Subject	Political Science
Module Name	International Politics
Paper Name	Power
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Objectives of the Paper	• To define power as a concept and understand it as a resource, strategy and as an outcome. • To analyse various definitions of Power as given by scholars in the field of Political Science. • To examine power as theorised in the discipline of Political Science as well as in International Relations.
Keywords	Power Influence Soft Power Hard Power Authority Consent Hegemony Elites

Power

Power constitutes one of the fundamental themes of Political theory. For centuries political theory has visualized power as being centralized in a state apparatus or in a series of political institutions. In classical political theory, power was embodied in the sovereign whereas in a monarchical society, power was invested symbolically in the body of the king, the incarnation of divine right. In liberalism, power was legitimized through the social contract. In radical political philosophies (Marxism, socialism, and anarchism), the place of power was seen as an oppressive arrangement. During the initial phase of the development of modern political science Frederick Watson had said, "The proper scope of political science is not the study of the State or any other specific institutional complex, but the investigation of all associations in so far as they can be shown to exemplify the problem of power". (Watson 1934:45) Both traditional and modern thinkers alike have brought the significance of power

in politics, from Machiavelli, Hobbes, Nietzche to Max Weber, Laswell, Kaplan, Morgenthau and others. It might not be wrong to conclude that there are probably as many conceptions of power as there are theorists.

Power is frequently associated with the notions of control, coercion and influence. Although there are varied definitions and usages of the term power, yet it can be simplified to three connected but different approaches- (I) power as a resource; (II) power as a strategy; and (III) power as an outcome. As a resource, power refers to the sum total of capabilities an entity or a country has to influence behaviour of another entity or a country respectively. A number of scholars have calculated the national power of countries in terms of their resource capabilities such as population, extent of natural resources, strength of their armed forces and also in terms of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, defining power only in terms of possession of capabilities would be myopic. This has been emphasized by Steven Lukes when he said, '...sociologists and strategy analysts, for example, equate power with power resources, the former with wealth and status, the latter with military forces and weaponry. But merely possessing or controlling the means of power is not the same as being powerful. As both France and the USA discovered in Vietnam, having military superiority is not the same as having power' (Lukes 2007: 84).

This brings us to the second approach to defining power in terms of strategy. Power depends on the context in which the relationship exists. The best guarantee to measure how much power one exerts on the other is to understand the other's preferences. This focus on context derives from the general recognition that "capabilities," at least in the political realm, may not be quite fungible. If this premise is held true, then a simple ranking of capabilities will not identify the truly most powerful entities in a system, unless one has first assessed the structure of the situation and the resources deemed to be most valuable in that situation. Accordingly, the critical value of this approach to power as "strategies", consists of making all analysis sensitive to the context within which the strategies take place and when certain strategies may derive their efficacy.

Power as outcomes, seeks to understand the extent of an entity's capability not from the inputs that make it powerful or from the context within which its actions were undertaken, but rather from an assessment of whether the entity was able to attain its desired ends, the ends for which the exercise of power took place to begin with. The claim of power in this approach rests simply on whether the initiator was able to influence the targeted entity to act in the desired way, even if that entails undercutting the target's own interests. This in a sense conveys the essence Robert Dahl's definition of power, as given below.

Definitions of Power

- One of the most oft quoted definitions on Power was given by Robert Dahl. Dahl (1957) defined power in terms of relation among people. He preferred to use the terms 'influence' and 'power' interchangeably. Dahl said that his 'intuitive idea' of power can be defined as, "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do." (Dahl 1957:203) He called the objects in the relationship of people as 'actors'.
- Bertrand Russell (1938) in his book *Power: A New Social Analysis* defined power as 'the production of intended effects'. (Russell 1938: 25)

