



An Immanent Critique of International Relations

“It’s the end of the world as we knew it”

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Introduction

International Relations (IR) is a discipline that was originally created to investigate the scourge of war in terms of its causes, and also possible cures of what was then seen – and indeed still is – as the malady of the body politic. (Lord Davies, 1919) More recently, IR has been charged with the investigation of who gets what and under which conditions. (Ken Booth, 1995) The normative aims are still the same in that the corollary of the ‘who gets what argument’ is to suggest that iniquitous distribution may cause conflict, the purpose of the discipline being to suggest ways to avoid it.²

The materialist/utilitarian emphasis present in both normative goals outlined above are inherently conflictual and this point has been hammered home by realists and neorealists *ad infinitum*. More progressive theories in IR, interdependency theory, world systems, Marxist, neoliberal and so forth are also wedded to the materialist commitment, and whilst the ‘difference’ of the arguments usually revolves around the explanatory, the progressive remedial aspect of the theories become bogged down by an implicit or explicit commitment to the ethic of progress, the state and the market.

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² E. H Carr suggested that the discipline should ‘tell the world about itself’. Evidence that environmental scarcity causes conflict is provided by Thomas Homer-Dixon “Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict” *International Security* 19/1 1994. Ironically, this paper is a validation of the arguments to follow and should be read by anyone unconvinced by an anarchist’s critique of IR.

This materialist/utilitarian commitment is tied to modernist and enlightenment philosophy which recent feminist and post modern/colonial theory has made considerable progress in highlighting. (Ashley, Walker, Sylvester, Weber, etc) I will briefly contextualise the arguments to follow before I explain the structure of this paper.

Despite considerable work by feminist deconstructivists of state theory and poststructural work on the subject of sovereignty, the state itself remains one of the core commitments of IR theory and is, as Ashley has argued, a commitment prior to – and exempt from – scientific criticism.³ Further, despite Marxist influence in IR having permeated most areas of the discipline, and despite the almost wholesale adoption of the neoliberal paradigm in most mainstream work, the other untheorised foundational concept prior to and exempt from science is the concept of private property.⁴ Noting that, as Horkheimer has argued, Marxism and liberalism share fundamental epistemological and ontological commitments, such as positivism, the state and market dualism, progress and so forth, the seeming contradiction in the dichotomy between Marxism and Neoliberalism is easily transcended.

Which brings me to a fundamental aspect of this paper, namely its location within the discourse of IR. Political economy as traditionally viewed is the search for understanding in the field of economics and politics. The interdependency of state and market should become clearer as this paper progresses, however, a few cursory observations should clarify the disciplinary locus of this work.

As we shall see, the state and private property have similar and parallel historical genesis'. To argue for a separation of the fields was the objective of Morgenthau's principles, though for well-known reasons, this has proved futile. However, the call for the incorporation of economics to the field of IR has been, to a large extent, met by a begrudging acceptance, as the concept of the state was always seen as assuming primacy over the market. This paper will seek to demonstrate how not only is this distinction futile, but that it is also discursively constitutive. Further, this constitution of the discipline in different and distinct spheres (IPE/Theory/Strategic Studies/Intelligence etc...) has served to entrench ontological assumptions concerning the state and private property and also to reify them.

³ R, Ashley quoted in Jarvis, 2000, p. 104.

⁴ Notable exceptions include Kurt Burch (1998) and Chris May (2000). See below.

It is undoubtedly axiomatic to point out that the state and private property are the foundations of the modern international system. That global capitalism could not work without property laws and a state to enforce them was beyond question even for Marx. Though Marx sought to highlight the internal contradictions of capitalism and the constitutive and protective nature of the bourgeois state, his closed teleology and attendant determinism would not allow him to theorise these two institutions out of a future world history despite the observation that their fundamental nature would have to alter radically. This change of nature was based mainly around a redistribution of who got what, when and how, and who should be in charge of such a re-distribution.

I also begin this paper with certain normative commitments of my own that I believe should be highlighted from the outset. IR needs to think the state and private property out of the discipline in order to develop a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of international relations. I base this assumption upon the normative aims of the discipline itself in that it seems that questions of who gets what, when and how so as to end conflict, cannot be answered conclusively with the ontological blinkers of the state and property distracting and impeding all progressive, immanent and transcendental theory.⁵

Further, this paper will also seek to make clear that both the state and private property are conceptual units and not actualities. Contra the conservatism of Critical Realism, I do not subscribe to the idea that multiple layers of abstraction aid in stopping war. It may be that Critical Realism can provide a deeper understanding of 'the international' as a concept, however, the main charge against postmodernists is their inability to put explanation into practice; and the same holds with critical realism.⁶ So what if the world is better understood? What do you intend to do about it? This paper aims to suggest quite simply, that in understanding the foundationless nonsense which is our concept of the international state system, we can dismiss it and attempt to refocus our efforts to fix global problems of who gets what when and how and thus stop war.

⁵ Most of Derrida's work engages with the distinction between transcendental such as Marxism, and imminent critiques such as the postmodern engagement. It is argued that transcendental theories have the potential for becoming totalising projects which would entrench imperfection and subsume all critique under its own logocentric rationality. The postmodern critique of Critical Theory's alignment with the modernist project is one such suspicion in this regard. See George 1996 and chapter six specifically. In anticipation of a critique of this paper in terms of its lack of parsimony, I would like to suggest that the reader become familiar with the language employed here for two reasons. The first involves developing a deeper understanding of the arguments presented and secondly to develop a deeper understanding of international relations per se.

⁶ My understanding of critical realism will be developed more fully towards the end of the paper, but it is a crude understanding. Its inherent conservatism is my main focus of critique.

Secondly, the theoretical and meta-theoretical foundations of this paper will seek to demonstrate the core commitment underpinning concepts of the state and private property; namely the object/subject divide. The assumption to be drawn from the arguments to follow asserts that this divide is illusory and that its normalisation in modern discourse is predicated upon explicit political agendas. This argumentation will draw heavily from postmodern discourse and (with a slight dose of irony intended) quantum theory. To state the normative and ontological commitment once more, there is no necessary and absolute divide between subject and object. The ramifications of this line of reasoning should become clearer in the pages to follow.

Structure and asides

This paper is divided into four main sections, which I will discuss below. The structure of the paper is both an outline of the possible structure my thesis may take and also a framework for further research. Each section is neither conclusive nor final, but should be read as a set of questions and preliminary observations upon which I intend to build over the next three years. Further, each contentious point or line of argument will be supplemented with considerable footnoting that will indicate avenues for further reading and the direction of further research. The aim of this type of format is to encourage the reader to comment upon the direction of my research and nature of the material to be used.

