviews are historically conditioned as Carr says, as human beings political scientists are prone to historically and socially conditioned thinking as well. Therefore, it might be meaningful for scientist to be aware of the possible ways in which their own thinking is socially conditioned. It would be really interesting to see the International Relations discipline through the lenses of "sociology of knowledge."

Thus, this thesis contends that the debate on Carr has recently taken a more fruitful path. However, it still seems to have certain blind spots.

1.4 Blind spots of the debate

The so-called radical components of Carr's thinking are yet to be explored. Carr's emphasis on the social conditioning of thought has not been completely dealt with. How deep is the social conditioning of thought in international politics? How does it affect the way units deal with each other? In addition, Carr's prediction of the possible emergence of larger units of political organization is something political scientists may have to consider (he also guesses the emergence of a European unit). It might be useful to study what other kinds of economic and political units are emerging. Similarly, his prediction that nationalism may not be the last ideology of the modern state system is worth noting because if larger units emerge, it will be likely for them to replace nationalism with another ideology and it might be useful for the politicians in any unit to be aware of both the emergence of such units and the worldview(s) they may promote.

Another blind spot of the debate is probably the other works of Carr which are related to the issues of international relations. It is probably a good idea for students of International Relations to be encouraged to read Carr's later works on International Relations such as the *Conditions of Peace & Nationalism and After*. Also, students of International Relations should also be encouraged to learn about the debates on International Relations itself. There are debates about whether International Relations is a science or not, if so to what extent, whether International Relations can be positivist or not and if so to what extent. Carr seems to offer an alternative to positivist methodologies. Any debate on positivism is likely to touch on Carr's position on positivism. All of these are worth noting for a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding the discipline.

Coming back to a reading of Carr it is also important to note that often the immediate policy recommendations of Carr proved to be not as

meaningful as the deeper levels of his argument. Carr's immediate policy recommendation was "appeasement" and this proved to be quite meaningless once Hitler's intentions were made clear. Hitler would not be appeased by a balance of power, he wanted more and like many others Carr could not see this.

Second, Carr argued for a new science of International Relations which did not fail to take notice of the power factor in international politics. This argument is still meaningful today. In fact, realism, the dominant approach in the discipline is guided by this warning. Therefore, it is meaningful for student of international relations to be able to read the interests hidden behind the statements of diplomats and statesmen. However, this part of Carr's theory may have been taken the recommendation a bit too far to a degree that was not promoted by Carr. Carr did not promote classical realism and if we consider him as a classical realist, then we may miss some of his main points.

Third, Carr argued that every worldview (realist or idealist) is historically and socially conditioned and relative. This actually makes Carr's theory different from that of Morgenthau who believed in a fixed human nature. (Jones 1998, 132) It might be interesting to use "sociology of knowledge" to reveal the vested interests hidden behind both the idealist and realist worldviews of our day. Scholars may study to delve deeper how Carr used his own method and the method may be developed for further inquiry. It might also be useful to examine who actually is doing work on sociology of knowledge and studying how ideas affect international politics. For example, as change in Islamic countries happen, it might be interesting to study how and why change occurs and which utopian and realist elements cause them to change and towards what direction they are spiraling. After all, domestic change may mean change in international politics.

Fourth, Carr argued that the function of his new science was to study change or in his words to study the "the constant interaction of

irreconcilable forces (ie. utopia and reality) [which] is the stuff of politics." (Carr, 1967, 94) Developing Carr's method may prove to be useful in predicting and managing change in international politics. In fact, Carr aimed to find a way to replace war as a means of change by other methods of transformation. This may also be worth noting since achieving change through peaceful means is a constant concern in international relations.

Finally, Carr's warning that ideas formed in the social conditions of a period may not be viable in the conditions of another is also worth discussing. This is quite relevant today as the world has recently gone through a transition from the "Cold War" politics to a world led by a single power and it might soon experience further transitions. This means that there is an urgent need to understand the emerging order. In line with Carr's warning, it might be as catastrophic to read the 21th century conditions with thinking patterns that arose from 20th century conditions. Carr said that politicians (& political scientists) need to constantly check their thinking and create uneasy compromises between reality and utopia, power and morality. His warning is still relevant.

In fact, this might be the time for students of international relations to be upgraded from the textbook Carr to a deeper reading. They may study more than the first few chapters of The Twenty Years Crisis, but a full reading of the text and his other works on International Relations.

This thesis mainly follows an analysis on the debates on Carr, a close reading of his theory and the evaluation of the recent debates in the light of the understanding derived from this close reading.

Firstly, to show the direction in which the recent debate has taken and to show how Carr's theory is a theory of change, this thesis firstly summarizes the recent debates on Carr in three periods which are the periods of immediate reactions in the early 1940's, the following period of general silence and the post Cold War explosion of interest in Carr's theory. This part of the argument explores formerly overlooked components of Carr's

theory and shows his focus on the changing nature of world politics and the origins of his thoughts that emerged in the debates after 1991.

Secondly, a close reading of Carr is presented in Chapter 3. This reading follows the path Carr's argument takes by following his thoughts on the social and historical conditioning of thought, a general theme of the *Crisis*, his thoughts on 'sound political thinking', his introduction of 'sociology of knowledge' as Modern Realism and his dialectic method. In addition, this chapter examines the lack of definitions in Carr's work and its implications. More importantly, the chapter analyses how Carr adapted Karl Mannheim's 'sociology of knowledge' to international politics, Marxist elements in his thought and his inclination to steer away from positivism in social sciences.

The last chapter analyses the recent debates on Carr in light of the reading. The analysis focuses the debates and their implications for current studies. It sheds light on the unexamined components of Carr's thought. It also analyses the debates in comparison to the levels of argument in *Carr's Twenty Years Crisis* and the claims he had made. In short, the last chapter is an attempt to evaluate whether the debate is mind opening in terms of understanding Carr and in terms of understanding international relations.

This study focuses mainly on the revival of interest in Carr's theory of International Relations and the relationship of this with his dialectic method. This aim limits the scope of the work to mainly the *Twenty Years Crisis* where his dialectics is found. However, this work also lightly touches upon *Conditions of Peace* and *Nationalism and After* as they better our understanding on Carr's theory of International Relations. However, this work does not dwell on the other works of Carr which are not directly related to the theory of International Relations apart from a brief reference to Carr's emphasis on progress in *What is History*.

Chapter 2

Reactions, Silence and Revival

Carr wrote his classical piece of International Relations, The *Twenty Years Crisis: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* in 1939 right before the beginning of the second world war. During the war and the 40's he was criticized by scholars from both the liberal and the realist camp. Yet, after the initial criticism faded a long period (40 years) of silence ensued and Carr took his place in the textbooks among classical realists. So, from 1950 to 1990 there has been very little specialized interest in the Twenty Years Crisis. Nevertheless, after 1991 there has been a revival of interest in the *Twenty Years Crisis*. In fact, in one recent biography of Carr's life and works, it is argued that it is best to date the beginning of recent interest in Carr from Ken Booth's 'Utopian Realism' of 1991. (Jones 1998, 8) This thesis tries to explain why after years of silence and there has been recent revival of interest in Carr.

To fulfill its aim, this chapter follows the main stages of the debate on Carr's theory and the nature of the recent interest in Carr. The three main steps in the debate over Carr's theory can be summarized as initial reactions, general silence and an explosion of interest in Carr's theory. In fact, these phases are not coincidental. Each phase also reflects a phase in international relations and its theory.

The immediate reaction from both liberal and the realist intellectuals was sharp criticism of Carr's moral and theoretical relativism. Carr's criticism of 'complete utopianism' and 'complete realism' and also his thorough relativism was distasteful for both realists such as Morgenthau and for liberals like Norman Angell, Alfred Zimmern, Arnold J. Toynbee and Susan Stebbing. Apparently, the 40's was a period during which liberals (the so called utopians of Carr's *Twenty Years Crisis*) and realists were all in need of powerful ideals. In fact, it is not difficult to imagine why during the II World War, any relativist position proved to be quite distasteful.

From the 50's to the 90's, Carr's theory was largely ignored in the specialized literature and this was perhaps the II World War was replaced with another: The Cold War. The Cold War was a period characterized by tension between the two powers, worries of threat of nuclear war and wars between the two great powers at the peripheries. All of this naturally created interest in conflict. In this period, realism became the dominant theory in international politics of international politics. Not surprisingly, readers of Carr could obviously see the parallels between his emphasis on power and Cold War tensions and rivalry. For example, realist concerns over military power gained precedence over other problems. Studies on, security, defense and conflict resolution flourished. Especially in the US, questions of security, weapons development and deployment, and strategy became the main focus for scholars and government-funded think tanks also worked on these issues. (Holsti 1998, 19, 45) In this polarized atmosphere, there was probably little patience for the relativism or the critical components of Carr's theory. Therefore, he was established as one of the founding fathers of realism and being established as a staunch realist, he remained largely ignored in the specialized literature on international theory.

After the Cold War, things changed. As one scholar argues, the end of the Cold War has created a good deal of soul-searching in the academic discipline of International Relations. This is probably the context which led to the revived interest in Carr. To begin with, as the dominant theory realism started to develop interests in areas such as domestic politics, international cooperation, the analysis of change. These were areas that were often neglected during the Cold War. In addition, Liberal IR-theory started to devote less time to international institutions and become focused on other problems such as democratization, sovereignty, and change brought about by modernization and globalization. Moreover, theories such as the English School received renewed interest in the field of international political economy. (Sorensen 1998, 83, 100)

All these post-Cold War developments created an atmosphere in which, more radical components of Carr's theory such as his debt to Mannheim and Marx, his belief in dialectical historical progress and his critical approach could finally become the focus of attention again.