- Stephen L. Wasby (1972) observed, "Power is generally thought to involve bringing about of an action by someone against the will or desire of another." (Wasby 1972: 22)
- Max Weber, the German sociologist defined power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests." (Weber 1964: 54)
- Anthony Giddens defined power as "the ability of individuals or groups to make their own concerns or interests count, even where others resist. Power sometimes involves the direct use of force, but is almost always also accompanied by the development of ideas (ideology) which justify the actions of the powerful." (Giddens 1993: 21)
- Robert M. MacIver (1965) defined power as "the capacity in any relationship to command the services or compliance of others." (MacIver 1965: 43)

These definitions of power primarily focus on that aspect of power where one group or people dominate the other 'unwilling lot'. Power in order to be stable also takes the form of authority which also comprehends legitimacy, which is the capacity to secure 'willing' obedience. It is authority which ensures social acceptance and effective implementation of rules, policies and decisions. Robert M. MacIver's definition of power as 'the capacity in any relationship to command the service or compliance of others' can be used as case in point to illustrate the relation between power and authority. Power may involve force or use of coercion, but compliance of others will be best obtained when they regard the command as right, good or beneficial. Authority hence is the most effective instrument of exercising power in the sphere of politics. Therefore, the precise relationship of power and authority can be derived as follows:

Authority = Power + Legitimacy

Max Weber (1978) identified three types of authority that prevails in a modern state. They are, traditional authority, charismatic authority and lastly, legal-rational authority. Traditional authority meant the right to rule as ordered by tradition, such as dynastic rule; charismatic authority stood for the exceptional personal characteristics of a political leader with dynamic personality with magnetic charm like that of Hitler; and legal-rational authority originates from a political office where the leader is appointed through a procedure based on a set of rules like merit-based selection, promotion, election. It is this legal-rational authority which is the characteristic of bureaucracy, which in turn is an attribute of the modern state.

Steven Luke's on Power

Steven Lukes's (1974) *Power: A Radical View* has become a widely cited classic in contemporary political science. Luke's three dimensions of power, particularly the third dimension, has become a standard of reference when it comes to defining power and its various dimensions. Lukes conceptualised power in terms of three dimensions which reveal the distinguishing features of three views of power: the pluralist view (which he called the one dimensional view); the view of critics of pluralism (which he called the two dimensional view); and a third view of power (which he called the three dimensional view). Lukes's first

work was devoted for the most part to stressing the importance of this third dimension of power.

The distinctive features of these three views of power as conceptualised by Lukes can be summarized below in the form of a table:

Dimensions of Power as conceptualised by Lukes	**Focus on**
One-Dimensional view of Power	a) Behaviour; b) decision making; c) (key) issues; d) observable (overt) conflict; e) (subjective) interests, seen as policy preferences revealed by political participation.
Two-Dimensional View of Power	a) Decision-making and control over the political agenda (not necessarily through decisions); b) Issues and potential issues; c) Observable (overt and covert) conflict; d) (Subjective) interests, seen as policy preferences or grievances.
Three-Dimensional View of Power	a) decision-making and control over the political agenda (not necessarily through decisions); b) issues and potential issues; c) observable (overt or covert) and latent conflict; d) subjective and real interests.

Source: Steven Lukes (2005), *Power: A Radical View*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.29.

Lukes argues that the first two views of power are inadequate, claiming that the three-dimensional view is a better means for the investigation of power relations. According to Lukes, the two-dimensional view of power is limited in that it focuses only on observable conflicts, whether overt or covert. Lukes claims that A can also exercise power over B by influencing, shaping, or determining his wants and preferences. A second criticism is that this view is too committed to behaviourism that is to the study of concrete decisions, whereas inaction can also be the outcome of socially structured and culturally patterned collective behaviour. In line with the previous arguments, however, Lukes argues that power can be also exercised by preventing grievances - by shaping perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way as to secure the acceptance of the status quo since no alternative appears to exist, or because it is seen as natural and unchangeable, or indeed beneficial. Lukes therefore sustains that it is important to investigate what he calls the third dimension of power – the

power to prevent the formation of grievances by shaping perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way as to ensure the acceptance of a certain role in the existing order. This, is a very contentious and, at the same time, fundamental view. The three-dimensional view allows us to consider the many ways in which potential issues are 'kept out' of politics, whether through individuals' decisions or through the operation of social forces and institutional practices.