In terms of the structure of the argument, the first part of the paper will elucidate areas of considerable under-theorisation and investigation in IR. I will focus upon both the concept of 'the state' and 'private property' and also upon the genealogy of these concepts. I will endeavour to demonstrate how, within modern discourse as handed down over the last three to four hundred years, the concept of the state and private property have become embedded and axiomatic to the extent that their natures have become reified and intransigent. It is this intransigence that I hope to challenge with the purpose of moving beyond.⁷

⁷ It should be evident that I will not classify my methodology as it will circumscribe the range of possible ideas which I could possibly encompass. Neither will I restrict my ontology to the purely conceptual. Feyerabend's 'tool box' analogy is quite useful here in terms of what I can do to 'know' and in how 'my world' can be known. Neither will I categorise myself as either postmodernist or anything else. I would like my paper to be read 'blind' and judged by its normative commitments and whether these commitments are achievable given the arguments I present. The purpose is not to be evasive, but to demonstrate the futility of categorisation and to thwart the powers categorisation serves.

The second part of this paper will deal with philosophical challenges to the core materialism of statist theory and notions of 'private' property. These challenges are those taken from postmodern philosophy. The core contention here is to demonstrate and unsettle the core assumptions of materialism, namely the object/subject divide. This section will demonstrate quite eclectic lines of argumentation and its purpose is to demonstrate the power of a certain discourse of materialism, the 'otherness' of my line of argument, the way in which my argument has been traditionally conceived as a threat to the stability and order of the status quo, and also to demonstrate the inherent 'anarchism' of postmodern literature.⁸

I will also discuss the postmodern conception of the object/subject dichotomy in this second section of the paper. Arguments concerning the right/rationality nexus, the ontology/epistemology hierarchy and postmodern critiques of history, reality, discourse, norms, hierarchy, power and so forth will be elucidated as a prelude to reconstruction. This section of the paper will attempt to demonstrate and elucidate the theoretical foundations of IR and the challenges of postmodernism and feminism. Its purpose is to elaborate upon the potential 'thinking space' (George 1994) that has been opened up and the work that could potentially be done within this new theoretical space.

As the third line of argument in this paper, I will use this space myself to develop a new ontological locus which dismisses the state and private property, which shows the ramifications of such a dismissal, and which also develops the benefits of such a dismissal. I propose that the benefits are infinite, however, the main point of this paper is to demonstrate the necessity to develop theories of agency more fully in IR so that we may actually 'see' who does what, where, when and how, without abstractions to impede and circumscribe our investigation, to demonstrate the folly of subscribing to fatalistic, cynical and sceptical notions concerning human potentiality and to demonstrate the possibility of wholesale change – should we so desire it.

And finally, I would like to engage with Critical Realism, as this is possibly the most fruitful method by which I can defend my position. Critical Realism has the potential to develop a sophisticated notion of 'the international'. Its ability to provide theorists with radical deep-mining theoretical tools is to be celebrated. In comparison with traditional methodologies however, it is but a small step for 'western man'. The final section of the paper will attempt to demonstrate its inherent conservatism, how the roots of this

⁸ See A Koch, 1993

conservatism can be traced to its unwillingness to break with the modernist project as I see it, and so forth.

And so to the 'text'...

A Genealogy of the State and Private Property

The State

As the empirical story goes,

... populations, once free, and simply agreeing 'to feed' a certain portion of their military defenders, gradually became the serfs of these protectors; how 'commendation' to the Church or to a Lord, became a hard necessity for the freeman; how each Lord's and Bishop's castle became a robbers nest – how feudalism was imposed, in a word – and how the crusades, by freeing the serfs who wore the cross, gave the first impulse to popular emancipation.⁹

Apologists for particular governments and for government in general commonly argue, precisely, that they offer protection from local and external violence. They claim that the prices they charge barely cover the costs of protection. They call people who complain about the price of protection 'anarchists' or 'subversives,' or both at once. But consider the definition of a racketeer as someone who creates a threat and then charges for its reduction. Governments' provision of protection, by this standard, often qualifies as racketeering ... [t]o the extent that the threats against which a given government protects its citizens are imaginary or are the consequence of its own activities...¹⁰

This part of the paper seeks an elaboration of the argument presented above in theoretical and material terms. I will also show how the mainstream arguments differ from these perspectives. The tension between the two positions will be demonstrated to be constitutive of the discourse of IPE and IR in general, in terms of an ontological commitment to 'the state' and by implication – 'private property'.

⁹ Peter Kropotkin. *Mutual Aid*, (1913) 1972 p. 146.

Roberto Mangaberia Unger¹¹ provides a very interesting account of the rise and establishment of a type of 'the state' in Japan circa the sixteenth century – the times that led to the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate.¹² What Unger argues, is that in attempts to avoid reversion to a cashless economy by the three main sectors of society at this time, the peasantry, warlords and local landlords had to draw together to ensure that local economies could progress to a cash based economy. Unger argues that while the warlords and landowners had a monopoly of coercive power, the peasantry had a monopoly of productive ability, which placed them in a position of relative strength. Having stepped out of the productive process, both the warlords and the gentry were in an exposed position in terms of feeding themselves and in an effort to provide some medium of exchange (having nothing to barter with) cash was introduced to the exchange process by the warlords and their landlord cohorts.

Reversion to a cashless economy occurred each time one of the three sectors of the population sought to consolidate control of the market/land/military triad. For example, attempts to disarm the militant peasantry wasted time and human capital and thus reversion occurred each time life was lost in the sense that fewer produced whilst demand became higher and cash became scarcer; it being spent predominantly upon warfare etc. And this cycle continued each time sectors of society fought with one another. To avoid this reversion, it was necessary for social cleavages to maintain a modicum of peace and social stability that has developed a "style of social organization that superimposes community, hierarchy, and contract".¹³ Property, once held in common, became institutionalised and alienated from the people for whom it was most beneficial, i.e. everybody. Unger notes that this form of social organization, whilst expedient at the time has become reified and now allows no framework for the transformation of society through 'imaginative and institutional' processes, much to the detriment of societies potential. This type of analysis, as Unger points out, is quite different from the usual contractarian, racketeering, or imposition theories espoused by Waltz, Tilly and Kropotkin¹⁴ respectively, though the contractarian theory is the most obviously fantastical of the three. It is to this theory that I will now turn.

¹⁰ Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organised Crime" 1985 p. 171.

¹¹ Unger 1987. This work is monumental and will require considerable analysis to draw out its true potential for IR. This short usage in no way reflects the depth of all three volumes. For the analysis used here, see the third volume of *Politics: A Work In Constructive Social Theory*. 1987.

¹² Unger draws his empirical work from Chinese, European, Russian and Japanese cases. My use of the Japanese is arbitrary. The differences between the four are contextual though the underlying thesis has profound implications as Unger explains (*Plasticity into Power*. p13 – 25).

