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EXPLAINING DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS:

A CRITICAL REALIST ANALYSIS WITH A CASE

STUDY OF JAPAN

ABHINAV WALIA

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Abstract

This research raises two interrelated questions. *Firstly*, what makes democratic transitions possible? *Secondly*, what purchase can 'critical realism' afford in this enquiry? Previous studies on the first question are essentially predicated on an 'event-ontology', i.e. atomistic events, actions, or empirical indices. Whilst they have furthered understanding, it is contended here that they are nevertheless inadequate. Contrastively, the thesis prefers a 'non-event' ontology which facilitates focus on social structures and underlying mechanisms, without subordinating or denigrating agency. Pursuing a non-anthropocentric approach, the research begins by addressing the neglect of structure, agency, space and time from democratic accounts. These are brought centre stage from what will be shown to be their current peripheral status. In a parallel move, the hypostatization of democracy—treating democracy as a hallowed entity over and above social practices—is impugned. Correlatively, the tendency in some current literature for universalistic models of democracy, which underestimate the diversity of experience of different geo-historical regions, is also interrogated. Thus the research gravitates away from describing democratic transitions in 'splendid isolation' to scrutinizing them as a sub-set of social transformation. Recognizing that conditions of social change too change over a period and the explanandum itself undergoes change, a case is made for a new explanans, viz. critical realism (CR). CR enables employing 'non-event' ontology and illumes the structural agential relationship, which is crucial in the process of democratic transitions. The exploratory exercise is developed into realist modelling of democratic

transitions. Japan, as a case study, serves to demonstrate the viability of realist modelling. The methodological precepts of some alternative models of democratization are also applied to Japan. By contradistinguishing them, the deficiencies of the non-realist models are revealed. Although the research stresses particular geo-historical regions and their unique social patterns, the concern is not with historicism, i.e. isolated or unique patterns. Rather, the aim is to provide a broad theoretical framework which is applicable to non-democratic societies in understanding their endeavours towards democratic transition. In this pursuit, the research develops a scientific approach to studying democratic transitions. It employs a realist analyst's (Margaret Archer) model of social morphogenesis and then applies it distinctively to democratic transitions. The results of the research affirm the profitability of realist modelling in explicating democratic transitions. This is due to the consideration that democratic transition is an intricate process and any attempt at oversimplifying it may result in misattribution of its causality. Thus the central claim to originality in the thesis lies in three main arguments: for a critical realist approach, in general, to the understanding of issues such as democratic transitions; against approaches which lack the concepts and explanatory power of critical realism, and for a very specific set of arguments as to how critical realism can and should proceed in understanding this kind of issue. The thesis is therefore original in advancing both the methodology of international or comparative politics and its substantive content. In addition, it also distinctively applies Archer's model of morphogenesis to democratic transitions.

Preface[1]

This research is with a difference. Though the theme (democratic transition) is somewhat familiar, its treatment is not. In so stating, no tall claim is made; rather, the reasons for differential treatment have to do with the fact that this thesis, to some extent, is an autobiographical account. In other words, the thesis is closely related to the evolution of a particular thought-process and concomitantly a particular stance or mode in conducting enquiry by the researcher over a period. The reasons for this should become clear anon.

At a deeper level, this dissertation relates to an ongoing enquiry by the author. The enquiry process can be stated like this. For the last two decades or so, I have been attempting (do not have 'final' answers yet) to answer three main questions. One, why do I think the way I do? (Corollary 1: why do other people think the way they do?). Two, can this mode of thinking be altered, manipulated? Three, how can the 'mind-body' relationship be better conceptualized? (Corollary 1: What is 'I'?) These questions were not framed in this fashion, when the enquiry process commenced. However, for the sake of precision and, with retrospective analysis, it can be said that the enquiry was focused on these three questions. All three questions are interrelated and have deep philosophical

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[1] Although this is a doctorate research, the *Preface* is presented in a rather general fashion, i.e. without too many citations, making some general assumptions, and drawing some general conclusions. At first sight, this may seem incongruous with a doctorate research project, but further reading of the dissertation should dispel all such doubts. Some phrases, quotations employed subsequently in the dissertation have been mentioned in the *Preface*; these sources find mention in the ensuing thesis. The reasons for such generalized reasoning should become clear presently, as the aim is not to share detailed information about the alternate courses (explored by the author before settling down to the methodology employed in this research), but to show how

connotations. Indeed, they have remained philosophical conundrums down the centuries.

The enquiry spanning two decades has led to a mental peregrination into various domains and disciplines. For the sake of record, some of these domains and disciplines include astrology, emotional intelligence, *kundalini* awakening, numerology, psychology, Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), spiritualism, books on positive thinking.[2] However, one by one, these domains and disciplines, all fell like mirages, as they failed to provide convincing answers to the three aforementioned primary questions. In the final analysis, the weight of a theory lies in its test. In a like manner, the test of these domains, disciplines lay in their informing and changing the pattern of thought process, but none seemed to provide the appropriate answers. For example, Krishnamurti[3] preaches that the cause of suffering is *desire*. It then follows that suffering can be removed by tackling desire, but Krishnamurti is silent on the *how* of this. He does not take up the fundamental question – what *is* desire and why is desire there, in the first place? Why is it in different forms in different persons at any given time? Why should one prescriptive dose be given for all and sundry? Why impose an order on others? More precisely, Krishnamurti simply starts with desire as a given without probing the mechanisms that generate it. Likewise, astrology remains adamant that the position of the celestial stars, at the time of birth, plays a role in

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they became a catalyst in prodding a 'deviant' mode of thought. 'Deviant' here does not imply anomalous or aberrant mode of thought; rather, it informs about a non-conformist attitude.
[2] See, for instance, Robbins, Anthony (1988) *Unlimited Power: The New Science of Personal Achievement*, London: Simon & Schuster.
[3] Krishnamurti, Jiddu (1987) *Education and the Significance of Life*, Bombay: B.I. Publications. See, especially, chapter 8.

many aspects of life. Now, it may be pensively asked: Why not consider the position of the stars at the time of conception? Why cannot this configuration affect a person's life? Why is it only a one-time affair, i.e. at the time of birth? Why cannot the stars' ever-changing position influence a person's daily life? Do persons born at the same time, across the globe, thousands of miles apart with different succeeding life experiences, likely to have the same personality; if yes, how? What is the *mode* in which the stars affect a being and affect his personality? No concrete answers are provided. A lesson here is that raising qualitatively different questions can be useful in understanding a problematique than providing ingenuous answers.

Some of these domains, disciplines, at first sight, may appear to have no connection with the three primary questions of enquiry. Nonetheless, further probe would show that these questions are closely related to life-process, itself. There are multitudes of people, who resort to these modes to seek, extract make meaning out of life, in general, and of their own selves, in particular.

A fundamental characteristic (which later transpired to be a blemish) of these modes/domains/disciplines is that they are 'closed'.[4] They are premised on the notion of being able to explain everything unfailingly. This all-encompassing view initially seems alluring and impressive, as temptation for 'final' answers is often strong. Howbeit, in the course of two decades of enquiry (by way of

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[4] *Cf.* Koestler, Arthur (1982) *Bricks to Babel: Selected writings with author's comments*, London: Picador, p. 63. Koestler argues that 'Marxism, like Freudianism, like Catholicism, is a closed system'. A closed system has amongst others two peculiarities, viz. (i) it represents a truth of universal validity, i.e. capable of explaining all phenomena, and to have a cure for all that ails man [sic]'; (ii) it is irrefutable by evidence, as all data are so organized to fit in with the expected pattern.

observation and analysis, thought experiments), such an all-encompassing view and what it concomitantly proffered as solutions, turned out to be insubstantial and even misleading. This is because these modes take causation – a very important issue – for granted and, thereby, oversimplify the matter. For instance, *kundalini* domain would say that *x* causes *y*, but this is assumed in *a priori* fashion rather than conclusively/empirically demonstrating it. It is certainly not that *a posteriori* knowledge is better than *a priori* knowledge. Depending upon occasions, the situation could be otherwise also. Anyhow, given the uncertainty in life and the possibility of multiple causal chains, stated generically, such monocausal thinking/solutions are insubstantial, as they try to square a circle.

It was around this time of ferment (1998) that I took study leave from my service which I had joined in 1989. The period of study leave, speaking retrospectively, turned out to be a rich learning experience. Habitual thinking/working, as it unfolds in daily life does prevent a *fuller* understanding of many issues, whereas, a period of introspection (such as, study leave) can be useful in *initiating* a learning process at a deeper level, which would appear to be different from the learning that does take place in daily praxis.

Even by way of their 'negative' results, these modes/domains, at least, informed about varied thought patterns and kindled a learning process from what they lacked.[5] They were, thus, useful as they generated some insights, albeit

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[5] Thomas Alva Edison had stated in memorable words about experimental failure. He would say: "I have not failed 700 times. I have not failed once. I have succeeded in proving that those 700 ways will not work. When I have eliminated the ways that will not work, I will find the way that will work". See Nosotro, Rit 'Thomas Edison: February 11, 1847 – October 18, 1931, Atheist and Renowned Inventor' at http://www.hyperhistory.net/apwh/bios/b4edisont.htm, retrieved on 14 December, 2005.

through their shortcomings: (a) oversimplification of complex matters; (b) slighting complexity in causation (c) the flaws of treating the human system as closed, as determinate; (d) one-on-one, or associational thinking; (e) overlooking multiple causal chains involved in social phenomena; and (f) foundationalism. An important learning then was that a scientist must search for causes than being complacent with descriptions.[6] Moreover, multiple interpretations of the same phenomenon were also a distinct possibility. An omnivorous curiosity was consequently generated to enquire into the three primary questions by asking qualitatively different questions: *What else is there which can answer the primary questions?* Thus was generated the yearning for making enquiries by transcending received knowledge; the latter was not deemed to be received wisdom, but something that needed to be tested and, thereupon, accepted or rejected. Stated differently, no authority could be deemed sacrosanct whose words were to be taken as-a-matter-of-fact. A collateral development was that of *healthy skepticism* towards received knowledge rather than blind acceptance. *Unsettling settling concepts* was worth pursuing for. T. H. Eliot's remark – 'There is more to understand. Hold fast to that as the way to freedom' – seemed a fine motto for any enquiry.

With these insights, the enquiries were directed towards science as a possible mode of responding to such queries. It was during this period (in 2000) that I came across a book titled *The Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins. Whether intended or unintended by Dawkins, my interpretation of the book fostered

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[6] The term 'descriptions' has not been employed in a deprecatory sense.

determinist and reductive thinking.[7] The temptation to explain everything was quite strong. My own (further) interpretations instilled in me the notion that genes could be manipulated and, thereby, alter certain human characteristics. A corollary was that the cognitive process was *solely* the function of certain biological mechanisms which, too could be manipulated. Reductionism seemed an attractive proposition. The path of the Holy Grail was close, or so it seemed. The answers to the three primary questions also seemed within sight.

It was in this background that I reached Nottingham Trent University (NTU), UK to pursue the doctorate programme. The fact that Human Genome Project was on in both UK and USA furthered my belief that some great results would ensue. However, the results of the Human Genome Project did not provide any 'final answers'. The somewhat despondent mood was followed by readings on quantum physics, secondary readings on David Bohm, and especially 'theory of complexity'. My own interpretations of these events led me to render the previous 'deterministic' readings suspect as they could not clinch reality and explain everything – the commonsensical view that reality is simple and can be explained at time t_1 lost its sheen. The intricate nature of life, the involved nature of reality, and the complexity of phenomena crumbled the notion that reality is a pre-given waiting to be identified in a right manner. What constitutes reality, itself, became a matter proper for enquiry.

It is here that the threads of these philosophical enquiries can be tied with the research project– on democratic transitions. The extant texts on democratic

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[7] No pejorative hue is accorded to reductive thinking, as is the fad in present times, since reductive thinking is useful in certain contexts.

transitions too suffered from some of the hereinbefore stated flaws. The enquiry process thus came a full circle. One's own broader outlook towards life is assuredly reflected in the manner of enquiry in any aspect. Whilst any research process is likely to be enriching and may unravel hitherto unknown facts, it cannot commence without some degree of pre-existing beliefs that shape enquiry. How the beliefs of the author, in some measure, underwent change and in what circumstances has been explained *supra*.

The extant texts on democratic transition, though at times insightful, generated dissatisfaction too with oversimplification, in many quarters. Examples abounded: elation (almost reaching giddiness) about the fall of the Berlin Wall and the (misplaced) hope that democracy had finally arrived or emerged victorious; making too much out of one or two events, or a simple chain of events, such as gatherings at Tiananmen Square, or even the fall of Berlin Wall; similarly, misconceived notions, such as the 'end of history', the 'third' wave of democracy, democracy from 'below', against the 'state'.[8] All these were subjected to 'thought experiments', in-depth probe, and also related to real life experiences and not simply taken as being received wisdom or simply assumed to be true. Thus, the ground was set for examining democratic transitions in a somewhat different perspective, but without oversimplifying it. The recent problems confronting the *Orange Revolution* in Ukraine are a case in point. Compare the jubilation less than a year ago with the present status (September 2005) when President Viktor Yushchenko has had to sack the very team which led the *Orange Revolution* amidst accusations of mass graft. Doubtless, there

seems to be more to democracy than mere congregations, ousting authoritarian regimes, as the case of Iraq also evidences.

There is a Chinese saying: when the student is ready, the master arrives. It was in this scenario that I treaded into Critical Realism (CR, i.e. the methodology employed in this research project). As the subsequent chapters would reveal, it simply fitted in. There was immediate inclination toward CR. Even without having read CR, some of its precepts had been formulated earlier, albeit in a somewhat different terminology, yet which had a synonymy with CR. CR, surely, further elaborated upon and aided in developing new concepts which were in synonymy with the views that had evolved. To name a few: (a) distinction between appearance and reality (b) causation being distinct from associationalism or sequential unfolding of events (c) reality existing independently of our knowledge about it (d) multiple interpretations of the same reality, though some interpretations may be better than others, than all being equal (e) what *is*, that is stress on ontology, and finally (f) why is X, X, that is the issue of causation.

Hence was situated the topic of democratic transitions in a framework which, itself, stemmed from larger enquiries towards questions about life and thinking process, especially so the three primary questions raised earlier.

The insights were very useful for the three primary questions, though without 'final' answers. In point of fact, whilst some answers were obtained, simultaneously, those realms which were unknown earlier opened up new

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[8] A reading of the thesis shall reveal their shortcomings.

frontiers of enquiry. As such, any research needs to be considered as an on-going process.

To sum up, a certain degree of liberty was taken in writing the *Preface* in making generalized statements, but now their purpose should be apparent: it was to show how a particular thought-process evolved by interacting with the raw materials of life and extracting, re-extracting meaning out of them.

If the curiosity of the reader has been aroused, which was *one* purpose of writing the *Preface*, read on.

Contents

Introduction

The objective

What makes democratic transitions possible? This thesis is written in the conviction that it will be able to provide a systematic response to this question. It aims to prognosticate[9] by specifically exploring the underlying mechanisms that augur democratic transitions. In so doing, it posits that a prognosticator's task vis-à-vis democratic transition(s) is akin to a physician. A sagacious physician is not complacent with appearance(s) of illness; s/he seeks to cure by transcending the manifest or obvious signs. Instead of merely relying upon the visible or audible, s/he seeks to unveil the invisible mechanisms that are veiled from a commonsensical view. The physician is thus an expert in the 'knowledge of invisible illnesses' with the prime task of treating the underlying cause(s) of illness.[10] In a similar vein, the research considers exploring democratic transitions' prognosis by surpassing, but without superseding, manifest social practices/processes, such as voting, media *et al.*

In so articulating, the central thesis of the research is that the *prospects* for democratic transitions—transformation from non-democratic regimes to democratic regimes[11]—hinge crucially on the intricate operation of structure and

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[9] The expression is employed in a weaker sense, i.e. instead of predicting, the aim is to inform about the likely developments vis-à-vis democratic transitions.

[10] Cf. Bourdieu, Pierre *et al.* (1999) *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*, translated by Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson *et al.*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 628, 629.

[11] A working definition is provided in a subsequent section, viz. 'working assumptions and definitions'.

agency. In other words, the interrelationship between structure and agency provides a conceptual framework for explicating democratic transitions. The claim can be delineated in a three-fold manner. *One*, democratization is essentially a *process* of social transformation. *Two*, it then follows that in any given region, democratic transformation cannot occur in a social vacuum; it will encounter pre-existing social structures. As these structures pre-exist others, they have independent powers and properties over others. These powers/properties are thus autonomous in nature. Similarly, social agents, in their *mediation* through social structures develop an objective web of interrelations. This relational pattern also has autonomous powers and properties, as it is irreducible to the individuals comprising society. *Three*, the autonomous powers/properties of structures and agents are *likely* to afford resistance to (political) transformation towards democratization given the existential vested interests. Nonetheless, the constraining factors do not predetermine the outcome, they only condition it. Thus the nature and outcome of the agential activities can lead to reproduction of structures (non-occurrence of democratic transition), or transformation of structures (possible occurrence of democratic transition). At the heart of the matter then is the issue of – structuring of the structures of 'structure and agency' and their 'autocatalysis'.[12] Stated thus, a formal proposition for democratic transition can be posited as:

$$DT = P_0 \longleftrightarrow A_1 \longleftrightarrow O_2$$

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[12] They are both the cause and the outcome in social reproduction/transformation. The catalytic agents can either speed up or slow down such processes. The term is from Wilson, Edward O. (1978) *On Human Nature*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, pp. 213, 214, though employed in a social context here.

Stated less cryptically, democratic transition (DT) is a function of the interaction between the past structures (P_0) and the activities of the agents situated therein (A_1). The eventual outcome (O_2) indicates occurrence of democratic transition, wherein, social structures transform contra reproduction. Schematically, DT can be presented as follows reckoning with the same constants:
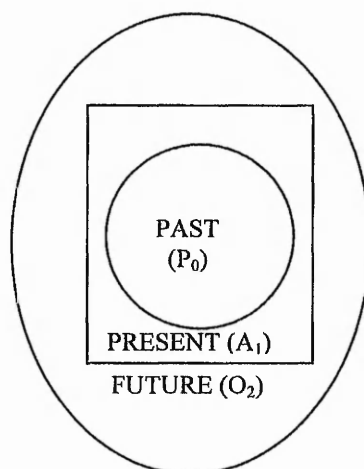
Fig. 1 Venn diagrammatic representation of temporal interlinkages

The diagrammatic representation pronounces the intent of this research about the *interlinkage* between past, present, and future social developments vis-à-vis democratic transitions.

The structural agential (hereafter, *stag* – shorthand for *st*ructural+*ag*ential[13]) approach is rooted in the concrete. It focuses on particular territorial sites, given the fact that no two countries have identical social patterns and processes. Universal models are considered to be problematic, as they either negate or downplay the *specifics* vis-à-vis the *universals.* Engagement with the 'specific', i.e. unique characteristics of particular geo-historical regions, in one

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[13] The terms structural agential, and, the acronym – *stag* shall be employed interchangeably.

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way, is deemed profitable for evaluations. A biological analogy is apt here and should clarify the point. Traditionally the aim in medicine has been to accentuate uniformity amongst humans. Hence, the categorization of 'average' or 'normal' wo/man[14] in aetiology to describe parameters of health and disease. Per contra, in some quarters, the focus is now shifting to treating each individual as biochemically unique and, thenceforth, stressing peculiar and exceptional qualities of each individual,[15] so much so that each individual is to be treated as a 'deviate' with unique needs—nutritional, environmental, and others—which upon fulfilment can lead to an optimal biological being. Analogically, it is argued that each country presents a unique site for appraising prospects for democratization. The key to success for democratic transition in one country might not be the key to success for another country, i.e. there is no master key. With each country having unique socio-cultural structures and processes, situating prospects for democratization via the *stag* approach seems more beneficial. In short, the conceptual notion of an 'average' state is questionable. A logical corollary then is that 'average' or singular prescriptions for 'road maps' towards democratic transitions too are questionable. The dubiety extends to the belief that democratic 'programs' can be 'downloaded' irrespective of space and

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[14] This is not to denigrate overgeneralization in its entirety. Advantages have accrued from such systematization. For instance, the triumph of mankind over various diseases is the result of such a pursuit. The thrust of the argument here is that an overly generalized approach is secondary in significance to the approach which emphasizes biochemical individuality in providing treatment. The latter is more prospectful for optimal health of *an* individual.

[15] For a good account of biochemical individuality, see Williams, Roger J. (1956) *Biochemical Individuality: The Basis for the Genetotrophic Concept*, London: Chapman & Hall. Though he wrote way back in 1956, the theme was not picked up immediately. Williams was a man ahead of his times and it is only now that his work is getting the attention that it deserves.

time. Indeed, there is 'no closed list of transformative possibilities…The best available explanatory model is often different from prevalent understandings'.[16]

Pertinent questions arise here: What are the distinguishing features of an approach that seeks to uncover the underlying mechanisms of democratic transitions? What are the inadequacies of generic or omnibus models of democratization? Can a *stag* approach (to remind, *stag* is the abbreviation for '*st*ructural *ag*ential') redress these inadequacies? If so, how? What advantages can accrue from a *stag* approach? Importantly, what could be the underlying social mechanisms that facilitate or constrain democratic transitions? The main objective of the research having been enunciated, the remaining *Introduction* is an exercise at unpacking the objective by addressing these questions.

The compelling need for a structural agential approach

There should have been mounting advocacy for a *stag* approach especially in the last decade or so, given the fact that the positive auguries for democratization in the immediate aftermath of Cold War went awry. Spearheading the prophecies then was the rhetorical device of 'end of history', which the political horizon now belies. The post-1989 democratic endeavours in various parts of the world, in general, and in E. Europe, in particular, have depicted that mere visions for change, social actors wanting to change, and statesmen preferring to transform their countries are in and of themselves inadequate factors. Envision 1989 *et. seq.*

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[16] Patomaki, Heikki (2002) *After International Relations: Critical realism and the (re)construction of world politics*, London: Routledge, p. 1. (The page reference is from a draft manuscript handed over by Patomaki to the author; this applies to all subsequent references in the thesis of *After International Relations*.)

– the media pictures of the fall of the Berlin Wall, demonstrations by people, huge congregations, and the fall of authoritarian regimes. Punctuate this with people's euphoria, their popular movements. Compare this with the present situation in parts of E. Europe, including Russia: from sputtering economies, to various civil woes, including breakdown of law and order, in some pockets, are now the norm than the exception.[17] What did these social actors confront in not realizing their aims? If the obverse were true, i.e. they confronted cipher resistance, then their dreams of democratization should have been realized. The non-realization of the objective should lead to exploration of the proposition that they confronted, with or without being aware, the structural constraints which were *peculiar* to their respective countries and which pre-existed their activities too. The structural constraints of specific geo-historical regions demand and deserve, to some extent, *peculiar* and *particular* redress. The discussion thus unsettles approaches predicated <u>solely</u> on manifest events, human behaviour or experience. Employment of a *stag* approach can well be construed as one way of telling better stories about democratic transitions.

A close inspection of the endeavours towards democratization since the end of the Cold War also reveals, to paraphrase Bourdieu, that 'things of logic' cannot eclipse 'logic of things'.[18] With unique difficulties being encountered in

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[17] The words of Dan Fenno Henderson seem prophetic now. He had remarked long ago (in 1969) about the need to avoid the 'error of complacent, deterministic assumptions that inevitably a pot of democracy lies at the foot of each developmental rainbow however authoritarian it may be at the moment'. Henderson (1969) 'Law and Political Modernization', *Political Development in Modern Japan* by Robert E. Ward (ed.), Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 387-456, p. 389.

[18] See Bourdieu, Pierre (1997) *The Logic of Practice*, translated by Richard Nice, Cambridge: Polity Press, (reprinted), p.11 *et passim.*

democratic transitions in E. Europe, Latin America, as also some Asian and African countries, synthetically derived arguments for democracy from assumptions that non-correspond to local ingredients or situational logic are objectionable.

Whilst more and more people embrace democratic ethos across the world – from Afghanistan to Iraq, Romania to Russia, Belgrade to Bosnia, Haiti to Fiji, they, in part, remain unaware about its translatability into practice. Indeed, how a mechanism/object functions, does not necessarily inform how it came into being; origins cannot be inferred from effects.

The inadequacies of omnibus models

The effacement of unique spatiality/temporality of specific regions from the political canvas permits expounding across-the-board models of democracies.[19] It is *as if* conditions that work for one country would work for another one too. It is argued that these models are inconsistent with social reality.

It is argued that omnibus models are problematic in the manner of their (non)treatment of particular geo-historical regions. Each region can be expressed as a unique ensemble of institutions and agential activities. Can this ensemble be treated as a 'black box', i.e. its inner workings be taken for granted or simply be assumed? The research resists attempts to treat this unique ensemble as a 'black box', as it is precisely this that needs to be entered into and unravelled; it is this that 'claims being'. It is suggested that by not opening the black box,

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[19] Such broad generalizations may have some merit, but they do not, generally, pass the muster when it comes to practicality.

democratization in any geo-historical region is reduced to an input-output model. The argumentation for an input-output model can be represented thus:
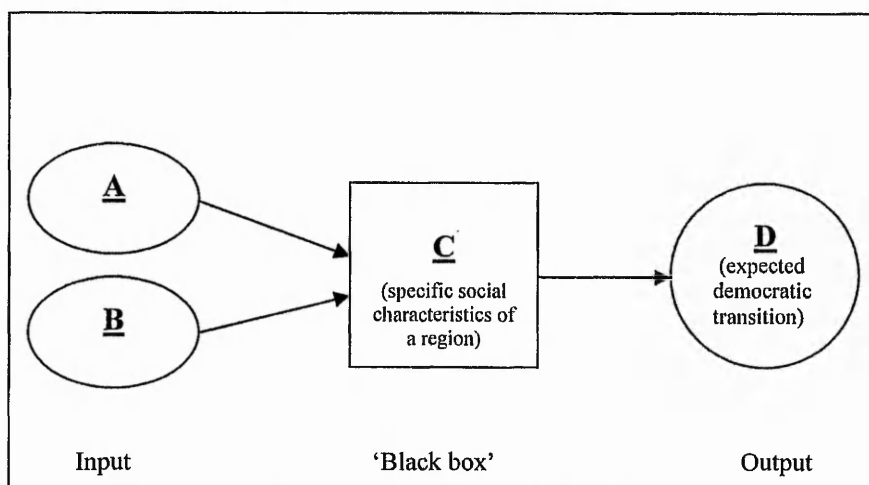
Fig. 2 Marginalization of unique social processes into a 'black box'

To elaborate, let A & B be any two constants as conditions for democracy; party system and voting can be such constants. The 'black box' postulation assumes that if A/B are juxtaposed to a given state of affairs – social structures, social agents, organizations, institutions (designated as C), it would simply replicate democracy. Yet, it needs to be interrogated how A and B will react with C. D should be demonstrated in the practical *outcomes* too and, not unreservedly assumed in the *premises* only; otherwise, it commits the *petitio principii fallacy*. It might well be that other activities are required prior to this stage. Social realms are unlike laboratories where closed experiments usually elicit accurate predictions or show regular motions. The portrayal of simplistic replication of democracy is an oversimplification of reality,[20] for such theoretical constructs

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[20] Instead of overly simplifying complex social problems, 'discourse can and must be as complicated as the problem it is tackling demands'. Cf. Bourdieu (1990) *In Other Words: Essays*

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apparently aim to apply cutting across wide regional disparities – from the ravages of Rwanda, to the oil-fields of Iraq, the fierce tribal rivalries of Afghanistan, the military dictatorships of Pakistan and Myanmar *et al.* Despite historical variations betwixt these countries, can the same recipe—trans-historical and pan-cultural—be proffered for democratization? Are human beings automatons that respond identically to the same stimulus? The research contests dogmatic pre-selection of a 'recipe' without reckoning for whom the democratic 'dish' is meant. The research therefore departs from such self-axiomatic precepts ($\underline{A}+\underline{B}+\underline{C}=\underline{D}$). A pre-selection that slights the pros and contras of specific regions vis-à-vis prospects for democratization needs to be counter-questioned. Concordantly, the research gravitates to an explicatory approach that broaches the specific situatedness of structures and actors. While considering the poser 'what ought to be', the research especially focuses on why is 'what is'.

The point is elucidated by creating a hypothetical, though not fictitious, empiricist modelling of democratic transitions. It serves as a foil in bringing out the characteristics of the *stag* approach advocated by this research. Empiricist modelling here means one which in its explication of democratization confines itself to the manifest social objects – organizations, and/or agents, or their activities; it, *inter alia*, overlooks emergent powers and properties, relational patterns between social objects, and/or rules, norms, values, positions, processes

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Towards a Reflexive Sociology, translated by Matthew Adamson, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 52. Likewise, the research augurs treating the complex issue of democratic transition in a non-oversimplified manner.

which are irreducible to manifest human behaviour.[21] Consequently, empirical modelling fails to recognize the complexity of social reality. Its assumptions and conclusions are contradistinguished below with *stag* modelling.

Empiricist modelling	Stag modelling[22]
Social objects have unchanging powers/properties. The assumption aids applicability of models of yore—antiquity, classical times—to contemporary times.	Social objects' powers/properties undergo change over a period of time. On this count, the models of yore are not necessarily applicable to contemporary times.
Conditions that favour democratization in one region are favourable for all (the 'fallacy of composition').	Conditions that favour democratization in one region may not necessarily be favourable for all as evidenced by post-1989 experiments.
Simple decomposition of social realm into parts can explicate democratization. For instance, the division of society into free, willing agents or such groupings can bring about democratization (irrespective of their embedded nature in a particular milieu of constraints/enablements).	Simple decomposition of the social realm into parts without accounting for which relations are necessary and which are contingent can be hazardous.[23]
Reductionist, or single-factor-explication of democratization, such as merely through ejection of authoritarian regimes.	A-single-factor explication of democratization may result in misattribution of causality, as there is a complex array of social objects without nomothetic properties of action/reaction/interaction with other social objects. An authoritarian regime may be ousted, without commensurable emergence/ expansion of democracy.
Follows an 'if...then' relationship. To exemplify, 'if free press...then democracy'.	Effects of social mechanisms are contingent; hence, the manifest powers of social objects are *tendencies* and not law-like. That is why similar factors or variables may have different effects in different places or even in same places at different times.
The manifest powers/properties of social objects are their real properties.	Social objects have powers/properties irrespective of whether exercised or not. All powers/properties may not be exercised at one and the same time. Thus, there is likelihood of different outcomes from the same set of objects.
Effects of social relations are additive and conjunctive vis-à-vis democratization. A set of conditions can add up at any place and time to produce democratization.	Societies being open, social relations do not necessarily add up mechanically; diverse outcomes, as also unintended consequences are possible.

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[21] See, for example, Lawson, Tony (1997) *Economics and Reality*, London: Routledge, part III for a critical realist account of human subject. Also see Archer, Margaret (2000) *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[22] It is broadly synonymous with the realist model.

[23] See Sayer, Andrew (1992) *Method in Social Science: A realist approach*, 2nd edition, London: Routledge, pp. 118, 119. See chapter 1, footnote 78, and the related text, thereof.

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Social systems are closed, therefore, social objects will behave similarly or are expected to behave/react similarly irrespective of space and time.	Social systems are open. Hence, social objects, may or may not behave/react in a similar fashion.
Confuses persons with positions, as if by merely changing groups of persons (in power) will eventuate into democratic transformation.	Positions generally have an autonomous existence in a social structure and are unaffected by social actors' idiosyncrasies.
Inclination towards the precept of *A follows B*. It seeks associations between events towards democratization, such as high literacy rates, high socio-economic development *et al.*	Demystifies 'associational' thinking.
Equivalence between different temporal frames. The assumption is replication of 'revolutions' that occurred earlier, say, in 1688, 1776, or 1789 or some other period. If they could occur antecedently at a specific time/place, they can be reconstructed subsequently in other places/times.	Non-equivalence of different temporal frames.

Table 1 Contrast between the empirical and *stag* models

A generalized claim is made here: omnibus models for democratization share, implicitly or explicitly, some features of empiricist modelling. The contrapuntal attributes of *stag* modelling render the empiricist models' exposition suspect. Simultaneously, a need is also established for the exploration of a different approach. There is indeed a close relation between the nature of questions raised for any research and the methods thereof.

A qualifying statement is pertinent here. Not all democratic models discussed subsequently can be categorized as *purely* empiricist. Yet, they do suffer from inadequacies of empiricist modelling, in some measure, which shall be taken up in Chapters 3 and 6. It is in this vein that the deficiencies of empiricist modelling have been enunciated at the very beginning and, while discussing subsequent models, if any such deficiency is noticed, it can then be picked up for discussion.

A tentative explication of the research modelling

Having identified some shortcomings in the omnibus models, the next step is devising a strategy whereby these shortcomings can be appropriately redressed. The issue is complex and is treated as such. To facilitate comprehension, a mechanical analogy, of the watch is employed. Now a watch is not only what it *appears* to be—it has a dial, the time signifying needles etc.—which inform its phenomenological form. Howbeit, time-indication is not a function of these visible paraphernalia only; it is a function of certain other mechanisms too, indiscernible on the surface. From this simple analogy, it is extrapolated that watch is an exemplar of *three-orders of explanation*. The *first order explanation* is about its phenomenological form. The *second order explanation* is about its intrinsic form or that of the powers and properties of its mechanisms. The *third order explanation* is about the interlinkages between the first and second order explanations.

Without taking the analogy literally, due to inherent differences between watch and society, an analogue feature for democratic transitions is the *orders of explanation*. The research makes the case for explaining democratic transitions in *orders* of manifest social structures, underlying mechanisms, and their interlinkages.

A *third order* explanatory modelling of democratic transition is tentatively described *infra*. The parenthetical remark is that it is illustrative and

not exhaustive. It is the very purpose of the research project to uncover these mechanisms:

- Let A = amongst others, variegated actors, elections; voting at regular intervals; a party system; rule of law; free press; civil rights; literacy; gender equality; a fairly thriving economy (first order explanation)
- Let B = amongst others, norms, positions, processes, rules, values, reflected in and through the network of social objects; social construction of space; bodily dispositions; structural constraints bequeathed by past actors; the symbolic power inherent in a given set of relationships; the scale of 'honour and contempt'[24]; (second order explanation)
- Let C = the *nature* of interrelationship between A and B. More precisely, in what manner does B enable/dis-enable A. 'C' may also mask significant part of social reality from the social actors (third order explanation)

It is argued that *A per se* is meagre to explicate democratic transitions, as the factors therein appertain to *conditions* of democratization than its *causes*.[25] For democratization, it is proposed that the movement has to be from $B{\rightarrow}A$ and then back, and so on, as it pre-exists A and wields autonomous influences. The causal influences which enable the insertion of democratic system in a society therefore appear to lie at a deeper stratum, i.e. B. To invert this causality, i.e. from $A{\rightarrow}B$ seems impractical. This can be illustrated with an example. Seymour Martin Lispet[26] enunciated interrelated factors for a democratic state (such as high rate of literacy, high socio-economic development, etc.), which are not borne out by

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[24] The scale of 'honour and contempt' in a society characterizes activities (i) that are prioritized by it and whose performance is likely to be acclaimed; and, (ii) those activities that are proscribed and whose performance will invite censure. See, for example, Harré, Rom (1993) *Social Being*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 271.

[25] For a fine analysis distinguishing between 'functional' and 'genetic' questions of democracy, see Rustow, Dankwart A. (1999) 'Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model', *Transitions to Democracy* by Lisa Anderson (ed.), New York: Columbia University Press. Originally published in *Comparative Politics*, 1970, Vol. 2, pp. 337-63. Also see Tilly, Charles (2000) *Processes and Mechanisms of Democratization* at the main Columbia University web http://www.ciaonet.org, retrieved on April 10, 2004.

[26] See Lipset, Seymour M. (1976) *Political Man*, London: Heinemann, chapter 2, wherein he employs empirical variables to substantiate the claim of direct *correlation* between socio-economic development and democracy. Also see chapter 3 of this thesis for a fuller consideration of the issue.

practicality. India with a low literacy rate and a poor economy at independence (1947) transformed into a democratic set-up and has remained functional unto now, i.e. for more than five decades. Singapore with absolute literacy and a thriving economy is an undemocratic state. Some oil-rich Arab states have a high per capita income minus democracy and, autocracy is the norm than the exception. Thus, the link between the *conditions* of democracy and democratic transition seems to be tenuous. In this background, a *third order explanation* for democratic transitions seems a worthwhile pursuit.

To recapitulate, the trajectory for a stag approach is strengthened by the heterogeneity of different geo-historical regions in their institutions, organizations, and mode of social activity. They have unique constraints, as also enabling factors. As such, the study of democratic transitions can be fruitful if it engages these factors. The next section attempts to demonstrate how an examination and understanding of interrelationship between structure and agency can enable such a move.

Background to the problematique of 'structure and agency'

Mainstream social theorists (and, thereby, theories) have traditionally paid insufficient attention to the examination of *interplay* between structure and agency for explicating democratic transitions. Put differently, there has been a neglect of situational logic. It is not the case that the issue of structure and agency is wholly insignificant. It appears the neglect is less out of lack of interest than due to the subject being regarded as intractable. While in political theory, it seems the issue has been dealt with unobtrusively, on the broader canvass of

social sciences, the subject has been reduced to according primacy to 'individual' or 'society'. In prioritizing one entity, the other has been discounted. This is reflected in the claims and counterclaims of reductionism vs. reification, subjectivism vs. objectivism, voluntarism vs. determinism, micro vs. macroscopic approaches, and methodological individualism vs. methodological holism. Despite the varied appellations, the basic thrust of the arguments for either camp have barely altered. The issue has been redressed, though unsuccessfully, by conflating one entity (structure or agency) into the other or, by treating one as the epiphenomenon of the other.

Despite the hitherto hypo-emphasis on structure and agency vis-à-vis democratic transitions, this research suggests that structural agential interplay forms the kernel in social reproduction/transformation, and is thus unavoidable. It inescapably enters writings, exploring and explicating democratization, perhaps unknowingly at times and, generally *either* in terms of groups, parties, agents, leaders/statesmen, *or*, structures, institutions, organizations, social laws. It is a potent factor even where non-explicitly embraced. Such being the backdrop to the subject, it might be rewarding to deal with it explicitly and emphatically.

The uni-dimensional views have, so it seems, asked the wrong question of *prioritization* – of structure *or* agency and, have thus received the wrong answer; additionally, they have closed themselves to other possibilities. Due to foreclosure, the latter shall remain a closed book for such approaches. This research makes an attempt to redress this defect by abandoning interrogation

from an *either/or* perspective, i.e. in terms of prioritization of structure or agency. It inverts the issue by employing the conjunctive *and*, and, thereby enables the possibility of examining their *interplay*. This research adopts a non-conflationary approach towards structure and agency. In the absence of a non-conflationary approach, a theoretical conundrum has been the explication of contingencies, unintended consequences,[27] non-desirable outcomes, emergent powers and properties, emergence of situations contrary to what most actors desired, role of stochastic or probabilistic factors in transformation or, why in some cases relatively less efforts have avalanche-like effects, while intense efforts tend to be non-productive.[28]

A consequence of disregarding the interrelationship between structure and agency of specific geo-historical regions is a gloss of the temporal dimension. It is stripped of the *longue duree* or the long chronological span: there is no past to it, nor any distant future. By treating democratic activities in the 'here and now', the genealogical temporal frame is overly compressed. This move is debatable, as it is a matter for enquiry whether trans-territorial activities related to democratization are occurring in a linear passage of time. It is proposed

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[27] Amongst various reasons, Bottomore proffers one reason for unintended consequences: individual actions are uncoordinated and may 'actually impede or distort each other'. Bottomore, T.B. (1986) *Sociology: A Guide to Problems and Literature*, New Delhi, Blackie & Son (India) Ltd., p. 310.

[28] While beyond the scope of this work, a fascinating exercise could be to explore these issues from another explanans, viz. the 'theory of complexity'. The highly elegant theory of complexity has gained recognition of late and is a fine exploratory exercise of diverse and wide-ranging complex issues, such as, crowds, traffic, social stratification, urban development, patterns of weather, climatic changes, archaeological discoveries, cell functioning, complexity of the human body, and evolution, amongst many other issues. See Axelrod, Robert M. and Michael D. Cohen, (1999) *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier*, New York: The Free Press; Jervis, Robert (1997) *Complexity in Political and Social Life*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press; Lewin, Roger (1992) *Complexity: Life at the Edge of Chaos*,

here that different things are happening at different places at any given point of time. Thus, not metaphorically, but literally, different regions, at one and the same time, are in different temporal domains.[29] As an exemplification, the 'advanced' states, such as the USA, UK, and Japan underwent a proper industrial revolution. The industrial revolution, *inter alia*, affected the pattern and web of relations between social actors. The process also involved technological revolution, which led to a wholly new pattern of social construction of space. Contrast this with most Asian/African states which did not experience a proper industrial revolution. Now in the year 2003, it is suggested that these two groups of countries are at one and the same time in different temporal frames. The industrial states in the last hundred years or so have essentially *transformed* their structures and social relations and, thereby, moved from one temporal frame to another. In contrast, some non-industrial states by essentially *reproducing* their structures lack sharp demarcation of past/present temporal frames, as due to intense continuity, the temporal component has remained static. For some isolated territories, the contemporary temporal frame might well be what it was decades ago. Examples: Tibet and Bhutan. Although an overgeneralization, the issue is not strictly of precision of dates, as much as of conveying that there is a temporal hiatus between different territorial domains. The uneven nature of democratic transitions and the constraints encountered by individual countries are

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New York: Collier Books; and, Waldrop, Mitchell M. (1992) *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

[29] As all languages are pre-scientific, at first sight, the statement may seem somewhat problematical. Yet, meaning can be extracted from this statement thus: some societies are in marked contrast to what they were fifty years ago while others are still continuing in the manner what they were a hundred years ago or even more.

unascribable to inherent differences between locations; rather the obstacles encountered are due to cumulative social processes which have been reciprocally confirming, temporally. In view of the disjuncture between countries' temporal dimension, mere superimposition of universal model(s) for operationalization of democracy is arguable; they might well be immiscible with each other. On the other hand, the issue of interiorization of 'foreign' models—modification as per internal requirements—is notable. A good example is Japan which has interiorized various 'exogenous' objects, such as technology, liberal education, etc.

To summarize, purely descriptive accounts[30] of 'voluntarism' (primacy to agency) and 'determinism' (primacy to society/structure) are unrefined in explicating democratic transitions.[31] Descriptions *a la* 'voluntarism', whereby, social actors can will, perform and achieve anything they want are misleading. The freewheeling social agent is an argumentative fiction – a fiction that can be played out on stage only given their biological/social constraints and restrictions. Conversely, 'determinism' also is inapposite, as it imbues all powers with society only. Collaterally, it renders the agential entities inert or quiescent. It too is a fictitious account of social reality, as society defies an immanent or immutable form; it transforms over a period of time, but not in the manner everyone desires. This occurs through the causal powers of activity residing in social agents, acting on antecedent social structures, which 'determinism' denies.

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[30] No pejorative hue is accorded to descriptive accounts here.

[31] See, for example, Itzkowitz, Gary (1996) *Contingency Theory: Rethinking the Boundaries of Social Thought*, New York: University Press of America, Inc. Itzkowitz raises similar questions

Statement of the Research Problem

If powers and properties of social objects undergo change and are inconstant; if social objects at different places may act differently; if single-factor explication of democratic transitions is precarious; if, at one and the same time, different temporal frames prevail in different regions; if 'routes' for democratic transitions vary, what is crying for attention is the specificity of geo-historical regions. All these features are encapsulated schematically below:

PRESENT

| Social structure along with emergent properties | ↔ | Cultural system along with emergent properties | ↔ | People along with emergent properties |

PAST

FUTURE

(if)

Democratic transitions
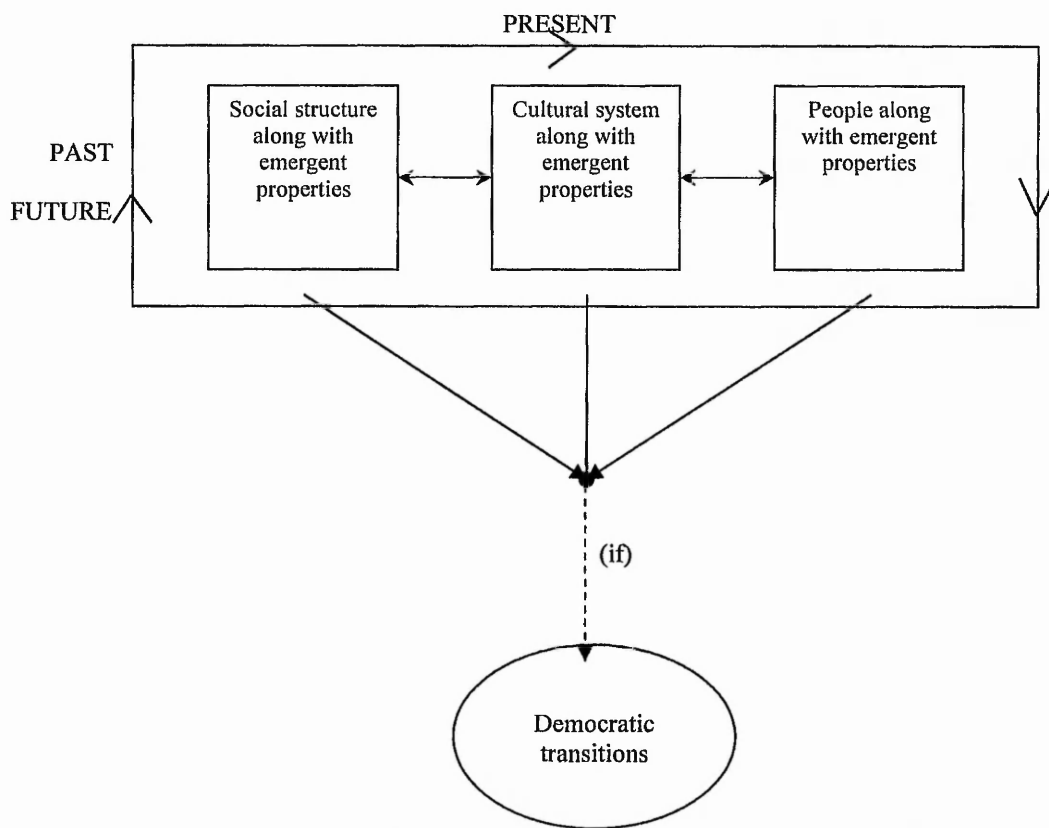
Fig. 3 Opening the 'black box' of democratic transitions

about escaping from the afflictions of micro and macro colouring of social theory. In so stating, not all his solutions are endorsed.

The figure unhinges the isolated treatment of social structure, culture, and people; the research insists that democratic transitions for any society hinge on the interrelationship between these three entities along with their emergent properties. The figure also configures the temporal sequence: the present eventually merges into the past and so the cycle moves on ceaselessly.

Closely related is the issue whether research can be confined to the 'present tense' only? Should societal structures' functioning at time t_1[32] be described only via 'here and now', decoupled from both past and future? In addition to temporality what also demands notice is that at any given point in time, i.e. T_x, for any society, i.e. S_x, how, in the first place, are things hanging together the way they are. There must be some causal powers and properties that have shaped S_x at T_x. The exploration calls for a regress into the past to identify those causal influences that have their bearings on the present, all of which have a bearing on democratic transitions. Wrapping all these issues into a compact question is – *what makes democratic transitions possible*? The remaining research questions/issues are:

(1) What are the pitfalls of ignoring the *stag* approach vis-à-vis democratic transitions?

(2) What attributes should a model of social reproduction/transformation possess? Does it have relevance for democratic transitions? If so, what?

(3) What are the lacunae of non-realist models of democratic transitions?

(4) How can realist modelling redress (3), i.e. the preceding point?

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[32] Time t_1 implies in the 'here and now', and also any cut-off date for analytical purposes.

(5) How to devise a framework that situates the past, present and future on a continuum? Put differently, how can the neglect of temporality in democratic transitions be addressed?

Methodology and methods

The research makes the case for a different explanans with respect to the explanandum, viz. democratic transitions and, thereupon, employs critical realism (CR). CR enables the opening of a new explicatory window about the interplay between structure and agency: it nurtures the construction of a conceptual framework in which both are (α) temporally and analytically distinct, and (β) have autonomous, emergent powers/properties, irreducible to each other. This framework shall hopefully shed new light on democratic transitions. Realism[33] can be described as a competing approach to empiricism in the philosophy of science. Three reasons are proffered for employing it. One, fugitively transcending disciplinary approaches, along with their concept-laden theories, definitions, and associated practices may be a worthwhile exploratory exercise in attempting to grasp social reality. It is apropos also on the count that theories are transitive not only for epistemological reasons, but also because the subject matter itself undergoes perpetual change. Therefore a 'new explanandum

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[33] Critical realism and realism are employed interchangeably. To describe the nuanced differences between different strands of realism is beyond the scope of this work. The usage of realism in this thesis is synonymous with critical realism.

calls for a new explanans'.[34] Two, empiricism's[35] singular concern with the phenomenological form of society papers over the question of being. In so doing, it reduces the question of being, or what exists to how do we know about it ('epistemic fallacy'). Discussing core issues—structure and agency—can be useful here. Three, description and explanation are the same.[36] What we believe to *be*, also *is* what we study. In any explanation, say, of democratization, all relevant knowledge is conceptually formulated which forms the bases for description. Thus description and explanation go hand in hand. Yet in those cases where explanation reaches an outcome that is in contrariety to the original ontological position, it becomes imperative to reconsider, review, and reformulate it. Such a reformulation is need of the hour for democratic transitions' analyses. It may enlighten the recent, including failed, experiments towards democratization in various parts of the world. Theoretical frameworks often convert into their own prisons by confining further research, resulting in the explanans being circumscribed by the explanandum and, thereby, compromising possibilities of enriching research. It then follows that no theory can be an end in itself. Theories should have practical applicability to the real domain. In addition, practical reason cannot be collapsed into theoretical reason.[37]

This research employs the cognitive tool of retroductive reasoning for conducting enquiries. It is a mode of enquiry that switches from manifest structures to how they are there in the first place. What has rendered them there?

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[34] Archer, Margaret (1995) *Realist social theory: the morphogenetic approach*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 79.
[35] Subsequent chapters inform how empiricism wields some influence over democratic accounts.
[36] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 18.

What are those factors, mechanisms, processes, structures, social circuits *et al.* which make them possible? This mode of enquiry can be expedited by asking transfactual questions, i.e. questions which are not purely related to the immediately given/factual outcomes.[38]

The research takes up a concrete case study to demonstrate the viability of the *stag* approach. It disengages from ideal or extreme types of cases/models. Ideal types may not exist actually whilst extreme types' concern is with exceptional cases. The research engages in real cases, i.e. those which exist *now* and stand the test of validity. Japan serves as a good specimen. The chronology spans, in very broad strokes, three centuries – from the Tokugawa period (early 17th century) through the Meiji era (1868), and up to the Second War period.[39] The span is well tensed: it can be trifurcated into past, present, and future. In spite of the long temporal span, the information is selectively culled.

Japan's democratic transition provides an engrossing case study – despite devastation of economy and infrastructure, annihilation of the ruling elite, and immense hardships for the populace in the immediate aftermath of the Second War, Japan not only survived, but also emerged as a major actor on the globe. Its ignominious defeat in the War now seems a minor hiccup or an aberration on its road to progress. This scenario begs democratic transition being ascribed a wholly political hue, which would be a narrow interpretation of the

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[37] Bourdieu (2000) *Pascalian Meditations*, translated by Richard Nice, Cambridge: Polity Press.
[38] Cf. Danermark, Berth *et al.* (2002) *Explaining Society: Critical realism in the social sciences*, Routledge: London, p. 77.
[39] A similar long span for analyzing other democratic transitions is not a prerequisite. Here it is employed to substantiate the temporal argument about the past affecting future developments.

transformation. For this reason, the broad social canvas is brought into sharp relief.[40]

The dependent variable is democratic transition, i.e. it is a function of other independent variables. As the chosen factors are basically conceptual, hence, readily available indices are lacking to quantify the same. Recourse is thus taken to theoretical modelling[41] to understand democratic transitions' choreography.

The realist model of structure and agency articulated by Margaret Archer serves as a good beginning point of research.[42] Archer's model is sound because of its conceptual completeness in demonstrating 'analytical dualism' of structure and agency. It also addresses temporality fittingly. Whereas the conflationary approaches elide structure and agency and, portray a narrower chronological span, the realist model is grounded in a longer chronological span that has its roots into the past and shoots into the future.

Significance of the subject

How can a *stag* approach illume the study of democratic transitions? The *stag* approach stands in contradistinction to commonsensical thinking, which projects what is plain for everyone to see, and is ergo unlikely to explain what resides in, or is embedded at a deeper level of social reality, as it discountenances 'emergentist' powers/properties. Emergentism *is* pertinent here. Although

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[40] See chapter 4 for a fuller discussion of Japan's case study.

[41] Theoretical modelling here, *inter alia*, implies attempts at describing 'underlying reality' rather than merely providing 'instrumental frameworks'. *Cf.* Worral, John (1998) 'Philosophy and the

emergent powers/properties are a typical case of, to paraphrase Winston Churchill, 'a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma', they nevertheless are an indispensable component of research: they assist in the revelation of deeper layer of social ontology, thereby, enriching the explicatory power over democratic transitions.

Marx had appositely remarked that if appearance and reality were to be the same, science would be meaningless for appearances do mask reality.[43] Correspondingly, the significance of the research lies in its 'transphenomenal' and 'counterphenomenal' character,[44] i.e. the research attempts respectively to go beyond appearances and, critically question and contradict those social structures that conceal specific practices, especially from the social actors themselves. On this count, it anticipates a fresh perspective on the subject.

Key Assumptions and definitions

(A)   What is begging for answer now is a definition of democracy. The definitional exercise is not so much a complex issue, as one that is prone, on the one hand, to harangue, and, on the other, to cavilling, carping and even bickering. In attempting to steer clear from such a situation, the research conceives of democracy as an open-ended ladder whose first rung implies freedom from arbitrary codes/rulers, and, construes democratization as an on-going process, as

Natural Sciences', *Philosophy 2: Further Through the Subject* by A.C. Grayling (ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 197-266, p. 235.
[42] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*
[43] For a brief discussion on this point, see Russel, Kathryn (1979) 'Science and Ideology: Critical Comments on John Mepham's Article', *Issues in Marxist Philosophy*, Vol. III by John Mepham *et al.* (eds.), New Jersey: Humanities Press, pp. 185-96.

distinct from an end-product. Democracy also serves as a regulatory mechanism for contesting issues and of competing struggles in a legally defined manner. In a democratic society, endeavours towards pluralization can be appropriately contested than being dogmatically foreclosed. Moreover, democratization, as a process, over a period of time, affects all societal sectors (in a reciprocal relation, i.e. as a two-way affair rather than being a one-way affair); this includes educational institutions, other organizations, production of movies, especially the genres of movies, kinds of discourses, freedom of expression in these realms, and so on. For this reason, in the ultimate analysis, democracy is broadly considered as a social process rather than a purely political process. The political cannot remain detached from the social component and, inversely, the happenings in social are bound to affect the political. Thus, the conception of aloofness of the political from the social appears to be tenuous.

The issue, without a doubt, demands a bigger treatment than the definitional exercise. Hence, the remainder is postponed to chapter 3; the reasons for postponement shall become clear thereupon. The chapters are so arranged that the postponement does not affect the continuity or momentum of research. Reader's patience is requested for.

(B) The research enterprise endeavours to achieve a scientific explication of democratic transitions. In this pursuit, it rejects and refutes the positivistic conception of science. The oft-assumed synonymity between science and positivism is misplaced. Such synonymy is premised on regularities in motions

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[44] See Collier, Andrew (1994) *Critical Realism: An Introduction to Roy Bhaskar's Philosophy,*

or behaviour, predictions, and nomological generalizations. These precepts are oppugned here, as they are obtainable, *au fond*, in closed laboratory conditions with controlled variables. In open systems, such control is unavailable given the multitudes of mechanisms – both known and unknown. The research thus does not so much redefine science, as much as attempt to define it appropriately by extricating it from the morass of a mechanical view of society. Concomitantly, a scientific exercise is deemed to be constituted by exploring the underlying mechanisms of social phenomena (see chapter one for details). Conducted in this fashion, democratic transitions too can be studied scientifically. 'Causal explanation' wherever employed is incongruous with law-like generalizations. Its usage here is congruous with mechanisms approach.[45] 'Mechanisms approach', in turn, means an explanation constructed upon the bases of underlying mechanisms of the phenomena.

(C) The employment of words or pre-fixes, such as 'West', 'Western' is considered periphrastic, as it is non-indicative of any specific country nor do all W. European/N. American countries possess identical traits.[46] There are nuanced differences in the so-called 'West', just as there are, in the so-called 'non-West'. The usage of terminology, such as Western models, Euro-centric models, or Western democracy, all beg the question – which Western model, what Euro-centric model, or whose Western democracy? Such employment is itself symptomatic of what it aims to arrest – counterpoising 'West' against the 'non-

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London: Verso, pp. 6, 7.
[45] For a comprehensive discussion see Elster, Jon (1989) *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

West'. It conveys less by itself than by its counterattraction to the 'non-West'. The terms are sparingly used here and that too as *faute de mieux*; in most cases, for specificity's sake, particular European or N. American countries are named.

(D) The terms *theory, approach, model,* and *theoretical model* are used interchangeably for the purpose of this research, as all represent a framework that generates understanding about the world, its inner workings, and the relations between its parts.[47] In any case, this research, due to its anti-foundationalist stance, considers these as ongoing attempts at better comprehending reality rather than arriving at some final explanations.

Limitations

The discursive features of democracy have been avoided, though without negating their significance. This avoidance however does not affect the outcomes of the research nor the applicability of theoretical modelling, insomuch as discursive democracy does not emerge and proliferate in a political vacuum. It, itself, is a product of social relations that have been in reciprocal confirmation over a period of time. Stated differently, the social process of reproduction/transformation plays a conditioning role for the complexion of discursive democracy, while not predetermining the latter.[48] Although the

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[46] Categorization of Spain and Portugal as S. European countries unalters the pith and marrow of the argument here.

[47] As an exemplification, see Dubin, Robert (1978) *Theory Building*, New York: The Free Press, p. 18; also see McClelland, Peter D. (1975) *Causal Explanation and Model Building in History, Economics, and the New Economic History*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 28, 29.

[48] A fine specimen is: Habermas, Jurgen (1991) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger, Massachusetts: The MIT Press. The study canvasses the emergence of public sphere in *select* places at time t_1. There are background reasons for this emergence upon which Habermas dwells.

significance of discursiveness is acknowledged, it is nonetheless beyond the scope of this research.

Chapter breakdown

The research develops the following line of argumentation and exploration.

Chapter One introduces Critical Realism. It then details the main features of CR to demonstrate its depth in both the natural/social worlds. CR's emphasis on ontology is highlighted. The review attests that CR is well equipped to conduct research on democratic transitions from a *stag* perspective.

Chapter Two presents a conspectus of structure and agency from a Critical Realist perspective. A distinction, albeit brief, is drawn with other conflationary approaches, such as 'determinism' and 'voluntarism'. The advantageous position of a realist interpretation is affirmed, especially via Margaret Archer's model. Finally, lessons are drawn for a finer explanatory power over democratic transitions.

Chapter Three critically examines some contentious issues in the democratic discourse. Next, some non-realist models of democratic transitions are analyzed. Their drawbacks validate the need for a *stag* approach.

Chapter Four concentrates on Japan and establishes its fitness for study. Some interpretations of Japan's democratic transition are assessed; their weaknesses spur addition of more dimensions to understanding the subject.

This is an affirmation of the proposition that discursiveness is conditioned by structural influences and agential activities of specific geo-historical epochs.

Chapter Five initiates steps for expounding a tentative realist modelling of democratic transitions.

Chapter Six first applies non-realist models to Japan's democratic transition and then appraises them. The exercise testifies to the need for devising alternate models to get a better thematic grasp.

Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine exposit Archer's model, and enrich it further by enumerating mechanisms that impinge upon democratic transitions, and, apply the same to Japan.

In the *concluding chapter*, the significance and profitability of the *stag* approach is reiterated by charting the main arguments developed in the research.

Additionally, the *Appendix* provides information about Japan's historical account and *Chronology* provides information about some important events in Japan.

Contribution

This, it is believed, is amongst the first critical realist dissertations on democratic transitions *per se*. It provides a unifying and systematized treatment of structure and agency, and stresses their significance in democratic transitions. It emphasizes the significance of the linkages between ontology, methodology and practical theorizing. Importantly, it shall bring into sharp relief that democracy is essentially a relational entity rather than a vacuous object/structure.[49]

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[49] Cf. Thompson, Edward P. (1963) *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Gollancz. In an enlightening commentary, Thompson informs that working class is not a thing or

Just as Sigmund Freud[50] enlarged the concept of truth—truth refers not only to what one believes or thinks, but also what one represses, as one does not wish to think it—the research attempts to broaden the concept of mechanisms which augur democratic transitions, i.e. mechanisms of which people may or may not be aware.

The research is timely and relates to practical problems confronted by non-democratic countries in their attempts towards transition(s). It is also significant as its theoretical implications cover vast swathes of non-democratic territories and the populations thereof. It should, hopefully, lead to construction of knowledge for understanding democratic transitions which, thenceforth, could perhaps illumine social actors about weighing strategies. The research project is open to being developed and refined further.

To recapitulate the targets, the research hopes to accomplish the broad tasks it sets upon itself: (α) to tackle the inadequacies and overgeneralizations of purely *a*structural/*a*agential approaches[51], and (β) to replace this abstraction with an objectified and systematized view of the situatedness of structures and actors in a given matrix, along with their concomitant interrelationship. By thinking *about* the discourse and not necessarily *with* it, the research should, in some measure, facilitate the objective and 'unsettle' some of the ossified-cum-'settled' elements.

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even a structure. Such construal obscures its real meaning; it is best conceived of as an historical relationship.

[50] See Fromm, Erich (1980) *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought: A Revolutionary Study of Genius in Conflict*, London: Abacus, p. viii.

[51] This is shorthand for approaches that marginalize the possibility of interplay between structure and agency.

Chapter 1

Methodology and methods for analyzing democratic transitions

1.1 Prefatory remarks

What is 'Critical Realism' (CR)? What is the explicatory power of CR vis-à-vis

the social phenomena in general and, democratic transitions in particular? Can

CR enrich the theory/practice of democratic transitions? It is the objective of this

chapter to address these questions. It is claimed—a claim that shall hopefully be

demonstrated in the research—that the adoption of CR could enrich the

explanatory power over the process of democratic transitions. All research

projects (this one being no different) should seek to shake the complacency of

discovering the obvious or, describing the consequential effects of social

processes.[52] Mere collection, accumulation, and assembling of facts, and then

furnishing them in a presentable form is insufficient. Such collations warrant re-

interrogation: do these exercises shed any new light on *how* democratic

transitions occur, *why* they occur in some places and not others, and *what* are

their underlying mechanisms?[53] These are the focal areas of enquiry and, demand

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[52] An ensample is the thesis of 'third wave' of democratization: it is in traffic only with democratization's consequential effects. See Huntington, Samuel P. (1993) 'Democracy's Third Wave', *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.), Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 3-25. See chapter 3 of this research for a critical analysis.

[53] *How* and *why* questions about social phenomena are pertinent. See, for example, Layder, Derek (1998) *Sociological Practice: Linking Theory and Social Research*, London: Sage Publications, p. 101.

and deserve close attention. Otherwise, if research 'simply provides yet another set of categories or boxes or paradigms',[54] it loses sheen.

What is the fundamental distinction between realist and non-realist approaches? Realism sustains the view that the structuring of reality is such that it presents a fine distinction between appearance and reality. As reality does not readily present itself to us 'the way it is', hence, the need to peer 'through the mists of the ephemeral and superficial to the structured reality beneath'.[55] Having raised the issue of underneath structured reality, the issue of underlying mechanisms and their significance in social enquiry cannot be understated. Realism criticizes approaches that skirt intervening into the underlying social mechanisms, and, signifies their relevance in social enquiry. A prerequisite for such intervention is a sound theoretical framework.[56] What then can be the desiderata of the same? This chapter responds to this puzzle. If it were further shown that CR closely represents these features, it would then be deemed to have better explanatory power.

Given the open nature of society, which rarely etches its own course in inexorable, indelible ink, an interrogation-mark is put to deterministic and/or universalizing approaches because *possibilities* for transformation seldom close. A given state of affairs is scarcely a testimony to the fact that it emerged after all options were exhausted. Therefore, at any given point in time, avenues for

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[54] Cf. Cohen, Percy (1970) *Modern Social Theory*, London: Heinemann, p. x.
[55] *Cf.* Hay, Colin (2002) *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*, Hampshire: Palgrave, pp. 122; 92.
[56] A meta-theory (like CR) can indeed have theoretical assumptions. See, for example, Fay, Brian (1987) *Critical Social Science: Liberation and its Limits*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 3; p. 42 *et seq.*

improvability are open and explorable. This then spurs the need for proffering better models for social life. Such models should be articulated cautiously given the 'performative' nature of science, i.e. any proposition produces certain effects; its repercussions could be positive or negative.[57] Conformably, the alternate model may not necessarily improve conditions, it may even worsen the situation or simply perpetuate status quoism. Hence the need for some circumspection.

On what basis does CR claim to possess better range in informing about reality? CR responds by stating that it interrogates the 'ontological depth' in the world – both social and natural. This accords a greater breadth and richness to its explanatory armoury. Various non-realist approaches miss the 'ontological depth' that inheres in reality due to preoccupation with epistemology.

It would be interesting to briefly note here the rise and growth of CR. CR can be described as a competing approach to empiricism in the philosophy of science. It is now mainly associated with the writings of Roy Bhaskar. He formally propounded it in *A Realist Theory of Science* in 1975 and its sequel *Possibility of Naturalism* in 1979.[58] Yet, there is more to CR than Bhaskar; the theoretical debate generated by the writings of Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend *et al.* in the 1960s and early 1970s provided the background for its development. These theoretical debates bruited about a vigorous approach not only of the *philosophy of science*, but also the *philosophy of social science*. During this period, Rom Harré, amongst others, developed and propounded many

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[57] 'Positive' and 'negative' rarely come in neat packets. The usage here connotes whether the repercussions are mostly positive or negative.

central notions of critical, scientific realism.[59] These included epistemological relativism, ontological realism (to be explained shortly), the crucial ontological distinction between open and closed systems, and the role of analogies and metaphors in science. The debates of 1960s/70s were a step forward in generating questions against empiricist orthodoxies, but they foundered in taking the next step of professing 'ontology', that is the theory of 'being'. Roy Bhaskar thereupon took up the mantle of completing this unfinished project. Bhaskar himself did not coin the appellation 'critical realism'; it came into usage by the elision of two main phrases which also constituted the key precepts of his philosophy, namely *transcendental realism* and *critical naturalism*. As the elided phrase—critical realism—came to be employed by some of his followers, Bhaskar subsequently accepted its usage. Bhaskar mainly draws his premises from sciences, but his conclusions generally belong to ontology. This, then, leads to the application of his theory of knowledge to ethics and politics. His 'explanatory critiques' have had a profound effect in philosophy of science and social science. The short span of CR's flourishing belies its wide-ranging disciplinary employment.[60]

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[58] Bhaskar, Roy (1978) *A Realist Theory of Science*, Sussex: The Harvester Press; Bhaskar (1998) *The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences*, 3rd edition, London: Routledge.

[59] Harré, Rom (1967) *An Introduction to the Logic of the Sciences*, London: Macmillan; Harré (1970) *The Method of Science*, London: Wykeham; Harré and Paul F. Secord (1972) *The Explanation of Social Behaviour*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell; and, Harré (1972) *The Philosophies of Science: An Introductory Survey*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[60] For example, in economics, see Lawson, Tony (1997) *Economics and Reality*, London: Routledge; in linguistics, Pateman, Trevor (1987) *Language in Mind and Language in Society*, Oxford: Clarendon Press; in psychoanalysis, Will, David (1986) 'Psychoanalysis and the New Philosophy of Science', *International Review of Psychoanalysis*, no. 13; and in organization and management (O&M), see Ackroyd, Stephen and Steve Fleetwood (eds.) (2000) *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations*, London: Routledge.

No theory exists in a vacuum. In its very existence, it adopts both an adversarial and an investigative stance.[61] Confronting other theories is thus part of the game. In the midst of competing claims and counterclaims about explicating reality, what position does CR occupy? In point of fact, CR stands in contradistinction to many other approaches – positivism (invariable laws, simple cause-and-effect), empiricism (sense observation), methodological individualism (voluntarism),[62] methodological holism ('determinism'), methodological idealism/ phenomenalism (extreme subjectivism), structuralism (determinism and 'social imperialism'),[63] postmodernism (relativism and 'linguistic terrorism'),[64] and some strands of post-structuralism (wherein identity, certainty and truth are problematic).[65] CR also diverges from 'pragmatism', 'conventionalism' and 'instrumentalism'.[66] Although theories do have a confrontational stature, confrontation cannot be an end in itself. A theory must ventilate enquiries towards ever better explication of social reality. What then are the requisites for a sound approach? It is to these that the research turns to now, and strives to demonstrate CR's equipage thereof.

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[61] Collier (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 70; also see Outhwaite, William (1987) *New Philosophies of Social Science: Realism, Hermeneutics and Critical Theory*, London: Macmillan Education, p. 20.

[62] Despite nuanced distinctions between (i) methodological individualism and voluntarism, and, (ii) methodological holism and determinism, they are bracketed together for analysis, as their core commonalities coincide.

[63] See Archer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 22.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[65] For a lucid commentary on post-structuralism and postmodernism see Eagleton, Terry (2001) *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd edition (reprinted), Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, pp. 110-30, 193, and 199-204 respectively. Also see Best, Steven and Douglas Kellner (1997) *The Postmodern Turn*, New York: The Guilford Press. For a systematic decimation of postmodernism, see Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, Part II.

[66] On this point see Outhwaite (1987) *op. cit.*, chapter 3.

1.2 Critical Realism

What constitutes a realist theory? On what bases is CR an enriching approach in explicating reality? How is it different from other approaches? These are the topics for discussion in this section.[67] It has been presciently remarked: 'Once a science is born...philosophical assumptions no longer have a *privileged* access'.[68] Realism[69] too is a robust view which brings to the fore a scientific approach—as distinct from scientism—yet without relegating philosophy. Dispositionally, explication by CR, 'is not a philosophical foundation'. Contrastively, it is 'open to further argumentation, experience, criticism and change. That what is should be analyzed and explained by social scientists and lay actors, not by metaphysicians'.[70] Steeped thus in a copious philosophical soup, it is expectable that in explicating social reality, some of the quintessential philosophical assumptions would be challenged; to name a few – foundationalism, infallibility of knowledge, uniform laws, relationship between social objects as purely conjunctive and additive, philosophical thinking in terms of simple cause-and-effect, and empirical nature of reality.

Collier[71] essays a fine definition of a *stronger* realist theory. It is rooted in:

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[67] The subsequent discussion in this chapter is based on the work of Roy Bhaskar (1978) & (1998) *op. cit.*, and its interpretation mainly by Archer (1995) *op. cit*; Collier (1994) *op. cit.*; Patomaki (2002) *op. cit*; Sayer (1992) & (2000) *op. cit.*; and, Danermark (2002) *op. cit.*

[68] Gazzaniga, Michael S. (ed.) (1984) *Handbook of Cognitive Neuroscience*, Plenum Press: New York, p. 4, italics added.

[69] The terms 'realism' and 'critical realism' are employed interchangeably.

[70] Cf. Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[71] Collier (1994) *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 7.

a) *Objectivity*: it refers to the 'real' world which exists, irrespective of the fact whether it is known, or would be known, or made apparent at any point of time.

b) *Fallibility*: all knowledge claims can be contested and/or refuted; a realist theory stakes no claim to making 'iron laws'.

c) *Transphenomenality*: a realist theory strives to go beyond mere appearances; in unriddling complexity, its search appertains to the underlying structures, and the related domain of actions and social characters situated therein.

d) *Counter-phenomenality*: complacency with extant knowledge/explanations is desisted; knowledge/explanations should transcend present structures, and contradict appearances.

CR seems to profess that it can provide finer explanatory quivers about social reality. Is this profession held in abstract or CR has devised a distinct categorization of the (social) world; if so, what is such categorization like? CR *has* devised such a categorization which can be stated simply. Ontologically, CR describes the world in terms of the 'real', the 'actual', and the 'empirical'. The *real* does not ascribe to an *ultimate* description of nature. On the contrary, it refers to a world—both social and natural—that exists irrespective of what one construes it to be. *Real* also refers to the structures and powers of objects, regardless of their knowledegability. Next, though without imposing strict hierarchy, is the realm of the *actual*: what would happen if and when the 'intrinsic' powers of objects were activated? This is to say that *actual* is

correlative with the occurrence of events. Finally, there is the realm of the *empirical*. It refers to the experiential act via which information about the real world is acquired; none the less, the real world is independent of this exercise, and its existence may remain undetermined by this act *per se*.

It is instructive to note how CR treats the inherent properties of structures/objects. CR avers the importance of inherent qualities/properties of structures/objects; even if non-manifest via observation, these powers/properties still play a vital role in the unfolding of events. Attempts can be made to gather their attributes from observable events. This can be achieved by identifying underlying causal influences and then validating their role in the observable phenomenon. It is conceivable that the social objects' powers have hitherto remained unexercised; the powers which remain unexercised, contain within them the seeds of acting themselves out in a given matrix of constraints and possibilities. Thus, occurrences in the social realm hardly exhaust all possible eventualities, thereby, leaving scope for further transformations at subsequent stage(s). Sayer pithily puts it: 'One of the temptations of social explanation is to suppress acknowledgments of the fact that at any instant, the future is open'.[72] It is therefore improper to treat social systems as closed, in which events are taken as matter-of-fact: they had to occur, so they occurred. This is akin to describing social events in the manner of 'postdictions'.[73] Howbeit, events are seldom pre-determined, as contingent and emergent conditions too play a role. In short, there

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[72] Sayer, Andrew (2000) *Realism and Social Science*, London: Sage Publications, p. 15.
[73] Cf. Sayer, Andrew (1992) *op. cit.*, p. 133. Sayer alludes to the fact that explanation and prediction are different. If the aims of explanation and prediction are jumbled up, then

is more to systems/processes than the discernible pattern of events. There is 'ontological depth' due to the workings of mechanisms, and attributable to specific geo-historical contexts.