Class Perspective–Marxist Theory of Power

Class perspective of power is associated with the Marxist school of thought. Although the term 'Marxist school of thought' was strictly speaking not coined by Karl Marx, yet what it means is that this school represents the thoughts and views associated with that of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. According to the class perspective of power, political power is the product of economic power. Political power is determined by the pattern of ownership of the means of social production. It further postulates that every historical epoch is characterised by the division of the society into two contending classes – the haves and the have-nots. In the ancient society these classes were represented by the master and slaves; in the feudal society by lords and the serfs; in the modern capitalist society, by the capitalists and the workers. According to this theory it 'class' which is the determining principle as to who exercises power. Those who owned the means of production organized themselves into the 'dominant class' and forced the rest of the society or the 'dominated class' to intense exploitation in order to strengthen their own power and position. The dominated class would resort to a struggle against such exploitation in order to put an end to the regime. This would lead to class struggle, which is a distinctive feature of society in every historical epoch, according to his theory.

The doctrine of class struggle was endorsed by some of the leading Marxists of their own times, like Lenin, Rosa Luxemberg, Mao Zedong. Antonio Gramsci is credited to have introduced the concept of 'hegemony' in Marxist theory of power. Gramsci pointed out that the 'structures of legitimation' within a capitalist or bourgeoisie society prevents any challenge to its authority. It is on the efficiency of these structures that the bourgeoisie society depends. The conventional Marxist theory postulated that that it is the economic mode of production that constituted the base and its legal and political structure and various other expressions of its social consciousness including religion, morals, social custom and practices constituted its superstructure. They held that it is the base that determines the superstructure. Change in the base leads to corresponding change in the superstructure. Gramsci deviated from this analysis. He was of the view that superstructure of the contemporary Western society had attained some degree of autonomy, hence it merited some independent analysis. Gramsci particularly focused on the structures of domination in the culture of the bourgeois society. According to Gramsci there were two levels of this superstructure: political society or State; and civil society. Political society resorted to coercion in order to maintain its domination, while civil society resorted to garnering consent to maintain its domination. Hence, Gramsci called the political society or the State as 'structures of domination' and to civil society he called them the 'structures of legitimation'. It is the latter which received Gramsci's attention more.

Gramsci said that the family, school and church to which he called the institutions of civil society taught the citizens to show natural respect to the authority of the ruling classes. It is these structures according to Gramsci that lend legitimation to the rule of the bourgeois class, so much so that even injustice appeared to look like justice. These structures enable the bourgeois society to function in a manner such that the ruling classes appeared to rule with the consent of the ruled. As Gramsci said, "When the power is apparently exercised with the consent of its subject, it is called 'hegemony'". Based on what Gramsci observed, one can derive the following formula:

Power + Consent = Hegemony

Gramsci was primarily a humanist, who wanted to democratize all institutions and was opposed to tyranny. He tried to convince the Communists to come out of the obsession with economic determinism and to continue the ideological war in the field of culture, philosophy and literature. It was imperative that the Communist revolutionaries infiltrate the institutions of civil society and develop a new mass consciousness from the socialist value system.

Elite Theory of Power –Pareto, Mosca and Michels

Three eminent sociologists of the early twentieth century, namely Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca and Robert Michels postulated the Elite theory of power. According to this theory society was divided into rulers and the ruled. But quite unlike the Marxist theory, the elite theory holds that these divisions are not based on economic power but on competence and aptitude. It was Vilfredo Pareto, an Italian sociologist who in his book *The Mind and Society* used the word 'elite' to indicate a superior social group. It was this group which exhibited highest ability in their own field of activity. The remaining parts of the society which did not belong to this group and did not exhibit such abilities were termed as 'masses'. They lacked capabilities of leadership and thought it would be better to follow the elite. Pareto distinguished between 'governing elite' and 'non-governing elite'. The difference between the two terms is that governing elite hold power for the time being, whereas non-governing elite constantly endeavour to capture power. Hence there is a constant competition between the two groups resulting in 'circulation of elites'.