¹³ Unger *Plasticity into Power* 1987. p. 48. The stereotyping here of Japanese cultural idiosyncrasies may well demonstrate Unger's Eurocentric viewpoint.

¹⁴ Waltz, Tilly and Kropotkin are each guilty of essentialising state theory. It is however difficult to avoid stylising arguments, especially in a paper of this length. I believe a larger argument can be made from this observation however. Shot of asking Morgenthau (for example) to critique his own position using

Realism and Neo-realism have a metaphysical theory of the state. It was not until the early 1990s that any sophisticated challenge arose to the hegemony of traditionalism in the form of post-structuralism. Post-structuralism, however, does not concern itself with the empirical evidence to dispute the nature of the state as theorised by traditionalists, but instead occupies a deconstructive position in terms of the discourse of the state per se. As such its role is limited in this section of the paper but will be elaborated later.

According to the traditional schools of thought in IR, the international states system is an ontological given. Martin Wight wrote, "power politics' suggests the relationship between independent powers, and we take such a state of affairs for granted."¹⁵ Needless to say this is an extremely powerful statement of Wight's ontological commitment, and as a further observation, it could be argued that the assumption still permeates the entire discipline of IR. But how did it become this way?¹⁶

First of all, it is argued, man existed in a free-for-all 'warre of one against the other'.¹⁷ This 'warre' in Hobbes's interpretation was predicated upon the utilitarian nature of man, for Morgenthau it was man's separation from God that prompted this irrational will to power¹⁸ and so forth. In order to mitigate this gladiator pit that the social Darwinists attempted to set in stone as scientific fact,¹⁹ the state was born out of man's rational self interest to avoid fighting and create order where there was chaos. The state, it is argued, became the adjudicator and developed to serve the best interests of man. Moreover, since it was the expression of the will of the people that the state be born, the state became the will of the people, i.e. sovereign. Once this sovereignty was consolidated, the state then had to defend its right to territorial jurisdiction in the face of competing claims to sovereignty. Continual 'warre' prevailed

postmodern 'motifs', it nigh impossible to represent arguments perfectly. The interpretative endeavour is therefore explicit in this paper and should be measured by these criteria. The use of Unger demonstrates how interpretative historical sociology that is 'anti necessitarian' allows us to avoid treating history as an artefact waiting to be discovered or a 'thing' with only one possible meaning. See Unger *False Necessity: Anti Necessitarian Social Theory in the Service of Radical Democracy*. 1987.

¹⁵ M. Wight. 1978, p. 23.

¹⁶ As an aside, Wight's historicism would not allow him to theorise 'pre-history' into his work. Most other Realists were not so cautious.

¹⁷ I have termed the paragraph to follow 'The Seven Stages of Neo/Realism'. It is a progression of concepts through (1) a state of nature, (2) human nature, (3) power, (4) the state, (5) sovereignty, (6) structure, (7) state of nature/anarchy. It is a sealed theory in the sense that all reasons must be present for the international system to be said to exist. Further, it is intrinsic to realist and neo-realist theory. Moreover, to subscribe to any one of the seven stages through a realist interpretation, necessitates the other six. The realist dismissal of idealism centres around the idealist notion that morality plays a part in IR, though the realists dismiss this argument through reference to the seven stages and how morality has no place given the state, power etc...

¹⁸ Greg Russell 1990.

until the peace of Westphalia when multiple claims to sovereignty were consolidated and the international state system was born. Ironically, the very state of nature that the state sought to mitigate has simply been pushed 'up there' and is now the assumed burden of the state and the reason for its existence (Tilly above). International politics is the study of how to mitigate a state of nature on the international level. It is argued that only more control of international affairs etc. can guarantee stability. At least, less control and order is seen as anathema to the historic rise and purpose of the state and the underlying purpose of IR.²⁰

Of course, Waltz admits in a footnote, that the state of nature "no longer exists, perhaps never did exist, and probably never will exist; and of which *it is, nevertheless, necessary to have true ideas.*"²¹ And the reason for this may be two-fold. First, the international system is an ontological given for most theorists and for its history to be told would unsettle this reification. Second, theorising from abstractions is important in IR as all we deal with in the theoretical genre of the subject, is abstractions. Carr goes further in this argument, and argues that, "[p]ersonification is the category of thought which expresses the continuity of institutions; and of all institutions the state is the one whose continuity it is most essential to express."²² And so on...

Private property on the other hand, is all but non-existent in IR theory. I would argue that this is to the detriment of theory. Kurt Burch and Chris May²³ are two notable exceptions. Burch, through a constructivist position demonstrates how the concept of property should be taken account of in IPE. He argues that it is of paramount importance as a 'constitutive principle' in IPE and IR in general. As the first to do so, it is a monumental task, and one that is a limited success. However, it prompts one to ask "so what?" and Burch simply does not delve into the potential for his observations. He is content merely to draw our attention to it. Chris May, developing a theory of property in IR in terms of 'intellectual' property, concludes with a Proudhonist line (a 'later' argument in terms of Proudhon's intellectual development) that our property is a vanguard *against* the imperialist tendencies of the state.²⁴

Otherwise, property is an intrinsic aspect of international relations that is left axiomatic though unconceptualised. For example, Andre Gunder Frank in his *Dependent*

¹⁹ See Kropotkin's engagement with the social Darwinists – explicitly Thomas Huxley – in *Mutual Aid*, 1972.

²⁰ Jim George has called this disciplinary 'purpose' Neo-Kantianism and to a large extent it echoes Zygmunt Bauman's thesis in *Intimations of Postmodernity* (1992, p. xvi.)

²¹ K Waltz, 1959, p. 167. n. 18. emphasis added.

²² E.H Carr. (1939), pp. 149-150.

²³ See Burch 1998 and May 2000.

Accumulation and Underdevelopment (1978) takes the nature of property as given and then sets out to demonstrate how European nations appropriated the riches of the world for their own development without asking how it could be possible to develop the British Empire – for example – by the appropriation of a shiny yellow metal with no productive capacity of its own, from South America and India.

Essentially, throughout the literature surveyed this far, the nature of property, or the possibility of private property itself, is not touched upon. This paper will now outline the basic assumptions and a genealogy of the concept of private property.²⁵

Private Property

Locke's *Two Treatises Of Government* (1690) is accepted as the first serious attempt to consider the nature of property in terms of its cause and its justification. Hume (*Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1751)) and Hegel (*Elements Of The Philosophy of Right* (1821)) developed a critique of Locke's central ideas but one which remained loyal to the materialist commitment.²⁶

Lock sought to mitigate the pervasive influence of the Church upon secular politics and in so doing began a materialist conception of political economy. According to Lock, God gave all to 'Men'²⁷ in common, though it is our prerogative in a state of nature²⁸ to take that which we want for our own enjoyment.²⁹ We take property and make it our own through the labour we expend in transforming the object into something with our personal stamp upon it. It thus becomes ours. We also come to express ourselves through our transformed and acquired property. This is a conventional rather than a natural theory of property as Whelan points out.