Causation is a weighty issue in both philosophy and science. 'Causation' shall be discussed subsequently in the chapter, at length, but suffice it would be to say here that it has generated many acrimonious debates. What is the take of CR on causation? Is it any different from its adversarial approaches? CR rejects the conventional construal of causality predicated on supposed regularities in sequential events. Per contra, CR is concerned with identifying underlying mechanisms and the manner of their working rather than finding regularities betwixt them, or stipulating law-like statements. Social processes are also an outcome of unintended consequences, or unacknowledged factors. The possibility of different causal mechanisms producing similar outcomes also remains. It could also be the case that the same causal mechanisms go on to produce different outcomes, at different times! Concordantly, it is apt to describe causal powers/properties as *tendencies*. This is due to the multifarious operating mechanisms whose combinatorial constellation is somewhat inaccessible. Be that as it may, endeavours should continue towards examining which underlying mechanisms have been activated, how they have been activated and, under what conditions. Avenues are thus opened for understanding social objects/processes at a greater depth. Additionally, the causal powers/properties of one mechanism may be affected by another one depending upon context(s), thereby, precluding

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explanations appear to be 'postdictions' i.e. 'accounts of past processes which would have served to predict the event-to-be-explained even before it occurred'.

law-like regularities. In view of this, CR is only derivatively concerned with outcomes. Consequently, realism runs parallel to empiricism and actualism; there is no intersecting ground between them due to the divergence of pursuits. What are the reasons for such non-intersection of ground and what are the flaws of empiricism and actualism, on this particular note? This merits a brief discussion to bring into sharp relief the distinction between them.

As per *empirical realism* that alone exists which is/can be observed, while *actualism* confines itself to the realm of actual events.[74] These approaches ignore dormant powers, capable of successive activation. Furthermore, they are undiscriminating about connectivity of two or more mechanisms producing manifest properties of social objects; or that manifest properties can be a consequence of retroactive effect of mechanisms. Such ontologies are 'flat'.[75] Contrarily, CR has a 'stratified ontology' which enables social objects' understanding at multiple levels. Concomitantly, CR is capable of clarifying antinomies in different patterns of social events even where social objects remain unchanging.

Temporality is often accorded undue (less) importance in describing social change. CR addresses this lacuna. In assigning causes to social change, CR primes the explanatory power with temporality. The possible 'cause' of any social change can be described retrospectively, i.e. from an historical period that

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[74] See Sellars, Wilfrid (1997) *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. Sellars attacks the 'the whole framework of given-ness', i.e. the framework of sense-datum theories. Richard Rorty in the *Introduction* to the *ibid.* text considers this one of the seminal books which played a role in shift from an earlier (empiricist) form of philosophy to a later form of analytic philosophy.
[75] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 12.

stretches into previous epochs. The causes 'spread out geographically and back in time'. The present actions can be characterized as being 'affected by dispositions which were "sedimented" at some earlier stage, often in different places'.[76] This also brings to the fore the concepts of *absence* and *presence*.[77] The past that impinges upon the 'now', despite being absent (not present now), has a 'presence' in the here and now. The past refers to the temporal, as also the spatial domain. Thus, happenings in one spatial domain can affect other spatial domains, irrespective of their propinquity.

Social structures comprise variedly interrelated and interacting social objects. Hence, how structures are conceptualized is also crucial; the conceptualization process closely relates to the interpretation of social object(s) situated therein. There is likelihood that understanding of some social circuits, their powers/properties may remain inaccessible to the social actors themselves. Notwithstanding this, the ongoing process of extracting meaning from social life continues unabated. A common metaphor of representation of images in (i) an ordinary mirror, and (ii) an array of closely aligned mirrors should clarify the point.

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[76] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 16.
[77] The 'past' of the present would have been at some point of time been a 'present', with a past and, so the process goes back into an ever deeper regress. On *absence* see Bhaskar, Roy (1993) *Dialectic: The Pulse of Freedom*, London: Verso, p. 5: 'Real negation' means 'real determinate absence or non-being'. Bhaskar's aim is to revindicate negativity so that one sees the positive 'as a tiny, but important, ripple on the surface of a sea of negativity'. As regards the notion of

A_2

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Ordinary mirror

A_1
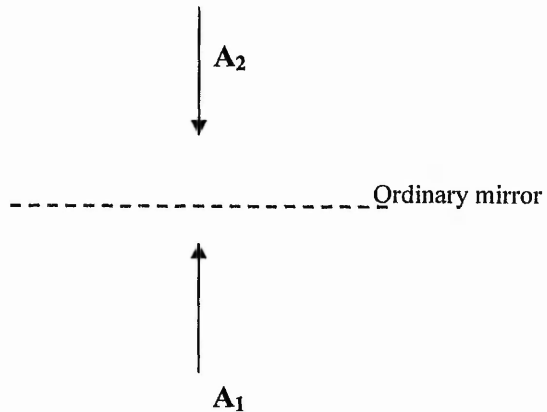
Representation of empiricist notion of causality – one-to-one simple cause-and-effect

A_3 B_3

A_2 B_2

B_1 A_1
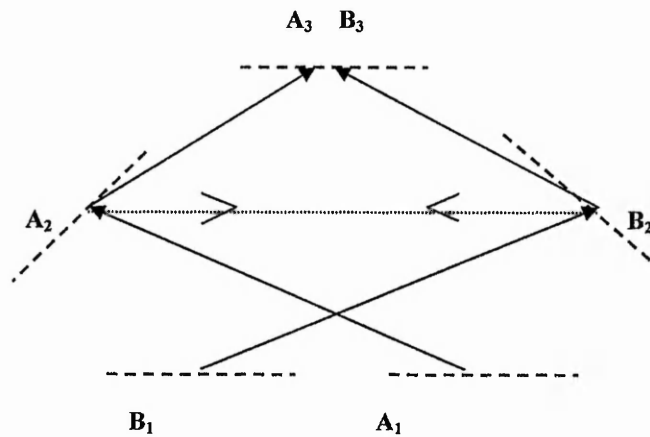
Representation of realist notion of causality – 'polyvalent' causation

Fig. 1 Metaphorical representation of empiricist and realist notion of causality

As per the empiricist view, causality has a linear, one-to-one relationship, as in the plain mirror reflection between the subject and its reflection. There is thus a

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absence, Bhaskar regards it as epistemologically, logically and ontologically prior to the notion of presence.

solitary equation of combination/permutation which can be represented in a notational form:

$A_2 \rightarrow A_1$, i.e. A_2 is caused by A_1

On the other hand, CR contends that in open realms, one-to-one causality is unobtainable, inasmuch as the mirrors are arranged complexly. In view of the latter, establishing a simple cause-and-effect relationship can be hazardous, and may result in misattribution of causality, i.e. attributing effects to wrong mechanism(s). This is substantiated by the following notational equation which depicts conceivable (from the diagram above) combinations and permutations of causality:

$A_3 \rightarrow$ (i) $\{A_1 \rightarrow A_2\}$
  (ii) $\{A_1 \rightarrow A_2 \rightarrow B_2 \rightarrow A_1 \rightarrow A_2\}$ [in case of counter-reflection though not depicted in the diagram]
  (iii)$\{A_1 \rightarrow A_2 \rightarrow B_2 \rightarrow B_1 \rightarrow A_2\}$, i.e. A_3 is caused by a sequential chain that commences from A_1 and through A_2 finally culminates in A_3.
  (iv) Numerous causal chains are possible depending upon the point of origin which could be A_2 or B_2, or, A_1 or B_1.

Now the illustration puts it rather simply and metaphorically, but it does convey the complicated nature of causality. If, in addition, the emergent powers are reckoned with, the complicated nature of causality becomes further compounded. At each new or higher stratum, each particulate may acquire emergent properties which are irreducible to the lower stratum/strata. This then should prepare ground for eschewing empiricism. Mere confutation however is insufficient. Hence, collaterally, CR strives for better abstractions and conceptualizations to sharpen social concepts. By raising counterfactual questions, it seeks to transcend mere associational thinking, formal associations or regularities. Correspondingly, CR seeks substantial connections. It is also of paramount import whether the

phenomena are contingently or externally related, or, necessarily or internally related.[78] The contrast between the two can be stated like this. If two entities exist irrespective of each other, then it is neither necessary nor impossible that they be in a mutually constitutive relation. Such a relation would then be external or contingent; a specimen can be the relation between a scavenger and a professor in a college. The same however is not true for the dyad of a landlord and a tenant, who are in a necessary or internal relation: one cannot be without the other. Insight of such relations assists in understanding and sifting objects' core properties from peripheral properties. To reiterate, though CR acknowledges the social construction of knowledge, it declares the existence of a world independent of a knower.

Foundationalism, not long ago, occupied a privileged position. With passage of time, the lustre has now worn off. Grand theories, final solutions, timeless precepts, singular causes, etc. are, in general, no longer the staple of contemporary discourse.[79] As CR vouches for a 'critical' status vis-à-vis social theory, it would be informative to know how it addresses the issue of foundationalism and what implication does this have for social enquiry. CR indeed abandons the search for foundational knowledge and contends that all knowledge is fallible. All the same, human endeavour to probe deeper into reality (social/natural) should persist. With each new 'discovery', knowledge of humans may probably enhance, and ignorance, diminish, yet without necessarily

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[78] See Sayer (1992) *op. cit.*, pp. 91, 119.

[79] Hay perceptively notes that if political analysis should be presented as 'an essentially and dynamic field', then, we must resist the temptation to present it as comprising 'a series of timeless, closed and almost self-referential traditions'. Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 7.

clinching certainty. The reason being that with unravelling of each new discovery, fresh insights may be gained of hitherto unknown frontiers. These frontiers are likely to defy human understanding at least at the incipient stage, thereby, recommencing the process of research. Thus the need to be wary of 'optimal' or 'final' solutions.[80]

In harmony with abandonment of foundational knowledge, CR is also apprehensive about reaching 'rock bottom'. Nonetheless, it espouses endeavours at ever better explication(s), though corrigible, of reality. In CR, a theory which fails to behold a (further) deeper explanation is unlikely to be a 'true one'. 'Therefore, far from rendering an explanation redundant, a deeper explanation underwrites it and reinforces its position in the structure of science'.[81] Moreover, in proceeding with any analysis it is important to reckon with 'what is what, what is a *non sequitur*, which conditions are necessary, which sufficient' and one should also be able to distinguish between '*can* and *must*, *all* and *some*, *often* and *always*'.[82]

In explaining social reality, it appears negligible attention has been paid to social objects' emergent powers/properties. CR attempts to addresses this neglect by cognizing them. Emergent powers/properties are irreducible to unit components residing in structures, i.e. they are more than the sum of their parts. In collective functioning of social objects, autonomous spheres emerge wielding causal influences; emergent powers/properties belong to such a realm and play a

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[80] For a fine commentary of 'complexity', see Zolo (1992) *Democracy and Complexity: A Realist Approach*, Cambridge: Polity Press, chapter 1, especially pp. 10, 11.
[81] Collier (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 110.
[82] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 4, original italics.

prominent role in any social system. They, *inter alia,* impinge upon social practices and relations; play a role in forming identities; metamorphose extant structures; create dependencies both within and without structures; and, also lead to formation of hierarchies of domination. On these counts, by studying social systems' emergent powers/processes, insights can be gained about the past which is present in the 'here and now'. The emergent powers/properties can be discerned in 'existential constitution; existential pre-existence (structures pre-dating the entrance of any particular actors); co-inclusion (different processes interloping or clashing); or lagged, delayed efficacy (past processes having cumulative effects now).'[83]

Knowledge is an integral component of social life. Lay actors too have a conception of it, though their conception is essentially impressionistic and expressionistic, i.e. too general and subjective. Such impressions are liable to misinterpret reality, in terms of *esse est percipi* ('to be is to be perceived'). Their inadequacy lies in being undistinguishing about the 'observables' and 'unobservables'. To address the lacuna, CR adopts a distinct stance on knowledge.

As has already been remarked, CR rejects foundationalism. Various other approaches too have rejected foundationalism. The difference between CR and most such approaches lies in the category devised to apprehend knowledge. What is the distinctive feature of such categorization by CR? What are its implications for interpretations by humans of the reality surrounding them? CR categorizes knowledge into two domains: the 'intransitive' and the 'transitive'. The study-

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[83] See Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.,* p. 84.

objects of science, i.e. physical or social world form the 'intransitive' dimension of knowledge. A grammatical analogy is apt here. The grammatical meaning of 'intransitive' is a verb-construction that usually does not require, or cannot take a direct object. To carry forth the analogy and to put it in simple terms, as per CR, 'intransitive' dimension refers to structures/processes which do not require an observer for their existence; such a world, by its very existence is already 'there'. For example, gravity exerts its powers on planet earth, irrespective of human awareness. Likewise, the moon exerts $1/6^{th}$ gravity of earth, irrespective of human knowledge or existence there. Neil Armstrong *et al.* would have experienced it in 1969 in their mission to the moon, but their departure unaffected the basic fact. The other dimension, viz. 'transitive' refers to the theories humans construct about reality. Thus, an intransitive dimension can have many transitive interpretations. To draw the grammatical analogy again, 'transitive' dimension goes beyond the level of the subject and needs an object for completion.

It may be asked – how much does the intransitive dimension alter when the transitive view changes? CR is agnostic about a proportional relationship: even if the transitive view changes, it does not necessarily imply that the intransitive view also undergoes concomitant change. The earth's orbit was unaltered by the heliocentric theory. The preceding question is typically relevant for social sciences, as a change in the researchers' minds is usually unaccompanied by a change in the studied phenomena. The social scientists, as

Sayer says, indeed are 'cast in the modest role of constructing rather than "constructing" the social world'.[84]

In view of the foregoing discussion, CR can be expected to contribute to enriching social reality's understanding.

1.3 Triangulation of Critical Realist precepts

The ontological and epistemological bases of CR can be triangulated as follows:[85]

Ontological Realism:
CR describes the world as stratified, structured and differentiated, wherein, diverse strata, figuratively speaking, lie in close imbrication, and, thereby, refutes the closed nature of the social/natural worlds.[86] It is only in a closed system that events/patterns can follow recursively, as per formal mathematical formulation. In view of reality being stratified, an inescapable corollary is that of 'irreducible complexity'[87], thereby leaving room for building up successively improved ontological notions.

Epistemological Relativism:
CR is, to put it mildly, unassertive about privileged knowledge of nature/society. More strongly, CR is anathematic to foundationalism. Concomitantly,

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[84] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 11
[85] On this point see Bhaskar, Roy (1998) 'General Introduction', *Critical Realism: Essential Readings* by Margaret Archer *et al.*, London: Routledge, pp. ix-xxiv, p. xi; and, Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 9.
[86] Natural systems, by and large, are open except in controlled conditions of experiments.
[87] See Behe, Michael J. (1996) *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*, New York: The Free Press, p. 39. The central thesis of Behe is that biological beings are 'irreducibly complex' at the molecular level which renders Darwinism suspect. His view is in a microscopic minority in a field dominated by orthodox biologists. Behe's more intricate usage of the term and shoring up creationism need not detain the argument here. The social realm, analogically, serves as another province of 'irreducible complexity'.

epistemological relativism can unequivocally be defined as: that 'the deepest and the most universal philosophical theses must be, in principle, open to criticism and change'. Devoid of foundational moorings, CR admits that social process can be reconstructed through further knowledge. Thus 'all beliefs and knowledge claims are socially produced, contextual and fallible'.[88] This then should clarify the mistaken view that realism avers to being the repository of True knowledge; such capitalization of truth, should now be dissociated with CR.

Judgmental rationalism:
CR acknowledges the significance of interpretive approaches to the extent that knowledge is socially constructed. Nevertheless, CR maintains that reality is not theory-determined, though it may be theory-laden.[89] That all views/explanations of social reality are relatively equal is somewhat absurd, as plausible judgments about their merit are thinkable. By employing 'theoretical and methodological tools', it is practicable 'to discriminate among theories regarding their ability to inform' about external reality.[90] Realism thus seeks to displace relativism which caters to 'everything goes'. As Andrew Sayer succinctly says: If 'everything goes' that should include anti-relativism, too![91]

In view of the heretofore discussion, it is supplicated that CR 'is committed to unfettered reasoning, to a belief that science can give us real insights into the nature of things, and to an interest in the potential of reason and science for human emancipation'.[92] Thus, CR can be considered as an heir to the

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[88] Patomaki, (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 8.
[89] See Sayer (1992) *op. cit.*, p. 5.
[90] Danermark, Berth *et al.* (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[91] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 77.
[92] Collier (1994) *op. cit.*, p. ix.

Enlightenment project, though it baulks from foundationalism. Another qualification of CR: it can 'be interpreted as a product of successive critiques of a complacent and overly confident modernism in social science, and its radical underestimation of the complexity, diversity and multiple meanings of the world'.[93] What seems to buttress the case for realism is the fact that 'philosophy's *manner of work* is pure reason, but its raw materials are not'.[94] Margaret Archer asseverates: 'given the way in which we are constituted, the way in which the world is made, and the necessity of our interaction,…we are all realists-naturalistically'.[95]

1.4 Is 'scientific' study of democratic transitions possible?

The relationship between philosophy and science has been perennially discussed. The trajectory of discussions became remarkably pronounced with the emergence of the mechanical view of cosmos in the seventeenth century. The ensuing positivism heralded a revolution in cognizing the world; its pinnacle was attained with the Logical Positivists.[96] The disputations impacted upon whether to study philosophy in a scientific manner and, if so, how?[97] The ramifications have had profound significance for social sciences, too. This section begins by discussing

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[93] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 30.
[94] Collier (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 25, original italics.
[95] Archer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 2.
[96] The *Vienna Circle* comprised a group of philosophers/scientists who sought to reshape philosophy as per positivist precepts. The members deliberated from 1922 to 1938 in Vienna, and included philosophers, such as Herbert Feigl, Otto Neurath and Rudolf Carnap, the mathematicians Hans Hanh and Kurt Gödel, and, the physicist Philip Frank. For a fine overview, see Schlick, Moritz (2002) 'The Future of Philosophy', *Philosophy of Science: Contemporary Readings* by Yuri Balashov and Alex Rosenberg (eds.), London: Routledge, pp. 8-21. In so suggesting, Schlick's views are not necessarily endorsed.

some undertakings in social sciences to emulate the 'hard' sciences.[98] Redefining science from a CR perspective follows next. The subsequent section focuses on two broad ways of conducting research and their relevance to democratic transitions. The central theme of enquiry is whether a scientific study of democratic transitions is possible and, if so, how?

Modelling of icons from physical sciences or 'paramorphic' modelling is not uncommon in social sciences. 'Paramorphs are usually constructed to model *processes*'.[99] The earliest 'paramorphic' interventions were manifest in positivism by seeking to create a physics of social sciences by determinism and prediction. The behavioural revolution took this paradigm to a more rigorous level. Evolutionary theory has been employed to support deterministic views of human nature, history and politics.[100] Political realism or power politics is oft described in such terms.[101] Kenneth Waltz's neo-realism[102] is notable amongst systemic theories. There are some similarities between 'selfish gene' theory and neo-realism.[103] Theory of 'relativity' has been employed to support moral and

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[97] It of course depends on how science is defined. The generic usage of science has meant law-like statements, predictions and regularities. This view is disputed here.

[98] The dichotomy of 'hard' and 'soft' sciences has been persisted with to *introduce* the topic and to steer the discussion on a familiar course; this however does not tantamount to approving it. These are typical constraints which the linguistic barrier presents. The *subsequent* discussion shall hopefully quell notions about such dichotomization.

[99] Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 127, original italics (with a reference to Rom Harré).

[100] Masters, Roger D. (1983) 'The Biological Nature of the State', *World Politics*, Vol. 35, pp. 161-193. Masters suggests that evolutionary theory can be 'extended to study human social institutions without engaging in genetic reductionism', p. 163. He supports 'naturalism', but without enforcing absolute standards irrespective of space/time.

[101] See, for example Thayer, Bradley A. (2000) 'Bringing in Darwin: Evolutionary Theory, Realism, and International Politics', *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 124-151.

[102] Waltz, Kenneth M. (1979) *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company. The appellation – neo-realism was, however, coined by Robert Cox.

[103] The interpretation is predicated upon similarities between issues, such as 'survival', 'self-generation', 'self-interest' etc., which are enunciated in the 'selfish gene' theory. See Dawkins,

cultural relativism.[104] Cybernetic theory was employed by Karl Deutsch to construct a general theory of political system as an information-communication network.[105]

It is a moot point how much these ambitious enterprises have rejuvenated social/political theory. Though creativity should be appreciated, it should not eclipse practical utility. Many traditional analogies, Archer emphasizes, are 'misleading' because they inadequately comprehend the 'quintessential ability of social structures' which is to change shape.

> Society is not a mechanism with fixed, indispensable parts and determinate relations between parts, pre-set preferred states and pre-programmed homeostatic mechanisms. Society is not like a language with an orderly, enduring syntax whose components are mutually invoking. Society is not a simple cybernetic system, which pre-supposes a particular structure capable of carrying out goal directed, feedback regulated, error-correction. All of these are special kinds of system and society is another, which is only like itself because it is open, and is open because it is peopled, and being peopled can always be reshaped through innovativeness.[106]

The persuasive quote would seem to render impertinent simple analogies from 'scientific' models. When a particular pursuit, such as dogmatically following 'hard' science models in social science, begins to indicate its inadequacy and becomes suspect, what should be the next course of action? Should one continue to dogmatically pursue the same path, or reconsider the original standpoint/pursuit? In such a situation, prudence would demand, and even dictate the need for a distinct and distinguished approach for rendering social reality more intelligible. Stating in unforgettable words on the subject, Isaiah Berlin held

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Richard (1976) *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Waltz however may dissent from this interpretation.

[104] Turner, Frederick (1997) 'Chaos and Social Science', *Chaos, Complexity, and Sociology: Myths, Models, and Theories* by Raymond A. Eve *et al.* (eds.), Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. xi-xxvii, p. xi. Turner is making a tongue-in-cheek remark for the relativists.

[105] Deutsch, Karl W. (1966) *The Nerves of Government*, New York: The Free Press.

that the issue was not that of failing to apply natural sciences' methods, but, on the contrary 'of over-applying them...To be rational in any sphere, to apply good judgment in it, is to apply those methods which have turned out to work best in it...[To demand anything else] is mere irrationalism'.[107]

Does a close bond obtain between the meaning one ascribes to social concepts and the manner of conducting enquiries? At first sight, the question may seem rather straightforward to justify a scrutiny. Yes, the question is so simple that it needs to be qualified as being deceptively simple for it is impregnated with a deeper meaning. This is discussed in the ensuing, as it has wider ramifications: it should tell not only about the enquiry process, but also the subtle forces that are at work (of which the agents may perhaps be unaware) in such an enquiry process. A close bond does exist between the meaning ascribed to social concepts and the manner of conducting research. The tight intertwining is usually screened from attempts at contradistinguishing them. Now, most lay actors are aware of the meaning of their concepts; what however is partially cloaked from awareness is how these concepts are acquired. This intricate terrain pertains to personal beliefs. The research underscores the point that in spite of the interpenetration of 'self' and being, and the 'doctrine of incorrigibility',[108] a re-engagement with 'self-knowledge' might be beneficial by shedding light on the *process* leading to

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[106] Archer, Margaret (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 165, 166.
[107] In Toulmin, Stephen (2001) *Return to Reason*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, p. viii.
[108] 'Doctrine of incorrigibility' means 'that any belief we have about our own current mental state is inevitably true'. D. M. Armstrong cited in Lewis, Hywel D. (1982) *The Elusive Self*, Macmillan, London, p. 24. Stretched beyond a point, it eventuates into relativism. For a fitting repartee to related strands, see Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 77. Consider: a Soviet ex-Communist Party member rejects his/her past beliefs. For the relativist, a 'crushing paradox' emerges as it

conceptualization, which itself could be due to long held dispositions. Thereupon, it might generate fresh insights. In 'nocturnal' philosophy, at least, efforts can be made to understand the process of acquisition of concepts and the meanings attached thereto. Conadic thinking[109] can be fruitful here. 'Democratic transitions' too, as a theme is no exception and such engagement can be gainful for injecting novel ideas and discarding irrelevant ones.

The section discusses the *modus operandi* of a research process. *A* practical bifurcation is (α) 'ampliative', and (β) 'reductive' approaches.[110] Ampliative approach starts with unproblematic core beliefs with the express purpose of seeking secure propositions as one moves outwards for accepted truths. In contrariety, the reductive approach shuns narrowing the field of enquiry; it seeks to broaden the field and thereby enhance understanding. It reckons with various possibilities instead of merely searching for accepted truths. It considers juggling with various possibilities that might even be mutually contending. Thence, from a broader perspective, it sifts research material. Characteristically, it abstains from propounding final answers, and like the best available explanatory models it 'rests on relatively insecure ground' and, thereby, leaves room for portrayal of refined models. It is unlike the ampliative approach that 'aims at simplicity and security at the expense of depth, complexity and

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cannot be said that 'the past political beliefs were correct when they were held and wrong when they were disavowed'.

[109] The term appears to have been employed by Roy Bhaskar; it is a device to widen one's preconceptions and thereby pushing one to rethink on various issues (conadic = conatus from Latin conari, i.e. to endeavour to push).

[110] For a brief deliberation, see Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. 124-26.

alteration'.[111] Stated thus, attempts at broaching and explicating democratic transitions from a 'reductive' perspective can be illumining.

To recapitulate, contriving physics out of society seems impractical. What this viewpoint fails to appreciate is the complexity in nature and society. Parsimonious constructions may apply in situations with high degree of certainty, but this becomes problematic 'in a world populated by active, conscious and reflexive social subjects'.[112] Nevertheless, there is a compelling need to study society in a scientific manner, which is distinct from the 'hard' science analogues, yet uncompromising in rigour. The research project considers realism as one such approach worth exploring. No declaration is made here to possessing a master key, which in itself would be a negation of realist philosophy. Simultaneously, 'science' too needs to be reconceptualized. Reducing science to law-like generalizations, predictions, regularities *et al.* affords little purchase on the immensely complex social realm. Probing further strata can afford profitability; reconceptualization is also a useful device. In so doing, a scientific pursuit can be said to be in play.

The chapter so far has shown that society is a unique ensemble of structures and agents. 'Hard' science analogues are considerably unrealistic for being inharmonious with the open nature of society. None the less, it would be inappropriate to state that nomological laws of society are undiscoverable, unfathomable, or elusive for this presupposes that such unvarying laws exist in the first place; this very assumption is disputable.

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[111] Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 125.
[112] *Cf.* Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 79.

1.5 Critical Realism and democratic transitions

If isolated events, empirical observations, and behavioural characteristics are by themselves, unsuitable, for telling about democratic transitions, what could be a more suitable indicator? What prospects does CR behold here? In employing CR vis-à-vis democratic transitions, the focus is on the *relational patterns of society*, i.e. the relations between individuals, groups of individuals, and the social structures thereof, as also, the relations between such relations. On this count, the powers/properties inherent in the relational framework also assume importance. Whereas the *stag* approach shall be developed in the following chapters, this section is devoted to considering some related issues to democratic transitions.

Spontaneous order

Superimposition of extraneous/alien structures is likely to be cosmetic in functioning, unless, internalized.[113] The American intervention in Iraq has led to imposition of some legislative bodies, but they have been rather inefficacious in performing and delivering results. Interiorization of extraneous structures, systems and processes, in a large, measure has to be self-generating; imposition of the same is incongruent with interiorization. The conceptual notion of 'spontaneous' generation of order is relevant here. Its origins, in modern times, are traceable to Adam Ferguson who described it as 'the result of human action but not of human design'. Friedrich Hayek[114] further articulated it. Although

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[113] The boundary between extraneous and intrinsic of course is tenuous over a period. Diffusion is an ongoing process of cultural development. A representation: India's ancient language Sanskrit lacks a proper word for divorce, as the very social practice was then unimaginable. However, over centuries of cultural interaction, divorce is now common, at least in urban areas, due to which the supposed life-long union of husband and wife is rather *alien*.

[114] Hayek, Friedrich A. (1973) *Law, Legislation and Liberty: Volume I, Rules and Order*, London: Routledge.

Hayek's epistemology is incompatible with CR, the important lesson here is that *designing* democratic institutions in non-democratic countries at time t_1 by sweeping aside their heritage seem impracticable.

Habitus

The research also engages the concept of *habitus* developed by Pierre Bourdieu. *Habitus* is cognate with realism, as it dissociates itself from both 'structuralism without subject and the philosophy of subject' and thereby opens the way for a 'non-mechanistic analysis of the relations between agent and world'.[115] How then is *habitus* produced? It is produced by the 'conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence'. It is constitutive of

> systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor.[116]

Habitus is thus a system of cognitive and motivating structures. Bourdieu continues: *Habitus* is a 'product of history, produces individual and collective practices', i.e. more history and ensures the continuation and 'presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the forms of schemes of perception, thought and action' guarantee the 'correctness' and constancy of practices over time. It is thus a system of cognition minus consciousness, intentionality minus intention, and practice minus its positing. Significantly, it is

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[115] Bourdieu (1990) *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*, translated by Matthew Adamson, p. 10 *et seq.*
[116] Bourdieu (1997) *op. cit.*, p. 53 and *et seq.*

the unchosen principle of omnifarious choices. *Habitus*, if interpreted as indistinguishable from notions of 'consciousness and the unconscious, of explanation by determining causes or by final causes', is misleading, as *habitus* excludes these from its framework.[117]

Agency

In analyzing (most non-realist) accounts of democratic transitions, four features are generally discernible regarding agency. One, agency basically remains un/under-stratified. Two, the background or underlying reasons for configuration of groups—how some are active, others quiescent—have been inadequately analyzed. Three, the impact of structural constraints on agency remains somewhat unexplored. Four, voluntarist views have crept in, in some accounts. To address these issues, realism discounts subsuming the whole 'constituency' of agency under a single rubric. Thus emanates the concept of stratified agency from the hitherto un/under-stratified view of agency. Social realism formulates the view that the stratified 'subject' possesses emergent powers/properties which emerge at each level of social stratum. The four strata are the self, the person, the agent and the actor.[118] The realist model of 'morphostasis' and 'morphogenesis' in one stroke, accords significance to spatiality, temporality and stratified agency. These issues are discussed in chapter 2.

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[117] Bourdieu (1990) *loc. cit.*
[118] For more details, see Archer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 254. Also see chapter 2 of this research.

Space and time

That democratic transitions materialize in space/time is truistic. Regardless of this, there seems to be a discernible neglect of both.[119] Whilst this has occluded a fresh perspective, the explanatory loss could be ascertainable especially after a comprehensive spatial/temporal account of democratic transitions emerges and allows contrast. The research's concern and objective is limited to demonstrating the problems of ignoring space/time and, thereupon, minimally incorporating space/time that fit in with the *stag* approach, which is central to dissecting democratic transitions. The exercise does not extend to enumerating various perspectives of space/time, which would be digressive here. Reckoning with the minimal objectives of research vis-à-vis space/time, the shortcomings of aspatial/atemporal accounts are first specified: (a) by collapsing space/time, diverse geo-historical regions' actors are bracketed together; (ii) the actors are then assumed to possess similar properties, which can be conveniently replicated; (iii) uniformities are accentuated which may actually be unobtainable in the first place. Social contexts are thus abstracted from their unique spatio-temporal frame. The resultant generalizations are ergo suspect. This section interrogates these standpoints to demonstrate the usefulness of injecting space/time into the subject.[120]

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[119] It is noteworthy that the omission has still not precluded meaningful organization of democratic explanatory projects. Cf. Sayer, Andrew (1985) 'The Difference that Space Makes', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Derek Gregory and John Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan, pp. 49-66, p. 65. He aptly remarks: It should not be overlooked 'how social theory has managed to pay space scant attention without too much trouble' and how those 'theorists who have been preoccupied with space have not been able to say very much about it'.

[120] The issue here is not one of commendation or reprobation of generalizations. Generalizations do chisel-off 'unwanted' data. However, as the post-1989 democratic experiments have belied

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The difficulties with de-spatialization are:-

(i) even if it is granted that humans, in a very generic sense are similar, the relations they enter into in distinct geo-historical sites also have similar properties, is a *non sequitur*; (ii) this confusion arises due to non-cognizing the distinction between action and activity; (iii) space is construed as 'somehow epiphenomenal, as a "codification" or a "reflection" of human intentionality or social structure'.[121] As such, an anthropocentric account of spatiality prevails.[122]

The task of social theory is not only to criticize false ideas but also to show why they persist. On this count, spatial negligence is attributable to: (1) 'Polyvalency', i.e. actors have a wide range of causal abilities/liabilities along with a susceptibility to new influences; besides, the differential spatiality sometimes remains constant, while, at other times it may be inconstant, thereby presenting difficulties. This also renders achieving a 'perfect combination of space and substance' infeasible and unwieldy.[123] (2) The confusing relation between space and society due to mis-conceptualization. Soja insightfully describes the production of space as both 'the *medium* and the *outcome* of social action and relationship'. Accordingly, 'spatiality *is* society, not as its definitional or logical equivalent, but as its concretisation, its formative *constitution*'.[124] Furthermore, it is often 'not *feasible* to achieve a perfect recombination of space

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initial optimistic generalizations, it is worth exploring what the added dimension of space/time beholds.

[121] Gregory, Derek and John Urry (1985) 'Introduction', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Gregory and Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan, pp. 1-8, p. 2.
[122] Urry, John (1985) 'Social Relations, Space and Time', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Gregory and Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan, pp. 20-48, p. 23.
[123] Sayer (1985) *op. cit.*, pp. 49-66, p. 57, 61.

and substance', as sometimes the 'tendency to separate space and substance' results in failing to 'recombine them adequately', thereby leading to practical problems.[125]

Space's neglect can be rectified by objectifying how space is constituted, how it configures/reconfigures temporally and, how it impinges upon social relations. The crux of the matter is the ontological status of space. This research rejects an 'absolute' conception of space, i.e. (i) space exists in a vacuum, and has little or no relation to social objects;[126] (ii) space is akin to a 'reflective mirror' or empty 'container' of social life;[127] and (iii) space has its own characteristics and is causally efficacious.[128] As Soja says, construal of a mirror obscures the specific connections that obtain between society and spatiality, whereas, in terms of a container, the connections are annulled by externalizing spatiality into a 'receptacle or a backdrop'. Sayer pithily states that emptiness is synonymous with nothingness which, in turn, means a non-entity. The absolute definition of space thus falls through a sieve. Contrariwise, a 'relative' view of space is posited here: space is constituted in and through social objects (as also their web of relations) though it is irreducible to them. Thus, 'social space' is best described as a 'subset of physical space that is colonized, reproduced and

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[124] Soja, Edward W. (1985) 'The Spatiality of Social Life: Towards a Transformative Retheorisation', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Gregory and Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan pp. 90-127, pp. 94, 95, original italics.
[125] Sayer (1985) *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 62.
[126] Sayer (1992) *op. cit.* pp. 147, 148.
[127] Soja (1985) *op. cit.*, p. 96.
[128] Urry (1985) op. *cit.*, 21.

transformed by human societies'.[129] Importantly, spatiality is 'not only a product but also a producer and reproducer' of social relations.[130]

As with space, de-temporalization[131] also has some difficulties:-
(i) it accentuates the present or the 'here and now' at the expense of past; (ii) it suffers from 'indexicalism', i.e. only the present exists thereby obfuscating causality and existence;[132] (iii) it sublates 'absence', i.e. the past which is 'invisible', yet wields influence;[133] (iii) time is construed as unidimensional and unidirectional, as if it is in a straightforward motion; (iv) the classical temporal dualisms of—changing/stable, contextual/decontextual, diachronic/synchronic, historical/traditional, linear/cyclical, quantitative/qualitative, reversible/irreversible, public/private, subjective/objective—have obscured than illumined the temporal process, as compartmentalization of time into neat dual categories is defective; and (v) time is necessarily successive and cumulative.

Again, as with space, there appear to be problems in comprehensively conceptualizing time. Thus, temporal negligence is attributable to:-
(1) While conceptualization of mechanical time provides a convenient, compact temporal position, its transcendence creates problem of scope for time is embedded in 'social interactions, structures, practices and knowledge, in artefacts, in the mindful body, and in the environment'. The biggest challenge then is the 'multiplicity, simultaneity and mutual implication' of time in these

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[129] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, pp. 110, 111.
[130] Soja (1985) *op. cit.*, p. 110.
[131] For a detailed exposition on time, see Adam, Barbara (1990) *Time and Social Theory*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
[132] Bhaskar, Roy (1993) *op. cit.*, pp. 252-55; 399.
[133] Bhaskar (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 4 *et. seq*; also see chapter 2.

domains.[134] (2) The construal of past as simply 'out there' and static seems mystical. Contrarily, the past is continually reconstructed and reformulated. (3) Other than mechanical time, there is also the subjective, relative view of time. (4) The boundaries of past, present and future are blurry, as one merges into the other and, thereby, creating problems of demarcation. (5) Ascribing chronological time retrospectively may behold a different perspective than when it was progressing in real time. (6) Linear interpretation of time loses sight of cyclical time and the fact that there is repetition in advanced industrial states too.[135] Therefore, time needs to be conceived of in its multiplicity, non-linearity, non-uni-dimensionality rather than the simple chronological and choreographed time.

Most problems arise due to preoccupation with 'event-ontology', i.e. describing the world by events, interactions, etc. This reduces spatial/temporal relations automatically and unproblematically to actions, incidents, etc. as if they suffice for enquiry amongst extant social entities. The requirement is of 'non-event ontology' as there are 'persistent and enduring structures, located within time-space'.[136]

The spatial/temporal domain is significant as it affects the constitution of social phenomena, including the people therein, as also their actions.[137] The 'production and reproduction of social life depends upon...subjects tracing out routinised paths over space and through time' aiming to fulfil their projects

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[134] Adam, Barbara (1995) *Timewatch: The Social Analysis of Time*, Cambridge: Polity, p. 6.
[135] Adam (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 41.
[136] See Urry (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 25.
[137] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 114.

which may be constrained by structures.[138] Moreover, 'social processes do not occur *tabula rasa* but always "take place" within an inherited space constituted by different processes and objects each of which have their own spatial extension, physical exclusivity and configuration', which reflects the open character of society.[139] Space constitutes meaningful action via 'a process of reciprocal confirmation between actors' concepts (usually as part of their practical, rather than their discursive consciousness) and the order built into their material practices and products, including the environment they inherit and construct'. People's place thus 'confirms their social position, which in turn justifies their place',[140] though, structures *per se* do not have determinate effects.[141]

In sum, disregarding space/time might not have extremely dented explication of democratic transitions, but even a minimal consideration or incorporation should make some difference. The non-homogeneity of different regions betokens such a need. This should enable developing a theory of '*situated* social action' that intersects with both 'the presences and absences of social structure'.[142] These factors work at both the collective and individual level. Power relations, directly or indirectly, limit and enable 'what people can do,...what people know (and are able to say) and how they perceive and think'.

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[138] Gregory, Derek (1985) 'Suspended Animation: The Stasis of Diffusion Theory', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Gregory and Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan pp. 296-336, p. 297.
[139] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 115, original italics.
[140] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, pp. 116, 117.
[141] Massey, Doreen (1985) 'New Directions in Space', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Gregory and Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan, pp. 9-19, p.17.

These features are reflected in language itself, social practices, and other signs of codification.[143] Similarly, individual biography formation includes 'language acquisition, personality development, the evolution of a not-always articulated or self-understood ideology, and the development of consciousness – is one with the becoming of place'. The relevance of situatedness of persons and the nature of relations they enter into, for democratic transitions, is thus underlined.

1.6 Critical realism and social phenomena

While the scientific quest for grasping reality is likely to not only elicit a diverse range of responses, it is equally likely to divide the interlocutors based on the responses they provide. Despite this, some questions are becoming, and need to be raised: 'Can we aspire to "science" and, if so, what precisely does that aspiration entail? Is there a radical separation between the subject matter of the natural and the social "sciences" which might qualify the extent to which social and political analysts can make "scientific" claims?' Do costs exist inhere in modelling the political/social in the manner of the natural sciences? If yes, would they outweigh the benefits? 'Are the questions that *can* be answered objectively or scientifically the most interesting or compelling ones?'[144] These are core questions connected with the subject matter and should invariably form the standpoints for the debate.

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[142] Thrift, Nigel (1985) 'Flies and Germs: A Geography of Knowledge', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Gregory and Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan, pp. 366-403, p. 366, original italics.
[143] Pred, Allan (1985) 'The Social Becomes the Spatial, the Spatial Becomes the Social: Enclosures, Social Change and the Becoming of Places in Skåne', *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* by Gregory and Urry (eds.), London: Macmillan, pp. 337-365, p. 340 *et seq.*
[144] Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 65; original emphasis.

At this juncture, it might be asked – can CR, grounded in philosophy of science, usefully explicate social phenomena? If so, how? This section provides a threefold response to these queries. One, it urges the reconceptualization of science. Two, it proposes that such reconceptualization renders social phenomena amenable to scientific study. Three, it demonstrates the advantageous position of CR in essaying this venture.

From initially drawing upon natural sciences for scientific enquiries, Roy Bhaskar[145] in subsequent works, along with others, developed critical naturalism which sharpened CR's relevance to the social domain. The 'primal question' in modern philosophy, Bhaskar says, is: '*to what extent can society be studied in the same way as nature*?' Broadly, two traditions have responded, but in diametrically opposing fashion: (α) *naturalism* – scientific study of society *a la* sciences is possible through positivistic laws, and (β) *anti-naturalism* – scientific study of society is dubious, as society comprises meaningful social objects whose decipherment/elucidation is the main task. Despite their ostensive differences, the two traditions share an underlying commonality: acceptance of empiricist notion of science. It is this mistaken view of science and the concomitant notion of causality that realism repudiates as it blurs ontology; in contrariety, realism brings the latter into sharp relief. Thereupon, realism proposes a qualified anti-naturalism and simultaneously establishes a refined naturalistic lexicon.

Naturalism is redefined as the thesis that 'there is (or can be) an essential unity of method between natural and the social sciences' with some provisos: it is

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[145] See Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, especially chapter 1; the elucidation *supra* is a concise version of this chapter.

distinct from (a) reductionism – which asserts the actual identity of subject matter; and (b) scientism – which denies differential methods for natural/social sciences. Side by side, the empiricist notion of causality is also jettisoned. The reconstruction is premised on a realist view of science. Reckoning that the manner of conceptualization of study-object(s) determines the form of science, it is submitted that an account of science is possible 'under which the proper and more or less specific methods of both the natural and social sciences can fall'. Yet, there is no gainsaying that differences in methods too prevail due to the very differences in subject matters. Indeed, limits are placed on naturalism by epistemological, ontological and relational considerations. A naturalistic science of society is scarcely a magic bullet capable of resolving all social/natural conundrums. The reconstructed view of naturalism can be stated thus: it can only 'specify the (ontological) conditions that make, and (epistemological) conditions that must be satisfied' for any scientific enterprise. Its unfolding is a matter of substantive task and relates to practice. In this entire exercise, realism considers investigations (premises and conclusions) as conditional and historically transient. The aim is for an 'irreducible level of discourse' along with an 'autonomous order of being'.[146]

According to Bhaskar, the bane of actualism is that it construes the explanation of a phenomenon as its dissolution. Thus, demystification of a phenomenon may be deemed as tantamount to destroying it. Practice, however, barely substantiates this. Richer in explicatory power, realism non-occludes presuppositions about the world, but maintains that philosophy cannot 'legislate

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[146] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 6.

in advance'. Otherwise, science would simply be the 'simple realization of philosophy'.[147]

As objects of enquiry are neither 'empirically given nor…determinate chunks', it is pertinent to know 'what kinds of things societies (and people) are' prior to considering whether they can be studied scientifically.[148] The comparability of philosophy with social science and natural science reveals a fraternity with social science, as the former is 'internal' to the latter's subject matter. The empiricist notion of causality vitiates science by projecting the world as 'closed and completely described…unstructured (hence as "obvious"), as undifferentiated and unchanging'. Philosophy on the other hand functions in social science through 'resonance', i.e. accenting the substantive social science. Realism can therefore underlabour for social sciences by: (i) debunking positivistic or related strands of knowledge (ii) setting terms for an appraisal of the problems the social sciences confront which enables a fair contrast with natural sciences, and (iii) illuminating a 'kindred mode of discovery' about agents' conceptions for social practices.[149]

To summarize, realism, *with* positivism is for a unified method of science and, *with* hermeneutics, sees science as differentiated in its objects. Thereafter, realism differs: *against* positivism, it sustains social structures' transfactuality and insists upon their conceptual nature; *against* hermeneutics, it sustains the intransitivity of beliefs and meanings and insists their susceptibility to scientific

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[147] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 7.
[148] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 13.
[149] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 17.

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explication and critique.[150] Bhaskar also maintains that though in this brand of naturalism *predicates* and *procedures* of natural and social sciences will be different, *principles* shall remain same. Put differently, although social objects cannot be studied wholly like natural objects due to irreducibility of the former to the latter, they can nevertheless be studied 'scientifically' by virtue of possessing a 'non-natural surplus'.

The case for consolidating realism vis-à-vis social sciences would be furthered if misapprehensions about realism were confronted/assessed. This is attempted here. Constructionists designate realism as unfit for social sciences (1) as it is non-invested with appropriate tools/lexicon; (2) social-construction of the world and its concept-dependence, *prima facie*, strike at the roots of realism; and, (3) the distinction between 'transitive' and 'intransitive' dimension also seems misconceived. On these notes, the so-called independence of the social world from knowledge about it appears to be spurious. How does realism respond to these grave charges?

Realism grants the social-construction of the world by qualifying it: Firstly, the social world/discourse is, to an extent, structured independently of humans.[151] It is especially independent of those who study it. This is validated by cases, such as Japan's democratic transition in the post-Second War period, or Rwanda massacre. These cases happened distinctively and probably distantly from those who studied/study them. Secondly, even though other discourses are interpreted through the researcher's discourses, it hardly follows that the

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[150] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, pp. 18-21.

researcher is studying his/her own discourse or some inter-textual *bricolage*. To do so is to reduce 'interpretation and communication to soliloquy'.[152] Thirdly, projection of social practices' isomorphism with actors' concepts is controvertible. As all knowledge is fallible, including that of lay actors, it follows that concepts of actors are necessary (concept-dependence), but probably unsatisfactory for explanation as they might mask or distort the occurrences. Fourthly, conducting interviews, filling questionnaires, etc. may *prima facie* suggest equivalence between the researcher and the researched. Upon scrutiny, this appears to be a misrepresentation as such activities' products are 'artefacts of the research question *rather* than the practice' and suggest some measure of mutual independence. Finally, 'strong' constructionism can also be confuted by raising the question: *whose* concept-dependence, i.e. of which actors – present or past, or both? Contemporary social practices are often more dependent upon the past actors than the present ones. It can thus be concluded that there is an intransitivity of social objects without negating social theories' influence on reality.

Finally, some more misconceptions about realism need to be further distilled. Reckoning with observations above, it is stated with Sayer[153] that realism contraindicates (a) monolithic ascription of constructionism; (while realism opposes 'strong' constructionism, i.e. all reality *is* socially constructed, it accepts 'weak' constructionism or social construction of knowledge); (b) a

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[151] See Wendt, Alexander (2000) *Social Theory of International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 2.

[152] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 35. The subsequent discussion in the instant passage *supra* is from Sayer.

condescending attitude towards reflexivity; (c) aversion to empirical studies; (d) governance of scientific practice by logic; (in opposition, realism insists that science is metaphorical and, thereby, demotes logic ('logicism')); (e) elision of quotidian and philosophical realist notions; (on the contrary, realism shirks from the same realizing that study-objects often remain independent from their descriptions). Finally, and affirmatively, realism advocates that 'discourse and knowledge are not merely self-referential – that is why they are fallible!'[154]

Causation is mired in polemics, whereof, the diametrically opposite views have shed more heat than light. These views are evaluated here. One view considers sequentiality as a causal interpretation. A particular event X may be further sub-divided as the unfolding of: $X = A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C$. That A apparently commences the sequence X, is followed by B, and then the sequence culminates in C, would imply that C was caused by B and B by A, i.e. the reverse sequential order. To illustrate, if upon ingesting victuals, a person develops stomach ache, the sequential law would locate causality with the victuals. Without disregarding this, it is *also* likely that the pain is symptomatic of an underlying cause triggered by the food-item. If sequentiality is an unsound yardstick of causality, is there a better conceptualization of causality than mere observed correlations, (similar effects arise from similar causes)? A contrapuntal view is that discovering causal powers and exposing the mechanisms thereof is unattainable. At best, social

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[153] See Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, pp. 62-64.
[154] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 62, de-italicized.

scientists can indulge in 'storytelling'.[155] As this viewpoint drifts from better conceptualizations, another front may be explored. In so doing, two central problems in the exercise are: psychological and methodological.[156] The former implies the subjective criteria involved in causal explanation whereby a subject elevates explanations that appeal to him/her. Thus, moon's eclipse is interpreted differently by a medieval theologian, a bushman, or a Newtonian mathematician. Stretched far, the argument runs into opposition of 'judgmental rationalism', i.e. all views are not equally correct. Of these, the Newtonian interpretation is the 'inference to the best explanation'. Anyhow, the psychological component is less weighty compared to the methodological component.

On the methodological front, much attention is concentrated on deriving generalizations via induction and deduction. To illustrate, as Tony Lawson does, (α) the *general* claim that 'all ravens are black' in a move to the *particular* inference that the subsequent raven will also be black is an exemplification of deduction; and (β) the *particular* observation of some black ravens in a move to the *general* claim that 'all ravens are black' is an exemplification of induction. These conceptual notions however do not exhaust all possibilities. Realism widens the 'net' of enquiries by retroduction or abduction as modes of inference. These can also be styled as 'as if' reasoning. Stated thus, realism's pursuit of uncovering underlying structures, mechanisms, powers and tendencies beneath ostensive events seems rewarding. This is, to recapitulate, due to (i) an

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[155] Charles Tilly however is uncomfortable with such storytelling. For an interesting account see http://www.columbia.edu/~eg577/Stories.doc and http://www.columbia.edu/~eg577/Why.doc, retrieved on 10 April, 2004.
[156] McClelland (1975) *op. cit.*, p. 31.

'ontological distinction' between the domains of real, actual and the empirical; they are irreducible like their components, i.e. mechanisms, events and experiences respectively; (ii) mechanisms' effects/actions are *tendencies* or potentialities, as some powers might lie dormant or remain un-actualized; additionally, due to concerted nature of mechanisms' action, it is conceivable that one set of tendencies might have acted their powers out, without being manifest, due to presence of countervailing powers; (iii) the transfactual nature of tendencies, i.e. the non-empirical element of an object which is irrespective of actual outcome; for e.g. gravity continues to exert its force on pen whether one is writing, or tosses it in air, or drops in a vacuous container.[157] If science's objective is illumining underlying structures that influence surface phenomena then '*laws* or *law-statements* are neither empirical statements (statements about experience) nor statements about events or their regularities...but statements precisely elucidating structures and their characteristic modes of activity'.[158] On this note, the penchant for delving into big events or causes for large-scale social changes is overreaching one's self. A possible substitution for exploring large-scale changes is enquiring into 'molecular processes' that arise as causal chains and feed into one another.[159]

In summing up, causal explanations are further clarified. They should be distinguished from:[160] (a) true causal statements – as merely citing the cause is

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[157] Lawson (1997) *op. cit.*, pp. 20-24.

[158] Lawson (1997) *op. cit.* p. 24, original italics.

[159] See Stinchcombe, Arthur L. (1978) *Theoretical Methods in Social History*, New York: Academic Press, pp. 61, 62; also see Elster, Jon (1993) *Political Psychology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 136, wherein, he discusses the need for 'microfoundations' in analyzing social institutions/processes.

[160] For an extended analysis see Elster (1989) *op. cit.*, pp. 4-7.

deficient, the causal mechanism too must be verified as distinct from suggesting; (b) assertions about correlations – if event *a* antecedes *b*, it does not necessarily follow that *a* causes *b* for the combination might be a consequence of another event; (c) storytelling – recounting a story only accounts for 'what happened as it might have happened (and perhaps did happen)', but such speculation is silent about causal explanation; (d) assertions about necessitation – genuine laws are likely to be preempted by other mechanisms; and (e) describing a causal mechanism as having finite number of links with each link, in turn being described by a general law or a 'black box' whose inner workings remain mysterious. Contrarily, by concentrating on mechanisms the 'dynamic aspect of scientific explanation' is sharpened, if not captured.

To reiterate, this research rejects law-like generalizations—*if p, then q*—in the social realm. Although the non-availability of experimental conditions constrains scientific research, this is not an obstacle in pursuing scientific research. Discerning *mechanisms* is deemed salutary than positing invariant laws. Collaterally, realism can be acclaimed for rescuing scientific pursuits from the clutches of positivism. Realism shows the possibility of scientific marshalling of data without necessarily relying upon empiricism.

This chapter thus has highlighted some neglected issues vis-à-vis democratic accounts. In all fairness, it is neither expected nor feasible that all issues be scrambled and then be thrown in together in these accounts. This would suffocate any research than invigorating it. This research being no different, it shall make selective use of these features in tandem with the *stag* approach. In

any case, being aware of the problematic areas brings them into consideration and eventually paves way for further enquiries into the issues. It is non-cognizance of such issues, which is the plague of any research.

Chapter 2

Structure and agency and democratic transitions

The *Introduction* has emphasized the *stag* approach's significance vis-à-vis democratic transitions. The propensity to accentuate uniformity in terms of 'average' states has been descanted and, thereupon, challenged. It has been propositioned that due to the unique structural agential interrelationship—the *cement of society*—each society should be treated as a 'deviate' in understanding prospects for democratic transitions.[161] It has been acknowledged that social structures are activity-driven with wide variation thereby resulting in particular configurational set-ups. What however has been resisted is the larding of social structures' structuration with 'average' democratic prescriptions. It has also been highlighted that different geo-historical regions' temporal frames may be somewhat disparate. Consequently, the research has suggested a disengagement from a singular 'road map' of democracy for all and sundry states. This then provides the backdrop for auguring the *stag* approach.

2.1 Prefatory remarks

This chapter develops arguments that should favourably affirm the salutary role of structure and agency in democratic transitions. The line of argumentation developed is fourfold. **First,** an overview is provided of the 'central problem' of

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[161] Treating a society as a 'deviate' calibrates understanding, yet without wholly proscribing generalizations. Generalizations can said to be the spice of enquiries, but up to a point where stretching the argument sustains itself, than crumbles.

social order,[162] which is a homologue for the issue of structure and agency.[163] **Second**, voluntarism is critically analyzed. **Third** follows discussion of determinism in a similar vein. All the same, the enquiry is not an exercise at faultfinding which, as an end in itself, would be extramundane and uninspiring.[164] It should rather guide to alternate vision(s). In tandem, the purpose of enquiry is twin-pronged: (a) to begin, by describing the inadequacies of voluntarism and determinism, and then (b) to be followed up, by articulating that their inadequacies *can* be resolved. A step further is taken by asserting that these inadequacies *must* be resolved for a belief in either of the notions is a stumbling block in grappling with social reproduction/transformation. They skew conceptualization, as also the practice involved in modification of social structures.

The Platonic notion of reality inhering in the idea seems apt here. By reconceptualizing structure and agency via a realist interpretation of the

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[162] The complex issue of social change has been stated to be 'the *ultima ratio* of the sociological discipline' and, thereby, the need for a cogent theory. See Bierstedt, Robert (1970) *The Social Order*, Bombay: McGraw Hill, p. 509. The statement is qualified by adding that the issue pervades other disciplines too and not confined to sociology only.

[163] The ding-dong battle for claiming superiority of 'society' or 'individual' is analogous to 'structure' and 'agency'. The divers appellations, employed by the rivals, have not altered the core arguments for either camp.

[164] Two examples should clarify the point. (i) Fritjof Capra suggests that like the 1920s crisis in physics, we are applying concepts of an outdated, Cartesian Newtonian world view of science 'to a reality that can no longer be understood in terms of these concepts'. He further says that a new 'paradigm' is required of a 'new vision of reality; a fundamental change in our thoughts, perceptions and values'. See Capra (1985) *The Turning Point: Science, Society and the Rising Culture*, London: Flamingo. However, Capra nowhere really suggests concrete ways of achieving this new vision. (ii) The great Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti somewhat similarly sermonized about cleansing our hearts and minds; he preaches: 'Creativeness is a state of being in which the conflicts and sorrows of the self are absent, a state in which the mind is not caught up in the demands and pursuits of desire'. See Krishnamurti (1987) *op. cit.*, 128. Yet, Krishnamurti, too, does not offer concrete ways and means by which mind cannot be caught up in desire. Both the writers do not engage the fundamental question: why X (thought, desire) is X? Anyhow, the point here is not that both the writers are engaging in faultfinding with a particular state of affairs

problematique, a better understanding might be fostered. Avenues are thus opened up for re-describing *what is*, in the first place, to be followed up by *why it is* and, then delve into *what should be*. In thus challenging the received political notions, i.e. those appertaining to voluntarism or determinism, ontology is brought centre stage.

Fourthly, the chapter enunciates the realist account of structure and agency. Interpretations thereof reveal that the methodological framework of realism is ortho-analytical for negotiating explications of democratic transitions.

The research project essentially engages ideas rather than their progenitors[165] *per se*; pre-eminence is thus accorded to the former wherefore eminent names may not find a mention in the main text.[166] This is to keep the discussion compact than to detract any credit from their work. Being parsimonious is also helpful in remaining focussed on the main theme from a realist perspective. Correspondingly, disciplinary developments, or more precisely historiographical accounts of structure and agency have been underplayed. However, this is without any cost to the subject matter and, in any case, citations are provided for further readings, at appropriate places.

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as much as that if something is criticized, then the alternative strategy should also be, in some measure, elaborated upon, otherwise the enquiry remains somewhat incomplete.

[165] Philosophers/social scientists in dealing with the knotty issue have often been inconsistent and, thereby, do not necessarily fit into neat 'camps'. This however does not detract from the fact that two opposing notions prevail.

[166] Eminent thinkers have been associated with dualistic thinking. The prominent voluntarist thinkers include Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill and Max Weber. Bernard de Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees: private vices, publick benefits*, 1714, is a particularly interesting account of voluntarism which was an enlarged version of his *Grumbling Hive*, 1705. In a satirical, didactic poem, he aired the view that social welfare is the outcome of individual vices, which provide a fillip for human enterprise. On the other hand, prominent determinist thinkers include Jean Jacques Rousseau, Johann Gottfried von Herder, Georg W. F. Hegel, Karl Marx and Emile Durkheim. These categorizations are very broad.

As structure and agency lie at the heart of social reproduction/transformation, their pertinence for democratic transitions is ineluctable. Irrespective of the fact whether a layman or a politician employs the appellation of structure and agency, s/he is, nevertheless, intruding upon the territory; whether the issues involved are organizations, institutions or, individuals, groups of individuals, leaders, or some configuration of the two, the *stag* territory is invariably trespassed, mostly, unawares. Stated differently, just the way one does not necessarily have to read realism or idealism to act like a realist or an idealist, analogously, one does not have to read voluntarist/determinist texts to hold similar assumptions. In any event, study-objects *precede* transitive interpretations, and already manifest the subsequently interpreted properties in real life. Lay perspective is imbued with meaning of social life, though the possibility of inappropriate construction of meaning remains.

One misconception may be clarified at the outset – that structures are necessarily synonymous with constraints and individual action with freedom.[167] To demystify, structures can *also* be enabling, whilst action, constraining. Moreover, structures' circumscribing powers are contextual. Such addling is in part due to the delicate nature of the subject which prods for a fresh perceptiveness on which realism seems to promise.

It is granted here that neither have all non-realist approaches interpreted the social fabric dualistically, nor is there an inevitability to dualism, as manifold ways of approaching social objects prevail; indeed, there are exceptions to

dualism.[168] This however scarcely dents the central idea that structure and agency are to society what life is to consciousness; it is truistic to say they are inseparable, or, more precisely, one and the same. As all social objects *are* constitutive of such fabric, and, democratic transitions being no different, the research explores the relationship between structure and agency and, thereby, understand the impression their signature leaves on democratic transitions. It is also granted that democratic transitions' explicit dualistic enunciation is perhaps lacking in extant literature, but this is not a prerequisite for interpreting the available texts (from a dualistic perspective) for, as stated, to employ voluntarist/determinist ideas, one is not necessitated to read them beforehand; as such, if this exercise of interpretation harvests commonalities, the initial objective would be fulfilled.

Finally, the realist dictum that there can be transitive interpretations of the same intransitive dimension[169] is applicable to democratic transitions too. The democratic discourse has advanced in multi-faceted hues: economic, instrumental, normative, pluri-dimensionalism, political, etc. Of itself, the *stag* approach therefore is best perceived as another transitive interpretation. On this note, the research also concurs with Hay that positions (including the *stag* approach) on the structure agency question should not be treated as 'universal solutions for all social scientific dilemmas'.[170]

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[167] Cf. Outhwaite, William (1987) *op. cit.*, p. 109.
[168] See, for example, Abrams, Philip (1982) *Historical Sociology*, Somerset: Open Books, chapter 8.
[169] See Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 11.

2.2 The incommensurability between the ontological position of voluntarism and determinism

A few preliminary remarks are apropos here. (1) Determinism and voluntarism are transitive dimensions of social reality and, therefore, corrigible, as better interpretations may supersede them. (2) They serve as a fine first rung in the exploratory ladder by providing a grip on the subject matter, albeit through their explanatory deficits which, in turn, heighten the need for their rectification. (3) It is reiterated that the main objective is culling insights for democratic transitions from the issue of structure and agency. A prolonged commentary on the latter and, its diverse interpretations would steer the research in a direction that would be deviating from its objective.[171] Avoiding such an excursus is thus in order. (4) Accordingly, the theme is selectively handled.

The construction of social reality *au fond* has remained a philosophical conundrum. In ascertaining its composition, a key idea has been that the larger entities derive their properties from the configuration of relations between their constituent parts, and, the social elements derive their properties from the larger constituted phenomena. The 'difficult paradox' has caused much consternation and defied clear understanding.[172] The fragmentation of social reality by determinism and voluntarism is a case in point.

In broaching the topic, a physical analogy comes handy.[173] Insofar as physical entities are concerned, there are two distinguishing properties regarding

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[170] Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 93.
[171] Archer has analyzed the 'structure and agency' conundrum at length. See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, Part I.
[172] Cohen, Percy S. (1970) *op. cit.*, pp. 11,12.
[173] See Cohen (1970) *op. cit.*, p. 12.

their composition. One, they are composed of sub-units whose interrelations produce the whole. On this count, the whole is more than the sum of its parts, as it possesses properties that are irreducible to the sub-units. Two, although the whole is non-reductive, the sub-units possess characteristics, independent of the whole. The cells continue to perform their localized functions, such as protein synthesis, autopoiesis,[174] etc. While they perform a role in the whole, their localized functions also have an autonomous existence. Contrarily, social entities such as, societies, families and markets depict an entirely different site. While these are 'structures of relations between elements', many characteristics 'of these elements are inconceivable apart from their participation in the whole'.[175] The characteristics of spouses, children, parents, siblings cannot exist outside of the component unit, viz. family. Some conceptualization of social structure is therefore needed to impute meaning to persons, 'since all the predicates which apply to individuals and mark them uniquely as persons are social'.[176]

How voluntarism and determinism have conceptualized social reality forms the basis for the next two sections. In so doing, the nuanced differences amongst their offshoots or related strands *per se* are not specified, because the discrete, though non-disparate, strands have problematized the issue in a more or

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[174] See Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela's path-breaking work on 'autopoiesis'. The duo developed the notion of autopoiesis only for biological systems, though there has been an attempt in some quarters to develop the conceptual framework for social realms, too. Stated less cryptically, autopoiesis means self-reproduction by biological systems. Thus biological systems are described as 'self-referential' and self-reproducing: they reproduce their structures by reproducing the components therein. See Maturana and Varela (1980) *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living*, London: D. Reidel Publishing Company. For a more accessible rendition see Mingers, John (1995) *Self-Producing Systems: Implications and Applications of Autopoiesis*, New York: Plenum Press. For a social interpretation, see Luhmann, Niklas (1989) *Ecological Communication*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
[175] Cohen (1970) *loc. cit.*, sentence de-italicized.

less similar fashion. As their core argument—individual *or* society—has remained unchanged, the monoliths of voluntarism and determinism suffice for inspection.

2.3 Voluntarism

In explicating social reality, voluntarism brackets out the collective, and brackets in the individual. It describes social structures by their basic unit, viz. the individual. Various appellations—'atomism', subjectivism, micro approach, 'action' approach, and methodological individualism—approximate the core belief of voluntarism: the individual *is*, therefore society is. As a reductionist[177] theory, it seeks to explicate social transformation by reference to individual dispositions.[178] Non-transformation too is ascribed to individuals: they don't want to change, they don't know how to change, and/or they do not contemplate about changing.[179] Watson succinctly puts it for the 'voluntarists': as individuals comprise 'ultimate constituents of the social world', hence, 'we shall not have arrived at rock-bottom explanations of such large-scale phenomena until we have deduced an account of them from statements about the dispositions, beliefs,

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[176] Manicas, Peter (1998) 'A Realist Social Science', *Critical Realism: Essential Readings* by Margaret Archer *et al.* (eds.), London: Routledge, p. 317.

[177] Anti-faddishly, the research non-ascribes a pejorative hue to reductionism and an honorific hue to emergentism, in an absolutist fashion. Instead of such *a priori* generalization, it is inclined to judge the merit of each by context.

[178] The activity dependence of structures is not being questioned here. What is being questioned is that individual activity cannot be divorced from the specific social matrix; this would unavoidably include the constraining/enabling factors and the influence they wield.

[179] Archer, Margaret (1979) *Social Origins of Educational Systems*, London: Sage Publications Ltd., p. 15.

resources and inter-relations of individuals'.[180] Due to this overwhelming accent on individual, Archer classifies it as an 'upwards conflationary' theory.[181]

Voluntarism would need to redress the following puzzles to bolster its arguments: amongst others, how to explain contingencies, unintended consequences of social behaviour, non-desirable outcomes and, tackling group behaviour or 'group variables' – 'political stability', 'legitimacy', 'stratification' or 'explanatory emergence'. Voluntarism takes recourse to a twofold path to address these issues. First, the 'composition laws' are evoked, i.e. what holds true for one individual, holds true for all others. This however is deficient, as the claim is not that, 'satisfactory means for accomplishing reduction *have* been found'; the voluntarist is only pronouncing that '*in principle* such reduction is possible'.[182] The explanative predicate is somewhat superficial too. Substantively, it would have required detailing individual dispositions and, specifying how individual behaviour can be compared with differences between group size and location. Howbeit, the enunciation of these empirical generalizations is unforthcoming. 'Voluntarists' jumble the *status* of human disposition(s): it is regarded as an 'independent' variable, instead of a 'dependent' variable. Moreover, as composition laws are empirical generalizations, they lack substantive evidence that they won't break down.[183] Second is the issue of (non)treatment of temporality. The focus remains on the

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[180] Watkins, John W.N. (1968) 'Methodological Individualism and Social Tendencies', *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences* by May Brodbeck (ed.), New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., pp. 270, 271.
[181] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 4.
[182] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, p. 9, original italics.
[183] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, p. 9.

'present tense', which is orphaned from the past and decoupled from the future. To clinch this argument, the burden of proof for the voluntarists is that of demonstrating the autonomy of the present.[184]

The point for interrogation then is whether the *present* is indeed autonomous. This, in turn, entails questioning the voluntarist premise of describing social systems through human aims, beliefs, desires, motives, objectives, etc. and, thereby, jettisoning any reference to groups. Archer counter-argues – can one account for a configuration of political attitudes vis-à-vis electoral success without a referential context of 'parties'/'voting'? Attitude to be described does derive its sustenance by reference to a larger context.

By neglecting/effacing the past, the voluntarist is 'constantly starting afresh'. Just as the past is deemed without any bearing on the present, the present along with its unintended consequences is divested of relevance for the future. As a consequence, the constraints encountered by social actors are interpreted as 'the effect of *contemporary* individual behaviour'.[185] Such 'ahistorical' accounts, while they punctuate 'personalization', are of unconvincing explicative power especially for complex societies.

By the voluntarist yardstick, constraints encountered by actors can be addressed in the 'here and now', if the actors so desire, or know how to eradicate them, or have adequate information about resolving them. This however seems an oversimplification of social reality. Archer provides a fine example[186] of how the constraints bequeathed by the past actors too wield operative power. This

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[184] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, pp. 11-13.
[185] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, p. 15, original italics.

power may exercise its force even at a later temporal period. Example: The *demographic configuration* of a society is, in part, an unintended consequence of its past generations' activities. The populace in the contemporary period confront it in a threefold manner: (i) they cannot modify the demographic patterns in the 'here and now', or probably very many years hereafter by mere will; (ii) they cannot dispense with the effects of this configuration for a considerable period; and, (iii) they cannot escape the influence this configuration exerts, till it is modified or gets altered over a period of time.

In a similar fashion, for democratic transitions too, there could be constraining factors – the result of past unintended activities; their effects might be ineffaceable in the immediate present; plus, instant transformation of their configuration, even where actors are keen, might well be insurmountable. Undeniably, another context may enable certain activities too, though in varying degrees. In sum, past structures can both constrain and facilitate certain activities and, thereby, play a profound role in future developments. A construal of social constellations as static would be inappropriate, as they do change over time. The key argument here is that instant redressal of constraints is impractical; they require a temporal frame to act themselves out with the parenthetical remark that the latter would depend upon context and place. The voluntarist, antithetically, would argue that the constraining constellation is reversible, and nothing of import can take place unless and until it is reversed.[187] This is tantamount to putting the cart before the horse.

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[186] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, p. 18.
[187] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 19.

To summarize, voluntarism is unable to dispense with dualism effectively; if its recourse to reductionism could, then there would remain no distinguishing feature(s) between macro/micro domains, 'for dualism would be transcended as soon as the problem of scope was solved'. The fact however stays that the 'problem of scope' remains unresolved. At the most there have been patchy attempts towards 'displacement of scope', i.e. there exists 'a homology between the social system and the miniaturized system – the small group'.[188]

Criticism: Despite waxing eloquently on individual dispositions, cross-situationally, voluntarism hardly escapes avoiding holistic terms. 'Individuals act guided by nebulous holistic concepts'.[189] Secondly, if the individual dispositions are the 'bedrock' of social explanations, then, how do they shed light on the 'actual causal sequences?'[190] Convincing answers are still awaited. Thirdly, even if social concepts can be accounted for by individual dispositions, that these dispositions are autonomous and are statable irrespective of social contexts is a *non sequitur*. On the contrary, dispositions are affected by social contexts.

2.4 Determinism

Determinism, unlike voluntarism, brackets out the individual and brackets in the society as a kind of structure. As with voluntarism, for determinism too, the nuanced differences between its different strands are un-engaged, for similar

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[188] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.
[189] Gellner, Ernest (1968) 'Holism versus Individualism', *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences* by May Brodbeck (ed.), New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., p. 262. The verity of the statement can be illustrated by an oft-cited example: encashing a cheque involves an implicit assumption of banking system
[190] See Gellner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 259.

reasons. Various appellations approximate determinism—'holism', objectivism, macro approach, and methodological holism—all with a shared view of reification.[191]

The ontological position of the 'determinists' is that society, contra individual, has *sui generis* properties which are and can be the object of study. For this reason, Comte remarked: 'Society is no more decomposable into individuals than a geometrical surface is into lines, or a line into points'. Durkheim could likewise remark: 'Whenever certain elements combine, and thereby produce, by the fact of their combination, new phenomena, it is plain that these new phenomena reside not in the original elements but in the totality formed by their union'.[192] The archetypal determinist view is epitomized in the statement of Levi-Strauss: 'I believe the ultimate goal of the human sciences to be not to constitute, but to dissolve man'.[193] Due to this overwhelming accent on society, Archer classifies determinism as a 'downwards conflationary' theory.[194]

In modern times, the Newtonian view of physics and cosmos has been germane for a mechanical view of society. The Newtonian view further blossomed out with the French mathematician Pierre-Simon de LaPlace who eminently remarked that if positions and motions of all atoms in the universe could be known, everything would be predictable. A concise and wholly

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[191] Some thinkers may deny the charge of reification, but their counter-arguments are rather ambiguous. They have so problematized the issue that if they let go of the long rope of abstract entity of society, they will have no option but to fall into the trap of 'voluntarists', i.e. explicating social reality by concrete, tangible entities, namely, the individuals. Accordingly, their attempts at extricating themselves out of the imbroglio seem unworkable.

[192] In Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 18.

[193] Levi-Strauss, Claude (1966) *The Savage Mind*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, cited in Archer, Margaret S. (2000) *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*, p. 18.

[194] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 3.

deterministic world! The temptation to systematize society on such lines, in the heady times must have been intense.[195] The Newtonian view of society received a fillip from evolutionary theory, too. Philosophy could hardly have remained isolated from such developments. During the nineteenth century, in tandem with the zeitgeist, the mechanical concept of society was fashionable. Biological analogies were drawn for society. 'Unity of science' i.e. employment of similar methods for both science and society was also a popular notion.[196] This underpinned August Comte's view of a 'positive' science of society. Conformably, the properties of society resided in groups, institutions, cultures, etc. and not individuals. Epithets such as 'dupes of nature'/'cultural dopes' are a legacy of such a tradition.

Determinists have apparently advanced orderly arguments to fortify their claims.[197] One, by propounding generalizations for the historical processes, the individual could automatically be eliminated from the expository canvas; as a corollary, 'individual autonomy and responsibility'[198] was inveighed against and, thereby, the diminution of persons to nescient beings was complete! Two, though individual dispositions vary in a large population, they remain undetectable or are insubstantial at the societal level which, on the other hand, is a site where regularities obtain, despite individual differences. Three, individuals'

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[195] The 'dream of total predictability, the denial of time and change, and the need for ultimate explanations', amongst others, generate the philosophical interest in determinism. See Kellert, Stephen H. (1994) *In the Wake of Chaos: Unpredictable Order in Dynamical Systems*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 51.

[196] To achieve 'unity of science' through law-like statements, deterministic regularities, or precise predictions is unrealistic in open realms. This view of science, as already stated, is challenged by realism.

[197] See Gellner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 259.

[198] Cf. Gellner (1968) *op. cit.*, pp. 254-68, pp. 254, 255.

thoughts/actions are often imbued holistically. Gellner illustrates thus: General de Gaulle was imbued with the *idea* of his country, viz. France, which did not necessarily concern individual Frenchmen. Similarly, a tribesman may pay obeisance to the tribe and not necessarily to individual tribesmen. Also, General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Japan in the post-Second War period, was imbued with the idea of America, but with marked haughtiness towards the American governing apparatus, especially the then President Truman and his team. Concordantly, public behaviour/physical objects – 'ceremonials, rituals, symbols, public buildings, etc.' coordinate and reinforce individuals' holistic ideas. Given the fact that a participant *qua* participant finds the social concepts 'ineliminable', the employment of holistic concepts seems apt.

Criticism: Granting that the whole is made up of parts, its activity is still attributable to the latter. Unless and until the parts act, the whole is devoid of meaning or a persona; it is a turn towards parts that personifies society. Ironically, this reifies too! Secondly, how can a mere abstraction – society, 'causally affect that which "really exists"' (individual)[199] i.e. the issue of 'index of existence—namely, causation'. More accurately, how can determinism 'endow an abstraction with flesh and power'. This is dubitable as antecedent incidents attributable to society can 'be translatable in individualistic terms'.[200] Thirdly, if something wields power, should it not be tangible? On this count, determinists are bedevilled by whether groups are tangible? If so, how? If not,

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[199] Cf. Gellner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 256.
[200] Gellner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 262.

should they continue to latch on to their own views? Fourthly, in attributing a 'group mind'[201] to society, there is a marked imprecision as to its location. Fifthly, the issue of how, in the first place, 'social reality is constituted and maintained' is simply taken for granted *a la* natural realm[202] rather than addressing the same concretely.