2.1 Immediate Reactions: Criticizing Carr's Relativism

After the publication of *Twenty Years Crisis,* the immediate reactions to Carr's theory were similar both from the liberals and the realists. One scholar succinctly stated: "The extreme moral relativism and the uncompromisingly materialist sociology of knowledge that Carr seemed to be purveying certainly came as a big shock to those who liked their morality and their knowledge unambiguous and neatly packed." (Wilson, Responses 2000, 181)

Interestingly, unlike the textbook stories, the so-called idealists did not seem to feel they had received a devastating blow. On the contrary, both liberals (most of whom Carr had labeled as utopians) and realists alike criticized Carr for his moral relativism. After all, these articles were written during the II World War during when the integrity of British morals were essential in the war efforts against Germany. (Wilson, The Myth 1998, 3-5). (Wilson, Responses 2000, 166-167)

Indeed, many scholars (realist or utopian) criticized Carr for his moral relativism. To begin with, Morgenthau found Carr's relativity so distasteful that he called Carr "a Machiavelli without *virtu.*" (Morgenthau 1948, 129, 134) In addition, liberal writers that Carr had labeled as Utopians found his theory diabolic. In fact, Norman Angell and Alfred Zimmern, thought the *Twenty Years Crisis* would be harmful due to its 'moral nihilism.' Arnold J. Toynbee found it lacking in purpose. The book was also seriously criticized by Leonard Woolf and Susan Stebbing and others. (Wilson, Responses 2000, 166-167)

For **Hans J. Morgenthau** the work of Carr in *The Twenty Years' Crisis* was a failure because it failed to be either realistic or moral enough. According to Morgenthau, Carr established the significance of power in international relations and then he simply lost his way by searching for a new Utopia. It is not hard to discern that Morgenthau finds this quest for Utopia futile. He states his opinion in these words: "...all his subsequent thinking becomes the odyssey of a mind which has discovered the phenomenon of power and longs to transcend it." In addition, Morgenthau criticizes Carr for his lack of a clear definition of morality. To him Carr "has only the vaguest idea of what morality is... ...the philosophically untenable equation of utopia, theory and morality" results in a "relativistic, instrumentalist conception of morality". Morgenthau states that the purpose of Carr is to create a synthesis between realism and utopianism, theory and practice, ethics and politics. While trying to create this synthesis he gets lost because 'Mr. Carr is philosophically so ill equipped'. He is very harsh in his last words about Carr, "It is a dangerous thing to be a Machiavelli. It is a disastrous thing to be a Machiavelli without *virtu.*" (Morgenthau 1948, 129, 134) Clearly, Morgenthau would not call Carr a realist or a utopian and he clearly disliked Carr's relativism.

Norman Angell also criticized Carr for his relativism because he thought that Carr's relativism was immoral. This is why Angell stated that Carr's book was 'completely mischievous [and] a piece of sophisticated moral nihilism'. He was concerned it would lead to 'do-nothingism.' Since Carr stated that international law and the sanctity of treaties were socially conditioned by the interests of certain nations, Angell was concerned this moral relativism would weaken the will to fight against Germany. Thus, he attacked Carr for providing moral ammunition to Hitler and even claimed that Carr's ideas were similar to that of Dr. Goebbels. Carr's relativist position could make people doubt the ideals for which Britain was fighting; it could make them pessimistic and defeatist. (N. Angell 1940, 39-40)

Alfred Zimmern was another scholar who criticized the 'thorough-going relativism' of Carr. According to Zimmern, even if some ideals or ideas were misused by the ill-intentioned, it did not mean that we could give up on ideals or morals completely. It was still possible to identify certain foreign policies as good or better. If certain values did not exist, all that the students of international relations were left with was 'blank frustration' and they could not actually build a utopia without any values. (Zimmern 1939, 750)

Arnold J. Toynbee agreed with Zimmern in a letter. Carr was a 'a consummate debunker', and Carr's *Twenty Years Crisis* would have been a 'very important contribution to the study of recent international affairs' only if debunking was the main job of the international relations scholar. However, debunking, Toynbee argued was only the introduction and it fell short of the main aim of building. Debunking lead to a dead end unless it provided 'a clearer view of what is morally right and wrong and what is politically destructive or disastrous'. (T. t. Angell 1940) In short, the moral relativism of Carr was pointless because it did not serve a greater purpose.

Leonard Woolf argued that Carr had not defined the concepts he was talking about and therefore his arguments were vague and if the terms were not defined clearly, it could not be considered a scientific enquiry. Carr had not even defined 'utopia' and 'reality' although these were the two terms he based his whole argument on. Evidently, the term 'utopia' often was used in two distinct ways and this led to confusion. It was not clear whether utopian beliefs were false, or impossible of attainment. This was because sometimes utopian was used as the opposite of 'realism', and it described a policy 'incapable of fulfillment'. At other times, the term utopian was used in opposition to 'reality' and it described ideas and beliefs that were 'unreal' or 'false'. As a result, it was not only the morals of Carr, that were relative but also his terminology was relative and Woolf pointed to this as a weakness.

The criticism of **Susan Stebbing** was similar to that of Leonard Woolf because she criticized the way Carr used his main terminology. In fact, Carr failed to define his key terms such as utopianism and realism, morality and power, conscience and coercion; theory and practice; altruism, self-seeking etc. These terms were put in conceptual pairs in Carr's argument as if they meant the same thing. However, none of them were defined and these conceptual pairs led to a quite wrong impression of reality. What is more, Carr seemed to imply that power was more real than morality and coercion was more real than conscience, etc. Stebbing found this impression fallacious and biased. Thus, she criticized the moral relativism and the ambiguous terminology of Carr. (Stebbing 1941)

A common problem with these criticisms is that they assume Carr is against moral values. Carr did not deny the possibility of morals. In fact, he accepted that morals had a sense. Yet, when these absolute ideals are applied to "a concrete political situation, they are revealed as the transparent disguises of selfish vested interests." Carr is simply pointing to the fact that when applied to real situations in domestic or international politics, the application of any ideals are flawed and they are always made to serve the powerful. For example, Carr did not like the fact that the victorious nations started to sell peace as a universal value right after the Versailles Treaty. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 87, 88).

2.2 Silence and its Reasons

This immediate scholarly interest in Carr was followed by silence. Perhaps this was because Carr was regarded as a political realist and things were left at that. In fact, Carr left his office at the British Foreign Office in 1936 and from that year to 1945 he wrote many works in which he criticized the ideal of the 'harmony of interests' and underlined the importance of the factor of power in international relations. Also, most of his critics openly treated him as a realist. One example is Susan Stebbing. She criticized Carr for the version of realism he mentioned in the 5th chapter of *Twenty Years*

Crisis. However, she did not seem to note his demolition of this type of realism in chapter 6 or his later chapters. (Jones 1998, 145)

There were probably other reasons for the silence regarding the theory of Carr. One was Carr's socialist sympathies. When realism became linked with rightwing in Britain and USA in the postwar period, Carr found himself distanced from these rightwing political inclinations. He was clearly sympathetic to the Soviet experiment so much that in the 1940's his readers in *Times* perceived him as the Red Proffessor'. (Jones 1998, 132, 144) Second, Carr did not directly address any of his critiques. Instead he wrote the *Conditions of Peace* and *Nationalism and After.* (Jones 1998, 156, 159) Third, Carr was interested in other areas. Around 1944, Carr decided to write a History of Soviet Russia and this work would take up 30 years of his life. (Haslam Dec, 1983, 1021)

2.3 A Few Rays of Light

For the reasons mentioned, the period of immediate reactions to the Twenty Years Crisis was followed by a period of very little interest in Carr. However, this was not complete silence because there was roughly a single article per decade on Carr's theory. In this period, interest in Carr is faint and not really in the form of a structured debate. Some of the readings are too literal and they miss the main points Carr was trying to make. The most revealing work in this period was probably Graham Evans' article because it demonstrates the consistency in Carr's thought.

Much like the immediate reactions **Hedley Bull** treated Carr perhaps a little too literally and as a classical realist and dismissed Carr's theory as no longer useful. According to Bull, the main thesis of Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis* was that the nineteenth century international order, morality and laws had collapsed and that interwar international organizations failed to see this. This was no longer a lesson International Relations needed. (Bull 1969) However, Bull oversimplified Carr's argument. His reading of Carr is perhaps a bit too literal and stuck in a concrete level of policy

recommendation. Therefore, he missed the more abstract levels of Carr's position such as the "the conditioned character of thought" and the need to account for change in international politics.

About a decade later **Johnston** claimed that Carr had two theories and that they were inconsistent. (Johnston 1967) His argument goes as such:

- The first theory was that *Twenty Years' Crisis* claimed that the "cause of the interwar breakdown" is traced to the harmful effects of doctrine of harmony of interests.
- The second theory was in *Nationalism and After*. In this second theory, the cause of the interwar breakdown was the tension between political autonomy and the necessities of economic and military interdependence.

So, Johnston concluded that Carr had two theories and that they were inconsistent.

According to Graham Evans, the problem with Johnston's position was that it missed Carr's main theme in *Twenty Years Crisis* and his other works that human thinking is historically and socially conditioned. According to Evans, this theme ties the two works to each other: "the principles of one age cannot without great danger be carried over, consciously or not, into another where the conditions giving rise to them have all but disappeared." (Evans 1975, 84) Thus, by delving deeper into Carr's argument, he discovered that it is indeed quite consistent.

In fact, Evans explains very clearly that the main difference between these texts is a level of analysis. In the *Twenty Years' Crisis* the argument is 'moral'. Attempting to apply the 'harmony of interests' to the 20th century conditions was a moral crisis. However, in *Nationalism and After* the difference is between the state systems of the 19th and 20th centuries and the difficulty of maintaining an old inter-state order under the new conditions. Both of these were different levels in which the thinking patters

of one age were applied to the conditions of another with detrimental results. (Evans 1975, 83)

Indeed, Carr does not present an inconsistent thesis in *Nationalism and After*. Instead, he explores the 19th century conditions in which nationalism fluorished along individualism and economic liberalism and he compares them with the changing conditions of the 20th century. The new conditions led to the "aggravation of the evils of nationalism" in this new period. He argues that the three causes of the crisis, "the socialization of the nation, the nationalization of economic policy and the geographical extension of nationalism", (or movements of self-determination) still have to be adressed through planning in supranational level. (Carr, Nationalism and After 1945, 25, 26) He also predicts that any transition from nationalism to internationalism will have to come through intermedeate units of organisation which may reinforce 'national by multi-national and international planning' (Ibid 45, 47.).

In *Conditions of Peace*, Carr takes his argument even further by explaining that war is not purposeless. When a societal demand for a new order is not addressed, this condition may lead to revolution or war. For Carr, Hitler served this purpose: "Hitler, like Napoleon, has performed the indispensible function of sweeping away the litter of the old world." Acc ording to Carr, both Russia and Germany were aiming to meet the demand for social and economic change: "Both were in their different ways looking forward to a new order based on new and revolutionary conceptions of social and economic organization." However, Britain and France failed "to understand the nature of the forces at work." (Carr, Conditions of Peace 1942, 8, 10)

He then goes on to explore the problems of the revolution of the 20th century from many different levels of crisis: the crisis of democracy, the crisis of self determination and the economic crisis. Throughout *Nationalism and After* and *Conditions of Peace*, there is an underlying and

unifying theme that applying the thinking patterns of one age to another rage with different conditions may prove fatal and that the societal and international demand for change should be addressed through peaceful means and planning rather than by revolution domestically and war internationally. Carr promotes multi-national planning (especially in Europe) as an alternative to change through war. (Carr, Conditions of Peace 1942, 241-251)

One of the most observant critics of Carr is Michael Joseph Smith. He criticized Carr for the lack of depth in his relativism. He found the sociology of knowledge of Carr to be somewhat "crude" and his idea that "the conditioning of thought is necessarily a subconscious process" to be somewhat shallow. This means that he thought Carr did not develop his relativism into a coherent method. He did not ask "What is the degree to which thought is socially conditioned? Which conditions are more important? Is it possible to avoid social conditioning?" Therefore, Carr's thinking could fall prey to his own criticism: "couching optative propositions in the indicative mood." (Wilson, Radicalism for a Conservative Purpose 2001, 128-129)

Also, Smith criticized Carr because when he used the term morality he meant the morality of "the man in the street". However, this made his argument misleading because Carr was no more the representative of the morality of the man on the street than his contemporary Utopians. Morevoer, the moral relativism of Carr caused him to promote appeasement. With his relativist lenses, Carr failed to notice that Germany was not simply a "have not" power to be appeased by regaining its role in the international politics. Thus, Smith reaches the conclusion that "in the hands of E. H. Carr realism ultimately becomes an agnostic relativism of power."