Hume argued that in a state of nature mans acquisitive nature negates a concept of society and only upon the constitution of arbitrary justice ('artifices') or moral codes

²⁴ Chris May, 2000. p. 177-180.

²⁵ This section is one of the most underdeveloped in terms of reading. The ideas presented here are the most rudimentary though the basic arguments do – I feel – do justice to the positions that I will engage with. Further comment would be welcomed.

²⁶ My work on property as conceptualised within mainstream discourse is at a very early stage. The observations presented should be read in this light. However, the basic propositions espoused by Hegel, Hume and Lock in terms of their conception of property are well documented and the references to follow should demonstrate this. I am again only attempting to sketch ideas here. The bulk of the work is still to come.

²⁷ This gender bias is my own, not *explicitly* Locke's.

²⁸ F. G Wheelan 1980 p 130.

²⁹ C. J Berry 1980. Problems with Locke's labour theory of property have been severely criticised, not only by Hume and Hegel, but also contemporary theorists. It is however foundational.

can order be established. Hume is inherently utilitarian in his theorising. Property for Hume is a primary 'cause'³⁰ and necessity in society, it is also a relationship, not a thing in itself. Rather than subscribe to Locke's labour theory of property, Hume attempted to demonstrate that property is "a species of causation" derived from a distinction between man and his property. This causal relationship between objects is constitutive of society and of necessity demands justice, as conflict is inherent to competing moral claims or 'artifices'. Justice is consequently sought in through the form of 'the state'.

Hegel however, goes one step further. Hegel is explicit in his development of a theory of 'objectification' of the individual through his acquisition of property. Freedom for Hegel can only be actualised through an objectification of the self. Our ego, it is argued, can only realise itself through putting our will into objects and thus making them our own. "I am only an "object to myself" when I can say of a particular "thing" that it is mine."³¹ This constitution of the self requires the observance and respect of others. Others follow suit and thus property rules are established. Justice is served when people do not impede the rights of the individual or attempt to steal his soul/property. For Hegel, therefore,

Property as the initial embodiment of freedom is a "substantive end," or end in itself, since freedom is the "substance of right." Property of itself is freedom; it needs no functional justification. To attain freedom, it is necessary that I have property, for in my property I become an "object to myself"... To regard property merely as a contingency, as a means to an end, such as the satisfaction of need is to misapprehend its significance.³²

I have neither the space nor the capacity to go into other major theories of property in any great depth. Those of significant importance are those of Marx, Proudhon, Nozick, Rawls and so on. Proudhon is slightly different in his conceptualisation, and a few words on him below.

Of more importance for the present argument is the development of a theory of rights to maintain property relations. Property could not exist without rights and this is

³⁰ Ibid. p.92.

³¹ Ibid. p 96.

³² Ibid. p.97. And if we are starving due to a famine induced by civil war? Now is not the time for complications.

recognised by each of the three theorists above. Rights are developed for Locke to protect the labour invested in property, for Hume to avoid the utilitarian nightmare of a state of nature, and for Hegel, rights protect the *Geist* from others.

Property rights have been loosely constructed around the Hohfeld/Honoré model, which is explained at great length by Lawrence Becker in his work *Property Rights* (1977).³³ Becker begins with the acceptance of the 'fact' that property 'exists' and attempts to provide some moral justification for their continued existence. He also tries to mollify the institutions most glaring deficiencies (namely inequality) through an articulation of the legal practices that sanction and develop property as a concept.

First, according to Hohfeld's four categories of rights-relationships, rights imply duties. We have claim rights-relationships which are explicitly about duty to respect a right and the moral right to use "coercive measures" to attain retribution should the right be violated. The second type of right concerns 'Liberty'. In a game, we are all at liberty to win. This is a right regardless of its execution. As Becker argues, "[i]n the proverbial state of nature" liberties are superfluous, however, once institutions arise, "natural liberties are limited"³⁴ though some liberties are dependent upon the existence of the same institutions i.e. civil liberties. It is this tension which is the focus of social contractarian theorists.

Power is the most relevant right relationship in terms of IR considering our fetishization of the concept. Unsurprisingly, the concept as elaborated by Hohfeld is very similar to the conventional realist understanding. Power as a right-relationship, he argues, is an ability to affect right modifications at will. This power right relationship can only exist within institutional frameworks as without them power will, presumably, run rampant and ruin everything. And finally, the fourth right-relationship involves immunity from the power of another, in the respect that one is not "under a liability with respect to the power of another." For example, if one was without legs, one could not be forced to run.

A.M Honoré classifies full liberal ownership of property as being actualised once at least two or more out of eleven criteria have been fulfilled. These include, the right to possess, use, and manage property; the right to the income, the capital and the security property has the potential to provide. Further, property ownership can be said

³³ See also Munzer *A Theory Of Property* (1990) pp. 17 – 50.

to exist when the possessor has the power of transmissibility, absence of a fixed period of ownership, is prohibited from harmful use, can claim property as debt, and when legal rights exist which can guarantee the transmission of property from one to another. Becker goes to great length to show that it is the right to the capital from property which is the most important and often fought for right.

Thus we can see, that regardless of the justification for property rights per se, laws and norms exist to protect the institution itself. Liberty actively promotes the acquisition of property, power will often redistribute property, and once we have it we can be guaranteed that the legal system will protect our right to it. Becker, somewhat fatalistically concludes his work by stating this on the final page:

The other thing brought out by a general justification is that private ownership is not only justifiable, but that the argument from liberty requires that the greatest extent of private ownership desired by an individual, and permitted by the general justifications, be allowed. If within the constraints imposed by a crowded planet whose population is voraciously consuming its resources, this maximization principle has a hollow sound, then perhaps we should make more than empty gestures in the direction of changing population policies and wasteful lifestyles.³⁵

The Malthusian doomsday scenario invoked for property it seems, so as to maintain its institutionalised and reified character indefinitely.

The point that this section seeks to make is that property rights as a discourse have entrenched and reified the concept of private property and the logic of it's *a priori* possibility. No analogy need be made between the rise of the state and property rights, as they were constitutive of each other as Burch argues. To postmodernists, my entry point, or point of departure should be obvious. If I can redefine our relationship with 'stuff' I can overcome the 'metaphysics of materialism'³⁶ and reframe the ontological locus of IR theory.

³⁴ Becker 1977. pp. 11 – 16 Becker's work is very illuminating and will require further study. This is also true of the work of Munzer, and D. Dickenson's *Property, Women And Politics* (1997)

³⁵ Becker 1977. pp. 117-118.