A common criticism for both the dualistic theories is that they undermine a reality/appearance distinction. Even though the social world is constituted by persons, a point of no less prominence is whether the subjects have an adequate understanding of their social world or not. 'Hermeneutic circle' along with explanative critique can facilitate this exploration by informing the lack of a 'neutral or transcendental standpoint'; additionally, adopting a critical stance might assist in revealing the underlying causes of domination, or 'false consciousness'. Both voluntarism and determinism fall short of this exposition.[203] They are also somewhat flawed in applying predicates, such as 'human' or 'social' to *events* and, thereby, differentiating the events solely on their provenance. Alternatively, a richer explication should be differentiating, poly-layered,[204] than ascribing monocausal linkage vis-à-vis social reality. In short, the dualistic theories' deliberations have impacted upon social reality's construal, though their residual influence has obscured than illuminated it. Despite their shortcomings, the dualistic theories may still remain fanciful unless their criticism is *also* followed up by introducing an *alternate* modelling of social

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[201] Cf. Gellner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 264.
[202] Manicas (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 314.
[203] Manicas (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 315.
[204] See Collier (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 108.

reality. It is toward this direction that the next section elucidates structural

agential relationship from a realist perspective, as a way to discountenance

dualistic theories.[205]

2.5 Structure and Agency: a realist view

The heretofore discussion has highlighted that the conceptual notion of structure

and agency is not altogether a new one; it has (re)emerged in various forms.

Intriguingly, the issue has pivoted on structure *or* agency, which has rendered

social reality irresoluble. The question as formulated has thus become a manacle.

As a consequence, the two have been presented as macro and micro entities,

wherein, the preferential entity determines the other, thereby, reducing the issue

to prioritization. This disjuncture illustrates how posing an incorrect question

might elicit an incorrect response. By posing the question as: what is *more*

significant—structure *or* agency—a foreclosure is attempted for meso-

possibilities. The possibility of the woods of interrelationship between structure

and agency is altogether missed by peering too closely at the trees of structure *or*

agency. Resultantly, the following remain inexplicable: unintended

consequences, undesirable outcomes, unanticipated changes, sub-momentous

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[205] Consideration of another conflationary theory, viz. 'structuration theory' (ST) is omitted here. By abutting on voluntarism and determinism, sufficient insights are derivable for the purpose of this research. The preliminary remarks at the beginning of §2.2 (of this thesis) hold here too. The locus of research *is* democratic transitions and *not* the comparative merit of structure/agency explanative. The latter would be digressive here. All the same, ST would be briefly mentioned in subsequent passages for reasons that would be obvious therein (such as, where a commentator referred to by this research has in turn mentioned ST). For a critical analysis of ST, see Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, especially chapter 4. Archer needs to dwell upon ST along with voluntarism and determinism, as she has donned the mantle of demonstrating realist model's superiority. This research simply accepts Archer's findings, which is another reason for avoiding ST. On ST, see Giddens, Anthony (1979) *Central Problems in Social Theory*, London: Macmillan. ST's basic

changes despite intense efforts and, conversely, mega-changes with lesser efforts. Given the enormous complexity of the matter, sceptical views too proliferate. Example: Reckoning with the 'abortive attempts' at resolving the structure-agency problem, it may be concluded that 'sociologists are not smart enough to solve the problem or that the problem itself is spurious'.[206] This research discards such views by preferring further enquiry. It seeks an altogether different treatment in explicating the subject matter.

In view of the hereinbefore stated lacunae, a need arises for a 'clean break, rather than for some "transgression"'.[207] Instead of reworking the given standpoints – by recombining or permuting variables, the research attempts to extricate itself from such an exercise. Correspondingly, this section presents an alternate reconceptualization of structure and agency, i.e. from a realist perspective. The latter reframes the question: how can *interplay* between structure and agency be explicated? At this juncture, Margaret Archer's methodological framework of non-conflationary theorizing is examined for enriching the understanding of democratic transitions. As democratic transitions occur in a social milieu, than in vacuity, Archer's model of social reproduction/transformation may be useful as democratic transitions occurrence is closely tied to the former. Furthermore, the view that structure and culture may be out of synchrony is sustained here. Being autonomous, they need to be studied

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premise is that structure and agency are mutually constituted. Hence, it suffers from 'central conflation'.
[206] Fuller, Steve (1998) 'From Content to Context: A Social Epistemology of the Structure-Agency Craze ', *What is Social Theory? The Philosophical Debates* by A. Sica (ed.), Oxford: Blackwell, p. 104.
[207] Cf. Bourdieu (1990) *op. cit.*, pp. 4, 8.

independently. It is in and through their causal interaction that subsequent social reproduction/transformation occurs.

Before presenting Archer's model and related realist precepts, the task is delimited thus. As Archer's model is elaborate, the purpose is to draw useful insights for democratic transitions than to recount or summarize it in its entirety. By selectively drawing upon it, the aim is to show how democratic transitions are internested with the social fabric, and are not plucked out of thin air.

The conflationary approaches non-cognize the 'ontological hiatus':[208] although social structures are activity dependent (past tense), they are irreducible to the current practices (present tense). This delimits what can be reproduced/transformed, or be accepted/rejected at a given point of time. This research therefore makes a compelling case for the *stag* approach than a mere suggestive one.

Realism responds to the seemingly irresolvable issue of social order by expositing the *transformational model of social activity* (TMSA). This model stands in contradistinction to three other models, viz. voluntarist, determinist and 'dialectical model'. All three are schematically represented hereunder:[209]

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[208]Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 37.
[209] The sketches are from Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 36.

society   society

Individual   Individual
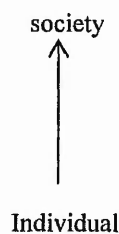
Model I: voluntarist model   **Model II:** determinist model
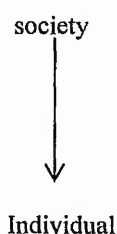
The voluntarist model, as already stated, construes society as constructed by individual actions, while the converse holds true for the determinist model.

Society   Society
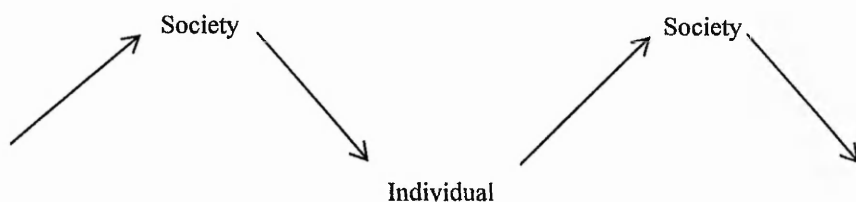
Individual

Model III: 'Dialectical' model

The 'dialectical' model above construes society as producing the individuals who in turn produce society in a continuous dialectic. Their deficiencies are addressed by TMSA (to be explained soon), which is schematically presented below:

Society

Individuals
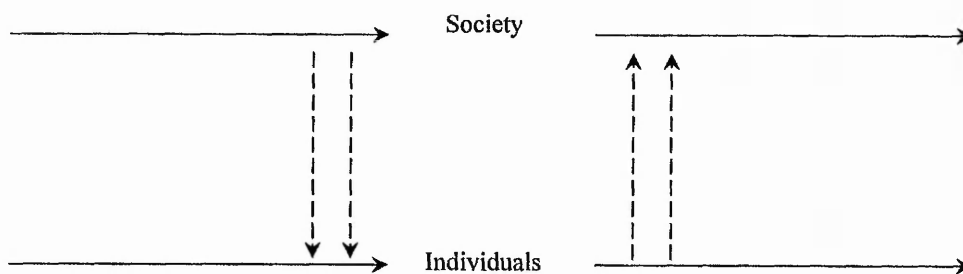
Model IV: The Transformational Model of Society/Person Connection

Fig. 1 Diagrammatic representation of four models of social activity

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In outlining the TMSA, Roy Bhaskar[210] enumerates its chief characteristics: (i) 'societies are irreducible to people' (ii) 'social forms are a necessary condition for any intentional act' (iii) the pre-existence of social forms 'establishes their *autonomy*' (iv) their '*causal power* establishes their *reality*', and (v) the 'causal power of social forms is mediated through human agency'. Society therefore provides the necessary conditions for human action, while the latter is a necessary condition for the former. Whilst society is present in and through action, action is always expressive of some social form. Per contra non-realist approaches, neither society nor individuals can be 'identified with, reduced to, explained in terms of, or reconstructed from the other'.

Though the original TMSA allowed more purchase on social phenomena, it remained somewhat inchoate:[211] (a) it lacked historicity, i.e. it could be considered to appertain to any moment in history than a determinate historical phase (b) emergence was not elaborated upon, as a result of which the model seemed 'overpersonalized', wherein, social influences wield their power exclusively through socialization and on all individuals (c) as mediation remained undeveloped, the past and future were unconnected by interaction. Anyhow, Bhaskar addressed these omissions subsequently.[212] TMSA is also a 'social theory in its own right',[213] albeit it warrants being

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[210] See Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, chapter 2, especially pp. 25, 26, 36, 37, original italics; also see Bhaskar (1979) Issues *in Marxist Philosophy: Epistemology, Science, and Ideology Vol. III*, New Jersey: Humanities Press, pp. 107-39.

[211] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[212] See Bhaskar (1989) *Reclaiming Reality*, London: Verso.

[213] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 136.

supplemented/complemented with a wider framework which is specifically what Archer's model accomplishes.[214]

Realism thus abandons the supposition that structure and agency are two sides of the same coin and one can 'peer at the two simultaneously'. While realism endorses that both are closely 'intertwined', it repudiates one as the epiphenomenon of the other. It reformalizes the standpoints and articulates that both are 'analytically distinct'; the latter position is due to the importance accorded to temporality which, in turn, reconstructs the problematique. The predicate of temporality is premised on three propositions. One, neither structure nor agency are 'co-extensive nor co-variant through time'. Two, as a corollary, 'each possesses autonomous emergent properties which are thus capable of independent variation'. Three, both can be 'out of phase with one another in time'.[215] It then follows that 'structure necessarily pre-dates the action(s), leading to its reproduction or transformation' and that outcome 'necessarily post-dates the action sequences which give rise to it'. This enables understanding the mutual 'impact' and 'import' between different strata; realism is thus concerned with 'interplay' between structure and agency rather than their 'interpenetration'.[216] The crucial issue is that of 'conditional and generative mechanisms operating *between* structure and agency'.[217] As there is an ever 'increasing distance between cause and effect'[218] in social realms due to complexity, a plausible

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[214] Archer's model, given its breadth, is staggered over sections and chapters in this research than condensing into one.

[215] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 66.

[216] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 15, 65.

[217] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p.16, original italics.

[218] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 119.

entry-point is the notion of stratification. Stratification facilitates comprehending social issues by probing social objects' multiple interactions. Oppositely, empirical investigation discounts emergence – the outcome of stratification, as empiricism is besotted with sense-experience.

It may be asked – why should the putative properties of structure and agency be demarcated? Three reasons are proffered. One, 'to identify the emergent structure(s)'. Two, 'to differentiate between their causal powers and the intervening influences of people due to their quite different causal powers as human beings'. Three, in the open system that society is, to 'be able to explain any outcome at all' involves interplay of structure and agency.[219] The demarcation of structure and agency thus enables a distinctive study of social objects, i.e. a study which is free from the pitfalls of both reductionism and reification. On a more concrete note, this enables getting a better foothold into the rugged terrain of complex social reality. Instead of proceeding wholly through some preconceived notions, the enquiries can be open-ended reckoning with manifold possibilities of interplay between structure and agency. In spite of these umpteen possibilities, the explanatory power is not diluted. On the contrary, explanatory power is enhanced, as the open nature of social realm is accepted. Within this framework, propositions can be advanced about social reality and the interrelation between its constituents that are neither dogmatic nor incorrigible. Still more concretely, certain configurations of interplay between structure and agency can provide fine beginning points for initiating enquiries.

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[219] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 70.

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These can be further developed as per context[220] thereby facilitating a better comprehension of events unfolding in *real time*. As such, more arrows are put in the explanatory quiver.

The divergence between realism and dualistic theories bring to the fore the viewpoint that the very manner of conception of objects makes a difference in understanding social reality. The dualistic theories, in one way or the other, have been dogged by empiricism. On this note, their presuppositions could not have transcended the observable/s. Any endeavour to engage the unobservable/s would have contravened the original empiricist ontological belief, i.e. human sense-experience is the foundation of all knowledge. That the 'nature of objects determines their cognitive possibilities'[221] is then fairly self-evident.

It is not the case that some philosophers were utterly unaware of having confronted a philosophical quagmire; some did realize the inadequacies of conflationary theories. They were puzzled by 'what it was that they held to be prior to action or consequent upon it'.[222] Logically, this should have led to reconsidering the original ontological position by disentangling from the *first* question – whether individual *or* society. Furthermore, unravelling society as void of reificationary powers would also have been beneficial. The dilemma could have been resolved by positing an interlinkage between social ontology, methodology and practical theorizing, and also by providing an interlinkage between the past, present and future. As the 'voluntarists' and 'determinists'

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[220] These points are further developed in chapters 7, 8 and 9.

[221] Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 99.

[222] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 67.

failed to devise a methodology for appropriating emergence, their explanatory efforts were akin to that of Sisyphus than of Hercules in resolving the issue.

The concept of emergence is now unpacked[223] in four steps. (1) The process of emergence is non-spontaneous. It emerges over a period of time for the reason that it is the outcome of interactions between relations. Hence, its effects manifest themselves chronologically. (2) Social reality being stratified, the powers and properties of some strata may be prior to others. Thus the former antecede and the latter succeed. (3) Upon emergence, the differentiated social strata comprise powers/properties proper that are relatively autonomous from each other. (4) By virtue of possessing autonomous properties, independent causal influences are exerted. It behooves a realist perspective to navigate in the complex realm of social reality, and identify these causal powers by careful manoeuvering. By so doing, their existence can be validated.

How is 'emergentist ontology'[224] advantageous? It is proposed that emergentist ontology can resolve the predicament of dualism. The proposal is predicated on two premises, in contraposition to conflationary theories. One, its starting ontological position is that the social world is stratified. Collaterally, the emergent powers/properties of structure and agency are irreducible to each other. Two, structure and agency are 'temporally distinguishable'. This is to say, in attempting to comprehend social reality, it is important to be informed of 'pre-existence and posteriority'. The allusion here is to the antecedent and consequent developments, thereby stretching the chronological span both before and, beyond

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[223] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 14.
[224] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 66.

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the 'present tense'. As the methodological framework facilitates examining structure and agency's interplay, the conceptualization is termed 'analytical dualism' and is based on '*historicity of emergence*'.

Realism does not wrestle merely with empirical presuppositions. It seeks to surmount them by maintaining that emergent properties are relational, i.e. they arise due to the combinatorial patterns of human relations; as these properties 'do not neatly map onto empirical units', the objective is to explore and explain 'how their causal powers originate and operate'.[225] This is not so much a case of deprecating the empirical realm, as much as of seeking to circumvent the difficulties it presents in social reality's explication.

The explicatory exercise *supra* has described that emergentism combats: (a) theories which reject the dependence of higher strata on lower strata, i.e. they project higher strata to be autonomous and independent; and (b) theories of reductionism. The next section presents a concrete realist model predicated on 'emergentist ontology'. It addresses the linkage between the higher and lower strata, and its ramifications for social processes.

The next task now is deliberating upon how contemporary actors are conditioned by past structures. It is contended that these structures, in general, exist and act independently of the concerned actors' knowledge because they pre-exist the present actors and *ipso facto* confront them in the present. Whether these structures are past actions' unintended consequences or, undesirable outcome, does not alter their stark existence or inherent powers. Such being their

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[225] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 10.

nature, they condition the social actors 'involuntaristically'.[226] For example, as Archer says, people are born into a linguistic community and acquire a language even before they can adjudge it. Language is only one instance of such abounding conditionings. Admittedly, actors' thoughts/actions/deeds in non-democratic countries, generically, could be due to long held dispositions and involuntaristic conditionings. Actors may well be playing out the conditionings inscribed on their bodies – consciously or unconsciously. Thus, a profound/lasting change in dispositions requires passage of time thereby precluding instantaneous change.

Transformation being a complicated process rarely conforms to everyone's yearnings/intentions. The social actors are, in a generic sense, differentially conditioned by the social structure, and have variegated interests. Concomitantly, their personal stakes are often in mutual opposition. Thus, contest betwixt actors is often the norm than the exception. In accordance, there are costs and premiums associated with particular activities. These multi-propertied twinnings eventuate into a social garland which anyone scarcely conceived of donning. A social process like democratic transition too is bound to be affected by such variables. At the heart of the matter then is the issue of (α) 'morphostasis', i.e. reproduction of social structures (β) 'morphogenesis', i.e. transformation of social structures. The move from (α) to (β), doubtless, is unattainable minus the causation of agential entities.

Material/ideational conditioning and agential projects thus deserve a proper place in estimating democratic transitions. Contrariwise, a voluntarist or a

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[226] No reification is alluded to here.

determinist account would creep in, surreptitiously, and cloud structure or agency respectively. Clouding material/ideational factors implies that agents have a free run of will; obscuring agential projects de-emphasizes effective causation. Two points are important in this backdrop: the past conditioning works primarily through projects of people in the present; it also impinges upon the very projects that are or can be conceived of, entertained, or sustained by actors.

Agential activity does cause social change, but social agents—individual or collective—are denied unmitigated run of will both by nature/society. This seems fairly uncontroversial and may be agreed to for were the obverse true, aspirations would have coincided with achievements. All corrupt governments would then have been ejected, inefficient institutions, wrenched out and, nirvana reigning supreme.[227] Social canvas has yet to provide such a surreal picture.[228] It is therefore appropriate to state that social actions are mediated – in and through past conditionings which, in turn, are the outcome of past actions by past social actors exerting themselves in the present.

As social sciences are 'performative', their explicatory power should enable 'human control over man-made institutions'; neither voluntarism nor determinism demonstrably customizes such control. Connoting society either as a

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[227] This of course is assuming that benign free run of will is in play, and not malignant, for free will could comprise both.

[228] It certainly does not negate transformational possibilities, amelioration of conditions, etc. but to visualize paradise on earth, i.e. absolute concord is plain fantasizing, as it forgets that the present, *inter alia*, is due to real causal powers/properties than adventitiously. Social conditionings, at time t_1, can be improved upon and even be changed over time, but there are also systemic properties that sustain privileges, 'social capital' *et al.*, i.e. new forms of such privileges too can emerge. Models, high on promise and low on performance are thus uninspiring and uninspired. While Bourdieu has focused mainly on the social/cultural aspects of 'social capital', Ben Fine argues for a space for political economy, power and conflict too. See Fine (2001) *Social*

'prison or a puppet theatre' leads to a cul-de-sac. Agreeably then, the aim therefore is to sharpen 'practical tools for getting out of prison and off the marionette strings'.[229] What should be the prerequisites of a sound methodological framework in explicating social change? One, it should provide an analysis of 'the how, when, or where of social change' rather than '"anytime, "anywhere", and "anyhow"'.[230] Two, instead of evading consideration/description of structural constraints, it should provide their explicit commentary. Admitting/identifying the constraints is 'conducive to the development of strategies for social guidance', for the scrutiny may reveal domains of 'highs' and 'lows' of constraints. In short, by examining the interplay between structure and agency commences the explanative exercise in *the right place and in the right way*.[231] The realist model provides one such fulcrum by interrogating narratives that explicate historical past in structural terms, and the present (including recent past) in voluntaristic terms.[232]

To recapitulate, realism entails a relational model, wherein, society is conceived of as the sum of overarching relations comprising individuals/groups. Furthermore, the chances linger of actors being (aware or) even unaware of the relations that bring them into the social fold.[233] This screening from the actors, among other factors, could perhaps be due to long-term conditioning.

Capital versus Social Theory: Political Economy and Social Sciences at the Turn of the Millennium, London: Routledge.
[229] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, p. 21.
[230] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, pp. 22, 23.
[231] Archer (1979) *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 25, original italics.
[232] Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 26.
[233] See Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 26.

The intent of the foregoing exercise was to reveal that the positions of voluntarism and determinism are controversial, unbalanced, and not without substantive reasons. There are also good enough reasons, as already reviewed, to take a leap of imagination into a realm of richer explication. How far does realism provide this ground is left to the reader to discern weighing the pros and cons of all positions?

2.6 A practical model of morphogenesis/morphostasis

The previous section has explicated structure and agency from a realist perspective. As much as the explication is vital, explicatory programmes, Archer opines, are 'not the end of the story'. Correlatively, examining interplay between structure and agency over space/time 'although indispensable' is still 'incomplete'. Why does Archer insist that the exercise is not yet complete? What else is essential and why? A 'final element' is required to hoist the explanatory programme on to a firm pedestal and, thereby, ensure its practical utility. Side by side the explanative programme, therefore, Archer propounds the 'morphogenetic/morphostatic framework' (or M/M approach). Its main propositions have been recounted *supra*, viz. (i) that 'structure necessarily pre-dates the action(s) leading to its reproduction or transformation'; and (ii) that 'structural elaboration' or outcome of agential activities 'necessarily post-dates the action sequences which give rise to it'.[234] 'Analytical dualism' accords gravity to 'the timescale through which structure and agency themselves *emerge, intertwine* and *redefine* one another'.[235] Counterintuitively, there is equivalence,

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[234] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 15.
[235] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 76, original italics.

between reproduction and transformation, in at least one sense – both manifest their outcome over a period. Realism thus emphasizes 'temporal inseparability' of structure and agency.

While oppugning modes of social enquiry that regard society as 'a mechanism, organism, language or cybernetic system',[236] the realist model, itself, proposes the possibility of 'radical and unpredictable re-shaping' of social structures/processes. By projecting 'double morphogenesis', realism thus endeavours to bring to the fore a new methodological framework.

What then are the characteristics of a realist model that mark its distinctiveness? The realist model is characterized by the following:[237]

➢ *Structural cultural conditioning* (structural conditioning, for short) – Structure represents the past in the immediate present. It is the 'initial distribution of a property' which is the 'consequence of prior interaction'. It *confronts* the social actors for any cut-off period. The daily praxis of actors thus reproduces or transforms structures rather than *creating* new ones. The past while easing itself out, plays out its own effects, and conditions outcomes, i.e. 'influences the time taken to eradicate it'. Structures generally do possess and manifest the property of temporal resistance. Structural conditioning is ceaselessly bequeathed, though with varying degrees in different societies. Actors' acquiescence to social structures could be due to the fact that they are "psychologically supported" by them or, due to "deep sedimentation". As a result, transformation is a time-

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[236] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 75.
[237] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 77-79.

consuming process. Additionally, transformation also involves unsettling vested interests: some actors have an interest in *status quo*, while others desire change.

➢ *Social cultural interaction* (social interaction) – Social interaction refers to contemporary actors' activity; due to past conditionings, this activity is acknowledgedly trammelled. Moreover, such activity, itself, to an extent, is an extended development of the past. Thus 'knowledge about it, attitudes towards it, vested interests in retaining it and objective capacities for changing it have already been distributed and determined' by the past structure. These factors do play a decisive role as to '*when the "longue duree"* is broken, *who* is primarily responsible for changing it, or *how* it is accomplished'.

Two categories of powers are ascribable to agency: (α) agency's 'temporal' influence, i.e. agency as a collectivity can hasten social transformation, delay it, or prevent the easing out of past structures; and (β) agency also wields 'directional' influence, i.e. the role of actors, including heroic acts of voluntarism, in conjunction with ground conditions. The play of these powers/properties, of course, is best considered in conjunction with structural conditioning.

➢ *Structural cultural elaboration* (structural elaboration) – Structural elaboration appertains to the outcome of the interplay between social interaction and structural conditioning. There is a temporal lag between contemporary activities and the future results. Where transformation occurs, it might ease out or modify past structures/their properties; new structural properties may also emerge.

Archer's model contrasts with other formulations on another aspect too: it invokes a new conceptualization of period(s) *per se*, that is 'analytical dualism' describes morphogenesis in a cyclical fashion: the completion of one cycle commences another cycle. In technical parlance, culmination of 'social elaboration' completes one explanatory cycle and simultaneously commences a new cycle which has distinct (received from the previous cycle) 'structural conditioning' at time t_1. Besides, present activities generate new conditional influences for future generations, just as the past activities had generated conditional influences for the present generation. As such, the cycles have to be broached from a fresh perspective in assessing reproduction/transformation.

The possibility of TMSA's[238] compatibility with other theoretical/methodological models except the conflationary theories remains. The latter, as already argued, downplay temporality and history, i.e. they slight the precedence of historical phases – the role of anterior cycles and succession by posterior cycles. Though 'action is continuous...structures are discontinuous (only relatively enduring) and once they are changed, then subsequent activities are conditioned and shaped differently'.[239]

What also calls for consideration here is the take of realism on the nature of ordering in a society. Given its firm faith, almost religiously, in ontological realism, the tenet of inexorable movement of society toward a particular goal would readily serve as a point of departure. Any premise that society, in its entirety, could be a wholly intentional product by actors would also be suspect.

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[238] See p. 100 ff. of this chapter.
[239] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 154.

Indeed, realism impugns *a priori* judgments of nature of ordering in a society. More precisely, such judgments evade what is 'ontologically vexatious' about society. Still more precisely, they non-cognize the following: even though society depends upon action, intentionality and human concepts, it rarely conforms to any specific intention, is non-subservient to any particular action, and is relatively independent of human concepts; on these counts, what calls for recognition is that society is an unintended consequence too.[240]

To imbue a distinct touch to her model, Archer would have to categorize the social system in a distinguished manner. Does she do so; if yes, how? Archer does adopt a specific mode which is reflected in her categorizing the social system into (α) social structure and (β) cultural system. Due to emergence, both structure and culture possess SEPs (structural emergent properties) and CEP (cultural emergent properties) respectively. SEPs or material properties pertain to institutions, roles and systems while CEPs or ideational properties pertain to norms, values and broad thinking patterns of society.[241] Lest these properties invite the charge of reification, the realist model also includes a third set of properties, viz. PEPs (people's emergent properties) and, thereby, typifies action. The three emergent properties are irreducible to each other and are relatively autonomous. The triune or *stratified model of social structure*, as the name hints, recognizes stratification in society. Extending the concept of stratification, the realist model pronounces a stratified view of agency too.[242]

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[240] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 165-67.
[241] These properties are further considered in chapter 7.
[242] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, chapter 6 for details.

If special attention is accorded to structure in realist modelling, it is unlikely that agency would be left behind. As both are intertwined, prudence would demand that both be handled in a special manner. How then does realism handle agency? This should become apparent by contradistinguishing realism with conflationary approaches and their attendant un/understratified view of agency. The contrast is shown thus:[243]

(i) Voluntarism: It presents a 'model of man' with virtually boundless and incontestable powers, and is premised on simple aggregation of interests/dispositions. Antithetically, realism gravitates away from a unitary conception of society in terms of individuals to include collectivities too. It also disputes that actors in the 'here and now' alone can generate all contemporaneous societal features.

(ii) Determinism: It presents individuals as 'indeterminate material' and thus miniaturizes selfhood via social roles; the self is simply an epiphenomenon of socialization. Contrastively, realism accentuates the 'reflective, purposive, promotive and innovative' character of agency and, recognizes agents' causative powers for change/stability. It discards the incongruous view of social agents' functioning through 'social hydraulics'.

Realism's contraposition to conflationary approaches, such as determinism and voluntarism is now further unbundled. As stated earlier, conflationary approaches collapse one entity, viz. individual or society into the other to expound social reality. This portrays one entity having extreme explanatory power. For instance, people either have free will (voluntarism) or are

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[243] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 191 and especially chapter 8 for details.

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mere puppets (determinism). A more balanced view could be that of describing people through the concept of stratification. Realism propounds a stratified view of people which is significant both for investigators, and the people themselves 'for the things they can do *qua* humans beings, *qua* agents and *qua* actors' will be different in different settings involving different powers, interests and reasons.[244] The trine view of agency is: persons, actors and agents. This is unriddled as follows: the Person fathers the Agent who in turn fathers the Actor phylogenetically and ontogenetically.[245] Both Agents and Actors remain anchored to the *Persons* for the former are neither constructs nor heuristic devices inasmuch as they relate to real persons, albeit with particular ways of being in society. *Agency* refers to human collectivities that group and regroup, and, thereby contribute to the reproduction/transformation of society. In embodying this property, humans also sustain/transform their collective identities along with the socio-cultural system. *Actor* refers to the individual whom Agency begets; thenceforth, actors derive their social identity by acquiring or investing themselves with a role. This personification situates them in the social matrix, with alteration in roles a distinct possibility. Agents are best conceived of as pluralities while the Actors, as individualities. The former does not strictly possess an identity, whereas the latter does.

In addition to the threefold view of people, a twofold categorization of *Agents* is useful, given their intra-dissimilarity:

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[244] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 255.
[245] Archer (1995) *loc. cit.*

(1) *Primary Agents* – They are generically quiescent with virtually nugatory power in the socio-cultural structure, due to their disorganized nature and unarticulated interests.[246] Example: the position of the untouchables in ancient India.

(2) *Corporate Agents* – They are well organized, can articulate their demands and interests, and are action-oriented to preferentially shape the socio-cultural structure. They typically comprise of associations, interest or pressure groups and the like.[247] Example: the Brahmins in ancient India.

The categorization's construal *a la* a watertight compartment would be misleading, as the likelihood of a Primary Agent in one domain being a Corporate Agent in another domain remains. The categorization therefore is better treated as elastic than static.

Unremarkably, both voluntarism and determinism project the self in a simplistic manner. The parsimony achieved in description outweighs the benefits in terms of explanatory power, as it side-steps the complexity involved in the formation of self. Conflationary approaches erroneously project the self as the product of a singular move – simple aggregation by voluntarism, and socialization by determinism. Their counterattraction with realism is apparent which refutes emergence of identity in a single move. This, in turn, underscores the weightiness of the differentiation of agency, as also that the 'social self' is an emergent identity.

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[246] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 259.
[247] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 258.

Realism also questions the highly uncomplicated assumptions of conflationary theories about a complicated reality as to the mode of action adopted by agents in society. Realism, in turn, presses the view that the very nature of resources' pre-distribution for any particular period privileges some societal sections over others. The consequent division of society, the apparent indivisibility of interests, at time t_1, predisposes people to variegated actions. Due to such conditional influences, costs/premiums play a role in action sequences. Example: a privileged group may sympathize with the demands of the less privileged about unequal distribution of resources. In charting practical activities to this end, the former may have to incur some costs on its own interests. Various combinations/permutations of interests vis-à-vis cost/premiums are possible.

Critical analysis of Archer's model

Although Archer's model seems to be compact, it has come under criticism on four main counts: Hay[248] criticizes Archer for presenting a (i) 'rather episodic, disjointed and discontinuous view of agency'; (ii) the '*impression* [Archer] *seems to give* is of structure as distant, external and long enduring', whilst agency, 'as an ephemeral or fleeting moment', thereby, implying a 'residual structuralism punctuated…by a largely unexplicated conception of agency'; and, (iii) the model is criticized for reifying and ontologizing an analytical distinction, i.e. between structure and agency. Additionally, King criticizes Archer for (iv) ontological contradictions in her model, i.e. the autonomy of social structure, which King strives to dismiss and correlatively seeks to rehabilitate interpretive tradition; he also reproaches the morphogenetic model thus: 'Archer has made a

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solipsistic error where she hypostatises the experience of an individual to derive sociological conclusions'. That is to say that Archer derives 'the existence of a social structure from the perspective of a single individual', whereas, if such perspective is 'de-centred', the realization is not hard to derive that individuals may mutually constrain each other.[249]

The hereinbefore mentioned criticisms are now responded to ad seriatim. (i) The charge that Archer's model is 'rather episodic...' seems inaccurate. In the three-phased model by Archer, action is assuredly continuous. Even the antecedent structural properties (appertaining to phase I) do not exert their causal powers through inanimate objects, but are mediated in and through agential action. In the second and third phases of the morphogenetic cycle, action *is* central, as social reproduction or transformation cannot occur without action. In case doubts persist, the reader is referred to a concrete example of direct application of Archer's model to elaboration of state education system in the *ibid.* work.[250] Nowhere in this application of the model does agency seem episodic, disjointed or discontinuous; just as a picture is worth a thousand words, similarly, the model's applicability speaks for itself about the continuous nature of action. Whether it is the situational logic of protection of the extant system or the play of vested interests, the role of corporate agents or competitive conflict, the same was enacted through continuous action. (ii) Hay does not proffer any dense argument as to why he has gathered the *impression* (this is his own wording)

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[248] Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. 125-26; *emphasis* added.
[249] King, Anthony (1999) 'Against Structure: A Critique of Morphogenetic Social Theory', *The Sociological Review*, 47(2), pp. 199-227, p. 217.
[250] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 327-42.

from Archer's model that structure *seems* distant and action, ephemeral. Archer's initial argument about conflationary theories deserves reiteration here; their main deficiency is that of ephiphenomenalism, i.e. reducing one in terms of another. Oppositely, Archer appreciates the relative autonomy of structure and agency; this implies that each stratum's properties are 'capable of independent variation, combination and…influence'.[251] The stratified nature of social reality further informs about emergent and irreducible properties. With these preliminary remarks made, the criticism may now be tackled more directly. To quote Archer: 'it is only by respecting the powers of people (i.e. not treating them as indeterminate material)' that the powers of the structure can exert a 'conditioning influence in a non-reified manner'. Archer further describes intentionality as the most important differentiating power available to people; this capacity enables them to 'entertain projects and design strategies to accomplish them (which may or may not be successful)'.[252] Agential actions in entertaining such projects or engaging in strategizing are far from mechanical responses due to: stratified view of agency, prior structural conditioning, personality differences, pattering of wants, and personal differences.[253] All these are ongoing processes, setting in motion multiple chains of action, reaction and, therefore, cannot be categorized as ephemeral. Structure is indisputably *relatively* enduring which is not the same as saying that it is distant, external, or even permanent. If structure were indeed distant, external or permanent, that is not within reach of humans, then, the nature of things would have been static. That things are otherwise, i.e. change

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[251] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 102.
[252] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 198; both parentheses, in original.

does occur (admittedly *not* necessarily as desired by all actors) and, that too, *only* through the casual power of action residing in the actors, should put to rest all doubts about structure being distant and external. This much may be conceded here that actors' interpretations about structure, their environment may be incoherent, unintelligible or even erroneous. Had structure been distant and external, instead of such interpretations (irrespective of whether correct or incorrect) thriving, structure would have remained a continual mystery. (iii) It is inexact to state that Archer reifies the analytical distinction between structure and agency. As said, Archer professes that structures are activity-dependent (past tense) but irreducible to current practices (present tense). It is this 'ontological hiatus' that permits differentiation between the two categories; it also enables construing 'these pre-existents as constituting the environment of contemporary action'.[254] Bhaskar too approves of an ontological hiatus between society and people, as the properties possessed by the society might be markedly different from the people. To repeat, neither 'can…be identified with, reduced to, explained in terms of, or reconstructed from the other'.[255] (iv) King's accusation is imprecise: he misapprehends the ontological distinction between society and people. Having committed this error, it is convenient to fall into the trap that structure is reducible to current practices.

All said and done, Archer's model is worth exploring further. It has rectified some shortcomings of conflationary modelling of structure and agency. At any rate, neither Archer nor any critical realist has insisted that the

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[253] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 132.
[254] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 196.

morphogenetic model is a consummate model for explicating social transformation or reproduction. Learning is an on-going process and complacency is the sure road to stagnation. Ergo, in the true spirit of enquiry, and considering both fallibility of knowledge and corrigibility of models, Archer's model is also open to being bettered.[256] On the latter point, Bob Jessop's[257] claim to have indeed devised a new theoretical model, which transcends various antinomies of dualistic theories, is worth reviewing, albeit concisely. Jessop speaks of creating a genuine duality by '*dialectically relativizing*' contra '*mechanically relating*' structure and agency.[258] Jessop purportedly opens a new front against dualism through 'strategic-relational' approach to study the social complex in a two fold manner: (I) *Social structure* through 'structurally inscribed strategic selectivity' which signifies that structural constraints are not absolute/unconditional, but operate selectively by virtue of being 'temporally, spatially, agency- and strategy-specific'. (II) *Action* through 'strategically calculating structural orientation' which implies that agents are reflexive, can reformulate their identities and interests within certain limits, and can also engage in strategically estimating their own current situation. The consequences flowing from such a redefinition of the structure-agency relationship include: (a) 'structural' moment comprises those elements which agent/s cannot alter at time t_1 (b) 'conjunctural' element comprises those elements which agent/s can alter at

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[255] See §2.5 of this thesis.

[256] Hay commends the assays of Bob Jessop's toward a *strategic-relational approach* which, Hay projects as being more promising. See Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[257] Jessop, Bob (1996) 'Interpretive Sociology and the Dialectic of Structure and Agency', *Theory Culture & Society*, Vol. 13(1), 119-28. Also, see Jessop, Bob (1990) *State Theory: Putting Capitalist States in their Place*, University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 15, 16, 262-69, 294-98.

time t_1 (c) the self-same elements can be constraining for one set of agents, and enabling for others (d) a strategic shift may convert a short-term structural constraint for agent/s into a conjunctural opportunity beyond the same time horizon or even within it (e) agents may modify the impact of constraints and opportunities by pursuing different alliance strategies (f) reflexive subjects do transform social structures (g) agents can re-articulate constraints and opportunities and, thereby, behold the potential of creating new rules, resources and knowledge, and (h) agents can reformulate strategies. The thrust of Jessop's argument is twofold: (i) structures exist within specific spatial/temporal horizons of action and not outside them (ii) actors continuously act in specific action contexts. Jessop professes that his approach does not posit 'abstract, atemporal and unlocated structures or wholly routinized activities performed by "cultural dupes"'. Instead of resolving the issue through 'abstract epistemological or methodological fiat', Jessop claims that his approach leaves the 'concrete-complex issues of practical action' underdetermined on an 'abstract-simple level and permits their resolution through appropriately detailed conjunctural analysis'.[259] Hay lauds the ontological premises of Jessop's approach as contrasted to other approaches due to: (α) distinction between structure and agency is purely analytical (β) 'neither agents nor structures are real, since neither has an existence in isolation from the other'; their existence is relational, i.e. 'structure and agency are mutually constitutive' and dialectical, i.e. 'their interaction is not reducible to the sum of structural and agential factors treated

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[258] Jessop (1996) *op. cit.*, p. 124.
[259] Jessop (1996) *op. cit.*, p. 126.

separately', and (γ) in practice, structure and agency are 'completely interwoven', just as in an alloy, only the amalgamated product is visible and not the individual metals/components. It then follows that the essential relationship is between the 'more immediate interaction of strategic actors and the strategic context in which they find themselves' and not between structure and agency.[260]

Any critique of the strategic-relational approach cannot miss the point that it draws upon critical realism.[261] Drawing upon the same source, both approaches (of Archer and Jessop) do contain some similarities, which include: actors are purposive and reflexive, as opposed to 'cultural dupes'; agents can, to some degree, reformulate strategies and rebuild alliances; agency alone possesses the power to transform structures; and that both structure and agency undergo change (captured in Archer's concept of 'double morphogenesis'). Jessop's approach does differ too in some respects from Archer's model, as stated before. What's more, too much cannot be made about the analytical distinction provided by Jessop between structure and agency contra Archer, as Archer herself has resisted and rejected compacting structure, culture and agency. Even if in quotidian life, structure and culture are fused together, it does not forestall their *distinct* analysis, just as consuming water non-precludes its examination as a combination of hydrogen and oxygen.[262] To sum up, any research process that reduces itself to taking sides or playing to camps not only becomes an enemy of free enquiry, but also becomes a closed venture. In this vein, this research too refrains from simply reducing the task to taking sides; it is open to learning new

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[260] Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 127, 128.
[261] Hay confirms this. Hay (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 127.

insights and incorporate them in research. Yet, the heretofore deliberating exercise does inform that Archer's model is worth pursuing and applying to practical cases, since it breaks new ground convincingly. As a genuine enquiry process never ends and remains incomplete, the lessons learnt from applying Archer's model to a practical case, viz. Japan can be a new beginning point for further enquiries. In this research, further additions, if and wherever required shall be made to Archer's model.

2.7 Lessons for democratic transitions

The previous sections have stressed that voluntarism and determinism non-exhaust all possible explications of society. At any rate, saturation points of explanations are rarely reached in a social domain. The enunciation of dualistic theories is not an end in itself; it serves as a prop for the main objective of preparing ground for developing an alternate conceptual framework for democratic transitions. Arguments have already been advanced for realist model's merit, by specifically advocating 'analytical dualism'. The latter links 'two *qualitatively* different aspects [structure and agency] of society…rather than two quantitatively *different* features'. The quantitative feature alludes to the *size* of the group, i.e. whether it is big or small. Notwithstanding the distinction— apportioning of 'big' scale to society and 'small' to individual—the notion is neither problematic nor contradictory, as 'there is no "isolated" micro world…"insulated" from the socio-cultural system in the sense of being

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[262] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 324.

unconditioned by it'; it is also not 'a hermetically sealed domain whose day-to-day doings are guaranteed to be of no systemic "import"'.[263]

Realist model's climacteric feature is 'double morphogenesis', i.e. transformation of both structure and agency spanning time-periods. At 'the end of a transformational sequence, not only is structure transformed, but so is agency as part and parcel of the same process. As it re-shapes structure, agency is ineluctably reshaping itself…in terms of its power and these in relation to other agents'.[264] Although the outcome is unpredictable, as Archer prompts, due to the equally unpredictable nature of structure and agency's interplay, the unpredictability is a non-deterrent to devising strategies by agents for social transformation. Expounded thus, a dynamic view is accorded to structure and agency.

The next rung in the exploratory-cum-explanatory ladder is assessing how the dualistic theories, as also the realist model, would extract meaning out of democratic transitions. Another way of educing this is by evaluating the extant texts on democracy from the afore-perspectives. In other words, what needs to distilled is this: whether expositions have peered at democratic transitions, implicitly or explicitly, through the lens of **(a)** mainly/only agential activity, **(b)** mainly/only structural process, and/or **(c)** structural-cum-agential interplay. In appraising this, the explicit employment, in democratic transitions literature, of

[263] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 11, original italics; p. 10.
[264] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 74.

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academic/technical terms related to voluntarism/determinism is not deemed necessary, so long as the core ideas can be more or less superposed.[265]

(a) An examination of democratic transitions' texts indicates a higher degree of emphasis on agency, i.e. in terms of actors, agents, citizens, masses, politicians, statesmen, voters, etc. **(b)** The emphasis on structure, in comparison to agency, is less vis-à-vis democratic transitions. **(c)** Insofar as structural-cum-agential account of democratic transitions is concerned, it would appear to be at a nascent stage.

In so stating, to reiterate, no assertion is made here that all democratic works can be strictly compartmentalized into one or the other 'camp'. What however is being suggested is that the pith and marrow of most accounts invariably lapses into a narrative of structure *or* agency. This does not imply that all democratic accounts should necessarily remain fixated on structure and agency; other strands are equally meritorious for exploration. The bone of contention here is that by the neglect of structural agential relationships, the interpretations/understandings are likely to be flawed, one-sided and, thereby, may distort social reality. In short, there is a case for examining democratic transitions from a fuller structural agential perspective.

To sum up, the standpoints of (α) the whole, i.e. society being more than the sum of its parts (determinism) and, (β) the parts, i.e. individuals determining the whole (voluntarism), have see-sawed during the 19th and 20th centuries.[266] As

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[265] The discussion of various approaches towards democratic transitions/democratization in the next chapter, i.e. chapter 3 should further elucidate the point.

[266] For a brief account of leading writers engaged in the debate, mainly in the second half of twentieth century, see Manicas (1998) *op. cit.*, pp. 314, 315.

stated, this is in part due to the manner of problematizing the issue. By assuming that the two entities are extreme ends of a continuum with no intersecting ground, the issue in general has been reduced to that of being *for* or *against* (society or individual) or of taking sides, which has precluded other alternatives. A contributing factor is that the see-saw plank has rarely been questioned; its opposite ends thus automatically become options. Realism takes the first step in opening a new explicative window by discarding the old plank and, adopting a new one. It thus disengages itself from *either* and *or* solutions.

It is now enumerated as to how voluntarist/determinist views impinge upon democracy; the shortcomings thereof exhort a shift in the manner of analysis. This then serves as a palimpsest for subsequently developing realist arguments in dealing with the tenacious issue.

• How does an explicit or implicit view of voluntarism inform, especially literature on democratic transitions? It is argued that it, *inter alia*, is reflected in the following assumptions/beliefs:

➢ It confuses positions/practices ('places, functions, rules, tasks, duties, rights, etc.') with persons.[267] Hence, it is convenient to state that mere change of groups or, sets of individuals can bring about democratic transitions.

➢ It cultivates the blame game: the incumbent or *this* group does not want to change, or cannot bring about democratic transition; the opposition or *that* group wants to transform and can guide towards democratic transition.[268]

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[267] Cf. Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 41.

[268] Most Asian and African colonies eventually were ruled by popular leaders. None the less, their development has generally been lacklustre. The recently freed colonies, viz. Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa with popular leaders taking over reins have fared no better. Zimbabwe ironically has become authoritarian. See, for example, Chan, Stephen (2003) *Robert Mugabe: A*

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➢ If problems are encountered towards democratic transitions, the contemporary actors are singularly responsible, as either they do not know how to address them or simply don't want to, or are incapable.

➢ Political institutions can conveniently become what the individuals want them to be or believe them to be.

➢ Individual dispositions can sufficiently account for democratic transitions.

➢ Some popular leaders are believed to have a magic wand, with which the extant (ill-equipped) social structures can either be dispensed with or be refurbished.

➢ An implicit, if not explicit assumption, at a base level is that the differences between societies *must* prevail and, so must the differences between different people because they *are* different.[269] The stilted interpretation privileges some societies while deprecating others. Besides, it perpetuates a hierarchical social order.

➢ The failure in transiting to democracy by non-democracies is attributable to improper initiatives by established democracies.

• A similar question can be raised for determinism too – how does it inform, implicitly or explicitly, literature especially on democratic transitions?

➢ This is reflected in the views that Asia and Africa are 'like that'; they cannot develop because their 'system' is as such.[270] Put simply, the *West can and the Rest cannot.*[271]

Life of Power and Violence, London: I. B. Tauris. Change of leaders thus does not fully account for transformation of social structures and begs for more.

[269] Cf. Gellner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 268 who critically presents views of the voluntarists.

[270] Some texts approximate this view. See Landes, David S. (1998) *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: why some are so rich and some so poor*, London: Little, Brown & Company; Harrison,

> States as entities are impediments to democratic transitions, whereas civil
> society actors of the same states are capable of democratic transitions.

However, it can be counter-argued here that the structural constraints confronting the states, will be encountered by the civil society actors, too, if they manage to acquire power. On this count, the research rejects the dichotomy of democratization from 'top' or 'below'. Permanent divisions between 'top' and 'below' are exceptional. Those below, given a chance, may reach the top and vice versa. Are social divisions wholly carved in stone, or are irreconcilable? The history of Japan, USA and UK, amongst others, evidences class divisions undergo change. Both entities – 'top' and 'below', to persist with the dichotomization, derive their sustenance from each other; one is incomplete without the other.[272] It is argued that the issue is not necessarily one of democracy from top or below,[273] but a model that works. A priori judgment that democratization from below is superior to one from top or vice versa is questionable.[274]

Lawrence E. and Samuel P. Huntington (eds.) (2000) *Culture Matters: how values shape human progress*, New York: Basic Books; de Soto, Hernando (2000) *The Mystery of Capital: why capitalism triumphs in the West and fails everywhere else*, London: Bantam; Fukuyama, Francis (2000) *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, London: Hamish Hamilton.

[271] 'West and the Rest' is to facilitate comprehension, given its prolific usage in common parlance.

[272] Cf. Zolo (1992) *op. cit.*, p. 50, footnote (51) on the apologue of Menenius Agrippa.

[273] Dualisms are deeply entrenched in the cognitive structures and need to be counter-questioned. On dualisms/dichotomizations, Sayer makes a penetrating analysis. See Sayer (1992) *op. cit.*, pp. 22, 23. Dualisms such as people/nature, mind/body etc. are 'beset with misconceptions which generate problems in our understanding of the world and of ourselves'. The dichotomy of 'top'/'below' seems another such category. However this argument neither precludes resistances nor suffocates social movements. It questions the logic of according preeminence to a certain set of actors simply because they are 'below'.

[274] In terms of idealization, Foucault provides an interesting account of governance. He considers the 'discontinuity' between the rulers and the ruled and dwells upon it in a refreshing manner, by not taking sides with either entity. See Foucault, Michel (1991) 'Governmentality', *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds.), London: Harvesters Wheatsheaf, pp. 87-104.

> The cultural values/traits of some countries, in contradistinction to others, are superior which facilitate democratic transitions.

> The failure in transiting to democracy by many non-democracies is attributable to the exploitative rule and its effects by the erstwhile imperial powers.

Now, these views too are problematic, as they do not enlighten about social transformation substantively. Having partly rejected agential activity, they are on the horns of a dilemma in describing change, which does occur in most, nay, all societies.

Crucially, both voluntarism and determinism are devoid of temporal dimension. In one stroke, the past is severed from the present thereby obfuscating the emergent powers/properties of both structure and agency.

The next task then is extracting notable points for democratic transition.

> For any given society, the contemporary (non-democratic) socio-political structures are in part due to the past generations' activities and practices.

> These structures wield causal powers and, thereby, influence present (agential) activities. The actors cannot wholly escape their consequences until they are modified or dispensed with.

> Thus, any given system possesses inherent constraints for some activities (such as democratization), even while it facilitates some other activities.

> Current activities may take time to yield results, as they have to continue to bear the influences of the past structures even while trying to transform them.

➢ People are not in a state of licence to create democratic structures due to past constraints and their causal influences in the present.[275] Regardless of leaders' rhetoric,[276] or invoking grand visions of Elysium times, the fact is that actors are in the task of either *reproducing* or *transforming* structures and not one of *creating* them.[277] 'This is the human condition, to be born into a social context...which was not of our making: agential power is always restricted to re-making...social inheritance'.[278] This is because structures are irreducible to people, as they pre-exist. Still, agency too has independent and autonomous properties.

➢ A commonly held premise that social group/s remain unchanged is challenged here. The illusion persists despite the fact that generations overlap, and old members are regularly weeded out by their demise. As they are replaced by new actors, it gives rise to the fiction that group properties are intact. For instance, 'working class' can be (erroneously) construed as a timeless notion. Still, the comparison between the working class of yore and the contemporaneous one is problematic, as there have been immense structural changes. Though social action is ceaseless, activities do not

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[275] *Cf.* Russell, Bertrand A. (1961) *History of Western Philosophy and its Connections with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, Routledge: London, p. 7. Russell's philosophical remarks are pertinent here; as he puts it: '(p)hilosophers are both effects and causes: effects of their social circumstances and of the politics and institutions of their time; causes (if they are fortunate) of beliefs which mould the politics and institutions of *later* ages'; italics added.

[276] It is a moot point whether leaders can *singularly* and *radically* transform structures, at time t_1, on their own. As Chomsky pertinently says: Martin Luther King, M.K. Gandhi and Rosa Parks (who triggered the Montogmerry (1955) Bus Boycott protesting racial segregation) were able to 'play a role in bringing about change only because the *real* agents of change were doing a lot of work'. (This, of course, is not to negate the structural properties prevalent then.) See Mitchell, Peter R. *et al.* (2003) *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*, New Delhi: Penguin, pp. 188-89.

[277] Cf. Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 71.

constitute an 'unbroken flow'. Likewise, the social objects that led to democratic revolutions in UK, USA may not *necessarily* have all properties in common with social objects in others parts of the world today. The mechanisms that facilitated transformation in that temporal frame may or may not reside in other parts of the world. It is precisely this, which has to be the focus of enquiry. Mere assumption cannot suffice, as it has weak practical demonstrability. It must be buttressed by practical instances. The point then is pellucid: it is pertinent to highlight '"whose" activities, "when", and "where"'[279] such activities occur vis-à-vis democratic transitions.

In sum, the chapter can be condensed in a sentence: democratic transitions cannot be independent of *where* they have to occur, *when* they have to take place, *for whom* they are intended, *what* are the objectives, *how* they are likely to unfold, and *which* configuration of social objects would be more in play.[280] *This underlines the significance of structure and agency in the unfolding of events at a particular place and time.* The *stag* interplay is indeed the 'building block' of morphostasis/morphogenesis and hence pertinent in the study of democratic transitions. This chapter was essayed primarily to establish the pertinence of the latter point. The focus now shifts to a lengthy discussion of rethinking democratic transition especially with a view to conceptualizing a structure agency dimension. The next chapter shall seek to realize this aim.

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[278] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[279] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[280] There is no 'rock bottom' of aptness for a democratic model. It is the outcome of an evolutionary process and is likely to undergo change over time.

Chapter 3

Rethinking democratic transitions from a Critical Realist perspective: the need to conceptualize a Structure/Agency Dimension

3.1 Prefatory remarks

How can better explication of democratic transitions be possible? The deceptively simple question masks complex social reality. The research therefore does not render complex things simple, but attempts to make them more intelligible, without rendering them any the less complex. It begins by examining the ontological presuppositions of non-realist accounts.[281] They are scrutinized from the following perspectives:

(a) whether social reality vis-à-vis democratization has been construed as unproblematic and objectively given, which can be unravelled by empirical predicates or discursive tools;

(b) whether the relational patterns—with their concomitant powers/properties—have been engaged, since any substantive transformation requires metamorphosing of such relations;

(c) whether concept-dependence of democratic discourse has also been rendered conceptually-determined; if so, can mere (re)conceptualization resolve the problems towards democratization;

(d) whether societies' objective material structures have been probed;

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[281] The term 'non-realist approaches' generically refers to the approaches discussed in § 3.4 of this thesis and, related strands.

(e) whether such accounts have a stratified ontology, or a 'flat' ontology, i.e. 'monovalent' presuppositions about democratization;

(f) whether an 'ought' has been derived from an 'is', i.e. whether 'keys', prerequisites, or prescriptions for democratization have been postulated without first explicating why things are the way they are;[282] without detailing the latter, can a viable *modus operandi* for democratization be expounded?

Equipped with these interrogatory arrows, the research appraises the non-realist accounts. There are now many 'keys'[283] to democracy—'associationalism',[284] 'civic culture',[285] vibrant 'civil society',[286] thriving economy,[287] and discursive communication,[288] amongst others. Howbeit, the evanescing euphoria in the post-1989 period starkly evidences their non-delivery.[289] The 'invisible hand' of *how* of democracy has indeed remained

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[282] According to Hume's Law, an *ought* cannot be derived from an *is*. In so stating the law, it is not endorsed.

[283] Some of these 'keys' are discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

[284] See Hirst, Paul (1997) *From Statism to Pluralism: Democracy, Civil Society and Global Politics*, London: UCL Press, especially chapters 2 and 3.

[285] See Putnam, Robert D. (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

[286] See Keane, John (1998) *Civil Society: Old Images, New Visions*, Oxford: Polity Press.

[287] See Linz and Stepan (1996) *op. cit.*, p. 7-15. For the duo, 'economic society' is one of the 'interconnected and mutually reinforcing' conditions for democratic transition.

[288] See Habermas, Jurgen (1996) 'Three Normative Models of Democracy', *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* by Seyla Benhabib (ed.), Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 21-30. On a not unrelated plane, it is interesting to note that some political discourses are so designed as to 'prevent thought'. Noam Chomsky provides examples: (i) 'terrorism' is only what *other* people do (ii) states claim to be engaged in defense, not aggression (iii) US 'defended' (and not 'attacked') S. Vietnam. Of course, Chomsky, writing in his inimitable style has US on mind, as he provides another instance, 'peace process' is whatever US does. See Mitchell, Peter R. *et al.* (2003) *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*, New Delhi: Penguin, pp. 37-43.

[289] See Diamond, Larry and Marc F. Plattner (eds.) (1993) *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. Written in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the 'Iron Curtain', it is a typical book of the times. The euphoric moments in the midst of the collapse of the erstwhile communist regimes are described as 'the greatest period of democratic ferment'. In retrospect, how short that period was! Contrast the evanescing euphoria with the current civic problems in E. Europe/Russia. Also see Kaplan, Robert D. (2000) *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War*, New York: Random House.

invisible. In addressing this conundrum, the research rethinks democracy from a specific perspective, viz. the interplay between structure and agency, a site deserving more attention, than hitherto has been paid.

Rethinking is considered a double move: it involves interrogating and unsettling received political notions, plus interrogating the structuring of cognition that projects (rightly or wrongly) 'constructs' on to the social realm. Rethinking engages congealed social motifs, as also their *production*—cognitive and material. This exercise, to employ common parlance, should bridge the so-called gap between theory and practice, i.e. philosophical precepts and organization of democracy.

The *modus operandi* is two-fold: (i) to interrogate the anthropocentric view of democracy, i.e. a conception rooted purely in human experience/behaviour; this is considered problematic, as it compromises on superempirical social relations which, in turn, condition—consciously or unconsciously—human experience/behaviour; (ii) to combat and in some measure correct hypostatization of democracy, i.e. imbuing democracy with a distinct identity, which can then be inserted into social realms irrespective of space/time. It is proposed here that democracy is a social construct and can be a product of social evolution only. Thus, a hallowed description of democracy is sought to be diluted, if not wholly superseded. What *is* superseded is construal of democracy purely in terms of events or abstract ideals, i.e. an 'ontology of

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Notwithstanding the pessimistic prophecies—looming tribal rivalries, volatile democracies, widening hiatus between the rich and poor, civil strife and ethnic violence—the same can be turned to advantage, by building scenarios which, as far as possible, preclude these possibilities.

appearances'.[290] There is a social world—amongst others, of capabilities, institutions, mechanisms, norms, powers, relations, resources, rules, tendencies, values—which exists independently of direct observation. By portraying a realist picture, democracy is brought to its rightful place – in the midst of its raw materials, viz. agents and social structures, which determine its existence. Transcendental models,[291] i.e. intuitive or abstract are considered dubious, as they are often detached from social context/practice.

A good beginning point for rethinking is the matrix of received political notions. Consider the following, generally mutually opposing and 'paired' coordinates:

Participatory democracy	Representative democracy
Broad definitional democracy	Narrow definitional democracy
Deliberative democracy	Legal democracy
Civil society-centric democracy	State-centric democracy
Elitist theory of democracy	Pluralist theory of democracy

Table 1 A matrix of paired, received democratic notions

That these coordinates preexist does not behoove that one plunges headlong and occupies *a* position. On the contrary, the *structuring* of the coordinates *per se* should be interrogated, as there is no 'givenness' about them: new coordinates may be needed and impoverished ones, be weeded out, or modified. In tandem, the research proceeds by thinking *about* the debates/discussions on democracy

[290] Cf. de Landa, Manuel (2003) www.ctheory.net/text_file.asp?pick=363, an interview, retrieved on January 10 2004.
[291] There are limits to logic. According to a viewpoint, logic is 'reductionist not accidentally but essentially and necessarily…it wants to turn the concept into a function'. See Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari (1994) *What is Philosophy?*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 135.

and not necessarily *with* them. This facilitates to 'know one's way around' with respect to how things are hanging together vis-à-vis democracy. It is a reflective exercise, with 'no intellectual holds barred', and, unlike the unreflective manner in which the centipede in the fable confronts the question, 'how do I walk?' after it has known how to walk.[292]

Instead of first adopting a standpoint and, thereupon defending it, the standpoints are *worked out*, by reckoning with their respective social objects. In rethinking democracy, one need not be a prisoner of past thought.[293] What is warranted is a 'concept of difference' and not merely 'conceptual difference'.[294]

Finally, rethinking goes hand in hand with explanatory critiques. By describing the contradictions inherent in social reality, explanatory critiques, in turn, can aid discovery of or imbibing new values hitherto unfamiliar.[295] The construction of democratic knowledge should also be scrutinized similarly to extract novel insights. Being secure in the known leads philosophers to see 'everything in relation to themselves...and their present knowledge'.[296] Realism provides a fine aperture to further probe into the matter. In this vein, democracy as an essentially contested concept, is discussed next to be followed by its narrow

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[292] Cf. Sellars, Wilfrid (1991) *Science, Perception and Reality*, Atascadero, California: Ridgeview Publishing Company, p.1.

[293] Cf. Bhaskar (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 61.

[294] Cf. Deleuze, Gilles (1994) *Difference and Repetition*, translated by Paul Patton, reprinted 1997, London: The Athlone Press, p. xv.

[295] Cf. Bhaskar and Collier (1998) 'Introduction: Explanatory Critiques', *Critical Realism: Essential Readings* by Archer *et al.*, London: Routledge, pp. 385-89; pp. 386, 387. They cite Marx and Freud whose works led to a new interpretation of welfare state and education of children respectively. These effects were not conceived of by the duo, but did go on to shape future history. Similarly, reinterpretations are required for democracy too. Also see Roy Edgley's quote in Bhaskar and Collier: 'social science, in criticizing other, ideological social theories and ideas as deeply contradictory, and so contradicting them, at the same time criticizes as contradictory, and so contradicts, the society in whose structure those inconsistent and conceptually muddled theories and ideas are realized'.

and broad meanings; thenceforth, an assortment of approaches to democratization is assessed, and the discussion is rounded off by reformulating democratic underpinnings.

3.2 Democracy—an essentially contested concept?

According to Bertrand de Jouvenal: 'Discussions about democracy, arguments for and against it, are intellectually worthless because we do not know what we are thinking about'.[297] It however begs – who is the 'we' in the statement? In stark contrast, lay actors, statesmen, social scientists, philosophers *et al.* want to appropriate the label - 'democrat'. Cranston, as well, echoes de Jouvenal's views: 'democracy is nothing but different doctrines in different people's minds'.[298] Conjoining the two views in a rather coarse manner, Keith says: 'Crudely speaking, up to the eighteenth century everyone had a clear idea what democracy was and hardly anyone was in favour of it. Now that position is reversed. Everyone is in favour of it but no one has a clear idea any longer what it is'.[299] Nonetheless, lack of consensus is barely a yardstick for labelling discussions on democracy 'intellectually worthless' for much of life is *pluridimensional.*

With no definitional congruity, is democracy indeed an essentially contested concept? According to Gallie,[300] an essentially contested concept

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[296] Bhaskar (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 62.
[297] See http://sydney.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=14432 for definition by Jouvenal, retrieved on 11 December 2003.
[298] Cranston, Maurice W. (1953) *Freedom: A New Analysis*, London: Longman, Green & Co., p. 441.
[299] Graham, Keith (1986) *The Battle of Democracy: Conflict, Consensus and the Individual*, Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, p. 1.
[300] Gallie, William B. (1955) 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 56, pp. 167-98.

possesses the following characteristics: (i) it is *appraisive*, i.e. it signifies some values; (ii) it is internally complex: the values attached to its sub-components determine the whole; (iii) multiple criteria for evaluating its parts result in competing descriptions, interpretations; (iv) it is modifiable, though exact modification remains unanticipated; (v) it is employed both 'aggressively and defensively';[301] (vi) it is derived from an original exemplar; and, finally (vii) the competing interpretations enrich the original exemplar. As democracy exudes all these characteristics, it can be deduced that democracy is an essentially contested concept. Further, the issue of which competing definition, interpretation, or conceptualization of democracy is the 'best', is insoluble either by (a) rational decision premised on a 'general principle'; or (b) by arguments, because all competing positions have equally sustainable arguments. While partly granting this, what needs to kept open is the very validity of some of the standpoints: *are they worth contesting?*

Although democracy is accepted as a contested concept, joining the fray, and occupying *a* position is only one option. Alternatively, the option of hitherto unexplored space can be opened thereby enriching the 'original exemplar', or revising the original ontological position(s), for which this research opts. A concrete analysis—of cosmopolitans' views on democracy contra the communitarians—should illustrate the point.

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[301] This implies that one can use it against other competing views to further one's usage, with the recognition that one's own view is also situated in a similar matrix, i.e. others can challenge it in a similar fashion to prioritize their usage.

The state has ontological primacy for the communitarians.[302] Correspondingly, intervention in a sovereign state is condemnable. Contrariwise, the individual, irrespective of state boundaries has ontological primacy for the cosmopolitans.[303] In according primacy to human rights/distributive social justice, an external intervention is generally deemed just. Now, instead of taking positions on either side, the standpoints may be further enquired into. On this count, the dissector points are: if an external (read military) intervention does occur, *who* should, *how*, and in *what* manner redistribute the resources? With preponderant majority of countries displaying inequality in wealth, there would appear to be a normative case against all. *Who*, then, in the first place, decides when to intervene? Who, then, intervenes? Who bears the costs for such prolonged enterprises? How will the extra-costs affect the populace of the country(ies) intervening? The states which can't handle their own inequalities, on what normative grounds can they don the mantle of righteousness for others? Specifics are wanting as to these complex issues from the debate's interlocutors.

Take the cases of post-September 11-Afghanistan and Iraq.[304] Now consider the costs of these ventures: (a) mounting loss of lives on both combatants; (b) Iraqi intervention, especially, divided the world and estranged

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[302] See Walzer, Michael (1977) *Just and Unjust Wars*, New York: Basic Books; Walzer (1981) 'The Distribution of Membership', *Boundaries: National Autonomy and Its Limits* by Peter Brown & Henry Shue (eds.), Totawa, New Jersey: Rowman & Littlefield; also see Walzer (ed.) (1998) *Toward a Global Civil Society*, (2nd printing), New York: Berghahn Books.

[303] See Beitz, Charles (1979) *Political Theory and International Relations*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Shue, Henry (1980) *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

[304] Afghanistan *prima facie* seems an objectionable case as the intervention fundamentally aimed at issues other than equitable distribution of resources. Be that as it may, society being open, impeccable 'fit' of cases are rarely available. Pursuit of flawless cases in society is often elusive. Instead of chasing a chimera, lessons can still be learnt from 'weaker' cases. In this sense, both

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many countries/sections; (c) fugitive semblance of law and order in Afghanistan and Iraq; (d) sporadic terrorist violence; and, (e) sub-standard basic amenities. By counterfactual reasoning, if these truly were cases of intervention for redistribution of resources, it is a moot point how many countries would cooperate, and how many would be keen to afford the cost. These ventures seem to be long drawn affairs and survival of 'interventionists', i.e. foreign soldiers, civilians in inhospitable terrain would be a priority to any concerted efforts for redistribution of resources, as vestiges of erstwhile regimes will likely fight than renege. Besides, the interventions scarcely alter the social customs, norms, bodily dispositions, etc., in a flash.[305] The contemporaneous social patterns in Afghanistan and Iraq, in broad terms, attest to this.

The crucial question then is: What is the translatability of such standpoints in the practical realm? The results in Afghanistan and Iraq are unencouraging, at least, at this juncture. From the approximate fit of the examples, there does appear to be case for revision of the original ontological position of the cosmopolitans.

All told, foreclosure *is* more problematic than essentially contested concepts *per se*. Accordingly, realism is unassertive about any subject's identity, in the true spirit of epistemological relativism.[306]

Afghanistan and Iraq seem apt cases for analysis. In the latter, democratization *was* an aim for intervention.

[305] See http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/31/international/worldspecial/31JUDG.html for a report about rejecting an Iraqi woman judge's appointment. Some women, due to past conditioning, consider themselves inapt for such a position, retrieved on 31 July 2003.

[306] Lawson (1997) *op. cit.*, p. 60.

3.3 Democracy – an end in itself or a means to an end

Democracy is oft-ascribed two mutually opposing meanings – broad and narrow. The bifurcation is an instance of dividing social objects into neat and nested categories. It, figuratively, manifests the Muller-Lyer illusion[307] – describing the 'other' view as opposing. Yet the so-called division is rarely neat; the distinction, quite often, is diffuse. Does this hold true for democracy in ascribing broad and narrow meanings? To this end, first the given categorizations are interrogated and, then, the purported bases of mutual exclusivity, considered.

Broad meaning

The broad meaning denotes the normative stance, i.e. what democracy should ideally be. Correspondingly, democracy is described as an end in itself rather than as a means to an end thereby sustaining the hallowed interpretation of democracy. Democracy transcends the 'political' and pervades the whole society. Tawney thus opines: democracy 'should be not only a form of government, but a type of society, and a manner of life which is in harmony with that type'.[308] The lofty ideals include: (i) social and economic equality; (ii) elimination of injustice; (iii) an ideal human subject who is against exploitation and repression; (iv) an ideal society facilitating subjects' self-fulfilment and self-development; and (v) good governance, i.e. greater self-governance, especially via participatory democracy. Thus broader meaning of democracy is associated with socio-economic ideals and the political system is only a means to strive towards them.

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[307] It is an optic illusion. It comprises a line whose centre has to be located by pinpointing it. As it turns out, the centre-point is elusory.
[308] Tawney, Richard H. (1931) *Equality*, London: G. Allen & Unwin, p. 442

Narrow meaning

In its narrow meaning, democracy concerns political functioning. Hence, it is only a means to an end, and not an end in itself. As a tool of governance, it includes the following features: (i) representative government; (ii) government duly elected by adult citizens; (iii) holding free, fair and regular elections; (iv) universal adult suffrage; (v) political parties competing for people's votes; and (vi) a limited, constitutional government. The narrow definition is now synonymous with Joseph Schumpeter's exposition of democracy. According to Schumpeter, democracy 'is a political *method*...a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political—legislative and administrative—decisions and hence incapable of being an end in itself'.[309] It is also a *modus procedendi*, i.e. 'the presence or absence of which it is in most cases easy to verify';[310] the empirical variables, such as voting, political parties *et al.* enable concrete cross-cultural comparisons of the degree of democracy.

Like with other standpoints, the research desists from taking a stance unquestioningly for the standpoints should be tested practically. Every criticism presupposes a better understanding of the social object under study and, thereby, a better vision for future.[311] In this vein, consider the following grid, in which X-axis represents broad definitional democracy and Y-axis, the narrow one. Upon intersection of X- and Y-axis, four coordinates can be plotted as follows:

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[309] Schumpeter (1976) *op. cit.*, p. 242, original italics.
[310] Schumpeter (1976) *op. cit.*, p. 270, original italics.
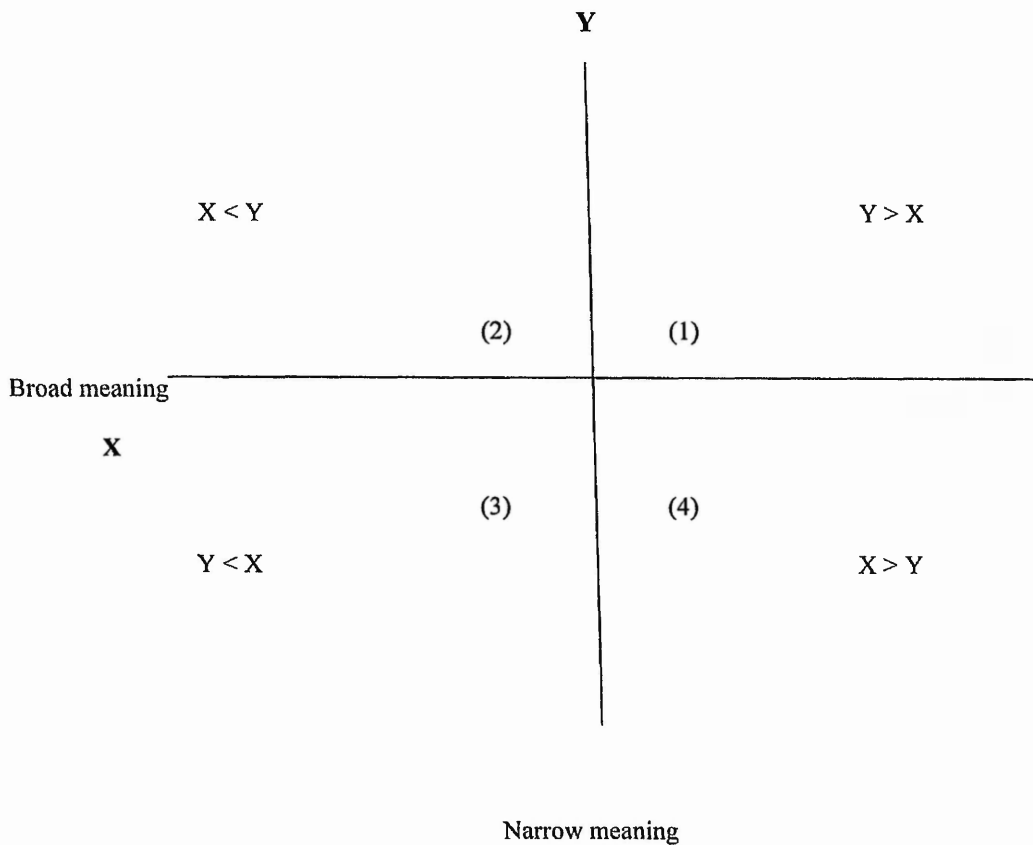
Fig. 1 A tentative schematic representation of narrow and broad definitions of democracy

The coordinates concomitantly reflect four extreme possibilities. In coordinate (1) a narrow (Y coordinate) definitional democracy (that is, 'political') may gradually promote a broad definition (X) – enshrining wider democratic ideals and values. India is an (approximate) exemplar of this coordinate. Despite a caste-riddled, hierarchical society and dismal political legacy of democratic norms, the inception of a democratic system, constitutionally enshrined, at independence (1947), played a role in gradually strengthening democratic norms

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[311] Cf. Sayer (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 172.

– free press, freedom of speech, association, etc. Similarly, coordinate (4) portrays the possibility of a broad definitional democracy advancing a narrow definitional political system. Here the democratic ideals and values antecede the political system which is a consequent development. Singapore approximates this coordinate. The socio-economic welfare schemes are already well entrenched. *If* the political establishment switches to a democratic form, it would very likely be a smooth operation. Conversely, in coordinate (2) a democracy-like political system may function, in some periods, without developing democratic ideals. Pakistan and Bangladesh best illustrate this. Military rules punctuate elected governments; either way, the socio-economic conditions barely ameliorate. Similarly, in coordinate (3) some democratic ideals may flourish, but there might be constraints in establishing a political system. This is especially manifest in territories desirous of secession, which then becomes a rallying point for varied segments of society, thereby, temporarily imbuing them with a sense of equality.

Having explicated the coordinates, somewhat facilely, a slight modification is in order. To initiate the argument, such a scaffolding of coordinates was constructed, which can now be dismounted. The afore-explication was necessary to enable sifting of the inadequate from the adequate (explication). The antecedence and consequence of broad or narrow definitional democracy is more metaphorical than literal. In reality, there is reciprocal influence amply reflected in (a) *evolving* political systems, and (b) social values/norms of advanced industrial democracies in the last two centuries. Establishing a political system is inconceivable without a set of norms.

Reconsider two coordinates as follows: At independence, the Indian Constitution enshrined affirmative rights for the untouchables. Yet, it was the outcome of about more than a century of prior reforms and some change in values. Fifty years since independence, the situation is much better than what it was when even the shadow of an untouchable would swing an upper caste into taking purifying baths, apart from meting out punishment to the former. Clearly a reciprocal influence exists between the 'two' definitional stances; one could not have developed without the other. The point is illustrative and related cases abound. On the other hand, in Pakistan and Bangladesh, both the political system and the values are reflective of their structural agential relationship: both are in turmoil, i.e. unable to stabilize. Fractured political system, punctuated with military rules, religious dogma, and a not-so-equal status for women are a reflection of *play* between broad and narrow definitional democracy. One is, to some extent, a reflection of the other. What holds for these countries, holds for others too. Society, at time t_1, is not necessarily what all people want it to be like.