In his first criticism Smith seems to have caught a specious part of Carr's argument. However, in the second part when he criticizes the relativism of, Smith fails to see that Carr's relativism is problematic if one assumes that

there is a single universal morality. An absolute universal morality was exactly what Carr was trying to avoid. He was not against the notion of morality in any of its forms. He was just criticizing the easy assumption that one's own morality represents absolute and eternal morality. He was trying to show that reality is change. Therefore, people applying morality should apply it by looking at the problem on its own merits, not by using a universal and eternal principle. (Molloy 2003, 298-299)

Among these three texts the most revealing one seems to be the text provided by Graham Evans because it shows the main theme that connects the major theoretical works of Carr. That theme is the social and historical conditioning of thought.

2.3 Revival of Interest

After the end of the Cold War, the literature on Carr's theory exploded. This thesis argues that this interest was due to the need to explain change in international relations. The end of the Cold War created a particular interest in change and the societal causes of it because the bipolar world order did not change through a war. It ended due to a change in the worldview of the leaders of former Soviet Russia. This created an interest in the societal sources of change and this led to the rediscovery of some of the overlooked components of Carr's theory. It also made the main themes and political science recommendations of Carr's theory more relevant. This means that the social conditioning of thought, change and "sociology of knowledge" as the new science of international relations all become more relevant as the need to study change became immediate.

In fact, this is partly in a special edition of International Review of Studies named the *80 Years Crisis*. Obviously named after Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis,* the introduction draws attention to the revival of interest in Carr 'that has gathered momentum' in the 1990's. According to Michael Cox, Tim Dunne and Ken Booth, there is a similarity between the 90's and the 30's. In the 30's when Carr wrote his work, a transition was

taking place in the way international relations was conducted and organized. The crisis at the end of the 1930s was only the manifestation of a bigger crisis. Applying the conditions of one era to another had proved to be disastrous. The disaster was caused by the collapse of the liberal-idealist thinking of the 19th century. When applied to the conditions of the inter-war period, it simply led to another disaster. Similarly, in the 90's and after the end of the Cold War, it was clear that a new order was about to emerge. The questions about the transition in the conduct and organization of the post-Cold War became immediate and at that point the uncertainty clearly reminded scholars of the deeper warnings of Carr's text and the overlooked components of his work. (M. K. Cox 1998, V) In short, many of the arguments in Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis* regarding change in international relations once again became relevant to the theory and practice of international politics after the end of the Cold War.

Following the debates around Carr's theory reveals that the debates can be placed roughly in two groups coinciding again roughly with the 1900's and the first decade of the 2nd millennium. After the 1990's the main attempts of scholars have been to save Carr from the grip of textbook realism and to rename the dynamic theory he promoted. After the 2000's scholars mainly focused on reading Carr in his own terms and tried to tried to separate the 'first great debate', a rhetorical device used by Carr, from the history of the International Relations discipline.

2.4 1990's - Redifinition Attempts

As mentioned before, 1990's was a period when scholars tried to save Carr from the grip of textbook realism and therefore they tried to point to the more radical components of his thinking. While Ken Booth pointed to the fact that Carr had been largely misunderstood; both Paul Howe and Andrew Linklater noted affinities between the thinking of Carr and critical theories. On the other hand, Tim Dunne appropriated Carr for post-modernist positions in which all perspectives are more or less relative while

Sean Molloy argued that Carr's relativism made him a post-positivist and the forefather of a critical discourse. Finally, Vendulka Kubalkova wraps us the whole debate by pointing to the dialectical nature of Carr's thought and explains how Carr can be everything to everyone at the same time. All of these scholars focused on the peculiar components of Carr's thinking that stood outside the borders of textbook realism. In fact, bringing all of these components together it is possible to see that Carr had a quite eclectic approach in which he took components from Marxism, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge and realism and probably many other influences and poured them all into one mould.

Ken Booth was one of the first scholars to read ambiguities in Carr and he concluded that due to the ambiguities in *Twenty Years Crisis,* Carr had been misunderstood. So, Booth had a peculiar name for Carr's theory: "Utopian Realism". Booth also asserted that since most of the scholars who read Carr were realists, they read him somewhat selectively:

> "His readers, overwhelmingly realists, have pounced upon his attack on utopianism but generally have failed to note his uncertainty, his criticism of realism and his positive comments about utopianism. For example, Carr defined political science as 'the science not only of what is, but of what ought to be '. Later, he described 'sound political thought and sound political life' as synonymous with finding a place for both utopianism and realism. He criticized 'pure realism' or 'consistent realism' for failing to provide the 'essential ingredients of all effective political thinking'. He argued that international order could not be based on power alone, and that it was an 'unreal kind of realism' which ignored the element of morality in any world order. Finally, the very last page of the book contains an appeal to the idea of spreading community beyond national frontiers, an expression of the desirability of broadening our view of

> international policy, and the suggestion that people might respond to an appeal to sacrifice for it. This side of Carr is normally ignored by realists. It was inconvenient that one of realism's chief gurus had some decidedly utopian leanings. (Booth 1991, 531)

Howe sees a similarity between Carr's writings and the critical theorists. To begin with, he argues that a reader paying more attention to the sources of Carr's political philosophy may notice that he was a consistent thinker and a thinker aware of both sides of the international order. For example, Carr was aware of both "the inertial forces tending to perpetuate an atomistic international system" and he was also aware that "time, along with healthy measures of utopianism would bring about a more peaceful and just international order." So, Howe summarizes the points that show both the Utopian and the Realist elements of Carr's thought and reaches the conclusion that Carr's Realism was of a different nature, "a more historical realism than many of his counterparts." (Howe 1994, 277) Howe says that the essence of Carr's view was this: "Change in the nature of states, resulting from the gradual adoption of more inclusive, universal norms, was slowly undermining the conditions that had made realism the most compelling theoretical account of international affairs." (Howe 1994, 288) This, for Howe is similar to the conclusions reached by critical theories.

Linklater argued that Carr's thinking had a critical Marxist vein. This is why Linklater tries to "release Carr from the grip of the realists" and to show the affinities of Carr's thinking to Marxist critical thought. (Linklater, The transformation of political community:E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations 1997, 324) He bases this argument on a few significant points. Firstly, Carr used the Marxian theme that there are no absolute moral values through which we can judge worldly affairs. (Linklater, Carr, Nationalism, State 2000, 240) Similarly, he was making use of Marxist thinking when he asserted that the morality of the period

reflected the interests of the dominant groups, i.e. their ideologies. In a clearly Marxist vein, Carr thought that the ideology of the dominant groups reflected their own interests. Secondly, Carr's understanding of Marxist thinking made him aware of the exclusion and discrimination that modern states created. Societies were far from being just or fair during the crisis between 1919 and 1939. (Linklater, The transformation of political community:E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations 1997, 326)

Carr was also quite aware of Marxist themes when he analyzed the sovereign state, nationalism and international relations. Carr knew that the states' power had peaked during the crisis years between the two wars and states. He said that states 'rigidly demarcated their borders and ruthlessly enforced barriers' and this made it very difficult to have an international form of power. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 228) He was also aware that when the states tried to gain total control over larger territories, violence was likely to increase. Other Marxist thinkers (such as Lenin, Bukharin, Horkheimer and Adorno) had already commented on the nationalization of societies and growing state power. Carr hoped that the powers of the state would decline. (Linklater, The transformation of political community:E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations 1997, 328) In fact, he believed that there was a trend "towards integration and the formation of ever larger political and economic units." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 229) In addition, Carr argued for 'welfare internationalism' or the 'subordination of economic advantage to social ends' and he argued that British policy would have to consider the welfare of people in Lille, Dusseldorf and Lodz as much as the welfare of the people in Oldham or Jarrods. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 238-239) Furthermore, Carr argued that the sacrifices had to come from the most powerful states. (Linklater, The transformation of political community:E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations 1997, 333) Indeed, Carr said "Those who profit most from the existing order can

in the long run only hope to maintain it by making sufficient concessions to make it tolerable to those who profit by it the least." Linklater demonstrated how Carr promoted self-sacricifice on the side of "have" states towards the "have nots" to maintain peace and explained how he extended the argument in *Nationalism and After*. (Wilson, Radicalism for a Conservative Purpose 2001, 131) In short, Andrew Linklater pointed to many points in Carr's theory that was similar to the critical theories.

While Linklater and Howe see Carr as an early critical theorist, Tim Dunne argues that Carr's theory was basically post-modernist, in the sense that Carr argued for the relativity of thought. Firstly, we see Carr's relativism in his usage of the terms 'utopianism' and 'realism' as critical weapons. Carr used especially realism to uncover the relativity of all thought. Carr was not satisfied either with 'complete utopianism' or 'complete realism' and finally he reached a dialectic understanding in which he highlighted the movement between these two extremes as the progress of history. Secondly, Dunne points to Carr's moral relativism. Dunne claims that while Carr was against any 'absolute utopias', he was not against 'process Utopianism'. Indeed Carr rejected any fixed or absolute standard. (Dunne 2000, 218, 224-226) Yet, Carr asserted that that once a supposedly absolute utopia was demolished by the weapons of realism, we would still need to build a new utopia of our own. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 93)

Although somewhat later in 2004, Sean Molloy's article argues that Carr's theory is an 'important precursor of critical and postmodern theories of international relations.' This argument is based on way relativism was used in Carr's theory and his dialectics of utopianism and realism. To begin with, while praising Mannheim, Carr applauded the "relativism" of Mannheim. According to Carr the criticism of "relativism" makes sense only to those who believed in an absolute standard. Yet, Carr reminded his readers that Mannheim "believed that the essence of reality is dynamic, and

that to seek any static point within it from which to deliver "timeless" judgments is a fundamental error." Carr held similar views about International Politics. In addition, Carr was very pragmatic about what made a theory that worked. Molloy reminds us that Carr thought that meaningful social knowledge is like a key that fits the lock we seek to open. "the right view is the one which enables us to understand and cope with reality in its existing (and *ex hypothesi* transient) form... We know it is the right key because it fits, and because we see the man with the wrong key battering helplessly at a closed door." (Molloy 2003, 299-300)

Looking at the way Carr has been considered many different things by many different scholars, Veldulka Kubalkova reaches the conclusion that Carr must be a dialectician. He argues that according to formal logical rules Carr cannot be a realist and an anti-realist (idealist or utopian) at the same time. However, as a dialectician, Carr could be both at the same time. Indeed, Carr had the ability to see duality and constant change in life. According to Kubalkova, Carr labeled the main approach in International Relations as realism and he labeled the other approach utopianism. He did this to present them in constant debate with each other. Thus, rather than being a founding father of any single theory, he was probably something better: a dialectician. Therefore, it is possible to place Carr, to a third position both inside and outside both realism and utopianism. Consequently, he can be considered the founding father of the idea of great debates and a promoter of both pluralism and interdisciplinary studies. (Kubalkova 1998, 30-33) In fact, this quality of Carr as a promoter of pluralism is the quality that made him meaningful for scholars with many different perspectives at the same time.