The Challenge Of Postmodernism

As Foucault once said, "Today our schools of rationality balk at having their histories written, which is no doubt significant"³⁷. I would like to assert, contrary to common misperceptions, postmodernism does have a common locus. It is to unsettle the certainties of the past and to elaborate not only the contingency of the present, but also the power/knowledge matrix, or discourses, that shape our conceptions of what reality could possibly be. As such postmodernism could be argued to be an ontological deconstruction without privileging ontology over epistemology or *vice-versa*.

At root, postmodernists, despite their aversion to labelling and marginalisation through description of their 'core' pursuits, mostly deconstruct inter-subjective relationships as they manifest themselves through discursive practices. As such they deconstruct discourse, though for postmodernists, nothing exists outside the discourse. The 'text' so to speak is constitutive of the discourse. The process of writing is constitutive, and reading perpetuates the movement. Life's influence upon the author is confined to the discourses within which the author exists. And so on...

What does this have to do with private property and the state?

The State

We should begin with the state, as there is plenty of work to survey here. Private property, on the other hand, is relatively free from the ravages of postmodernism... to date.

As Jim George quite succinctly put it, "Reality...is not what it used to be in International Relations."³⁸ Here he refers to the common dissatisfaction with the traditional paradigm in IR and the way in which it frames what it sees to be an immutable reality. To a large extent, however, the entire discipline is complicit in the realist/neorealists paradigm in its acceptance of the primacy of states and of the unconscious acceptance of the constitutive nature of a statist ontology and states per se.

³⁶ Rajani Kanth *Breaking With The Enlightenment* (1997)

³⁷ M. Foucault. *Politics Philosophy Culture* (1988), p. 83.

³⁸ George. 1994, p. 1. This section of the paper will draw heavily upon the work of postmodern/poststructuralist writers in IR only. When I come to the treatment of private property I will draw predominantly from Derrida, though his work echoes through most of the pages to follow.

Postmodernists in IR unsettle the basis of such a commitment through a deconstruction of the discursive practices which inform the reification of concepts into actualities and facts. Symptomatically of the discipline, postmodern feminism has been interpreted as merely an elaboration of power structures within the state and international system in terms of patriarchy. Not that this is not enough in itself, but without trying to co-opt the feminist argument, I think the argument can be understood to have much deeper ramifications. For example, Cynthia Enloe's work "Margins Silences and Bottom Rungs" (1996) can be read in at least three ways, though as a totality it presents a much deeper argument.

Enloe argues for a more sophisticated analysis of what constitutes a fact in IR. Second, after realigning our analytical focus, she directs us to look at how power/knowledge structures within society are constitutive of the state in terms of patriarchy and domination/hierarchy and also shows, as a corollary, the international system, by implication, is an abstraction which masks these power structures. Enloe demonstrates how an understanding of localised power/knowledge is constitutive of the international system. This argument does not make the state obsolete *per se*, however, by extending the argument it renders it superfluous to theoretical discourse.

If localised power/knowledge is constitutive of localised patriarchy and this patriarchy and its attendant social normalisation of domination is constitutive of the 'international system' then why talk of states at all? Should we not argue, as Enloe suggests albeit implicitly, that it would be far more constructive to assess the individual actions of individual men who base their international bargaining power upon the confidence that the state on who's behalf these men negotiate are "functioning and durable"³⁹ whilst the reality entails a very necessary and actively pursued subordination of the 'margins'. The dissenting voices, or those marginalised by patriarchy, those who feel unrepresented by their 'representors', and those who simply do not fit the dominant paradigm of international politics (everything except 'states') are the very things which are just as constitutive of international relations. What purpose does a conceptual unit called 'a state' do to simplify the argument? It does not, simplify it subsumes all difference under the totality of a sovereign centre. It is an unrepresentative and repressive *concept*.

³⁹ Enloe (1996) p.190

Three things that the above brings to the fore are the inside/outside conceptualisation of international politics, Enloe also draws in arguments of sovereignty, and third, power/knowledge.⁴⁰

Notions of patriarchy and international politics evidently cut across the traditional domestic/international politics dichotomy established most pointedly by Morgenthau in his six principles and reified since. Rob Walker argues that this discursive distinction has served to impoverish the philosophical and intellectual potential of the discourse of IR.⁴¹ Walker's point of departure is his critique of sovereignty and to a large extent the same is true of Richard Ashley, however, Walker's argument is largely concerned with the discourse of spatiality and its intransigence in IR.

Through a re-reading of Machiavelli and Hobbes, Walker demonstrates the contingency of time and place in political discourse. The reification of the international states system and the discursive practices this entails have forced a very specific reading of Machiavelli and Hobbes in IR. Both writers were read in such a way as to reinforce the axioms of IR along traditional lines, whilst the less desirable aspects of their work were marginalised through silencing and constant reference to a very specific, contemporary, conceptualisation of reality, and one which bears little resemblance to the times out of which the original texts arose.

Walker argues that sovereignty and spatiality have been collapsed into one and the same thing in IR. The Leviathan and the city state system reconceptualized to resemble billiard balls in constant 'warre' dupes the novice theorist into believing the scepticism and cynicism of traditional schools and entrenches the 'international states system' beyond question. Walker notes how modernity, in its attempt to homogenise and rationalise political space has, through IR, reached something of a hiatus in this regard, much to the detriment of a fuller understanding of the concept of the 'international' itself.

Ashley attacks sovereignty. It being the most constitutive principle in IR in terms of its normalisation through legal discourse, Ashley argues that an abstraction has reified and stopped short the potential of the concept of 'the international'. Postmodern work

⁴⁰ Power/knowledge is a more incisive conceptualisation of traditional modes of coercion and how they permeate discourse. Most if not all of Foucault's work engages with this concept. See Philip Barker, 1994.

⁴¹ Walker *Inside/Outside* 1993. See also the argument against this proposition in Buzan and Little "Why Did International Relations Fail as an Intellectual Project?" *Millennium* 3, 2001 Most notably, Buzan and Little argue that it is precisely because of the introduction of postpositive 'interferences' (Bleiker 1998) in IR that

is to be positioned on the borderlines of political and international discourse in this regard,⁴² and its main focus has been the logocentrism and heroic practices of the discourse of sovereignty in IR.