Described thus, four extrapolations are made. *Firstly,* societies being open in nature, *a priori* assumption as to which option is better—X or Y—is unillumining due to their interplay. In social reality, there is interplay between the two. Their interpenetration in practice transfigures both. All democratic societies evince this, where neither the so-called narrow or broad definitional patterns have remained static since onset of democracy; metamorphosis is the rule, not the exception, in the dialectical relationship. It is abstract reasoning minus a referent that sustains the two categories' disjunctive appearance. The

categorization also seems a case of 'repetition for itself' and, thereby, habit forming.[312] *Secondly*, the configurational coordinate for one country may be non-preferential for another. *Thirdly*, the issue of values is intricate. Neither are they carved in stone nor held equally by all segments in any society. Thus, the research does not take a position for the issue is not deemed one of taking a position, as it has generally been made out to be. As the structural agential interplay exerts a conditioning role, both can go hand in hand though at some junctures, may be somewhat out of synchrony. The definitional stance as to which is better—narrow or broad definition—is, then, no longer a *primary* question; it is not even a *secondary* question. A step further can be taken by stating that confusion has stemmed from ultra high expectations: by desiring democratic ideals' realization in an instant, in the 'now'. This stance, wherever taken, reflects deficient understanding of structural agential interplay; such abstract notions now need to be jettisoned.

A concrete case illustrates that democracy is a plant of slow growth, as also that democracy's broad and narrow meanings are in constant interplay.[313] Take USA as an instance. The first colony, Virginia, was founded in 1607. The Constitution, enshrining democracy, was adopted in 1789. During the contemporaneous period, the only persons entitled to vote were few white propertied men; women, slaves, non-propertied men *et al.* were excluded. Manhood suffrage increased gradually. Suffragettes attained the right in 1920 by

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[312] Cf. Deleuze (1994) *op. cit.*, chapter II.

[313] Refashioning 'pluralist imagination', i.e. reconstitution and renegotiation of 'constitutive tension between democratic pluralism and pluralization' is the central question here. Emergence

the 19th amendment to the Constitution. Blacks' legal entitlements in the post-Civil War (1861) period remained essentially on paper. Eventually the Voting Rights Act, 1965, culminated in bestowing equal franchise to them. While socio-economic equality is still a tension-filled site, new identities have emerged, eclipsing/modifying the previous ones, in the ongoing process. The phased development substantiates the futility of describing broad and narrow definitions in mutual opposition and even isolation. The classic chicken-or-egg (first) case, figuratively, has presented a similar dilemma. Analogically, one way to extricate oneself from the standpoints is by stating that chicken contains the egg, and the egg, the chicken.[314]

3.4 Analyses of approaches to democratic transitions

This section briefly assesses (α) three specific approaches to democratic transitions: modernization approach, transitions approach and historical-structural approach, and (β) some recent expositions on democratization. These approaches are then assessed from a critical realist perspective.

Modernization approach

Seymour Martin Lipset propounds the modernization approach in *Political Man*.[315] Lipset begins by defining democracy in a complex society: 'a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the

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of (new) plural identities is and should be an on-going process. See Connolly, William E. (1980) *The Ethos of Pluralization*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 14, 153 *et passim*.

[314] Moody, Richard (2003) on *Bhaskar list* about primacy of chicken or egg question at bhaskar@lists.village.Virginia.EDU, retrieved on November 18, 2003.

[315] Lipset (1976) *op. cit.* Chapter Two of the book, viz. 'Economic Development and Democracy' discusses the modernization approach, pp. 45-76.

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governing officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office'. The definition maps onto Schumpeter's 'political formula'. Lipset presents a direct *correlation* between socio-economic development and democracy, i.e. greater the level of socio-economic development, greater the chances of democracy. Collaterally, there is an inverse relationship between the level of socio-economic development and dictatorships. He augments his argument by empirically demonstrating it on a political canvass comprising 50 states from the continents of Europe, N. America, Australia and Latin America. The countries are further classified into two categories on the degree of democratic stability: (i) European and English-speaking countries, and (ii) Latin American countries.[316]

Lipset's hypothesis: 'only in a wealthy society in which relatively few citizens lived at the level of real poverty could there be a situation in which the mass of the population intelligently participate in politics and develop the self-restraint necessary to avoid succumbing to the appeal of irresponsible demagogues'.[317] To test the hypothesis, he develops 15 indices, including per capita income, percentage literate, percentage of males in agriculture, and radios per 1000 persons. These indices are further allocated under the rubrics of 'wealth', 'industrialization', 'education' and 'urbanization'. The results

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[316] The *European and English-speaking nations* are further sub-divided into (a) stable democracies, and (b) unstable democracies and dictatorships. They represent 13 and 17 countries as 'more democratic' and 'less democratic' respectively. On the other hand, the *Latin American nations* are sub-divided into (a) democracies and unstable dictatorships, and (b) stable dictatorships. They represent 7 and 13 countries as 'less dictatorial' and 'more dictatorial' respectively.
[317] Lipset, *ibid.*, p. 50.

apparently demonstrate the validity of the hypothesis: greater the socio-economic development, the more entrenched democracy.

Assessment: A severe criticism of Lipset's work would be a reflection of captiousness, as Lipset admits non-pronouncing a '*new* theory of democracy'. His aim is to formalize and empirically test 'certain sets of relationships implied by traditional theories of democracy'.[318] He is cognizant of the limitations of the thesis; by stating them explicitly, he situates his work on *terra firma*. He aims to draw generalizations for 'social phenomena on a total societal level'. By steering clear from both reductionist and 'ideal-type' approaches, he lays down his methodological postulates succinctly. Complex phenomenon such as democracy has 'multi-variate causation'. Consequently, to identify 'any *one* factor crucially associated with, or "causing"' democracy is an insuperable task. Lipset's work can be summarized in his own words: the aim is to establish 'the syndrome of conditions which most frequently distinguish nations which may be empirically categorized as "more democratic" or "less democratic" without implying any absolute qualities to the definition'. Thus he does not establish 'the causal necessity of any one factor' and readily admits this.[319]

Lipset's work is doubtless compact. None the less, it still falls short of explaining what makes democratic transitions possible. Besides, Singapore and some oil-rich Arab states belie the correlation: despite high per capita income, the link with democracy is tenuous. In contrast, India, with relatively poor socio-

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[318] Lipset, *ibid.*, p. 75, original italics.
[319] Lipset, *ibid.*, pp. 72, 74, all original italics.

economic development is still democratic.[320] The issue of socio-economic development—whether it is the cause or effect of democracy—remains open. In sum, modernization approach is not very enlightening about what makes democratic transitions possible in an open realm.

Transition approach

Dankwart Rustow[321] articulates the transition approach. He accords preeminence to democracy as a procedure than as a substance. Thus, the definitional stance does not bolster 'consensus' as the key conceptual notion. Rather, democratic framework is described as a byproduct of political struggles which reflect its competitive nature, such as competition between political parties.

The key puzzle is: 'What conditions make democracy possible and what conditions make it thrive?' The penchant in some quarters to conflate the two is resisted by Rustow.[322] The enquiry is predicated on the genetic question, as distinct from the functional. The prime question is – *how a democracy comes into being, in the first place?*' Rustow doubts the possibility of explicating the genetic question by plain examination of data about functioning democracies contra non-democracies. Functional correlations, such as level of socio-economic

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[320] Besides, at independence (1947), the literacy rate in India was not even 50%. This is not to say that education is irrelevant for democratization; rather, educational indicators are best construed as *a* step in the right direction for democratization. Educating or 'merely making people aware is *no guarantee* that everything will work out'. As Chomsky puts it, 90% of Haitians know what they want, are well aware of this, but cannot do anything except getting slaughtered. See Mitchell, Peter R. *et al.* (2003) *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*, New Delhi: Penguin, p. 186, italics added.

[321] Rustow (1999) *op. cit.*

[322] On this point, also see Shapiro, Ian (2003) *The State of Democratic Theory*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 79. Shapiro prompts that 'causes of democracy's arrival' be kept distinct from those 'concerning its survival'.

development are incomprehensive. Systematic enquiry alone can reveal whether these variables are the cause or the effect of democracy, or be apportioned into both, or neither. The upshot is that a genetic theory must (i) distinguish correlate from cause, and (ii) entail 'two-way flow of causality', i.e. a concatenation of socio-economic and political events; an insular description of socio-economic events is inadequate, as it eludes germane (political) mechanism's role. In short, functional issues equivocate on the genetic question and, thus remain unresponsive to it.

Beliefs unilaterally lead to action – this is a commonly held assumption. Consequently, visions are often conjured of first creating 'democrats' who then can usher in democracy. According to Rustow, this assumption prevaricates on cause and effect. In reality, there is a reciprocal influence between beliefs and actions. This opens conceptual space for democratizing people in unconventional manner too, such as cajolery, persuasion, or even coercion; they ultimately pave way for people getting accustomed to the norms.

Transition to democracy is a non-uniform process. Seeking *similarities* across countries for methods of achievement or, constellation of social classes in action or, bases of political issues is cumbrous. Recognizing social complexity, Rustow opens conceptual space for 'many roads to democracy'. A corollary is that democratic evolution is a non-homogeneous process, temporally. Even within one and the same country, the populace is not immersed in congruent political attitudes. Incongruent views are likely across different strata of society;

in combination, flux is the norm than the exception. Put differently, uniformity—geographical, social, temporal—is rendered suspect.

Being clear about his descriptive tools, Rustow proceeds to the explanatory part. He focuses on Sweden and Turkey as case studies. Sweden undertook the transition between 1890 and 1920, while Turkey, around 1945 onwards. By their scrutiny, similar mechanisms for possible democratic transitions are identified. Four stages are enunciated in the march towards democratic transitions.

I. Background condition: National unity is the background condition for democratic transition, however derived/constituted; its relationship with 'consensus' is dispensable.

II. Preparatory phase: In the background condition of national unity, turmoil and conflict are germinal for democratization. Mutual cleavages result in elites competing for supremacy. Democratization is thus set off by a 'prolonged and inconclusive struggle'. All the same, the democratic project can easily be derailed, given the delicate balance of political configuration. The issues and social composition, in any case, remain contextual.

III. Decision phase: The continuation of the preparatory phase eventuates into a 'deliberate decision' of the elites to 'institutionalize' some aspects of democracy. At this juncture, the elites play a 'disproportionate role' vis-à-vis the masses. Further, the compromise can only be 'second-best' for the discrete groups. Concessions and counter-concessions evaporate the original plans of competitors. To ensure stability, concrete decisions are preeminent over abstract values.

IV. Habituation phase: Upon a compromise in the decision phase, its unfolding in practice assists habituation of the populace. The institutionalization of democracy broaches 'a double process of Darwinian selectivity': (i) parties competing in general elections; (ii) elites competing for leadership. Put differently, competition is two-pronged – one for office, and, the other for projects proclaiming resolution of thorny political issues. The play of the democratic game metamorphoses the socio-political system and accredits democracy.

To recapitulate, Rustow jettisons 'functional requisites' for democratization. He suggests that events should occur in a phased, gradual manner; overburdening a social system with too many events can be counterproductive. The strategy is of 'finding backward and forward "linkages"' which can manage sequential tracts, as they evolve rather than proceeding by preconceived formulas.

Assessment: Rustow highlights the distinction between genetic and functional questions appertaining to democracy. By raising the right question, he moves in the right direction. Yet the journey is not traversed wholly, as the underlying mechanisms of transformation are not really discussed. The issue is reduced to a phased political alteration, thereby, sublating social objects' emergent powers/properties, as also, how they constrain or enable democratic transitions. All said, the genetic question is only partially answered.

Historical-structural approach

Barrington Moore, Jr. develops the structural-historical approach in *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*.[323] His work is the culmination of antipathy towards monocausal descriptions vis-à-vis social change, such as democracies and dictatorships; this section's concern is with Moore's explanation about the route to democracy.

According to Moore, the 'sonorous phrase' – *Western democracy*, means a 'long and certainly incomplete struggle' for: (i) checking 'arbitrary rulers'; (ii) replacing 'arbitrary rules with just and rational ones'; and (iii) obtaining 'a share for the underlying population in the making of rules'. He rightly opines that definitions of democracy 'have a way of leading away from the real issues to trivial *quibbling*'.[324] Indeed, instead of quibbling on definitions, Moore delves into real issues. His historical-structural approach is rooted in history wrapping structural transmutation of power relations over long periods.

The purview of the comparative study encompasses eight countries, viz. England, France, USA, China, Russia, Japan, Germany and India. The centrepiece of enquiry is the role of bourgeoisie, the landed aristocracy, and the peasants of these countries; their interactive relationship provides bases for expounding generalizations. The preoccupation is with concatenation of events that propelled these social classes into a certain trajectory and the consequences for the respective states. In this framework, the study delimits the period from

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[323] Moore Jr., Barrington (1977) *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, reissued in Preregerine Books, Harmondsworth: Penguin. See especially chapter 7.
[324] Moore (1977) *ibid.*, p. 414, italics added.

about sixteenth century to the post-Second War with decolonization in swing. This enables Moore to apply and test his generalizations derived from the mature democracies to a (then) fledgling democracy like India.

In 'broad strokes', Moore sketches 'three routes' to the modern world by portraying the role of the three social classes stated *supra*: (a) bourgeois revolution leading to democracy in England, France and USA; (b) peasant revolution leading to communism in China and Russia; and (c) reactionary political reforms from above leading to fascism in Germany and Japan.[325] India occupies a not so neat place and partakes features in even more broad strokes.

The social transubstantiation advancing democracy is premised on the following pre-conditions[326]:

(i) 'development of a balance to avoid too strong a crown or too independent a landed aristocracy'; (ii) 'a turn toward an appropriate form of commercial agriculture' which freed the peasantry; (iii) 'weakening of the landed aristocracy'; (iv) 'prevention of an aristocratic-bourgeois coalition against the peasants and workers'; and (v) 'a revolutionary break with the past'. In short, the struggle, often violent, between the bourgeois and the landed aristocracy, led to democratic revolutions, which are emblematic of the aforementioned pre-conditions. India meets at least two conditions itemized at (iii) and (iv); the lack of other conditions, in part, explains 'prolonged backwardness and extraordinary difficulties that liberal democracy faces there'.

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[325] Moore (1977) *ibid.*, p. 413.
[326] Moore (1977) *ibid.*, pp. 430, 431, all phrases de-italicized.

Assessment: Moore's thesis accords significance to *longue duree* in social transformation. He presents a conspectus of democratic transitions rooted in social classes. However, its applicability to contemporary non-democratic countries is limited due to the variance of social class structuring. In fact, Moore himself doubts the possibility of Western bourgeois habits proliferating in other parts, as such characteristics can only be imbibed in 'response to certain conditions' and not by imitating.[327] There is thus a shift from 'deterministic to a probabilistic tone and mode of argument', as the central concern—class relations—was 'mediated and shaped by local historical factors' and neither predetermined nor one, which was propelling inexorably in a particular direction. Thus the interactions between the lord and peasant led to 'certain political systems but *only* at certain, not repeatable, historical moments and in each case under certain, not reproducible, historical conditions'.[328] Moore's work, therefore, spurs the need for exploring into the depths of social reality to uncover the mechanisms which foster democratic transitions.

Having discussed the three *loci classicus* of democratic transitions, the research now briefly touches upon two recent commentaries on democratization, viz. 'civic culture' and 'associationalism'.

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[327] Moore (1977) *ibid.*, p. 425.
[328] Abrams, Philip (1982) *Historical Sociology*, Somerset: Open Books, pp. 173, 174, original italics.

'Civic culture'

Robert Putnam explores 'some fundamental questions about civic life' in *Making Democracy Work*.[329] The Italian (central) government's decision to institutionalize regional governments in 1970 provides the impetus for his study. Altogether twenty regions—fifteen new and five previous—are the object of study. The regional governments have diverse responsibilities, such as agriculture, economic development, health services, hospitals, housing, public works, urban affairs and vocational education. Putnam's study spans about a quarter of a century commencing from 1970. Interviews of a broad spectrum of people beginning in 1970 are used as a 'benchmark…to measure institutional development'[330] By, *inter alia*, employing game theory and rational choice modelling, Putnam discerns a marked contrast between North and South Italy's regional governments: North is creative, efficient, and better managed with sound implementation policies than the South.[331] The roots of the hiatus are traced to eleventh century: the Germanic rule in the North led to communal republics with emphasis on finance and commerce, whereas the Byzantine and Norman hierarchical rule, with emphasis on land, failed to develop such traits. The prime question is – what 'virtuous circles' preserved the good habits in the North and, what 'vicious circles', bad habits in the South. The clue lies in building 'social capital' in the form of 'norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement', trust, and those norms 'that can improve the efficiency of

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[329] Putnam (1993) *op. cit.*, p. xiii.
[330] Putnam (1993) *op. cit.*, p. xiv.
[331] Putnam (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 81.

society by facilitating coordinated actions'.[332] These networks are reciprocally confirming.

Assessment: Putnam's work is grand, stretched over a long period and, stacked and packed with statistical information. Howbeit, the insight that 'social capital' is the 'key to making democracy work' is as illuming as saying that US has the best missiles, because it has the best technology. Explicating *how* social capital was/can be built would have been more enriching. Alternatively, it could have been explicated *why* and *how* North and South diverged in their norms from eleventh century onwards, and why they *could not* change in a thousand years. The last sentence of Putnam's work concedes this: *'Building social capital will not be easy,* but it is the key to making democracy work'.[333] Didactically informing non-democratic countries' populace that 'social capital' is the key to democracy non-perturbs the structural/agential constraints. If Myanmar's citizens are reasonably informed about importance of 'social capital' at time t_1, say, 2004, the constraints still remain unaltered. Thus, mere possession of knowledge is insufficient, unless other contributing factors prevail. Despite the knowledge of gender equality, gender inequality persists in many parts of the world (as in Arabia), including well-educated strata, at time t_1.[334] Inglehart's comments are enlightening here: democratic institutions 'do not necessarily produce interpersonal trust'. A society's political institutions are *one* amongst many other

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[332] Putnam (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 167.

[333] Putnam (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 185, italics added.

[334] There is also the issue of 'free-rider' in societies lacking 'social capital'. Who bells the cat in such societies? For an account of institutions and the 'commons', see Ostrum, Elinor (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Cambridge: University of Cambridge; Olson, Marcur (1965) *Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

factors generating trust or distrust. In the long run, 'democracy is not attained simply by making institutional changes or through clever elite-level maneuvering. Its survival also depends on what ordinary people think and feel'.[335] Putnam does not offer a concrete argument on the *why* and *how* of the latter point.

Associationalism

Paul Hirst restates the old notion of 'associationalism'[336] whose intellectual roots, *inter alia*, are traceable to Robert Owen, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and John Neville Figgis. The current 'crisis of governance' provides the background condition and the impetus; associationalism provides a 'third way'[337] away from socialism's demise and ill-afflicted consumer capitalism. In such conditions, associationalism enjoys 'evolutionary advantage as selection pressures shift and [its] hitherto powerful competitors totter towards extinction'.[338] The principal objective is decentralizing and devolving maximum societal affairs 'to publicly funded but voluntary and self-governing associations'.[339] The advantages are: enhanced accountability, coping with diverse values in pluralistic societies, and improved enjoyment of services by all sections. Associationalism is neither reactionary nor revolutionary, as it abhors supplanting extant institutions; rather, it aims supplementing existing institutions, gradually.

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[335] Inglehart, Ronald (1999) 'Trust, Well-being and Democracy', *Democracy and Trust* by Mark E. Warren (ed.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 88-120, p. 119.
[336] Hirst, Paul (1997) *op. cit.*
[337] Hirst (1997) *op. cit.*, pp. 2, 3.
[338] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[339] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Assessment: Doubtless, the project is spurred by noble intentions to ameliorate living conditions for all, especially the less privileged. Notwithstanding this, the proposal confuses efficiency with self-governance. That multitudes can necessarily govern themselves efficiently is a *non sequitur*. Various utopian schemes—Robert Owen's *New Harmony*, John Humphrey Noyes' *Oneida Community*—for communal harmony and property have ended in fiasco. The cases are sub-immaculate 'fits', but do provide some gleanings, such as that these utopias are often leaps in the dark.[340] Besides, governance, like painting, sculpting, calligraphy *et al.* is also an art – it is a skill.[341] A construal of elitism is spurious, as diversity in skills is the essence of life. Furthermore, governance as a game of gathering maximum number of people for self-management does not inexorably cause effective governance. Such 'correct', general principles 'do not reveal themselves spontaneously, nor are they deduced from self-evident principles'.[342]

Hirst also cites Switzerland as an exemplar of associational democracy. A generous reading of this would be that the same traits could be transplanted to other countries; on the other hand, an uncharitable interpretation, though not incorrect, would demand to know *why* in Switzerland and *why not* in other countries. What are its prospects in Rwanda or Iran, now? Social practices, rarely, if ever, commence from a scratch. Hence the insertion of associationalism's wedge, at all places at time t_1, seems watery and thin. Even

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[340] Skinner's *Walden II* was a non-starter. See Skinner, Burrhus F. (1976) Walden *II*, 2nd edition, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
[341] It is an altogether different matter that the 'right' people might not be in the 'right' profession.
[342] Cf. Weale (1999) *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 8.

where possible, sufficient indicators are unavailable that all/most people prefer such voluntary cooperatives in practice, as distinct from philosophizing, intellectualizing.[343] It also demonstrates that the issue is closely related to relational patterns. That mere change in actors can redress all problems is a misplaced view, as it overlooks structural constraints, which exert their force irrespective of the *types* of actors. Associationalism, then, is a case of old wine in new bottles. The additional belief that failed projects may succeed in another historical period needs to be demonstrated than held in abstract.

Contrast with stag approach

Having considered five approaches to democracy, it is now examined what they did *not* dwell upon. None of the approaches, explicitly or implicitly, negotiated the following issues (cf. queries raised on the first page of this chapter): (i) explicit treatment of a long temporal segment to discover what happens in 'hidden depths of time';[344] stated thus, Putnam's and Moore's works, albeit historical, are wanting; (ii) the employment of a stratified ontology; (iii) demarcation between concept-dependence of democratic phenomenon and conceptual determination; (iv) scrutiny of emergent powers/properties of agents and structures, and their role in democratization; (v) the subject as a site of transmutation; it seems that the subject has been taken for granted, whereas it is precisely the subject which 'claims being'; there is no elaborate treatment as to

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[343] For an overview about whether 'realities of political life should be molded to fit one's theories of politics' or 'theories of politics should be drawn from the realities of political life' see Almond, Gabriel A. and Sidney Verba (1972) *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 475 *et seq.*

[344] This implies (a) selectively telescoping happenings over a long temporal period, such as through *stag* interplay and (b) attempting to grasp the unobservables, especially the underlying mechanisms of democratic transitions.

how bodily inscriptions, social conditionings preclude or foster democratization; (vi) the manoeuvres to break Hume's law, i.e. deriving an *ought* from an *is*, are ambiguous; and, (vii) the relational patterns with their concomitant powers/properties, especially so the conditioning/constraining features.

Further, in the absence of a *stag* approach, the 'solutions' for democratization often piggyback on another issue. The following statement evidences this: 'Democracies must…find mechanisms to mitigate conflict and cleavage with consensus. This may happen in the long run through the emergence of a civic culture'.[345] The issue of mechanisms is rightly raised, but the answer piggybacks on 'civic culture', which itself begs the question – *how* can 'civic culture' be possible in the first place? No specifics are provided on this. Secondly, employing new concepts, such as 'polyarchy'[346] to (re)describe a given phenomenon underlines the distinction between the transitive and intransitive dimension.

In contrast, the *stag* approach problematizes social reality distinctly: it rejects   social reality as unproblematically given, or that it is gaugeable with empirical predicates/discursive tools. It rather admits of an intransitive social dimension existing independently of our knowledge.[347] Thus, a *stag* approach resists complacency with simple conceptualizations and representations. It employs emergentist ontology for a better explicative.

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[345] Diamond and Plattner (1993) *op. cit.*, p. xiii.
[346] Dahl, Robert A. (1971) *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.
[347] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 169.

The *stag* approach does not repudiate the commonly held conditions for democracy. It seeks, in addition, a deeper explanative. For example, Robert Dahl[348] mentions some background or underlying conditions for democracy: military/police's control by elected officials; democratic beliefs/political culture; no foreign hostility to democracy; modern market economy/society; and, negligible cultural conflicts. This however does not elaborate how democratic beliefs evolve in a society, how they impinge upon a citizen, how his/her bodily dispositions alter, how in the first place should military/police be effectively and efficaciously controlled by elected officials where they are not, and how society develops certain social powers/properties. It is here that the *stag* approach can attempt to add more insights.

Analysis of a recent work on democracy should further clarify the significance of *stag* approach in the subject matter. While discussing good governance, Zakaria mentions countries, such as Singapore, Mexico and Chile. The lesson derived from their functioning is – first strengthen the economy, then the polity.[349] To buttress the argument, counter-instance is provided of some Third World countries which became authoritarian rather than democracies, as they first focussed on the political and, thereby, could not strengthen their economy. This oversimplifies matters, as it non-cognizes that the emergence of polity/economy themselves is dependent upon social powers/properties. Antithetically, India is an exemplar of having an established democracy without

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[348] Dahl, Robert (1998) *On Democracy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 145-65.
[349] Zakaria, Fareed (2003) *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, p. 78. As Zakaria puts it: 'Economics reforms first, followed by political reform'. Also see *ibid*, p. 54.

developing its economy initially. Zakaria's viewpoint is flawed for describing polity and economy as mutually exclusive entities. In any event, Singapore remains undemocratic despite its thriving economy. To assume that a flourishing economy shall automatically arise *if* the government and the populace will or pursue such a path is tantamount to falling into a voluntarist trap. Some East European countries have failed in such attempts. That some other countries have succeeded begs for more. What factors facilitated such a path? Indeed, there *is* more to flourishing economies. Zakaria's arguments also suffer from the fallacy of retrospective determinism, i.e. there is inevitability to events. It is *as if* developing the economy holds the key to political stability and *ipso facto* democratic transitions. This is debatable. Realism questions such monocausal interpretations which assume economy to be an independent variable over and above a particular societal matrix. The inadequacies of monocausal interpretations reinforce the case for multi-causal relationships. The *stag* approach is one such alternative, as it situates the issue in perspective by accepting the open nature of society.

Sample another fairly recent analysis of democracy: Huntington's 'third wave' thesis.[350] Huntington tracks three waves of democracy in the modern world: (i) from 1820s to 1926; (ii) post-Second War to 1962; and (iii) 1974 to 1990. Each wave spurred more democracies. The first two waves were punctuated by 'reverse waves' – from 1922 to 1942 and 1960 to 1975, respectively. Each reverse wave diminished democracies. Huntington attributes

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[350] Huntington (1993) *op. cit.* For statistical information about zonal regime-types at the 'third wave'- period, see Potter, David *et al.* (1997) *Democratization*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 9.

five factors for the third wave: erosion of authoritarian regimes' legitimacy; global economic growth (1960s); Catholic Church's anti-authoritarian shift; a turn in external actors' policies; and, 'snowballing' – emulation impetus increases for non-democracies.

The research argues that classification of a 'wave' and a 'reverse wave' requires a minimal information about correlations, commonality of variables, interconnections obtaining between different temporal periods, and how the movements in disparate spatial regions synchronized themselves, if at all they did so, in the first place. These aspects however remain unilluminated. Moreover, the configurations are retrospectively computed on a linear temporal continuum. Therefore, the thesis seems ambiguous, both synchronically and diachronically, about what makes democratic transitions possible.

3.5 Contesting deeply entrenched democratic concepts

This section winnows some democratic notions for their commonly held meanings. The received political knowledge is tested, instead of accepting it as handed down wisdom. In case it non-nourishes the democratic discourse, could the *stag* approach provide a better explanative?

Institutionalization of democracy

What is preferable for democracy – parliamentary or presidential system? This question has spawned many a debate, with positions occupied on both sides. For

instance, Juan Linz[351] supports a parliamentary system. Arend Lijphart[352] seconds him; he also advocates proportional representation with a consensus model. Presidential systems find disfavour for they nurture dictatorships, as apparently substantiated by the unstable Latin American political systems. In contrariety, Horowitz[353] supports a presidential system. He contends that a majoritarian parliamentary system can be as tyrannical and oppressive as a presidential system. As evidence, he cites the inefficacy and ultimate collapse of many African and Asian parliamentary systems.

Having stated the mutually opposing positions, the disputants' question of 'which system is preferable' is now put under the lens. Clearly, the question is 'loaded'[354] – it impels choosing *one* option, irrespective of the validity of the options. The latter's veracity can be ascertained by *re*-running the 'tape of life'[355] in all democratic countries, the cut-off dates being their institutional systems' inception. *Ceteris paribus*, the 'tape of life' would be run except that the parliamentary systems convert to presidential systems and vice-versa. The 'social experiment' would demonstrate the gravity of the institutional question – if the

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[351] Linz, Juan (1993) 'The Perils of Presidentialism', *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 108-26.
[352] Lijphart, Arend (1993) 'Constitutional Choices for New Democracies', *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 146-58.
[353] Horowitz, Donald L. (1993) 'Comparing Democratic Systems', *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 127-33.
[354] Cf. Walton, Douglas (1989) *Informal Logic: A Handbook for Critical Argumentation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 35 *et seq.* Walton pedagogically raises a similar question in discussing major fallacies: 'Have you stopped beating your spouse?' The question is 'loaded', for it assumes that a person beats his/her spouse. Unless the question is altered, the responder is in a bind.
[355] Cf. Gould, Stephen J. (1989) *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History*, New York: Norton, p. 14.

changeover inconsequentially alters social life, the primacy question of institutional systems would water-down. Alas, this experiment cannot occur in real life due to irreversibility of social motions[356] and the 'arrow of time'.[357] Nevertheless, a second-best option too is insightful, i.e. of examining a country having transmuted from parliamentary to presidential system or vice versa.

Sri Lanka fits the bill: it switched from a parliamentary system to presidential system in 1978. The query: Has the transfiguration altered the social landscape consequentially? The response: The ethnic strife with the Tamils in N. Sri Lanka continues; the per capita income or GDP has changed imperceptibly; impressive socio-economic equality is wanting; and, evidence lacks about radical socio-cultural transformation.[358] Thus, evidence for intra-change in institutions, in 'splendid isolation' from other societal patterns, boosting democratic norms seems nugatory. Now, this research is unenthusiastic about converting one swallow into a summer. None the less, the empirical case kindles at least questioning and reviewing the institutional question.[359] The recent turbulence in

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[356] Moore, Wilbert E. (1963) *Social change*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, p. 2.
[357] Prigogine, Ilya with Isabelle Stengers (1996) *The End of Uncertainty: Time, Chaos, and the New Laws of Nature*, New York: The Free Press, pp. 1-7, *et passim*.
[358] See http://www.youandaids.org/Asia%20Pacific%20at%20a%20Glance/SriLanka/index.asp#general for Sri Lanka's statistical information, retrieved on May 6, 2004. The website mentions: 'Ethnic strife...continues to exact a heavy human and economic toll'. 'Defence spending...swelled from 1.3 percent of GDP in 1980 to 46 percent of GDP in recent years, crowding out public investment and increasingly restricting spending on sectors vital to long-term economic development have overburdened the country's economy and social fabric'.
[359] See Lipset, Seymour M. (1993) 'The Centrality of Political Culture', *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 134-37.

Sri Lanka[360] exemplifies that institutional systems are not self-contained political bubbles, but soapsuds *in* a given political *solution.*

Without relational patterns' metamorphosis, juggling with political apparatuses, in terms of parliamentary vs. presidential system, seems cosmetic, when the following endure uninterruptedly: class relations, networks of wealth/poverty, circuits of vested/privileged interests, and non-availability of equal social opportunities. It is the 'virtuous' cycles, enabling certain activities, and/or the 'vicious' cycles, constraining other activities that bind the social mosaic than a superficial change of parliamentary or presidential system. Neither institutional option can deliver the results in case of circumferential 'vicious' cycles in any society. The recent trials and tribulations in Pakistan—from parliamentary set-up to military dictatorship to glimmerings of turnover to presidential system—affirm the contention that singularly interposing new institutional systems is both meagre and meretricious. Contrarily, the change in the social ensemble propels the self-same institutional system, hitherto ineffective, to chart new paths. India with the self-same institutional system, hitherto in a slumber, is now galloping in some respects, due to a change in the social complex.[361]

The research proposes that the primacy question puts the cart before the horse. The causality needs to be inverted: the institutional set-up is devoid of

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[360] In November 2003, Sri Lankan President unilaterally dismissed three cabinet ministers and suspended the parliament, thereby, tensing relations with the Prime Minister. The latter's efforts to resolve the Tamil impasse were considered ultra-concessionary by the former. See Jayasinghe, Christine (2004) 'Made to Disorder', *India Today International*, North American Special edition, April 19, pp. 20, 21.
[361] See Waldman, Amy (2003) 'Sizzling Economy Revitalizes India', *New York Times*, October 20, at http://www.hvk.org/articles/1003/117.html, retrieved on 5 May, 2004.

miraculous powers, over and above the social ensemble; it is generically emblematic of the social milieu. There is *some* degree of correlation between the people in society and the institutional system, thereof, at a particular historical juncture.[362] To put it more crudely, the people of Bangladesh cannot start afresh at time t_1 (say December 2004) and instantaneously create an institutional system like UK. Furthermore, the primacy issue is nonchalant towards the question: how does a simple transmutation of institutional system alter the relational pattern of the society and its concomitant powers/properties? It is claimed here that both types of institutional systems can be effective or ineffective, depending upon structural/agential interplay. To conclude, institutions shape human behaviour and, in turn, are shaped by human behaviour.

Insight: Institutions share an umbilical relationship with societal patterns and, in some measure, reflect them; metaphorically, society is the 'progenitor' and the institution, the foetus. It is granted that they may be out of synchrony partially. The debate about participatory and representative institutions can also be assessed likewise. The enticement to reify institutions is thus resisted. An additional point of relevance for established democracies that mount democratic initiatives could be stated simply. These democracies should realize that democratization requires 'the building of appropriate institutions of

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[362] Elster impugns castigating politicians for all social-ills. The 'subjects no less than the rulers are responsible—morally and causally—for the system'. See Elster, Jon (1983) *Sour Grapes: Studies in the Subversion of Rationality*, Cambridge: Cambridge, p. 89.

counteravailing power and the establishment of a supportive political culture. Both are processes that occur over relatively *long periods*'.[363]

Evolutionary crisis of democracy

It is widely held that democratic theory and practice are undergoing strains and stresses, especially in advanced industrial states.[364] Although there seems a *prima facie* case for it—that is, decline of public values/public sphere,[365] and rise of consumerism/ commodification, news-sensationalization—a close second look is worth the candle. The surface-meaning ought to be scratched, as it beholds the clues to the status of democracy. In a catechistical fashion, the following questions and answers can be framed:

Questions	Answers
Is there a crisis in advanced industrial states?	Normatively, a crisis prevails, due to incommensurability between contemporary social characteristics and certain cherished ethical norms.
What is the nature of crisis?	Dwindling 'social capital', declining family norms/group cohesion, rise in

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[363] Barkan, Joel D. (1997) 'Can Established Democracies Nurture Democracy Abroad. Lesson from Africa', *Democracy's Victory and Crisis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 371-403, p. 389; emphasis added.

[364] See Held, David (1995) *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, Cambridge Polity Press, p. viii; Hirst (1997) *op. cit.*, p. 1; Zolo (1992) *op. cit.*, p. vii; Dryzek, John S. (1996) *Democracy in Capitalist Times: Ideals, Limits, and Struggles*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. vii; see Touraine, Alan (1997) *What is Democracy?*, translated by David Macey, Oxford: Westview Press, p 9: 'democracy is degenerating into the freedom to consume, into a political supermarket'; and, Issac, Jeffrey C. (1998) *Democracy in Dark Times*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p. 2. Also see Barber, Benjamin (1996) *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World*, New York: Ballantine Books.

[365] For decline of 'social capital' see Fukuyama, Francis (1999) *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*, New York: The Free Press. Also, see Pharr, Susan J. and Robert D. Putnam (eds.) (2000) 'Preface', *Disaffected Democracies: What is Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p. xv. The duo puts it thus: the 'central problems galvanizing the attention of policy-makers and scholars' are 'why, in some of the world's oldest democracies in an era in which democracy as a form of government has triumphed worldwide, is public confidence in leaders and institutions of democratic governance at or near an all-time low'.

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	crime, hedonism, over emphasis on self-satisfaction, and decline of public sphere.
For which section of the populace does the crisis exists?	Though a neat categorization is infeasible due to some overlap, the following can be marked: moral preachers, some statesmen, many academics and philosophers, and civil society actors. Generically, for those the going is as good as it gets a crisis non-exists.
Is 'crisis' an apt label?	It depends upon which sets of actors are portraying the picture.
Accepting momentarily that a social crisis prevails, is it appropriate to impute it to democracy?	It is somewhat inappropriate to impute the crisis to democracy, as there are many causal chains: capitalism, electronic communication, information revolution, technology, etc. Democracy is intermeshed in this elaborate network and, being a social product, its nature is affected by other objects.
Is there a hidden meaning here?	Yes and no. *Yes*, that democracy is going 'astray' or losing its 'essence' is a considerable hint of an intransitive dimension, as also that democracy lacks autonomous power, and depends upon raw materials' properties in the midst of which it thrives. *No*, only if democracy is construed as an uncontaminated, pure object over and above social practices that should permeate generations in a pre-determined manner.

Table 2 Catechistical examination of supposed evolutionary crisis of democracy

The causality can thus be inverted: democracy as a component of governance can perform only within the bounds of a certain socio-political system. What is deemed as crisis of democracy might well be what a 'liberal' system of governance is capable of delivering. Common patterns prevail cross-culturally: mature democracies exhibit commodification of news, consumerism, decline of public sphere, etc. From the perspective of the populaces, Giddens remarks: 'Democracy is in some difficulty almost everywhere', whether it be Russia or the erstwhile communist states, or even the countries of its origin – Britain, Europe and US. 'Surveys show that increasing proportions of people are dissatisfied with

the political system, or indifferent towards it'.[366] This status, of course, does not preclude attempts towards change or, modifying such prevailing traits.

The relationship between governance and democracy can be stated like this. Democracy is *a* form of governance. Civilization is synonymous with governance, whether good or bad, but not necessarily with democratic functioning. Starting with the alpha male from the earliest hominids, through to chieftains, feudal lords, monarchs, and now presidents, prime ministers, governance displays its permanence, although its form has metamorphosed.[367] Communism was another vector of social order; it eventually collapsed, but governance continues in the onetime communist countries. Governance is thus central to social/cultural evolution. Five centuries hence, if civilization flourishes,[368] it will not be minus governance; whether democracy as it is understood now will persist is an open question.

Insight: Lamenting over the loss of pristine democracy merits a second look.

Public sphere

Public sphere—a forum for free exchange, dissemination, discussion, dissection of views, and, informing and being informed—is pivotal to democracy. According to a commentator, legitimacy in a complex democratic society results from 'free and unconstrained public deliberation' of common matters.[369] To deepen democracy, the focus must also shift to new sites, i.e. non-democratic

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[366] Giddens, Anthony (1998) *Sociology* (3rd edition), Cambridge: Polity, pp. 342-43.

[367] On hierarchy's unavoidability, see Fukuyama (1999) *op. cit.*, chapter 13. Nevertheless, the issue is open to further probe.

[368] Doubts about civilization's subsistence are due to the lurking concern about possibility of large-scale devastation by a nefariously designed virus. See interview of Stephen Hawking at http://research.lifeboat.com/hawking.htm, retrieved on 11 November, 2003.

[369] Benhabib (1996) *op. cit.*, p. 68.

countries. *How* can a public sphere be operationalized therein? Secondly, *what* benefits can accrue in conservative societies from its operationalization,[370] with hierarchical norms, archaic traditions, religious dogmas, and subjugation of women? There seem to be difficulties, at time t_1, in promoting a public sphere in non-democratic countries, in *isolation* from other social developments. Equality in deliberation of issues is an ideal even in democratic countries due to various factors. (1) Exclusivity of 'social capital', such as wealth, elite education, esteemed positions, and privileges enjoyed by some individuals even before deliberations commence. (2) Some analyzers have proffered psychological reasons too for unequal deliberations.[371] (3) Non-discursive societal features temper the noble intentions of 'deliberative democracy'. (4) *Habitus*, i.e. unconscious dispositions affect deliberations by often pre-forming opinions. Example: *ceteris paribus*, attempts at equal deliberations in Saudi Arabia, where women lack equal rights, at time t_1, say, 2004, short of other ameliorating factors, are likely to aggravate problems. If a social scientist condemns a social arrangement and demands its alteration, while admitting 'that the alternative arrangements which would emerge will be worse than the original',[372] then the exercise demands caution. (4) Intersubjective meaning-formation or semiosis, can be 'causally efficacious'. Furthermore, semiotic conditions are involved in the 'variation, selection and retention' of features of any social phenomenon: privileging certain discourses over others; inculcating certain discourses

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[370] This is assuming it can somehow be operationalized at time t_1.

[371] See, for example, Young, Iris M. (1996) 'Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy', *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* by Seyla Benhabib (ed.), Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 120-35.

semiotically (such as, ways of talking) and somatically (such as, bodily dispositions); objectifying these discourses in environment, social construction of space, technology, organizational practices, and in human bodies; and, developing devices for filtering in some discourses and filtering out others.[373] All in all, the issue is not exclusively of deliberations. The nature and level of freedom in deliberations is impinged upon by inherent social powers/properties with the parenthetical remark that the social totality is labile. Public sphere non-exists in 'splendid isolation'. An analogy: in a kaleidoscope, multitudinous bits rather than a detached bit form an image; likewise, a societal image arises from multiple causal chains. Public sphere, to be a success, would therefore require *other* needful factors too.

*What **is** the underlying structure of conversation?* Investigations show that a difficult conversation involves three sub-components.[374] These include the (i) the feelings of interlocutors, (ii) their identities, self-image, and self-esteem in play during the conversation, and finally (iii) the 'what happened' component. The latter is frequently premised on, 'I am right, you are wrong' which, the participants rarely question. Feelings/identity-related issues oft take considerable precedence over real/core issues. Arduous, as these challenges are, they are nonetheless surmountable.[375] In short, public sphere's significance is

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[372] Fay (1987) *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[373] For a brilliant discussion of these issues see Fairclough, Norman *et al.* 'Critical Realism and Semiotics' at www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/soc111rj.htm retrieved on 12.7.04.

[374] See Stone, Douglas *et al.* (1999) *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*, New York: Penguin. The book is a product of 'Harvard Negotiation Project'. Also see Simon, Herbert (1983) *Reason in Human Affairs*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 8, wherein, he states how 'facts, values, and emotions' impinge upon human thinking.

[375] Questioning one's innermost impressions is an onerous task: it is akin to asking the eye to see the eye itself, as it employs the 'instrument of analysis' (the mind), to know the 'instrument of

acknowledged, but without exalting it, over and above societal relations. Translatability of a social object, such as public sphere, is no less relevant than knowledge about it. A crude example: mere knowledge about public sphere is unlikely to assist Bangladesh's transit to a public sphere *a la* UK. The figurative kaleidoscopic image is pertinent to the social realm too.

The availability/non-availability of circuits of communication between the rulers and the ruled is weighty to democracy. The much-touted dearth of communication between the rulers and the ruled, in democracies, is debatable. The premise contends that augmenting the channels of communication shall launch effectual governance and, mitigate the hiatus between the rulers and the ruled.

To examine closely, take the case of advanced industrial, democratic states. The ruled have ample avenues for voicing their views – peaceful demonstrations, protests, free press and free association. The predilection for *more* avenues ignores non-exhaustion of the already available avenues. An over-consumptive but under-nourished citizen is barely a paragon for emulation. Ponder: In USA, feckless governors' recall is constitutionally provided in some states. Only two recalls punctuate American history: first, in N. Dakota (1921) and, second, in California (2003). Two inferences are made: (i) miniscule recalls imply that governors are competent and the populace, generally satisfied; (ii) if

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analysis'. On the latter point see Maturana, Humberto and Francisco J. Varela (1998) *The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding*, translated by Robert Paolucci, London: Shambhala, p. 24. [Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0877736421/ref=sib_dp_pt/103-6552765-8179020#reader-page on 7 May, 2004]. In disciplinary psychology, for a fine commentary on endeavouring to understand one's innermost thoughts and emotions, and the concomitant behaviour, see Epstein,

governors are incompetent, and people, dissatisfied, but procrastinate or shirk from preliminary process of recall—obtaining signatures of disgruntled sections—it implies they are indolent. In other industrial democratic states too, pro-active citizens can build pressure and opinion and, thereby, initiate somewhat similar forms of recalls. In those democratic countries where such a mechanism is unavailable, endeavours towards such incorporation can be made; similarly, other creative mechanisms can be conceptualized. In this background, Deleuze and Guattari's remark is non-banal and fresh: 'We do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. *We lack resistance to the present*'.[376]

Electronic democracy

Electronic communication generates hopes about 'electronic democracy'. Early 1990s witnessed optimistic tomes[377] thus waxing lyrically: greater transparency, accountability, distant people forming associations, networks etc. to make collective decisions, as also communicating public views to the elected representatives *et al*. A decade later, the appeal of electronic democracy is still strong, as it enables 'interactions between citizens, political representatives and administrative machinery [thereby] providing a special view of citizens'

Seymour (1998) *Constructive Thinking: The Key to Emotional Intelligence*, Westport, Connecticut.

[376] Deleuze and Guattari (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 108, original italics. The remark is especially applicable to democratic states, whereas for non-democratic states new capillaries of communication are required. Another instance of what available means of communication can achieve: in the US, public demonstrations affected the Vietnam war policy.

[377] Rheingold, Howard (1993) *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*, New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company; Robertson, Douglas (1998) *The New Renaissance: Computers and the Next Level of Civilization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Slevin, James (2000) *The Internet and Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press; Levinson, Paul (1997) *The Soft Edge: A Natural History and Future of the Information Revolution*, New York:

opportunities to influence and participate in policy-making and related processes'.[378] According to Anttirokio,[379] e-governance beholds prospects for better democratic governance on the following counts:

(a) Facilitation of information processes via presenting, disseminating and sharing information, as also collection and processing of data. This would result in two-way information process.

(b) Supporting communication and negotiation. This, in turn, would generate understanding and awareness.

(c) It would facilitate citizen consultation through motions, such as referendum, electronic town meetings (ETM), and moderated deliberative policy-making.

(d) Citizens' involvement in hands-on planning and preparation. This would be the consequence of participatory planning and/or advising politicians on political consequences.

(e) Community-based deliberation and participation through 'virtual communities', community networks and local/neighbourhood interactions.

(f) Political transactions and decision-making through public proposals and initiatives.

Routledge; Poster, Mark (1997) "Cyberdemocracy: Internet and the Public Sphere", *Internet Culture* by David Porter (ed.), New York: Routledge, pp. 201-218.
[378] Anttiroiko, Ari-Veikko (2004) 'Introduction to Democratic e-Governance', *e-Transformation in Governance: New Directions in Government & Politics* by Matti Mälkia *et al.*, London: Idea Group Publishing, p. 22.
[379] Anttiroiko (2004) *ibid.*, pp. 41-43.

Though this narrative presents a good prospective account of electronic governance, it seems to confuse causation with symptoms. This should become clear presently. Contrary to the initial rosy picture, the accelerating electronic communication, in both developing and developed countries, is bereft of initial expectations,[380] because this picture slights the vital relational network. The other means of communication, such as, radio, television and newspapers, too, have a minimal functional property, but beyond that, they fit into a given relational pattern; nowhere are these social objects identical – they perform different functions in Australia, China, Cuba, Iraq (both pre- and post-attack) and Singapore. The self-same social objects can thus be appurtenances of jingoism, authoritarianism, or liberalism.

Insight: The tendency to perceive technology as an independent object, in transforming societies, is questionable; technology is only one facet, in concert with others, that plays a role in evolution, transformation of societies.[381] inverse

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[380] There is no gainsaying that the social landscape has undergone tremendous change in many countries. Electronic communication has facilitated commerce, and assisted educational institutions, research, etc. Yet, the focal issue under discussion is democracy. In some cases, civil society actors have organized themselves through the medium, but whether dramatic overall improvement in government functioning and services has occurred is discussable. See Martin, Hagen for a discussion on electronic democracy on http://www.uni-giessen.de/fb03/vinci/labore/netz/hag_en.htm#3, retrieved on 15 November, 2004. Martin, *inter alia*, identifies that a problem with present democratic functioning is lack of political participation. From this premise, he assumes that electronic democracy may generate more participation. However, as said, he uninforms about why participation is less. He is looking for substitutes for participation, whereas, the main issue lies elsewhere, i.e. *stag* relationship, of which the actors themselves may be unawares.

[381] On a slightly different, but not unrelated, note, compare two features of structural linguistics (founded by Troubetzkoy): (i) shift from study of conscious linguistic phenomena to unconscious infrastructure; and (ii) basis of analysis becomes *relations* between terms rather than (treating them) as independent entities. The other feature of structural linguistics, viz. discovering general laws by induction or logical deduction is not the concern of this research. This research, too, on a somewhat similar plane seeks to bring in sharp relief the underlying features of society that play a role in democratic transitions; it also focuses on the relational pattern of society. *Cf.* Lévi-Strauss, Claude (1993) 'Selection from Structural Anthropology', *Great Books of the Western World, 58,*

question—despite available means of communication, why misgivings still persist about good governance?—stimulates pursuing auxiliary causes. Secondly, plentitude of information *per se* non-translates into accountability, as 'surfeit of information can be destabilizing if it is beyond the processing capacities of the agent or organization receiving it'.[382] Thirdly, new technology might lead to *more* democracy, but that is *one* possibility. There could be other possibilities too, which may not necessarily be 'positive'. Here, it would not be out of context to examine what role did the previous technological inventions (radio, television) went on to play when they were similarly placed as *novel* technological inventions of their times. Opinions will definitely vary. Meerloo is cited here, at length, about the adverse effects of such technological inventions:

> A child is 'confronted from early years with all modern devices and gadgets of technology – the radio, the motor, the television set, the film – is *unwittingly* conditioned to millions of associations, sounds, pictures, movements, in which he [sic] takes no part. He has no need to think about them. They are too directly connected with his senses. Modern technology teaches man [sic] to take for granted the world he is looking at; he takes no time to retreat and reflect. Technology lures him...the senses are continually overloaded with stimuli...Technical knowledge forced upon him in this way makes no demand that he think about what he sees and hears...In an overtechnical world, body and mind no longer exist. Life becomes only a part of a greater technical and chemical thought process.[383]

Summary: That 'appropriate conceptualization of a problem already prefigures the solution'[384] is a prescient remark. This is equally applicable to democracy,

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Social Science: Selections from Twentieth-Century Anthropology, History, and Sociology by Mortimer J. Adler, Editor-in-Chief, Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannia, Inc. p. 418.

[382] Elster, Jon (1989) *The Cement of Society: A study of social order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 4.

[383] Meerloo, Joost A.M. (1956) *The Rape of the Mind: The Psychology of Thought Control, Menticide, and Brainwashing*, Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, p. 209; original emphasis. Also, see chapter 12 on 'Technology Invades Our Minds'.

[384] Walker, Robert B. J. (1995) 'History and Structure in the Theory of International Relations', *International Theory: Critical Investigations* by James Der Derian (ed.), London: Palgrave, pp. 308-39, p. 332. Shlick's harangue on a somewhat similar theme, notwithstanding its logical positivist tenor, is memorable. See Schlick (2002) *op. cit.*

and, the issues confronting democratic transition. The heretofore discussion informs that the structural/agential issue leaves its signature on all themes. Accordingly, a case is made here for studying it directly than through its effects in an ancillary fashion.

In sum, the research has pried into various primacy-questions and, contrastively, shown the relevance of reciprocally confirming relations. All the same, nowhere in the foregoing is any democratic ingredient undermined or denigrated. By probing one-sided, monocausal explications—overly relying upon singular factors, such as public sphere or institutional arrangement, dis-embedded from relational patterns—and, showing their inadequacy, society's composite nature is highlighted. That is why visionaries mooting grand schemes while overshooting or skipping structural agential relations, at time t_1, confront a byzantine task.

3.6 On democracy

Knowledge about social objects 'depends upon knowledge-like antecedents'.[385] For instance, William Harvey upon discovering blood circulation conceived of it as a hydraulic model. Democracy is no exception: harking back to Greek antiquity and the classical times dot the literary landscape. Although dependence on past knowledge is, to an extent, unavoidable, occlusion of novel interpretations is avoidable.

Beholding social pictures in black and white skews representations. The post-Cold War 1989 events depict that instantaneous postmortems may be useful

in corporeal objects, but not necessarily in social objects. It was one thing to say that the communist regimes were crumbling; it, however, was not the same as saying that they were set to become democratic. Indeed a learning process is pathological if it reduces instead of increasing the capacity for future learning. It also overvalues the 'present expectations against all possibilities of surprise, discovery, and change'.[386] Nuanced interpretations are insightful than picturing democracy solely in counterattraction to communism or authoritarianism. Democratic transitions' explication should not be confined to the familiar, that which is proximate in time and space, but requires 'frame breaking experiences' in other places, in other times. A typical example of a familiar frame is by Rueschemeyer *et al.*: an organized working class plays a decisive role in democracy.[387] Today, such a frame would seem to be superfluous, as it relates to a specific historical period and has limited utility. Social ontologies are therefore required that transcend immediate social situations.[388] This assists in envisioning alternate approaches to democracy. The thesis thus dissociates from *inapposite* antecedent knowledge, as distinct from all antecedent knowledge. It works out democracy's description *infra*:

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[385] Bhaskar (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 22.
[386] Refer Patomaki (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 152.
[387] Rueschemeyer, Dietrich *et al.* (1992) *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, Oxford: Polity.
[388] Cf. Reed, Michael I. (2000) 'In praise of duality and dualism: Rethinking agency and structure in organisational analysis', *Realist perspectives on Management and Organisations* by Stephen Ackroyd and Steve Fleetwood (eds.), London: Routledge, pp. 45-65, p. 62; also see Reynolds, Charles (1973) *Theory and Explanation in International Politics*, London: Martin Robertson, p. 319. He alludes to a 'philosophy of explanation', i.e. any explanation faces questions which 'are not confined to the immediate area of the particular explanation' and inevitably includes wider issues.

I.   Democracy, as said, is a mechanism for countering arbitrary rules/rulers, as also accountability of the rulers.[389]

II.   Democracy is often described in black and white. This is to say that it is infrequently described as a multilayered concept than should be the case. For instance and as already discussed, democracy, amongst others, is described as:-

(i)   means to an end or an end in itself;

(ii)   mainly an institutional apparatus; and

(iii)   essentially a devise for pluralization, and so on.

The research rejects such compartmentalization and contends that democracy includes these issues, plus more, because upon onset of social transformation, the process is not confined to a solitary social object, but it pervades various societal segments/strata,[390] such as family, gender relations, societal values/norms, attitudes, etc. Hence, a wider range of objects can be brought under the ambit of describing democracy for the simple reason that society is stratified and any social transformation over a period of time impinges upon various strata. In this vein, the following points deserve mention.

Having oppugned the dichotomization of the 'means'/'end' continuum of democracy, an elementary structuring of democratic mechanism, at the political stratum, can be stated along with Anthony Downs, like this.[391] The main

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[389] This definition concurs with that of Moore's. See footnote 324 of this chapter.

[390] A fine example of such stratified enunciation is McGrew, Anthony (ed.) (1997) *The Transformation of Democracy? Globalization and Territorial Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

[391] Anthony Down's model is pertinent here. See Downs (1957) *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, New York: Harper & Row, especially Part I.

assumptions are: (i) democratic governments act rationally to 'maximize political support' (ii) during elections, their primary goal is reelection (iii) seeking election is the goal of parties devoid of power now (iv) the party receiving the most votes at an election manages the government until the next election with 'unlimited freedom of action, within the bounds of the constitution'. From these assumptions, two major hypotheses are: (a) democratic parties are analogous to 'entrepreneurs in a profit-seeking economy'. Therefore, they formulate policies expected to fetch most votes, just as entrepreneurs produce goods expected to reap most profit, and (b) citizens behave rationally in politics. While Downs' proposal is not wholly impeccable, it is still fastidious and marked by simplicity and practicality. Yet, the model is not the end of the story, period. If held in abstract, such a view remains an embellishment. What is equally important is *how* elections are held, *how* the electorates commingle with the party candidates; *how* free and fair the elections are, etc. will be conditioned by the structural agential relationship in which history is significant. A contrast: In USA, the yearlong campaigns in which candidates' speeches are followed by debates, discussions and manifold interactions with the electorate. In India, the campaigns occur for short bursts when the elections draw near, with greater emphasis on speeches than interaction with the electorate. Be that as it may, both are democracies, in their own way. By way of contrast, elections may occur in Bangladesh, but large-scale rigging may likely mark them. Merely considering elections thus is a weak indicator of democracy.

III. The dichotomization of minimal and maximal democracy is also questioned.[392] This view is circumscribing, as it blurs the nature of action at time t_1;[393] this is to say why a particular action happens at a particular point in time. Some Arab states, as of now, i.e. December 2004 (t_1), enfeeble gender equality due to particular historical reasons. Appropriately thus, 'minimal' and 'maximal' definitions consort each other, feed each other and are intertwined. Allegorically, social activity *a la* choreography equally impinges upon 'both' definitional stances which then co-evolve. This also conduces the addition of further democratic attributes, hitherto uncomprehended, in the distant future for they would be the outcome of future evolution and, hence, probably incomprehensible beforehand.

IV. Much wistful thinking about pristine democracy stems (to be discussed presently) from non-distinguishing its *ideals* from *practice*.

V. It is now fashionable to inveigh against the state. This research however deems the state[394] a requisite category for democracy for performing welfare responsibilities, such as, education, hospitals, public transport, social housing, etc.[395] Besides, state as a regulator is expected to play an important role in social

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[392] Minimal definition accords with democracy's narrow meaning and, maximal definition, with broad meaning (§3.3 of this thesis).

[393] Cf. Bhaskar, Roy (1993) *Dialectic: The Pulse of Freedom*, London: Verso, p. 159. Bhaskar says: 'Inaction…is as axiologically irreducible as non-being is ontologically. We cannot do everything at once or be aware of all the consequences of any one of our actions'. Martin Heidegger and Paul de Man's Nazi turn typically represent this.

[394] For an informative account on the changing nature of state, see Cerny, Philip G. (1990) *The Changing Architecture of Politics: Structure, Agency, and the Future of the State*, London: Sage Publications.

[395] For an account of state as 'guardian of public interest', see Bourdieu, Pierre (1998) *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of our Time*, translated by Richard Nice, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 2; pp. 29-44.

discord. 'Collapsed' states, such as Afghanistan, Somalia are hardly conducive for democratization.

VI. It is truistic to state that democracy is realized in society. Hence, *democratic society* is accorded more significance than democracy in abstract. As both co-evolve in real time, synopsizing democracy abstrusely is unhelpful. There can thus be various models of democracy.[396]

The so-called pristine democracy of yore is briefly considered here. First and foremost, it is arguable whether such a pristine sphere existed. With those actors long gone, history is reduced to reconstruction of documents and fables, wherein, hearsay also plays a role. Assuming that pristine democracy did exist, it did so in a peculiar historical matrix. Seeking the same framework now without the contributing social practices seems incongruous; isolating a single factor, viz. democracy, and aspiring it *in toto* is fantasizing, for along with democracy of yore comes the baggage of 'inferior' technology, speaking retrospectively, unequal social relations, aristocracy, shabby/ unhygienic living conditions, gender inequality, domination over youth, *et al.* The perceived luxury of 'pick and choose' of pristine democracy without the then attendant traits of social reality seems chimerical.

Social/cultural evolution like biological evolution moves forward.[397] Cultural development is additive and accumulative whereas organic evolution is

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[396] See Held, David (1987) *Models of Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press. It may be taken that Held has not exhausted all possible models of democracy.
[397] It *may* lack synonymy with 'progress' despite the forward movement, for progress is normatively tinted.

substitutive.[398] Social properties are non-arbitrary, relatively enduring, and exert causal powers. Consider: (1) There is no recorded case of *homo sapiens sapiens* having reverted to *homo habilis* (biological evolution). (2) There is no instance of feudalism having re-emerged in the advanced industrial states (social evolution). (3) There is no recorded case of <u>legally</u> punishing culprits in twentieth century W. Europe/N. America by dismembering limbs, pouring molten lead, or piercing body with red-hot iron, as was the past practice (non-reversibility of social motions).[399] The point is pellucid: irreversibility of certain social practices and biological structures. The prospects of USA reverting to slavery or Indians practicing untouchability, as it was practiced centuries ago, seem dim. The issue of pristine democracy also needs to be situated in such context.[400]

Consider the following arguments, proffered with W. European nations' history as the backdrop.

Natural reality	Social reality
A. Consider the Renaissance, Enlightenment phase of intense scientific, intellectual stimulation and development: curiosity about the natural horizons, planetary motions, bodily organs/functions, biological evolution, etc.	A. Consider the concomitant phase of revolutions, social movements: winning suffrage/civil rights, activism for gender equality, rule of law per contra arbitrary rules, etc.
B. Compare the general lack of interest now in quasars, quarks, inter-stellar space, black holes, genetics, etc.	B. Compare the general lack of interest now in stimulating or substantive public debates, contesting view points in a

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[398] Refer Steward, Julian H. (1955) *Theory of Culture Change: the Methodology of Multilinear Evolution*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, p. 13.

[399] See Foucault, Michel (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan, New York: Pantheon. The book begins with a graphic description of a corporeal punishment in France by dismembering of limbs in 1757; also see Tilly, Charles (1981) *As Sociology Meets History*, New York: Academic Press, p. 3.

[400] Note, for example, the hullabaloo over 'civil society' in 1980s/90s. Eric Hobsbawm aptly states: 'The 1980s in West and East were…full of nostalgic rhetoric seeking an entirely *impracticable* return to an idealized nineteenth-century' image of civil society. See Hobsbawm (1995) *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991*, London: Abacus, p. 139, italics added.

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	systematic, rigorous manner, and emergence of sensationalization, 'commodification' of news, etc.
Ques. Can the move from A to B be considered deterioration or a move to dark times?[401]	Ques. Can the move from A to B be considered deterioration or a move to dark times?[402]
Ans. The developments in A essentially appertained to the empirical world, which would seem to be the main concern of a common person. Once this curiosity was satiated, a common person could still lead a fair life with little or no information about B. Hence, in all fairness, there is no deterioration.	Ans. The developments in A essentially were the need of the times to demolish arbitrary distinctions between the populace. Once this was legally achieved, to a large extent, and life became more settled, with professionalization providing avenues to enhance personality traits, and consumerism on the rise, it is a subjective point whether there is deterioration. These views of dark times are not only a touch elitist, but anti-democratic for they reject the very essence of democracy that people should have the right to decide for themselves and live in the manner they want to.

Table 3 A discussion on 'democracy in dark times'

Democratization being a pursuit, it is in order to touch upon 'pursuit' too. Where should a pursuit be located ontologically? Pursuits are cognitive resources which, by nature are non-periodic: they wane and wax, fluctuate in intensity, and vary circumstantially. A *static* pursuit is an oxymoron. Although an intricate subject, it suffices to state here that ordinarily pursuits are intense at 'take-off' stage, gather momentum and upon realization plateau; continuous non-realization may dampen intensity. The possibility of yearning or even striving for initial stages also remains.[403]

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[401] The response of course would vary depending upon from whom it is elicited.

[402] A thorough study is required to gauge the effect of electronic communication, starting from television through to satellite television/Internet, on humans. There is discernible evidence of people now reading fewer books as compared to half a century ago. See http://www.teevee.org/archive/2001/04/01/moretv.html for a commentary on the pros and cons of television watching, retrieved on 9.12.04.
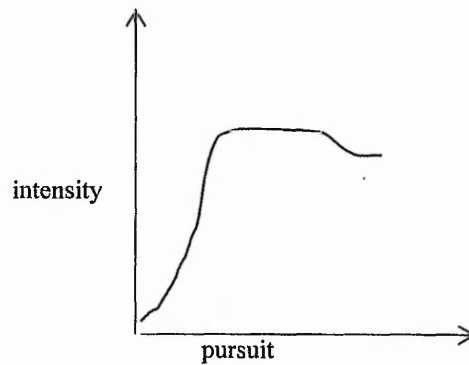
Fig. 2 Plateauing of pursuits

Fervent civil activity during 1980s in East/Central Europe represented the zenith against authoritarianism, while the subsequent decade depicted the nadir of social movement. As an exemplification, contrast the Olympian heights of civil movement in 1980s in Poland with the dwindling members of Solidarity in the immediate aftermath of Berlin Wall's collapse.[404] This attests to the plateauing of social movements, albeit a surge at a subsequent stage is possible. Humans are unlike mechanically acting automatons. Their activities are shaped by interaction with the environment which too undergoes change. Social theory's task is not only to promote change, but also expound why certain objects are the way they are, or why they persist in the way, they do.

Insight: The lamentation about democracy in dark times, the non-matching of perceptions with contemporary democratic functioning, at least, indicates (a) an intransitive dimension (b) the limits of hypostatization of democracy, and that (c) democracy is a social amalgam, varying contextually. It also bespeaks of a wide gap between theory and reality which calls for a further explanation. The

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[403] See, for example, a commentary on the emotion of love, its ups and downs, by Fromm, Erich (1957) *The Art of Loving*, London: Allen & Unwin.
[404] By 1990, Solidarity had 'ceased to be a national movement' and in another year, its disintegration 'as a unified organization' was complete. See Grugel (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 200.

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'explanation may be such as to justify the dominance of theory over reality rather than vice versa'.[405]

Finally, a brief comment is warranted on democracy's appeal. Why has democracy gained currency as a concept? Whereas many hypotheses abound, Herbert Simon's views are pertinent here, which this research shares. Simon[406] opines: Most human beliefs 'gain their credibility, not from direct experience and experiment, but from their acceptance by credible and "legitimate" sources in the society'. Democracy is no exception. Indian democracy *is* inspired by British democracy, but was firmly established, in part, due to acceptance by the then legitimate elements in society.

Although non-democracies are selectively inspired[407] by what transpires in democracies, only some societies realize democracy, while for others it remains a mirage, at time t_1. Even where it is realized, its results may be bitter than sweet. In mature democracies too, some aspects may embitter sections of populace. In such scenarios, some people are unfortunately habituated to labelling political institutions in two opposing ways: when pleased, they call the institutions democracy and, when displeased, 'politics'. The pejorative label is due to disliking some vexatious features, but neither 'politics' nor 'democracy' wholly describe such features in these institutions. Moreover, the underlying problems are irresoluble by labelling their desired and undesired aspects in this fashion. It would therefore be appropriate to assess these institutions with more

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[405] Graham (1986) *op. cit.*, pp. 236-37.
[406] Simon (1983) *op. cit.*, pp. 76; 99, 100.

sophistication; it would also do well to recognize that they have 'warts'. While continuing endeavours to remove political warts, it needs to be recognized that certain political phenomena are rudimental to political institutions' operation. Example: people will act out of self-interest and that what is called 'political' is manifestation of such self-interested pursuits.

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[407] In Pakistan, some segments of populace may desire free speech, yet they may have reservations about Shia Sunni parity, patriarchal society, subordinate status of women, etc. thereby reflecting selectivity in choice.

Chapter 4

Democratic transitions – a case study of Japan

4.1 Prefatory remarks

The research project has heretofore expounded realism's main precepts. Realism's depth and richness in explicating social reality has also been articulated. This has been followed, *inter alia*, by unpacking structure and agency from a realist perspective and propounding their germaneness for democratic transitions. The subsequent evaluation has attested to the salutary role of a realist interpretation. Simultaneously, the pitfalls of voluntarist and determinist accounts of democratic transitions[408] too have been enumerated. To further exemplify the role of structure and agency in democratic transitions, this chapter specifically picks Japan as a case study.

The historical image of Japan's democratic transition[409] is quite vivid: colossal loss of life/property during the Second War→Occupation by the victorious Allied forces (euphemism for US forces)→unleashing of political-cum-social reforms during the Occupation→Japan's propelling into a democratic trajectory. This image wields a powerful influence both within and outside Japan. As the motto of the research is to think *about* the discourse and not necessarily

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[408] To reiterate, this includes non-explicit voluntarist/determinist accounting too, wherein, extant democratic accounts can be interpreted from a voluntarist/determinist perspective.
[409] To save unwieldy constructions, 'Japan's democratic transition' is shortened to Japan's transition.

with the discourse, an acicular question is raised here: does the epigrammatic image of Japan's transition belie a deeper reality? This issue is explored by interrogating, *pari passu*, the view that Japan's transition was due to supervention. Conformably, the focus is on construal of Japan's transition as an inextricable *link* in the evolutive process, i.e. a link to anterior and posterior social developments. The research thus opens *a* 'conceptual space for considering democratic transitions independently from democracy'.[410]

The chapter develops the following line of argumentation. First, Japan's case is advanced as a fit one for examining democratic transitions. Second, the context of Japan's transition is delimited, i.e. the issues for consideration and non-consideration by this research are enunciated. Third, some scholarly accounts of Japan's transition are critically examined. Fourth, how some erudite Japanese have interpreted the democratic transition is expatiated.

In broaching the subject, a recounting of Japan's chronological history, counterintuitively, is not deemed necessary here. Two reasons account for such an approach: one, historical descriptions, in general, concentrate on atomistic events, agential activities, etc. This is to say they are predicated on 'event ontology' which this research finds inadequate in explanatory power. Two, this research attempts to explicate Japan's democratic transition by specifically employing the *stag* approach, which reckons with underlying mechanisms which, in turn, are shown to impinge upon events, etc., i.e. the former are more significant than the latter, though the two are closely related. Thus, Japan's

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[410] Cf. Anderson (1999) *op. cit.*, p. 2. This, of course, is *one* interpretation and democracy shall figure in other interpretations.

transition can be explained through an approach which does refer to events, but is not solely preoccupied with them. Although this research relegates events (chronological history) in its descriptive account, the chronological history has neither been omitted nor rendered superfluous. An account of modern Japan is available at Appendix I.[411]

4.2 Reasons for studying Japan as a case study for democratic transitions

Japan, *prima facie*, appears to be an unconventional case for democratic transitions (to be explained anon). It seems an unlikely foremost choice of many a social scientist.[412] If Japan is an unconventional case, what then would be the characteristics of a conventional case? In broad strokes, a series of interrelated features are summarized below:

➢ Overthrow/supersession of monarchical/authoritarian regimes, thereby, bestowing sovereignty to the populace.

➢ Popular social movements.

➢ Progressively equal rights for all citizens.

➢ Essentially a domestic/endogenous trajectory of democratization.

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[411] Inserting the narrative in the Appendix than the main text is not a cosmetic transposition of text. As this research attempts to present a non-anthropocentric account of democratic transitions, a purely 'event ontology' would be incongruous with this objective. In diluting the routinized cognition of Japan's history, it is argued, *pari passu*, that there appears to be more to the transition than mere historical events, actions, and interactions. Additionally, the structuring of arguments on paper seeks to structure the cognitive process of the readers by showing the degree of emphasis accorded to particular facets.

[412] See, for example, Rustow (1999) *op. cit.*, p. 16. In his article, he excludes three categories of countries for democratic theorizing; of these three categories, one category pertains to democratization in which military Occupation played a role. Examples: postwar Germany and *Japan*. For those readers wholly unfamiliar with Japan's history, a perusal of the Appendix at this juncture is recommended. Rustow's focus is on transitions 'mainly within the system'. Larry Diamond also shares the view that democracy was *imposed* on Japan, though surprisingly it 'it

- Self-constituting assemblies enshrining the constitution and enacting legislations.

- Social relations' permeation by individualist philosophy.

The features *supra* accord with the transitions, *inter alia*, in USA, UK, which have served as beacons for other countries. An expectance of isomorphism between their manner of transition and would-be transitions lingers. The expectance itself is vulnerable to counter-arguments, and also open to confutation given the open realm of society and umpteen possibilities, thereof. In spite of this, the fact that the expectation prevails, especially at a very commonsensical level, cannot be detracted. While criticizing the view, it also requires explication, that is, why this view prevails, in the first place. It can be explicated thus. As said, knowledge about (social) objects 'depends upon knowledge-like antecedents'.[413] Instance: spiritual discourse often brings ancient India into the picture.

In this vein, the above mentioned features, in some degree, permeate the democratic discourse. Many countries have freely borrowed democratic precepts from US, UK *et al.* which affirms the argument. Example: India's constitution adapts from the Westminster model. Whilst drawing inspiration from early democracies, the subsequent democracies will evolve as per their own societal pattern which reinforces the argument of structure and agency. Early democracies, as sources of inspiration, are explainable on the count of memory also. Consider an analogy: Individual memory is dis-endowed with forgetting the

took hold and endured'. See Diamond, Larry *et al.* (eds.) (1989) 'Preface', *Democracy in Asia*, New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, p. xi.

painful memories and remembering only the joyous ones.[414] Likewise, public memory is inextricably tied to the past. Japan's war-crimes still rankle in the minds of the Chinese and Koreans. Undivided India's partition in 1947 still fuels antagonism with Pakistan. Anyhow, adversarial issues are not the sole repositories of public memory. This is where the early democratic movements fit in, as they are, at least partially, immured in memory, and exert some force. It goes without saying that this is no hindrance to further experimentation, novelty and creativity. In other words, it is one thing to say that these features are synonymous with a particular historical unfolding; it, however, is not the same as to state that all subsequent transitions must necessarily follow suit. With this qualification, the afore-features can be tentatively accepted as conventional features of democracies, as available to the current memory. In contradistinguishing Japan's case, the following, commonly accepted, contrasts emerge:

➤ Supersession of emperorship was imposed by US Occupation (1945 to 1952) rather than being the handiwork of local populace, to confer popular sovereignty.

➤ Absence of concerted popular movements specifically for democracy.

➤ The populace was endowed with some civil rights by the Meiji elites, while others were granted during the Occupation. Moreover, the democratic developments owed less to tension between the rulers and the ruled.

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[413] Bhaskar (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 22.
[414] Human life would have been different if they were endowed with this trait.

➢ Japan's transition cannot be categorized as a wholly domestic/endogenous one, due to Allied intervention.

➢ Japan's postwar constitution was essentially a handiwork of Occupation staff than the culmination of a domestic struggle.

➢ Japanese society prioritizes community over the individual.[415]

➢ Besides, Japan had embarked upon a calculable militarist campaign since the turn of the twentieth century culminating in its ignominious defeat in the Second War. This needs to be taken with a pinch of salt; the pinch being that contemporaneously, UK and to some extent USA were also military powers. UK especially had an imperial reach. Nevertheless, the salt that does rub against Japan is that, unlike it, UK and USA were established democracies at the time. In addition, the effect of Japan's imperial policies on its domestic policies was majuscule rendering external/internal policies one and the same.