2.5 Biographical Accounts

This period of interest in Carr also includes two biographies on Carr's. While they are both very revealing, Jonathan Haslam's work does not really coincide with the scope of this thesis because it is a rather personal account

of Carr's life and it does not focus on Carr's influence on International Relations theory. However, the work of Charles Jones directly focuses on Carr's contribution to International Relations theory. It is quite relevant because Jones' was the main work which revealed how Carr adapted the methodology of Mannheim to his International Relations theory and how Carr steered away from positivism.

According to Charles Jones, the critical components in Carr's theory come from the fact that he was trying to introduce an alternative methodology for international relations. Much like other scholars, Carr was well aware of positivism in the 1930s. However, it appears that he did not prefer positivist methodology. He was probably aware that there were other methods that social scientist could use. This is probably why Carr introduced Karl Mannheim's "sociology of knowledge", as the new science of international relations.

This critical approach was imbued with the views of Marx on ideology and false consciousness. In fact, Carr referred to the *Twenty Years Crisis* as 'not exactly a Marxist work, but strongly impregnated with Marxist ways of thinking'. Therefore, when Carr introduced "sociology of knowledge" as an alternative methodology into international relations, he was also introducing some components of Marxism into his new science. According to Jones, when Carr wrote his major works on international relations, he did not write as a historian or a positivist. Instead, he wrote as a social scientist of some sophistication. In fact, the *Twenty Years Crisis* was titled by Carr as 'An Introduction to the Study of International Relations'. This meant that Carr took the implications of his methodological position quite seriously. (Jones 1998, 9-10)

Jones also sheds light into how much Mannheim's influence shaped the thinking of Carr. Carr made use of Mannheim's system of thinking in *Ideology and Utopia*. Mannheim's 'ideology' represents the forces in society that want to maintain their power and his 'utopia' represents the

forces in society who want to gain power. According to Jones, in *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, Carr turns Mannheim's 'ideology' into 'utopianism', and Mannheim's utopia becomes 'sociology of knowledge', or Carr's brand of 'realism'. This is the tool Carr recommends to create peaceful change. In fact, Jones' account Mannheim's influence on Carr is key for our understanding of Carr.

2.6 Beyond 2000

In the 2000's, the debate on Carr moved towards particular aspects of Carr's thinking. There are two new arguments in the specialized literature of this period. The first argument claims that the first great debate was a rhetorical tool used by Carr to further his own way of thinking. According to this Carr establishes different opinions as extremes and establishes his own ideas as a reasonable middle way. A second argument forwarded after the 2000 is that the first great debate never really took place in the history of International Relations. Even if it has been useful as a pedagogic tool for telling the history of International Relations up until now, it may be misleading for the students of IR.

The story of the International Relations discipline is often taught in the form of a series of 'great debates'. According to this historical account, the first 'great debate' was the utopian-realist debate which took place between the so-called idealist and the realists. In this account of the discipline, E. H. Carr's work, *The Twenty Years' Crisis,* has a special place because the work dealt a devastating blow to the idealist paradigm. Although it was the dominant paradigm during the interwar years, idealism, Carr's work revealed that it was a 'gullible' way of thinking, a 'hollow and intolerable sham'. After the Second World War, Carr's realism replaced idealism as a more scientific perspective and became the dominant paradigm. As a result, Carr has been acclaimed as the person who came up with the idea of "great debates". (Kubalkova 1998, 26) Today, Carr's idea of a debate between realism and utopianism pervades the International Relations discipline as the

idea of the 'first great debate' in the years between the two wars; however, this idea of a 'first great debate' has been contested.

In his article named The Myth of the 'First Great Debate', Peter Wilson reveals that the many authors who were labeled as Utopians by Carr did not consider themselves to be utopians (or idealists). In fact, Wilson asserts that 'utopianism' is a term Carr created to disparage many different perspectives that he disagreed with and he used this rhetorical device to replace these worldviews with his own. Firstly, this may be seen in the wide range of thinkers or politicians he criticized such as President Wilson, Norman Angell, Alfred Zimmern, Arnold Toynbee, Robert Cecil, Nicholas Murray Butler, John Dewey, President Taft, President Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Frederick Schuman and even Karl Marx. So, anyone could be an idealist. What is more, idealism included a wild array of political thought in it ranging from universalism to 'idealist nationalism', from humanism to optimism, from liberalism to socialism, from pacifism to anarchism, etc. Moreover, utopianism was not defined clearly and dispassionately analyzed in terms of its merits and shortcomings. Rather, Carr used the term utopianism impressionistically and this impression became inseparable from his criticism. As a result, Carr used 'utopianism' as a rhetorical device to disparage various ideas he disagreed with at the same time. (Wilson, The Myth 1998, 8-12)

In fact, one scholar argues that an idealist paradigm did not even exist in the interwar period. One reason for this is that the term idealism describes many different thinkers, so it blurs the differences between them. Also, many of these thinkers do not fit definitions in Carr's work or in textbooks. Another point is that the terms idealism had a different meaning in interwar years, it has many different meanings in politics and philosophy and it means different things to International Relations scholars. So, idealism does not help the students of International Relations grasp the different thoughts that existed during the interwar period. In fact, the usage of the term

confuses the readers. In short, the concept of idealism is used as a favorable punch-bag for realists, and a pedagogic device for teaching International Relations students, but in the long run, it does not help our understanding because it conveniently writes of a whole generation of scholars. (Ashworth, Where are the Idealists? 2006) In short, Ashworth claims that there was no 'idealist paradigm' during interwar years, instead there is an over-generalization that obscures our understanding of those years today and partially Carr is to blame.

Perhaps, the problem with seeing things as a debate of opposites is that it emphasizes the differences and makes the different parties seem mutually exclusive. Obviously, classical realists like Machiavelli were capable of idealist thinking and some writers that Carr labeled as idealists were better at grasping the intentions of Germany than Carr. Thus, placing many different schools of thought as idealism may lead to dispensing with these thoughts before even considering them seriously. After all, it was Carr who promoted 'appeasement'. This passage was later taken out of the *Twenty Years' Crisis*:

> If the power relations of Europe in 1938 made it inevitable that Czecho- Slovakia should lose part of its territory and eventually her independence, it was preferable . . . that this should come about as the result of discussions round a table in Munich. [1]

This passage shows with striking clarity that, Carr promoted appeasement as a realistic solution to the problem posed by Germany. Carr, the realist, probably could not see the reality that Germany would not be appeased. On the other hand, the so-called utopians of the period like Woolf, Zimmern and Angell were against appeasement. (Ashworth, 1st Debate? 2002, 43-45)

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[1] P 278 of the 1939 edition of *Twenty Years' Crisis*.

In fact, a literary review of the period between the 1930's and the early 40's reveals that there was no 'first great debate' between idealism and realism during the interwar years. That is, there are no articles discussing the advantages of realism and idealism in the International Relations and political science journals of the period. (*Ibid. 44*). [2] Instead, there were a variety of discussions on three significant questions: "Does capitalism lead to war? What are the most effective ways of dealing with totalitarian state aggression? Is retreat from entangling alliances a reasonable response to a world turned upside down by war and economic depression?" (*Ibid. 33*)

As mentioned above, within the discussion on the immediate reactions to Carr's work, Carr's so-called utopians did not seem to feel devastated by Carr's work. In fact, many of them criticized Carr for his moral relativism and thought that Carr's work would have dire consequences. In fact, Norman Angell and Alfred Zimmern criticized the *Twenty Years Crisis* for its 'moral nihilism', Arnold J. Toynbee criticized it for its lack of purpose and scholars like Leonard Woolf and Susan Stebbing criticized it for the relativity of terminology or its lack of clarity. Carr simply failed to define even his main terms such as utopia and realism. (Wilson, Responses 2000, 166-167)

In the first decade of the 2000's, scholars attempted to detangle some of the knots in the International Relations discipline that were tied up by Carr and fortified by later International Relations scholars such as the 'first great debate'. After all, Carr is the first one to use the dialectic between 'utopianism' and 'realism' in order to describe political thought and the International Relations discipline. However, it seems that the message of Carr has been truncated and turned into a pedagogical tool that may teach a lot at an introductory level, but obscure a lot when one needs to delve

[2] Ashworth reviewed interwar period issues of major political science and IR journals such as *International Affairs*, *Political Quarterly*, *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, *International Conciliation*, *Journal of Politics* and *Political Science Quarterly*, *Power Politics* and *American Strategy in World Politics*.

deeper into the theory of international relations. Therefore, these scholars contend that while the idea of great debates may have its merits for teaching purposes, this over-generalization may also blur our understanding if we forget that it is a generalization after all. As one of my professors used to say "generalizations are good things. As long as you do not take them too literally, they help you understand."

In conclusion, the debates of the 2000 mean that it may indeed make more sense for students of International Relations to read Carr without labeling him as a realist or an idealist or anything else. His dialectic method attempts to capture change and that inherently makes *The Crisis* a somewhat complicated text, however, Carr's language is accessible and clear. Therefore, if allowed students may understand Carr's complex theory for what it is.

Chapter 3

A Reading of Carr's Twenty Years Crisis

As we have seen in the introduction many scholars have found Carr to be stimulating for their own methods of thinking about international relations. However, Carr's complex argument has often led to very different opinions on what his theory really is.

This part of the thesis contends that Carr's theory is a dialectic theory that analyzes change in international politics. These are the steps by which Carr builds his main argument. Firstly, Carr asserts that every form of political thinking is historically and socially conditioned and relative. This means that the patterns of thinking that are applicable in the social conditions of a period may not be applicable to the conditions of another. Secondly, Carr concludes that due to the "conditioned nature of all thought" politicians and political scientists need to constantly check the relative nature of their thinking. Thus, they should create uneasy compromises between reality and utopia. He calls this method "sound political thinking". Finally, Carr proposes a new method of thinking: "Sociology of knowledge" for sound political thought. This is the new science which follows the historical progress in international politics by analyzing the "relative and pragmatic character of thought." The *Twenty Years' Crisis* actually demonstrates how Carr's "sociology of knowledge" can be applied to international politics.

