CONSTRUCTIVIST ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MAPPING IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

TRIPURESH PATHAK[1]

[1]Assistant Professor (Political Science), Govt. Vivekanand P.G. College, Maihar, Dis. Satna (M.P.), INDIA

ABSTRACT

Psychological Mapping can be used as a broad term referring to coherent and precise attributes of an individual, group or national identity. Realism states that there is basic conflict among states while Liberalism supports the notion of cooperative International Arrangement. Realism as well as Liberalism adopt an objective approach while Constructivism contends that reality is inter-subjective and is constructed by interactions of actors and institutions. It gives lot of scope to an agency to shape and mould reality within the constraints of structural attributes. Psychology becomes important as Constructivism gives great importance to emotional aspects. The interaction between real world and virtual world in era of information revolution has lot to do with the propagation of hatred. There is suspicion as well as hope in International Relations. This aspect of psychological malleability is important in understanding the dynamics of International Relations. Constructivism creatively engages with role of endogenous groups whose psychological attributes are important in understanding their viewpoints. The contemporary scenario of risk generated through weapons can be properly analysed by understanding aspects of fear. The environmental challenges too pose a great risk to human existence and it can be properly evaluated only through concept of collective responsibility, empathy and sympathy.

KEYWORDS: *Psychological Mapping, Constructivism, Tragedy of Commons, Symbolic Crystallization, Structuration. Psychological Deflection.*

PSYCHOLOGY AND APPROACHES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Psychology is branch of knowledge that deals functioning of human mind, interplay of cognitive and affective dimensions of human beings in the activities of human beings. Psychology has many approaches that define the nature and attributes of human learning and knowledge and it is very advanced and autonomous field. The paper only aims to underline some important psychological characteristics that exist at an individual as well as group level in the context of International Relations. The actual conduct of International Relations, like all other human activities, is done by the concrete individuals who have some or the other perception of reality. The diplomats, public leaders, interested groups and citizens are greatly moved by their psychological features. These psychological features are related to ambition, trust, suspicion, fear, hope, despair, common belongingness, othering and many other emotional-cum-cognitive feeling. The use of psychological features has been used not just in politics, but also in law as we have advanced field of criminal jurisprudence related with the analysis of the intention of criminal behind his execution of criminal act. In politics, there has been study of different psychological features in the light of acquisition of power and the capacity of players to interpret their self interests.

Psychological Mapping refers to the precise statement of important attributes of an individual, group or national identity. It is reflected in the external acts of given entity. It is relevant in International Relations and can be related to important dimensions and concepts of International Relations. There are 3 types of maps: cognitive maps; mind maps and concept maps. (Gibbons, 2019) There is need to study the different attributes and define and refine it as per the demands of International Relations. Psychological Mapping will help us in understanding the interactions and inter-dependences between various psychological and political concepts. The mapping can be done figuratively, but it has been discussed only in theoretical form in this paper. Psychological Mapping is done to understand the meaning of different political concepts from the psychological perspective. Psychological Mapping has elements of continuity over long periods of history. If we study history, we will find that same forces of ambition, jealousy, power-hunger, wrath and similar psychological attitudes have acted as the main stimulants of war and conflicts between states. It is also dynamic as there is generation of new pattern of fear, insecurity and hope with change in political and economic structures. The revolutions proceed on the basis of great hope generated among the people regarding creation of better order and not just the problems prevalent in old order. The psychological attitudes also cast their impact on the different art, literary and other creative activities in the society. The concept of mental mapping in

context of city was developed by Lynch who contended that for proper mapping, there is need to have identity, structure and meaning of given attribute.   (Lynch, 1960, Pp.8-9) There is need to store representations that can be done both externally as well as internally. (Downs and Stea, 1977, p.62) These creative activities are very important as they play an important role in political consciousness and political education of the people.