Logocentrism is a term borrowed from Derrida, which denotes a form of rational privileging. This occurs each time binary dichotomies are set up against one another and settled in terms of the rational sovereign centre. For example, the realism/idealism dichotomy is settled through an appeal to the internal sovereign rationality of the heroic practice of realism. Realism, having proclaimed a monopoly on rationality in IR settles the dichotomy on its own terms and thus sets about deriding the Idealist position as irrational, *contra* the sovereign project and thus obsolete given the *a priori* of a sovereign reality. Postmodern literature is suspicious of all such dichotomies, arguing that the discursive power/knowledge needed to establish the hierarchy and primacy of the logocentric position, marginalizes the 'other' quite deliberately. In Ashley's "The Poverty of Neorealism", for example, a considerable section of the essay was edited out by Robert Keohane. This section sought to demonstrate the strengths of the initial interpretative dimension to classical realism. The purpose of doing so was to demonstrate the poverty of Neorealism in terms of its positivist pretensions. By editing this section out of the essay, Keohane established a dichotomy between the poststructural position of Ashley and the neorealists position. This dichotomy assumed a 'you're either with us or against us' dimension and the potential of the critique to develop *within* mainstream discourse was lost, by re-establishing *an outside* and marginalizing poststructuralism in the process.⁴³

The rational centre, or inside, is the mainstream in IR. This mainstream is conceived of as a heroic practice, one which attempts to tame all protest to its intrinsic rationality and subsume all conflict within its own lines of argumentation. The idea that difference can coexist within arguments is seen as chimerical, or as an internal nemesis to be eradicated to maintain the integrity and purity of the rational sovereign voice.

The debate surrounding sovereignty – it being, however, only conceptual – exemplifies this argument. Ashley seeks to demonstrate that the actualisation of sovereignty is impossible. As E. H Carr once said, "One prediction may be made with some confidence. The concept of sovereignty is likely to become in the future even more

the project has failed. I would argue the complete opposite; postmodern 'interferences' have not been taken far enough.

⁴² Ashley, 1995.

⁴³ See George, 1995.

blurred and indistinct than it is at present... It was never more than a convenient label..."⁴⁴ For Ashley however, sovereignty represents more than simply a label. Sovereignty for Ashley seems to imply the possibility of it and the quest for its actualisation. Sovereignty is the mission of modernity. It signifies the quest for certainty, foundations, right, truth and the linear progression to the 'end of history' at which point 'Sovereignty' will be attained. IR has been caught up in this story since the second world war.

The logocentrism inherent to this progress is inherently dangerous as it will continually marginalise, subvert, rationalise and consume all which oppose the sovereign voice. In my view, the untheorised concept of 'the state' implies as much itself.

Private Property

As Rob Walker has argued,

Some people may kick tables to reaffirm the material solidity of the 'real world,' but the demonstration is unlikely to be convincing to anyone familiar with the categories of contemporary physics.⁴⁵

And so a little irony. Modern social sciences have been in the throes of what Rajani Kanth has called a "physics envy" for centuries. Concerted efforts by social scientists to mimic the methodology of the natural sciences in order to produce value free and objective knowledge are epitomised in the form of positivism.⁴⁶ Positivism asserts that the possibility of a unified scientific method for both natural and social sciences is to be investigated. Positivists assume the total separation of subject from object, both in conceptual and observational terms. Thus, objects have no intersubjective relationships with each other and the influence of one upon the other is merely a physical actualisation of subjectivity. Thus objectivism implies that sense stimuli (facts/events/etc) are objective actualisations of life processes. Interpretation of these life processes is not the concern of the serious social scientist as values impede judgements, and interpretation implies the fallibility of factuality.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ E. H Carr. 1946, p. 230. Note how this contrasts with Carr's statement concerning personification quoted above, page 7.

⁴⁵ Walker. 1995, p. 327.

⁴⁶ Popper has demonstrated the fallibility of the natural-scientific method and its inappropriateness as a model for the social sciences.

⁴⁷ Critical treatment of positivism in the social sciences confronts one major hurdle; its profusion in form and content. See Steve Smith (1996) for a more rigorous analysis.

Private property is one such material actuality conceived as fact. Economists concern themselves with the transformation of property into commodity and value through the process of exchange. Once alienated, property assumes a value that is reified and mutated through infinite exchange and transformation. *Capital* by Karl Marx, is one of the most important works to deal with this phenomenon. The entire edifice of global exchange is based upon the materialisation of property as value-in-itself. As we saw in the first section of this paper, property rights have been established to protect this materialisation, and deep philosophical abstraction has entrenched not only the validation of this process but also the possibility of the process itself.

I will now problematise the concept of private property and provide some 'deep philosophical argumentation' of my own, laced with a heavy dose of irony.⁴⁸

As we saw in the previous section, the concept of private property is based upon a deep philosophical commitment to materiality. This materiality is absolute, in that the fundamental distinction between two objects is absolute. The knowing subject, the rational 'I', has domain over the unknowing object and in using and transforming that object, the rational subject invests the object with his own subjectivity. Materially speaking, if I have it then it is mine. If I want it then that is because to have it would make me better, the object is unknowing thus its opinion is not only unforthcoming but irrelevant. Once I have 'it', I invest myself in it, thus to take it from me would be damaging to my 'self'.

If history is a fixed *a priori* and not in any way constitutive, then legal notions of 'privateness' become transcendental of the historical process. The assumption is that property and the laws to protect it 'exist' outside of our desires, and that they are fundamentally immutable, only corrections need be made – fundamentally, property is a right irrespective of time and place. Under these laws, regardless of the justification for the possibility of property, goods once held in common are now privately owned and the purpose of law is to mitigate inequality whilst upholding justice.

There are two philosophical movements at work here. First of all, the materialist, and secondly the ahistorical. Underlying both is a tension that is central to contemporary philosophy: the history of the object/subject divide.

Ironically, quantum mechanics could be said to be based upon the same investigation though in a temporal vacuum imposed by science. In his introduction to Husserl's *Origin Of Geometry* (1962) Jacques Derrida unsettles the absolutism of time and place through the dual process of historicizing geometry and highlighting the intersubjectivity of objectification. Geometry is the idealisation of the object through its separation from the speech modes which originally constituted the science itself. Geometry is also an example of how speech modes are translated into an objectivity outside of human preference. The space/time abstraction which underpins spatiality and temporality in order that the abstractions 'existence' be transcendental, is an idealisation of a reality which is inherently linguistic and intersubjectively constituted. Thus, Derrida argues that the presupposed 'origin' of objectivity cannot be divorced from its historical constitution through speech and collusion. There is no necessity in objectivity – it is but an assumption.

Heisenberg's 'uncertainty principle' also demonstrates this. At the quantum level, nothing occurs of necessity. Probability can be calculated, however, without 'observing' with the interference of light (photons), nothing can be said to 'happen', only that two actualities – a beginning and an end – 'exist'.