This chapter also argues that Carr's dialectic theory analyzes the dynamic nature of international politics due to Carr's adaptation of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge to international politics. This means two things. Firstly, it means that the theory is a theory of change because Mannheim's "sociology of knowledge" is also a theory of change and Carr adapts it to the new science of international politics that he is proposing. Secondly, it means that the *Twenty Years' Crisis* actually demonstrates how Carr's "sociology of knowledge" is applied to international politics. This in fact, is

a theory that shows the constant struggle between opposing forces in international politics and the theory of International relations. It means that it is possible to see the influence of Marx and Mannheim in Carr's dialectic method. Finally, Carr's dialectic sets him apart from many of the theoretical approaches that name him as one of their own. He was probably not a realist, a proto-constructivist or a critical theoretician. Instead he was a dialectician. Someone who created the debates in International Relations.

Since Carr adopted Mannheims sociological theory that explained societal change to international relations, this theory enabled him to take into account constant change in international politics. He also believed that ideas were socially and historically conditioned. Therefore, they were also in constant change along with the transformations in international politics. Thus, Carr labeled the main approach in International Relations realism and he labeled the other approach utopianism and he presented them in constant debate with each other. This was his dialectics. As a result, it is possible to place Carr, to a third position both inside and outside realism and utopianism. He is the founding father of the idea of great debates and a promoter of both pluralism and interdisciplinary studies. (Kubalkova 1998, 30-33) Carr could appreciate many different ideas and their merits. This is the quality that made him meaningful for scholars with many different perspectives at the same time. However, this is why we cannot name him as the representative of one of these ideas (realist, constructivist, etc.) because then we would run the risk of missing his pluralistic and dialectic approach.

3.1 The social and historical conditioning of thought

The first step of Carr's argument on the science of international politics is that any form of political thinking is conditioned and therefore any form of political thinking is also relative. To begin with, Carr argues that ideas of any person are socially conditioned. In addition, he argues that the ideas are shaped by the historical conditions of any given period. Finally he adds that the conditioning of thought is a psychological process and thus the thinker

may not be aware of the conditioned character of his/her ideas. Thus, Carr's argument that ideas are socially and historically conditioned is repeated many times throughout the Twenty Years' Crisis.

Carr states that both "utopian" and "realist" thinking may be socially conditioned. On one hand, he finds utopian thinking socially conditioned because he find that the supposedly universal ideals of the utopians actually represent their social and political position. He states: "the absolute standard of the utopian is conditioned and dictated by the social order, and is therefore political." On the other hand, Carr finds that the complete realist position is also socially conditioned. The absolute standard of the realist is that "there is no good other than the acceptance and understanding of reality". Carr finds this assumption dogmatic. In fact, he compares realist dogma with the dogmatism of Christianity and states that this position is also socially conditioned because it reflects a preference for the existing order. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 21). Moreover, Carr claims that [pure] or consistent realism often implies that the so-called realist thinker has certain interests underlying his/her thinking. Realism may stem from a desire to preserve the privileged conditions of a certain group or nation(s). Thus he states: "In politics, the belief that certain facts are unalterable or certain trends irresistible commonly reflects a desire or a lack of interest to change or resist them." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 60)

Carr also adds to this argument that "the conditioning of thought is necessarily a subconscious process" and 'thoughts are also conditioned by the interests and the purpose' of the thinker. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 71) In international relations, this implies that the "supposedly absolute and universal principles were not principles, but the unconscious reflections of national policy based on a particular interpretation of national interest at a particular time." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 87) Here it is possible to see the influence of

Reinhold Niebuhr on Carr because like Niebuhr, Carr reveals that the preaching of Universalist ideologies does not necessarily reflect altruism. This is because people's morality suffers when they act together in groups. Carr later says "The group is not only exempt from some of the moral obligations of the individual, but is definitely associated with pugnacity and self-assertion, which become positive virtues of the group person." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 159) and he bases this on the ideas of Niebuhr. (Howe 1994, 294) Naturally, groups do not prefer to reveal that their ideas are colored by their interests and thus they present their own interests as universal good. As the French Foreign Minister Walewski's stated: "it was the business of a diplomat to cloak the interests of his country in the language of universal justice." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 72)

Since, all ideas are socially conditioned, this is easily applied to international law and the treaties by Carr. Carr finds that "international law" does not represent some universal good but the interests of the powerful nations. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 173) He also states that international law is socially conditioned. He argues that laws are often made with an aim in mind and often this aim is to create the order that a certain group of people desire. Therefore "the ethical character of the law is obviously conditioned by that aim." As a result, the positions people take regarding law also reflect their place in the power struggle. Conservatives may want to preserve the "existing legal situation" and hence their power and those may want to gain power and therefore "desire to change it". Thus, any of these positions are conditioned by the social positions of the thinkers. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 179, 180) Moreover, Carr demonstrates how the idea of the "sanctity of treaties" is socially conditioned. He argues that the principle "pacta sunt servanda" (exp. Latin: "agreements must be kept") is sometimes immoral and "its application cannot always be justified on ethical grounds" because treaties help powerful countries maintain the existing order. Carr analyzes "the sanctity

of treaties" as another idea that can be used by the powerful states to maintain their power implying that this is an idea conditioned by their own interest. He says that the principle of sanctity of treaties is "a weapon used by the ruling nations to maintain their supremacy over weaker nations." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 189, 190)

As a result, Carr concludes that "the theories of international morality are ,... ..., the product of dominant nations or groups of nations. " (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 79) and "the pleas for international solidarity and world union come from dominant nations which may hope to exercise control over a unified world. Indeed, ideas of international unity such as the "Chinese cosmopolitanism" and "Modern internationalism" (created by the French at the height of their dominion) are all reflections of these aspirations to dominate the world. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 85) ""International order" and "international solidarity" will always be slogans of those who feel strong enough to impose them on others." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 87)

Carr uses some examples to prove that historical conditioning of thought exists. His first example is the understanding of sovereignty. 'Divine rights of the kings' used to be the basis of sovereignty. However, in time this notion of rights changed and people began to believe in "the natural right of people to relieve themselves from oppression by a king'. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 68). Secondly, he uses imperialism and *laisses-faire* as examples that prove that historical conditions precede theories on them. This means that even theories are conditioned by their period. He quotes from Hobson that "empire precedes imperialism" and adds that the justification of free trade followed its application in the nineteenth century. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 69)

3.2 Conditioning of Thought: "Harmony of Interests"

Carr also uses "harmony of interests" as his main example prove that all ideas are subject to historical and social conditioning. According to Carr,

the idea of the "harmony of interests" was created by the special historical conditions of the 19th century British Hegemony. Once "British Hegemony" receded, "harmony of interests" did not reflect the conditions of the 20th century anymore. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 232) Carr's argument was that "harmony of interests" domestically served "privileged groups in order to justify and maintain their dominant position and that internationally "harmony of interests" served the interests of Britain in the 19th century. This mode of thinking, Carr asserts, was possible due to the political conditions of the period: "British predominance in the world trade was at that time so overwhelming that there was a certain undeniable harmony between British interests and the interests of the world." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 81)

What then was the "harmony of interests"? It was the belief that the "highest interests of the individual and the highest interests of the community naturally coincide". It had its roots in the "laissez faire school of political economy by Adam Smith." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 43) Yet, the Adam Smith's ideas were formed before the industrial revolution and after the "invention of the steam engine" and the industrial revolution, any 'harmony of interests' ceased to exist. The idea became the ideology of a dominant group. Therefore, from Carr's perspective the 'harmony of interests' was a false idea to begin with even when it applied to domestic politics only.

In International Relations the doctrine of the "harmony of interest" turned into a belief that by following national interests 'nations would contribute to the welfare of humanity.' (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 46). This had made sense at a time when British Hegemony and ongoing expansion of markets created something similar to a harmony of interests between Britain and the rest of the world. However, by the end of the 19th century,

competition of interests replaced harmony of interests. After 1918, the belief in "harmony of interests" turned into a belief in a common interest in peace. English speaking peoples believed "war profits nobody." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 51) However, according to Carr this was actually a reflection of their own interests: "The common interest in peace masks the fact that some nations desire to maintain the status quo without having to fight for it..." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 53) Thus, Carr here reveals the conditioned character of the idea of 'harmony of interests' in international politics.

As a result, Carr explains that the crisis became inevitable. Cases of "economic nationalism" showed that interests did not really coincide. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 56) Finally "economic nationalism swept over the world" and the "clash of interests" among nations became obvious. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 58)

The social and historical conditioning of thought also implies that 'ideas formed in the social conditions of a period may not be viable in the conditions of another.' Carr says that the application of harmony of interests failed in the 20th century because this was an idea formed in the 19th century and it was compatible with the reality of the 20th century. Other components of 19th century thinking were also inapplicable. Carr argues that Adam Smith's *laissez-faire* idea became obsolete when the Industrial Revolution ensued. Finally, the international economic harmony that was created by British dominance was also inapplicable by the 20th century. As Carr said "the assumptions of the 19th century liberalism were untenable in the conditions of the 20th century." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 40)

To sum up, Carr concluded that all thinking is historically and socially conditioned and relative. Therefore, the thinking acquired in one era cannot be applied to another era. This meant that a different mode of thinking was required. A mode of thinking that was aware of change and the conditioned character of all human thought.

3.3 Sound Political Thinking

Carr concludes that due to the "conditioned nature of all thought" politicians and political scientists need to constantly check the relative nature of their thinking. Consequently, they should create uneasy compromises between reality and utopia by constantly revealing the conditioned nature of human ideas. He calls this method "sound political thinking". This is why he promotes a mode of thinking: "mature thought [which] combines purpose with observation and analysis." For Carr both "utopia and reality are thus the two facets of political science" and therefore, they should take their part in "sound political life" and "sound political thought" (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 10)

Carr positions both "consistent utopianism" and "consistent realism" as two extremes that should be avoided. And then he introduces "sound political thought" as a middle way.

The problem with "consistent utopianism" is that the supposedly absolute and universal moral principles are often the reflections of the national interests of the most powerful states at a given situation and time. Carr does not deny the possibility of "ideals" all together. He says that these values do have a sense on their own merits. However, when people try to apply these absolute ideals to "a concrete political situation, they are revealed as the transparent disguises of selfish vested interests." He is simply pointing to the fact that when applied to real situations, the application of these ideals are flawed and they are always made to serve the powerful (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 87, 88).

Carr points to some problems with "consistent realism". The first one is that it excludes four "essential ingredients of effective political thinking." These are "a finite goal, an emotional appeal, a right to moral judgment and a ground for action." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 89) Another problem is that "consistent realism breaks down because it fails to provide any ground for purposive and meaningful action." However, human beings will always try to seek a way out of the results created by pure realism because it offers only a "naked struggle for power" and this is hardly a desirable condition of existence for human beings. Finally, "consistent realism" proves to be as conditioned as "consistent utopianism". This means that it too can become an agent of vested interests. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 92, 93)

Carr sees the progressive movement of international relations thinking as such: People create ideals/visions to escape the "naked struggle for power" that realism offers and then any ideals they create become "tainted with self-interest and hypocrisy" when it takes a "concrete" political form and therefore it needs to be attacked with the instruments of realism. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 92, 93)

As a result he promotes sound political thought. This kind of thinking uses the dialectic of "consistent realism" and "consistent utopianism":

> "Any sound political thought must be based on elements of both utopia and reality. Where utopianism has become a hollow and intolerable sham, which serves merely as a guise for the interests of the privileged, the realist performs an indispensable service in unmasking it. But pure realism can offer nothing but a naked struggle for power which makes any kind of international society impossible. Having demolished the current utopia with the weapons of realism, we still need to build a new utopia of our own, which will one day fall to the same weapons." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 93)

This idea of sound political thought is repeated throughout Twenty Years Crisis. Carr repeats: "Political action must be based on a coordination of morality and power". (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 96) In his chapter about peaceful change he explains what he means "peaceful change can only be achieved through a compromise between the utopian conception of a common feeling of right and the realist conception of a mechanical adjustment to a changed equilibrium of forces." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 223)

Since "sound political thinking" should include both utopia and realism, Carr moves on to propose the method by which this can be done.