➢ Additionally, Hitoshi Abe[416] enumerates some more distinctive features of Japan's democracy: (α) Euro-American democracy is premissed upon the fact that individuals are the basic units of society and that society is constructed in and through the will of the individuals. In contraposition, Japanese view society as 'a naturally occurring, organic creation than a composite of purposive individuals'. The model groups in Japan are the family and the village, both of which are naturally occurring. The primary aim, therein, is to

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[415] Sansom, George B. (1946) *Japan: A Short Cultural History*, revised edition, London: Cresset Press, p. vii. A resultant feature has been to emphasize the 'duties of the individual and…neglect his rights'. Sansom, of course, is remarking about cultural features than pursuing a democratic discourse.

[416] Abe, Hitoshi *et al.* (1994) *The Government and Politics of Japan*, translated by James W. White, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, pp. 204-05.

maintain harmony. The state, too, is viewed similarly. (β) Whilst the Euro-American democracy is primarily a political concept, i.e. the 'function of politics is to resolve conflict', the Japanese view the state as a surrogate family ('family state'), i.e. the state is conceived of as a 'social collectivity' which would be devoid of conflict and opposition. In the absence of conflict, 'there is no place for politics', thereby, rendering the Japanese state apolitical.[417] Stated otherwise, democracy is viewed 'less as a means for resolving conflict and disagreement and more as a technique for avoiding it'.

➢ Finally, democracy in Japan has another different connotation than in the West: in Japan, democracy relates 'not to a form of government but to a form of relationship',[418] which again informs about the Japanese notion of society *per se*. These distinctive features also have to do with the structuring of social structures in Japan, which pre-existed Occupation policies, and provided the raw materials for subsequent change.

This then should clarify the distinction between the commonly held conventional and non-conventional cases. Concordantly, Japan may be considered as an unconventional case. All the same, it is argued that an unconventional case *ipso facto* does not become an unfit case. A caveat is in order here. The contrasting features mentioned *supra*, as said, reckon with the *commonly* accepted features of democracy at a particular historical juncture which, however, are no bar to

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[417] The Japanese have devised fine strategies for avoiding conflict and confrontation. Example: the mechanism of *nemawashi*, whereby, attempts are made to arrive at decisions unanimously rather than through an open show of strength, or even majority vote. To ensure this, prior to a formal meeting, the participants or their representatives meet and prepare the agenda and draft proposal which, with some deliberations, are then accepted unanimously. Subsequently, at the formal meetings, the proposal(s) is/are accepted unanimously.

[418] Nakane, Chie (1970) *Japanese Society*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, p. 143.

subsequent additions to the repertoire of commonly accepted features, at another historical juncture. Nobutaka's take on the issue is apposite here. He says that one 'could take the position that only democracy based on individualism, the democracy found in the West, is genuine', though this view would be rather 'ethnocentric'. There seem no good reasons for excluding Japan 'from the list of democratic nations that exist today', but one should also anticipate that Japanese democracy need not necessarily reproduce all features of Western democracies, as Japan's 'social and cultural basis is different'.[419]

The research now doubly aims to demonstrate the fitness of the Japanese case. Qualitatively different questions need to be raised here: Can transition to democracy be so momentous, as it appears in Japan's case, without any apparent conventional/background democratic conditions/norms? Can a foreign power's sheer presence, and/or legislative acts cause democratic transition smoothly? Can a militarist state adopt democratization without any perturbations? Hypothetically, it may be granted that USA facilitated Japan's democratic transition, but can USA claim credit for five decades of democratic stability too? The answers to these questions are likely to beg more questions. At this point, if doubts still persist about unfitness of Japan's case, they need rethinking and reconsideration. The scepticism can also be met with another line of argument which can be stated thus. The die is further loaded in Japan's favour by an analogy; scientific experiments on pathological cases, per contra 'normal' cases, have provided a deeper understanding of the process of cognition, paradoxically,

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[419] Nobutaka, Ike (1978) *A Theory of Japanese Democracy*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, p. 5.

for 'normal' cases too.[420] Likewise it is worth exploring whether so-called 'non-conventional' cases in the social realm can illume democratic transitions. As Bhaskar[421] remarks:

> It might be conjectured that in periods of transition or crisis generative structures, previously opaque, become more visible to agents. And that this, though it never yields quite the epistemic possibilities of a closure (even when agents are self-consciously seeking to transform the social conditions of their existence), does provide a partial analogue to the role played by experimentation in natural science.

Andrew Collier phrases such excursuses as 'the methodological primacy of the pathological'. He continues: 'By seeing how something goes wrong we find out more about the conditions of its working properly than we ever would by observing its working properly'.[422] A similar view is expressed by a set of commentators: '(n)orms never become so apparent as when someone breaks them'. It is likely that mechanisms that may have been counteracted upon by certain other mechanisms in a particular situation may be uncovered in another situation.[423]

Now, primacy of the 'pathological' over the 'normal' or habitual is arguable and context-dependent. Moreover, social cases infrequently provide a pathological glimpse of social situations. Nonetheless, what can be imported from the concept is that whence such an opportunity knocks the door softly, attempts to open that door should be pursued. Thus the unconventional case of

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[420] Refer, for example, the experiments by Michael S. Gazzaniga and Roger Sperry on split-brain patients in Sagan, Carl (1977) *The Dragons of Eden: Speculations on the Evolution of Human Intelligence*, New York: Ballantine Books, pp. 166 *et seq.*; 253; 258; Sperry's work highlights the left and right hemisphere specialization; also see Damasio, Antonio (1994) *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*, New York: G. P. Putnam; Damasio (1999) *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*, New York: Harcourt Brace.
[421] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 48.
[422] Collier (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 165.

Japan provides an opportunity for studying structures that were hitherto rather opaque. The exploratory 'net' can be cast wide by raising the question: What else was happening in the 'hidden depths of time' which facilitated the transition?

To summarize, monocausality vis-à-vis Japan's transition is precarious and might lead to misattribution of causality; thus, singularly crediting USA or Japanese elite is questionable.

4.3 Delimiting the subject

This section delimits the subject and, correlatively, outlines the purview of Japan's case.

One, contra voluntarism, the research demotes explicating Japan's transition centering purely based on actors, i.e. leaders, statesmen, etc. Two, contra determinism, structures' preeminence defining actors *qua* actors as 'bearers' of structures is opposed. Additionally, the counterattraction between a wholly chronological narrative *and* stratified temporal sequences is brought into sharp relief. This is sustained by the divisibility of past, present and future, and sequestering emergent properties of structure, culture and people. In contrast, uni-linear, ahistorical accounts render the happenings in the 'hidden depths of time' inapprehensible by neglecting both stratification and emergence.

Three, the nature of Japan's architecture of governance is not the focal point of this research. That a particular architecture has emerged, taken root, and sustained itself is simply accepted. The acceptance is not unfounded: free, fair

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[423] Cf. Danermark *et al.* (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 104.

and regular elections for five decades attest to the stability of the Japanese system.

Four, polemics have dominated Japan's democratic credentials.[424] To steer clear from the deliberations doubting Japan's democratic credentials would invite the charge of complacency or orthodoxy. Hence, what follows is a brief discussion of the same. The main arguments advanced against Japan's democratic credentials are: **(a)** Japan lacks a strict multi-party system. **(b)** One party, viz. Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) wields overwhelming influence and has ruled disproportionately.[425] **(c)** Technocracy flourishes, i.e. politicians/bureaucrats are the real rulers.[426] **(d)** The conservative elites, suspicious of democracy deflect mass attention from politics to economics of consumption.[427] **(e)** For most Japanese, democracy has less to do with ballot boxes than with personal life. **(f)** Japan's voting percentage is amongst the lowest which typifies apathy.[428] **(g)** 'Public sphere', in the strict sense, is indiscernible in Japan. Public sphere, simply stated, means an open public space for discussions, dissection of public issues which then inform opinion, build opinion, enlighten

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[424] A recent exemplification is Bowen, Roger W. (2003) *Japan's Dysfunctional Democracy: The Liberal Democratic Party and Structural Corruption*, Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, p. 1. According to Bower, though Japan's democracy is real, it suffers from 'personalism, graft, cronyism, favoritism, bribery, money politics, factionalism, and collusion' which is a longhand for 'structural corruption' or *kozo oshoku* and is deeply built into the political functioning,
[425] In a single stretch, LDP ruled from 1955 to 1993.
[426] See, for example, Thomas, Roy (1989) *Japan: The Blighted Blossom*, London: 1. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., especially pp. 22-24; for an overview on growth of bureaucracy, see Dower, John W. (1992) 'The Useful War', *Showa: The Japan of Hirohito* by Carol Gluck *et al.* (eds.), New York: W. W. Norton & Company, pp. 49-70, p. 61 *et seq.*
[427] See Gluck (1992) *op. cit.*
[428] See Gluck (1992) *op. cit.* Also, see Kyogoku, Jun-ichi (1993) *The Political Dynamics of Japan*, translated by Nobutaka Ike, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, p. 24.

people and so the cycle goes on. It played a prominent role in England, France and Germany in democratizing politics.[429]

These objections mainly relate to post-Occupation socio-political developments. To remain unassailable, they need to withstand the weight of counterarguments. First, a general comment is in order. The objections' overarching feature seems to be the primacy of a peculiar structuring of social structures over against viability. Questions of primacy are often circular like the classic dilemma of chicken or egg *or* theory or practice. A contrapuntal argument, as stated, can be that the chicken contains the egg, while the egg contains the chicken; by the same token, theory and practice go hand in hand, as 'all knowing is doing and all doing is knowing'.[430] In a like vein, the primacy of structuring over viability is at best meretricious and, at worst misleading, as both co-evolve. Now to the more particular objections itemized *supra*. **(a)** The structuring of political parties, their patternings is an historical process and thereby reflects the concerned social fabric.[431] This is affirmed by the variety of party structures in equally diverse social systems: from the mainly two-party system of UK to the multiple party system in Italy, they are the products of peculiar historical evolution. In India, the Congress party stood as a monolith after independence (1947) till the mid-1970s. Thenceforward, new regional/national parties mushroomed and, the current fragmented party system

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[429] For a comprehensive analysis of public sphere see Habermas, Jurgen (1991) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger, Massachusetts: The MIT Press. Habermas also critically examines the contemporary marginalization of the public sphere in the very countries of its origin due to commodification, consumerism, etc.

[430] Maturana and Varela (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 26.

reflects the equally fragmented social structure rife with caste, religious and linguistic divisions. Construing party structuring in a pre-conceived fashion with aspirations of universal application seems implausible. Japan is no exception to this proposition and its party system is likely to reflect *its* societal terrain, practices than some transcendental icon.[432] Enucleating the latter can only be at the diminution of structure/agency and space/time. Above all, social realm being open, further configurations/reconfigurations belong to the realm of possibility. Importantly, there is nothing on record that LDP's presence has gravely undermined democratic norms. Kyogoku proffers the view that despite a long-term LDP monopoly of power, there is no 'dictatorial politics'. Various rituals ensure this; these rituals include 'dying-with-honour' tactics of the opposition. Besides, other political rituals also 'show the conflict between the two sides and the defeat of the opposition' and prevent arbitrary functioning.[433] **(b)** LDP's Gulliver-like status with other Lilliputian parties is acknowledged.[434] What however is contested is the hasty conclusion of Japan's lack of democratic credentials from this premise. The latter view non-cognizes the following: the long LDP reign has not converted the political system into an authoritarian

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[431] See Lipset, Seymour M. et al. (1967) Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-national Perspectives, New York: The Free Press.

[432] The 'logic of practice' is pertinent here and is equally applicable to politics. For a positively mesmerizing account see Bourdieu (1990) *op. cit.*, p. 81; for a further commentary on 'logic of practice' refer chapter 5 (Book I). According to Bourdieu, 'logic of practice' appertains to the *practical* connotations of an action sequence, which is replete with episodes that occur 'in the heat of the moment'. It unfolds daily in every person's life and could be playing a game, or a demonstration, or any other activity. It is the subsequent dissection of the event from a 'scientific'/rational perspective that robs the action sequence of its originality, by ascribing reasons to it which may not be there in the actors' mind. In Bourdieu's words, there is an 'antinomy between the time of science and time of action'. 'Practice unfolds in time and it has all the correlative properties, such as irreversibility, that synchronization destroys'.

[433] Kyogoku (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 179.

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architectonic; LDP's self-perpetuation is not arbitrary, but fashioned legally by acquiring people's mandate at regular intervals; electoral process reciprocally constitutes the electorates and the competing candidates; given this dual structuring between the electorate and the candidates seeking (re)election, in case of severe LDP misadministration, the LDP candidates would have been ousted, leading to political reconfigurations. Affirmatively, LDP can, at least, claim fractional, if not more, credit for the stability and prosperity of the nation, on count of its long reign.[435] Whilst monopolizing power, LDP did succeed in making the 'economy grow through the expansion of exports'.[436] In democracies, nothing is carved in stone. To exemplify, when the Congress establishment imposed Emergency in India (1975) and thereby jeopardized democracy by repressing civil rights, it was trounced in the subsequent election. Significantly, until 1975, it had won all elections and stood like a behemoth in the midst of political dwarves. Furthermore, it would be appropriate here to briefly mention the nature of functioning of Japanese political parties. In the system of 'constituency service', not only the ruling party, but also the opposition parties seek to share in the benefits' distribution. Politics thus becomes 'concerned with how to gain from government appropriations'. Such politics, based on 'calculation' leaves 'no room for passionate politics – the emotional impulsive

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[434] The allegory of David and Goliath too is appropriate in that no individual/group, in the ultimate analysis, is invincible; this is equally applicable to political parties.

[435] For a brief, positive account of Japan's democratic functioning, see Muramatsu, Michio (1992) 'Bringing Politics Back into Japan', *Showa: The Japan of Hirohito* by Carol Gluck *et al.* (eds.), New York: W. W. Norton & Company, pp. 141-54. Despite Japan's recent economic woes, there is no radical decline in the living standards of the people.

[436] Kyogoku (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 23. Kyogoku maintains that LDP dominance, in part, is due to the imbalance in the allocation of seats: rural areas are over-represented in the parliament and, it is in rural areas that LDP is strong.

kind that releases one from the humdrum everyday existence'.[437] **(c)** It is admitted that politicians and bureaucrats play a prominent role in Japan and, between the two, the bureaucrats allegedly wield real power, epitomized in the saying: the 'politicians reign but the bureaucrats rule'.[438] Be that as it may, this is a common pattern in the 'advanced' industrial democracies. Besides, the increased bureaucratic role[439] is in part a response to the emerging political complexity, than a peremptory decision. The key question is whether this has undermined Japan's democratic system. Facts contravene this assumption: Japan's per capita income is amongst the highest; wide-income disparities are absent;[440] bureaucracy's programmatic functioning is reflected in high level of citizens' care – public transport, health services, general hygiene, education, etc. all of which attest to efficacious functioning. Longevity of the populace testifies to this. In spite of its recent economic woes, Japan's economy remains world's second largest.[441] In any case, the (parliamentary) representatives' interventions in the bureaucrats' work provides 'constituency service by giving play to local conditions [and] has the effect of mitigating feelings of hostility toward bureaucratic domination', wherever such feelings exist.[442] **(d) & (e)** These are norm judgments open to contestation. If people's quotidian life subsists in a desired manner, can it be construed as a blemish on the system? It could also be

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[437] Kyogoku (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[438] See Johnson, Chalmers (1992) 'The People Who Invented the Mechanical Nightingale', *Showa: The Japan of Hirohito* by Carol Gluck *et al.* (eds.), New York: W. W. Norton & Company, pp. 71-90, p. 79.

[439] On this point see Zolo, Danilo (1992) *Democracy and Complexity: A Realist Approach*, translated by David McKie, Cambridge: Polity Press; also see Offe, Claus (1984) *Contradictions of the Welfare State*, by John Keane (ed.), Hutchinson: London.

[440] Abe *et al.* (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 215.

[441] Bowen (2003) *op. cit.*, p. 99.

interpreted as achievement of lofty political ideals, as it enables self-realization and self-fulfilment. To argue from a different angle, the portrayal of politicians/bureaucrats deflecting people from polity to economy, represents people as 'dupes of nature' or automatons. The tendentious view divests agency of intentionality, purposiveness and creativity. The crux of the argument is that polity, after all, is about a better life which Japanese establishment has provided to its populace. Coercing people into politics would be *democracy of force* rather than *force of democracy* and thereby self-defeating. **(f)** Japan's voting percentage is indeed amongst the lowest. Howbeit, the mono-interpretation of apathy is arguable, unless supported by a host of related factors, especially showing that in different conditions, other than at time t_1, would also elicit similar behaviour. While criticizing any object/action, it is insightful to also enquire why things are the way they are – why X is X? Unconditional apathy is a luxury which can be afforded only at one's peril. Besides, voting is only *one* factor depicting the health of democracy; only by itself, it is a deficient political barometer. Now elections are generally held in democratic countries in 4/5 years and it would be too narrow a perspective to expect people to be democratic once in 4/5 years! It is in the day-to-day life, as also the larger individual life that democratic norms should be manifest, which is evidenced in Japan. With a few exceptions, the picture is analogous to most advanced industrial democracies. As for low voting then, a likely reason could be satisfaction of basic wants, amenable living/work conditions and so on. **(g)** Public sphere *a la* England and France was non-existent in pre-Second War Japan. The public sphere in the former was the outcome of a

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[442] Kyogoku (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 104.

concert of particular historical practices. Cosmetic juxtaposition of extraneous, ahistorical practices in other regions is likely to be counter-productive. Secondly, path to democracy is not marked in indelible, monochrome ink; available avenues will, in some measure, consort the regions' historical practices. As for contemporary Japan, constitutional rights are available for forming associations, free press, free movement, free speech, all of which play a role in opinion-making/forming. On the other hand, a note should be made of the issues of staple discussion in the USA today[443] – should evolutionary science be taught in schools, date rape, or family structure![444] Even earlier, Freud had referred to the 'miscarriage of American civilization'.[445] The lesson here is that nothing remains static: the earlier sites of public spheres have themselves witnessed a shift of focus on issues. By the same token, criticism of lack of a public sphere is thus semi-accurate. Accuracy would also require responses to *how* and *why* questions, as stated above – why X is X? The need then is of redefining and sharpening the

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[443] On commodification of the public sphere, see Debor, Guy (1994) *The Society of the Spectacle*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, New York: Zone Books; and, Zolo (1992) *op. cit.* chapter 5. A feature of the contemporary public sphere in USA is well articulated in 'Being Whatever it Takes to Win Election', *New York Times*, 1992 quoted in Der Derian, James (1995) 'A Reinterpretation of Realism: Genealogy, Semiology, Dromology', *International Theory: Critical Investigations* by James Der Derian (ed.), London: Palgrave, pp. 363-396, p. 392. An extended quote is enlightening: 'The news cycle has become as 24-hour-a-day thing, and it moves very fast all the time now. What happens is that a fragment of information, true or false, gets sucked into the cycle early in the morning, and once it gets into the cycle it gets whipped around to the point that it has gravitas by the end of the day. And, unfortunately, people are so busy chasing that fragment of information that they treat it as a fact, forgetting about whether it is true or not'. Also see Postman, Neil (1985) *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, New York: Viking Penguin for a commentary on the decline of the public sphere.
[444] See Wolfe, Alan (1998) 'Neither Politics nor Economics', *Toward a Global Civil Society* by Michael Walzer (ed.), 2nd printing, New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 241-51.
[445] See Horowitz, Irving L. (ed.) (1974) *Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills*, London: Oxford University Press, p. 598. According to Mills, liberalism has collapsed in America: albeit liberal ideals flourish and rhetoric prevails, a theory of state has become irrelevant.

terms of the debate and, thereby, deepening the polemics. In sum, doubts about Japan's democratic credentials are unfounded.

4.4 Interpretations of Japan's democratic transition

This section examines some interpretations of Japan's transition.

Democratization had precedents in Japan[446]

Japan's transition has a notable exegesis: prevalence of nascent democratic stirrings in the post-1868 era. Apparently oblivious of this embryonic development, the Occupying forces anticipated a Herculean effort to 'implant' democracy, given the track record of Japanese ferocious fighting down to the last man. The impression of Japanese as fanatics soon dissolved for no sooner the militarist laws were repealed, a popular movement emerged whose 'vigor and scope…surprised the Occupation authorities'.[447] Ike Nobutaka is a prominent proponent of the viewpoint that democratization had precedents in Japan. Makoto Iokibe seconds this outlook.[448]

Makoto traces the faint beginnings of democratization to Japan's modernization commencing in the 1850s. Makoto articulates that the initial aim of Japan's *kaikoku* (opening) policy was to avoid military defeat and colonization rather than rigorously pursuing Western knowledge. (The latter, after all, did impact upon the social fabric due to the variegated nature of contact.) The

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[446] There is an inevitable duplication with some sections of the Appendix here. Some overlap is unavoidable in other sections too.

[447] Nobutaka, Ike (1950) *The Beginnings of Political Democracy in Japan*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, p. xiii. Nobutaka's work serves as the main source of analysis for the perspective that democratization had precedents in Japan.

[448] Iokibe, Makoto (1998) 'Japan's Democratic Experience', *Democracy in East Asia* by Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (eds.), Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 79-96.

dilemma between these two somewhat opposing standpoints was *enfin* resolved and was best summed up in the adage – 'Japanese spirit, Western knowledge', i.e. *wakon yosai*. The Anglo-American political concepts, over a period, did affect certain sections of the Japanese populace. To put it briefly, 'democratization became an inseparable element in Japan's modernization'[449].

The budding liberal movement or the *Jiyu minken undo* (Movement for liberty and popular rights) is traceable to the early 1870s.[450] More precisely, it commenced in 1874 petitioning the throne for establishing a popularly elected assembly; it aimed at expanding people's political participation. Yet, delicate glimmerings of the liberal movement are traceable even earlier to the Shogunate period. Despite the Tokugawa seclusion policy, information about European developments emanated from the Dutch trading centre at Nagasaki. The Chinese books on European governments complemented such knowledge. The subsequent Japanese embassies/missions to Europe and USA were also informative about foreign developments. Japan's encounter with new political institutions/concepts—legislature, parliament, deliberation—was stimulating, though full comprehension was tardy given their rather 'alien' nature. All the same, the 'new knowledge acted as a ferment among the intellectuals', and was germinal for modifying extant political structures.[451] Correspondingly, sundry proposals about bicameral legislature gained currency after the Meiji Restoration. In point of fact, the Shogun's resignation in 1868 was premised on an eventual

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[449] Iokibe (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 80.
[450] Also, see Abe *et al.* (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 201.
[451] Nobutaka (1950) *op. cit.*, p. 30.

emergence of a bicameral body with a prominent role for himself.[452] This turned out to be a miscalculation, for the rivals' aim was Shogunate's extirpation.

A momentous development of the Meiji Restoration was the *Gokajo no Goseimon* or the Charter Oath of Five Articles (1868) enshrining democratic principles. Externally, it aimed to demonstrate the capability of an Oriental country and, internally, it sought to placate cross-sections and thereby imbue a semblance of unity.

Although the democratic stirrings were bereft of overly popular movements, sporadic democratic efforts were reflected in – promulgating the *Seitaisho* or the first modern constitution in 1868, establishment of an experimental bicameral legislature, as also *Kogisho* or the deliberative assembly for enacting laws. Whilst the initial democratic effervescence soon faded, legislative bodies were hoisted into prominence. They were soon established at both the national and local level. Between 1871 and 1879, 48 prefectures had legislative assemblies.[453] In 1874, a 'memorial' was published in the newspapers making a strong case for representational government predicated on non-arbitrary rules. Although the establishment was outsmarted on kindling this initiative, the publication provoked a resonant debate amongst many sections.

The liberal movement engulfed varied sections of society: the samurais, farmers, wage labourers and intellectuals. An important political society of the times was *Risshisha* (Society for Fixing One's Aim in Life). It was initially founded in the domain of Tosa, but spread its reach in other parts too. It

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[452] Nobutaka (1950) *op. cit.*, p. 34.
[453] Nobutaka (1950) *op. cit.*, p. 50.

advocated deliberative assemblies, equality, local autonomy, natural rights and self-government. Similar societies emerged in other localities embracing wider views and sections.

In the 1880 petition movement for establishing a parliament, over 200,000 people participated, thereby, informing that the 'movement enjoyed the support of a large segment of the Japanese population'.[454] The efforts towards a party system entered a concrete orbit with the formation of the first party, viz. *Jiyuto* or Liberal Party (1881).[455] Influenced by French thinkers, it cherished liberty and equality. Its main constituencies were the samurais, affluent farmers and merchants. The second party, viz. *Kaishinto* or Progressive Party was formed the next year (1882). Due to its urban leanings, its main constituencies were the bureaucrats, intellectuals, etc. Both parties stood for elected legislatures with the cabinet not responsible to the Diet. The establishment, not to be left behind, formed its party *Teiseito* or the Imperial Party whose performance remained lacklustre.

The first general elections were held in 1890 after promulgation of the constitution. A formal bicameral legislature was also created. Despite this political paraphernalia, government functioning was rigid with relatively few powers to the legislature. It was later in 1918 that the grip of the oligarchy loosened, as for the first time the prime minister was a member of the lower house, as also from the majority party. This was a major development, as hitherto the cabinets were not responsible to the legislature. The period was marked by

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[454] Abe *et al.* (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 201.
[455] It underwent change of name (*Seiyukai*) in 1900.

the rise of democratic movement and is known as 'Taisho democracy' (1912-1926). During the period, popular determination became manifest on a few occasions. For instance, when civilian cabinet of Premier Saionji Kinmochi fell in 1912 due to army's pressure, popular resentment, movement against the unconstitutional act of the army emerged and the newly formed General Katsura Taro's (unconstitutional) cabinet fell. Likewise, in 1924, another military-led cabinet also fell due to popular movement for protecting the constitution. Thereupon, Premier Kato Komei ushered in a period of civilian cabinets headed by party politicians. Yoshino Sakuzo, an eminent theorist of Taisho democracy, translated 'democracy' to mean *minponshugi*, i.e. 'people as the basis'. This sought to shelve the question whether sovereignty resided in the emperor or the people and, attempted, instead, 'to establish a political process that would permit the people to participate and aim to realize the popular welfare'.[456] Another favourable development during the period was the expansion of suffrage: from modest beginnings of 1% suffrage in 1890, universal manhood suffrage was granted by 1925.

The intellectual ferment during the Meiji period questioned some anachronistic norms/practices. Liberal books inundated the market: translations of English Utilitarianism were followed by those of eminent English philosophers, such as J.S. Mill (*On Liberty*) and Herbert Spencer (*Social Statics*); Continental philosophers' works were also translated, such as Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. Novels also served as a medium of disseminating political information against official oppression. Nobutaka cogently states: 'A

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[456] Abe *et al.* (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 203.

redefinition of the relation of the individual to the state and to the society was made necessary'.[457]

Critical developments also fostered the growing space for enlightenment. These included, government politically unifying the nation, garnering public support by setting-up local assemblies and councils, developing a well-knit system of transport and communication, and alleviating regional variations in speech and manners; these imbued a sense of national unity and enabled quicker communication. Newspapers gained in circulation and increasingly assumed a political hue. They disseminated news and promoted exchange of views.

Socialist sputtering too was manifest in the 1870s, which owed to socialism concurrently gaining global audience. These activities initially remained insignificant, albeit subsequent events were to provide a fillip to socialist ideas. The Russian Revolution and the end of the First War led to mushrooming of proletarian parties and labour associations. Translatability of ideas into action too was conspicuous. 1918 witnessed Rice riots due to peasant discontentment. Such local uprisings had precedents, notably during the 1880s attributable to precarious economy and the ensuing hardships. Examples: Gumma uprising and Chichibu revolt. Similar rebellions took place in other parts, though they were quickly repulsed.[458] Farmers took recourse to forming parties such as *Komminto* (Distressed People's Party) and *Kyuminto* (Poor People's Party) especially to deal with debts. In a turn of events, by the 1930s,

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[457] Nobutaka (1950) *op. cit.*, p. 111.
[458] Nobtuaka (1950) *op. cit.*, p. 164. Nobutaka opines that these issues were related to democratic movement, and were not solely economically hued.

the leftist movement had waned. The residual socialist groups compromised by diluting their hitherto radical stand, thus being leftist more in letter than spirit.

With war clouds hovering, non-party cabinets regained prominence. The Diet was reduced to a mere 'rubber stamp for already determined policies'. The China War (1937) completed the formality of all parties towing the militarist line. In 1940, the main political parties were disbanded to allow military a free hand in policy-making.[459]

After the Second War, the political parties again emerged due to a favourable environment. Social Democratic Party was formed by the left-wing elements (minus the communists); Liberal Party and the Progressive Party were formed by the conservative politicians. The difference between the latter two groups was not so much predicated on policy, as much as on 'personalities and political traditions'. According to a commentator, Liberal Party could be considered as a 'lineal descendant of the old *Seiyukai*' and the 'Progressive Party, of the *Minseito*'.[460]

Analysis: What is apparent is that none of these developments was truly autochthonous;[461] most were inspired from abroad. This, however, in itself, cannot be a major criticism in analyzing Japan's early liberal movement, as diffusion/assimilation of ideas is integral to cultural development.

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[459] Hunter, Janet E. (1989) *The Emergence of Modern Japan: An Introductory History Since 1853*, 3rd impression, London: Longman, p. 225, 226.

[460] Tiedemann, Arthur, E. (1955) *Modern Japan: A Brief History*, New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House (P) Ltd. [published in arrangement with D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., New York], p. 89.

[461] See, for example, Abe *et al.* (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 204.

Robert A. Scalapino calls such 'experimentation' by Japan as 'guided democracy'. He considers two viewpoints in assessing the experiment: one that it 'kept open the channels of political competition and slowly institutionalized procedures and patterns of thought conducive to parliamentarism [sic]'; second, and the more pronounced view is that Japanese experiment did not 'automatically produce the Japanese polity of today'. Indeed, parliamentarism had 'failed' in prewar Japan. There is also a distance of 'light years' between the Meiji era experiment and the postwar experiment in matters relating to 'techniques of power, pressures of time, and ideological-political alternatives'.[462]

In further assessing the Japanese experiment, the brunt of criticism must be borne by Japan's internal structuring. Whereas to the external world, Japan provided appearance of a unified ruling structure, a closer scrutiny reveals that behind this façade internecine rivalries were rife. Meiji Restoration's initial unity was sustained due to the need for a common front against Tokugawa Shogunate and the Occidental powers. The clans of Satsuma, Choshu, Tosa and Hizen had played a prominent role in sounding the death-knell of the Shogunate. Of these clans, the former two, or better known as Sat-cho (from the first three letters of each clan) exercised dominance. These western clans – the *tozama* or the 'Outer Lords' were suspected of subversion by the Shogun, as they were originally the latter's adversaries.[463] No sooner was the first aim of ousting Shogunate

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[462] Scalapino, Robert A. (1969) 'Elections and Political Modernization in Prewar Japan', *Political Development in Modern Japan* by Robert E. Ward (ed.), Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 249-91, p. 291.
[463] Fitzgerald, C. P. (1974) *A Concise History of East Asia*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, p. 208; Fitzgerald contends that this 'fact was long concealed, or denied, by current opinion and official history in Japan'.

achieved, fissures emerged owing mainly to 'personal ambition and the grand designs' each individual within the oligarchy harboured.[464] Besides, there were fundamental problems in the very nature of the initial democratic movement:[465] (i) the parties in the 1880s operated in a 'static' environment, as the constitution had not been promulgated till then and they were unaware of its ultimate nature; consequently, their preparations were somewhat stymied; (ii) mutual bickering and internecine rivalries sapped the strength of the movement; (iii) democratic credentials of some party members were discredited by their involvement in subversive activities; (iv) some party members' reputation was besmirched as they deserted their parties for lucrative government posts;[466] disbanding of *Jiyuto* party in 1884 was partly due to this and the *Kaishinto* too suffered similarly; (v) none of the parties emerged due to (democratic) ideological underpinnings or popular/mass movements, rather they were the handiwork of vendetta; (vi) the government often responded by harsh measures to counter subversive activities which dampened the democratic spirit; and (vii) as the initial cabinets were neither responsible to the Diet nor were cabinet members from parties, the legislature remained at best a 'talking shop'. To this list, Nobutaka adds the non-entry of prominent urbanites and industrialists into the movement as a weak point. Furthermore, no new political symbols were proffered that could compete against the only available one, i.e. the emperor. With nationalism gaining ground, and most leaders themselves being staunchly nationalistic, the possibility of a

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[464] Hunter (1989) *op. cit.*, p. 207.

[465] Hunter (1989) *op. cit.*, 214-16.

[466] On this point, also see Ienaga, Saburo (1954) *History of Japan*, Tokyo: Japan Travel Bureau, p. 224.

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weak state seemed preposterous. All along, Japan's development was geared towards strengthening the state. As such, docility and obedience were emphasized as virtues for the populace. The *Imperial Rescript on Education* symbolized this, thereby, informing that the 'imperial state sought to control even people's innermost thoughts'; the people were made both politically and morally powerless.[467] Finally, the Meiji oligarchy survived due to its 'suppleness', i.e. their knack of granting concessions when confronted with insuppressible opposition/pressure, but without parting with substantial power, and, suppressing the movement wherever deemed fit and possible.[468] It is not without significance that in their overarching scheme of things, 'by instinct, if not by design, [they] fought shy of political or social reforms which might lead the Japanese people to think more of rights than of duties', as the overriding aim was to unify Japan and increase its wealth.[469]

Democratic transition as essentially the handiwork of actors/reforms

This view can be subsumed under the voluntarist account of Japan's transition. Typically, American and some Japanese texts have extolled Japan's modernization and democratization as an epiphenomenon of American excursions, thereof. Stated thus, Commodore Perry's arrival in Japan (1853) spurred modernization, and General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) completed the circle by converting

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[467] Abe *et al.* (1990) *op. cit.*, p. 202.
[468] Nobutaka (1950) *op. cit.*, 190, 191.
[469] Sansom (1946) *op. cit.*, p. vi.

Japan into a democracy.[470] MacArthur in characteristic egotistic style credited himself for the political transformation in Japan: the political reforms were 'probably the single most important accomplishment of the Occupation'.[471]

Some Japanese writers insist that democratization in Japan was 'imposed from above'; it was not the 'result of any internally generated change'.[472] Makoto Iokibe partly differs by arguing that democratization in the postwar period occurred due to popular will and not through outside pressure; in addition, he admits that postwar Japan's 'return to democracy' was 'made concrete by the Allied Occupation reforms'.[473] John Maki also subscribes to the view that Occupation policies played a role in Japan's democratic transition.[474]

This is an apt place to briefly consider the American policy towards postwar Japan, as some Japanese analysts too accept the affirmative role of Occupation's policies in Japan's democratization.[475] Occupation's most conspicuous feature was departure from the conventional maxim of 'woes to the vanquished and spoils to the victors'.[476] Concomitantly, the initial Occupation soldiers were of high morale and steeped in strict discipline. Their conduct

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[470] See Gluck (1992) *op. cit.*, p. xxv.

[471] MacArthur, Douglas (1965) *Reminiscences*, New York: Crest Books, p. 346. Also see Beasley, William G. (1969) *The Modern History of Japan*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2nd impression, p. 291. Beasley comments: MacArthur's reports 'consistently overstated the success of "democratizing" policies'.

[472] Fukutake, Tadashi (1989) *The Japanese Social Structure: Its Evolution in the Modern Century*, translated by Ronald P. Dore, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, p. 78. It is arguable, from another perspective whether, in the first place, democratization can be imposed – from 'above' or 'below'. This point shall be discussed elsewhere.

[473] Iokibe (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[474] Maki, John M. (1962) *Government and Politics in Japan*, London: Thames and Hudson, p. 8.

[475] See, for instance, Ishida, Takeshi (1971) *Japanese Society*, New York: Random House, pp. 26, 32. Also, see Fukutake, Tadashi (1974) *Japanese Society Today*, Tokyo: Tokyo University Press. Fukutake also opines that Occupation policy later shifted from 'experiment in democracy' to creating in Japan a 'bulwark against communism' with the incipience of Cold War (pp. 5, 134).

[476] *Cf.* Ward (1969) *op. cit.*, pp. 492-93.

quickly allayed Japanese misgivings about marauding victors.[477] Morishima describes the arrangement as a 'model Occupation'.[478]

The arrangement was neither adventitious nor out of serendipity. Rarely do would-be victorious powers pre-plan meticulously and methodically about administering to-be-ruled territories; this rarity transpired for Japan by USA. With the War continuing, American policy makers trained their officials in Japanese language and prepared monographs on administering Japan.[479] These efforts came handy when Japan was ultimately occupied. The Occupation policy mainly developed out of the *United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan* (August 29, 1945) and the *Basic Initial Post-Surrender* (November 8, 1945). The coordinated efforts resulted in various reforms. (1) *Demilitarization:* Military organizations were disbanded and military elements were purged. Political prisoners were freed and tyrannical laws, repealed. (2) *Constitutionalism:* A new constitution was enshrined. (3) *Political reforms:*

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[477] On the other hand, the Americans too may have changed their views about Japanese as 'fanatics' who fight to the finish. However, since the American troops began landing in a Tokyo airfield from August 27, 1945 onwards, there was no Japanese combat with the former. This is despite the fact that there did appear to be reasons for such Japanese reaction: (i) medieval warrior tradition was binding – triumph or death (ii) the Japanese were never defeated in any war (iii) no alien had set foot on their soil except as a guest (iv) their land was sacred (v) the emperor was a representative of Divinity, if not divine (vi) their 'exaltation of the fatherland was not patriotism but frenzy' (vii) American military had wrought immense misery and destruction on the Japanese. Yet, the reaction of the Japanese ('silent, immobile, docile, to all appearances even deferential') was 'incredible, almost inconceivable', almost like a 'clinical phenomenon in abnormal psychology'. See Peffer, Nathaniel (1989) *The Far East: A Modern History*, 1st Indian reprint, Delhi: Surjeet Publications, p. 447.

[478] Morishima (1982) *op. cit.*, p. 158.

[479] For a balanced view on the theme, see Ward, Robert E. (1969) 'Reflections on the Allied Occupation and Planned Political Change in Japan', *Political Development in Modern Japan* by Robert E. Ward (ed.), Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 477-535, p. 525. Ward states that the Occupation policies represent 'instances of intelligent and realistic planning'. At the same time, he also reckons that they were not 'prescient and practicable' in all respects, which in open systems can be granted. In point of fact, they had shortcomings, too. Yet, 'on the whole they were soundest in the areas of long-range *democratization* and the basic structure and authority of the Occupation'; italics added.

These reforms abolished autocratic governmental functioning. In accordance, parliamentary system was entrenched with the House of Representatives as the supreme legislative body. An elected House of Councillors was also established though with a subordinate status. The prime minister's selection was to be through the House of Representatives by Diet members. Further, the bureaucracy's subservience to the prime minister was ensured. To intensify judicial norms, a Supreme Court was instituted as a medium for judicial review of legislation. Assorted legislations were also enacted to serve as a springboard for the main reforms. (4) *Educational reforms:* These aimed at diluting the 'elitist flavour' of higher-level education. Textbooks were revised and jingoistic passages excised. A shift was emphasized 'from rote memory to work and indoctrination to thinking for oneself'.[480] (5) *Economic reforms:* These included dissolution of *zaibatsus* or economic conglomerates and setting up frameworks for free flourishing of economy. (6) *Labour reforms:* These included freedom to form labour unions. They aimed at empowering peasantry and industrial labour. (7) *Land reforms:* Absentee land ownership was banned and farm sizes were proportionally reduced, thereby, rendering the peasantry, in some measure, egalitarian. A 'reverse course' or backtracking in reforms occurred due to the impending Cold War, but the basic framework relatively endured.[481] The governance could well be described as 'benevolent despotism'.

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[480] Reischauer, Edwin O. (1970) *Japan: The Story of a Nation*, (4th edition), New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 196.
[481] See Hunter (1989) *op. cit.*, p. 12, wherein she says: 'the pattern of Japan's postwar history owes much to Occupation policy'.

Analysis: SCAP headed by MacArthur did launch a broad spectrum of political, social and economic reforms which had been conceived of in advance by the US policy makers and, in the implementation of reforms, MacArthur did possess discretionary powers. While the reforms have survived and largely been assimilated by the Japanese, assimilation rarely occurs in a vacuum. Sheer benevolence or malevolence of regimes is an unsure guide of reforms' success. Mikhail Gorbachev's benevolence and his *glasnost/perestroika* policies could not extricate USSR out of its problems. Conversely, even tyranny has its limits in delivering reforms. The communist diktat over E. Europe showed its fissures visibly in 1989, but cracks pre-existed. In a like vein, Japan's case too should be closely scrutinized than simply considering the unleashing of American reforms. Even if it is granted that the US was a 'benign' victorious power, can this alone be the locus of Japan's transition? Such a view ignores that society being open, Japan could have probably reverted to past practices, such as aggrandizement, or reneged on the reforms in the post-Occupation era, i.e. after 1952 (see figure below).

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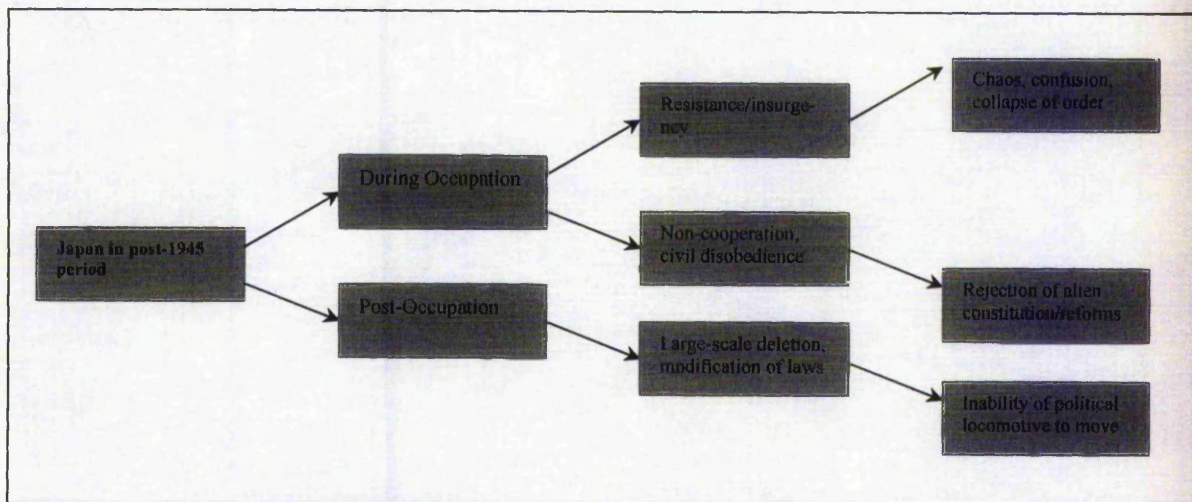
Fig. 1 Depiction of probable alternatives in post-1945 Japan

Besides, 'what is selectively advantageous' for one country may be simply 'ruinous for another'.[482] It is only in retrospect that the following picture seems alluring: step 1 – US pre-plans Occupation, and, step 2 – most pre-planned reforms are implemented successfully. To this picture must also be added a stroke of brush that this was an open-ended experiment, wherein, outcomes were uncertain and, unlike closed experiments, variables, scarcely controllable. That the objectives were, more or less, realized was *one* possibility *before* the experiments commenced. The non-retrogression of Japan subsequently makes the democratic picture brighter, but this merits more attention. What merits inspection is, how in the first place did the system continue, along with the 'alien' reforms, even after the Occupation ceased.

It is also a fact that during Occupation, Japan's political apparatus was not dismantled in its entirety. Despite American anticipatory planning, the difficulty in administering a culturally/linguistically unfamiliar country led to

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retaining the local civil/bureaucratic structure, thereby maintaining continuity too.[483] The Occupation commands were implemented via the local machinery.[484] At Occupation's inception due to shortage of military government personnel, it was decided that instead of directly controlling the Japanese, the Japanese government would be retained to serve as the medium of control.[485] This shifts focus to Japanese bureaucratic paraphernalia and its capabilities. Cultural continuity and cultural properties in play at that time also need to be reckoned with.[486] There are thus limits to what a foreign establishment can achieve on its own.[487] There were more elements of continuity. For instance, the conservative

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[482] Sahlins, Marshall D. (1968) 'Evolution: Specific and General', *Evolution and Culture* by Marshall D. Sahlins, *et al.* (eds.), 5th printing, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, pp. 12-44, p. 26.

[483] See Zhukov, Y.M. (ed.) *The Rise and Fall of the Gunbatsu: A Study in Military History*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, pp. 178-82. After the Occupation, the 'Japanese war-time state machine remained intact and continued to function under US control both during and after the surrender...The Cabinets of Prince Higashikuni, Baron Kijuro Shidehara, Shigeru Yoshida and others, that replaced one another, were composed of rabid reactionaries. In one way or another, members of these Cabinets had been responsible for the past policy of war and aggression and they did all they could to preserve the socio-political and economic basis of militarism'. One may disagree with such strong views on count of ideological differences that come into play due to authorship; yet, it cannot be denied that with the turn of 1940s, when Soviet Union was perceived as the 'bulwark of international communism' (and an adversary), by the US, Japan was perceived of less or no threat. This enabled 'most double-dyed reactionaries' to continue in Japan's political machinery. In addition to such leaders, the lower level bureaucratic staff was mostly Japanese. This further underscores the point that there was some degree of continuity between the past and present of the contemporary period.

[484] *Cf.* Ward (1969) *op. cit.*, p. 527. Ward contends that what success the SCAP enjoyed at the local level was mainly due to the 'the efficacy of Tokyo's centralized controls throughout the country [that is] precisely the phenomenon that SCAP was seeking to destroy'.

[485] Tiedemann (1955) *ibid.*, p. 83.

[486] See Najita, Tetsuo (1974) *Japan: The Intellectual Foundations of Modern Japanese Politics*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 142. Najita holds that Pacific War did not dissolve 'tradition' in the 'diffuse meaning' of the term. 'Loyal commitment to ethical and aesthetic ideals and service to persons and efforts greater than the particular self remained values central to Japanese culture'. Thus and so, Japan's transition cannot be explicated merely through what transpired immediately in the post-1945 era. Japan's past, and the concomitant social powers and properties, too had a role in it.

[487] In Iraq, the US command has to rely upon local administrative apparatus which then brings its own powers/properties into play. Moreover, receptivity to reforms is also a pertinent factor. Compare the non-receptivity in some quarters in Iraq to the reforms proposed by US to the broad receptivity in post-1945 Japan to US reforms during the Occupation. *Cf.* Pyle, Kenneth (1981) *The Making of Modern Japan*, 1st Indian reprint, Delhi: Surjeet Publications, p. 153.

parties drew much of their leadership from former bureaucrats, especially so after the post-war period. Besides, even the pattern of parties in the post-war period depicted a resemblance to the pre-war period: two 'conservative parties, the Liberals and the Democrats, both with pre-war roots, re-emerged', as also did the Socialists in an amalgamation of pre-war left-wing parties.[488] As for MacArthur, he seems to loom as a larger than life character in the entire episode. That his credentials were far from immaculate is not an altogether missing viewpoint. An observer opines that SCAP cultivated a 'bureaucratic, inefficient, dictatorial, vindictive and at times corrupt' administration. Moreover, not all reforms had beneficial effects. MacArthur pushed deconcentration, i.e. ending zaibatsu monopolies. This move was condemned by authorities in Washington as being anti-capitalist. Some initial measures indeed were unfavourable to Japan's economy.[489]

Japan's transition thus seems a narrative of sequence of events in and through agents. Yet, a 'narrative of sequence of events' tends to 'create the illusion that epochal theories are being substantiated'. By assuming a particular event or actor as a cause, the remaining sequence is simply deemed additive.[490] Sequential passage of events as an exegetical device is doubtful, as it concerns itself only with episodes and not the intermeshed causal chains. This results in an incomplete theoretical analysis of the complexly structured social mosaic.

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[488] Pyle (1981) *op. cit.*, p. 171.
[489] Schaller, Michael (1985) *The American Occupation of Japan. The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 112, 113; 139.
[490] Stinchcombe (1978) *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 11.

It would not be out of context here to consider the viewpoint that whilst democracy was initiated in Japan, it was 'difficult for the "gift" of democracy to be accurately appreciated'. Fukutake proffers eight reasons:[491] (i) the passive resistance of the (remaining) ruling class; (ii) people had no 'ground soil of experience in which to root the new ideas'; (iii) democracy contrasted with the 'familistic value system' to which the Japanese had been 'bred in the bone'; (iv) extreme poverty hampered the wholesome exercise of democratic liberties; (v) Japanese knew 'only the ethical principles of convention, reinforced by the ethics courses in schools which stressed "don'ts" rather than "dos"'; (vi) respect for human rights – central to democracy – did not augur individualism in Japan, but only promoted selfishness which existed latently, fostered by the previous regimes; (vii) with the onset of Cold War, the Occupation functioning became less in terms of 'an experiment in democracy', and much more in terms of 'an anti-Communist base'; correspondingly, purge ordinances were amended, 'purgees' were allowed to return, thereby, strengthening the ruling (conservative) strata; and (viii) Japanese who had been strictly reared in the prewar atmosphere, found 'the unrestrained behavior of the so-called *après-guerre* generation' insupportable.

Fukutake's claim is not without merit. It may be granted that 'accurate' appreciation of democracy did not initially occur in Japan. Yet, the fact remains that democratic functioning, at no point in time, capsized. Even in established democracies, all actors may not be having a full perception of import of democracy. The point then for exploration is that despite these ostensible

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[491] Fukutake (1989) *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

imperfections, how exactly Japan's democratic transition occurred. What factors enabled it? Doubtless, there is more to Japan's transition than meets the eye.

Democratic transition as the outcome of new constitution

Japan's transition is partly attributable to the constitution, promulgated in 1947. Nakane believes that democracy succeeded in Japan because the Japanese found it a 'useful term for demeaning the old "feudal" or "authoritarian" pattern of the Japanese social and political system'.[492] This assuredly would have been unfeasible without a concomitant change, in some measure, of the material set-up, such as the constitution; the constitution did play a role in setting into motion new set of images which were to be aspired for. Here was a document that could serve as a motif for demarcating the postwar period from the prewar period in clear terms. Another Japanese observer, viz. Fukutake also judges the *document* to be a 'democratic peace constitution'.[493]

Altogether, the new Japanese constitution comprised of 11 chapters and 103 articles. The constitution proclaimed that 'sovereign power resides with the people, [and that the] emperor shall be the symbol of the State…deriving his position from the will of the people'. The constitution was essentially US-inspired and *ipso facto* contained provisos reflective of its democratic ethos. Thus to imbue a legislative touch, article 41 of the constitution stated that Diet was the 'highest organ of state power'; it was also the 'sole law-making organ of the state'. The Diet was to consist of a House of Representatives and a House of

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[492] Nakane (1970) *op. cit.*, p. 143.
[493] Fukutake (1989) *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 83. He also adds that due to Cold War, the 'spirit of the established democratic peace constitution was' however 'to be radically amended by *conservative* forces'; original emphasis.

Councillors. Similarly, judiciary was vested with wide powers. As per article 81, the Supreme Court was the 'court of last resort with power to determine the constitutionality of any law, order, regulation or official act'. As per (unique) article 9 or the 'peace-clause', Japan renounced its sovereign right to wage war. The US-inspired fundamental rights included: The citizens' right to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness' (article 13); 'All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations, because of race, creed, sex, social status, or family origins' (article 14); 'No person shall be convicted or punished in cases where the only proof against him is his own confession' (article 38).

In addition to imbuing a democratic structure to central government, local government was also sought to be reformed: prefectural governorships and other local institutions thus became elective bodies.

Thus and so, the constitution was the touchstone of a democratic system. To ensure the viability of the constitution, the social framework was simultaneously sought to be re-chiselled to sustain its spirit. Wide-ranging complementary reforms were unleashed relating to education, industry, economy, land, agriculture and labour, amongst others. These reforms elevated the constitution beyond a cosmetic artefact and suffused it with dynamism. An important legal reform was the recognition of the individual as the basic unit than the hitherto 'household' or *ie*. The Japanese Government was also directed to stop teaching Shintoism in schools, and end State support to Shinto shrines.

Analysis: Analyzing retrospectively, Japan's constitution, since its inception, has served as a bulwark of democracy. Japanese democracy can be said to have passed its litmus test via its free, fair and regular elections. On the obverse side, analyzing non-retrospectively, the following points demand and deserve attention. (1) Constitutions generally are the culmination of a social process rooted in some ideals. The participators in these processes, by and large, are aware of these ideals and, given opportune times—upheavals, social movements, or even peaceful developments—translate them into constitutional provisions. The American constitution resulted from such local aspirations. (2) Japan's constitution, at its initiation, was the crowning-glory of the Americans in Japan rather than the Japanese. There is a surreal touch to Japan's constitution: imposed by the victors over the vanquished with many provisos striking no chord with Japan's customs/mores (which intriguingly has still endured). (3) If a constitution's translatability were a smooth affair, countries like Bangladesh[494] would be much better-off for its lofty ideals remain merely in black and white, i.e. in letter than spirit, and, 'collapsed' states, such as Kosovo could rejuvenate themselves as well, by sheerly adopting a constitution. (4) Where constitutions have synonymy with social practices, they become evolving and dynamic artefacts. The argument of 'cognitive dissonance'[495] also works in some cases, as in India. Yet, the argument underscores the situatedness of practices. (5)

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[494] See Bangladesh's constitution at http://www.bangladeshgov.org/pmo/constitution/index.htm, retrieved on May 8, 2004.

[495] See Festinger, Leon (1957) *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, Stanford: Stanford University Press. The thesis articulates the synonymity between beliefs and action. As such, by following a set of democratic actions, people unfamiliar with them can subsequently develop such beliefs.

Believing that constitutions have proper powers to themselves is tantamount to reifying them. To paraphrase Alexander Wendt, constitutions are what people make of them in particular contexts. In any case, not all provisions of any constitution thrive equally well: some take precedence than others; and some are more viable than others. Example: In the Indian constitution, a Directive Principle of State Policy, such as free education for children below 14 years still remains unachieved.

With the *familiar* 'background' conditions, *au fond*, wanting in Japan, the relative success of democracy becomes intriguing due to this omission. There seems to be more in the Japanese ensemble than meets the eye. The key question then is: What else made Japan's transition possible? What facilitated the success of the document itself? As the constitutional argument lacks concrete answer to these questions, the *stag* approach shall be employed to elicit replies.

Democratic transition as a reflection of Confucian ethics

Japan's transition is also considered as eventuating from Confucian ethics. Originating in China, Confucian ethics influenced the neighbouring countries, including littoral states like Japan. The first point for examination is whether the Confucian ethics inculcated by Japanese remained cognate to the original brand.

Of the various virtues which Confucius propagated—benevolence (*jen*), justice (*i*), ceremony (*li*), knowledge (*chih*) and faith (*hsin*)—benevolence was the most vital. Confucius also believed in the inherent goodness of 'man'; harmonious relations between family-members were a manifestation of the same.

When these harmonious relations transcended the confines of a family, and extended to other humans, acme of social order was attained, i.e. harmonic bliss. Confucius rejected a constitutional form of government, as it dispensed with the (desired) sense of shame by maintaining order through imposing laws, whose infringement would invite penalty. Hence, people become engrossed with avoiding punishment than with morality.

Although Confucian ethics originated in China, Japan's relative insularity was germane for a local amalgam. A prime modification of the tenets was the preference of loyalty over benevolence: subjects' loyalty to one's lord was to be absolute.[496] In the *Hundred Articles* or the *Legacy of the Ieyasu*, a severe code of conduct was formulated which emphasized the 'unquestioning performance of duty to superiors as the highest goal of life – at the expense of personal desire or even familial obligations'.[497] Thus, loyalty 'in conjunction with filial piety and duty to one's seniors, formed a trinity of values which regulated within society the hierarchic relationships based on authority, blood ties and age respectively'.[498] The individual was thereby subordinated to the group. The motif was often invoked to garner loyalty for the medieval lord/nation. This held true for modern Japan, too. Two items from modern Japanese history should illustrate

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[496] On this point, see Nitobe, Inazo (1974) *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*, Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, p. 84. *Bushido* literally means 'military's knights ways'. The *bushido* code is somewhat unwritten like the English Constitution; it has had a profound impact on Japanese society.

[497] Bendix, Reinhard (1978) *Kings or People: Power and the Mandate to Rule*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 437. The *sankin-kotai* (double attendance) system {see Appendix} too was interpreted in Confucian terms. Bendix remarks: it extolled the loyalty men 'in each rank owed to their superiors, from the shogun's obeisance to the emperor down through the ranks of the daimyo and samurai to the obeisance each son owed to his father' (*ibid.*). Consequently, the whole social fabric was tied down tidily in a regimented fashion.

the point. This trait, i.e. loyalty, figured as the first precept in the *Imperial Precepts to the Soldiers and Sailors, 1882*, thereby, underlining its significance in society. In the next century, during the Second War, this trait found its practical manifestation in the *kamikaze* fighters who smashed their airplanes into the 'enemy' ships, thereby, laying down their lives for the emperor/state.

The second point for examination is the role these ethical precepts played in Japan's transition? To respond to this, another question needs to be raised about Japan's institution of the emperor.

An intriguing feature of the Occupation was that the emperor was not held culpable for the War crimes, although the War was fought in his name. Instead of being convicted in the Tokyo War tribunal, his reign's continuance was permitted, albeit with two modifications. One, he was stripped of his divine ordainment and, two, instead of remaining a sovereign, he came to symbolize Japan's unity. This episode is deemed significant from the Confucian perspective of Japan's transition. Even earlier, during the Meiji Restoration, the '(i)ntelligent and the educated' Japanese were aware that the emperor's government was actually oligarchy's rule, but they accepted the same, as any act of opposing the oligarchy would be deemed as opposing the emperor; this, however, would be nothing short of sacrilege, as the latter was 'a sovereign, immensely respected, almost worshipped, heir to a dynasty which had reigned since record ran,

[498] Morishima (1982) *op. cit.*, p. 7; also see Morris-Suzuki, Tessa (1996) *The Technological Transformation of Japan: From the Seventeenth to the Twenty-first Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 3; and, Hunter (1989) *op. cit.*, p. 66.

completely identified with the national traditions and even with the national religion'.[499]

The continuation of emperorship in the midst of a humiliating defeat was symbolic of cultural unity/continuity, as the Japanese were not deprived of a sense of identity. At Japan's surrender, the emperor called upon his subjects to 'bear the unbearable, endure the unendurable, and seek peace'; he also opined: 'I judge that the Americans are quite well disposed toward us'.[500] Put differently, the ethical principle of loyalty stirred the Japanese 'subjects' to cooperate with the US. According to Masataka Kosaka, the 'success of the postwar reforms stems from the historical continuity maintained'.[501] Another commentator opines: 'Had the Japanese monarchy been abolished by the Occupation authority, postwar history would have witnessed traditional nationalists joining the ranks of America's enemies and both extremes of the political spectrum forming anti-American movements…[whereas] the majority of the Japanese supported the Occupation policies and regarded the United States as a friend'.[502] This viewpoint is further corroborated by another analyst, viz. Kenneth B. Pyle. He suggests, by citing evidence, that Douglas MacArthur had concluded that the imperial institution was necessary for maintaining political stability and

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[499] Fitzgerald (1974) *ibid.*, p. 209.

[500] See Iokibe, Makato (1992) 'Japan Meets the United States for the Second Time', *Showa: The Japan of Hirohito* by Carol Gluck *et al.* (eds.), New York: W. W. Norton & Company, pp. 91-106, p. 98, 99.

[501] Kosaka, Masataka (1992) 'The Showa Era', *Showa: The Japan of Hirohito* by Carol Gluck *et al.* (eds.), New York: W. W. Norton & Company, pp. 27-47, p. 43. Also, see Hall, John W. (1969) 'A Monarch for Modern Japan', *Political Development in Modern Japan* by Robert E. Ward (ed.), Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 11-64, p. 64. Amongst presenting other views, Hall also proffers the view that in the post-war period, the emperor has 'literally come to embody the new determination of the Japanese to remain a peaceful democracy'.

[502] Iokibe (1992) *ibid.*, p. 106.

facilitating reforms; otherwise, there could be 'catastrophic consequences', such as resistance, unrest which, in turn, would require millions of (Allied) troops for many years, as also recruiting and importing hundreds of thousands, civil service officials. All this, then, would be a tremendous strain.[503] It goes without saying that Washington finally accepted such 'determined advice' from MacArthur.

Analysis: There is no gainsaying that neo-Confucian ethics played *a* role in the emergent social system. It also is a fact that in Japan, imperial loyalty was conflated with filial piety. Indeed, emperor's subjects were stated to be his children; the term employed for the subjects was *sekishi* (infants).[504] This partly explains subjects' intense loyalty to the emperor. Nonetheless, Confucian ethics, as a stand-alone explicator of Japan's transition is insufficient. As has been the case throughout Japanese history, 'outward appearance and real facts in government [have] rarely agreed'.[505] Instance 1: Whilst the Meiji Restoration occurred in the name of the emperor, the real reins of power were in the hands of the oligarchy. Instance 2: Even later, the emperor's exalted status, for all practical purposes, was hardly manifest during the Second War, as his real position was one of passive receptivity.[506] Moreover, the other Confucian-ethic countries in the region, including China, still have an authoritarian streak. Even where democracy has made a foothold, such as in S. Korea or Taiwan, nepotism

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[503] Pyle (1981) *op. cit.*, pp. 156-57.
[504] Smith, Robert J. (1985) *Japanese Society: Tradition, Self and the Social Order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 32.
[505] Fitzgerald (1974) *ibid.*, p. 208.
[506] On this point, see Reischauer, *op. cit.*, pp. 158 *et seq.*

is rampant. This then begs for a deeper explication of social processes[507] which, in addition to Confucian ethics, facilitated Japan's transition.

Views of John Maki on Japan's transition

According to John Maki,[508] the circumstances that enabled a peaceful democratic revolution, i.e. from authoritarianism to democracy include (a) defeat and loss in the war (b) the accompanying turmoil and dislocation (c) 'an enlightened occupation' (d) the Japanese society was equipped with the basic institutions for constituting a modern state, and (e) a populace 'generally willing to reject the discredited authoritarianism, and to embark on the construction of a new democracy'.

Analysis: The portrayal is quite sanguine, but will it be able to stand the test of counter-questioning? By way of first counter-argument, Iraq presents an almost comparable case, except perhaps for §(d) above. The rather messy picture with killings of innocent people at regular intervals, not forgetting the lack of basic amenities and civil disorder would inform that causality is a much more intricate issue. That an attitude of the populace rejecting authoritarianism necessarily fosters democracy is a *non sequitur*. It is more a post hoc construction and still more precisely, it commits the fallacy of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, i.e. after this (which could be a particular event, such as a democratic attitude amongst

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[507] On a somewhat different plane, arguments have been proffered that Asian Tigers' (S. Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) advancement is due to neo-Confucian ethics. This seems anachronistic, as it is precisely this trait which was considered to impede progress in classical China. For an overview, see Spybey, Tony (1992) *Social Change, Development and Dependency: Modernity, Colonialism and the Development of the West*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 201.
[508] Maki (1962) *op. cit.*, p. 8.

sections of populace), therefore because of this. A temporal sequence is thus reduced to a causal relation. As said, Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, and Pakistan stand out as counterexamples. What then begs for is this – ideas of anti-authoritarianism amongst the populace are useful, but *what else* is there which makes democratic transitions possible? A complicated question would seem to call for an equally complicated answer.

Political participation in rural Japan

This section briefly traces the growth of political participation in rural Japan. The subject is inescapable, since spotlight is also on 'grassroots democracy' in the democratic discourse. The section should familiarize the unacquainted with such political developments, but the latter is not so much a causal factor in Japan's democratic transition, as much as it tells about the formation of a particular political structuring at the rural level. Even this is informative since it tracks the compass of transformation in rural political development and the degree of role it could have played in democratic transition, both directly and indirectly.

According to Kurt Steiner[509] 'political development' of a society contains both institutional and psychological components. That is to say, the concept should inform about institutions and political orientations of a community. The focus of attention then is on the level of national and local political processes. In a transitional society, the degree of democratization at the two levels, viz. the

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[509] Steiner, Kurt (1969) 'Popular Political Participation and Political Development in Japan: The Rural Level', *Political Development in Modern Japan* by Robert E. Ward (ed.), Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 213-247. Steiner's work forms the basis for argument in the section above.

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national and the local, may be inconsonant with each other. It could be due to the fact that whilst the national leaders emphasize (creating) national awareness at the state or central level, the local level political processes may be parochial and infused with sub-national tendencies, i.e. non-democratic features.

In Japan, too, the local level political process, **in the pre-Meiji period**, was parochial. It was reflected in varying degrees in that (i) the populace made few, if any, demands on the political system as a whole (ii) they expected 'little for themselves from its output' (iii) they had no 'sense of active political participation' nor could they provide substantial inputs, and (iv) the majority of the population hardly related to the 'political system as a whole'. Allegiance to Japan as a political entity was generally lacking. The theory of sovereign emperor did prevail, but the only rulers most of the people knew during Tokugawa Japan were the shogun and the daimyos. The daimyos owed allegiance to the shogun, but managed their own affairs through their retainers. The samurais, on their part, confined their loyalty to the fief lord. Due to these reasons, in pre-Meiji Japan, 'popular orientation toward Japan as a national political system was minimal'. Even so, much as the fief government's decrees were accepted and obeyed, their importance was minimized by sayings like *tenka hatto, mikka hatto*, i.e. 'government laws are but three days laws'. The general attitude of the villagers was one of passivity.

In the **post-Meiji period**,[510] the national leaders endeavoured toward creating a modern state by transforming the (rural) parochial political culture into

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[510] Some of the important legislations pertaining to the subject matter include Family Registration Decree (1871), Three New Laws (1878), City Code and the Town and Village Code (1888).

a 'subject political culture'. The multiple fiefs were perceived as symbols of sub-national identifications and loyalties. Hence, the fiefs were abolished in 1871; new governmental units, viz. prefectures, replaced them. It is not that the local populace was wholly unruffled when it came to accepting reforms. Decrees, such as, reforming the calendar, vaccination, establishing government schools, land surveys, numbering of houses were often greeted with rioting. In institutional terms, these exercises meant 'centralization and the bureaucratization of administration'.

For better administration, districts (*ku*) were created, though these were subsequently abolished for their impracticality. Reckoning with ground reality, towns and villages were accepted as the basic administrative units. Village affairs were gradually bifurcated into the (i) official and (ii) unofficial sphere. In the former, the villagers acted under bureaucratic supervision, through the new village assemblies (*sonkai*) with *kocho* supervising the affairs; in the latter, the (remaining) village affairs continued with minimal bureaucratic interference through traditional leaders and village meetings (*yoriai*). The decision-making mode presented a sharp contrast between the two domains: in the former, through majority vote, while in the latter, through unanimity. The chief executives, i.e. mayors of towns (*machi*) and villages (*mura*) were to be indirectly elected by the town or village assemblies and, thereupon, confirmed in their offices by the governor.

The local government system of 1888 was introduced with the advice of German experts, but it also contained some elements of compromise between the

ruling elites at the national level and the local level. Villages could thus retain their 'separate property or establishments', such as, forests, meadows, wells, etc. This communal property was christened as 'property ward(s)', though in common parlance it continued to be referred to as *buraku*.

Yamagata Aritomo, the mastermind behind the Meiji local government believed that such institutionalization would fulfil a patriotic obligation, as the local populace would be rendering service to the state by administering local affairs. In addition, this procedure would enable the local people to know the difficulties involved in manning such affairs and this would serve at least a double advantage – stymie ideological movements and party strife at the lower level.

The new system did not fully achieve the initial goal of 'subject' political culture. On a positive note, it did keep the countryside stable and peaceful. An important mechanism in this entire operation was the establishment of centralized school system, which provided a link between the national state system and the local people.

The system was somewhat constricted too. One, it mainly pertained to performing national functions. Two, the local executive was only an emissary of central government. Three, popular participation was insignificant.

In the **ultranational period**, it gradually became evident that the central leaders' exhortations of 'local self-government' were rather ineffectual due to *buraku* parochialism and lack of village autonomy. The second decade of the twentieth century witnessed agrarian unrest also. The *buraku* was successively

given more recognition, as well as an array of tasks to enable commingling between the people at the local level with those in the larger social fabric.

With the Second War looming large, the state required further mobilization of the people. The national spiritual mobilization (1937) was a means to achieve the objective of mobilization in a more activist fashion. Significantly, the schemes devised in 1940 by the *Imperial Rule Assistance Association* employed the *buraku* as the basic organizational unit.

All said and done, the movement failed to 'separate the individual's political orientations from the diffused solidarities of the village community'.[511]

In **postwar Japan**, the Occupation policy reckoned with local self-government or 'grassroots democracy' as an important ingredient for overall democratization. The Local Autonomy Law replaced the Meiji local government codes in 1947. This (a) eased central controls (b) made the mayor subject to election by the electorate and accountable to the assembly (c) enhanced the decision-making ability of the local assembly, and (d) introduced popular initiatives like recall of mayors and assemblymen. Despite this, the civic interest in the village as a unit remained weak, as the villagers viewed themselves 'primarily as members of *buraku*'.[512]

Steiner estimates that in some countries, nation building oft is a problem due to a fracture between the range of political developments at the rural level and the national level, but in Japan the extant circumstances were conducive for

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[511] Steiner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 240.
[512] Steiner (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 241.

the creators of a modern Japan. These circumstances, in conjunction with others, facilitated initiating change in the political domain.

4.5 Lessons for democratic transitions

Having analyzed some interpretations of Japan's transition, the insights of Chapter Two are now invoked for its summative assessment.

➢ There is predominant emphasis on the 'present tense', such as from the perspectives of (i) constitution, at time t_1, playing a role in democratization (ii) agents singularly contemplating, introducing and producing changes vis-à-vis democratization, at a certain historical period. These perspectives focus mainly on the period of 1945 and thereabouts. What other causal properties were in play is completely side-stepped.

➢ Where longer spans are considered, such as from the perspective of Confucian ethics causing democratic transition, uni-linear unfolding of events is accentuated which reduces causation to antecessor and successor events.

➢ In all interpretations, the causal chain directing democratization is monocausal than multi-causal. The simplicity so achieved is not without explanatory cost. This becomes conspicuous when in other countries, purportedly liberal constitutions (as in Bangladesh), democratic attempts by many agents (as in Pakistan) have customarily failed to deliver. Monocausal chains in explicating democratic transitions thus seem extremely limiting.

➢ Emergent powers/properties are overlooked resulting in overstressing empiricism.

➤ Crediting Douglas MacArthur for ushering in democracy seems an over-exaggerated viewpoint. It is a typical voluntarist account, ensconced in the belief that actors have unlimited powers and can perform heroic deeds in a libertine fashion; this viewpoint disregards the inherited social ensemble along with its inherent properties, some of which may be constrictive.

➤ The constraints/enablements of past structural powers/properties are discounted.

➤ The role of unconscious dispositions and, how they impinge upon social processes, such as democratic transitions is underestimated or altogether omitted.

Stated thus, the commonly held view—a 'new' democratic system was laid over the 'old' social classes/structure(s), in Japan, sweeping away the military state[513]— is contentious. That Japan's debacle led to the detectable crumbling of the militarist establishment – at least, by way of trials, executions, incarceration, and purges – can be granted, but the dichotomization of 'old' and 'new' in the twinkling of an eye during 1945, is a moot point. If for the sake of argument, the preceding statement of supersession is accepted, what demands further questioning is that upon apparent installation of a 'new' system, where did the 'old' social structure go? As overnight social transformation is unexampled, the possibility of the old system going away lock, stock and barrel is questionable. Old structures continue to wield their powers and properties in varying degrees through the self-same agents. This is not to deny that humans are malleable, which they certainly are, depending upon contexts. The view stated hereinbefore

treats culture 'as derivative and not basic'. It overlooks the view that some 'traditional' institutions and practices can coexist with 'modern' ones for lengths of period and the former can be of 'great positive value' to the modernization process.[514] Thus, continuity along with change *is* pertinent for both social evolution and democratic transitions. Cultural factors form the core of this argument, which oftentimes are disregarded.[515]

A related and relevant point here also is that subjects reproduce or transform social structures rather than creating them. This aspect needs to be mined for explanatory nuggets in Japan's transition. In summation, without rendering any of the afore-explanative exercises obsolete, the aim is to make the *stag* approach a starting point for reordering these views by importing insights of realism. The exploration then should be, to employ Lefebvre's phrase, about what was 'silently developing in the hidden depths of time'[516] which eventually made democratic transition possible in Japan.

4.6 Japan's democratic transition – a Japanese perspective

The previous section has critically examined varied renderings of Japan's transition, but one considerable point still remains unexplained – how have the Japanese themselves viewed the transition *to* democracy? This is an apt place to understand what exactly democracy means to the people of Japan, in their own terminology. Is there any difference in such a conception from the commonly

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[513] Thomas, Roy (1989) *op. cit.*, p. xii.
[514] *Cf.* Burks, Ardath W. (1969) 'The Politics of Japan's Modernization: The Autonomy of Choice', *Political Development in Modern Japan* by Robert E. Ward (ed.), Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 537-575, pp. 538, 542.
[515] See, for example, Inglehart (1999) *op. cit.*, p. 119.

held conceptions? If yes, what does this signify? Are there any lessons for 'democratic transition' or its conceptualization? These issues are the focus of this section.

Instead of computing or gauging the collective estimation vis-à-vis democracy, the opinion of a couple of eminent Japanese analysts is presented below. This section begins by linking postwar Japan with prewar Japan by enumerating some common characteristics. Thereafter, it discusses the elemental structure of Japanese society and the concomitant psychological hue and, how this impinges upon notions of freedom and democracy.

It is only in the fitness of things that in assessing postwar democratization, which, arguably, did not commence *ab initio*, a link is provided with some characteristics of prewar Japan. A snapshot of prewar society's characteristics is provided by Koichi:[517] (i) A tradition 'rooted in the agrarian past', which valued 'harmony with others over self-expression and dignity of the individual'. This ultimately fostered unfaltering loyalty and unqualified identification with the social group. (ii) The feudal past combined with the legacy of territorial clans made the Japanese 'inward-looking and emotionalistic' which translated into a 'self-effacing attitude within the group spurred by a strong sense of shame'. (iii) The long authoritarian reign led to 'veneration of officialdom' and subordination of peoples' interests to those of bureaucracy. The bureaucrats were deemed as equal to the samurais, as well as the emperor's emissaries. This

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[516] Lefebvre, Henri (1984) *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, translated by Sacha Rabinovitch, reprinted with a new introduction by Philip Wander, New Brunswick: Transaction Publisher, p. 1.
[517] Koichi, Kishimoto (1999) *Politics in Modern Japan: Development and Organization*, Tokyo: Tokyo Echo Inc., pp. 5-6.

enabled the bureaucrats to push through industrialization and other nation-building policies during the Meiji era. (iv) The conventional adage – yield to the powerful – prevailed which drove the individual 'to go along with the crowd, to drift with the situation rather than take independent action, in order to preserve harmony'. This resulted in 'consensual' decision-making which, at times, blurred responsibility. The flip side was that those who went against the grain, invited ostracism. All these traits did play a salutary role in Meiji modernization for various reasons, but they were also the nation's 'Achilles heel' in shedding past practices. These deeply entrenched attitudes and proclivities not only exerted considerable influence on prewar politics, but played a role, in some degree, in the postwar politics also. The Occupation did not and could not have dented these attitudinal, cultural traits instantly. As Richard Koenigsberg forcefully argues that such culturally constituted ideas perform psychic work in the life of the adherents. They exist because they represent the fulfilment of psychological needs in a particular social matrix, just as culturally different ideas in another social matrix fulfil the psychological needs of those who embrace them. Ideologies and 'dominant discourses' allow people to 'encounter, work through and attempt to master fundamental desires, fantasies, conflicts and existential dilemmas'.[518] Some questions, specifically relating to Japan, arise here: What is the ordering of society in Japan? What role does this play at the mental level? What are its implications for democracy? The succeeding narrative attempts to unravel these riddles.