Mosca in his book *The Ruling Class* (1896) too postulated that people are divided into two classes- ruler and the ruled. While Pareto's ruling class were characterised by intelligence and talent, Mosca's ruling class was distinguished by its capacity of organization. Mosca defined ruling class as a political class that represents the interests of the influential and important groups, especially in a parliamentary democracy. He however, believed that leadership could emerge at all levels, including the grass-roots level, because every strata of the society had the potential for producing good organizers. Mosca too subscribed to the view that because of constant competition between the rulers and the rule, there would be a 'circulation of elites'.

Robert Michels (1949), a German sociologist in his book *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* propounded the theory of 'Iron Law of Oligarchy', by which meant that every organization is modelled on the principle of the law of oligarchy of the rule of the chosen few. Michels held, "majority of the

human beings are apathetic, indolent and slavish. So they have to bank upon their leaders for pursuing their social objectives. Trade unions, political parties and other organizations are vehicles of such leadership." As the complexity of an organization increases leaders become indispensable for the organization. They use their manipulative skills, oratory and persuasion with an objective to perch themselves on power. They become so prominent that it becomes impossible to dislodge them at periodical elections. Hence according to Michels, this 'Iron law of Oligarchy' makes it impossible for the 'circulation of elites', as a result belying hopes for any democratic organization.

Hannah Arendt on Power – The Constructive View on Power

In order to arrive at a constructive view on power, Hannah Arendt (1970) distinguished between 'violence' and 'power'. According Arendt, power belongs to people, whereas violence is committed when rulers use force against the consent of the people. In her major work *On Violence*, Arendt said that power relations are essentially cooperative, that is, power 'corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert'. Accordingly, power belongs to a group and remains with it as long as the group remains together. Hence Arendt is of the opinion that power keeps the public realm together, whereas violence threatens it. Violence belongs to the state. Arendt observes, "Where genuine power is absent, violence may emerge to fill the gap". This public character of power was sketched succinctly in Arendt's essay 'On Public Happiness' where she observed, "that no one could be happy without his share of in public happiness…and that no one could be called either happy or free without participating , and having a share, in public power." (Gottsegen 1994: 67)

Feminist Theory of Power

Feminist theory subscribe to the idea of the division of society into two broad categories on the basis of gender – men and women. It holds that the subjugation of women is systemic in nature as a result of the structural operation of patriarchy. Feminist analyses of power consider patriarchy to be a key factor in the subjugation of women – political, economic and cultural. As a result of patriarchy, women are understood in terms of their relationship to men. Also, patriarchy overlaps and interacts with other systems of oppression like caste, class, race etc. It is interesting to note that there is no feminist theory of power. Different strands of feminism hold different view points on what constitutes the source of patriarchy. "Liberal feminists would try to show the deficiencies of liberal conceptions of liberty, equality and justice to the extent that they do not take into account gender, while Marxist feminists would produce a critique of the gender-blindness of class analysis. Radical feminists hold gender to be primary category of analysis, and argue that all later forms of power imitate the original power relationships of men over women." (Menon 2011: 154)

Power in International Relations

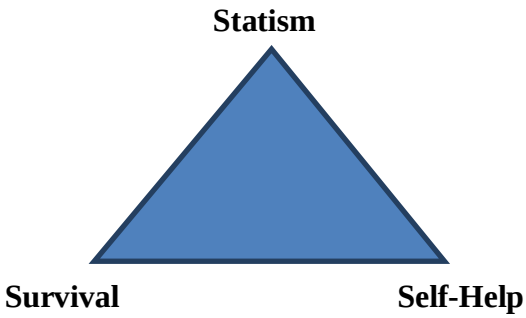
The discipline of international relations has tended to treat power as the exclusive province of realism. Most introductory texts to international relations cleave to the formulation which is in turn viewed as the only way to understand power as to how one state uses its material resources to compel another state to do something it does not want to do. The tendency to associate power with realism partly owes to the fact that rivals to realism typically distance

themselves from 'power' considerations. This feature has been especially visible in recent years, as neoliberal institutionalists, liberals, and constructivists have attempted to demonstrate their theoretical salience by demonstrating how 'power' variables are not causally consequential in their explanation of empirical outcomes.