Electrons are in constant motion. Consequently, at the subatomic level, all things are in motion at all times. If everything is at base made of atomic particles, then everything 'is' – at base – in motion. Further, if there is no direct causal relation between two sub-atomic particles, if it could be argued that there is no necessary separation between two objects, that all things are intersubjectively constituted, can anything be said to be – of necessity – separate? Without the use of photons as interference, electrons are absolutely unpredictable. The use of photons interferes with the passage of electrons and thus 'mediates' their actions in accordance with the length of the particle/wave, and its direction. Which implies that 'looking' at electrons alters their behaviour in accordance with the desire of the observer. Quantum mechanics has therefore recognised that it is impossible to predict.

Yes! Physics has given up. We do not know how to predict what would happen in a given circumstance, and we believe now that it is impossible, that the only thing that can be predicted is the probability of

⁴⁸ Thank Socrates and Rorty for the possibility of philosophical irony! See also Sankaran Krishna, "The Importance of Being Ironic: A Postcolonial View on Critical International Relations Theory" *Alternatives*, 18.

different events. It must be recognised that this is a retrenchment in our earlier ideal of understanding nature. It may be a backward step, but no one has seen a way to avoid it.⁴⁹

Probability implies explicit interpretation. Facts, even in physics, are not separate from our ability and need to interpret them. Each time we interfere we make something occur in the way that we want it to, when it comes to the quantum. Objectivity is intersubjectively constituted and it is not final. For us to see photons must exist and our eyes must be receptive to them. This implies that there can be no absolutes except just that: there are no absolutes.⁵⁰

On what basis can we justify the 'privateness' of property except via social convention. If social convention is all it takes, then this too can change. All we need to be shown is that the 'privateness' of property is impossible.

Proudhon argues that private property is theft. This is his most often quoted and misunderstood proposition. In fact, Proudhon goes to great lengths to explain how private property is logically impossible first, and that since it is logically impossible, to appropriate something which cannot *be* 'private' in any absolute sense is, logically, theft from the rest of humanity.⁵¹ Proudhon argues that if

producer A makes a profit out of producer B, according to the principles of economics, B must be reimbursed by C, C by D, and so on down to Z... But by whom will Z be reimbursed for the loss caused him by the profit charged by A in the beginning? By the consumer, replies Say. What a contemptible hypocrite! Is this consumer any other than, than A, B, C, D etc., or Z? By whom will Z be reimbursed? If he is reimbursed by A, no one makes a profit, and consequently there is no property. If on the contrary Z bears the burden himself, he ceases to be a member of society, since it refuses him the right of property and profit which it grants to the other associates.

Since the nation then, like universal humanity, is a vast industrial association *which cannot act outside of itself*, it is clear that no man can

1993.

⁴⁹ Richard P Feynman, *Six Easy Pieces*: 1995, p. 135.

⁵⁰ Michael Talbot takes this scientific observation one step further.⁵⁰ Neither do I have the space nor the context within which to elaborate his findings. See Michael Talbot, *Beyond The Quantum*, 1986.

enrich himself without impoverishing another. For in order that the right of property, the right of increase, may be respected in the case of A, it must be denied to Z, and so we see how the equality of rights, separated from the equality of conditions may be a truth. The iniquity of political economy in this respect is flagrant.⁵²

This argument falls under all three of Becker's classifications of anti-property arguments, as it claims that property is not only a social disutility, but also a self-defeating institution and that it perpetuates inequality.⁵³ Proudhon uses the same form of logical deductivism as Becker. Becker is unable to see a way out of the property deadlock, though Proudhon argues for private property's abolition as an end in itself.

There may be other ways to present an anti-property argument. Postmodern philosophy and quantum physics point a way out of the abolition argument and into a reconceptualisation of the nature of property in order that legal precedent reflect the inherent, though marginalised, communal potential of property.

Arguments against the abolition of private property concern the social utility of the institution, a certain fatalism in regards to any form of change, and personal profit from the institution itself which obviously holds people back from consciously giving up privilege. Proudhon and many others argue against the social utility argument quite forcefully. The 'correctness' of their case cannot be measured in terms of their failure to transform social practice. Social fatalism is the domain of all conservatives and usually serves to entrench rather than transform. Conservative agendas are more often than not wedded to personal ambition within present 'structures' rather than the helping of others to achieve better ends through transformative means. And the argument from personal privilege, if the 'zero-sum' proposition holds, is not only dangerous, but also downright nasty.

The object/subject debate in quantum mechanics and postmodern philosophy would suggest that there are grounds for a reformulation of our relationship with 'objects' and 'others'. The validity of the necessity of any form of hierarchy is seriously questioned by intersubjectivity, and the idea of domination of one over the other is

⁵¹ Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *What Is Property*. 1970. I will demonstrate the relationship between the possibility of private property and conventional science below. My research will also attempt to draw parallels between Proudhon's 'theft' argument and quantum theory.

⁵² Proudhon, 1994 p. 165-166. emphasis added.

also questioned by the observations of quantum mechanics; that if all things are joined at the subatomic level, all things are of necessity equal in nature. It will be argued that hierarchy for the purpose of control and domination is 'an aberration' of 'nature'.

A Pre-existing Locus Of Ontology, Or An Epistemic Slight of Hand?

Prior to my defence of the arguments presented above, I will attempt a reframing of the ontology of IR drawn from the above arguments. This section is also the main thrust of the purpose of my thesis, and should be read as hugely inconclusive. In fact, in an attempt to avoid the transcendental. I would like to suggest that this section is an immanent critique of reality derived from the possibility of 'another' that will be incessantly under critique itself.

This paper is arguing that we should forget the ontology of 'the state' and 'private property' and move on. The implications of this dismissal are profound when realised. My research will attempt to reconceptualize the planet we live on.

The profusion of different subjects that deal with the planet earth is an obvious starting point for reconceptualisation. To attempt to make this reconceptualisation contextually relevant we must first define what it is exactly that the subject of IR is trying to do. The introduction to this paper introduced at least one direction research could take.

Moreover, through simple reconceptualisation the international system as it exists today, as a planet inhabited by people, need not change. To admit that it might would be to suggest that theory in some way influences reality – a position derided as fantasy by most traditionalists. In fact, forgetting 'the state' would change very little in material terms, as it is only a concept. However, without the concept of the 'international system of states' nothing need be of necessity be the same again. Statist logics necessitate conservatism, and sovereignty entrenches it. Forget 'the state' and anything is possible. Private property entrenches iniquitous social interaction. Though I will never be able to prove this beyond doubt, surely rethinking social relations along more communitarian lines will fulfil one objective – namely a reconceptualisation of who could get what, when and how, in order to stop war.

⁵³ Becker, 1977. The broader aims of my thesis will involve an investigation into the claimed 'zero-sum' nature of economics. I cannot engage with this argument here, though the arguments presented here and also by A.G Frank would suggest as much.

The rest of this section will be left open to prompt the imagination and to give an idea (stylise) the project under consideration.