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[518] *Cf.* Koenigsburg, Richard, 'Why do Ideologies Exist: The Psychological Function of Culture' an on-line article at http://home.earthlink.net/~libraryofsocialscience/ideologies.htm, retrieved on

Inspected more closely, Japanese social organization or more accurately, the group organization reveals 'the vertical structuring principle' of a familistic state.[519] The same point can also be stated like this: 'a homogeneous society built on a vertical organizational principle'. Elaborating on this concept, Nobutaka clarifies that the vertical social structure (*tate*) is akin to a single bond between individuals in social relationships. The bond is unequal and inevitably leads to hierarchy. The differential ranking further differentiates personal links in terms of 'superior' and 'subordinate'.[520] Nobutaka further continues that every individual has a group to which s/he is most devoted. The chief function of such a social group is to provide 'social identity'. Ranking occupies a prime place in the groups and their grouping. 'In return for paternalistic leadership, the followers are obligated to show loyalty and devotion to the leader and to the group'. As a result, all action is directed toward the group and not 'calculated' in terms of an individual.[521]

Strong in-group feelings affect indifference and oftentimes latent hostility toward outsiders. The distinction between 'we' and 'they' thus seems quite intrinsic. Another result is the difficulty encountered by Japanese in relating to unknown people or strangers; to interact with the latter, a third party introduction becomes unavoidable. 'In effect, individuals cannot move easily from one group to another'. This renders arduous for the Japanese to maintain effectual voluntary

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9 August 2005.
[519] Nakane (1970) *op. cit.*, pp. 141; 149.
[520] Nobutaka (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 16.
[521] Nobutaka (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 18.

organizations, as it is improbable that they would be structured on the vertical principle.[522]

As is often the case, social structuring of a community is, very broadly, in reciprocally confirming relations with its psychological underpinnings. This holds true for Japan, too. Nobutaka Ike promotes the psychological concept of *amae*, as developed by the Japanese psychiatrist Takeo Doi,[523] and the bearing it has on Japanese society. In Japan, social organization based on vertical ties finds its counterpart in individual Japanese psychology. *Amae* is derived from the verb *amaeru* which, stated simply, has to do with dependency. The word is unique to Japanese language. Doi defines it thus: 'to depend on and to presume on another's love' or 'to seek and bask in another's indulgence'. George de Vos interprets it as the 'passive induction of nurturance [sic] towards one's self from others'.[524] Families and small groups provide the setting to the individuals for such nurturing, i.e. to engage in dependent behaviour. The social mosaic is so organized that the differentiation between public and private spheres is bleary. Privacy is material to an individual, as in W. Europe, having goals of self-realization and personal autonomy over and above the social groups and the family. In Japan, this would be extraordinary.[525] It is instructive to note that *Nihongo* (Japanese language) has no equivalent word for 'privacy'. The idea of 'public' is expressed by the word, *ko*, meaning 'prince'.

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[522] Ike (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 19. This is not the same as saying that voluntary organizations are non-existent in Japan. Voluntary organizations do exist and work in Japan.
[523] The theme is advanced in the book *Amae no Kozo* (structure of *amae*) published in 1971.
[524] Ike (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 21.
[525] Ike (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 22.

The concept of freedom in the manner it unfolds also has exceptional undertones. Ike remarks that the Western concept implies, very simply, that the individual asserts his/her freedom apart from the group. In Japan, this would be practically outlandish, as *amae* binds individuals to the group which, in turn, creates dependency feelings. Literally speaking, an individual who is already dependent cannot be realistically free. In view of this, the Japanese have an ambivalent attitude toward freedom. At one time, *jiyu* (freedom) implied freedom to engage in acts of *amae*; otherwise, it was frowned upon. Due to the current predominance of the Western concept, an ambivalent attitude has developed amongst the Japanese toward freedom.[526]

In such structuring, Chie commentates that the transformation from feudalism to democracy was not so much a structural or organizational one, as much as a 'change in the direction of the motion of energy within the same pipeline' and this energy was exerted by the same kinds of people.[527] Considering the situatedness of past social practices, Nakane defines democracy as a system 'that should take the side of, or give consideration to, the weaker or lower'. Democracy thus becomes (i) a device for 'maximum consultation' to enable decisions based on consensus, and (ii) a kind of 'communitarian sentiment' with key factor as cohesion within the group. Chie makes the case that in democratic functioning the meetings should be so conducted and concluded that unanimity remains supreme. No one should feel 'frustrated or dissatisfied' for not being consulted, as this weakens group unity and solidarity. Beneath this

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[526] Ike (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[527] Chie (1970) *op. cit.*, pp. 144-47

democratic vein, Nakane is aware that the old hierarchical structure silently lurks. This impinges upon decision-making which could actually be the outcome of influential member(s). A peculiar, perhaps unique, feature of Japanese social system is that a dominant group rather than the individual exercises power at the top.[528]

The social values, which impinge upon decision-making, are more than those that meet the eye. Chie submits that unlike other societies, in Japan, religion and philosophy have no consequential role. A curious feature of Japanese society – of people, in their daily life, can be subsumed under the rubric – a 'very human morality'. This generates the feeling 'I must do this because they are also doing it' or 'because they will laugh at me unless I do so'; this rules the life of individual persons 'with greater force than anything else and affects decision-making'.[529]

In view of the foregoing, the Japanese political system can be looked upon as a 'hybrid variety', as it draws on two different types of political, social and cultural traditions: the institutional framework, from the Western tradition, and the leaders and voters, from an insular tradition. The Western institutions do form the political architectonic, but a remarkable degree of continuity with the historical past is unmistakable in cultural values and the inner functioning of social institutions.[530]

The lesson from Japan's transition, tersely stated, is this. Democracy is a layered concept: at an institutional level, some concepts, processes may be

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[528] Nakane (1970) *op. cit.*, p. 146; 151.
[529] Nakane (1970) *op. cit.*, p. 150.

incorporated from other countries, and may be common at a broad level, but how the raw materials of change, i.e. people themselves interpret the change, how they operate in an environment to achieve that aim will be influenced by cultural factors, as at time t_1. That culture evolves and does not remain static is also part of the picture.

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[530] Kyogoku (1993) *op. cit.*, p. 226.

Chapter 5

Structure, time, agency and realism (STAR), and democratic transitions

This chapter proceeds in three steps. One, it briefly recapitulates the inadequacies of the non-realist or, more precisely the *non-relational* approaches towards democratic transition. Two, it enunciates the thesis' main working assumptions. Three, it prepares ground for constructing realist or *relational* modelling of democratic transitions. In this entire exercise, the research shall neither be a prison of past thoughts nor allow disciplinary boundaries to become prisons.

5.1 The inadequacies of the non-realist approaches

In grappling with and making meaning of social reality, a social scientist usually relies upon his/her experience. S/he perhaps has no other choice. Herein lies the possible source of *first-person-plural presumption*,

$$I \rightarrow n \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots (1)^{\phi}$$

This is to say, 'what I think for myself, holds true for others'[531] [as stated in the notation – from 'I' to all others (*n*)]. Not only is the social scientist overly credulous about introspection's reliability, but also attributes meaning to others in a cascading fashion. First hand experience is no vehicle of absolute certainty,

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$^{\phi}$ The main points of the chapter are marked numerically. The equations or notations therein do not follow mathematical rigorous norms. Wherever employed, they are annotated and should be understood thus; they provide the reader with a ready reference of the points made in this chapter.

as 'that which is derived from experience can again be annulled by experience'.[532] Correlatively, purely experiential accounts of democratic transitions are objectionable for sublating objective social structures. The latter can be appreciated by engaging the supra-experiential entities—ensemble of social relations, positions, 'habitus', etc.—which exert a causal influence on actual events. The non-relational accounts[533] are also deficient as they (i) are anchored to agents'—individual or collective—actions and behaviour; this however is incommensurable with the view that society is more than the aggregate of its constituents; (ii) reduce democratic exercise at forming associations – elections→freely elected governments→human rights/levels of education/wealth/urbanization, and so on; howbeit, correlations are not synonymous with the 'genetic' question of what makes democratic transitions possible; (iii) insufficiently negotiate with the 'deadweight' or social constraints of non-democratic societies, whereas, it is precisely from the womb of these that subsequent morphogenetic forms will take shape; and (iv) regard time as if it is in linear passage, whereas the requirement is of a differentiated exposition of time.

Resolution of these issues also demands and deserves attention of the unobservables.[534] Even so, a philosopher can 'only say as much as the

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[531] See Dennett, Daniel (1991) *Consciousness Explained*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co. p. 67. First-person-plural presumption is part of being human, but to remain moored to experiences is to be oblivious of other domains of complex social reality.

[532] Waltz (1979) *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[533] The non-relational accounts have also been referred to in Chapter 3.

[534] See chapter 1 of this thesis, wherein this issue ('unobservables') has been discussed. Also see Bradley, Francis H. (1893/1978) *Appearance and Reality: A Metaphysical Essay*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 474.

philosophical tools at his [sic] disposal can enable him to say'.[535] This brings to the fore the significance of realism, as its methodological tools can assist in understanding the unobservables in the social realm in a substantive manner. The empiricist/idealist penchant has remained resilient, in part, due to non-cognizance of such tools.

The next step then is to explore for answers in the right place. Just the way a 'mystery is a phenomenon that people don't know how to think about',[536] similarly, in the absence of realism or related methodological tools, there appear to be obstacles in circumventing empiricism/idealism. It is proposed that realism can remove such obstacles and, enrich the understanding of democratic transitions by charting the hitherto unexplored or hypo-emphasized realms.

5.2 The working assumptions

Is Margaret Archers' morphogenetic model adequate to explicate democratic transitions? As the model generically articulates social reproduction/transformation, it needs to be complemented to enhance its applicability to transitions. The desideratum then is canvassing what happens in the 'hidden depths of time' which causes transitions. The dictum—'the present is the key to the past'— is pertinent here. This allows generalizing by assuming that the processes occurring contemporaneously have their roots in the past.

The realist modelling is set out here with the following assumptions:

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[535] Bhaskar (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[536] Dennett (1991) *op. cit.*, p. 21.

'Punctuated equilibrium'

Societal morphogenesis,[537] in general, ensues from rapid bursts of transformation than gradual, incremental change. The former is often manifested in (α) rousing events such as revolutions, upheavals, *putsches*, etc. though not necessarily confined to them. Example: Russian Revolution (1917); and (β) momentous occasions, including peaceful swap of rulers, permitting changes whose outcomes may be immediate or lagged. Examples: Meiji Restoration (1868) with immediate results and Indian democracy (since 1950) with lagged results now manifest in profound social changes, i.e. after about 50 years. These mutations, depending upon contexts, get 'locked-in'[538] and perpetuate themselves. Thereupon, gradual changes too follow, but generally within the newly metamorphosed entity. Example: Since the American Revolution (1789), not only has democracy been 'locked-in', more developments too have resulted – abolition of slave trade, extension of suffrage, new plural drives, etc.[539]

Punctuated equilibria is thus an explanans for the explanandum of *sociation*. The neologism implies emergence of new social structures and rhymes

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[537] Social morphogenesis implies a shift in social practices whereby a society evolves, over time, and acquires additional features; some previous features may be abandoned or simply peter out. Most medieval societies were reproducing themselves and hence social morphogenesis was non-existent. Even now, some isolated tribal societies have scarcely changed from what they were centuries ago.

[538] For a brief review, see Waldrop (1992) *op. cit.*, pp. 35-41; also see Lawson (1997) *op. cit.*, pp. 247-55. Instances of 'lock-in': the common QWERTY (typewriter) with unsystematically arranged keys and gasoline automobiles prevailing over steam-cars, despite the cost-effectiveness of the latter. Even 'sub-optimal' models may predominate upon taking lead. Once this happens, they are said to have been 'locked-in' for perpetuity. To illustrate, the haphazard arrangement of the qwerty keyboard remains unaltered for more than a century. The caveat is that not everything that gets 'locked-in' is sub-optimal.

[539] American democracy has its shortcomings too. For a fine consideration, see Plamenatz, John (1978) *Democracy and Illusion: An examination of certain aspects of modern democratic theory*, Longman: London, chapter 5.

with speciation, i.e. emergence of new species.[540] Punctuated equilibria may not necessarily coincide with democratic transition. However, substantive results of democracy are more likely with occurrence of subsequent punctuated equilibria. It is not the case that punctuated equilibria happen in a society once only; they may happen successively bringing about further change.

Significance of structure and agency vis-à-vis punctuated equilibria

Just as in speciation (as per 'punctuated equilibria' thesis), new species evolve in rapid bursts by changes in the genetic material, in sociation, analogically, social transformation occurs due to the variegated interplay between structure and agency, which agreeably are the 'building blocks' of society. A prominent difference does remain between biological evolution and social evolution: in the former, the organisms have no role in transformation in the genetic material, which occurs independently of their volition, action, whereas, in the latter, change happens only due to agents' volition, action though there may be a mismatch between intention and outcome.

The main point sustained here is that change occurs in rapid bursts. Example: the profound metamorphosis of the conservative Indian values about family, divorce, gender status in the last five years, especially in the Indian metros. Put differently, what did not occur in about fifty years since independence has happened in less than 1/10th of that period, thereby, bolstering the pertinence of punctuated equilibria. The transformation in India cannot simply be ascribed to a changed thinking of sections of the populace. Even in the

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[540] The neologism should not be confused with conflict in society. Georg Simmel has produced influential tracts on this theme and employed the term 'speciation' thus.

1970s, the educated Indians were aware of the liberal ideas and practices in UK, US, and W. Europe. Mere awareness or even disseminating such views to the public, at large, did not automatically lead to the flourishing of such ideas and practices. However, due to the reforms introduced in the 1990s in the raw materials of society, especially so the economic reforms, which of course sustained, set in motion multiple causal chains impinging upon one another, and affected various segments of society. Agents had opportunities for new role-plays and the cast structure of past, in interplay with agents, opened up avenues for the liberal ideas and practices to take root rather than being merely held in abstract. Similar examples attesting to change vis-à-vis punctuated equilibria, in a short-span of time, abound: the students stirring in the 1960s in the US; the protest marches, rallies by the Blacks in the 1960s for getting civil rights in the US; the cultural and related changes in the 1960s, 1970s in US, UK, and W. Europe. From these examples, two points stand out: (i) changes occurred, in a *specific sphere*, in a short period, and (ii) the changes were profound and far-reaching. Previous attempts for such changes in these respective countries had not yielded concrete results. This would suggest that the reasons lie in the structuring of structures and their interplay with agency. 'Punctuated equilibria' thesis certainly does not render trivial the change that occurs gradually.

The correlation with preceding non-democratic regimes

Contrary to popular perception, a close link exists between the emerging democratic structure and the antecedent non-democratic structure. While power

changes hands, the social system, as a whole, rarely crumbles concomitantly. It is also evident that no two democracies are identical, either in structure or function; except for a few core features—regular elections, universal suffrage and civil rights—the quotidian affairs have nuanced differences. The reasons lie in the preceding structures from which the democratic structures emanate. Authoritarianism having a taken-for-granted hue to it, thus needs to be explained, for such regimes do not arise in a vacuum; they too emerge in a particular social realm and have real causes as do democratic transitions. Franz Neumann instructively remarked – A state is as strong or coercive, as it needs to be.[541]

Upon democratic initiation and during subsequent developments too, the antecedent regime's norms, rules, etc. seldom evaporate instantaneously, as human dispositions and the social inscriptions on human bodies are resilient. In case they were overly labile, societal instability would arise. Even the transfer of power between collectivities seldom perturbs the extant norms immensely, at time t_1, instantly. These unique norms condition the subsequent developments; hence, simple replication of democracies seems arduous, as each democracy develops from the raw material of the previous norms. Example: India prior to independence was a hierarchical, caste-regimented, religious society with restricted opportunities for women. Although independence granted equal legal rights, the ground situation has taken time to alter. Neither did independence drastically alter literacy, health, hygiene, and other public programmes. In contrast, Japan, during the Meiji period, i.e. much before democratic transition,

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[541] Neumann, Franz (1950) 'Approaches to the Study of the Political Power', *Political Science Quarterly* 65, pp. 161-80. The afore-statement may seem tautological, but is not irrelevant.

had attained full literacy before the turn of the twentieth century. In other realms, too—technology, industrialization, transport and communication—it continued to make remarkable progress. After democratic transition, Japan continued developing rapidly in these sectors. This is reflected in *Shinkansens*, i.e. the bullet trains, high investments in Artificial Intelligence, biotechnology, etc.[542] There *is* a link between past, present and future. In short, the past casts an unavoidable penumbra on the present.

Secondly, it is misleading to bracket all authoritarian regimes under the rubric of 'tyranny'. Concrete examples of diversity abound: Turkey under Mustafa Kemal Pasha (benevolent despotism); USSR under Josef Stalin (totalitarianism); Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew (benign authoritarianism); Iraq under Saddam Hussein (rapacious authoritarianism); and Afghanistan under Taliban (obscurantism). The point is pellucid: authoritarian regimes are unlike. A claim is apt here: an 'efficacious' authoritarian regime can transit to an efficacious democratic regime. Singapore, if it ever makes a transition, it would likely be smooth. Contrarily, an 'inefficacious' authoritarian regime, if it transits, is likely to be an equally inefficacious democracy. Russia's multifarious problems towards democratization partly lie in its erstwhile communist functioning, which still exerts influence. The past, as Marx presciently stated, indeed weighs upon the future generations.

Dynasties and democracies can be contrasted in one more manner here. In most dynastic changes of yore, power changed hands mainly at the level of, so to

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[542] The fourth technology forecast survey of the Japanese Science & Technology Agency, published in 1988, provides an impression about Japan's future prospects. *Future Technology in*

say, the 'political' component – from one person/clan to another. Administrative changes, if any, were as per a dynast's whims and fancies. The deeper structure of society – its norms, attitudes, moral values, bodily inscriptions, etc. were less affected as (i) the dynasts themselves were mostly a product of those socio-cultural norms, (ii) an alternate framework was unavailable, and (iii) conservative societal set-ups inhibited pluralist drives. Even where invasions occurred, changes were infrequently demanded of the norms/values. Notwithstanding the Mughal invasion in India, spanning over seven centuries, the Hindu mode of social life continued uninterrupted, except that the Hindus paid a non-believer's tax; if the obverse were true, India would now have been the largest Muslim nation. Whereas in dynastic successions, the main changes were often at the level of the 'political' component, *democracy in a society* is more than a mere change in the 'political', as over a period, it is incomplete without a change in norms, attitudes, etc. More concretely, the two co-evolve and are one and the same. This then is the epicentre of resistance to change in many non-democratic countries, as pre-existing/extant social structures and agents with vested interests do exert causal force.

The difference between change in dynasties and democratic transitions can be diagrammatically represented as:

Japan: Forecast to the Year 2015, Tokyo: Institute of Technology.

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Change in dynasties

Autopoiesis,
Inwardly

unchanging dynast over
and above the ruled

unchanging set of norms of the populace in a society

Change in democracy

Outwardly, transforming

mutual relationship between rulers & ruled

Changing set of rulers from within
society

Changing norms expected of the populace in society

Fig. 8 Difference between dynastic change and democratic change
[in both the illustrations small circle represents the rulers and the large circle, the ruled]

Iran, Iraq and Myanmar at different historical junctures attest to this viewpoint.

By raising qualitatively different questions, further headway into the subject matter is attempted. Can democratic transition occur through a neat or disorderly change of 'political' component? If yes, is the latter independent of the social lattice? If not, what else is required? What else does it presuppose? What are non-democratic systems' inherent properties that interlock their social

relationships in a manner that a unilateral change by social actors is well nigh unrealizable?[543]

Significance of structure and agency vis-à-vis the correlation between preceding non-democratic regimes and the successive democratic regimes

As any democratic regime emerges from the womb of the preceding non-democratic regime, structure and agency undeniably assume worthy consideration. This is because in no democratic transition at time t_1 do the agents undergo a complete overhaul in personality and traits nor do the social structures change suddenly and abruptly. Example: Turkey's democratic transition. History evidences that the Turkish society did not metamorphose into a wholly new entity when it transited to democracy. The corollary is that any society cannot be finely dissected into neat units of one being the pre-democratic society and the other being the post-democratic society, save for the purpose of analysis. The new regime will invariably draw upon the cultural and social properties, with some modifications, from the historical past. Thus, structure and agency form the connective tissue in any transformation and thereby hold the key to understanding democratic transitions.

For the hereinbefore discussed reasons, hypostatization of democracy is resisted here, as democracy essentially lacks autonomous existence save the social context in which it emerges.

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[543] Cf. Sayer (1992) *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 95.

5.3 Democratic transition as a sub-set of social transformation

This section prepares ground for developing a realist modelling of democratic transitions by employing a special technique to study the subject: just as telescopes and microscopes bring to light a hitherto unknown world, the research employs *starscopes* to uncover the underlying social mechanisms and also to study the interplay between structure and agency.[544] The neologism—starscope—is a conjunction of 'star' + 'scope', wherein, the acronym s-t-a-r stands for structure, time, agency and realism. What fingerprints are to a detective, DNA to a microbiologist, starscopes are to a realist perspective of democratic transitions. Importantly, a detective cannot alter the fingerprints, a microbiologist cannot alter the DNA (at least in 2004), so no sweeping claim is made here that starscopes can alter the structural agential framework of a society; all the same, they are the stepping-stones toward understanding the latter, as they provide a better understanding of society and democratic transitions.

Construing transition as a mere 'political' displacement is a narrow interpretation. The research insists that transitions also have to do with social transformation. Stated thus:

$$DT \subset ST \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

This is to say that democratic transition (DT) is a sub-set of social transformation (ST). To state otherwise is tantamount to committing the fallacy of 'misplaced concreteness', i.e. reifying the 'political' component, as if it exhausts all methods of change. Moreover, the 'political' is not over and above the 'social', i.e. independent of the social matrix from which it emerges. There *are* reciprocally

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confirming relations between the two. Two realist precepts deserve attention here, viz. (i) the existence of an intransitive dimension and (ii) the relational nature of society. This argument can be illustrated with a crude, yet, useful physical analogy. In blood transfusion from person x to y, the metadescription of blood groups—A, B, AB or O—and their matching between persons x and y resides in the surgeon's pronouncements; the 'intelligence'[545] in the molecular structure of person y is unaware of this linguistic description.[546] It has its own information-processing faculty of which the blood classification provides only an approximate, albeit useful, insight. Analogically, social reality (SR) too is relatively independent of philosophers' descriptions (PD).[547]

$$SR \neq PD \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots(3)$$

For social transformation to be possible, the components of change should become reciprocally confirming with other societal constituents, like blood transfusion, and, not be a case of superficial juxtaposition which remains unintegrated with the social system.[548] Designing 'alien' institutions/structures is unhelpful, as they remain essentially non-functional. The non-fulfilment of democratic aspirations in some East European countries demolishes the voluntarist view of individual aspirations being unencumbered; it also indicates

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[544] This should become clearer in chapters 7, 8 & 9.

[545] Charles Darwin in enunciating the *origin of species* 'captured only a piece of the problem'. 'Prior to life, prior to self-reproducing entities', how exactly did inert chemical matter transform into life? This poser has notably remained unanswered. It is contended here that unless the chemical matter had some ability to 'self-organize', the inorganic matter would have remained inert for aeons; life came forth as it possessed such 'intelligence' of self-organization. See Kauffman, Stuart (1994) 'Whispers from Carnot: The Origins of Order and Principles of Adaptation in Complex Nonequilibrium Systems', *Complexity: Metaphors, Models, and Reality* by George A. Cowan *et al.* (eds.), Westview Press, pp. 83-160.

[546] An excellent exposition is by Maturana and Varela (1980) *op. cit.*

[547] See Wendt (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 75.

the existence of some intervening variables, viz. structural constraints. It follows then that democratic transition is the marriage of democratic *ideas* with pre-existing material *relations and ideas,* and how they both evolve and generate new combinations and permutations. How the agents at different geographical locations interpret democracy is also of no less significance in any transition. The immense complexity of democratic transitions (DT)—due to infinite social linkages, some known, others unknown—renders a single theory of change (ST) remote,[549] i.e.

$$DT \neq \Delta ST \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots(4)$$

Furthermore, social transformation/democratic transition is neither continuous nor discontinuous. The post-transition stage could be both (i) slow and imperceptible, unfolding over stretches of time, as in case of India, or, fast in some respects, as in case of USA. Either way, the argument can be pressed that no society changes *in toto.*[550]

What then is the nature of social transformation? It is suggested that social transformation, including democratic transition (DT) is somewhat similar to linguistic transformation (LT) where shared meanings are more than the sum of the parts, i.e.

$$DT \infty LT, \text{ wherein } shared\ meanings \geq units \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots(5)$$

Consider the following diagram, wherein, each dot represents an individual in a society with a common language.

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[548] Relations of dominance too can be reciprocally confirming. The ancient Hindu caste system is a typical exemplar.
[549] Democratization aside, even social transformation cannot be comprehensively explicated by a single theory of change. See Cohen (1968) *op. cit.,* p. 204.
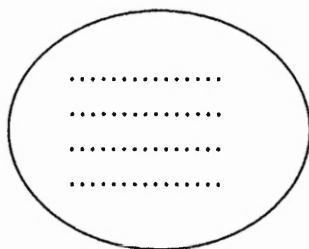
Fig. 1 Representation of linguistic and social transformation

In this society, even if some pockets of elites, or even the pariahs tinker with language, or contrive neologisms, they shall remain unintelligible in the larger society, unless the new vocabulary or norms of grammar have been adopted by most individuals. On this count, the underlying unity of the social fabric is revealed.[551] Take English language as an ensample: it has undergone much transformation—both written and spoken—from the times of, say, Chaucer up to the present. Members of each succeeding generation have conversed amongst themselves effortlessly because the moderate changes in each generation were tacitly accepted. Chaucer's generation would be bewildered were they to hear newfangled or even standard English now.[552] This underlines the necessitous link between past, present and future; and also that social forms emerge step-by-step and not out of the blue. Likewise, for social transformation to occur, 'messages' of change must somehow relate to the past,[553] reach a wider net of individuals, be

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[550] Cohen (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 176.

[551] The allusion to organic unity does not involve an ethical or moralistic hue. In the immediate context, it simply refers to the significance of a 'least common denominator' in terms of language knowledgeability, shared meanings, and the like.

[552] See Lowth, Bishop Robert (1762/1995) *A Short Introduction to English Grammar with Critical Notes*, (new edition), London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press. An influential tract, it prescribed new, grammatical rules that were eventually accepted. Examples (reformed grammar parenthetically indicated): I don't have *none* (any): You *was* (were) wrong about that; Mathilda is fatter than *me* (I). Also see Fromkin, Victoria *et al.* (1983) *op. cit.*, p. 14; p. 248 – it contrasts 17th and 19th century London English. Whilst there were changes in London English in the 19th century, American English continued unperturbed.

[553] This includes countering them too.

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tacitly accepted, and be reciprocally confirming, even if they are oppressive or discriminatory. In short, just the way a language would collapse, if each individual employed his/her own morphology of words, syntax, grammar, phonology and semantics, a society too would collapse if each individual employed his/her own norms, rules, meanings, values, etc. Organic unity stated thus implies that democratic transformation or the process of acculturation is a *social* process.

The uncoiling/reformulation of old wirings is a time-consuming process. If metaphorically, human entities' bodily inscriptions are considered as 'bits' of information, what are the prospects for a *complete* change of personality? It is proposed that this is unlikely in the same (adult) body. Human practices affirm this. It appears that there are limits to human malleability at time t_1, as humans may alter some characteristics than all. A mathematical expression should elucidate the point. Consider: if an individual, A, at any given point in time has some properties which, hypothetically, can be computed and are, say, *a* to *z*, or altogether 26 properties. The number is of course a heuristic device. The more relevant point is that 'A' may alter a property *p*, which is about subjugation of women and, thereupon, treat them equally in all respects with men. This does not necessarily imply that all other properties minus *p* also get altered.[554] This is

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[554] On a somewhat different but not wholly unrelated plane, the habitual life of an *average* human is manifest thus: he/she generally knows only one language well, has a limited vocabulary, settles down to a profession, does not change the *nature* of profession frequently, does not shift from one educational institution to another habitually, does not procure disciplinary degrees one after the other, does not change households frequently, and so on. While other options do exist, rarely do individuals go for large-scale overhaul of their personality simply for the sake of experimentation, or the thrill of it. The dictum, 'nothing venture, nothing gain' has limited practicality. Gresham's Law would state that routines drive out planning; routines do seem to get the better of life. The propensity for 'cognitive closure' arises due to aversion towards ambiguity

exemplified thus. Eminent personalities while intellectualizing about *some* issues retained *other* dispositions without perhaps being fully aware of them or questioning their core beliefs. (1) Luminaries, such as Desiderius Erasmus, Thomas More and Jean Bodin believed in witchcraft.[555] (2) The American founders of democracy claimed having set up the first democratic state, while subjugating women/slaves. (3) Martin Heidegger's and Paul de Man's Nazi turn, is also a case in point. In a similar vein, some people are incredulous about new developments. Four centuries ago, Martin Horky *et al.* ridiculed Galileo Galilee for telescope's wondrous powers.[556] Similar disbelief is now manifesting in some quarters about prospects of stem cell research. The ethical component in stem cell research should not detain the argument here.

The main argument is summarized mathematically:

1st stage of A's personality (pre-transitional)
$$A = \{a + b + c \ldots + z\}$$

2nd stage of A's personality (post-transitional)
$$A = \{a + b + c \ldots + z\} - \{p\}$$

In the second stage, one bit of information, i.e. p has altered, but other bits of information may prevail, such as x (belief in caste system), y (inclination to suppressing opposing views or free speech), and so on. Example: Iraqi prisoners'

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and to approach certainty. See Pfeffer, Jeffrey *et al.* (2000) *The Knowing-Doing Gap*, Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, p. 88. Likewise, for democratic transitions, social constructs, such as, social attitudes, norms, and values bestow a common/shared meaning in a society and are reflected in social institutions. There are constraints towards modifying them at 'free will', though this does not imply that these traits are unalterable over time. Other reasons include general unwillingness to change, or inertia, or sheer habituation which non-questions habits, once they have settled down, at time t_1.

[555] See Sagan, Carl (1996) *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*, New York: Ballantine Books, p. 115 *et seq.*; also see Latour, Bruno (1987) *Science in Action: How to follow scientists and engineers through society*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press, p. 191.

abuse. The instance is only suggestive, as varying permutations and combinations are possible which nonetheless underscore the inability of any single body to shed all previous conditionings and inscriptions, many of which are not even at the conscious level.[557] History evidences this in democratic countries. This insight—of individual entity—is equally applicable to collective entities, such as, groups, organizations and societies. To portray similarly for society, let there be a hypothetical set of measurable traits in a society, in stages 'A' (pre-transformational) and 'B' (post-transformational), as follows:
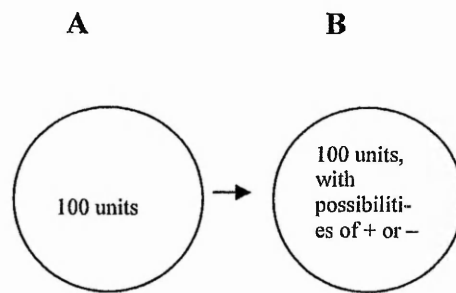
Fig. 2 Balance of change in a society

If this society transforms all the 100 inherited units in one go, it shall collapse than augur a democratic transition for there will be no edifice to construct/continue. Given the dubiety of total change, combinations and permutations for fractional change, with varying degrees, will continue. Stated differently, instant property peeling in humans is a trait distinctly not manifest in social practices.

To put very simply, change can also be described as follows:

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[557] See Kitcher, Philip (2001) *Science, Truth, and Democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 19-20. (Reference to four centuries' temporal frame is only a benchmark; the same cognitive process traverses aeons back.)

A	B	C

Received structure and culture

Present action, interaction on 'A'

Outcome as a result of play between 'A' and 'B'

(±)

site of addition of democratic values,

subtraction of non-democratic values

Fig. 3 Probable scenario of change in a society

If 'C' in the diagram implies democratic transition in a hitherto non-democratic country, it *ipso facto* implies that the pla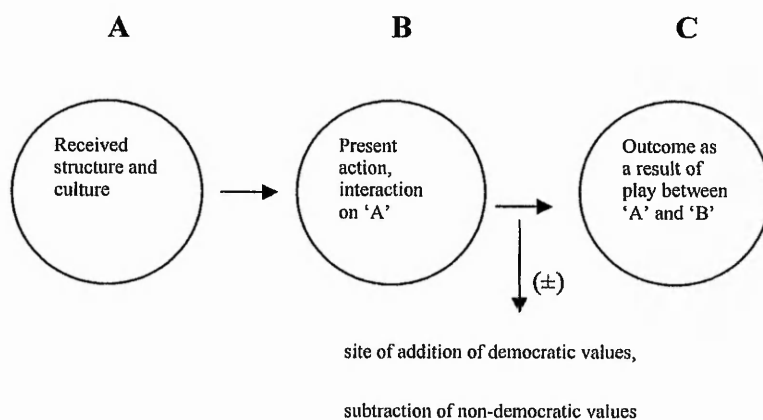y between 'A' and 'B' should cause at least some *subtraction* of non-democratic values, or institutions, or norms, and, *addition* of some democratic values, institutions, and norms in the system. It is precisely these additions to or, subtractions from earlier systems that shape democratic transitions. In a way, democratic transition is an historical (re)construction.

The upshot of the previous arguments is that incipient democratization is an inhomogeneous process, and does not flatten out all differences, or overhaul non-democratic qualities instantaneously. As part of social transformation, democratization can be best described as a differentiated process, wherein, some new qualities may be easily adopted/assimilated by non-democratic societies, while others prove too alien at time t_1, for adoption; some non-democratic traits may prove too contumacious, at time t_1. As this is an ongoing process,

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[557] For arguments with telling effects, see Damasio, Antonio (1999) *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*, New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, p. 298 *et seq.*

democratization too is best construed similarly – an ongoing process. As said, the dramatic changes in India in the past conservative norms, values, family structure, gender relations, and the recent pluralist drives have taken fifty years to develop. It is noteworthy that such dramatic changes are missing in Bangladesh and Pakistan which, prior to independence, were an integral part of India.

Significance of structure and agency vis-à-vis the point on democratic transition as a sub-set of social transformation

Actors' intentions, group formations, and other anthropocentric contrivances have been shown to be rather weak guides of democratic transitions. Moreover, due to the unlikelihood of drastic social change at any temporal juncture, the case for both change and continuity is buttressed. As at the macro level, certain attributes persist, the relational framework seems a suitable explanative. As democracies function distinctively in different countries (for example, in Japan, France and India) due to the differences in their cultures, an inescapable corollary is that democratic transition is indeed a sub-set of social transformation of *a* particular society along with its unique social, cultural properties. When a larger *set* of social transformation is chosen over the *subset* of democratic transition, the analysis of structure and agency inevitably follows.

Questioning commonly held 'paths' toward democracy

Quite often, explicating the *how* of democratic transitions results in accumulating data and classifying/typifying cases of transitions. This supposedly invigorates transitions' understanding. The present section shall assess this point by taking

up concrete examples of such explication. Alfred Stepan[558] undertaking a similar exercise fastidiously enumerated eight paths towards democratization:

- Internal restoration after external reconquest – Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Netherlands (post-1945)
- Externally monitored installation – Japan and West Germany (post-1945)
- Internal reformulation – France and Greece (post-1945)
- Organized violent revolt coordinated by democratic reformist parties – Costa Rica (1948)
- Party pact (with or without consociational elements) – Colombia and Venezuela (1958)
- Society-led regime termination – Argentina (1969) and Peru (1977)
- Marxist-led revolutionary war – Nicaragua (1979)
- Redemocratization initiated from within the Authoritarian Regime – Portugal (1974), Spain (1977) and Brazil (1982)

Although informative, the typology lacks minimal generalizations. It is uninformative about **which** social objects demand prying attention in subsequent transitions. It overly relies upon past events/experiences. Society being open, subsequent transitions may add new routes to the list, hitherto unbeknownst.[559] Merely expanding the list retrospectively, with advantages of hindsight, is still ambiguous about the *how* of transitions. Viewing numerous (black) ravens non-guarantees that the next one will not be white. Stepan's analysis contains its own Achilles heel, as diverse possibilities exist in open realms. This is further depicted in a tabular fashion by first numerating apparent paths of democracy and then collocating counterexamples.

Attribute	Counterexample
Bourgeois revolution	Japan, Turkey

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[558] Stepan, Alfred (1988) 'Paths toward Redemocratization: Theoretical and Comparative Considerations', *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* by O'Donnel, Guillermo *et al.* (eds.), 2nd printing, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 64-84.
[559] Chapter 4 has stirred the settled notion that Japan's transition was due to exogenous influence. In other words, the chapter had proposed that there is more to Japan's transition. In a similar vein, the monocausal particulars by Stepan also demand further enquiry.

Capitalism	India
Civil society	Most Asian democracies
Public sphere	Mauritius, Philippines, Taiwan
Violent revolution	Finland, Sri Lanka
Social movement	S. Korea
Party compromise	UK, USA
High literacy, urbanization, etc.	South Africa

Table 1 Numeration of counterexamples of various paths to democracy

At first sight, this exercise may seem odd, but there is a need to go beyond first sight experiences. As has been rightly remarked, criticism precedes and fosters creation; it is in this vein that a critical stance is adopted here. In scrutinizing the list, the unmistakable point is that transitions occur differentially. To reiterate, merely adding new paths non-explicates what makes democratic transitions possible. Examining the theme from a different lens, the relational framework is the least common denominator in all these transitions and seems a worthwhile entry-point in the social ensemble.

A recent tract supplements Stepan's work[560] wherein prominent devices for transitions are enunciated.

Mains devices towards transitions

- Reforma-pactada, ruptura-pactada
- Constitution-making
- Civil society
- Collective leadership/moderates
- Availability of opposition
- Pacts between different parties
- Previous regime's defeat in war

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[560] See Linz and Stepan (1996) *op. cit.*, chapters 3 and 4.

▪ Interim government
▪ Military-led extrication from authoritarian rule
▪ Workable bureaucracy for democracy
▪ Autonomy of political society
▪ Rule of law and freedom for civil society
▪ Removal of support by external hegemon to erstwhile non-democratic regime
▪ Developing rule of law and trust

Table 2 Tabulation of main devices propounded by Linz and Stepan for democratic transitions

The criticism levelled in the previous passage holds for contents of table 2 too. This perspective results from a narrow focus on temporal domain. It also non-transcends the event-ontology.

Inglehart[561] also presents a similar schema. According to him, democracy can result from:

❖ decades of gradual evolution (Britain and US)

❖ imitation (India)

❖ cascades (much of E. Europe in 1989)

❖ revolution (Portugal)

❖ negotiated settlement (Poland, Nicaragua and S. Africa)

❖ external imposition (Japan and W. Germany)

Inglehart does admit that there is no single path to democracy, but the paths that he enumerates do not touch upon the genetic question of transitions. His presentation suffers from the same defects as that of Stepan. This also holds true

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[561] Inglehart (1999) *op. cit.*, p. 80.

for Huntington's classification about transitions:[562] (i) transformations – imposed from above (ii) interventions – imposed from without (iii) replacements – revolution from below (iv) transplacements – negotiated transitions. There indeed is a need to go beyond the categorizations of already occurred transitions and their retrospective classification.

Now, some commonly held misconceptions about democracy are considered.

Suppose society is a tablet in an onward trajectory as depicted below.

x

Historical evolution

(toward DT)

Society

z

y

d (cut-off date, say,

2004)
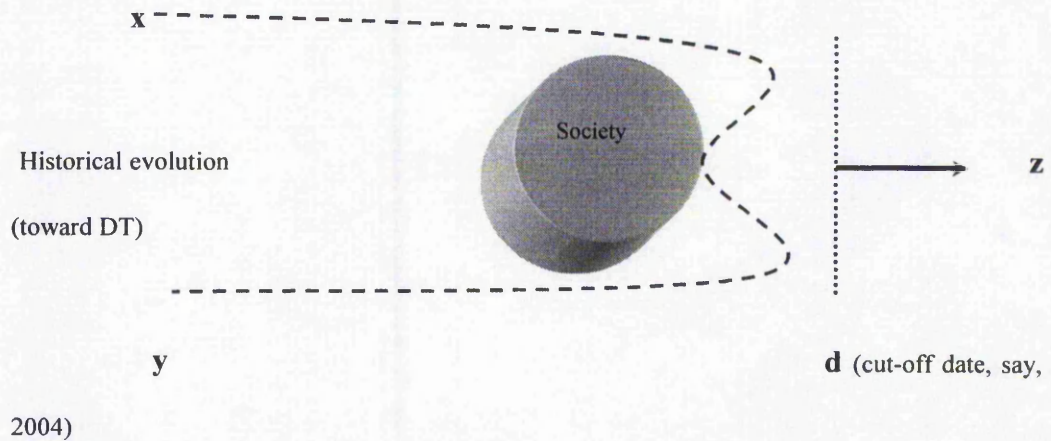
Fig. 4 Forward and backward linkages in democratic transitions

In the figure, xy represents the historical evolution of a society; d represents the temporal period with attempts towards DT (democratic transition). In much democratic literature, there is a discernible focus, in varying degrees, on z, or the immediate events at time t_1, by ordinarily unyoking historical evolution from a *stag* perspective. This is disadvantageous on the explicative front. History moves forward, but not in an untrammelled fashion; its own heritage impresses upon its

[562] See Huntington, Samuel (1991) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth*

trajectory. Notwithstanding past's *absence*, it has a bearing on the present. In this context, Auguste Comte's remark is telling – the past (dead) actors are the major actors.

A restructuring of the main argument is pertinent here and can be stated like this. Strictly speaking, definitive reasons held amongst the agents themselves for democratic transitions is a misnomer as (i) there are competing claims during the transition – some for, others against, democracy; (ii) the actors have divergent perceptions about returns from democracy; (iii) the neophytes may discontinue *some* non-democratic habits while continuing with others; (iv) the transition is, in part, an unintended consequence; (v) it can occur with the preponderant majority unaware of its essence; (vi) its onset may (partly) be the handiwork of a miniscule populace; and (vii) the much desired substantive results may be available in non-democratic states like Singapore and unavailable in democratic states. As such, the resultant disposition is not what everyone desires, but a cobbled together fabric with sutures stitched by threads of claims, counterclaims, concessions and counter-concessions. Beyond these events, the structuring of structure and agency also demands attention. This is discussed at length in chapters 7, 8 and 9.

Democracy, it is argued, is also *a* mode of social order. This should put to rest the apparently necessary, but actually disconcerting, isomorphism between democracy and intrinsic efficiency.[563] Democracy of course is meritorious

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Century, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

[563] For a pithy argument, see Schmitter, Phillipe C. and Terry L. Karl (1993) 'What Democracy is…and is not', *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 39-52, pp. 49-51.

though efficiency and 'merit' (depending upon what constitutes merit) needn't necessarily straddle together. Expectations are high from democracy though some of them are often unmet. Cunningham[564] sounds off that democracy may have the following shortcomings: it may (a) lead to 'tyranny of the majority'; (b) breed demagogy; (c) produce ineffective governments; (d) mask oppressive rule by providing a sort of cover; (e) bring about conflict and reduce parliaments to 'debating societies'; (f) result in inability to take decisive action; and (g) cause massification of culture and morals. This equally applies to mature and other democracies. Some analysts point out that in advanced industrial states, there is dissatisfaction with the social fabric.[565]

In the case of individuals, in all practicality, some balance obtains in their daily life between expectations and opportunities. Resolution of 'cognitive dissonance' generally works well at the individual level, where expectations synchronize with the opportunities.[566] Democracy, in contrast, presents a peculiar concept in which expectations exceed opportunities. Is the surfeit of expectations in a democracy, a typical case of *nympholepsy*, i.e. seeking the unattainable? Consider the following societal 'cube' pre-existing a democratic transition:

v
w
x
y
z
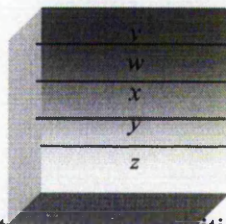
Fig. 5 Dimensions of a society at the pre-transitional stage

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[564] Cunningham, Frank (2002) *Theories of Democracy: A Critical Introduction*, London: Routledge, pp. 15-26.
[565] See, for instance, Fukuyama (1999) *op. cit.* He laments the weakening of 'social bonds and common values holding people together in Western societies', p. 5. *et passim.*
[566] Festinger (1957) *op. cit.*; also see Bourdieu (1990) *op. cit.*, p. 10.

Fig. 5 Dimensions of a society at the pre-transitional stage

The five dimensions, *v* to *z, supra* mean:[567]

♦ *Power distance* (*v*) = the degree of inequality in a society and the extent to which the powerless accept and expect inequality.

♦ *Uncertainty avoidance* (*w*) = the level of comfort and discomfort in unstructured situations (USs) by society's culture programs; USs imply novel, surprising, unknown, unusual situations and the consequent stress-compatibility; it also involves the tolerance/intolerance of ambiguous situations.

♦ *Individualism vs. collectivism* (*x*) = the societal gradation fostering individuals fending for themselves or getting integrated into groups.

♦ *Masculinity vs. femininity* (*y*) = the emotional distribution of social roles.

♦ *Long-term vs. short-term orientation* (*z*) = the cultural programming which tutors members with delayed *or* quick gratification of emotional, material and social needs, i.e. fulfilment of needs in the present or postponed to the future.

Without employing empirical variables, the exercise can still be accomplished by a 'thought-experiment'. Imagine a democratic country prior to its institutionalization, say, USA in the pre-1787 period. The thought-experiment reveals that none of the above parameters underwent transformation in 1787 or even in the immediate future; it took almost two centuries for change in gender relations. This depicts that democratization is continually unfolding. If to this thought-experiment are added the received appurtenances – transport, education,

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[566] Festinger (1957) *op. cit.*; also see Bourdieu (1990) *op. cit.*, p. 10.

social security, knowledge construction, etc. the enormity of governance becomes more vivid; none of these too changed in 1787. From this perspective, the political developments of 1787 can also be construed, in part, as an outcome of past history. Moreover, the tasks confronting anyone who dons the mantle of ruling, irrespective of whether the new regime is communist, democratic, or totalitarian, is monumental. As no single leader or clique has a direct reach into the all-pervading social structures/sectors, the relational importance is again brought to the fore in understanding transitions.

5.4 Significance of stratification

This section considers the role of stratification vis-à-vis time and bodily dispositions, and, the significance of the same for social transformation and democratic transitions.

'Time' has conventionally been treated as linear unfolding of moments. A case has already been made for re-describing time as transcending the mere 'present tense' or the 'here and now' in favour of 'sequential tracts'. Still, this is inadequate to explicate social transformation as it is silent on why some changes occur in societies virtually instantaneously, while others confront resistance. A three-dimensional modelling of time[568] spanning three different temporal periods

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[567] Cf. Hofstede, Geert (2001) *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. xix, xx.
[568] The three-dimensional modelling is adapted from Marvin Minsky's mind-modelling. According to Minsky any good theory analyzing the mind should span three different time periods. It must be slow to reckon with billions of years in which human brains have evolved; it must be fast to reckon with fleeting weeks and months of infancy and childhood; and, finally it should account for the intervening period, that is, centuries of growth of our ideas through history. See Minsky (1988) *Society of Mind*, New York: Touchstone, Simon & Schuster, p. 18. A similar modelling of time span for explication of democratic transitions can be useful.

is proffered here: it should be 'slow' to reckon with centuries of social evolution; it should be 'rapid' to reckon with the fleeting changes that occur in the contemporary period; and, finally, it should also be able to account for the changes in institutions and related practices that occur during the interregnum. The three-dimensional view of time (T) can thus be noted as:

$$T = I^\circ, II^\circ, III^\circ \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots(6)$$

I° - RAPID	II° - INTERMEDIATE	III° - SLOW
Technological advancements, such as the electronic communication, incl. internet, satellite television, etc.	Institutions, nature of jobs, modes of transport, construction of social space, vested interests in society, hierarchical stratification of society, etc.	Attitudes, bodily dispositions, conventions, moral beliefs, bodily inscriptions, norms and values.

Table 3 Description of differentiated view of temporality vis-à-vis social transformation

The tabular representation shows that differentiation of temporal segments affords more purchase in understanding social transformation. (1) The same technological developments can be replicated in non-democratic/authoritarian countries, depending upon finance and expertise. All the same, it is not self-evidently true that these gadgets can lead to transparency or accountability in governance. Newspapers in *open* USA are different from *state-owned* Singaporean newspapers; usage of Internet has a different meaning in *liberal* Britain from *authoritarian* China. (2) The attitudes, moral beliefs, social norms, bodily inscriptions, etc. i.e. the residual legacy or the 'deposits'/'sediments' bequeathed by the past generations are offset at an unequal pace in various countries. Myanmar remains virtually an isolated land with slow social motions. The argument is stressed by the following instances: (a) Saudi Arabian women may watch satellite television broadcasting French fashion shows, thereby

depicting the independence of women, but allow themselves to be subjugated by males. (b) The Japanese after a century and half of Western technological development still cling to their norms, their work culture, etc. (c) In the USA, the immigrant Latin American population continues with its family norms, language, and cultural/religious traits. Social transformation is not only slow, but also demonstrates dispositional and inscriptional tenacity. USA and UK exemplify that democratic transition is a slow, evolving process – from the 'political' component to institutions to recent pluralistic drives; and, the process is still continuing. The argument for differential change can be illustrated diagrammatically as follows:
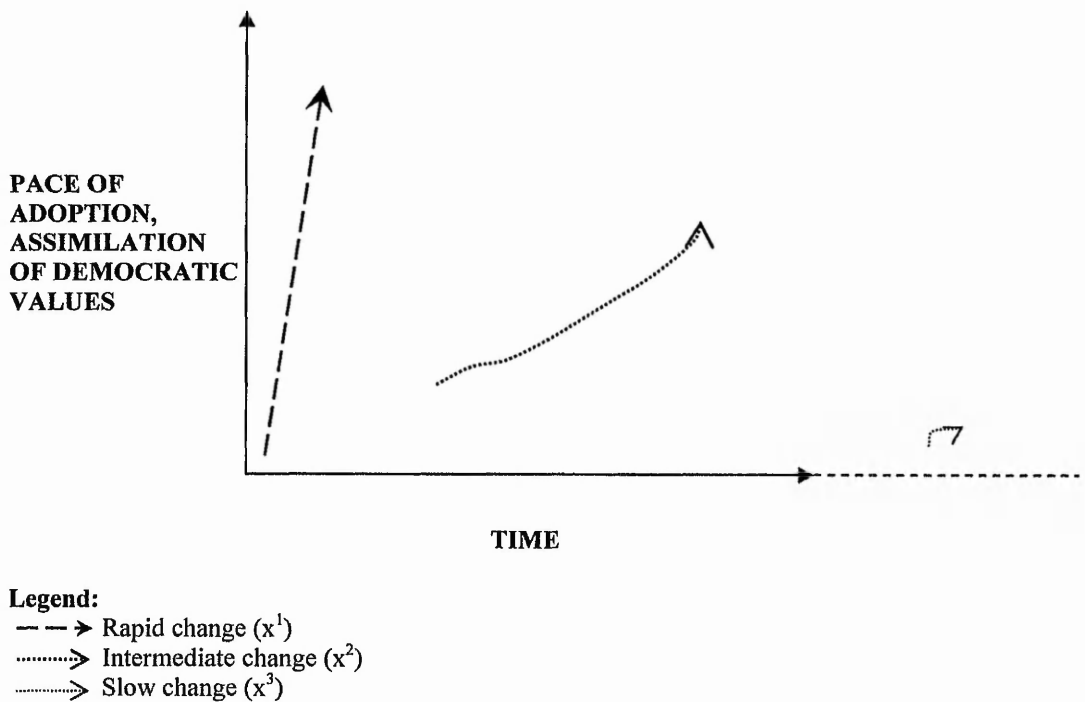

PACE OF ADOPTION, ASSIMILATION OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES

TIME

Legend:
– – ➤ Rapid change (x^1)
·········➤ Intermediate change (x^2)
·········➤ Slow change (x^3)

Fig. 6 Representation of stratified nature of change

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Viewed in conjunction with the previous fig. (i.e. 5), x^1 in fig. 6, not only takes less time, but also progresses with quick pace; x^2 in contrast, takes more time for gestation and its pace too is not very quick; x^3 stands in marked contrast – firstly, it is an open question whether it will undergo substantive transformation over a period of time (hence, the projected line on the X axis); and, secondly, even if there is a takeoff, its pace is *likely* to be tardy and its trajectory somewhat uncertain, though it would vary from context to context.

The foregoing arguments are relevant for democratic transitions, as the latter occur in real time and space, and cannot escape the *stag* relationship. As such, the differentiated nature of transformation is emblematic of human beings' stratified nature, and the social practices thereof. On these bases, a tentative unfolding of democratic transition can be posited as follows:

RAPID	INTERMEDIATE	SLOW
More circulation of information; technological gadgets with limited use of group formation of identity and interest-relation.	Creation of parties, elections, new Constitution, proliferation of groups advocating democracy.	Equal status of men and women, equality amongst classes, status of religion, pluralist drives and their acceptance.

Table 4 Schematic representation of unfolding of democratic transition in stratified humans

Given the intricacy of democratic transitions, the need then is to enlarge the ontology of social sciences in general and democratic transitions in particular. The trifurcation of reality, in a generic sense, into the 'real', 'actual', and the 'empirical' is a useful artifice. A plausible re-imagination of democratic transitions can then be through the levels of empirical, actual, and real which respectively appertain to experiences, events, and structures. Questions about which one of these levels is more real is a 'bogus' formulation. 'For if there is a relationship between the worlds it is one of natural generation, not an

interpretation of man [sic]. The relationship is not between a real and an imaginary object, but between two kinds of real object, one of which is very small' such as in the relationship between table and electron.[569] The nature of trait(s) against each domain is mentioned *infra*.

REAL	ACTUAL	EMPIRICAL
Mechanisms, such as rules, norms, 'habitus,' attitudes, bodily inscriptions, social powers and structures.	Political movements, competition for votes and anti-authoritarianism.	Personal preferences, evaluations and political leaders.

Table 5 A stratified description of reality vis-à-vis democratic transition

There is a pattern to these domains which is represented below:

Manifest social events, perceptions

Underlying causal powers, properties, mechanisms

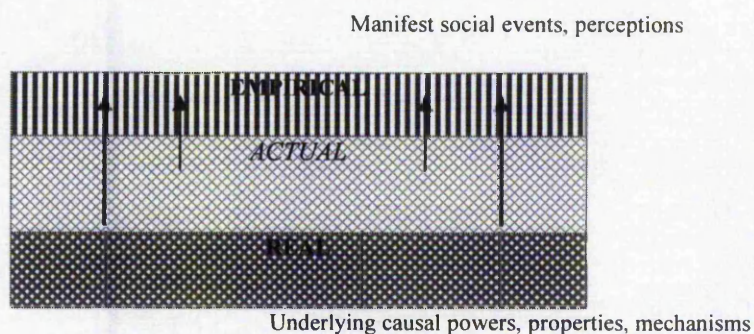Fig. 7 Depiction of the stratified nature of reality and the influence of the preceding stratum over the subsequent stratum

The underlying mechanisms generate social phenomena, thereby, impressing the ontological distinction between the real and the empirical; as a corollary the two can be out of phase with one another.

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[569] Cf. Bhaskar (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 59 (font modified of the words, 'table' and 'electron').

Significance of structure and agency vis-à-vis stratification and the realms of real, actual and empirical in explaining democratic transitions

Any student of democratic transitions would be intrigued by why in some societies, at a particular historical juncture, democratic changes do happen, whilst in other societies, despite vigorous efforts by the agents, the results may be nugatory. Or, why in some societies, some variations and adjustments towards democratization may occur relatively quickly, while in some other societies, strenuous efforts by agents may still not deliver results? As agents' actions are an insufficient measure of informing about these wide variations, the relevance of structure and agency and their interplay again comes to the forefront. The move from the observables to the unobservables seems worth exploring.

An empiricist account of democratic transitions would be unable to analyze the realms of real, actual and empirical, as it will be confined only to the observables. Without possessing appropriate methodological tools such an analysis would perhaps be unthinkable and therefore unrealizable. Realism does offer the methodological tools for analyzing democratic transitions from such a perspective and one possible method in this mode of analysis can be the focus on interplay between structure and agency, which would cover the apparent events, as well as the underlying mechanisms of transitions.

5.5 Requirements for modelling of transitions

This section examines some desiderata of sound modelling of transitions.[570]

What modelling should avoid:

The 'inductivist illusion' is the plague of rigorous research. Seeking exactitude by extensively examining cases or accumulating/assembling data may lead to a plethora of information and concomitant correlations, but remains uninformative about social phenomena's underlying mechanisms. Facts, as David Hume said, do not speak for themselves. Besides, social issues are neither necessarily additive nor conjunctive. Hence, relentlessly compiling data begs the question – whether it needs to be added up, in the first place; if so, *what* should be added up and in what manner? In open realms, simply adding up objects often impedes than aids the issue, as few, if any, regular, behavioural chains obtain. *Secondly*, no inductivist procedure can state affirmatively which data to regard/disregard due to the possibility of incongruence with social reality. Expanding the number of cases rarely betokens certitude. *Thirdly*, 'knowledge for the sake of knowledge' is a shibboleth; it loses its sheen, as objects contending for knowledge are infinite and, one can easily be swamped by superfluous information.

Reckoning with the foregoing, the specification of 'don'ts' of theoretical modelling is now followed by the 'dos' of the same.

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[570] The views developed here have been influenced by Waltz's seminal work on neo-realism. See Waltz (1979) *op. cit.*, chapter 1.

What modelling should contain:

To extract meaning out of complex reality—natural or social—a theory is required, as apprehending complex phenomena does not automatically aid its comprehension. At the same time, a *theory* needs to be distinguished from a *law*. While laws identify invariant relations amongst objects, theories explicate why those relations prevail. Thus, a theory is not a collation of laws, but is a postulation that explains those laws. Correspondingly, theories can only be 'invented' and not be 'discovered'. While the question for laws is: 'Are they true?', for theories, it is: 'How great is their explanatory power?' *Secondly*, an all-comprehensive theory with every possible minutiae of information is generally less instructive.[571] For instance, what is a map's utility, correct to the inch in scale? In Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* such precision was of scant utility to the farmers in cultivating land, as when fully opened, the map prevented sunshine from reaching the ground: the former entirely matched the latter – inch to inch! Concordantly, a theory has to be terse and parsimonious.[572]

Thirdly, non-equivalence between theory and quotidian events is conceivable.[573]

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[571] As Jon Elster puts it: 'A useful concept must be substantially less than all-embracing'. Elster (1978) *Logic and Society: Contradictions and Possible Worlds*, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, p. 4.

[572] Also see Lave, Charles A. *et al.* (1975) *An Introduction to Models in the Social Sciences*, New York: Harper & Row, p. 19: 'Models are simplified representations of the world' as it is 'impossible to represent the full complexity of the world'.

[573] On this note especially, the role of 'conjectures' in enquiries cannot be understated. Shrödinger's quest for explaining human life in terms of physics and chemistry exemplifies this when he authored the idea in 1944. See Shrödinger, Erwin (1995/1944) *What is Life? The Physical Aspect of the Living Cell with Mind and Matter & Autobiographical Sketches*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. In memorable words he wrote that the inability of the 'present day' (say, 1940s) physics and chemistry to account for the same explication did not imply that life could not be accounted for in such terms subsequently by these sciences. Likewise, another 'conjecture' is that of Roger Penrose who has reservations about the possibility of devising a computer with artificial intelligence equalling or surpassing human thought process, because scientists lack a fundamental insight into physics to comprehend mind. See Penrose

Fourthly, endeavours at affirming a theory's veracity are erroneous, as it is laws that can be verified as true or false, not theories. As theories aim at explication, they can *au fond* be improved upon. To exemplify, Newton's theory of gravitation or Darwin's theory of evolution can basically be improved upon or be subsumed under 'higher' theories. Stated thus, a theory specifies relations amongst social objects, including unobservables, their causal connections rather than their occurrences/observations.[574] *Fifthly*, instead of accepting information as evidence, the more relevant points/questions for enquiry are: What makes 'X' (democratic transition) possible? What causes or facilitates 'X'? 'How does it all hang together'? Concomitantly, a theory is a 'depiction of the organization of a domain and the connections amongst its parts'. A caveat about theory is in order here. Polemics have dominated the magnitude of theory's applicability to social sciences. As the research has opted for non-closure, hence, it would be inappropriate to enter the quagmire of stringent causal connections in society. None the less, a weak interpretation of afore arguments does hold for society.

The following interrelated principles merit attention in understanding democratic transitions modelling...(7)

Theoretical assumptions	Explanation
People, generically, act more in terms of society than in terms of state or government.[575]	In people's customary life, pre-political and pre-logical logic is often in play. This is best represented by post-attack Iraq which allows a peep into such hitherto opaque structures. Even though the 'authoritarian' regime has

(1996) *The emperor's New Mind: Concerning Computers, Minds and the Laws of Physics*, London: Vintage.
[574] See Wendt (2000) *op. cit.*, pp. 5, 66 *et seq.*
[575] Cf. Levy Jr., Marion J. (1996) *Modernization & the Structure of Societies*, Vol.1, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, p. 4.

	been ousted, the social patterns and relations with concomitant powers/properties continue unchanged. Indeed there is no drastic change in social life, whether it be liberty for women, status of religion contra its past status, hierarchical norms in society, etc. The past bodily inscriptions still persist. The lesson for democratization is that there are limits to what a government alone can achieve and, simultaneously, what an ousting of an authoritarian government cannot, so to say, 'dis-achieve'.
Democracy, amongst other things, is also a *by-product* of other activities.[576]	This is a corollary of the previous point. India is an exemplar of this proposition. The government in fifty years of independence endeavoured reducing caste/communal riots, gender bias, with nominal results. Rules and pontification, by themselves, are insufficient to alter actors' thinking or behaviour. In contrast, the last decade has witnessed liberalization of economy, commercialization, consumerism, while electronic media has facilitated activities in other directions. With generation of new social interests, the frequency of riots has dwindled. Gender bias is comparatively diminishing. As a by-product, democratic norms have been strengthened. This does make the case for the proposition that activation/deactivation of mechanisms also plays a role in social transformations.
Political agents are causal agents of events not of causal laws. There is an ontological distinction between the two.[577]	If political agents were omniscient beings possessing causal power of altering social structures unilaterally, the erstwhile rulers of USSR or Eastern Europe could have sustained communism; alternatively, their successors could have instantaneously formed the democratic governments they so very much desired. That both failed is evidence of the ontological distinction. The lesson is that actors, including governments can change society or bring about democratic transitions only to the extent the causal mechanisms permit. On this note, causal laws are non-cognate with sequential events.
There is no necessary synonymy between centralization and authoritarianism, or, between decentralization and non-authoritarianism.[578]	In all modernized societies, centralization is the norm given the rise of electronic communication, swift means of transport, networks of information, etc. Despite this centralization, most of the 'advanced',

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[576] For a brief discussion on 'by-products', see Elster (1983) *op. cit.*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 44 *et seq.*

[577] On this point see Bhaskar (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 12, 33 and 35.

[578] See Levy (1996) *op. cit.*, pp. 17; 55 *et. seq.*

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	industrial states are non-authoritarian. Contrarily, small, non-modernized societies without being centralized might be authoritarian, and also be predicated on strong hierarchies, gender inequality and so on. Hence to categorize democracy purely in black and white, wherein, decentralization is equated with democracy and centralization with authoritarianism is inexact.
All actors in non-democratic countries are unlikely to have a broad understanding of democratic ideas and norms at least initially and possibly at subsequent stages.	This is because accumulation of 'social capital' by some individuals privileges their position and, thereby, opens space for a set of actors to wield influence over others. Shorn of rhetoric, democratic transition from its inception is premissed considerably on hierarchy and some degree of, by way of one interpretation, non-parity between actors.[579] This aspect surely does not dent democracy for the two can go together.
Strong explanations of democratic transitions by way of self-help groups, political parties, associations are 'partial' explanations.	There is an overall character in the relational pattern which is reflected in all social institutions. The social groupings themselves reflect the relational pattern. If there is a malaise at the national level, it is likely to be reflected in these groups too. The inapt governance in Nepal is equally matched by the fragmented nature of politics.
An ontological distinction is made between 'ideal' and 'actual' democracy.	Many actors have tacit understanding of the distinction in most social situations. It is precisely because it is so obvious that its significance is often overlooked. In reiterating the point, it is emphasized here that while projecting ideal models, commentators should not necessarily expect them to be actual. The advantage in highlighting the distinction ensures that some issues that seem paradoxical may no longer be so.[580]
The likelihood of a gap between those who participate in popular movements and those	The structuration of society, privileged positions of certain people, generically, plays

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[579] This is *not* to suggest that (i) accumulation of 'social capital' is static: those who don't possess it at time t_1 can acquire it at t_2, or that (ii) the hiatus due to hierarchy is incontrovertibly fixed: old divisions might disappear or get modified; there is also the possibility of new ones emerging.

[580] Cf. the distinction with Levy Jr. (1996) *op. cit.*, pp. 26-30. He summarizes thus. In all societies, people distinguish between the ideal and the actual structures; rarely, if in any society, do the two coincide neatly which may actually cause stress and strain. The lacuna is inexplicable in terms of hypocrisy of actors, as some deceptive acts are indeed open to ridicule or exposure. Be that as it may, even heightened dissemination is unlikely to wholly remedy this, as the gap is an irreducible facet of life. Two reasons are proposed for such hiatus – one, given the limited cognitive abilities of humans, no individual can have access to all pertinent information, at all points of time about how to act ideally and, two, in a society where there is a close superimposition of the two, it would render that society brittle, as given the close interdependence of social structures, even a minor failure in such a perfect system would cause a complete revision of the entire set of relationships rendering the fabric fragile.

who get to rule seems ineliminable.	a role in enabling this, although boundaries are never hermetically sealed.[581]
Agents' preferences cannot be aggregated.	Firstly, there is no strict measure by which a complex array of preferences can be neatly classified. Secondly, preferences are in a constant state of flux due to their transient nature. Hence, actors' preferences do not provide a full measure of democratic change.
Categorization of democratic transitions from 'above' or 'below', or, due to 'exogenous' or 'endogenous' factors are insubstantial unless they reckon with other factors, like societies' core properties.	Agents, whether from 'above' or 'below' belong to the same society and share certain meanings in a given space/time, irrespective of the fact that one group may be 'oppressing' others. Oppression too is reciprocally confirming, till it is challenged. In any case, those 'below' can reach 'above' and vice versa, as boundaries are not impermeable. Nor is it self-evidently true that those 'below' are necessarily efficacious than those 'above'.[582] Similarly, 'exogenous' factors can only carve on 'endogenous' factors or materials, and are thus bound to be affected by the 'deadweight' of the past.

Table 6 Consideration of issues pertinent to democracy

At this juncture a supplementary poser is raised to the primary poser: *what properties must a non-democratic society possess to enable a democratic transition?* The remaining chapter is an exercise at responding to this poser.

A case has already been made for construing democratic transition as (i) means of social order, and (ii) as a sub-set of social transformation rather than a hallowed object. The divers routes towards transitions demonstrate that transitions are non-nomothetic, and that *if p, then q* principle is unobtainable.

In this background, the following arguments are advanced:

➤ Democratic transition's causes may reside elsewhere than in the ostensive democratic ideas and practices.

➤ Transitions may be the result of society's deeper systemic powers/properties.

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[581] Cf. Tilly (1981) *op. cit.*, p. 2.

[582] India provides a classic case where political leaders from the so-called 'below' upon reaching 'above' have become even more corrupt than their predecessors, against whom they had launched a crusade for social welfare. The province of Bihar is a typical example.

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> Some social rules may likely be opaque to the actors themselves.

> The future can emerge from the unique present of a society only.

Equipped thus, it is proposed that democratic transitions occur when at time t_1, possibility of symbiosis exists between the outgoing authoritarian regime's structures and the emerging democratic regime. The condensed statement is unbundled below for its simplicity is deceptive and packs a lot in itself. First, some commonly held viewpoints are contested.

A. Counterintuitively, some hitherto focal points of the discourse are questioned:

i. Ideological underpinnings – Ideologies affect humans in a dynamic than static fashion. Besides, their popularity is marked by vicissitudes. In the final analysis, ideologies are manifest in and through embodied humans, in their attempts at self-organizing their own lives, as also of others, including coercive means.[583] They are a weak indicator of efficacy as countries professing similar ideologies function dissimilarly; Cuba functions differently from China (communism), while Finland functions differently from Sri Lanka (democracy). These differences are rooted in the structural agential relationship. The 'end of history' is of course disputable, but what is less doubtful is the denting of liberal democracy's ideological underpinnings in the wake of failed or quasi-successful post-1989 democratic experiments.

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[583] A cognitively impaired person is incapacitated to self-organize due to an atrophied sense of 'self'. For such a 'person' (without a persona) ideology and mundane pursuits are inconsiderable tools to personate, as the very faculty of consideration is impaired. A step further can be taken to posit that a sense of 'self' and its self-organization through the environment are one and the same. Cf. Damasio (1999) *op. cit.* Damasio suggests that the sense of self depends on brain's ability to organize the being in relation to object(s) than on language, memory or even reasoning. It is a device for ensuring survival and enduing meaning to life.

ii.   Institutionalization – Institutions codify social practices. The debates about institutionalizing participatory or representative democracy and, parliamentary or presidential system are attempts at comprehending social reality and, in some measure, manipulating it. The research inverts the causality and states that the emergent institutions themselves are the outcome of social practices and, with pre-nucleated powers/properties; a superficial alternation is unlikely to deliver results. Setting up new institutions, as in Iraq, which seems to be reciprocally non-confirming, has limited utility. Institutions are the microcosm, which pre-reflect the social macrocosm. Institutions co-evolve with society in an organismic relationship, though they may be out of synchrony at some point in time. It is arguable whether setting up an 'advanced' institution in a 'backward' country enables it to gallop to progress. Recombinant techniques may be successful in genetics, but not necessarily in social reality. The belief that by *designing* institutions, human behaviour can be moulded permanently and deeply is problematic. Precise, empirical investigations are still awaited, though Russian and Chinese revolutions negatively evidence this.[584] Those institutional arrangements *per se* are incapable of radically re-chiselling people's behaviour where they are the handiwork of wholly extraneous parameters.

In sum, these precepts promise more than they can deliver.

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[584] For a brief discussion on political institutions see Simon, Herbert (1983) *Reason in Human Affairs*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 98-102.

B. Societies beholding potential for stratification, including further stratification of individuals, are more likely to transit to democracy. This is because democratization itself is symptomatic of such societies stratifying themselves. Capitalism too, in some measure, fosters democratization by the accompanying causal chains—exchange, industrialization, social construction of space, urbanization—which play a role in stratifying society. These circuits impinge upon human self-organizing competencies. In redefining the 'self' vis-à-vis the emerging environment, the humans then undergo change in norms, social practices *et al*. By perforating the social lattice in hitherto unfamiliar ways, capitalism plays a role in activating mechanisms for new pursuits and deactivating others which collectively spur democratic norms. The argument is buttressed by the fact that it is mainly in stratified societies that democracy has emerged and, it is therein that capitalism has flourished. Of course, no case is being made here that capitalism *is* the way to democracy. More importantly, the fact remains that the *stag* relationship of a society, may or may not, at time t_1, foster capitalism.

It is suggested that the attendant trait of democracy, viz. pluralism is fostered more by the potential to sprout stratifying chains than by sheer logic, rhetoric or pontification. In tandem with direct efforts, indirect efforts are also efficacious. Concrete alternative options can assist in dissolving non-democratic traits. Perform the following 'thought experiment'. Take Japan as a concrete case. Remove causal chains of technology, communication and capitalism. Next excise the memories of World War II; also grant that militarism was dysfunctional.

Strew the landscape with limited natural resources as a *given*. Now ponder whether in this scenario, sheer moral force could deliver democracy. It is assumable that this is unlikely. Such isolation is only for experimental purposes, but it does allude to the evolutive nature of democracy.[585] It is also suggestive of its integrated nature, i.e. in Venn diagrammatic parlance, it is a sub-set of societal properties. Figuratively, a would-be democratic society is like a seed with some core properties which, on their own, may lie dormant. Just as a seed requires favourable soil for growth and sun for photosynthesis, democratic society too requires an apropos environment for, to coin a neologism, 'demosynthesis' i.e. evolution of democratic principles in and through social activities. Photosynthesis is meaningful for plants than stones, as the former possess such generative mechanisms. In a like vein, demosynthesis is meaningful for those societies which, at time t_1, possess such underlying mechanisms and a conducive *stag* relationship.

C. New incumbency of old positions *on a grand scale*, i.e. entering of old positions by new incumbents, may not necessarily enable transitions as, on one fine day, leaders' dispositions, norms, etc. are unlikely to undergo radical change. Besides, so long as the previous positions remain intact, they are likely to exert their influence irrespective of new incumbents.

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[585] 'Moral science' often slights the intricacies of human behaviour. 'Thou shall not give unto temptation' is unhelpful as an abstract ideal. Oscar Wilde's befitting repartee was: 'I can resist anything but temptation'. Stand-alone moral dicta often fail, unless *alternate* paths/pursuits are in circulation.

D. Anti-faddishly, it is proposed that self-seeking behaviour[586] is helpful for democracy rather than being anathema. As a self-organizing principle, it spirals onto life by challenging traditional norms associated with unequal relations – deference to age, hierarchical norms, family patterns, gender relations, etc.

E. Increasing, iterative external stimuli, such as through electronic medium, on public memory may loosen traditional residues and provide the mechanisms for *replacement* of past deposits at time t_1. The premise that shedding of undemocratic traits may occur by criticism of such traits and the consequent realization of a wrong and, thereby conducing reform, is questionable. People hold on to particular views/convictions, *inter alia*, due to (a) their past experiences (b) their early conditioning (c) their present relationships (d) the social milieu in which they are born and the traditions they embrace (e) their self-organizing capabilities and opportunities (f) available empirical parameters, and (g) reasonable arguments. There is an overlap too, amongst these factors. Therefore, the belief that merely the force of arguments can address all wrongs is arguable. Example: despite decades of criticism of the practice of untouchability in India, it still prevails in varied forms. The lower castes still do menial jobs, such as sweeping, scavenging, etc. Thus unwarranted optimism on the afore-belief *in toto* has yet to demonstrate its practicality. This does inform that indirect means may occasionally be useful in altering social practices.