Realism

History of the discipline of International Relations mention of the 'Great Debate' that took place in the late 1930s and early 1940s between the inter-war 'idealists' and a new generation of realist writers like E.H. Carr, Hans J. Morgenthau, Reinhold Neibuhr. The term 'idealists' was imposed retrospectively by the realist writers on the inter-war scholars. According to the realist scholars the approach of the idealists was more focussed on understanding the cause of the war and not finding a remedy for its existence, hence the name idealists. The realists charged the idealists of ignoring the role of power and the competitive nature of politics among nations. From 1939 to the present, leading theorists and policymakers have continued to view the world through the prism of the realist paradigm. The standard account of the Great Debate is that the realists emerged victorious and that the rest of the International Relations is in many respects, a footnote to Realism. The fact that Realism offers some sort of a prescription for States to maximize their interests in a hostile environment explains in part why it remains 'the central tradition in the study of world politics'. Many contemporary realist writers often claim to be part of an ancient tradition of thought that includes illustrious figures like Thucydides (c.460-406 B.C), Machiavelli (1469-1527), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). The perspective these realists offered on the way in which state leaders should conduct themselves in the realm of international politics are often grouped under the doctrine of *raison d'etat*, or reason of state.

John Baylis and Steve Smith (2007) in their book *Globalisation of World Politics* argued that 'three Ss' constitute the corners of the realist triangle that includes – Statism, Survival and Self-Help. It is also important to mention in this context that these three core elements were present in the work of realists like Thucydides as well as that of Kenneth Waltz. However, there are different schools of realism like Classical Realism associated mostly with Thucydides and Hans J. Morgenthau; Structural Realism associated with Kenneth W. Waltz and Neo-Classical Realism associated with Randall Schwaler. What emerges from an analysis of the realist school is that power is crucial. Yet, irrespective of how much power a state may possess, the core national interest of all states must be survival. Like the pursuit of power, the promotion of national interest is an iron law of necessity.



(A Thematic Representation of the 'Three Ss' of Realism as given by Baylis and Smith)

Realists argue that the basic structure of international politics is one of anarchy in that each of the independent sovereign states consider themselves to be their own highest authority and do not recognize a higher power above them. Power is crucial to a realist lexicon, yet irrespective of how much power states possess, the core national interest of all states is survival. In order to ensure the survival of the State, if a state feels threatened it should seek to augment its own power capabilities through arms build-up. Hence, the realists throughout the ages have considered it to be essential to preserve the liberty of states through balance of power. The mechanism of the balance of power seeks to ensure an equilibrium of power in which case no state or coalition of states is in a position to dominate all the others.

Realism has often been divided into three broad categories. The most simple categorization have been in terms of its periodization- Classical Realism (up to the twentieth century), which is frequently depicted with Thucydides; Modern Realism (1939-1979) and Structural or Neo-Realism of Kenneth Waltz (1979 onwards).

Classical realist lineage begins with Thucydides's representation of power as a law of human behaviour. The behaviour of the state as a self-seeking egoist is understood to be a mere reflection of the people who comprise the state. Classical realists argue that it is from this human nature that the essential features of international politics- fear, competition war emanate. Hans J. Morgenthau, a later classical realist also agreed with Thucydides. Morgenthau postulated six principles of political realism. He argued that "international politics, like all politics is a struggle for power". According to him politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature. It means that it is human nature to crave for power and more power. It is this reflection of human nature that we find in the arena of international politics. It is the second principle which is the core Morgenthau's principles. He said, "The main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power." (Morgenthau 1978:15) It is assumed that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power, and the evidence of history bear that assumption out.