In International Relations, there are very well developed approaches of Realism and Liberalism. Realism is based on the relentless pursuit of power by International actors. Liberalism is based on the potential of players to cooperate with each other in order to fulfill common interests and goals. The emphasis on relative gains, i.e. gains of players in relation to each other by Realist thought underlines the significance of mutual mistrust, suspicion, jealousy and deep sense of insecurity among the actors of International Relations. The emphasis on absolute gains, i.e. gains attained by the players in absolute sense without comparison with gains attained by other players by Liberalist thinkers is a validation of the propensity of individual actors and institutions to be satisfied with their own objectives, without bothering much about the problems to be created by the performance of other actors and institutions. This is support of rational faculties of human beings by Liberalism in instrumental sense. The consistency in behaviour is very important in the development of institutions. The consistency depends upon the development of norms and values that are consensually regarded as more or less morally binding on all the actors and institutions. This requires development of a sense of adherence to commonly evolved norms as much as possible. Realism contends that such norms are only morally significant and the states breach the norms and values as per their calculation of selfish interests. Realism argues that states rely on the principle of self help. (Waltz,1979, Pp.111-114)) The short term interest is regarded to be significant enough to cause the breach of norms. Liberals contend that norms develop because of their observation by actors and institutions in significant number of cases over sufficient amount of time. The players are able to sacrifice short term gains by breaching the norms in order to derive long term benefit from following the norm as norm development causes not just reduction in transaction costs, but also significantly reduces the amount of uncertainty. Thus, the psychological valuation of immediacy and short period of time that is more certain and significant for the individual actors themselves as opposed to discounted valuation of longer period of time that is not only uncertain but also irrelevant for the personal career of actors themselves, is very important aspect that must be critically evaluated before understanding the scope and limitations of various decisions taken in the International arena.

Constructivism is an approach in International Relations that believes in inter-dependence and inter-relationship between various actors and institutions. It supports the viewpoint that Reality is neither purely objective as contended by the Realist and Liberal scholars, nor is it purely subjective as advocated by the Postmodern thinkers. It occupies middle ground between rationalist approaches and interpretive approaches. (Adler, 1997) Reality is constructed due to the interaction between different players and institutions and there is sharing of meaning related to structures and processes that operate in real politics. Constructivism gives lot of support to identity and interests. Identity is related to the grouping of people around some common characteristics like religion, race, nation, language, economic status etc. and the definition of some core values and objectives are defined as interests. Constructivism adopts middle path between structuralism and individualism and this places it closer to *Structuration*, a concept developed by Anthony Giddens. (Giddens:1984) Structuration is a balance between structural determination and individual freedom. It suggests that individuals are greatly influenced by the values supported by given social structure, but the structure in turn is dependent upon the repetitive actions of the individual beings in order to survive and progress. Constructivism also tries to strike balance between values promoted by International Structure like Anarchy, Self-Help and Institutions etc. and the autonomy of individual states to further those values or chart out an independent path for itself. Constructivism also uses verstehen methodology developed by great German thinker Max Weber as it aims to understand the different perspectives of different players and institutions. It also gives adequate amount of respect to Positivist tradition as the International Relations do not happen in vacuum, but in face of concrete objective realities. There is thus a need to understand the objective realities and the impact of various significant events on the different states.

CONSTRUCTIVISM AND PSYCHOLOGY

Constructivism is greatly engaged with psychology. The importance of Structure lies in the fact of imitational propensities present in human beings. It is considered easy to walk on the well known paths than to search a new path. The structure also limits the chance of success that is available to any new or out of the box solution. This is because the might of structural values will act against the new pattern developed by individual players. The limit posed upon the structure is due to appreciation of the fact that the structure does not exist on its own apart from the human activities. There has been effort to demystify the power of structure and it has been found by different scholars that structural values perpetrate because of repetition of the essential acts by the relevant actors and institutions. This opens up the space for Individual states to modify the values of structure as per its own power. This opens up the chance for altering the values of structure. The psychological space open for different actors and institutions grants autonomy and power for the sense of perception of such players. Constructivism gives respect to the heterogeneities inherent in the international structure and aims to evaluate the