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[586] Cf. Simon, Herbert (1983) *op. cit.*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 105. According a pejorative hue to self-interest is mistaken for pure altruism is best considered as an ideal. Per contra, 'it is

5.6 The limitations of empirical enquiries into democratic transitions

This section briefly touches upon the limitations of empirical enquiries in describing the *how* of democratic transitions. The empirical indices employed by Lipset have already been evaluated. It may be argued that the empirical indices of Lipset do not pertain to the deeper traits of a society and, hence, if empirical indices to this effect are gathered, they may be more useful in understanding democratic transitions. This is worth accepting for the sake of argument. Examining deeper cultural properties and traits can then be a possible line of enquiry here. As the proof of the pudding lies in eating, the proof of such arguments would then lie in their demonstrability. The empirical index of 'uncertainty avoidance', as applied by Geert Hofstede shall serve as an approximate for the purpose. Although Hofstede has not specifically used the index for democratic transitions, this does not prevent its further processing and evaluation for other subject matters (such as democratic transitions) than for what it was intended by Hofstede. It is in this light that the following exercise is undertaken.

According to Geert Hofstede differences in thinking and social action amongst members of different societies are due to 'mental programs' developed 'in the family in early childhood and reinforced in schools and organizations'. These programs 'contain a component of national culture'.[587] Hofstede defines culture as 'collective programming of the mind' which manifests itself not only

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probably reasonable to assume, as a first approximation, that people will act from self-interest'.
[587] Hofstede (2001) *op. cit.*, p. xix.

in values, but also in symbols, heroes and rituals.[588] He develops some factorials to assess the cross-cultural differences.

Humans in trying to fulfil their hopes/aspirations encounter some uncertainty, especially due to the non-predictability of the future. As uncertainty generates anxiety, societies, in turn, generate three broad means to cope with them.[589] (1) *Technology*: it includes all human artefacts. It reduces some level of anxiety due to short-term predictability of artefacts. (2) *Laws*: they appertain to formal/informal rules guiding social behaviour. Rules reduce society's internal uncertainty by making member's behaviour less unpredictable. (3) *Religion*: it pertains to anxieties over which human control is weak or without defenses. Rituals perform a dual function: socially, they bind society, and, by way of external uncertainty avoidance, seek to control the future.

Each society has its repertoire of such norms. While previous research, especially psychological, has enquired into individuals personality and dispositions to cope with uncertainty, a lack of extensive exposition of national/cultural identity, inspired Hofstede to elaborate on the issue. His basic proposition is that 'on the national cultural level, tendencies towards prejudice, rigidity and dogmatism, intolerance of different opinions, traditionalism, superstition, racism, and ethnocentrism all relate to a norm for intolerance of ambiguity'.[590]

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[588] Hofstede (2001) *op. cit.*, p. 1.
[589] Hofstede (2001) *op. cit.*, p.p. 146, 147.
[590] Hofstede (2001) *op. cit.*, p. 146. Subsequent presentation is from chapter 4 thereof.

The Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) is based on IBM database/questionnaire.[591] To amplify its applicability, the data has been 'triangulated' with other related researches, and the correlations thereof substantiate the validity of UAI. Put differently, research on UAI is not an isolated, 'stand-alone' instance, but blends well with other available data and has high reliability.

Implications of Country Uncertainty Avoidance Differences

Low UAI	High UAI
Lower anxiety level in population.	Higher anxiety level in population.
More subjective well-being.	Less subjective well-being.
Less resistance to changes.	More resistance to changes.
Most people can be trusted.	One can't be careful enough with other people.
Openness to change and innovation.	Conservatism, law and order.
Willingness to take unknown risks.	Only known risks are taken.
What is different is curious.	What is different is dangerous.
Tolerance of diversity.	Xenophobia.
Comfortable with ambiguity and chaos.	Need for clarity and structure.
Appeal of novelty and convenience.	Appeal of purity.
Belief in one's own ability to influence one's life, and the world.	Feeling of powerlessness towards external forces.

Table 7 Summary of Hofstede's Uncertainty Avoidance Societal Norm

Hofstede maintains that UAI is reinforced in families, schools/educational institutions, organizations/work situations, and in political systems. Some of

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[591] Its details need not occupy us here.

these features are mentioned below which are telling in how bodily inscriptions are formed in society at all levels.

Low UAI	High UAI
In the Family	
Lenient rules on what is dirty and taboo.	Tight rules on what is dirty and taboo.
Truth is relative.	Concern with Truth with a capital T.
Few rules; if children cannot obey the rules, the rules should be changed.	Many rules; if children cannot obey the rules, they are sinners who should repent.
Mild superegos developed.	Strong superegos developed.
Children exposed to unknown situations.	Children protected from the unknown.
Undifferentiated, informal ways of address.	Strictly differentiated forms of address.
Nontraditional gender roles accepted.	Traditional gender roles preferred.
At School	
Students expect open-ended learning situations and good discussions.	Students expect structured learning situations and seek right answers
Teachers may say, "I don't know".	Teachers supposed to have all answers.
Students attribute achievements to own ability.	Students attribute achievements to effort, context, and luck.
Children rate self-efficacy high.	Children rate self-efficacy low.
Dialect speech positively valued.	Dialect speech negatively valued.
Independence for female students important.	Traditional role models for female students.
In Motivation	
Traditional children's stories stress strong achievement motivation	Traditional children's stories stress strong security motivation.
Hope of success.	Fear of failure.
Preference for tasks with uncertain outcomes, calculated risks, and requiring problem solving.	Preference for tasks with sure outcomes, no risks, and for following instructions.
In the Work Situation	
Weak loyalty to employer; short average duration of employment.	Strong loyalty to employer; long average duration of employment.
Innovators feel independent of rules.	Innovators feel constrained by rules.
Renegade championing.	Rational championing.
Power of superiors depends on position and relationships.	Power of superiors depends on control of uncertainties.
Tolerance for ambiguity in structures and procedures.	Highly formalized conception of management.
Appeal of transformational leader role.	Appeal of hierarchical control role.
Innovations welcomed but not necessarily taken seriously.	Innovations resisted but, if accepted, applied consistently.
Superiors optimistic about employees' ambition and leadership capacities.	Superiors pessimistic about employees' ambition and leadership capacities.

Table 8 Key differences between Low- and High-UAI societies at the levels of – Family, School, Motivation and Work Situation

A country-wise list UAI is presented below, as expressed by Hofstede with the remark that Hofstede had compiled a list of 50 countries, while here the list has been trimmed.

Sl. no.	Country	Actual UAI
1.	Singapore	8
2.	Denmark	23
3.	Sweden	29
4.	Ireland	35
5.	Great Britain	35
6.	Malaysia	36
7.	India	40
8.	Philippines	44
9.	United States	46
10.	Canada	48
11.	New Zealand	49
12.	South Africa	49
13.	Norway	50
14.	Australia	51
15.	Netherlands	53
16.	Switzerland	58
17.	Finland	59
18.	Iran	59
19.	Thailand	64
20.	Germany (F.R.)[φ]	65
21.	Arab countries	68

[φ] The statistical information was compiled earlier, hence the reference to pre-unified Germany (F.R.).

22.	Taiwan	69
23.	Pakistan	70
24.	Brazil	76
25.	Venezuela	76
26.	Colombia	80
27.	Mexico	82
28.	South Korea	85
29.	Costa Rica	86
30.	Chile	86
31.	Panama	86
32.	Argentina	86
33.	Spain	86
34.	Peru	87
35.	Yugoslavia	88
36.	Japan	92
37.	Salvador	94
38.	Belgium	94
39.	Uruguay	100
40.	Guatemala	101
41.	Portugal	104

Table 9 UAI for some countries

One line of tendentious argument is preempted here, viz. that some countries can transit to democracy and others cannot due to UAI. Comparing *figures 8* and *9* (above) provides some insights. The traits mentioned in *figure 7* about low UAI at level of family, school, motivation and work situation ordinarily appertain to democratic societies. Contrarily, the traits for high UAI

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ordinarily appertain to non-democratic societies. Yet, exceptions too are there: as per *figure* 8, Japan is a democracy, but has a high UAI, while Singapore is a non-democracy with a very low UAI. Furthermore, from *figure 8* it is also observed that Portugal with the highest UAI is also a democracy.

The aim definitely is not to belittle Hofstede's findings for they are indeed insightful, useful. To repeat, in Hofstede's favour, he has not employed these empirical indicators to explain the *how* of democratic transitions. The aim here rather is to draw on these variables in a different light to bolster the argument that *empirical indices are insufficient indicators of the how of democratic transitions* and, side by side, stress the significance of the non-observables, too.

The argument about the limitations of empirical indices is stated differently below. The empirical indices point to only a few observations, such as economic growth, political parties, electorates and/or some cultural traits. Useful, as they are, their limitations soon become apparent when their findings hold true for one or some countries and not others (as in Lipset's thesis). Would this not prompt adopting a different course of enquiry which examines a broader picture? The argument is simplified by the diagram presented below. The circles represent various sub-components of society, such as bureaucracy, army, nature of political games, economy, education system, media, genre of movies, technology, organizing capabilities, etc.[592] The circumferential line represents the permeation

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[592] '(S)ocietal norms affect organizational functioning [in a] surreptitious way'. See Hofstede (2001) *op. cit.*, p. 375. For a fuller narration see chapter 8 therein. The phrase requires annotation for instead of a 'surreptitious' manner, the societal norms affect all other realms in an ostensive/non-ostensive fashion due to close interplay.

of society by the properties of structural agential relationship in all the sub-components. Additionally, this is depicted by the arrow which rises perpendicularly and then feeds back into the social realm. The dotted lines below designate the autocatalytic loops, i.e. any subsequent developments too must imbibe the properties of the structural agential relationship. All in all, the structural agential relationship leaves its mark on all sub-components present, and those that can be possible. As a specimen, even cursorily comparing these units of liberal Britain and authoritarian N. Korea should drive home the point. Whereas in Britain, the liberal tinge will manifest in genre of movies, the nature of education, or a particular work culture, that is some underlying social properties will be manifested in all walks of life, in N. Korea these sectors of life will represent its underlying social properties in all walks of life, which will reflect authoritarian streak. This does hint that studying a broader picture, through a theoretical model, that does not touch upon some specific empirical indices, but reckons with underlying reality in wider terms and also informs about the interconnections about the main components of society would perhaps be more useful.
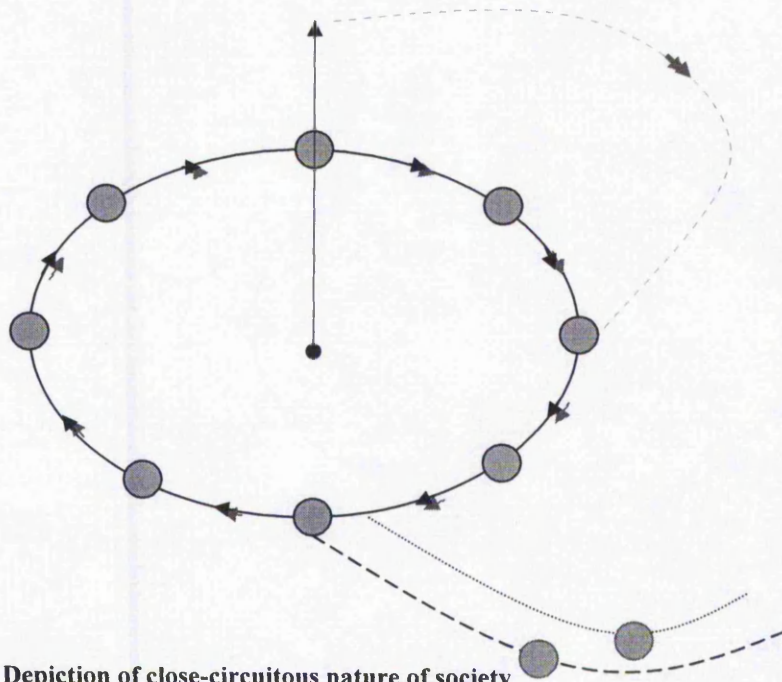
Fig. 9 Depiction of close-circuitous nature of society

A scientific enterprise of democratic transitions explains what makes democratic transitions possible for a 'scientist can never rest content with effects: he [sic] must search for causes'. The objective is to 'discover the natures of things' and not merely to collect 'conjunction of events'.[593] An attempt has been made by the research to strive towards this direction. Yet, causation does not operate at grand levels of 'How will society *x* transit to democracy?' If there be such a democratic barometer, it has yet to be brought to light. Causation operates at the segmented levels of 'what properties do those societies possess that transit to democracy'?[594] Or, 'what makes democratic transitions possible'? To these

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[593] Bhaskar (1979) *op. cit.*, pp. 186; 228; 214.

[594] Cf. Stinchcombe (1978) *op. cit.*, p. 17 wherein he discusses causation. 'Causation does not operate at the grand level of "Why did the Russian Revolution lead to Stalinism?" but on the segmented level of "How do revolutionary legislatures legitimate coups d'etat?"'

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posers, the realist modelling serves as a springboard for conducting more research and thereby illuming democratic transitions.

Conclusion: The chapter has shown that explaining democratic transitions merely through empirical indices is a limited exercise. Being confined to the known also has limitations, as it precludes the opening up of new vistas of enquiry. This stimulates the need for a theoretical model, which amongst others, should consider these qualities: (i) non-equivalence between quotidian life and theory (ii) instead of pointing out empirical indices, which are the outcome of deeper processes of societies, it should tackle the latter (iii) it need not necessarily focus on the immediate present, reckoning with the notion that 'the present is the key to the past' and, therefore, interlink the present with the past (iv) it should employ the interplay of structure and agency and their various configurations for examining the larger picture, and (v) resist the temptation to make too much out of one event or a chain of events.

Reckoning with the foregoing, it is informed that the modelling devised in chapters 7, 8 and 9 considers the following points, both in terms of what the modelling would be about and what not.

What the modelling is not about
* It does not proffer precise predictions for possible democratic transitions.
* It eschews propensity for formulating general laws of democratic transitions.
* It disfavours purely ethical views of democratic transitions which might be divorced from reality.
* It does not employ high sounding or resounding words, such as 'paths to democracy' *et al.* which are low on explanatory power.
* It is not a grand theory providing a universal, sequential unfolding of events and processes towards democratic transitions.

What the modelling is about
* It develops a modelling whereof internal structuring has applicability cross-culturally.
* It arranges social phenomena in orderly categories, shows the connections that exist betwixt them, and the interrelationships between their parts.

Chapter 6

Alternatives to realist interpretations reviewed and critiqued

This chapter contradistinguishes three theoretical models of democratic transitions, viz. modernization approach, transitions approach and historical structural approach by specifically applying them to Japan's transition. This exercise shall bring into sharp relief their explicatory power. By specifically applying them to Japan[595]—a country which none of these models initially engaged—the explanatory scope is sought to be enlarged. If these models explain Japan's transitions, they can be said to pass their muster; if not, the explanatory power of the models would be in question. Per contra these models, chapters 7, 8 and 9 present realist modelling of Japan's transition. The contrastive modelling shall enable appraising the respective models' explanatory power.

6.1 Modernization approach

Seymour Martin Lipset's modernization approach is employed as follows: (i) some indices, *a la* Lipset, are adopted viz. about wealth, industrialization, and education; (ii) the empirical values are then allocated for the years between 1940 and 1952. The counterintuitive choice of 1940, i.e. zenith of Japan's militarism and, conversely, the nadir of Japan's democratization,[596] is deliberate: the objective is to test the validity of the model by comparing and contrasting the

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[595] It of course is not mandatory that these models should have considered Japan as a case study. Nonetheless, the modelling should have broad applicability to those cases too which were not originally considered. It is in this vein that the three models are applied to Japan.

same empirical variables in 1940 and 1952 (when Japan was deemed to be a democracy). What changes occurred in the variables in about ten years, and what changes occurred in the social matrix are the focus point of enquiry. More importantly, what caused what? The issue of causality is thus put to test; this should also aid in judging the empirical variables in a new light.[597]

Industry, economy

Years	Percent change
1870-1910	69%
1910-1950	49%

Cumulative Percent Change of GDP per Capita 1870 – 1950

The tabular information above shows that cumulative percent change of GDP actually dropped in the second period, which also was the period in which Japan underwent democratic transition.

Years	Percentage change
1870-1910	1.3%
1910-1950	1.0%

Average Annual Growth Rates of GDP per Capita 1870 – 1950

The tabular information informs that the annual growth rate dropped in the second period, which again was the period in which Japan underwent the transition.

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[596] This is to say when the prospects for transition apparently were least propitious. As such, the zenith of militarism seems a fit choice.

[597] The empirical variables are from Panayotou, Theodore *et al.* (2000) 'Is the Environmental Kuznets Curve Driven by Structural Change? What Extended Time Series May Imply for Developing Countries' Center for International Development, Harvard University, retrieved from the internet on 12 December, 2004 at http://www.cid.harvard.edu/caer2/htm/content/papers/bns/dp80bn.htm with a reference to Maddison, Angus (1995) *Explaining the Economic Performance of Nations*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Years	Emissions
1930	0.39
1950	0.33

CO_2 Emissions per Capita (metric tons of carbon)

The per capita CO_2 emissions did decrease in 1950, as compared to 1930.

Years	Per capita income
1930	1,780
1950	1,873

Income per Capita (1990 Geary-Khamis Dollars)

It is gathered from table *supra* that there was a marginal increase of per capita income from 1930 to 1950.

Years	Capital stock per capita
1930	3,691
1950	5,830

Gross Nonresidential Capital Stock per Capita (1990 Geary-Khamis Dollars)

From 1930 to 1950, capital stock per capita showed some improvement, as per table above.

Years	Gross capital per unit
1930	1.318
1950	1.767

Gross Nonresidential Capital Stock per Unit of GDP (1990 Geary-Khamis Dollars)

In the intervening 20 years, an increase of 0.449 per unit occurred which cannot be considered to be significant.

Years	Exports per unit
1930	0.04
1950	0.02

Exports per Unit of GDP (1990 Geary-Khamis Dollars)

The exports per unit, in fact, decreased during the intervening period by 0.02 per unit of GDP. This also was the period when political changes were occurring in Japan.

Education[598]

Types	Year 1948	Year 1952
Kindergarten	1,529	2,874
Elementary school	25,237	26,377
Lower secondary school	16,285	13,748
Upper secondary school	3,575	4,506
Total	48,181[599]	53,770

Total number of schools (private, national, local)
(http://www.mext.go.jp/english/statist/xls/005.xls)

In education, too, it is gathered there is nominal increase in total number of all categories of schools, when reckoned with the five year gap. Elementary schools witnessed a decrease in number. In respect of number of students and teachers, some increase did occur, as can be observed from the two tables below.

Types	Year 1948	Year 1952
Kindergarten	198,946	370,667
Elementary school	10,774,652	11,148,325
Lower secondary school	4,792,504	5,076,495
Upper secondary school	1,203,963	2,342,869
Total	17,215,747	20,136,770

Total number of students (private, national, local)
(http://www.mext.go.jp/english/statist/xls/006.xls)

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[598] The statistical figures are from official website of Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan retrieved on 12 December 2004. See http://www.mext.go.jp
[599] This is the aggregate of all institutions, but not all sub-categories are mentioned here.

Types	Year 1948	Year 1952
Kindergarten	5,917	12,142
Elementary school	282,236	322,573
Lower secondary school	169,283	183,900
Upper secondary school	68,707	100,881
Total	534,821	671,277

Total number of full-time teachers (private, national, local)
(http://www.mext.go.ip/english/statist/xls/007.xls)

Analysis: The above exercise of tabulating information was performed with the main task of calculating whether Japan underwent any enormous change in variables relating to economy or education from 1940 to 1952. It was not deemed necessitous to employ identical variables, as per Lipset, as other variables too can enable such an assessment for they simply serve as a barometer of social 'health'.

It is thereupon concluded that these and related variables do not enlighten about the *how* of transitions. Moreover, the fact that vast improvement in most such variables was lacking between 1940 and 1952 and, yet Japan did undergo transition prompts about the inadequacy of these indicators in understanding transitions. The need therefore arises for grappling with the underlying social processes that, in case of Japan had thrown up militarism prior to 1945, but in a large measure, also played a role in democratic transitions.

Lipset's model can be categorized as empiricist and, to some degree, monocausal, at least on the following counts. (1) It overly relies upon empirical indices which neither fully explicate the *how* of democratic transitions, in general, and Japan's transition, in particular, nor do they exhibit consistency, for as already discussed in chapter 3, exceptions prevail such as Singapore and Saudi Arabia on the one hand, and India on the other. (2) Lipset's model has limited

applicability than being applicable to all transitional/non-transitional cases. (3) It employs a 'flat' ontology. (4) Reliance is on *if A, then B*, i.e. if some economic and educational indices have a high percentage, they demonstrate democratic transitions, but the underlying mechanisms are not discussed, thereby beholding the possibility of misattribution of causality. Additionally, the focus is on observables only. (5) Agency's transformative powers and its stratified nature are nowhere discussed, which are crucial to transformation. (6) Temporality, a key conceptual notion is eclipsed, keeping the focus mainly on 'present tense'.

6.2 Transitions approach
Following Rustow, the transitions approach proceeds in four stages.[600]

I. Background Condition

Tokugawa Ieyasu unified Japan in the early 17th century. Although a semblance of unity prevailed previously due to lingual uniformity and a homogeneous race, fissiparous tendencies and lack of swift communication and transportation often marred this. *Shogunate's* centralized administration perpetuated peace and stability for more than two centuries. The origins of a pronounced national identity are traceable to this period; the seclusion policy further strengthened it. It was, however, the ouster of *Shogunate*, and the ensuing Meiji Restoration which bestowed a strong national identity to the populace. Technological advances plus other developments—swift transport and communication, universal education, industrialization, common laws, the threat of Western 'barbarians', emperor as the unifying icon, etc.—both expanded and contracted Japan. Infrastructure and

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[600] The basic features of Japan's history have been discussed in Chapter 4 and the Appendix. Hence, pleonasm is avoided here. This section briefly traces the *phases* postulated by Rustow.

human resources expanded Japan while communication networks contracted Japan. All in all, a distinct and distinguished sense of national identity prevailed in the post-Meiji era.

II. Preparatory Phase

Notwithstanding national unity, underlying tensions and mutual rivalries were rife amongst the ruling elites. This was especially fostered by their competing plans for national development. To paraphrase Rustow, the elites were vying for supremacy. Chasms and cleavages deemed germinal for democracy too were plentiful. Some dissemblers played musical chairs – relinquishing parties/associations for lucrative government posts. The reforms could scarcely have been unanimous given the competing claims and demands of cross-sections of elites. Arbitrary decisions led to disgruntlement and such activities often irrupted into riots, revolts and uprisings. The establishment conveniently overcame these uncoordinated efforts and, hence, their achievements were nugatory. Strains of concerted efforts were not altogether missing: popular societies and associations mushroomed in 1870s/1880s. Thus rolled-on an inceptive 'prolonged and inconclusive struggle'.

III. Decision Phase

The concatenation of – disgruntled elites, popular societies, wrangling oligarchy, and discontentment amongst certain sections at having been left in the lurch after the Meiji reforms rendered institutionalization of reforms unavoidable; the ineluctability also stemmed from the fact that institutionalization would catapult Japan into the league of modern nations and, thereby, enable annulling the

humiliating unequal treaties. In the 'decision phase', it is concurred with Rustow that the elites play a disproportionate vis-à-vis the masses; Japan was no exception. Congeries of proposals for legislation were in proliferation. The oligarchy however pressed for its own version of the model: a cabinet headed by the prime minister, bicameral legislature with limited powers of deliberation, and the initiation of the party system. Constitution too was promulgated in 1890. The arrangement was not wholly consensual nor could it have been, as it was the outcome of concessions and counter-concessions. It was, as Rustow would call it, a 'second best' arrangement. This orchestration was simultaneously matched by wide-ranging social, economic and technological reforms. In point of fact and to Rustow's prescience, concrete decisions were preeminent over abstract values. Example: abolition of the samurai status and its appurtenances (1871); much to the chagrin of the samurai, the decision was systematically enforced. 'Darwinian selectivity' too was at work with parties and leaders jockeying for positions. It may be the case that the oligarchy wanted a rather decorative political mechanism or a 'safety valve', but the working of the party system around the 1920s was vibrant rather than a mere embellishment.

IV. Habituation Phase

The institutionalization of polity, albeit short of full autonomy to the legislature, did habituate the populace by its very functioning. Elections continued to be held, franchise was gradually extended, aspirants to the power-apparatus burgeoned, and new parties emerged. Early 1920s witnessed some of the finest moments of Japan's party system and the period is known as 'Taisho

democracy'. Thenceforward, the Depression of the 1920s and the ensuing military campaigns shrivelled the democratic conduits and Japan was to enter into an increasingly belligerent mode until its occupation by the Allied Forces. Thus a rather anticlimactic end to Rustow's model, at least up to 1945!

Analysis: The heretofore etching of Japan's transition, as per Rustow's model, is a rather rosy, if not distorted, picture. Presented favourably, it aims to approximate the 'transitions model', despite its ostensive drawbacks. To pause briefly, two points, in a charitable interpretation of Rustow, are stated. One, in his schematization, he discountenanced Japan as an exemplar for initial analysis on counts of (a) military occupation, and (b) that the transition was not 'mainly within the system'. Two, Rustow acknowledges that democratization is a non-uniform and non-homogeneous process and, thereby, he opens up conceptual space for 'many roads to democracy'. Now, without being uncharitable, it is argued that a theory, in the ultimate analysis (if not initially) must be broadly applicable than selectively. Stated thus, applying and testing the model to Japan, in spite of Rustow's reservations, is in order. To this end, the same four stages are re-assessed, this time more critically.

I. Background Condition

Rustow maintains that the pivot of national unity needn't necessarily be consensual; its derivability is independent of its existence. In Japan's case, there is no gainsaying that nationwide unity sharpened after 1868, irrespective of its manner of achievement.

II. Preparatory Phase

This phase demands a closer scrutiny, as it cannot be decided out-of-hand that Japan had *indeed* embarked on the path towards democratization. There is counterevidence of the same: (a) the oligarchy intended to strengthen the state than eviscerating it; (b) while some leaders rhapsodized about autonomous legislature, deliberations, etc., a common thread nevertheless was elevation of Japan's status in the eyes of the then powerful W. European/N. American nations; hence, nationalism and state's fortification were potent factors in all reforms; (c) incontrovertible evidence of masses systematically rising in unison, demanding equal rights/liberties for themselves, or popular movement/revolution demanding democratic rights, is lacking; and, (d) the very germs of the Meiji Restoration were not rooted in democratic soil, but in eliminating the undesirable alluvia of the Tokugawa era, one of which was countering the 'Western barbarians'. In short, this substantiates that democratic fervour was nebulous. A populace faces a formidable task in fabricating something of which it is unaware in the first place, and the same holds true for supposed democratic underpinnings in Japan.

III. Decision Phase

Although some democratic principles were institutionalized, the generally accepted democratic principles turned out to be amiss. These manifested in the following: (a) the prime minister and the cabinet were not selected from the legislature; (b) the former was not accountable to the latter; (c) the parties lacked ideological underpinnings, which was partly due to the manner of their

origination: instead of prior ideological interests coalescing into associations, it was a case of the other way round; (d) there was no mechanism of checks and balances to preclude non-democratic deviation; intriguingly, militarism too thrived under a 'benign' interpretation of the Meiji Constitution; (e) besides, party leaders themselves often deserted their own parties for prestigious government positions leaving their followers dumbfounded.

IV. Habituation Phase

It is a fact that the Japanese were accustomed gradually to the new institutions and the devices thereof, such as electioneering, party system, voting, etc. Coincidentally, the rise of militarism also habituated the population. This is statable as evidence of large-scale opposition to it lacks.

Having attempted somewhat generously to explicate the transitions model, these four phases can now, anticlimactically, themselves be called into question, as (1) the socio-political developments since the Meiji era culminated in militarism, and (2) in the post-1945 Occupation period, such stages were unobtrusive. To reiterate, Rustow shunned Japan's case for his model (perhaps due to its counter-adaptability), but is the exclusion an incontestable commandment? On the other hand, showing the inapplicability of the model, and its selective nature, provides stimulus for further exploration. It is a moot point how far selective models deepen democratic transitions' understanding. A theoretician's formulation is somewhat tenuous if s/he says, 'my theory is

correct, except in country *x*'.[601] Summatively stated, the transitions approach is inadequate for explicating Japan's transition, in particular and, others, in general. The fact that Rustow excluded Japan from his modeling, *ipso facto*, implies that he was aware of its inapplicability.

Rustow's thesis assuredly is not wholly empiricist or monocausal, but the following grains to this effect are discernible. (1) In applying the model to Japan, in particular, and others transitions, in general, the focus is mainly on events, agents, agents' behaviour/experience. It is definitively predicated on 'event ontology', which is why it has limited function. Remember, originally it remained inapplicable to Japan. (2) The underlying mechanisms of social transformation remain undiscussed. (3) Bodily dispositions, and other unobservables, such as norms, values, etc. are deficiently dealt with. (4) There is a discernible lack of focus on the relation obtaining between persons and positions. (5) It assumes that the manifest powers of social objects are their real powers. (6) Over-reliance on agential powers, thereby miniaturizing structural conditioning/constraints. (7) Due to these reasons, broad applicability of the model is wanting.

6.3 Historical structural approach[602]

Moore's thesis traces three 'main routes' to the modern world – democracy, fascism and communism. The mileposts punctuating these routes are emblematic of the interrelationship between three social classes, viz. the bourgeoisie, landed

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[601] Cf. King, Gary *et al.* (1994) *Designing Social Enquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 21, 22.

aristocracy and peasants. Whereas this ensemble democratized USA, UK and France, in Japan and Germany, it led to fascism and, in China and Russia, it led to communism. This section synopsizes Moore's thesis on Japan's totalitarianism contra democratization.[603] The aim can be stated like this. Moore's chronicling culminates in Japan's totalitarianism, but then the intervening period for democratic transition is miniscule in comparison to the long gestation period of militarism. If militarism's rise is explained by the past historical account, by the same token, should not the subsequent transition too, be described by the same account, as it too emerged from the past's womb and the womb was *common* which sustained both militarism and democracy! There does appear to be more to Japan's transition than the ostensible events.

Moore's thesis is modelled on Japan's transition thus. In Japan, 'reactionary' capitalism took root in both agriculture and industry. Despite introducing some novelties, it allowed the landed upper class to 'maintain intact the preexisting peasant society' and, thereby, extract enough surpluses to reap profits in the market.[604] Nevertheless, a labour-repressive system, contrary to popular perception, needn't necessarily cause greater suffering. In Japan, the peasants had 'an easier time of it than did English ones'.[605] The constellation however was germinal for fascism, as it congealed the interests of the landed aristocracy and the commercial/manufacturing classes. The alliance formally and

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[602] Although it is attempted to keep the text terse, some overlap with other sections is likely, to sustain continuity.

[603] A synoptic view of the social origins of totalitarianism is available in Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, chapter 8; the immediate discussion is from this chapter.

[604] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 433.

[605] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 435.

informally inked moneymaking by the latter and rule by the former. This reciprocal relationship manifested during 1868-1918. Additionally, the Japanese political fort remained virtually impregnable due to the absence of a combined revolutionary challenge from peasants and urban strata.

Moore notes that Japan's problems were inherently 'insoluble': to modernize without changing the social structures led to an impasse; 'the only way out of this dilemma was militarism which united the upper classes', tied down the lower classes, and cashed in on foreign expansion by making 'reaction popular in the form of fascism'[606].

A glimpse of Tokugawa regime is useful here for understanding the antecedents of absolutism.[607] To its credit, *Shogunate* ensured two centuries of peace and stability. The administration is also notable for a few ruptures with the past: meticulous, inobtrusive erosion of samurai's independent bases of power. The samurai was enjoined to stay with the *daimyos* or overlords in castle-towns. This dispossessed the samurai of the former function of warring, which became a rarity with prolonged peace. The samurai's position deteriorated gradually. Due to his meagre rice stipend, and absence of other remunerative source(s), he inevitably fell into debt to eke out a living. Increasingly discontented, he often snapped his ties with the warlord, turned to *ronin* (wandering, masterless) and, was eager to combat the establishment. Many of the 'impoverished' samurais were to play a conspicuous role in dislodging the *Shogunate*.

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[606] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 442.
[607] The subsequent discussion is from Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, chapter 5, wherein, he discusses at length Japan's fascism.

Another rupture with the past appertained to the merchants. Initially abhorred by Confucian ethics for moneymaking, merchants rose prominently and became the chief source of lending. With many sections becoming indebted, Moore describes the relationship as 'symbiotic antagonism', in which the merchant was the dominant partner. Gradually the merchant was to become a potential source of trouble against whom peasant ire would be directed.

Shogunate's functioning, in any case, was antithetical to the emergence of a free society given its peculiar accentuation on loyalty and duty. The element of written/oral contract was weak. The feudal bond was 'more primitive, less objective and rational than its European counterparts'. It was predicated upon 'unwritten custom and ceremonial observance' with 'fictive kinship relationship' as the dominant leitmotiv. Self-governing towns with domain-demarcating Charters were absent.[608]

In the late Tokugawa period, the old ethic was being undermined while no new configuration had 'taken its place'.[609] Rigid barriers between classes now betokened permeability: warriors becoming merchants and vice versa. With other mores crumbling, and *Shogunate's* financial situation getting increasingly insecure, ground was being prepared for a shift. When the moment did arrive in 1868, the *Shogunate* was eventually displaced. The discernible features of the Restoration are – it was devoid of an ideological-hue; sans influential thinkers or charismatic leaders; and, neither an instance of class struggle, nor a bourgeois

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[608] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, pp. 234, 238.
[609] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 235.

revolution. It is apt to describe it as an 'old-fashioned, feudal struggle between the central authority and the fiefs'.[610]

These developments facilitated a section of the ruling class to detach itself from its moorings and carry out a 'revolution from above'. Some reforms ramified the social landscape but, *au fond*, Japan's social/industrial revolution was 'partial' and, the so-called 'revolution' of 1868 'limited', as some anachronistic features subsisted with the emerging changes. Moore tracks the 'essence of Japan's tragedy' to this queer conjunction.[611]

In the Imperial Restoration, the samurais played a vital role. None the less, their plummeting status received no respite. The new dispensation compensated the *daimyos* and the samurai, but the unsteady finances led to reduction of the same. In 1871, the remaining privileges of the samurai were abrogated. Finally, the launch of conscription army took away the last bastion of the samurais, viz. chivalry. The peasants joined the army in hordes. Two birds were thus killed with one stone: the samurai was debilitated while the possibility of a peasant revolution was scotched.

There were other reasons too for the non-occurrence of a peasant revolution. Moore proffers three reasons: (a) the taxation system was such that it left sufficient surplus with the enterprising farmer and, thereby, stimulated production; (b) traditional control over the peasant, by yoking the peasant to the feudal overlord and more systematically through bureaucracy; and (iii) a social framework adapted to commercial agriculture by incorporating some new strands

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[610] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 243.
[611] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 229.

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but, importantly, without dispensing with the core features of the hitherto overbearing structure. Resentment prevailed against the feudal overlord, merchant and emerging landlord. Some peasants often 'voted with their feet', to vent resentment, by leaving their villages *en masse*. Moore does consider the probability of a peasant revolution in Japan. It is another matter that the occasional violent eruptions towards the end of the late Tokugawa period or during the Meiji 1870s/1880s were rarely threatening. They petered out both due to uncoordinated nature of efforts and repressive measures adopted by the establishment. As for prospects of a bourgeois revolution, Moore doubts the same due to the taming of the commercial elements.

The *pax Tokugawa* pyramid, whence inverted, secured the loyalty of the peasant to the state than the feudal overlord. The 'centralized feudalism' perpetuated a paternalistic system wherein administrative tentacles pervaded deep into the basic social unit, i.e. the family. A commonly constituted device was the five-man group comprising senior nominated men. In was a surveillance and reconciliatory mechanism, and also facilitated unanimity amongst villagers by serving to prevent open conflict. It played a role in curbing surreptitious and subversive activities. Its time-tested feasibility led to its employment subsequently during the Second War in a martinetish fashion. During the Tokugawa period, an injunction had already weakened the peasants: they were forbidden from possessing firearms, carrying swords, studying Confucianism, and adopting novel religious practices.

Commercial agriculture also affected the social landscape: it wrought some changes at the village-level. From the shadows of familial units, tenancy loomed prominently. By late Tokugawa period, wage labour was common and landlord-tenant relations replaced paternalistic relations. Howbeit, property relations underwent no drastic change: neither did expropriation of peasants occur nor did the peasants get an upper hand over the dominant classes. Moreover, the Land Tax (1873) did put the onus on the peasant for maximum revenue. Required to raise cash to pay the tax, he eventually depended more on the vagaries of the market and the village usurer (usually the leading village-landlord). In some cases, the indebtedness often led to confiscation of farms. Despite the existence of peasant's proprietary rights, the ground situation remained static: the peasant turned out to be the loser for want of appropriate documents, as also reliance upon custom and oral tradition. In the final analysis, the peasant was the 'source of capitalist accumulation'.[612] It is noteworthy here that the new landlord class emerged out of peasantry than aristocracy.

The upshot of these developments was a secure/strengthened landlord keen to cultivate commercial interests. Rendered immune from life's vicissitudes, his anathema towards some social changes was dispelled. These changes did not however alter the oligarchic structure though they turned the landlord against the peasant. The inherent contradictions of sustaining a feudal-cum-commercial system had at least one bright side: this provided government with room to manoeuvre to steer the course between Scylla and Charybdis depending of course on scale of priorities at any given time.

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[612] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 273.

A novel development was that some elites engaged in banking, commerce and industry which curtailed the merchant's sway. Contrary to Germany's case, neither a Junker class nor a powerful landed aristocracy emerged in Japan. 'Big business needed fascism, patriotism, emperor Worship, and the military, just as the army and the patriots needed big industry to carry out their political program. The agrarian radicals could not see this, or at any rate refused to recognize'.[613]

Japan's fascism was distinct: it had continuity with the previous constitutional government; it was non-equivalent of a March on Rome or a *putsch*; there was absence of a single mass party; it was devoid of a *Führer* or *Il Duce*; and, was minus a massive extermination or terror policy. Fascism in fact emerged more 'naturally' in Japan. In the given social system, the *foreign* rationalist-secular ethos' penetration was thin. Recourse was therefore taken to employ local cultural symbols which still wielded mass appeal. There is also little evidence of peasants' enthusiasm for ultra-nationalism. Whilst the peasant formed the bulwark of the army, his role as an obedient recruit of the fascist regime was generally one of passiveness and submissiveness.

Militarism tightly interwove the society and, in a sense of *déjà vu*, the afore-mentioned village-societies, five-man committees etc. became the warp and woof of totalitarian regime. Thus, the basic social unit was intermeshed within the national fabric.

Analysis: Moore's thesis is elaborate and informative. Yet, the luminous details about the interrelationship between the peasant and the landlords could well be construed as *a* spoke in the impending democratizing wheel; these

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[613] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 302.

attributes/effects were not impedimental to the political transformation in the post-1945 period. Moore apparently concedes this point: 'In the political history of Japan it is much more difficult to draw a sharp distinction between a democratic and a totalitarian phase than it is in Germany history'.[614] The dividing-wall between totalitarianism and democratization is thus tenuous. The metaphor itself holds only for transubstantiation of events, than at a deeper level, given the continuity between the past and present.

Moore also painstakingly provides an historical/chronological commentary. Sequential events in which A follows B, followed by C may mask causality due to the multiple linkages in society; Moore's thesis underplays society's stratification. Limitations become apparent when the locus remains social events only. In Japan's case, they (focus on social events only) beg how democratic transition occurred smoothly.[615] From a commonsensical perspective, Japan switched from fascism to democratic entity in virtually a twinkling of an eye. Even transcending the commonsensical explication, the fact remains that the entire explanation about fascism finely merges into the rise of democratization. On this note, the whole course of events in Japan requires greater attention. In sum, Moore's thesis is not so much obsolete as much as it requires complementation, whether it be to explicate democracy or dictatorship.

Barrington Moore's thesis doubtless considers temporality, and some deeper social processes spreading out over time. Without denigrating the merit of

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[614] Moore (1977) *op. cit.*, p. 299.
[615] A smooth transition here implies one without hiccups. The reference is not to a violent revolution which, in any case, is not deemed a prerequisite for democratic transitions, as peaceful transitions too are possible.

the thesis, it is contended that the following strains do conform to empiricist thinking. (1) The focus, in Japan's case, as also other cases, is on events, classes, agents and the like. To put the record straight, events surely need to be discussed, but not as 'stand alone' objects, or in 'splendid isolation'. They need to be situated in a *stag* relationship, as also underlying mechanisms which lie, for analytical purposes, at strata below. (2) In Japan's case, Moore devises a long chronological span for rise of militarism, but this self-same structuring merged into democratization imperceptibly!!! The dividing wall between periods of militarism and democratic transition, in the mid-1940s is thin! This energizes the view about prevalence of transfactual powers in social objects, and that (a) their manifest powers/properties are *tendencies*, and (b) social mechanisms' effects are contingent. (3) A stratified view of agency is non-discernible with primary focus on *agents*. (4) Due to spotlight on events, classes, the model's applicability is confined, as it can be applied only to particular historical periods, whence such classes prevailed, and that too in particular societies and not all.

It would not be out of context to mention about Paul Hirst's associationalism here, although it has not been applied to Japan's case. Hirst's model undoubtedly suffers from empiricism. (1) The structural conditioning/constraints are wholly slighted. (2) His attention is overwhelmingly on the 'present tense'. (3) Agents are implicitly described as unconstrained which is a fictitious account. This research so far has highlighted how the past's *absence* bears on the 'here and now'. (4) A thorough reliance on 'flat' ontology. (5) The model regards social objects' manifest properties as their real properties.

(6) Hirst's model has limited applicability; even in Japan's case, it is self-evident that without self-help mechanisms, the structuring on the part of state or in other words, top-down structuring has in no way been detrimental to the Japanese. More to the point, Japan transited to democracy, and has sustained the democratic structure along with exhibiting a worthy example of caring for its citizens by providing very fine basic amenities; all this has been without associationalism. Self-help thus cannot be an end in itself for it is a means to an end, i.e. of better life.

On similar lines, Zakaria's thesis puts the cart before the horse. His claim that first economies should be devised, and then polities, is monocausal. (1) Societies that cannot design polities are now expected to design economies! (2) The thesis is reductionist, as it engages single-factor explications. (3) Temporality is rendered insignificant. (4) The past structuring and constraints are unconsidered. (4) The real properties of objects are deemed to be their manifest properties. (5) It also presumes that if some societies can transit in mode x, then others too can follow suit. (6) Finally, it does not appear to be the case that in Japan, economy was devised first and then polity. In actual unfolding of history, i.e. in real time, both co-evolved.

Finally, Putnam's thesis, though unapplied to Japan, also carries some non-realist germs. (1) Whilst Putnam implies the significance of underlying mechanisms for democratization, none of these are discussed explicitly. (2) The attention remains on observables, though at times, he does accord relevance to unobservables which remain unstated. (3) The focus is on agential activities than

their emergence in a relational framework. (4) His thesis implies that factors which have fostered democratization in one society may do so in other societies, too. A streak of 'associational' thinking therefore prevails. (5) In Japan's case, 'civic culture' as rationalized by Putnam was markedly absent, though Japan still transited to democracy in the most unusual circumstances, thereby, putting a question mark on the broader applicability of Putnam's model.

Most importantly, none of the models/approaches discussed above attended to emergentism – emergent powers/properties and how they impinge upon humans.

6.4 The flaws of non-realist accounts of Japan's democratic transition
The non-realist accounts are problematic on the following counts:

(a) A pure narrative of the reforms unleashed by the American forces as causing democratic transition (hereafter transition) is inadequate, as it is discontinuous with past activities and practices. It also suffers from the erroneous belief that actors can commence activities *ab initio*.

(b) Attributing transition(s) singularly to Japanese elites in the post-Second War period is flawed similarly as (a).

(c) Claims that elements of change pre-existed, i.e. prevailed since the Tokugawa period can be moderately accepted. Such claims however would need to distinctly explicate what were those elements and which concatenation was conspicuously in play. That conditions of change also change over time also demands reckoning.

(d) An assertion that transition was caused by a spontaneous change in the agents and their dispositions in the postwar period is impractical because it neglects the actual play of agency, and how it is conditioned to act by past practices. One of the finest examples clueing in a subtle way is the case of colonies: even after independence, which must have been a heady feeling, not many were able to rise like a phoenix from ashes, simply by euphoric feelings, exhilaration on the part of the citizens, including the leaders. The insight here is that the raw materials of change also need to be acted upon. All the same, there is no gainsaying that humans are malleable depending upon contexts, without forgetting that such malleability, by itself, is an insufficient means of change.

(e) The projection that transition occurred due to efficacious 'political' governance is inadequate, as it is overly premised on the view that the 'political' disciplines and directs rest of the social segments with finesse. Per contra, it is suggested that the 'political' is only *primus inter pares* vis-à-vis social order.

(f) The transition cannot be wholly explicated on account of temperaments, such as 'will to succeed' or to 'redeem' the nation for such temperaments have to be translatable to the material realm. The latter should in some degree have enabling factors or facilitate devising such factors. Myanmar's citizens have not been able to overthrow decadent structures by mere 'will to succeed'.

Detracting structure/agency from explanative of large-scale social process(es), such as democratization generates explanations without 'historical grounding'

which is required for collective action theories as 'means of action that are available to people...vary significantly as a cumulative product of historical experience and...strongly constrain its likelihood and character'.[616] The preceding arguments buttress the case for a *stag* approach, which reckons with both society and agents. This can be formally stated as follows:

If d.t. = x^n
then $x \rightarrow \Sigma$ *s.a.*

This is to say that if democratic transition (d.t.) is the function of a concatenation of variables, x^n, then a beginning in deciphering x^n should be from a rudimentary understanding of structure and agency (Σ *s.a.*), which are the 'building blocks' of social reproduction/transformation.

Finally, a pitfall in modelling democratic transitions is couching concepts in positivistic terms, which begets 'ontological monovalence', i.e. 'the reliance on a "purely positive, complementing a purely actual, notion of reality"'.[617] This results in making assumptions which are implicitly or even explicitly professed on conditions of closure, whereupon, open systems, such as societies, are incorrectly deemed coequal with closed systems. Regularities in outcomes obtain in the latter, but not necessarily in the former. The research now engages the conditions of closure implicit in such modelling. It is reiterated that these conditions can obtain only in closed laboratory conditions where variables can be controlled; hence their employment in social theory needs to be obstructed as

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[616] Cf. Tilly, Charles (1981) *As Sociology Meets History*, Orlando: Academic Press, p. 214.
[617] Bhaskar, Roy and Norrie, Alan (1998) 'Introduction: Dialectic and dialectical critical realism', *Critical Realism: Essential Readings* by Margaret Archer *et al.* (eds.), London: Routledge, pp. 561-574, p. 562.

they cloud a deeper understanding. The research resists three conditions of closure:[618]

(1) *'Intrinsic closure condition' (ICC)*

ICC is obtained when the social objects within a domain respond similarly or predictably. In open systems, control over diverse data is unattainable which renders such 'constant conjunctions' impractical. In the case of Japan, were it the case that social objects responded similarly over time, the Tokugawa regime could neither have been dismantled nor could a qualitatively different Meiji Restoration follow on. Another instance: the militarization of Japan would have been irreversible and subsequent democratization impossible, if social objects behaved similarly.

(2) *'Extrinsic closure condition' (ECC)*

ECC is obtained in a domain by isolating it from all external influences, thereby securing 'constant conjunctions'. Yet again, in open systems it is unrealizable, as not only intra-society but inter-society boundaries too are permeable. In case of Japan, if ECC remained in play, Japan would not have taken rapid strides especially towards technological development, whose inspiration did come from Europe/America; this was manifest in the abundant missions, embassies that were sent abroad to study social patterns, institutions etc. The insights gained were translated in Japan, as per local needs.

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[618] Cf. Lawson (1997) *op. cit.*, pp. 77-81.

(3) *'Aggregational closure condition'* (ACC)

ACC obtains when a constant outcome is derived irrespective of the magnitude of aggregation of social objects. In open realms, such constancy is non-likely as control of variables—especially where human agency, without invariant properties, is involved—is suspect. In case of Japan, if ACC indeed prevailed, then the ups and downs, and the swings associated with the morphogenetic forms of Meiji conservatism→ militarism→democratic transition would have remained non-existent.

The research therefore eschews such closures in the realist modelling of democratic transitions. According to a commentator, comparing alternative models is a better exercise rather than simply accepting or rejecting a single model.[619] However, comparison cannot be an end in itself, as judgmental rationalism pronounces that plausible judgments about models' explanatory power can be made. It is in this vein that alternate realist modelling is propounded. Chapters 7, 8 and 9 are devoted to this task.

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[619] Lave (1975) *op. cit.*, pp. 58, 60.

Chapter 7

Realist Modelling of Democratic Transitions – *Pulse I*

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 detail the realist modelling of social reproduction/transformation and sensitize its applicability to democratic transitions. Towards this objective, *each chapter is trisected* as follows. *Part A* exposits a particular phase of Margaret Archer's model, viz. structural/cultural conditioning (Phase I in chapter 7), socio-cultural interaction (Phase II in chapter 8) and social elaboration (Phase III in chapter 9). *Part B* proposes additions to each phase of Archer's model to sharpen its suitability for democratic transitions. Finally, *Part C* demonstrates the viability of modelling by applying it to Japan's transition, phase-wise. As this is an exploratory exercise, the issues are tackled briefly.

Before moving to Parts A, B & C, a tentative structuring of the modelling is presented below in two parts. The first part conveys what the modelling does not lay emphasis upon, and the second part conveys what is emphasized in the modelling.

The modelling *does not* emphasize:

(i) Phase-wise analysis of democratic transitions

(ii) Only an event or a chain of events or a flash point occurrence

(iii) Democratic ideas, practices being an essential ingredient in democratic transition

(iv) The immediate present or time t_1

(v) Democratic revolution from 'up' or 'below'

(vi) Actors' perceptions of and preferences about democratic transition

The reasons for the afore exclusions *ad seriatim* are (i) democratic transitions do not strictly follow specific, chronological phases (ii) one event, broadly speaking, is interconnected with other events as well as underlying reality and, hence, too much cannot be read into one event or a chain of events or a flash point occurrence (iii) democratic ideas are not *necessarily* a precursor to democratic transitions, i.e. they have no inherent power to practically translate for a given society (iv) immediate present is laden with properties from the past too (v) political groupings may profess different ideologies but that by itself is a

deficient mode given the fact that the political groupings lack free run of will and inescapably have to engage the raw materials of change, i.e. the structures, which dent their autonomy, as distinct from irrelevance (vi) the actual unfolding of transitions seldom, if ever, conforms to all actors' preferences.

In so stating, none of these points is slighted; only the focus is sought to be shifted from one layer of social spectrum to another.

What the modelling *does* lay emphasis upon:

> (i) Non-equivalence between theory and quotidian life

> (ii) Categorization of social reality into real, actual and empirical
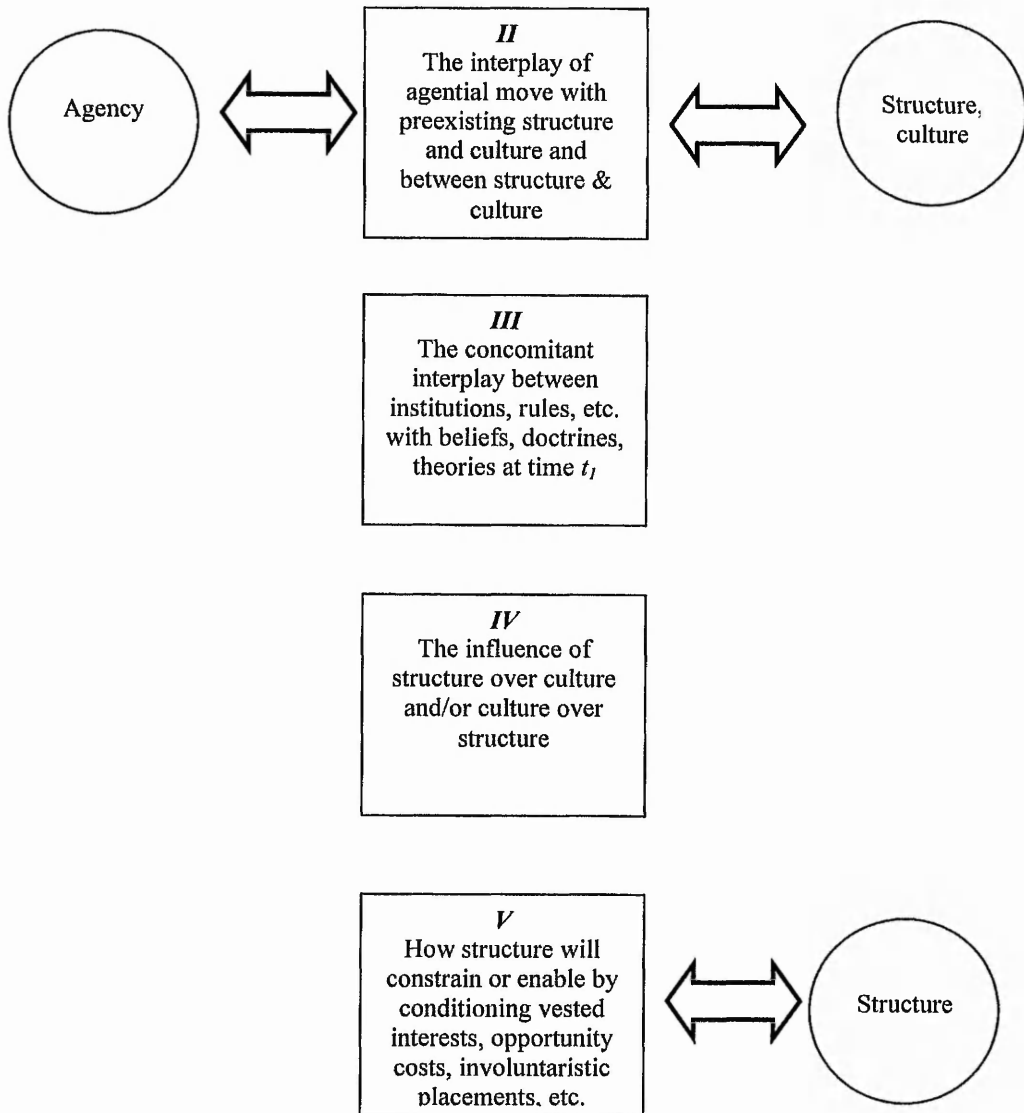
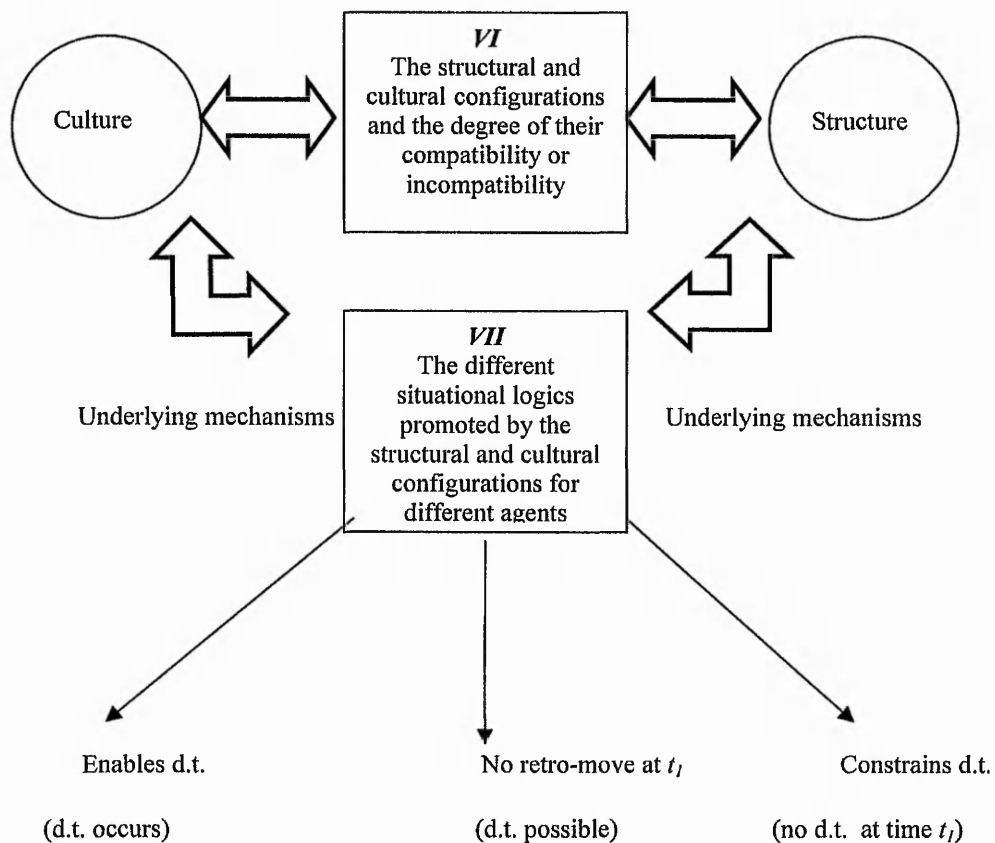> (iii) Interlinkages between the immediate present and the past

> (iv) Scope for democratic transition on the erstwhile non-democratic structuring

> (v) Analyzing interplay between structure and agency in the following manner

> *I*
> Agential move is a prerequisite, but no agential move commences *ab initio*

Therefore

Legend: d.t. = democratic transitions

Part A

7.1 Prefatory remarks

A compelling need for 'analytical dualism'[620] arises because of, amongst others, five realist insights:

(i)   social reality neither necessarily corresponds to nor is synonymous with actors' construal of it;

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[620] The methodological appellation for Archer's model is 'analytical dualism'. See chapter 2 of this thesis.

(ii)   whilst agents are the 'only efficient causes in social life', they non-exhaust social reality, because emergent properties—material/ideational—too exist and are 'the bearers of causal powers';[621]

(iii)   society 'is only present in human action, but human action always expresses and utilizes some or other social form'; neither can both be 'identified with, reduced to, explained in terms of, or reconstructed from the other'.[622]

(iv)   albeit structures are the outcome of human interactions, i.e. are activity-dependent, they are irreducible to current practices; an 'ontological hiatus' exists between society and people;[623] and

(v)   due to this 'ontological hiatus', social structures pre-exist and confront people, i.e. structures are not wholly of people's making/choosing.

Analytical dualism thus is predicated upon distinguishing between the 'genesis of human actions, lying in the reasons, intentions and plans of people…and the structures governing the reproduction and transformation of social activities'.[624]

A few clarifications about analytical dualism should bring into sharp relief its explanatory potential. **One,** whereas other approaches compact structure, culture and agency, analytical dualism analytically distinguishes them. It may collaterally be granted that in everyday life and in much substantive analysis, structure and culture are fused together in at least one sense – they are treated as an amalgam. Nevertheless, this non-precludes their *distinct* analysis,

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[621] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 195.
[622] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 37
[623] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 37.
[624] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 35.

just as consuming water daily non-precludes examining it as a combination of hydrogen and oxygen.[625] **Two**, a neat analytical distinction between structure (material properties pertaining to institutions, roles and systems) and culture (ideational properties pertaining to norms, values, broad thinking patterns, plus ideas such as beliefs, doctrines and theories) is useful in informing 'which is more influential for the other, when, where and under what conditions'.[626] Instead of collapsing them, realism opens avenues for inspecting their varied configurations and permutations. **Three**, far from reducing agents to quiescent objects, the purpose of describing (antecedent) structural/cultural conditioning and the powers/properties thereof, is to depict the pre-conditioned (as distinct from determined) stage over which the agents step on and play their part, as also to show, generically, what roles they can possibly play. With these preliminary issues clarified, the stage is set for articulating the realist modelling. This chapter engages the first phase, viz. structural conditioning of the M/M approach.[627]

7.2 Social/cultural conditioning: a mediatory process

Structural/cultural conditioning is a relational property than an intrinsic one; whether it enables or constrains is an outcome of the relational patterns of society. These emergent structures present 'objective limitations'; they define the extant roles, institutions, and, beliefs, doctrines, theories. They, *pari passu*, may

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[625] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 324.

[626] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

[627] See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, chapter 5 for a detailed commentary. Archer's theoretical model's formulation corresponds to Morphogenetic/Morphostatic approach and provides a method of conceptualizing interplay between structure and agency. This chapter along with the subsequent two chapters synopsizes each phase of Archer's model.

circumscribe other possibilities for change, at time t_l. Secondly, they delimit what '*can* be reproduced, re-formulated, rejected or transformed'.[628] Although these properties 'foster or frustrate "projects"', they themselves work through people's 'projects', thereby, showing both their transfactual nature and ability to work transitively.[629] In other words, material structures do pre-exist prior to agents' activities.

Involuntaristic placement

The pre-existing structural/cultural emergent properties condition the current activities by impinging upon the following. (1) That what is (such as resources) to be distributed and in what manner. (2) The scope for role formations. (3) Positions available at time t_l and their relative advantages/disadvantages. (4) Whether the institutional operations aid or hinder each other, i.e. culture and structure. These pervasive and continuous processes contextualize all social action.[630] The objective delineation *per se* may be misdiagnosed by sections of people, who may be, say, unaware of their domination, but this misrepresentation may be promoted by the elites to gratify their interests. On this count, the structured situations' real effects cannot be conflated with subjective constructions.

Vested interests

The antecedent SEPs/CEPs (structural/cultural emergent properties) play a role in dividing the people having different vested interests which, then, imbues them with pursuits towards either societal change or status quo. The vested interests

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[628] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 197, original italics.
[629] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 198, 200.

may mismatch people's real interests, but being objective, involuntaristically, they do predispose people to particular courses of actions. Consequently, relative advantage weighs more than absolute well being.[631]

Opportunity costs

Involuntaristic dispositions barely entail that people are immured permanently in a situation, or are unreflective, or that given situations singularly/uniformly promote pursuit of vested interests. Contrariwise, other options exist as people are self-monitoring, but costs are likely to accrue upon abandoning vested interests. Thus, the same action-sequence evokes differential opportunity costs for different people and, thereby, conditions decision-making. This affects both the pursuit of present and alternate undertakings for which too, premiums and penalties prevail. It follows that transformation is neither a universal potential nor equitably distributed amongst people.[632]

Degrees of interpretative freedom

The objective distribution of costs and benefits encourages/discourages different courses of action and also affects interpretation of actions. If the obverse were true, i.e. interpretative freedom was unbounded, then people's situational responses would have been supremely individualistic. Howbeit, this surreal picture is lacking in social reality, as actors do confront conditioning influences.[633]

[630] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 201.
[631] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 203, 204.
[632] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 205-07.
[633] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 208-13.

Directional guidance

Stipulating determinate courses of action or precisely predicting outcomes may be possible in closed systems than in open systems. Nonetheless, this is hardly a barrier to understanding the impact of, say, structure and culture on agency. This understanding can be gained through the role of (α) first-order emergent properties (past interaction's results), and (β) second-order emergent properties ('relations between the results of the results of past actions').[634] This section focusses on the latter, i.e. CEPs and SEPs and scrutinizes structure and culture, i.e. institutions and beliefs/ideas respectively. It explores how they relate to each other, i.e. whether they are in compatible or incompatible relations, and how this affects their operations. Different combinations and permutations can result from such interaction, as shall be shown shortly. From these diverse combinations and permutations, differential situational 'logics' emerge, and place their holders into diverse positions. In this exercise, inter-relational linkages are pertinent – whether necessarily and internally related, or contingently and externally related.[635] As and when a particular situational logic is strategically conducted, it represents the generative mechanism of morphostasis (reproduction) or morphogenesis (transformation). Likewise, CEPs/SEPs work in a fashion similar to mediatory mechanisms.[636]

Assumptions of second-order influences eclipsing first-order conditionings are held in abeyance here as the spotlight is on potentialities, which ultimately may be realizable or non-realizable. The latter depends upon how the

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[634] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 213.
[635] Refer chapter 1 for details.

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first-order conditionings interact with the second-order conditionings and, whether this interaction facilitates or restricts their realization. Either way, the fact remains that the social ensemble comprises of multiple interdependencies and interpenetration. Within this ensemble, structure and culture shape situations for agency and supply it with directional guidance. This, in turn, depends upon the constituent elements of structure and culture respectively (to be discussed anon), and, whether harmony or disharmony[637] marks them, which is due to their competing/complementary nature. A systemic incongruence is likely to condition mutually incommensurable strategies and provide corresponding directional guidance. Conversely, systemic congruence is less likely to provide directional guidance due to a smooth texture of the social fabric. A supplementary insight here is that due to profound social cross-connections, the polemic of materialism vs. idealism seems futile. Furthermore, strategic success/failure is not a pre-given for such an inference consorts the determinist bandwagon. As per realism, strategic outcome depends upon the actual interacting social groups.

Now the combinations/permutations of structures/culture's constituents are elucidated; first, the structural configurations, cultural configurations, come next.

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[636] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 217, 219
[637] Neat shades of harmony or disharmony, and, compatibility or incompatibility may be infrequently available, but the likelihood of one shade being more weighty remains.

Four structural configurations and their situational logics[638]

Of the *four* configurations, which one a society approximates at time t_1 is historically contingent; whether all or only the principal societal institutions are implicated in one of the configurations is also contingent.

Necessary compatibilities

This constellation has necessary and internal linkages of a compatible nature amongst the systemic structures. The compatibility is reflected in mutually invoking and reinforcing institutions which function reciprocally. This constellation fosters the situational logic of 'protection' and morphostasis of structures. Example: Ancient India with its interconnecting domains of caste, economy, kinship, law, polity and religion. Whether the seeming 'concordant' structuring emerged out of concordance or due to 'false consciousness' is beyond the scope of this work.

Necessary incompatibilities

This constellation also has necessary and internal linkages between the social constituents, but of incompatible nature, which threatens the durableness of their mutual relationship. It therefore promotes the situational logic of 'compromise' betwixt competing constituent elements and is potentially change-prone, albeit the compromising nature of constituents generally favours morphostasis.

Contingent compatibilities

This constellation has contingent interlinkages and obtains in the midst of inter-sectional compatible relations. It promotes the situational logic of 'opportunism', as each section can gain only by exploiting the available opportunities. In case of

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[638] For a detailed exposition, see Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 218-29.

a major flux, the morphostatic relations yield to morphogenetic relations, as new patterns/interests emerge displacing old ones. Example: Displacement of feudalism and the concomitant rise of commerce, colonial trade, manufacturing and capital.

Contingent incompatibilities

This constellation also has contingent interlinkages and obtains especially in times of disruptive influences, viz. intra-/inter-society conflict, whence, prevalent codification of norms become pliable, i.e. allowing interaction between hitherto non-interacting sections, or cessation of the hitherto territorial confinement of certain sections of people, or restrictive movement of some marginalized sections, etc. It promotes the situational logic of 'elimination' – each section accrues gains by impairing its opponent. It is thus conducive for morphogenesis. Example: Marx's analysis of contradiction between forces and relations of production, and Max Weber's patrimonial bureaucracy.

To reiterate, it is a matter of historical contingency which of the four configuration arises. Ergo, *which* second-order properties characterize the system's institutional relationships is an empirical matter; what however transcends empiricism is 'what occurs when different second-order properties characterize different institutional clusters simultaneously'.[639] Furthermore, two features characterize most social situations. One, *all* agents are rarely encompassed in all major social clusters, though some may be involved in many. The material assets owned thus, induce appropriate alliance formations. Two, notwithstanding the preceding feature, further mobilization of agents, or

modification of resource distribution is open as nothing is pre-determined. Yet these two features do condition 'who will be involved, how they will proceed strategically and what resources are at their disposal', which are decisive in morphostasis or morphogenesis.[640]

Four cultural configurations and their situational logics[641]

Now the observance shifts to *cultural configurations* which resemble the preceding *structural configurations* and are also fourfold configurationally. As with structural configuration, cultural configuration too cannot be assumed in advance to be of one type or another.

Necessary compatibilities

The constellation prevails when invoking an idea/belief inescapably evokes a complementary idea/belief as both nourish each other. Example: Ancient India's religious system. This constellation promotes the situational logic of 'protection', thereby, advancing morphostasis, and systematizes closely-knit, widely shared ideas/practices.

Necessary incompatibilities

This constellation prevails wherever constraining contradictions emerge between different ideologies in a society. Activation however occurs only when someone advocates one belief against the other, otherwise they lie dormant and are socially inconsequential. Defying a lasting solution, they generate the situational logic of 'correction' or 'ideational syncretism', i.e. redefining one or the other or

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[639] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 227, 228.
[640] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 229.
[641] For a detailed exposition, see Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 229-45.

both beliefs, or reconciling their inconsistencies. This mostly encourages morphostasis.

Contingent compatibilities

This constellation catapults agency into a trajectory wherein opportunities for *cultural free play* abound, thereby, encouraging novel activities. It presents a loose situational logic of 'opportunity' in which agency is rather unconstrained in pursuing alternate strategies.

Contingent incompatibilities

This constellation lacks necessary and internal relations. Resultantly, the competing beliefs are unrestrained in their belligerence and maximum gains accrue by damaging the opposition. The situational logic of 'elimination' is sustained which aids morphogenesis.

Part B

7.3 Adding further insights to silhouetted democracy

The non-realist explications of democratic transitions have generally paid attention to, figuratively speaking, the silhouette of democracy, i.e. its broad contours, its image, its profile; what transpires within this outline or within the lengthy shadows has received little attention. It is to these inner flickerings that feed transitions, i.e. the shadows within the shadows that this research now turns to.

Although a democratic transition can be conceived of as a multi-phased process, this research proposes, for the purpose of argument, a three-phased process. Explication is simplified by reference to figure below.

Phases	I	II	III
Tense	Past	Present	Future
Correspondence to Archer's model	Structural conditioning	Social interaction	Social elaboration

Fig. 1 A three-phased description of democratic transitions

The figure corresponds to the three phases of Archer's model in which a tensed congruence also prevails. This is to say that the past, present and future of a society are adequately cognized. To reiterate, the phase-wise division is for analytical purposes only, as in a *democratic transition sequence* manifold sub-sequences with equally manifold intersections are possible. Without rendering the latter as superfluous, three broad phases are preferred on the count of parsimony, yet without explanatory loss. To further simplify examination, democratic transition is considered as the culmination of a prior process than initiating proceedings *ab initio*, that is to say, from the very beginning or from scratch.[642] Moreover, as social elaboration commences a fresh cycle, subsequent pluri-dimensionalism in democracies is equally explicable.

With these preliminary points cleared, the first phase of Archer's model, viz. structural conditioning is applied to democratic transition process and is christened as *Pulse I*. Likewise, the next two phases in democratic transitions are christened as *Pulse II* and *Pulse III*. The metaphor of a pulsating society—

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[642] Even emergent properties *can* exist unexercised due to a 'variety of intervening contingencies' which testifies the open nature of society and agency's transformative/creative powers. People can resist, repudiate, suspend or circumvent emergent properties in unpredictable ways. These

throbbing with activity—is apt here and, hence, the derivation of the term *Pulse*. The terminology is useful as it shall distinguish when reference is made to democratic transitions and when to Archer's model. This section's immediate concern is with *Pulse I*.

First, the realist approach is contrasted with non-realist approaches vis-à-vis democratic transitions.[643] This contrast is best read in conjunction with the points made in *Introduction* and chapter 2 whose repetition is refrained from.

Realist approach	Non-realist approach
1. Stratified account of society, temporality and agency.	1. Non-stratified, 'flat' account.
2. Structure, culture and agency are analytically distinct.	2. Analytically non-distinct.
3. 'Non-event' ontology transcends events, actions, etc.	3. 'Event-ontology' fixated at events, actions, etc.
4. Ruptures society, analytically, into structure, culture and agency and presents varied combinations/permutations of structure/culture; shows how they provide directional guidance, promote different situational logics, condition strategies, affect devising alliances, and pursuit of vested interests.	4. Combinatorial patterns of structure/culture are not propounded.
5. Emphasizes generative/mediatory mechanisms.	5. Non-highlighted.
6. Illumines that systemic properties may remain unexercised.[644]	6. Focus mainly on exercised powers.
7. Tendencies towards reproduction/transformation differentially distributed amongst populations.[645]	7. 'Transitions approach' and 'historical-structural approach' do account for this in varying degrees.
8. Widespread knowledge about democracy	8. Extra-emphasis on familiarity with ideals,

powers' exertion depends upon 'their reception and realization' by people. Significantly, their effect is mediated than direct. See Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 195.
[643] 'Non-realist approaches' here refer particularly to the three *loci classicus* discussed in chapter 3 and, more generally, to the remaining approaches, therein.
[644] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 214.
[645] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 217.

as an idea is insufficient to practically implant it.[646] Mere gatherings, revolutions, depositions *per se* may, ironically, be inadequate for 'self-government'. Contrastively, with large sections initially unaware about democratic ideals, democracy may still come through. The open nature of society mocks any attempt to box it in through canonical prescriptions of democracy. Examples abound of mutually dissimilar 'paths' to democracy. The future, expectedly, should provide novel 'paths' to democracy.	with their knowledgeability, empirical factors, such as education *et al.*, or overthrow of authoritarian regimes without dwelling upon generative mechanisms. Effects of democracy are expected to inform about the functioning of the system, but they do not.

Table 1 Contrast between realist and non-realist approaches of democratic transitions

The table above shows that realism rejects oversimplifying the explanation of democratic transitions, as the latter occur in open realms rather than in closed conditions. It also spurs the need for further enquiries, as a scientific enquiry must shake complacence and raise the question – *what else is there in X (for instance, democratic transitions)*? In other words, there is a need to question the available explanations, to strive to go beyond them and come up with better propositions. The task is not a negative one, as much as a creative one. Having clarified this, the focus now shifts to the mechanisms that play a role in democratic transitions.

The following mechanisms deserve close attention while explaining democratic transitions. The mechanisms mentioned in Part B of this chapter and subsequent chapters are applicable crosswise, but for analytical purposes, each chapter generically identifies different ones for each phase/pulse. Instead of concentrating on a single mechanism, the research specifies a few mechanisms in

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[646] Of course, inspiration for some sections of the populace may be a pre-requisite but the main point here is that, by itself, mere familiarity with democratic ideals is *insufficient* to realize them in practice. It could well be that in a society most people are familiar with the idea and yet cannot effectuate it. Example: Singapore.

concert. In open realms such as society, it is unlikely that a single mechanism has excessive explanatory power.

Although other analysts may have employed a different or non-realist lexicon, yet some pursuits at explaining democratic transitions have remained common and hence citations from such works would be provided, where shades of commonalities are noted.

7.4 Neglect of underlying processes

The deficient treatment of some themes vis-à-vis democratic transitions is now enumerated; the generic issues are listed numerically and those pertaining particularly to Japan, alphabetically.

The non-realist democratic literature has, generically, deficiently regarded the following themes
1) The weight of the past on the *nature* of d.t. in a particular society[647]
2) Structural/cultural configurations and, whether their compatibilities/incompatibilities are of necessary or contingent relations.
3) The differential distribution of capital—cultural, economic, social, symbolic—and how it conditions d.t.
4) The role of *habitus* in both continuity and change vis-à-vis d.t.
5) Ir/relevance of morphogenetic/morphostatic scenarios for d.t.; whether d.t. occurs in a morphostatic or morphogenetic scenario, or, can occur in both scenarios with other contingent conditions.
In Japan's case
A) The social conditioning obtaining in Japan at time t_1 and what it constrained and enabled.
B) A three-tiered approach to temporality and how it impinges upon social transformation/continuity.