Structural realists although concur with the classical realists that international politics is essentially a struggle for power, but they differ from the classical realists in that they do not subscribe to the view that it is the result of human nature. Structural realists argue that the anarchical nature of the international society is because of the absence of any overarching authority. Structural realism is associated with Kenneth Waltz (1979) and his major work *Theory of International Politics*, who defined the structure of international system in terms of three elements- organizing principle, differentiation of units and distribution of capabilities.

According to Waltz, it is the third tier i.e., the distribution of capabilities across units, which is important in understanding and explaining international outcomes. It is the distribution of power which is a key independent variable in understanding the international outcomes. But for the structural realists, power is the means to the end goal of security. Waltz himself wrote, "In crucial situations, however, the ultimate concern of states is not for power but for security." Hence, structural realism is often called as 'defensive realism'. A different account of power is given by the school of 'offensive realism' associated with John Mearsheimer. Offensive realism parts company with defensive realism on how much power states want. According to him, it is the structure of international politics that compels states to maximize their relative power. Hence for offensive realism the best option for states is to acquire more power than any other state. The ideal position for offensive realism is to be the global hegemon, but sine it is difficult to project power across large swaths of water bodies, hence for Mearsheimer, "the world is condemned to perpetual great-power competition". (Mearsheimer 2001:87)

Soft Power: Other variant of Power

A distinction has been made on the means adopted to achieve success in foreign policy decision-making. Hence we have two types of means- 'hard' means which includes military might and economic strength and 'soft' means which constitutes the means of attraction by 'co-option instead of coercion'. It was Joseph S. Nye who coined the term 'soft power' for the first time in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* published in 1991. Even though the theorizing of so-called soft power did not make much headway after Nye developed the concept, the idea of soft power has entered into both public and academic discourse being used both by statesmen and scholars alike.

Nye has differentiated between- (a) Command power- the ability to change what others do can rest on coercion or inducement; and (b) Co-optive power- the ability to shape what others want can rest on the attractiveness of one's culture and political values.

	HARD	SOFT
Spectrum of Behaviours	Coercion Inducement Command ◄-------●----------●------	Agenda-setting Attraction ------●----------●---------► Co-opt
Most likely resources	Force Payments Sanctions Bribes	Institutions Values Cultures Policies

POWER

Source: Joseph S. Nye, 'Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics', page 8.

Power depends on the context in which the relationship exists. The best guarantee to measure how much power one exerts on the other is to understand the other's preferences. At times desired outcomes are achieved without commanding, when the other believes that the objectives that he/she is following are legitimate. In such a situation the means of coercion becomes unnecessary, because the desired objective of co-option is achieved by the means of

attraction. For example, the radical Muslims who followed and supported Osama bin Laden did so, not because of any inducement or payments but because they believed in the 'justness' of Laden's cause. In the lexicon of a radical element or a *Fidayeen*, the idea of *'shahadat'* or martyrdom or supreme sacrifice holds more currency than any payment can make. This narrates a different form of power which is in stark contrast to coercion which is also a form of power.

It is such deficiencies of brutal hard power which brings us to the concept of 'the second face of power', which Nye calls 'the indirect way to get what you want' (Nye 2004: 5). Nye used the term soft power which he said co-opts rather than coerce others. It rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others. Nye gives familiar examples at the personal level to demonstrate this power of attraction- 'In a relationship or a marriage, power does not necessarily reside with the larger partner, but in the mysterious chemistry of attraction…' (Nye 2004: 5).

Although coercive power traditionally dominates realist literature, but another source of power is widely discussed in the works of even classical realist E. H. Carr's — 'power over opinion' and Hans Morgenthau's — 'policy of prestige', both of which mirror the concept of soft power as suggested by Nye. The logic suggests that traditional instruments of hard power - military might and economic inducements - act as a motor that sets any foreign policy in motion. Similar to Carr, Morgenthau believes that political power is reliant on the psychological relationship between two actors. In order to maintain the psychological impact of political power in international relations, a state must be concerned with their 'legitimate' use of coercive power. To have power delegitimized is to lose the optimal impact of its political leverage, or in other words to have friction applied to a policy already set in motion. Foreign policies that attract support, based on popular ideals serve the purpose of endowing these policies with an appearance of legitimacy.