3.4 "Sociology of Knowledge" or Modern Realism

As Carr establishes "consistent realism" and "consistent utopianism" as two extremes that should be avoided, he establishes a third way of thinking for sound political thought. His proposal is "sociology of knowledge". This is the new science which follows the historical progress in international politics. Here it is important to note that When Carr makes a distinction between the classical "realism" (or "consistent realism") of Machiavelli (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 63,64) and "modern realism" (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 65) and "consistent realism" is a mode of thinking which Carr does not promote. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 90, 91)

What then is the modern realism of Carr? Carr explains how both utopian and realist theories incorporated "a belief in progress" and this helped realism to become "more dynamic and relativist". So, he introduces "sociology of knowledge" as the new science which analyzes the "relative and pragmatic character of thought." This is what Carr calls, modern realism. For Carr, the success of modern realism stems from the fact that it reveals the "relative and pragmatic character of thought itself". (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 67) Carr equates "sociology of

knowledge" with modern realism and argues that realism shows that ideals are often historically and socially conditioned:

> The outstanding achievement of modern realism, however, has been to reveal, not merely the determinist aspects of the historical process, but the relative and pragmatic character of thought itself. In the last fifty years, thanks mainly though not wholly to the influence of Marx, the principles of the historical school have been applied to the analysis of thought; and the foundations of a new science have been laid, principally by German thinkers under the name of the "sociology of knowledge." The realist has thus been enabled to demonstrate that the intellectual theories and ethical standards of utopianism, far from being the expression of absolute and *a priori* principles, are historically conditioned, being both products of circumstances and interests and weapons framed for the furtherance of interests. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 68).

To conclude, Carr introduces "sociology of knowledge" as the new science of international politics. Right after introducing the new science, Carr demonstrates the method of "sociology of knowledge" to the students of international politics by showing the conditioned character of some universal ideals such as the harmony of interests and internationalism. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 71-87).

What is Carr's method of "sociology of knowledge"? It is a method of thinking that offsets the 'socially conditioned' character of all thought by seeing the relative merits and weaknesses that seems to be in conversation in a certain period. This means seeing the dialectic between the 'utopian' and 'realist' modes of thinking in international relations. According to Carr, "Purpose, whether we are conscious of it or not, is a condition of thought." This is why when people started to study international relations, their purpose was to 'cure the sicknesses of the body politic.'(Ibid.3.) At the initial stage of political science thinkers, like Plato, Confucius and others, advocated imaginative solutions to political problems and at the initial stage

of the science of international relations 'the desire the to prevent war' determined the direction of study. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 8) However, the failure to establish peace after 1931, made it necessary to analyze facts critically. There was need for 'serious critical and analytical thought' which would mean 'hard and ruthless analyses' of facts rather than aspirations (Ibid.9). This hard and ruthless analysis is the stage of realism which follows the initial stage of utopianism. It would however, be wrong to conclude that Carr is promoting 'complete realism'.

Carr adds a twist to this dance between realism and utopianism. He says that "political sciences can never wholly emancipate themselves from utopianism". (Ibid. 9) In addition, he does not see this as a necessary step for the development of international relations. The problem with utopianism is that progress cannot be achieved "unless it grows out of a political reality." Yet, as a reaction against 'utopianism', realism may depreciate the role of purpose in thinking and may become cynical and deterministic, because it may assume that things cannot be changed. Therefore, there is a need to strike a balance, a Greek mean, between the two modes of thinking. The political scientists need realism as a 'corrective to the exuberance of utopianism' and they may have to 'invoke utopianism to counteract the barrenness of realism.' For Carr, they are both necessary for understanding politics and international relations. (Ibid. 10)

This is the dialectic between the questions of 'what is' and 'what ought to be'. It is fruitless to talk about aspirations of what international politics should be because the scientist cannot simply wish the international system and politics away. Therefore, it is essential to ask questions such as: 'what is the current state of affairs in international relations?'However, there is a limiting aspect to realist questioning. Anyone who has determined 'what is' is also likely to ask: what is next or what should we do now? This is because as Carr says people cannot escape their own mode of thinking. They think for a purpose. Answering the "What is next?" with the answers of the

question 'What is?' seems fruitless. It is useful only for those who want to maintain 'what is', the ones on the side of the status quo. However, Carr seems to believe that there is progress and the dialectic between 'what is' and 'what ought to be' is the machine that drives change in domestic or international politics. This is why it is important for him that both utopianism and realism have incorporated a belief in progress. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 65)

Carr is very consistent in the way he sees progress because he sees reality as constant change and history as progress. In *Twenty Years Crisis*, he places sound political thinking between 'what is' and 'what ought to be' because it corresponds to the human condition of being at the present while reviewing the past and thinking purposefully about the future. It is meaningful to understand 'what is' if the purposeful thinking of 'what ought to be' is to bear any fruit. This perspective of progress was repeated in 1961 when Carr published *What is History?* He devoted a whole chapter to the topic '*History as Progress*' and he defined progress as such: "Belief in progress means not in any automatic or inevitable process, but in the progressive development of human potentialities." (Carr, What is History? 1984, 119) The historians are at the present in a process between the past and future. For Carr, 'the only absolute is change' and what defines our thinking is the particular place we stand in time and our sense of direction. This is why the dialectic of 'what is' and 'what ought to be' is critical for Carr:

> 'The absolute in history is not something in the past from which we start; it is not something in the present, since all present thinking is necessarily relative. It is something still incomplete and in process of becoming – something in the future towards which we move, which begins to take shape only as we move towards it, and in the light of which, as we move forward, we gradually shape our interpretation of the past.' (Carr, What is History? 1984, 121)

3.5 Influence of Marx

As mentioned before, the approach of Carr was influenced by the Marxist views of ideology and false consciousness. We know this because Carr referred to the *Twenty Years Crisis* as 'not exactly a Marxist work, but strongly impregnated with Marxist ways of thinking'. So, when Carr introduced "sociology of knowledge" as an alternative methodology into international relations, he introduced some components of Marxism into his new science. (Jones 1998, 9-10)

For one thing, Marx's writings seemed to reflect his determination to avoid being one-sided. This means that he presented the world in constant change and he used mutual interaction and transformations while presenting the world. (Ollman 2003, 4) This is clearly an influence that can be felt in Carr's writings. For Carr "the constant interaction of irreconcilable forces is the stuff of politics." (Carr, 1967, 94)". Carr pinpointed to realism and utopianism as the forces of politics and due to their constant interaction, the political scientist would find himself studying this interaction. Indeed, this interaction was the machine that brought about progress.

Carr's lack of definitions may also be an area where he is influenced by Marx. Carr does not clearly define the terms "realism" and "utopia". Instead, he juxtaposes the opposing Utopia and Reality with other conceptual pairs such as Free Will and Determinism, Theory and Practice, Intellectual and the Bureaucrat, Left and Right, Ethics and Politics. Rather than clearly defining his terminology, he created an impression by using dualisms. (Wilson, The Myth 1998, 4,5) This has led to much criticism against Carr.

It is known that Marx never offered any definitions either. The apparent meanings of the terms in Marx's writing seem to vary with context. However, one scholarship explains why Marx carefully avoided clear-cut definitions: "I soon arrived at the philosophy of internal relations, a carryover from Marx's apprenticeship with Hegel, which treats the relations

in which anything stands as essential parts of what it is, so that a significant change in any of these relations registers as a qualitative change in the system of which it is part. With relations rather than things as the fundamental building blocks of reality, a concept may vary somewhat in its meaning depending on how much of a particular relation it is intended to convey." (Ollman 2003, 4) It seems that Carr may have been influenced by this approach in which all concepts are in constant change along with the system which is in constant flux. Therefore, defining a term may mean fixing it in time and place and creating a historically and socially conditioned definition that is fixed. Yet, Carr thought that all of his terms were in constant interaction and transformation. Much like Marx, he avoided definitions deliberately.

There are other areas in which the influence of Marx on Carr can be observed. Firstly, Carr he seemed to agree with the Marxian understanding that no absolute moral values through which we can judge worldly affairs existed. (Linklater, Carr, Nationalism, State 2000, 240) In fact, the idea that the morality of the period reflected the interests of the dominant groups, i.e. their ideologies is clearly influenced by Marx.

Carr was also aware of the exclusion and discrimination that modern states created. Societies were far from being just or fair during the crisis between 1919 and 1939 and this shows his awareness of the Marxist perspective. (Linklater, The transformation of political community:E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations 1997, 326)

Furthermore, Carr analyzed the sovereign state, nationalism and international relations and he was deeply influenced by Marxist thinkers in his analysis. He pointed to the fact that the states' power had peaked during the crisis years between the two wars. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 228) He was also aware that when the states tried to gain total control over larger territories, violence was likely to increase. Other Marxist thinkers (e.g. Lenin, Bukharin, Horkheimer and Adorno) had

already commented on nationalization of societies and growing state power. (Linklater, The transformation of political community:E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations 1997, 328)

Finally, in a clearly Marxist approach, Carr argued for 'welfare internationalism' or the 'subordination of economic advantage to social ends'. He said that British policy would have to consider the welfare of people in Lille, Dusseldorf and Lodz as much as the welfare of the people in Oldham or Jarrods. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 238-239) Furthermore, he argued that the sacrifices had to come from the most powerful states. (Linklater, The transformation of political community:E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations 1997, 333) He promoted self-sacricifice on the side of "have" states towards the "have nots" to maintain peace. (Wilson, Radicalism for a Conservative Purpose 2001, 131) In short, as many points reveal Carr's theory was indeed imbued with Marxist thinking.

3.6 Karl Mannheim, a Crucial Key

In the introduction of *Twenty Years Crisis*, Carr mentions that he has been greatly influenced by Karl Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, ix, x) This turns out to be a key factor in understanding the dialogue between "utopia and reality" in Carr's work. Indeed, "Ideology" and "Utopia" are terms which represent the opposing forces in politics in Karl Mannheim's work "Ideology and Utopia". In Mannheim's analysis, "ideology" represents the worldview of conservative forces within a society that are trying to protect their own power and "utopia" represents the worldview of forces that are striving to change the political order. As change occurs and the classes with utopias become more powerful, every worldview (or utopia) transforms into an ideology. Therefore, every utopia falls into the position of an ideology one day only to be replaced by a new utopia and the cycle continues in the same way. This is the machinery that drives change.