The Poverty Of Critical Realism

Within IR theory, there has been a glaring contradiction between the epistemological and ontological positions held by most mainstream theorists from the classical realism of the late nineteenth century, to the Critical Realist position of the present day. Contrary to traditional theory, I would argue that we cannot experience 'the state' and 'private property' in the ways in which positivism demands. 'The state' is an anthropomorphic entity that has been reified in discourse and sanctified by international law. 'Private property' is a concept not an invariable social fact and it too has been reified in discourse and justified by law. It is this idea of 'the state' that protects this concept of 'private property'. Further, as the state is built around a geographical appropriation of land, without 'private property' the idea of 'the state' would be impossible to infer from cartography. 'The state' is the protectorate of that which it demands for its existence. The flip-side of this argument suggests that without the legal dictate of 'the state', 'private property' both would be but concepts, though I am trying to argue that that is all they are anyway. At least, both are mutually constitutive.

Let us consider these arguments in ontological and epistemological terms.

First, the state as actor model, which is implicit and explicit to varying degrees throughout the discipline of IR as a whole, relies upon the objectification of a reified concept which does not exist in any tangible way. It is the results of acting as though a 'state' existed which are observable. Ontologically, therefore, IR presupposes statism to varying degrees. However, epistemology in the mainstream demands positive affirmation of phenomena. So how is this barrier overcome? The state is simply objectified and analysed as though it were a tangible thing in itself. Epistemologically, therefore, positivism reaffirms the state as an object of legitimate research though it denies it theory. Much in the same way as the institutions of the state and private property are mutually constitutive, ontology and epistemology, in so far as they discuss the state, are also mutually constitutive. Without a positivist epistemology, the state cannot be discussed as a thing as we would no longer be able to objectify it and analyse it. Without a statist ontology and all it presupposes in mainstream theory (international anarchy, etc) positivism would only be warranted on a domestic level –

hence the 'domestic analogy' being more descriptive than the actual interstate theory itself.

Private property is no less incompatible to mainstream philosophical dispositions. The way the argument can progress however is to bring in concepts of legality and legitimacy in terms of property and the state respectively. Legality has no right beyond the social compact it springs from and the terrible violence transgression threatens. The law stipulates that claims to private property and sovereignty are indivisible.⁵⁴ The law itself has sanctified objectivism and maintains it through the threat of violence. This objectivism clothes the emperor and personifies an abstraction. To repeat, E.H Carr once said, "[p]ersonification is the category of thought which expresses the continuity of institutions; and of all institutions the state is the one whose continuity it is most essential to express."⁵⁵ We can now begin to infer from this that the certainties of IR are psychological, not of necessity 'factual'.

Critical Realism 'promises'⁵⁶ to transcend the relativism and 'extreme negativity' of postmodernism through an explicit recognition – on its own terms – of the existence of multiple layers of ontology. It is argued that through Critical Realism, it becomes possible to recognise the existence of the concept of 'the state' through its mitigation of social reality through its influence upon our lives albeit conceptual or psychological. Equally, Critical Realism, not dissimilarly from a standard epistemological anarchistic position championed by Feyerabend, argues that multiple epistemes can help us understand our constructed and conceptual realities on multiple levels of abstraction. Tony Lawson, one of the foremost Critical Realists in the field of economics argues much the same thing in terms of the market.⁵⁷ Neither of the conceptual foci of the state and market, need of necessity be transcendently unintelligible, which, Critical realists argue, is the main contention of postmodernists.⁵⁸ The problem with this position is that it further entrenches the conceptual units that are most dangerous to

⁵⁴ Steven Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organised Hypocrisy*. 2000.

⁵⁵ Carr *Twenty Years Crisis*, pp. 149-150.

⁵⁶ See Patomäki and Wight, 2000.

⁵⁷ Tony Lawson, *Economics And Reality*. 1997.

⁵⁸ I would argue that postmodernist deconstruction is an inherently ontological endeavour. As this paper has shown, I have attempted to deconstruct notions of the knowable in ontological terms. Darryl Jarvis (2000) committed the error of attacking postmodernists for their epistemological relativism whilst either ignoring or missing the point that postmodernists are not concerned with the rational way of coming to know reality. Postmodernists argue that reality is not transcendently knowable. Thus their immanent critique of ontology concerns epistemology only in the most superficial way. Thus, for Jarvis to argue that the postmodernist position is logically unviable due to its presumed epistemological position is to miss the point entirely. Vasquez predates Jarvis' position. See, "The Post Positivist Debate: Reconstructing Scientific Enquiry and International relations theory after Enlightenments fall." In *International Relations Theory Today*. Booth & Smith, 1995.

human existence.⁵⁹ There is an explicit level of conservatism in the Critical Realist position that is justified logocentrically, because despite the Critical Realist insistence that all things are knowable, they are only knowable by its own motifs.⁶⁰ Further, by validating any number of epistemological tools, Critical Realism could potentially open up traditional realism for conceptual battles it could not lose. Shifting goal posts has never been easier! Again, the dichotomy between postmodernists and the 'rational rest' is set up and resolved by the knowing logos, despite endless pleas by postmodernists to avoid such transcendental critiques due to their totalising tendencies. However, I would argue that the threat of the totalising tendency comes second to the danger inherent in revalidating the essence and intransigence of 'the state' and 'market' – at least that is the central contention of this paper.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to highlight and contest the 'false-necessity' of mainstream theorising in IR. This does not imply that through demonstrating the superfluity of 'the state' and 'private property' as concepts we have to do away with an entire discipline. We will always need to feel secure, garner information about each other and develop ways of bringing differing interests together on an 'international' level – and international relations is in one of the most important and promising positions as an academic pursuit in this new millennium. Its intellectual and philosophical potential in terms of its applicability to the 'real world' – however conceptualised – is unsurpassed. Historically speaking, despite the contradictions and moral poverty of traditional theories of international relations and IR in general, IR has influenced the world in very real ways. Without wishing to sound morally superior, given the new 'thinking space' we have in IR at present, the postmodern and critical theories in IR have a much more benign potential than those of Kissinger for example. This paper has tried to argue that to 'do' IR praxis without recourse to 'state' and 'private property', could prove far more conducive to correcting the ecological, militaristic, misogynistic, and exploitative modern mess we're in.

As somewhat of a final observation, I would also like to say that this paper has demonstrated quite an unorthodox position for a so-called anarchist. I have argued that the state and private property should be thought out of existence, that to overthrow them is nigh impossible. We *only* need to dream up something to replace

⁵⁹ R, Kanth (1997) and Seabrook *The Myth Of The Market* (1990).

⁶⁰ R, Kanth, "Eurocentrism, Realism, and the Anthropocentric Cartography of Emancipation." (forthcoming).

them instead. To turn Proudhon's call to arms on its head, I would like to profess: *je suis pas anarchiste!*

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