Peter Van Ham (2010) in his book Social Power in International Politics offers us a constructivist notion of 'social power' that captures "the ability to set standards, create norms and values that deemed legitimate and desirable without resorting to coercion or payment" (Ham 2010: 5). Social power resides in such diverse practices as agenda-setting, issue or problem framing, public diplomacy, norm advocacy or discursive power. Van Ham also wrote that on the fringes of soft power several other concepts have flourished. He gave the example of Walter Russell Mead who added nuances like 'sticky power', 'sweet power' and 'sharp power'. Mead argued that US has 'sharp' (military) power and 'sticky' (economic) power. Van Ham observed that Mead's idea of sticky power conjured up the images of embeddedness of the complex interdependence scholars like Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye introduced in 1970s. Ham also argued that sticky power revisits liberal institutional thinking which suggests that treaties and international organization have a significant impact on the state behaviour in terms of formulating and even reformulating state preferences and choices (Ham 2010: 7). Stephen D. Krasner's definition of a 'regime' as a set of explicit or implicit 'principles, norms, rules, or decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue area' is hence relevant to our debate (Krasner 1982: 190). This was even recognized by E. H. Carr who argued in his book *The Twenty Years' Crisis* that the Anglo-Saxon control over ideas constitutes a major source of global power. The power of ideas and norms are hence are hardly new to the discourse. Since power is hardly ever an end

in itself and is almost always a means to achieve other goals (from survival to reputation) so the study of power has therefore gone beyond realism.

Constructivism argues that ideas and discourse matter and that norms, values and identities heavily influences political life. Surely international politics still offers numerous relatively unchangeable constraints to state behavior such as the balance of military power or the global market, yet ideas and discourse matter since they construct the socially agreed facts that cannot be wished away by individuals and inform the common knowledge that sustains legitimacy and authority. As Ted Hopf (1998) claims that identities play an important role in society, since "they tell you and others who you are and they tell you who others are" (Hopf 1998: 127).

Foucault on Power

Michel Foucault, the French postmodernist, has been one of the most influential thinkers in modern times whose ideas on power have shaped the discourse on power per se. Foucault is widely known for his idea that 'power is everywhere', diffused and embodied in discourse, knowledge and 'regimes of truth' (Foucault 1991). Foucault's work marked a radical departure from previous ways of understanding power. Foucault argued that 'power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere' so in this sense is neither an agency nor a structure. Hence he challenged the idea that power is wielded by people or groups by way of 'episodic' or 'sovereign' acts of domination or coercion, arguing that power is instead pervasive and dispersed. (Foucault 1991: 63) He observed that power is a kind of 'metapower' or 'regime of truth' that pervades society, and is in constant flux and negotiation. Foucault uses the term 'power' or 'knowledge' to signify that power is constituted through accepted forms of knowledge, scientific understanding and 'truth'. These 'general politics' and 'regimes of truth' are the result of scientific discourse and institutions, and are reinforced constantly through the education system, the flux of political and economic ideologies and the media.

John Gaventa (2003) in his work *Power After Lukes: A Review of the Literature* notes that Foucault was one of the few writers on power who recognised that 'power is not just a negative, coercive or repressive thing that forces us to do things against our wishes, but can also be a necessary, productive and positive force in society'. (Gaventa 2003: 2) Foucault's approach to power was different from the mainstream ideas in the sense that he believed that power transcended politics and he saw it as a regular, socialised and embodied phenomenon. Hence, revolutions, do not always lead to change in the social order. However, critics of Foucault considered his conceptualization of power to be so removed from agency or structure that scope for practical action seemed to be very little.

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