understanding and perspectives of different actors and institutions. Constructivism opens the field as it allows an analysis of domestic factors in International Relations. There is a scope for "ideational alliance" between Constructivism and Psychology. (Shannon, 2012) It tries to overcome the assumption of given endogenous factors. It aims to view the dynamics of endogenous factors and aims to evaluate their impact on the foreign policy of given state. The psychology of endogenous groups is related to its history and its expectations from the present political structure regarding its share in allocation of resources, besides its respect and prestige. This puts sort of pressure on domestic political structure, but also creates potential of mobilization in the name of the common enemy and promotion of irredentism. The psychology regarding affection, hatred and reluctance to larger and smaller groups; primary and secondary groups; has great bearing in not only integration of state but its potential of sacrificing the self interests for the national interests. The use of symbols is very important in this regard. The immense respect given to symbol considered as crucial for the identity is very powerful means of acquiring respect from the identity. The power of symbol is because of its representative value as it can represent all the aims and objectives of people of given identity. The strong, condensed, objective nature of image makes symbol even more important as its significance can be easily communicated to all the members of the group. The simple manifestation of symbol is powerful enough to overcome all the heterogeneities present among members of given identity. The level of emotional attachment to symbol is thus immense and the other groups desiring communication of political and social messages are also comfortable with the symbols as it facilitates easy communication with the groups related with the symbol. Symbol has the potential to crystallise an amorphous concept. This can be termed as *symbolic crystallization* and this has potential to mobilize masses on basis of common identification with external reality. The opposition groups, opposed to the group that has relation with symbol are definitely provoked by the undue display of symbols and these symbols have the value to start clashes between members of different groups. Thus, symbol can also become site of conflict between two groups.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The paper cannot evaluate all the different psychological attributes that have relevance in International Relations. It only aims to do justice with the structural and individual level nature of psychological attributes and its impact on the perception and understanding of different players. The analysis of psychological features must be done in a dynamic manner, giving respect to the immense development in science and technology that has greatly altered the pattern of activities in International Relations. There has been great debate related to the impact of information technology on the social psychological aspects of human beings. Though the interaction of physical reality with virtual reality has become very common feature of contemporary times, it must be stated that the massive flow of unfiltered information in very small amount of time has increased the sensitivity of information. On one hand, there is tough question of regulation of activities of individuals as there is substantive case of violation of rights if the states interfere much in the activities of individuals who share their thoughts, beliefs and values on social networking sites. If the blogging activities are left unregulated, then there is fear of cycle of reactions and counter-reactions that may be very harmful to the social fabric in both short and long terms. The image creation through social networking sites is very simple as the blogger has simply to send lot of messages favourable or opposed to given identity or interest. The selective flow of information coupled with distorted information with varying degree of rumor easily creates lot of misperception and incorrect knowledge about the features of given identity. Politics is an arena where mobilization determines the configuration of power and one with sufficient mobilization is able to climb up the high echelons of power. So, there is lot of focus in politics on effective mobilization of large sections of society. The process of othering where a given identity is differentiated from self identity is an old phenomenon, but it has been made easier by the availability of social networking sites. The psychology of hate has been promoted by the deliberate use of dissemination of data for the purpose of mobilizing a group in opposition to enemy groups. The advantage of social networking sites that opens up new vistas for overcoming hate is also important and it ought not to be ignored. The social networking sites have increased the reach of common educated person to communicate his information with the rest of the world. He, no longer, is limited by the paucity of capital resources, as used to be the case when he had to seek the publishers to get his work published. He can effectively communicate his ideas in simple words and orally through use of videos as well. The sections of public have greater access to him than the earlier days when a person had to either buy the book the book or go in the library for reference. So, all the incorrect and false ideas spread with malicious intent, can be easily countered. This is better position than the old days of closed societies when there was greater censorship. Thus, the internet has its remedies for solving the ills of misperception though it does act as a medium of flow of malicious information.