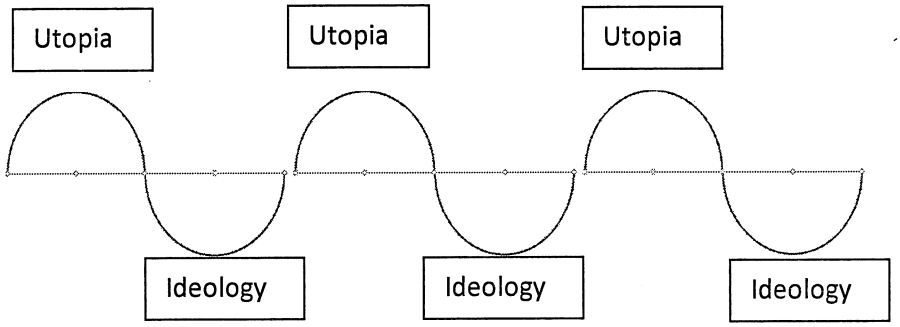
The similarities are apparent. Firstly, Mannheim argues that all political thinking is socially conditioned. (pg. 296) he says that "Ideologies" and "Utopias" are ideas which transcend the situation. This means that they do not reflect the social conditions of that period. (pg. 299) Moreover, often the elites or the representatives of an existing order (or "topia") label calls for a better order by other groups as utopian. On the other hand, groups that are emerging have a problem with the existing order and therefore, they label the ideals of the existing order as ideological. (Mannheim 1979, 183) Therefore, Mannheim says that history progresses "from topia over a utopia to the next topia, etc.". This means that progress for Mannheim takes place as emerging groups or classes defy the old existing order ("topia") and then they try to establish their own utopia which becomes the next existing order "topia". This is why Mannheim proposes the usage of "sociology of knowledge "to set the one sidedness of individual positions." The advantage of "sociology of knowledge" is that it does not assume an eternal fixed reality. Instead, it is aware of change. To explain this Mannheim says this conception of reality with the sociology of knowledge is different because it is aware of constant flux: "It strives to take account of the dynamic character of reality, inasmuch as it assumes not a " reality as such " as its point of departure, but rather a concrete historically and socially determined reality which is in a constant process of change." (Mannheim 1979, 178, 179)

In Carr's analysis of international politics, Carr utilizes these terms in a different way. He starts his analysis at the point when a "utopia" (a vision) has fallen into the position of an ideology and Carr replaces the Mannheim's ideology with "utopia/utopianism" and he places "reality/realism" as its opposite. Much like Mannheim, Carr establishes these positions in an endless debate with each other. These forces are in eternal conflict and two extreme opposites. Finally, like Mannheim he proposes a middle way for political scientists, a way that can analyze the continual debate and the transformations of politics. As mentioned before "modern realism" for Carr

means "sociology of knowledge", (Jones 1998, 121-124) a method which studies the debate between realism and utopianism.

3.7 Manheim and Carr

The Wave of Societal Change in Mannheim



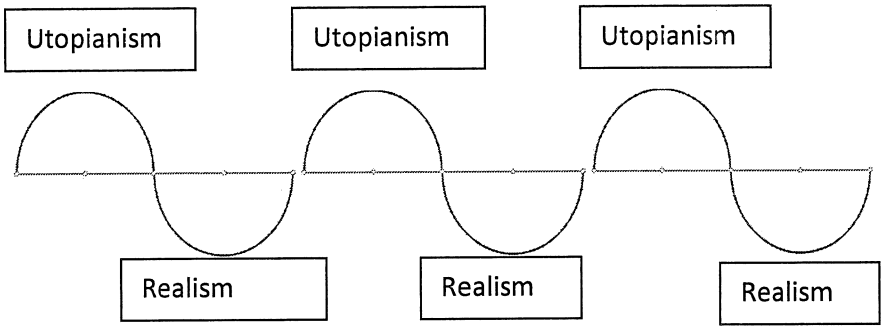
Sociology of knowledge

For Mannheim sociology of knowledge "strives to take account of the dynamic character of reality,.. ...., a concrete historically and socially determined reality which is in a constant process of change." (Mannheim 1979, 178, 179)

Mannheim warns us that at any given time Utopian and Ideological elements may mix in a society. So, when Carr tries to analyze realist and utopian elements, he is faced with a similarly complex mixture. According to Mannheim, a worldview which is the utopia of an ascending group may in time turn into an ideology when that group becomes powerful and a part of the system. (Mannheim 1979, 178, 179)

Carr adapts the same model to international relations. However, he picks up the argument at the exact moment when the utopia of a previous period turned into an ideology in Mannheimian terms. That is, Carr starts his argument at the exact moment where Utopian ideas of the 19th century like "harmony of interests" had turned into ideologies, ideas that no longer apply to the conditions of the 20th century. Thus, he also recommends "sociology of knowledge" as the science which will reveal the conditioned character of human thought in international relations.

The Wave of Change in International Relations According to Carr



Sociology of knowledge

For Carr, "The outstanding achievement of modern realism, however, has been to reveal, not merely the determinist aspects of the historical process, but the relative and pragmatic character of thought itself. As Carr sees "sociology of knowledge" as the modern realism. (Carr 1964, 68).

According to Mannheim, "the relationship between utopia and the existing order turns out to be a "dialectical" one". Manheim also says that each era allows the emergence of certain ideas and values that manifest the needs of that age and people use these ideas to overcome the limits created by the existing order and then these ideas create a new existing order. (Mannheim 1979, 179)

Likewise, Carr sees a dialectical relationship between utopia and realism. Interestingly, Carr twists and alters Mannheim's terminology to his own use. He takes Mannheim's ideology and utopia and renames both as 'utopia and utopianism'. He then places utopia in constant dialogue with 'reality and realism.' (Jones 1998, 129) He says "Having demolished the current utopia with the weapons of realism, we still need to build a new utopia of our own, which will one day fall to the same weapons. The human will continue to seek escape from the logical consequences of realism in the vision of an international order which, as soon as it crystallizes itself into concrete political form, becomes tainted with self-interest and hypocrisy, and once more be attacked with the instruments of realism." (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 93) The adoption of this dialectic

movement from Mannheim makes Carr's theory inherently a theory of change and this is closely related to the recent interest in the theory of Carr.

Chapter 4

How meaningful is the debate on Carr?

Carr's theory has become relevant again due to the changes in the world system. When Carr applied Mannheim's "Sociology of Knowledge" and Mannheim's dynamic understanding of Ideology and Utopia to International Relations, Carr's analysis led to a dialectic theory of the changing nature of in International Politics. As a result, I agree with Vendulka Kubalkova in that Carr was a dialectician. With dialectician here we mean someone who uses a dialectic method for interpretation. Dialectic here means a process of thought in which apparent contradictions (eg. a thesis and an antithesis) are seem as a part of a higher truth (synthesis) (Oxford 2011). Carr used 'complete utopianism' and 'complete realism' as his thesis and antithesis and he found his synthesis in relativism. For him the higher truth was that every idea was socially and historically conditioned, therefore, there was a need for a relativist perspective. The relativist position of Carr which sought to study change was overlooked for a long period of time. Indeed, in our fast changing world, the formerly overlooked components of Carr's theory and his attempt to analyze the changing nature of world politics may be essential.

4. 1 Levels of Reading

A final reason why a reading of Carr and the debates on him may prove to be confusing is the many levels of argument that Carr has included in his work at the same time. In the policy recommendation level Carr wrote the Twenty Years Crisis to advocate for the policy of appeasement. Combining a welfare argument between 'haves' and 'have nots' and the belief that the Versailles settlement was unjust, Carr believed that in the policy of appeasement until the outbreak of war in 1939. (Jones 1998) However, after the war Carr cut out the parts that promoted appeasement out of the *The Twenty Years' Crisis.*

When appeasement is taken out, the readers are left with the other levels of argument. In domestic and international politics Carr promoted "sound political thought" which he defined as a compromise between power and morality. Finding a compromise between power and morality is something that politician may find themselves doing daily. For the study of international relations however, Carr recommended 'sociology of knowledge' as a method. As a result, readers need to be careful about what level the argument proceeds while reading the debates on the *Twenty Years Crisis*.

4.2 Relevance of Carr's Theory

To cut a long story short, Carr's immediate policy recommendations did not prove to be useless but the deeper levels of his argument proved to be more relevant to the discipline of IR.

The part of his argument promoting appeasement proved to be meaningless soon after the Twenty Years' Crisis was printed in September 1939. Although, the occupation of Prag in March 1939 could have revealed that Hitler would not be appeased, Carr may have failed to assess the implications of the September 1938 appeasement. For whatever reason, Carr decided to keep the parts of his argument about 'appeasement' in his text even after the occupation of Prag. Yet, Carr revised the original text in the 1946 second edition. He removed some of the passages that related to then 'current controversies which have been eclipsed or put in a different perspective by the lapse of time. (Jones 1998, 131) (Fox 1985, 4) In fact, Carr was not alone in his support for appeasement. He was following a common belief that "unsatisfied powers were a threat to global order only if they remained unsatisfied, but as they got more of what they want they soften their views, and 'acquire the vested interest in peace'." (Ashworth, 1st Debate? 2002, 42)

Carr also argued for a new science of International Relations which took notice of the power balance in international politics. He believed that international politics was dominated by a 'utopian' belief that the will to do

something would make it so. He wanted to balance the disregard for power that he observed in the arguments of his time. While the point of Carr has been well taken and power is generally not disregarded in international relations nowadays, it may become relevant time and again when the study of international relations becomes dominated by any single paradigm.

As mentioned above, Carr also argued that any worldview is historically and socially conditioned. (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 21). This is actually quite significant because this sets Carr apart from classical realists that he is often categorized with. Classical realists like Machiavelli, Hans Morgenthau or Herbert Butterfield believed in a fixed human nature. However assuming that there was something fixed in human nature and fixing the parameters of social change was not historical for Carr. This was because things like 'human nature, natural law or divine providence' could not possibly remain fixed, while social change continued. Even if we consider Carr a realist, Carr is quite different from 'human nature' realists due to the influence of Mannheim and his ideas on the social and historical conditioning of all thought. In fact, for Carr human nature was not fixed at all. Instead, it altered according to the material, historical and social conditions. When Carr attempted to establish a new science of International Relations, he was trying to found a social science that took socio-historical change into consideration and this is why he adapted Mannheim's methodology and some Marxist elements. (Jones 1998, 132,133) This is also why he avoided definitions. Definitions would remain fixed while change rendered everything to be subject to change according to the context they were found in and so the definitions would not reflect the fact that every part was changing along with the system. This part of the argument is relevant today. If we read Carr's argument as a methodological manifesto, rather than a polemic on appeasement, it promotes a new method of studying international relations and that method is his dialectic 'sociology of knowledge' and it is well worth studying.