The constructivist analysis of psychological attributes has to be done in the light of fluidity and stickiness of psychological values related to identity. The pre internet era had lot of stickiness related to formation of perception concerning an identity. That was due to the fact that there was relative paucity of facts related to other identities and few instances often shaped the nature and characteristics on the mental map of a group. The level of knowledge about other identities has increased a lot in contemporary times and this has enabled better appreciation of

strengths and weaknesses of given identity in current times. The rapid flow of information has made the entire process of identity perception very fluid as there is scope of adjustment and change in meaning given to other identities. Thus there has been decrease in stickiness or constancy in values, norms and features associated with other identities by group. This has made time factor very important as lot of changes can happen in relatively small amount of time in contemporary politics. The entire build up of identity over centuries in the context of quickly changing perceptions is a very complex challenge for members of different groups. This is because suspicion attached with members of given group because of some illegal activities of other group becomes very problematic and embarrassing experience for the law abiding simple members of the same group. This has resulted in increase in hate crimes against members of such identity. Hater needs a known population to displace his or her resentment. (Waylin, 2003, p.184)

HARMFUL WEAPONS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FEAR

The development of technology has increased the nature and magnitude of damage that can be probably caused by the use of such harmful technology. The entire modern structure of International Politics has developed over the past few centuries. There is lot of respect for the sovereignty of the state. It is believed that states will act rationally to further their self interests. Even this process of promotion of self interests has resulted in deployment of harmful weapons that has caused large scale destruction of life and property. But there are actors in International politics that are averse to the peaceful use of technology and aim to use weapons just for show of their political power. It has become difficult to contain such powers as there are various overt and covert channels that supply materials and technologies to such irrational actors. This has increased the level of fear in different states of the world as the use of very harmful and powerful weapons like nuclear weapons may cause the process of use and counter use of weapons that may result in mutual destruction of all the states.

The degree of fear generated and high level of insecurity created due to existence of such weapons is very unfortunate phenomenon. This is because there is need to properly develop and implement codes and protocols related to use of technology that is equitable, just and fair. The existence of fear is used as blackmail factor against other states as the erring states are encouraged to break even more codes, limitations and rules since the other states are compelled to avoid escalation of war at all costs. The wielders of such power even increase their power if they are not stopped at earlier stages.

The construction of basic values and norms related to identity is also done in the context of hope and opportunities generated by the shifts in the old order. The high level of economic opportunities shifts the course of discourse from suspicion to arena of great cooperation and assistance in building

new and viable free order. The states that were on the part of closed economic system near to U.S.S.R. were referred to as bad and dangerous by U.S. But after the fall of U.S.S.R., the same states have been co-opted by U.S. and it is claimed that such states are natural and true elements of liberal economic system. Thus, it can be easily pointed out that International Relations are very dynamic. There is always a great opportunity to develop close and proximate relation between different states. There are also differences over vital aspects that may result in conflict between the states. It is upon the construction given to reality by the major players and institutions that determines the course of International Relations. The economic opportunities are related to investment and employment avenues open in given economic dynamics. The states, on finding scope of lot of profitability through investment in foreign states, try to develop friendly and positive image of foreign states. There is lot of management of psychological viewpoints concerning several states.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE

There is also need of proper understanding of environmental factors on the psychological perception of different players and institutions. The increase in level of environmental pollution and ecological degradation has created new fear regarding the future of different states. The increase in sea level is feared to cause death of large number of people and forced migration of lot of people. This can cause problem of large scale migration, unemployment and pressure of economies in which such refugees would seek shelter. The environmental pattern has already changed for the worse. There has been alteration in rainfall and summer-winter duration in many regions of the world. There is dire need of developing consensus regarding adoption of adequate technologies that would reduce the level of environmental pollution. There is need to contain the rise of global temperature within 2 degree Celsius. This is possible if there is wide use of eco-friendly technologies and supply of these technologies to developing states at low costs is done in order to ensure sustainable development. This is related with the degree of seriousness that the common public opinion has regarding environmental factors. Psychology can help to describe explain and inform our response to climate change besides increasing our understanding about how people feel and think about climate change. (Swim et al, 2011) Since the ecological factors cast their impact on collective entities as opposed to individual human beings separately, there is play of **tragedy of commons**. Hardin developed this concept which implies that the people are more adept in maintaining resources under their private ownership while they are careless and irresponsible towards commonly held resources. (Hardin, 1968) There is need to understand the actual consequences of ecological degradation in an ethical manner. There is need to develop empathy and sympathy both for the future generations. Empathy is applicable for states that have themselves borne the

consequences of calamities. Sympathy is needed for the states that have themselves not suffered the consequences, but whose people can understand the miseries of other human beings, including their future generations.

ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFLECTION IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The psychological aspect of ***Deflection*** is very important in understanding the basic nature of International Relations. Deflection is nothing but a deliberate attempt to turn away the attention of a person from one important to other issue of less importance, but greater sensation. Deflection is a phenomenon that helps an entity to face the bitter situations by shifting its attention to some other entertaining or light hearted events. This is essential for psychological health of individuals and groups. The presence of unhappiness, dissatisfaction and unpleasing mindset is very harsh reality an it needs to be overcome. Deflection is important aspect of daily political working as the system has lot of pressure and it needs to reduce pressure by diverting the load on the system. This is very in understanding the policy of dictatorial states. There may be shortage of many basic amenities in such states or there may be sheer desire of large sections of people to get the participatory rights. In order to prevent the people from attaining such rights, the dictator starts or escalates the tension with other states. This compels the people to stand together with the ruler in time of crisis rather than wage struggle against him. Such tendencies are also visible in the case of democratic states. This is because there is need to get support of considerable number of voters in order to get elected in a democracy. A good performance in conflict against other state increases the level of support of the government and it has good chance of getting reelected. The democratic peace theory suggests that there ought to be peace within the democratic states. But this has limitation as democracy involves large scale mobilization of people and conflict is means to deflect the attention of large number of people. Deflection is important means of strengthening centripetal force when centrifugal forces are trying to assert themselves. This is because there is often need of some visible symbol that can unite all the people. The image of enemy is very important factor for unifying the diverse sections of society. This is because enemy poses the question of survival and this vital question has the potential to supersede all other questions raised against the state.

CONCLUSION

The paper has tried to do justice with the concept of psychological mapping in relation with International Relations. This is because there is need to develop and utilize existing psychological concepts that are relevant to International Relations. It must be said that the psychological interaction with political reality is not new and there have been efforts by great scholars like Hobbes, Machiavelli, Thucydides, Hans J.

Morgenthau and many other political thinkers to creatively engage psychological concepts, though the conceptualization was not much sophisticated. Constructivism is very important approach that is related to the formation and crystallization of norms and values. The emotional aspect is given lot of significant place in the constructivist analysis. The rationality has limited significance in mobilizing large number of people. There is need to understand the high level of insecurity created by the development of hazardous weapons and the fear that they generate among the people. There is need to do justice with the insecurity generated by the environmental degradation. This is because there is fear of large scale migration of people from one state to other due to environmental calamities. There is fear of large scale destruction of lives and property of people due to the environmental pollution. The hope generated by economic opportunities is also important in understanding the dynamics. There can be proper use of optimistic psychology that is behind all the efforts of entrepreneurs. The states are seen in terms of availability of raw materials and labour supply and market for finished goods and services. The fear of being swept away by the highly competitive multi-national companies results is formation of protectionist movement in different states. The psychological shifts in economic aspects are as dynamic as the movement of different phases of economic cycle. There is need to understand the different the complex relationship between different social, economic and cultural aspects of International Relations and the psychological attributes relevant to such aspects.

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