Carr argued for the news science of International Relations to be "sociology of knowledge". This has a few implications for studying world politics, studying International Relations and International Relations theory. For the study of international politics, it may be interesting to see if anyone is taking this path. This may mean studying what the leaders of the world or the diplomats know, how they reach information on world issues and how they express the interests of their nations. For example, studying the Wikileaks [3] documents (Fildes 2010) and reading how the US diplomats have reported a country's dealings will reveal both their opinions and valuable information on the perspectives of the diplomats on what forms American interest. After all, if everything is conditioned by social, historical conditions and the interest of the thinker, reading the thoughts of diplomats from a relativist point of view will help us understand their understanding of US interest much better than if we simply assume a fixed interest and a fixed human nature.

Another area where 'sociology of knowledge' can be used is the study of the field of International Relations. It might be quite revealing to see which countries have universities that study international relations more, how are the inclinations in research areas in different countries and how are the they funded. For example, these questions can be asked: How international relations departments are the in the US? What is the percentage of International Relations scholars in these departments? What percentage works with institutions that encourage them to study security issues or other issues? What percentage of works is funded by institutions that are not concerned with security and other issues, etc. In short, what are the social and historical conditions that shape International Relations studies?

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[3] Wikileaks has been defined as a whistle blowing website. According to BBC News, it has an established a reputation for publishing sensitive material from governments and other high-profile organizations to the web.

A final area where 'sociology of knowledge' may be fruitful is the theory and methodology of International Relations. Carr attempted to create a scientific discipline of International Relations that steered away from positivism. Carr was probably aware of positivism in the 1930s and as a historian he was probably repelled by it. He was also aware that a social scientist could use other methods and did not prefer to use positivism. Therefore, any debate on positivism and International Relations will probably refer to Carr. Interestingly Carr chose to utilize an alternative methodology, Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge. This was a dialectic approach and it was influenced by the ideas on of Marx on ideology, false consciousness. (Jones 1998, 122)

In addition, the purpose of Carr in introducing this new science was studying change. Carr, himself states that "the constant interaction of irreconcilable forces is the stuff of politics." (Carr, 1967, 94)". For Carr, these forces were realism and utopianism and due to their constant interaction, the political scientists would find themselves studying these interactions and relations rather than fixed concepts. As mentioned before, this interaction was in fact the source of the machine that brought about progress. In fact, Carr argued in articles in The Times, that the war was only a symptom of the greater revolutionary social transformation. In fact, this transition was as fundamental as the transition from feudalism to modernity which took place at the time of Napoleon. Carr often argued that radical social change, such as revolutions or wars pointed to the fact that the existing social institutions and intellectual habits needed to be reconsidered. (Jones 1998, 137) This is why he repeatedly criticized the failure of the League of Nations institutions, and the failure of the 19th century modes of thought.

In fact, Carr's sociology of knowledge may be applied as a warning and a method to analyze change in international politics. Here Carr aimed to find a way to replace war as a means of change by other methods of transformation. Even if replacing war with other methods of international

change may not be possible, analyzing change is a significant aim by itself. Therefore, a method that aims to study change will regain relevance whenever there is a change in international system. In addition, Carr's warning that the worldview of an era may not be applicable to another one is also worth noting. This warning is quite relevant today since the world has recently gone through a transition from the "cold war" politics to a period dominated by a single power. Therefore, there is urgent need to understand the emerging order. In line with Carr's warning, it might be as catastrophic to read the 21th century with thinking patterns that arose from 20th century conditions.

Finally, Carr often shows the relationship between domestic politics, economics (often in democracies) and foreign policy. His policy recommendations embrace all three. In fact, he called for the 'subordination of economic advantage to social ends' from the national to the international sphere. He even made a call for international welfare stating that the 'British policy may have to take account the welfare of Lille, Dusseldorf or Lodz as well as the welfare of Oldham and Jarrow.' (Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939 1964, 238, 239) In line with Carr's thoughts, it might be fruitful to study the effects of economic crises on war and peace.

As a result, reading Carr in his own terms is meaningful because it opens many possibilities for research and different modes of enquiry. If reading Carr in his own terms is an eye-opener, what can be said of the recent debates on Carr? Do they open our minds and broaden our horizons?

4.3 Are Debates Eye-opening?

The debates on Carr can be placed under three groups. One group of debates is on whether Carr is a realist or not. A second group focuses on what Carr meant and tries to read him in his own terms.

The first type of debate on whether Carr is a realist or not was meaningful in the past, but it is not meaningful anymore. This is because Carr was confused with 'classical' or 'human nature' realists in the past.

However, some of the components in his thinking show that he did not see human nature as a fixed thing. Instead, the only constant Carr observed was constant change and everything else was relative. Therefore any further discussion on whether Carr is a realist does not further our understanding unless it clearly defines what is meant by 'realism' and compares it to the 'modern realism' (ie. Sociology of knowledge) that was promoted by Carr. A discussion on what the definition of realism should be is far beyond the scope of this paper and in fact such a discussion could be the focus of an entirely different paper. Suffice it to say that one scholar who reviewed the realist tradition found very different representative definitions of Realism from different thinkers of the Realist tradition such as Waltz, Morgenthau, Mearsheimer, Gilpin, Smith, Frankel and etc. (Donnelly 2000, 7,8) Therefore, this debate simply serves to blur our understanding and rests on a misunderstanding of some of the components of Carr's thought.

The other debates on what Carr really meant and the debates on International Relations theory methodology are more fruitful because Carr offered a method for the analysis of transformation in international system. His work and warnings will become relevant again whenever there is change in the international system. In addition, his ideas on scientific methodology and International Relations discipline are eye opening. In fact, the whole International Relations discipline seems to be obsessed with this debate on how International Relations methodology should be. Any debate on whether International Relations research should be positivist or not, or whether it should take domestic factors into consideration is likely to refer to Carr. Indeed, some components in Carr's thought require further study.

The debates on Carr have some blind spots. The so-called radical components of Carr's thinking are yet to be explored. One scholar lists these radical components as 'welfare internationalist', 'revolutionist', and 'Marxist' aspects and adds that Carr was radical in method, in prescription and analysis. (Wilson, Revolutionist's Realist 2000, First Press, 6) In fact, some

of these components have been overlooked and this led to the fact that other important components were also left unnoticed. These are Carr's emphasis on the social conditioning of thought, his belief in the possible emergence of larger units of political organization (like the EU) and his belief that nationalism may not be the last ideology of the modern state-system.

One solution to the lack of debate may be reading the other works on International Relations that Carr wrote in the early 1940's such as his *Conditions of Peace & Nationalism and After*. It might help the students to understand Carr in his own terms. Also, it might be mind opening if students of International Relations are encouraged to be aware of the debates on International Relations: Is it a science or not, can it be empirical or not and if so to what extent?

4.4 Conclusion

When Carr adapted the methodology of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge to international politics, he created a dialectic theory that analyzes change. To begin with, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge was a theory of societal change with a Marxist twist that aimed to read the progress in human societies through the clashes between their 'ideologies' and 'utopias' (or their transcendent worldviews.) Therefore, When Carr adapted Mannheim's "sociology of knowledge" to international relations his theory inherently became a dialectic theory that analyzed change. In addition, Carr believed in progress, so this was only fitting. In *Twenty Years' Crisis* Carr actually demonstrated how to apply "sociology of knowledge" to international politics.

Parts of Carr's argument only fall into place when we understand the importance of 'sociology of knowledge'. When Carr asserts that every form of political thinking is historically and socially conditioned and relative, he is showing the need for studying the 'relative and conditioned character of

thought.' This is imperative because as Carr demonstrated applying the thinking patterns of a past era to the conditions of another may prove to be catastrophic. In addition, Carr concludes that due to the "conditioned nature of all thought" politicians and political scientists need to constantly check the relative nature of their thinking and this requires them to think about the interested and conditioned side of all human thought. Carr calls this "sound political thinking". It is a thinking process achieved by creating compromises between reality and utopia. Finally, Carr proposes "sociology of knowledge" as a method for sound political thought. This, for Carr, is the new science which follows the historical progress in international politics by analyzing the "relative and pragmatic character of thought" and the *Twenty Years' Crisis* is the application of Carr's "sociology of knowledge" to international politics.

Carr's methodology for the sociology of knowledge is the use of the dialectic between realism and utopianism. This method is used to make up for the relative nature of all human thought. How is it possible to create compromises between reality and utopia, realism and utopianism, between an analysis of 'what is' and 'what ought to be?' Realism and Utopianism can both become 'intolerable shams' if they are taken to extremes, so Carr presents them in constant dialogues and as correctives to each other. Thus, politicians, diplomats and political scientists will constantly have to achieve 'uneasy compromises' between the two using them as weapons to attack the weakness of each other.

In his dialectic, we can also see the dualism between utopias (ideas that transcend current reality) and their reality, ideas like equality and freedom and their applications in concrete political and economic institutions. Carr was acutely aware that any idea in international relations whether it is idealistic or realistic would become a tool for vested interests and would need to be attacked by other perspectives. As a result, Carr argued for

sound political thought which would make use of both utopianism and realism in a dialectic dance.

Carr was a very eclectic thinker who was influenced by a wide range of thinkers from Mannheim to Niebuhr and Marx. He took components from Marxism, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge and realism and many other thinkers and poured them all into one coherent mould. Adapting the dialectic method of 'ideology and utopia' from Mannheim into International Relations Theory, he placed 'complete realism' and 'complete utopianism' in endless interaction and told the student of international relations to focus on the relations and the interactions between realism and utopianism to see the relative nature of all thought. He recommended using the dialectic method of 'sociology of knowledge' to understand the changing nature of international relations. When Carr called his science modern realism, he meant 'sociology of knowledge'. However, he was misplaced among classical realists like Morgenthau for a long time.

Looking at the misplacement of Carr among classical realists, it is not surprising to see why the more peculiar components of his thinking were overlooked during Cold War years. The social and historical conditions of the period made studies of conflict much more urgent for the young science of International Relations at the time.

The end of the Cold War period through peaceful means, however, created interest in the societal sources of change. Faced with the new challenge of explaining peaceful change in international relations, some scholars were probably reminded of Carr's thinking. Carr had attempted to explore the dialectic of utopianism and realism, a machine for change and he had attempted to explore the possibility for peaceful change in international relations. As a result, the peculiar aspects of Carr's theory and the dialectic machinery he provided to explain the changing nature of world politics became more relevant after the end of the Cold War. This means

that the revival of interest in Carr was caused by the new conditions and the new structure of the world system.

The debates on Carr were almost frozen during the Cold War years. This was probably due to the fact that it was not possible to have a fruitful debate on Carr while assuming him to be a classical realist. This only served to blur our understanding of his thinking.

The debates after the end of the Cold War, however, took a much more fruitful turn. Hopefully, Carr will be studied much more in years to come. Understanding his thoughts on change may help us understand our every changing world much better.

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