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[647] d.t. = democratic transition

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7.5 An exposition of some mechanisms

This section briefly enounces a few mechanisms that can be useful in explicating democratic transitions.

Mental horizons

At any point in time people are imbued with *finite mentality*, which is both a product and cause of their *habitus*. Finite mentality means that at time t_1, people's mental horizons open up gradually and can take in new inputs also gradually. Historical practices affirm this. Example: The resistance in the *present continuous tense* to same-sex marriages in parts of USA.[648] That such attempts are occurring in 2004 is still a step forward in contrast to a century ago when even a shade of societal acceptance would have been inconceivable. That in many other parts of the world such instances are socially unthinkable is reflective of their mental horizons. It is likely that in 2050, situations in these respective regions would likely be different with greater acceptance. In short, what people can achieve is conditioned by past historical practices.[649] This then should put to rest overoptimistic notions of freedom from all constraints, or eliminating 'archaic' practices in a twinkling. Example: In Iraq, despite the endeavours of Allies towards democratization, suicide bombings are continuing, the structuring of social patterns has barely altered, and insurgency continues. It may be granted

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[648] http://www.cassm.org/ retrieved on April 27, 2004.

[649] In 1890s, Oscar Wilde was tried for homosexuality in Britain and, thereupon, incarcerated too. Earlier on, in 1885, the British Parliament had passed the Criminal Law Amendment Act which was used to try acts of 'gross indecency' between men. This act, then, was the product of its times and reflected how people, in general, viewed homosexuality. In contrast, a century later, the issue is treated more liberally. Doubtless, the change has not occurred overnight. For a brief biography of Oscar Wilde see http://media.wiley.com/product_data/excerpt/16/07645446/0764544616.pdf, retrieved on 3 December, 2004.

that these are still early days, yet it also signifies that the over-optimism of the Allies in ushering in democratization was misplaced.

Analogously, in Japan too, given the conditioning of *Pax-Tokugawa*, there were limits to Japanese mental horizons, both individually and collectively, to inputting and outputting of new grains of thought/practice. As such, a long authoritarian rule, secluded from developments in the external world was infinitesimally conducive for democratic practices, at least, as understood by the preceding instances in UK or USA.

Critical mass and imitation

Critical mass can be defined as a mechanism that generates some activity which is 'self-sustaining once the measure of that activity passes a certain minimum level'.[650] Instances: clouds precipitate when the electrical charge therein reaches a critical mass; people adopt/shed practices, such as belief in large/small families depending upon how people around them, in a very generic sense, are a family unit. The large families of yore contrast with smaller families, especially in urban areas. Thomas Shelling informs that people's behaviour depends on *how many* people are behaving in a particular way. Part of this suggestion may seem tautological, but that is no criterion for rejecting a suggestion. Even a tautological argument can be meritorious. To exemplify further, democratic functioning in USA, UK, France, amongst others, has reached a critical mass, whereupon its subversion into totalitarianism seems unlikely. Inversely, countries like Haiti, Myanmar, Pakistan, amongst others, have not reached a critical mass for

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[650] Schelling, Thomas C. (1978) *Micromotives and Macrobehavior*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, pp. 94, 95.

cementing democracy. Whether Iraq and Afghanistan have reached such a critical mass for democracy is a moot point given the tribal rivalries, the rift between Shias and Sunnis, or even the subordinate status of women.

The mechanism of *imitation* is closely related for it plays a crucial role in generating critical mass. Imitation is a phenomenon which occurs both consciously and unconsciously. It can explain both change and continuity in societies.

Analogously, Japan had not reached a critical mass by 1850s sufficient to overthrow the extant authority. This was reached in late 1860s, when the Meiji Restoration occurred. Whilst critical mass for overthrow of *Shogunate* was reached, but critical mass for another aspect, say, democratization of Japan was not reached given the past and contemporaneous activities. This is attributable to the stratified nature of social realms.

3 D Temporality

In continuation of the previous point, at any turn of event, people, both individually and collectively, are differentially affected. They move ahead in steps and strides than leaping into altogether new terrain that overhauls their personality instantaneously. Humans distinctly lack this capability. 3 D Temporality or three-dimensional temporality is a useful device in grappling with how beings interact in the social environment.[651] Changing one aspect of personality should not be confused with change in all other aspects, which are contingent upon other factors.

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[651] Refer chapter 5 for temporality.

Analogously, in Japan's case, at the time of Meiji Restoration and thereabouts, the following classification, in very general terms, is outlined.

Level I (rapid change)	Level II (medium change)	Level III (slow change)
* Repudiation of the *Shogunate*	* Partial acculturation with ideas and practices of W. European countries	* Bodily dispositions, such as in the social expressive order continued
* Acknowledgement of the emperor's ascendance	* Changeover to the emerging new professions, growing education, etc.	* The notion of absolute loyalty to the higher authority
* Emerging technological changes		* The subjugation of women

Fig. 3 D temporal representation of Japan at Meiji Restoration

The diagrammatic representation indicates that with each increase in level, a greater *cost* is exacted upon people in modifying their bodily dispositions.

Inertia

In morphostatic scenarios, the mechanism of inertia is, oxymoronically, active. Routinized thinking and action are rampant. Admittedly, novelties are arrested in such scenarios.

Analogously, in Japan's case, inertia was unencumbered. Two centuries of *Shogunate's* rule are a testimony to this.

Reciprocity

Despite the possibility of 'ontological hiatus' between society and people, in one sense, reciprocity endures between the two. A Hollywood movie best captured this idea in which the main character who lived several centuries ago is abruptly thrust into the twentieth century with his past dispositions fully intact. He is shocked and awed at the skyscrapers, people wearing 'startling' dresses, new means of transport, nuanced change in speech, etc.; the movie graphically captures the meaning which 'reciprocity' is employed here to convey.

Analogically, people should in some way be conversant with the existent social structures. Otherwise, if 'alien' democratic structures are artificially juxtaposed to existent social structures, the agents will likely be in the same situation of the Hollywood character, at least initially, which in turn would condition favourable/unfavourable activities. This informs about the evolved nature of democracy in conjunction with the prevailing *stag* relationship. Iraq and Afghanistan provide a litmus test of whether (or not) mere extraneous superimposition of democratic structures can deliver results.

Analogously, in Japan's case, reckoning with mental horizons, memory and reciprocity the agents were placed a situation which constrained some activities, such as the way democratization was then understood in USA, and, enabled other activities, such as the loyalty-based social structure serving as a springboard from where to take further leaps. Admittedly, the mechanisms mentioned *supra* are closely intertwined with the *stag* relationship and underscore their significance for democratic transition only in and through their concatenation than in isolation.

Part C shall now show that conditioning works in and through

(i)   'shaping the situations in which agents find themselves', and

(ii)   'what those differently situated have a vested interest in doing about them';

(iii)   'influences with whom they [agents] are pre-disposed to ally'

(iv)   'what resources can be drawn upon in their strategic action', which

(v)   'defines the differential bargaining powers of participants'.[652]

<div align="center">

Part C

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7.4 *Pulse I* – Social conditioning in Japan

Part C *applies* the *realist approach* to Japan's transition, whereupon, Japanese society comes alive as a multiplex – pluri-layered with variegated objects which too are stratified, and multitudinous mechanisms with transfactual powers. The metaphor of a multiplex is helpful, as it cognizes both macro- and micro-level orchestrations. Casting aside the empiricist-levelled landscape with few examinable objects, realism opens a veritable Pandora's Box, but neither rashly nor with its concomitant afflictions and, in which, there is more than mere Hope (for scientific explication).

A major irritant in explaining Japan's transition is the apparently sudden shift from militarism to democracy. This aspect raises questions about explanatory quivers along with their arrows, whether they are directed on militarism *or* democratization for the so-called dividing wall between the two phases demands and deserves a closer scrutiny. Consider: Moore's historical-structural approach comprehensively reviews Japan's militarism, but is confronted by the puzzle of how democratization resulted, with the same classes, social divisions, virtually intact and apparently, in a short chronological span.[653] The present case study should demonstrate that compartmentalizing society, in
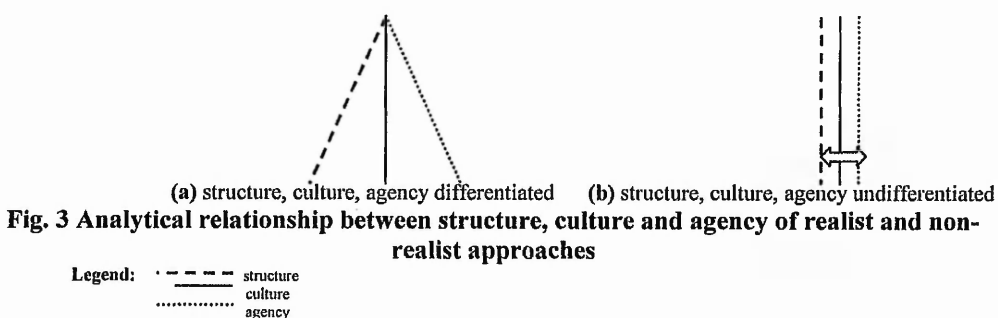
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[652] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 328.

[653] This does not render Moore's thesis obsolete, but seeks to augment it with further details.

such a manner, compromises its open nature. Indeed, society defies all attempts at closure.

This research situates Japan's transition in an historical-cum-social complex in which what transpired was *one* possibility. Otherwise, the explication would be a 'postdiction'. Following the latter course would be an invitation to suffer from the criticisms already deliberated. There is also need to avert becoming a prey to 'reverse causal processes', i.e. attributing a consequence to a behaviour even when the behaviour is yet to manifest for in open realms there could many other reverse causal chains.[654] In attempting to obviate these shortcomings (a) necessary and contingent relations are identified,[655] and (b) the social complex is, for analytical purposes, sub-divided into the realms of *real, actual* and *empirical* for investigative purpose.[656] Arguments to this effect are alphanumerically numbered beginning **A₁**.

(A₁) *Analytical rupture of society into structure, culture and agency*

In analyzing Japan's transition, society is trifurcated as per figure (a) below in contradistinction to (b).

(a) structure, culture, agency differentiated   (b) structure, culture, agency undifferentiated

Fig. 3 Analytical relationship between structure, culture and agency of realist and non-realist approaches

Legend: – – – – structure
············· culture
················ agency

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[654] Cf. Stinchcombe (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 100.
[655] See chapter 2 of this thesis.
[656] See chapter 1 for term-definitions.

Accordingly, the scenario in early seventeenth century Japan is depicted as under:

Structure	Culture	Agency
Shogunate	Divine emperor	Stratified agency
Strict hierarchical structure	Steeped in Confucian ethics	Diverse roles
Graded classes	Closed society	Routinized thinking/action$_\Psi$
Tight division of labor	Aversion to foreigners	Transformative capabilities$_\Psi$
Agrarian economy	In awe of 'superior' Chinese culture[657]	Unconscious dispositions$^\Psi$
Close kinship ties	Social integration/harmony prevailed[658]	
Patriarchal family	Belief in inequality of classes	

Fig. 4 Threefold division of Japanese society

(A₂) *The generative and mediator mechanisms*

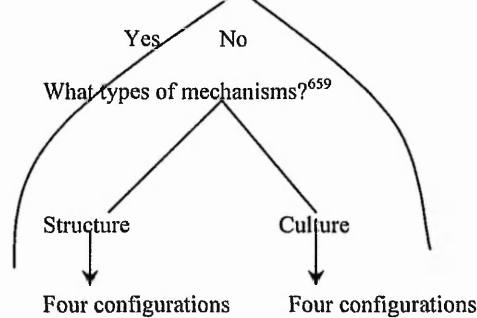The enquiry proceeds in the following branched manner.

Fig. 5 The generative/mediatory mechanisms

The response to the first poser in the sketch above being in the affirmative, structure/culture's configurations is applied to Japan's transition as per chart

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[657] Sansom (1946) *op. cit.*, p. 109. Japan's philosophical and religious ideas could only be expressed and expounded in an 'alien tongue and imported script'. The latter enriched its native script too. Japan is described as a nation 'busily digesting and assimilating a superior foreign culture not imposed from without by conquest or proximity, but voluntarily, even enthusiastically adopted'.

$^\Psi$ The first two marked agential attributes may *prima facie* appear to be mutually contradictory, but they reflect a 'common man' in his quotidian life than projecting an 'ideal man'. The attributes are better construed as imbricated dispositions than as contradictions.

[658] More precisely, the myth of social integration prevailed. All societal components serving towards an overarching purpose, such as societal harmony is a caricature of reality, and is irredeemably a functionalist viewpoint.

[659] As *Pulse I* is considered in this chapter, agency has not been inserted in the picture, as of now.

infra. The period of reckoning is from early seventeenth century to about mid-nineteenth century, i.e. the period of *Pax-Tokugawa*.

UNDERLYING PROCESSES			
Structural configuration	**Situational logic**	**Directional guidance**	**Possibility**
Necessary compatibilities	Protection	Maintenance of system	Morphostasis

Structural configuration – The structural configuration conformed to *necessary compatibilities*, wherein, the interlinkages were necessary and internal. The *Shogunate* edifice, its relation with the emperor, the class distinctions, tight division of labour were mutually reinforcing and reciprocally confirming from the highest to the lowest level. The society was tightly knit leading to morphostasis of the system. At this juncture, the pros and contras of perceived gains, for lower classes, were mired in uncertainty. Hence, any disruptive attempt would likely have been self-defeating, and also entailed losses, at least initially.

Situational logic – The afore-conditions generated the situational logic of *protection*. Whether the social dispensation was everyone's first choice is a moot point, but mutual benefits (including the misperceived ones), of varying degrees/forms, accrued to all. Conformably, the motivation for large-scale change was non-existent.

Directional guidance – People, consciously/unconsciously, were inculcated to their respective role-play, with broad-spectrum applicability – to samurais, merchants, peasants, women *et al.* and, also institutions – family, polity, economy, etc. Breaking social norms would have invited ostracism, and attempts at fomenting trouble may have been similarly inhibited. This is evidenced by the long, peaceful and tranquil reign of the *Shogunate*. In the first two centuries,

there were hardly any major social aberrations, in terms of, systematically defying old practices, or adopting an altogether antithetical social code.

Now the analysis turns to cultural configurations.

UNDERLYING PROCESSES			
Cultural configuration	*Situational logic*	*Directional guidance*	Possibility
Necessary compatibilities	Protection	Maintenance of system	Morphostasis

Cultural configuration – The ideational framework was also necessarily and internally related and corresponded to *necessary compatibilities*. Belief in unequal rights and duties, elevated status of samurai, divine emperorship, aversion to foreigners, etc. were closely related to the structure which sustained the whole system. Opposing ideologies/beliefs were by and large absent. In any case, their emergence at time t_1, would have unlikely won a constituency in a conservative society, thus rendering such attempts bereft of incentive. Besides, each minor social frame, i.e. each microcosm was representative of the (national) macrocosm. With control tentacles penetrating every nook and corner of society, the Japanese universe perpetuated and reproduced itself in all social processes, which prevented overall alteration in society. Japan's plight matches the heretofore analytical framework – carrying on its routines in 'splendid isolation'.

(A_3) *Involuntaristic placement*

As society antedates people, involuntaristic conditioning is inevitable. Example: *Nihongo* (Japanese language) confronted each succeeding generation and was not entirely of its making, as it was received from previous generations. Similarly, involuntaristic placement too is integral to society. In Japan, the *Shogunate* had

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strictly apportioned the resources, as per class distinctions which automated future distributions – both material and cultural. The pyramidal administration was topped by the *Shogun* at Tokyo followed by the respective feudal lords or *daimyos* who resided in castle-towns along with their retinue of officials. A uniform administrative system prevailed in each castle-town wherein positions of samurais, farmers, and merchants were fixed. Example: Generations of *daimyos* had to follow the 'dual attendance' system at Edo. It was advantageous, at least in the short run, to engage the positional set-up than attempting to dismember it. The given positions thereby conditioned relative advantages/disadvantages; moreover, their would-be occupants/incumbents' role-play was therefore pre-conditioned and objectively defined.

A₄ *Vested interests*

In the existent milieu, the emergent structures' effects (SEPs/CEPs) generated positional vested interests. The *Shogun's* primary aim was preservation of the system, corroborated by the *daimyos* too, as they stood to gain the maximum by the maintenance of the system. The samurais upon removal from land and perforce staying with the *daimyos* were enclosed in the castle-town power apparatus; the irenic reign provided nary an opportunity to engage in their traditional profession of martial arts. Yet, the samurai, irrespective of his personal like/dislike of the system, was still the better off in following the routines than breaking them. On his own, the samurai was powerless to thoroughly extirpate what he abhorred and establish what he might have liked. Thus in the first two centuries of *Shogunate* rule, explicit expression of

antagonistic vested interests was virtually a non-occurrence. Different sections amassed differential returns from the system, yet they were better off in unequal gains than scheming for equal distribution, as the regime had the wherewithal to crush such uprisings.

It was at the confluence of these social factorials that Japan stood during the first two centuries of the *Shogunate*.

Chapter 8

Realist Model of Democratic Transitions – *Pulse II*

Chapters 8 details Phase II of Archer's model, viz. Social interaction[660] and concomitantly *Pulse II* of democratic transition process.

8.1 Prefatory remarks

Realism posits a stratified and differentiated view of agency. It is for a 'reflective, purposive, promotive and innovative' agency as without such traits, *social interaction* would be absent. Concordantly, realism rejects uni-dimensional views of agency, such as (α) holism – which projects selfhood through 'social roles' only, thereby, dissolving 'personal identity into social relationships';[661] (β) voluntarism – which presents an 'underconstrained picture of wo/man' and assumes 'simple aggregation' of individual interests suffices for explicating society.[662] Antithetically, realism proposes agency as having an identity other than:

➤ a collectivity comprising society (holism); and

➤ an entity which creates all current features of society (voluntarism).

These rejections, in turn, lead to espousal of:-

➤ a stratified view of agency; and

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[660] For a detailed exposition, see Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, chapter 8.
[661] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 249.

> educes an insight into different 'patternings of wants' of persons due to their 'personal differences' resulting from different social resources, positions, etc. and how these spur varied courses of action.[663]

As such, the individual person is unhinged from the social agent. The bedimming of agency by both holism and voluntarism is thus diagnosed and mended by realism. A distinct view of agency is thus brought to the fore.

Part A

Corresponding to the three phases of the M/M cycle, realism proposes the following vis-à-vis agency: *Phase I* – Agency operates under conditions not entirely of its making. *Phase II* – Conditioning mediates through agents and provides reasons for seeking change or stability, as per their given situation at time t_1. Resource distribution amongst vested interests plays a prominent role in this. *Phase III* – The resultant morphostasis/morphogenesis is due to agency, but rarely meets their aspirations and is thus, in part, also an *unintended consequence*. Agents' competing views, their ensuing compromises, concessions, counter-concessions all play a role in this.

The triune view of agency has already been discussed in Chapter 2 and pleonasm is avoided here. Proceeding thereupon, realism contends that in social/cultural transformation, 'double morphogenesis' of agency is involved: 'agency leads to structural and cultural elaboration, but is itself elaborated in the process'. Human collectivities group and re-group which reflects their

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[662] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 250.
[663] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 251, 252.

transformative power.[664] Thus, agents *qua* agents are agents of the socio-cultural system they are born into and also the systemic features they transform over period. Archer defines them as '*collectivities* sharing the same *life chances*'.[665] Internal and necessary relations between the two are irreducible to people pursuing some pre-ordained goals of wealth, status, etc. Contrarily, all these attributes themselves are contingent upon extant relations between the powerful and powerless. Furthermore, dual categories, such as categories of equality/inequality are group-based rather than individual-based. Without reifying them, these properties are better recognized as emergents, thereby, acknowledging their internal/necessary relations with structured groups over time.[666] Despite the uneven distribution of resources, and the resultant vested interests, it remains a fact that agency has powers proper to itself.

Whether it is social morphostasis/morphogenesis, corporate agents play an influential role in society. They shape the *context* for all actors, more so as a consequence of corporate interaction than what particular agents want. To engage in strategic performances implies that agents are 'active' than 'passive' and that they are subjects with reasons to bring about *certain* outcomes rather than letting things happen to them. The possibility also remains of happenings which do not correspond to self-interests. Contrastively, primary agents would seem to be 'passive', which they are, as things do happen to them; their interests, if any, are unarticulated and, they react to occurrences, not of their making. Whilst their 'action' is best construed as 'aggregate response', they should not be deemed

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[664] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 247; 255.
[665] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 257, original italics.

'intrinsically passive', i.e. incapable of activity for 'their passivity itself represents a suspension, often a deliberate suspension, of their agential powers on the part of those Corporate Agents' whose interests they serve.[667]

In responding to the question—what are the conditions for morphostasis or morphogenesis of the Social Agency—the following points demand inspection. (1) Morphostasis should account for structuring of the Corporate and Primary Agents (C & PA, for short), their divisions, their patternings, the pre-groupings, the eventuating interaction and its impact. (2) Correlatively, morphogenesis should account for the differential structuring, patterning and how this eventuates into regrouping during interaction.

Morphostatic scenario – Both C & PA are neatly delineated; their delineation is perpetuated through interaction and may well be enduring. The situation is aided by conjunction between structural and cultural morphostasis; the latter's repercussions have already been discussed.[668] To synopsize, (α) *culturally*, hegemonic ideas flourish via Corporate Agents (CA) to which the Primary Agents (PA) are accustomed. Non-existence of opposing ideas perpetuates cultural unification. (β) *Structurally*, a vertical social organization prevents opposition and subordinates PA. The perpetuation of existent structure and culture prevents regrouping of agents. Additionally, in a morphostatic scenario, neophytes of various hues, and new corporate groups are stifled as the PA are pre-immersed in a homogeneous cultural soup, thereby, rendering alternate cultural ideas unavailable. This subordination of PA might well be due

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[666] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 257-59.
[667] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 260.

to 'perceptual power' rather than 'consensual precepts' or, simply voluntary adhesion.[669] In a morphostatic scenario, social structuring is devoid of powerful groups capable of challenging or subverting the system, whereupon, cultural discontentment, even if it exists, lacks a material source to catapult it centre-stage. With the 'raw material' of transformation depleted, viz. 'organized interest groups and articulated ideational alternatives', the odds of conversion of PA into CA are suffocated.

This is a typical situation co-feeding culture and structure and is mutually advantageous too. Cultural morphostasis sustains extant structural formations, whilst structural morphostasis sustains extant cultural formations. Any attempt to destabilize the cemented structure is fraught with high opportunity costs which, in part, explains how morphostasis sustains itself.

Morphogenetic scenario – Inversely, the morphogenetic scenario shrivels PA and amplifies CA. It provides procrustean ground for diversification of interests and their accompanying competition and conflict. In contrast to *morphostatic scenario* where vested interests successfully strive for status quoism, in a *morphogenetic scenario*, vested interests contend with competing interests due to increasing differentiation and diversification. Correspondingly, the CA is hypo-consensual and more prone to competitive interests.

For the entire process of social interaction, realism proffers ten propositions.[670]

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[668] See chapter 7.
[669] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 262.
[670] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 264, 265. The ten propositions refer to the M/M approach as follows: propositions 1-3 = Phase I; 4-7 = Phase II; and 8-10 = Phase III.

The morphogenesis of agency
1. Agents are unequal due to initial distribution of structural/cultural properties, which demarcate the CA and PA at each commencement of cycle. [To remind, CA= corporate agents; and, PA= primary agents]
2. CA can either change or stabilize the socio-cultural system, encompassing the PA.
3. Differential agent knowledgeability is due to prior interaction's effects upon them.
4. 'All change is mediated through alternations in agents' situations'. CA alter living context of PA whilst PA alter the operating environment CA.
5. The genera of CA and PA are redefined over time in and through their activities towards change or stability.
6. CA/PA actions maybe constraining or enabling.
7. PA actions constitute 'atomistic reaction, uncoordinated co-action or associational interaction' depending upon their participation-level.
8. CA interaction 'generates emergent properties'; PA actions 'produce aggregate effects'.
9. Social Agency's elaboration expands CA and contracts PA.
10. Social change rarely matches what everyone wants, as it is the outcome of PA aggregate effects and CA emergent effects.

Table 1 Social Agency and its morphogenesis

8.2 Actors: The triple morphogenesis

It is reiterated that the concept of Social Agent (as a plurality) is unsynonymous with concept of Social Actor (as a singularity). The latter requires a detailed exposition, as it is pertinent to know how s/he 'becomes a particular person and acquires an identity as a social self'.[671] Here, the process of 'triple morphogenesis' (TM) assumes notability for the Social Actor emerges through it. In TM, the 'particular social identities of individual social actors are forged from agential collectivities in relation to the array of organizational roles which are available in society at that specific point in time'. More precisely, TM is a process in which 'Agency conditions (not determines) who comes to occupy different social roles'.[672]

Now, social roles entail necessary/internal relations. Instances: (α) a pupil needs a pedagogue, (β) just as a tenant, a landlord. Each such instance is

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[671] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 275.

predicated upon further necessary/internal relations vis-à-vis resources/rules. To continue with these two instances respectively: (α) needs pedagogic paraphernalia, curriculum, etc. and (β) needs buildings, expertise. These minimal entailments may depend upon further relations, such as compulsory schooling/housing legislation. Significantly, 'roles operate in sets rather than in isolation'.[673] Instances: teachers, principals, renters, etc. rather than *a* teacher, principal, renter, etc. These are implicated in extended necessary/internal relations some of which may be unsymmetrical. Moreover, actors are actually role incumbents and roles have emergent properties irreducible to occupants' idiosyncrasies. The following points affirm this: (a) roles' pre-existence (b) roles' temporal durability (c) roles endure despite change in successive holders' personal traits, and (d) constraints/enablements inhering in roles than particular occupants; such constraints/enablements are unlikely to be dispelled merely by change of occupants, unless the larger relational pattern undergoes change, within which they are situated.[674]

It is a fact of life that persons become Agents before they become Actors.[675] People are born into a differentiated society and partake the privileges or non-privileges of the collectivities they are born into. Born into collectivities, they thus become Agents and are, at least initially, enclosed in an array of positions than roles. Accordingly, the privileged have disencumbered opportunities while the non-privileged have restricted opportunities in life.

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[672] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 275; pp. 255, 256.
[673] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 275.
[674] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 276.
[675] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 277.

Although options are conditioned than determined, the differential opportunity costs in striving towards them practically circumscribe them. Be that as it may, initial positions are corrigible, though extensive alterations entail higher costs.

Agents' endowments with initial interests, i.e. those sectional interests they are born into, 'provide the leverage upon which reasons (otherwise known as constraints and enablements) for different courses of action operate'.[676] They of course condition outcomes than pre-determining them.

Archer repudiates bundling all interests into roles. By so doing, she elucidates that Social Agents, as collectivities, confront interest-related problems rather than role-related problems. In tackling these problems, agents employ certain activities which may not be construed as 'games', as they are devoid of both regulative and constitutive rules.[677] Conformably, roles/rules' elaboration is integral to morphogenesis, and leads to defining new positions. Regrouping thus seems to be a locomotive for generating new role/rule sets, some of which are unintended. This provides an alternate account of non-role governed actions, as distinct from a situation in which all interests are bundled into roles, which precludes Actors from contravening those roles. In the entire process, Agency creates new roles/games/rules for Social Actors. In a nutshell, 'Agency makes more room for the Actor, who is not condemned to a static array of available positions'.[678] This then is the analytic advantage of distinguishing the Social Agents from the Actors. All the same, the distinction between Social Agent and Actor is temporal and analytical than real; the two categories are not distinct

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[676] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 278.
[677] Archer (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 278.

people. Thus realism underscores the point that Actors cannot be understood without reference to Agency. Collaterally, Actors are irreducible to Persons too, though they are anchored in the latter. Without this anchorage, the reflexive and creative spark, typical of humans, would be absent.

A caveat about humans is in order here. Nowhere in the heretofore commentary has the *human being* been demolished. Social Agent/Actor non-exhaust humanity, as both are rooted in the Person. This alone can explicate processes like 'self and social monitoring, goal formation and articulation, or strategic reflection on means-ends relations' which, in turn, are dependent upon more basic properties of Persons.[679] By bringing agency centre-stage, by accentuating that agency alone has transformative capabilities, the deterministic views of history are thus challenged.

Part B

8.3 Neglect of underlying processes

The deficient treatment of some themes vis-à-vis democratic transitions is now enumerated; the generic issues are listed numerically and those pertaining particularly to Japan, alphabetically.

The non-realist democratic literature has, generically, deficiently regarded the following themes
1) A pronounced consideration of the structuring of CA and PA.
2) Grouping and re-grouping as an ongoing process and the faultiness of tying it to specific classes.
3) The differential reaction of PA and CA to social developments at time t_1.

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678 Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 280.
679 Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 281.

4) The internal and necessary relations entailed by social roles.
5) Actors' role-play and the constraints/enablements prevalent therein *than* in individual persons (or their idiosyncrasies).
In Japan's case
A) *Who* was pre-conditioned to likely play a prominent role in the 1850s/1860s and who was not? *What* were the prospects for change?
B) *Whose* activities brought about change in the said period?
C) *When* did change come about?

Table 2 Role of Corporate Agents and Primary Agents in morphogenesis/morphostasis

8.4 An exposition of some mechanisms

In understanding democratic transitions, the following mechanisms/issues are pertinent.

Memory and identity

Agents are born into society and are seldom, if ever, vacuous subjects.[680] At both individual and collective level, they are imbued with memories and identities. From birth onwards, this is a continuous process in which family, school, religious congregations, etc. play a major role. Although these memories are continually reinterpreted, they do condition future life-courses. Cumulative memories are (i) inter-generational, (ii) weigh upon the people's minds, and (iii) impinge upon what people can contemplate and accomplish.

In democratic transitions too, memories and related identities play a vital role, as in any society, its descendants are involutaristically conditioned from birth onwards in many aspects of life by their progenitors who cannot but rely upon their own past memories bequeathed through generations. Memory thus

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[680] See Anderson, Benedict (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition, London: Verso.

ensures passage of bodily dispositions, societal norms, etc. though these may alter over time with fresh additions to memory. Example: the spread of immigrants from British Isles to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and USA, in part, explains the common linguistic traits, socio-cultural mores and even democratic structures.

In the case of Japan too, amongst other factors, some memory- and identity-imbuing traits were – regimented society and supreme loyalty to the overlords. In this background, democratic transition's facilitation would have required further additions to the memory, in and through activities, which were initially lacking. Memory thus plays an important role in societal continuity.

Boundary-setting

Boundary-setting operates at both the material and cognitive level. As a mechanism,[681] it plays a notable role in imparting unity and identity to a community. Cognitively, it plays a role in distinguishing one from the other. Its results may be either long-drawn or swift, depending upon context. Post-September 11 events have played a role, in some quarters, in boundary-setting with Arabs and viewing them with some degree of mistrust. This boundary-setting was insignificant prior to September 11. The cognitive mechanism of boundary-setting also results in heightening identity. Territorially, it works through people's projections of their aspirations on *their* territory against other territory. Kashmir in India is a site for interminable struggle for 'self-

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[681] Cf. Tilly, Charles (2000) *Mechanisms in Political Processes*, at the main Columbia University web http://www.ciaonet.org, retrieved on April 10, 2004.

determination' for sections of the local people.[682] Quite often, the 'struggle' or 'insurgency', however interpreted, is in part due to boundary-setting, the conditions in which the agents on either side of boundary find themselves, and the terminology employed to interpret the struggle also signifies the mechanism.

In democratic transitions too, boundary-setting plays a striking role. Conquest, confrontation, colonization and revolution are abrupt shocks that may assist in democratic transitions. They are handy devices, so to say, in setting boundaries, especially cognitively, and condition activities accordingly. Conquest in Japan, confrontation in England, colonization in India, and revolution in USA have played a role in auguring democratic transitions at opportune times. These events provide turns and twists to the structural properties, though by themselves, they have limited utility in changing the deeper properties, such as bodily dispositions, etc. None the less, they can play a role in bringing shifts in political constellations which, over time, set the momentum for deeper change. Two points are reiterated here. One, an explanatory quiver which relies on *a* solitary mechanism-based arrow is feeble. Mechanisms are best understood in and through their concatenating effects. Two, it is in the context of *stag* approach that their workings are better comprehended.

In Japan's case, the Meiji Restoration did set boundaries: (i) *closing* against the foreigners (ii) *opening* up to acquisition of liberal, constitutional ideas, and (iii) against the *Shogunate* and things associated with his regime. The latter may have assisted people, particularly at the cognitive level, to be more

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[682] Different actors, such as India, Pakistan, USA and UN interpret the same situation differently,

receptive to changes counterposing *Shogunate*, as objects associated with him stood discredited. Seen from this perspective, the pushing of reforms, their implementation and subsequent success becomes more meaningful, as this mechanism opened a window of perceiving reforms countering the tarnished administration.

Role playing and retro-democracy

Much confusion occurs in considering actors' role-playing in any context, in purely black-and-white. A black-and-white construal would deem a despot to be wholly unfit for transforming into a democrat. Such labelling has limited utility. On a broader plane, this is flawed because it is rooted in a non-stratified conceptualization of self, as if a person can only be a democrat *or* an authoritarian.[683] Some democrats do oft function authoritatively even *in* a democratic framework. Example: J. L. Nehru in India who took unilateral decision on taking up the Kashmir issue in the UN, whereas, the then home minister in India was against internationalizing the issue. How some premiers in democratic countries have sent their troops to Iraq – apparently against the public opinion, is also a case in point. Example: Tony Blair in UK. Moreover, uni-dimensional views slight that all democratic countries were preceded by authoritarianism. Labelling people *qua* people as democrats or tyrants is unhelpful, as such categories become meaningful only in a relational framework.

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but that is beyond the scope of this research.

[683] In a memorable line, Alexander Solzhenitsyn stated: 'If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?' Similar categorizations of humans in other respects are also slightly tenuous.

Example: Democratic citizens (read military men) of US can be involved in episodes, such as Abu Gharib prison in Iraq and, cast to the winds all norms of civility. Furthermore, Agents in non-democratic societies are known to fall in line with a democratic framework without hiccups. India is an exemplar – at time of independence with a preponderant population, mired in illiteracy, and with barely any idea about democracy! Even though few people understood democracy, a retro-move was also absent, i.e. attempts to subvert initial democratic experiments. This, amongst other factors, sustained the tentative insertion of the democratic framework due to absence of a backlash or of viable alternate strategies. Contrarily, in other non-democratic societies, agents encounter seen/unseen problems towards democratization. Russia is an exemplar. An authoritarian regime may be deemed to be repressing its populace. Yet a foreign intervention premissed upon the expectation that uprooting the demonic regime would suffice may be in for shock by encountering resistance from not only the erstwhile privileged agents, but also sections of local populace who were repressed. Iraq is an exemplar. All exemplars attest to the open nature of society and, demand and deserve understanding mechanisms in conjunction within the matrix of interplay of structure and agency. Conformably, the issue is one of environment facilitating or constraining appropriate role-play, i.e. one which is conducive to democracy. There is thus need to transcend the surface meaning of authoritarianism or democratization. Stated differently, there are other hurdles to democratic transitions than mere authoritarianism.

Democratic politics – can it be categorized only as a grand strategy or as a routine struggle?

Although the question is 'loaded', it does raise important issues. Democratic politics as a grand strategy broadly implies two meanings: one, all non-democratic societies inexorably march towards democratization and, two, intellectualizing and/or devising grand strategies can deliver democratic transitions. Both the contentions are put under the lens. One, social practices do not support the view that all societies are inexorably marching towards democratic transitions; Singapore is a fine specimen of a non-democratic country, yet with a well-oiled functioning machinery. Two, while the research upholds optimism and creativity for devising plans and strategies for carrying out democratic transitions, as this is precisely what actors engaged in such pursuits are doing, the research doubts the merit of sheer intellectualizing divorced from ground conditions at time t_1, as this viewpoint falls into the voluntarist trap and ends up squarely blaming the people in a given state; this viewpoint also ignores the structural constraints and the emergent powers/properties. The other viewpoint of democratic politics as a routine struggle can be described like this. The democratic endeavours of various societies as 'routine reproduction of controversies or competitive interests without relation to the basic deep movements of society' rather than a 'conscious struggle or [a grand] strategy formed by history'.[684] Whilst inspiration from democratic norms is useful in fostering transitions, it is, by itself, an insufficient condition for democracy.

Unless the ideals, norms get inserted into the existent *stag* relationship, they, for all practical purposes, are likely to be embellishments. Evidence is lacking of democratic norms having been inserted in the routine political struggles of Pakistan and Bangladesh, whereas, the same have been inserted in the routine political struggles of India. Yet, this is not to say that India presents a very rosy picture, as it also has its share of drawbacks. What the examples do indicate is that the knowledge of an object, such as democracy is a necessary, but insufficient condition for its translatability. The issue then needs to be situated in a larger social matrix, i.e. in a *stag* perspective which symbolizes morphostasis or morphogenesis, in the routine struggles of a society.

This research therefore prefers an overlapping view of the two contending positions. First and foremost, the routine struggles are symptomatic of the *stag* relationship and, secondly, the past cannot simply be dispensed with, as the past emergent powers/properties may play their effects at subsequent periods. Simultaneously, strategizing also is part of being human, but becomes meaningful only in conjunction with the given raw materials, viz. various social objects and how they react to such strategizing. The research is inclined to describe democratic politics more so in terms of routine political struggles than in terms of abstract strategies which are divorced from given situations. The Iraq attack provides an approximate exemplar. Notwithstanding the optimism of Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, US, Iraq is yet to show signs of stability leave aside democratization. Similar airing of views by Ahmad Chalabi—such

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[684] See Williams, Raymond (1979) *Politics and Letters: Interviews with New Left,* London: NLB,

as, removal of the despot, viz. Saddam Hussein, would promote democratization—apparently, have also not yielded promised outcomes. The research questions this kind of strategizing for democratic transitions. Side by side, this also shows that hypostatization of democracy is counterproductive. In short, the research prefers a balanced view of democratic politics as strategies do blossom, but mainly in and through the routine struggles of a society.

Part C

8.5 *Pulse II* – **The corporate and primary agents**

Part C *applies* the second *phase* of the realist model to Japan's transition.

The second *pulse* in Japan's transition is analytically pegged at the decade commencing 1850s (through to 1890s), which is distinctive from its past due to a medley of events: (i) foreign ships landed at Tokyo, demanding opening up of trade relations; (ii) ineffectuality of the *Shogunate* to disregard the foreign demands which ultimately ended up in the 'unequal treaty' system; (iii) this eroded the *Shogunate's* elan in the populace's eyes; (iv) abandonment of 'double attendance' at Edo further reflected the central power's erosion; (v) the concurrently popular slogans were – *sonno*, i.e. 'honour the emperor' and *joi*, i.e. expel the barbarians or the foreigners; (vi) in this midst, the *Shogunate's* attempts to rehabilitate himself by refurbishing administration, sending foreign missions, and ushering in technological advancements were feebly perceived; and (vii) the

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p. 103.

whirlpool-like scenario also witnessed increasing congregations at Kyoto – the emperor's site in a sign of shifting loyalties, at least away from the *Shogunate*.

The realist view of agency provides useful insights for it stresses that agents rarely act in a libertine fashion perennially; Japanese conservative society was no exception. Moreover, as internal and necessary relations exist between collectivities and life-chances, the agents' response to the situation was likely to be varied. Whilst individual stirrings were significant, the group-based inequalities played a finer role in the ensuing events. To exemplify, the *Shogunate* relinquished his throne expecting that a bicameral legislature would be created with a special role for him. His supporters too shared this expectancy. Howbeit, his opponents dissented from this idea and had their own plans to oust him and transfer power ceremonially to the emperor.

In this milieu, the following corporate agents preponderated. (α) Samurai – Although samurais were hitherto tied to the castle-towns of the *daimyos* and their warring had discontinued due to long-reigning peace, they nevertheless comprised a privileged section of society and commanded deference. If not materially, culturally, they were on a high pedestal and thereby retained the potential to play a conspicuous role in subsequent struggles. (β) Court nobles along with the emperor – Whilst the emperor was considered as having divine origins, in the administrative organization, his status was peripheral. His advisory nobles too lacked real power, which was vested in the *Shogun*. Nonetheless, this societal component retained a halo around itself and was a potential corporate actor due to the tremendous cultural capital.

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Around the Meiji Restoration, the corporate/primary agents' situation seemed thus:

Corporate agents (CA) identified	CA who (if) abstained from the struggle	CA and their competing gains/losses	Primary agents (PA) identified	PA who actively participated in the struggle	PA and their relative gains/losses
Samurai	Participated actively	Some gained to become rulers	Peasants	Disorganized struggle	No substantial gains
Court nobles + emperor	Fairly active participation	Ceremonial power transferred to the emperor	Merchants	Unsystematic participation	Inadvertent gains
Shogunate	Active participation	A loser in the competitive struggle	Artisans	Passive participation	Inadvertent gains
			Women	Passive participation	No tangible political gains/losses

Table 3 The Corporate/Primary Agents around the Meiji period

The schematic presentation and the corresponding events in Japan sufficiently underscore the point that corporate agents shape the social environment. As per chart *supra*, all corporate agents actively participated, but with differential results for their self-interests. Inversely, barely any primary agent participated in an organized fashion or articulated its demands, if any. If by counterfactual reasoning, the primary agents, viz. peasants, artisans, women etc. at time t_1 had caused tumult, it can be extrapolated that the outcome would been more of ephemeral bubbling on the social waters, as they themselves were unaware of alternate paths, or an intelligible agenda for the nation or themselves, and lacked both material/cultural assets. They were thus rather conditioned to stay in the same rung at t_1 in the absence of cultural sponsors or social legitimization. Anyhow, they did provide the environment in which the corporate agents

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refashioned the social landscape. Antithetically, the more distinguished samurais were jostling for greater social space and eventually received the sponsorship of the emperor, thereby, buttressing their cultural capital and by virtue of ruling the country, control over material resources too. While enunciating the role of collectivities, realism, simultaneously, also amplifies the view that *individual* actors *per se* are insufficient objects to alter the social mosaic; it is group-based identities and, activities in and through collectivities that play a pivotal role. Reckoning with the fact that groups pre-exist the agents, realism also maintains that the agents operate in an environment not entirely of their making, but one in which the past conditions condition their activities.

8.6 Double morphogenesis in Japan's transition

The social setting in the 1850s/1860s and thereabouts provided ample fodder for (a) agents' grouping, re-grouping (b) shaping, reshaping of agents' identities, and (c) transforming social structures. In other words, for analytical purposes, the period is appropriate for assessing the second *pulse* in democratic transition in conjunction with the past conditioning. In the background of constraints/enablements, the agents' interaction with social objects facilitates understanding how new groups were forged and what new identities emerged.

The outstanding samurais forged an alliance to eject the *Shogun* from the power-apparatus, in collusion with the court nobles. They re-shaped their identity, as also of others by becoming king-makers from being the third-rung of previous power-ladder. Besides, human appetites need a canvas on which they can be exercised. Society with its kaleidoscopic hues invariably provides this

canvas. In Japan's case, the freshly ascending samurais projected their appetites, *inter alia*, on to the nation, i.e. the nation became their canvas. A vibrant Japan was to personify *them* and towards this end, a series of reforms were initiated. That most reforms were implemented and ultimately consummated cannot be explained merely by elites initiating them, as many elites initiate reforms in other countries too, but often unsuccessfully. Furthermore, in formulating and implementing reforms, the samurais redefined themselves – they even curtailed their own privileges, such as carrying of double swords or pension which was granted after the Meiji Restoration. Social change thus involved both a change in the environment plus a change in those who were impacting on the environment.

8.4 Triple morphogenesis

The double morphogenesis in Japan led to the triple morphogenesis, as the emerging environment provided persons with abundant opportunities to engage in novel pursuits, play different roles, acquire a social identity and fall into a social niche. The social lattice became pronounced with wider avenues for self-fulfilment and self-development, at least in comparison with previous times. The rise of newspapers, dramas, etc. was soon to pave for similar activities in the later period.

Pre-1850s Japan, by and large, presented a morphostatic scenario, wherein, the corporate and primary agents were distinctly pictured. In tandem, structural/cultural morphostasis reinforced the extant structuring. Structurally, the *Shogunate* ruled the roost and, culturally, the capital was essentially located with

the emperor. Neither party found it expedient to discontinue the mutually sustaining system, as the costs would have been high in splitting the constellation, which none was keen to bear. It was reciprocally advantageous to continue with the system, irrespective of private doubts. This precluded agents' regrouping and hampered the rise of new corporate agents. By 1850s/1860s, the impermeable divide between the corporate and primary agents was becoming permeable, and manifested in the contemporaneous events. Some sections, especially samurais, found the circumstances favourable for articulating their views and organizing themselves. Social differentiation and (partial) ideational diversification led to emergence of new vested interests – industry, commerce, landlords, bureaucracy, professionals and so on.

In conclusion, Japan underwent major social change during *Pulse II*, which was the result of agents' activities and, in turn, modified the agency too. Japan was now to enter the dramatic state, viz. *Pulse III* that is expanded in the next chapter.

Chapter 9

Realist Model of Democratic Transitions – *Pulse III*

Chapters 9 details Phase III of Archer's model, viz. social elaboration[685] and concomitantly *Pulse III* of democratic transition process.

9.1 Prefatory remarks

Realism elevates explanatory methodology over predictions vis-à-vis social reproduction/transformation.[686] This is in tandem with the fact that the events' transpiration is also a combination of the contingent and tendential. This 'transitive, corrigible narrative' is the methodological hallmark of the M/M approach, contra the intransitive 'scientism' of voluntarism or determinism.[687]

In the absence of apt methodological tools, one can fall into the trap of considering agency and society coinciding with each other. Realism combats this viewpoint by analytically distinguishing them. In this manner, it also extricates itself from the second trap of 'constant conjunctions', i.e. what agency does is immediately reflected in society. Per contra, realism projects a temporal lag between the two, i.e. agency's efforts bear fruit subsequent to their performance. By interposing connective mechanisms between agency and society, realism

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[685] For a detailed exposition, see Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, chapter 9. Also see § 2.5 and § 2.6 of this thesis.

[686] For a fine argument about why prediction is not necessarily a prerequisite of science see Lawson (1997) *op. cit.*, pp. 20-25.

[687] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 294.

allows a methodological step forward for understanding their interplay. Correlatively, the connective mechanisms between Phase I and II comprise *vested interests* and the varied *situational logics*; likewise, the connective mechanisms between Phase II and III comprise *exchange* and *power*. As their effects emerge over time, realism rightly assails confining social reproduction/transformation to current agential activities only. It energizes exploring the internal relations between desire(s), exchange and power, plus their necessary relations with the anterior structural/cultural context.[688]

Part A

9.2 Stratified social reality

The process of socio-cultural interaction is predicated upon groups transacting resources (political sanctions, wealth or other forms of capital, and expertise) to strive towards social stability or change, as per vested interests. It automatically encompasses the interrelationship between resource distribution and vested interests. The stratified nature of this process is now unbundled in three steps.[689]

First-order relations -- bargaining power

The resources' differential distribution amongst groups provides them with *potential* bargaining power, i.e. by varying degrees of its possession or non-possession. It informs which group brings what resources and in what measure in the social tussle(s) towards promoting vested interests. By virtue of being the first rung in the social operative ladder, this situation concerns first-order

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[688] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 296.
[689] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, pp. 297-308.

relations. It conditions (i) *who* can enter the transactions-arena (ii) individual/group's bargaining power (iii) differential participation and strategizing by elites/people, and (iv) groups' nature of demands.

Broadly, the first-order resource-distribution's repercussions are: (a) proportional relationship between access to *all* resources and bargaining position, i.e. low access→low bargaining power; high access→high bargaining power; and (b) in contrast to (a) which has extreme positions on the social continuum, there exist at the mid-continuum, agents with intermediate, or thereabouts, bargaining power through access to *various* resources. Changes shall most likely transpire by those in the upper echelons of the continuum, albeit this *original* distribution is certainly alterable than carved in stone.

The first-order bargaining power is a necessary, but insufficient indicator of the nature of interaction/transaction or, who succeeds thereupon. Realism opens analytical space in examining *what else* contributes to negotiating power of groups.

Second-order relations – negotiating power

As per AD (analytical dualism), the 'social distribution of resources' and the 'relations between agential groupings' are changeable, independently of each other.[690] The former pertains to individuals and the latter to society, whose conflation realism repudiates. Conformably, the relationships between resource holders cannot be fused with resource-concentration, as different resource holders may be interacting harmoniously, or be interacting inharmoniously. It

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[690] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 300.

therefore is an empirical than a presumptive matter whether society's stratification is uni-dimensional or multi-dimensional.

As first-order bargaining power is inadequate in explicating the social fabric, the enquiry lens is put on both 'relations *between* different kinds of resource holders' and '*amongst* each of them'.[691] It is this that informs about *real* negotiating power, since the latter becomes meaningful only when groups/individuals *interact* and enter a *particular relationship*. Aside from the structural component, the cultural component too plays a weighty role in transactions. Summatively, the second-order relations or the constraints/enablements arising from SEPs/CEPs confront first-order relations in the social transactions. Agency is no less significant here, as it itself undergoes double morphogenesis, i.e. in trying to change society, it undergoes change, thereby regrouping, generating fresh alliances, and relaying conciliatory or discordant overtones to other corporate agents.

Third order relations – reproductive versus transformative power

The second-order relations have a cascading effect on future developments for they entail (i) 'structural differentiation intrinsic to the emergence of SEPs' (ii) 'ideational diversification intrinsic to the emergence of CEPs', and (iii) 'social re-grouping intrinsic to the emergence of PEPs'.[692] These category-attributes, in turn, generate further interrelations amongst themselves leading to third order relations. The actual outcome of structural-cultural interaction is dependent upon *social perception*, i.e. how agency (especially, CA) perceives, wields and

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[691] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 300, original italics.
[692] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 302.

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receives the interaction. For instance, corporate groups *for* status quo would likely employ containment strategies against subversive activities/beliefs and vice-versa. In this milieu, the status of SEPs, CEPs and PEPs is pertinent. It may be recalled that they have *relative autonomy*, because of which 'their *own* elaboration, and therefore their new generative powers' can be without mutual synchrony.[693] Having clarified these points, the next task is to examine the process of morphostasis and morphogenesis.

9.3 Primary and secondary questions about morphostasis and morphogenesis

Primary question

In articulating realist modelling, the primary enquiry is: when does morphostasis (reproduction) occur and when does morphogenesis (transformation) occur? The response necessitates a further response to two interrelated questions—the *how* and *why* questions—which are raised next.

(A) *The how question –*

Whether the structural and cultural powers are compatible or incompatible? The enquiries should assist in theorizing about 'where, when, and with whom transformational versus reproductive power lies'.[694] In other words, the enquiry peers at the (i) analytically distinct categories of culture and structure by particularly discussing their interplay and what this portends for morphostasis and morphogenesis; (ii) the social fabric into which structure, culture and agency

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[693] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 304, original italics.

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are interwoven; instead of enquiring with preconceived notions about any of these categories or any particular class causing democratic transitions, the research emphasizes situated agents and their practices at time t_1, wherein, *who gets what, when and where* is conditioned by the distinctive past.

The *how* question is further bifurcated and, thereupon, responded to as follows –

(I) How do cultural factors penetrate the structural field?

Once a material interest group approves a doctrine (belief, ideology, theory) for advancing its interests, it is unavoidably placed in a situational logic to consolidate it and withstand/repel counterattacks. Such approval is 'quintessentially public' for it informs the populace unequivocally of the group's standing and strategizing towards both proponents and opponents.[695] The open announcement also spurs the latter to re-group themselves, if need be.

(II) How do structural factors penetrate the cultural field?

When espousal of a doctrine by an interest group becomes synonymous with its own standing, so much so that their identification is one, the doctrine's prospects are entwined with the particular interest group in its competition with others. This often has a spiralling effect – while one ideational group seeks more sponsors, an unintended consequence is the emergence of other groups' patrons, with different doctrine(s), similarly seeking sponsors, to further their interests. Thus, ideas too play a prominent role in the social mosaic, as there is more to society than interests, resources and sanctions.

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[694] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 304.
[695] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 306.

Having raised and responded to the *how* questions, the exercise now shifts to *why* questions, whose need arises as the mutual influence of structure and culture is still a black box and needs to be unravelled.

(B) *The why questions –*

Depending upon context,

(I)   Why is structure more influential over culture?

(II)   Or, why is culture more influential over structure?

Having specified the *how* and *why* questions, their inter-linking should now unlock the *primary* question – when does morphostasis occur and when does morphogenesis? This then should facilitate perceiving democratic transitions in a different perspective.

Realism[696] proposes that (i) one category, i.e. structure or culture is *more influential* over another when discontinuities arise between morphostatic and morphogenetic sequences in their respective domains (to be elucidated presently); (ii) *reciprocal influence* between structure and culture arises due to conjunction between the two sequences; and (iii) what eventuates depends upon how agency acts during the afore-conditions of conjunction/discontinuity.

To conduct enquiries into this matrix, Archer proposes four basic morphostatic/morphogenetic-cycle combinations in the structural/cultural domains. Contra ideal types these basic combinations are extreme types, as they do exist in reality.

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[696] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 308.

1. Disjuncture between cultural morphostasis and structural morphogenesis; structure more influential than culture

The mutual discontinuity ensues between *a* powerful cultural agent and *multiple* corporate agents with structurally differentiating material interests. Whilst cultural patterns reproduce, structural patterns start undergoing transformation conducing to re-definition of interests, their assertion and advancement. These new self-interest groups realize that cultural reproduction with the hitherto 'archaic' ideas permits few, if any, benefits; contrariwise, negative costs mount for either supporting these ideas or passively following them. Thus, the situational logic of elimination is promoted and, the material corporate groups, to enhance their standing directly confront the dominant cultural doctrine thereby inducing cultural elaboration – unleashing 'new' ideas, undermining old ones. The hitherto quiescent subjects too join the emerging divisions countering the heretofore Syncretism/Systematization of ideas. Example: In 1991, steps were taken to liberalize Indian economy. Whilst structurally, new agents emerged on the social canvass, the conservative cultural mores still persisted.

2. Disjuncture between cultural morphogenesis and structural morphostasis; culture more influential than structure

The discontinuity ensues between *a* powerful structural agent and *multiple* corporate agents undergoing cultural differentiation. The structural agent by sheer dominance reinforces extant social relations, and restrains new/opposing groups' emergence, but the structural agent can only 'retard' the emergence of new ideational groups. The cultural morphogenesis intensifies competitive

conflict of ideas conducing to Pluralization/Specialization with more primary agents drawn into the protean cultural whirlpool. The other material interest groups are inevitably influenced, as the cultural changes present competitive advantages/losses, new opportunities, etc. depending upon how they are braced. Examples: Renaissance, Enlightenment and scientific revolution.

As 'cultural agents are *also* structural agents', cultural change 'leads to the reconstitution of structural subjects'.[697] Although the sway of corporate agents in a particular direction has an initial advantage, it ineliminates subordinate groups who too possess leverage.

3. Conjunction between cultural morphogenesis and structural morphogenesis; culture and structure equally influential in morphogenesis

In this configuration, the following practical possibilities remain:

(i)   cultural/structural morphogenesis occurs together;

(ii)   cultural morphogenesis precedes structural morphogenesis or vice versa;

(iii)   due to (ii), temporal discontinuities between the phases are likely.

The corporate groups compete, clash, diverge in interests and reorganize themselves in the structural/cultural realm conducing to differentiation and diversification.[698] Correspondingly, monolithic domination by a group is absent. In this milieu, cultural and structural groups interact, with the former seeking sponsors and the latter seeking legitimization. Although the interpenetration of structure and culture is simultaneous, it is analytically examinable whether the

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[697] Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 317, italics added.
[698] All the same, an overlap between some structural and cultural interests is possible.

cultural groups first seek sponsorship or the structural groups first seek legitimization and with what repercussions.

When and by whom the first alliance(s) is forged is crucial. To exemplify, the first material sponsor for a set of cultural ideas is more likely to share the same commonalities, thereby accounting for admittance of both groups into each other's fold without compromising much of their ideals. Additionally, the structural group(s) first to go in for ideational endorsement throws its opponents to seek similar endorsements for their views. If the opponents fail to seek such endorsement, their very existence may be jeopardized. Importantly, opposing (material) groups cannot endorse similar ideas, otherwise their mutual opposition itself would be bereft of any distinctively grounded differences. Once certain groups initiate sponsorships or endorsements, the remaining groups enter the fray, but usually have to compromise their ideas, values etc. and this explains the queer alliances that emerge, i.e. the coming together of strange bedfellows.

The abounding opportunities for pluralization and specialization stymie any regress to structural/cultural morphostasis. This swells the ranks of corporate agents and shrinks the primary agents. Furthermore, in this configuration, the resources are less unevenly distributed. The two sequences are mutually reinforcing, but the process is transitory than everlasting. At some temporal juncture, some alliance(s) emerges stronger, entrenches its views, thus commencing a fresh cycle. The outcome depends upon resources and relations involved between the groups, the nature of ideas advanced/endorsed, and the situational logics generated. During the configuration's operativeness, and,

subsequently too, the twin processes of structural/cultural morphogenesis retain their relative autonomy. Example: India in 2004 – it exhibits structural stratification, as well as a perceptible metamorphosis of the hitherto conservative cultural norms. Some pluralist drives which would have been unthinkable a decade ago are now in play and acceptable too.

4. Conjunction between structural morphostasis and cultural morphostasis; structure and culture equally retard metamorphosis; stated alternatively, they promote status quo

The rosy picture of a culturally integrated society has been customarily portrayed in many political accounts. The portrayal is often questionable, as the subjugated elements might well be incognizant of their domination. Their apparent reconciliation to their fates still undeceives that the rosy picture is a caricature. Example: ancient India's caste-riven society.[699] Such scenarios are nurtured by both structural and cultural morphostasis, wherein, (α) cultural morphostasis signalizes ascendancy and perpetuation of hegemonic, systematized ideas; analogously, other ideas, if any, stay subordinated; (β) structural morphostasis signalizes a regimented social organization with sharp demarcation between the elites and the plebian; with resource-distribution overwhelmingly in favour of the elites, opposition is habitually stifled. Due to reciprocal influence of structure and culture, the scenario can endure for long. Moreover, structural/cultural corporate groups lack incentives to rupture their alliance, as both benefit from the alliance.

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[699] For a different interpretation of the Indian caste system see Dumont, Louis (1972) *Homo Heirarchicus: The Caste System and its Implications*, London: Paladin. Dumont argues for viewing the Indian caste system on its own terms, i.e. as a society based on different principle for which new social concepts should be employed.

Resultantly, the reservoir of primary agents stays copious, as corporate agents' augmentation is encumbered.

Part B

9.4 Neglect of underlying processes

The deficient treatment of some themes vis-à-vis democratic transitions is now enumerated; the generic issues are listed numerically and those pertaining particularly to Japan, alphabetically.

The non-realist democratic literature has, generically, deficiently regarded the following themes
1) A systematic analysis of structural/cultural combinations and what *prospects* they behold for d.t.[700]
2) The impact of ascendancy of culture or structure, or, their equipollent interaction on d.t., i.e. the significance of differential influence wielding powers of structure or culture, at different junctures.
3) How different situational logics emerge from structural/cultural interaction and impinge upon d.t.
7) The in/compatibility between structural and cultural powers and their impact on d.t.
5) The temporal lag between agents' activity and the consequent result vis-à-vis d.t.
6) The impact of vested interests, resource allocation, etc. not only as a pre-given, but also how they are shaped in and through interaction, and how they impinge upon d.t.
7) The generative mechanisms for morphostasis/morphogenesis and how they affect d.t.'s emergence.
In Japan's case
A) Super-event explanations, i.e. explanations transcending events; pure event-explanations of Japan's transition run into trouble, as the dividing wall between militarism (pre-1945) and d.t. (post-1945) is tenuous.
B) The possibility of commonality of powers, properties in militarist Japan and democratic Japan.
C) What changed, if anything did, at a deeper level of reality in the post-1945 period? When did the substantive change occur – prior to democratization or along with it or consequently?

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[700] d.t. = democratic transitions

D) The counterintuitive proposition – divisibility of Japan's transition into more than one sequence.

Table 1 Role of structure, culture and mechanisms in democratic transitions

9.5 An exposition of some mechanisms

This section briefly enounces a few mechanisms that can be useful in explicating democratic transitions.

Competitive conflict

Competition amongst contending power groups (i) generates different situational logics, (ii) conditions strategies and, thereby, (iii) impinges upon agents' behaviour.[701] In Japan's case, Phase-cum-*Pulse III* too can be explicated by competitive conflict. At commencement of *Pulse III* in Japan, the political mechanism of election generated the situational logic of both compromise and elimination amongst competitors. The rising military exploits and its gradually ascending social capital intensified the situational logic of elimination. As the political parties successively lacked the coercive instrument, they were ultimately ejected from the ensuing configuration. In the altered political configuration, the mechanism of competitive conflict was at work in the international realm too. In this mutual synchrony, the military's interests could progress in a more forceful fashion. At any rate, the mechanism of competitive conflict applies equally to democratic transitions too. In post-War Japan, the mechanism was institutionalized in its routine political struggles without much ado, and is attested to by regular, free and fair elections since democracy's inception.

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[701] Cf. Archer (1995) *op. cit.*, p. 333.

In failed democratic experiments, the mechanism of competitive conflict (as per democratic norms) fails to insert itself in the routine political struggles at time t_1. Consequently, groups vying for power in such experiments may take recourse to competitive conflict as it existed before, such as *might is right* instead of playing according to the democratic rules of the game, i.e. competing in a legitimate struggle, where vote is mightier than the sword. Yet, this is one side of the story; the other side, of course, pertains to the *interaction* by agents for energizing democratic framework, and, how the *structural-cultural constraints* condition such endeavours.

Part C

9.6 *Pulse III* – social elaboration in Japan

For analytical purposes, the research locates the *social elaboration* sequence in Japan, in the decade commencing 1890s.[702] This temporal lag affords more purchase in understanding Japanese society, as the interaction/activities' translatability into the social realm during 1850s-1880s was far from immediate – some desires/claims were realized over time, while others remained unrealized (example: the 'unequal treaty' system was in force despite attempts to rescind it); those that were realized were different from as initially envisaged (example: the constitution resulted from contending pulls and pressures and was distinct from the aspirations of many actors, i.e. of an autonomous legislative assembly). The competing claims towards various goals diluted the original standpoints. Yet this

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[702] That the Japanese actors may not have undertaken their activities thus, does not discount such an analytical exercise.

dilution became visible consecutively than instantaneously. The second advantage of temporal lag is that it enables sidestepping a wholly unadulterated picture of all activities/desires translating into reality, which is dubious. Stated differently, unintended consequences' neglect is redressed.

On unintended consequences, the hunter-gatherer's activities provide an approximate analogy. While the predecessors of the hunter-gatherer were, aeons ago, managing their quotidian life—through hunting, foraying, foraging, security maintenance, cooperation with others, and warding off evil of supernatural forces—a whole set of institutions were emerging, such as, division of labour, kinship, religion, family and parentage. None of these institutions was carefully designed, but emerged, in part, as unintended consequences. Even on a smaller time-span, unintended consequences do result and Japan's case is no different. The nature of unintended consequences is sketched *infra*.
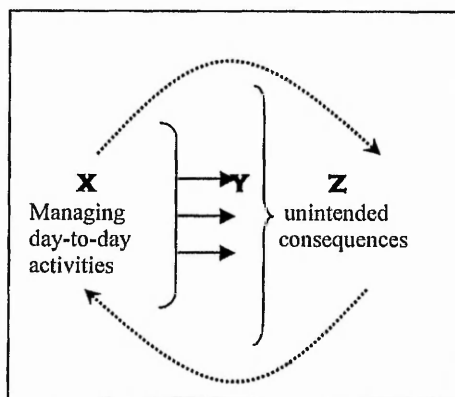

Fig. 1 Unintended consequences independent of agents' aspirations

People manage their day-to-day activities (X) with certain expectations (Y) which are realized/unrealized in varying degrees, but the entire process

contributes to consequences that were unpremeditated. Adventitiously, a whole gamut of powers and properties emerge which the argument now addresses.

Now the research portrays the first-, second- and third-order relations' powers and properties and their pertinence in Japan's transition.

First-order relations – In *Pulse I*, the *Shogun, daimyos* and the samurais possessed bargaining power, in decreasing order of intensity. The emperor, albeit peripheral to daily governance, retained considerable cultural capital by virtue of his divine origin. Resource-allocation and positional placement sustained the asymmetrical bargaining power. That this arrangement was not etched in indelible ink was evidenced by future events. This necessitates cognizing *second-order relations* appertaining to negotiating power, which emerges in and through interrelations. Indeed, as the events indicated, the interrelations between corporate agents modified the originally obtaining pattern. The tables were turned on the *Shogun*, whose negotiating strength plummetted, whereas, that of select samurais soared. That regrouping too is a continuous process was manifest both prior to Meiji Restoration and after it. Preceding the Restoration distinguished samurais forged an alliance to dethrone the *Shogun*; howbeit, once the primary objective was realized mutual differences surfaced and fostered regrouping. The mutual bickering affected the ensuing plans, which were tailored and retailored through concessions and counter-concessions. The realist proposition of highlighting relations between different kinds of resource-holders, and also amongst them is useful, as treating samurais, etc. as whole categories confounds the issue than clarifying it. Differences amongst a single category too

are imaginable. Post-Meiji Japan witnessed this in the caravans of samurais deserting and joining government as per expedience. Such tergiversation often sullied government's image. Finally, *third-order relations'* pertinence is marked, as they signify further emergent powers/properties and interrelations and their boding for social processes. In Japan's case, structurally, the dislodging of the *Shogun* modified the pyramid like societal structure: instead of a domineering overlord, a pack of samurais took over. Yet the legacy in and through the emergent property of tight control over lower units of governance remained resilient. This manifested in the equally tight control that was exercised over the demarcated provinces. Beneath the veneer of the reforms, the earlier downward thrust of control continued uninterrupted in a new guise. Culturally, the halo around the emperor grew intense, as the series of changes were devised and implemented in his name, even if he was infrequently consulted over the nitty-gritty of reforms. The emergent cultural powers/properties were, in part, also due to the dislodging of the *Shogun*. Having abolished his privileges, a train of activities were set into motion whose effects became inescapable. *Shogun* was forced to partake the blame for the ills confronting Japan. Heaping blame on a prevalent apparatus activated cognitive mechanisms of perception thereby conjuring an alternate system which could redress the ills. The Japanese emerging from a long period of seclusion looked up to N. American and W. European countries for new political arrangements; the concepts of constitution, legislative assemblies, party system *et al.* concomitantly gained currency. Dissemination and proliferation of such ideas gathered momentum, which could

have been resisted at elite's own peril. In short, reforms on these lines had become inevitable. It is another matter that their form was different from what many had envisioned. On the agents' front, the intellectual ferment, the activation of environmental and cognitive mechanisms, generated their own set of emergent properties. The iterative exercises towards such reforms were to structure people into a newly emerging polity with new set of norms and rules. Admittedly, a productive environment for reforms was emerging.

In non-realist accounts, the in/compatibility between structural and cultural powers is sublated; this neglect ill-affords grasping when conditions are germane for morphogenesis and/or morphogenesis, as it is in this kernel such information is, so to say, coded. Additionally, the interpenetration of structure and culture and their implication for democratic transition too is slighted.

During the Meiji Restoration, cultural factors had well penetrated the structural field, as once the elite pack of samurais was ensconced at the helm of affairs, they aired their aims and intentions publicly. Hence, they were indispensably placed in the situational logic of consolidating and protecting them. The battle-lines were accordingly drawn with proponents/opponents joining the contest expediently. The suppression of Satsuma Rebellion is a case in point. Thereafter, cajolery, persuasion, allurements were employed by the government rather than coercion to achieve its aims. Simultaneously, the structural factors too penetrated the cultural field. As the doctrine espoused by the elites became synonymous with their own standing, they needed more sponsors to consolidate their control. The state resources were supplemented by

the emerging commercial groups which led to forging of closer bonds between them.

The relative influence of structure and/or culture and what this portends for democratic transitions is now assessed. Japan in post-Meiji period was in a constellation having conjunction between structural and cultural morphogenesis. A new set of corporate agents had emerged who had accumulated sufficient capital to command and also perpetuate a nationalist doctrine. This was reflected in the rise of technological developments, expansion in business and industry, commerce, agriculture, and growth in other realms. Of course, the agential powers were no less significant in enabling these changes. The scenario seeking to replenish Japan with national pride nourished the rise of military which, commenced its newfound status in style around this period, and was to emerge as *the* prominent corporate actor soon. The developments thereafter, in some non-realist accounts, refer to the rise of Japanese militarism. This however is a narrow interpretation, as it is fixated on a single category to the diminution of others. It also overlooks which power/properties changed and which remained intact due to rise of militarism. Realism introduces the possibility of the commencement of a new morphogenetic cycle at this juncture and to analyze the whole process in a different vein. Ergo, realism promotes formulating new impressions about various objects:

Commencement of a new morphogenetic cycle in Japan's transition and the insights it provides:

1. A new set of emergent properties.

2. A topical constellation obtaining between structure, culture and agency.

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3. A current set of corporate agents.

4. Distinctly new patterning of bargaining, negotiating and transformative power.

5. Fresh regrouping of agents with potentiality of further regrouping.

6. Possibility of same mechanisms producing different results, depending upon interaction.

7. Possibility of different mechanisms producing same results, depending upon interaction.

8. Power in a state of flux; tying it to a category or a class in absolute terms blurs social reality.

9. A close relation may exist between structure and function, but the same structure may also be capable of more/less of the same set of functions or, even different functions, hitherto unknown or unexplored. Put differently, certain properties prevailing in *an* (as distinct from all) authoritarian regime might be conducive for *facilitating* democratic transitions.

10. Autonomy of structural conditioning from agential interaction, which explains that their non-synchrony causes the drifting of results from agential intentions, i.e. agents aim for something, and what eventuates is often something else.

Table 1 An interpretation of a new morphogenetic cycle in Japan

The employment of a new morphogenetic cycle invigorates explanatory power on the above counts. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Japan was shifting into a different configuration due to past interaction and structural conditioning. The structures that emerged barely matched what different agential groups had initially intended. Even the most powerful were far from a state of licence and experienced structural/agential constraints. These structures emerged in part as an alternate system contra the *Shogunate*. Having denounced the *Shogun*, a semblance of different governance became mandatory; hence the elites were unable to withhold such concessions. On the other hand, some agential groups were for greater legislative autonomy which however failed to materialize. None the less, a constitutional system, despite imperfections, was in place. All this set into motion, different situational logics for different actors. Most importantly, an edifice was constructed that bestirred agents into alliances to capture political power, irrespective of its imperfections. New corporate agents also emerged

leading to proliferation of new interests and pursuits. In so analyzing, a new set of *involuntaristic placement* emerged. Instead of the *Shogun*, the elites now had access to the public resources and this affected role play of the agents. Besides, the changed political architecture created new positions at different realms of society – political, educational, technological *et al.* all of which conditioned agential activities. *Vested interests* and their articulation too underwent metamorphosis. Of course, political posts were creating their own situational logics and the concomitant jostling for power, but embryonic nationalism, a potent factor in *Shogun's* removal, played upon cognitive and emotional mechanisms. Military establishment initially marshalled for limited campaigns fed on these mechanisms and started to emerge as an independent corporate actor over and above the 'political', of which, it was initially a component.

The mechanism of boundary-setting[703] assumes importance here. Boundaries too are layered. One, in Japan's case, nationalistic fervour, *inter alia*, played a role in setting boundaries around military establishment as a component over and above civil government; this was not without some degree of acceptance from the populace – expressed or unexpressed. Two, the exploits of the military further fed on these cognitive mechanisms. Three, the then major international actors had accorded Japan an inferior status; this played a subtle role in boundary-setting, as it imbued the elites and the populace to organize themselves in a manner to get a due recognition, especially given Japan's meteoric rise in technological and social development. Thus boundary-setting

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[703] Tilly, Charles (2000) *op. cit.*

worked at the (i) level of persons' cognition, (ii) at inter-state level amongst governments, and (iii) at intra-societal level amongst those in the power tussle.

The civil government in the first two decades since its inception functioned side by side with the military. Yet in the open realm that society is nothing is pre-determined. In this mutual functioning, army and civilian government fostered different role-plays; consequently, avenues were opened for emergence of a new set of necessary and internal relations. In the background of Meiji Restoration, the military element was in a necessary relation with the establishment. The aspiration for national prestige, the craving for being a major power, the hunger for glory *et al.* purveyed units for the army in a unique way. This manifested in the dazzling, continuous rise of the military. In the absence of a real challenger coupled with absence of new corporate grouping or regrouping at time t_1 and, fed, *inter alia*, by the afore-mechanisms, the military became unstoppable. Its march ended only in an external encounter. This is how the initial parity between civilian government and military gradually turned into an asymmetrical relation.

Sections of populace may have been wary of government and/or military, but the *opportunity costs* were high in challenging or striving to alter the given situation. On the political horizon, as said, few, if any other, corporate groups existed. The peasants and the workers were already facing the brunt of suppression and lacked either dynamic leadership/organization, as also articulation to achieve their objectives. Spurts of terrorist activities could hardly be expected to shape profound refashioning of governmental architecture. In

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other words, the *degree of interpretative freedom* was confined for most agents. Thus in the given scenario, each grouping was conditioned by *directional guidance*. It was the military and the elites who stood to gain the most from such directional guidance. Given the poor organization of primary groups, their stakes were high, i.e. even with large-scale effort, they stood to gain less. Contrarily, the risks for military and elites were low, i.e. due to past conditioning, even with less effort, they stood to gain more.

As for *structural configuration*, Japan was no longer in the configuration of *necessary compatibilities* between its components. The erstwhile calm and serene social texture was now in a state of perturbation. Japan now approximated the configuration of *contingent compatibilities* which promoted the situation logic of opportunism: each section stood to gain by exploiting the situation, as per their positional advantage/disadvantage. Neither the army nor the civilian government at this juncture was mighty enough to dismiss the other. This served as a nascent period for the military to emerge as a major corporate group over time. As for *cultural configuration*, Japan approximated the configuration of *necessary compatibilities* which promoted the situational logic of protection. The overarching doctrine underpinning the Meiji Restoration was *sonno*, i.e. 'honour the emperor', and, *joi*, i.e. expel the barbarians or the foreigners. The seeds for nationalism and even jingoism were sown here.

The research now counterintuitively proposes that Japan had reached a stage which was partially conducive for democratic transition at the commencement of the second morphogenetic cycle, that is around the turn of the

previous century. This is notwithstanding its militarist exploits. It needed a spark which was then missing to accomplish the transformation; this spark was provided by US Occupation. However, without the preexisting societal properties, it is arguable whether the US Occupation would have effected Japan's transition. This condensed conception requires unbundling which is essayed as follows. The essence of the argument is best captured by an analogy. A seed is already in possession of generative powers of self-flowering. It is a matter of providing the spark of a conducive environment for its growth. Similarly, a society may possess the generative properties of democratic transition at time t_1, but may not undertake the transition for various reasons. Example: Singapore, as it appears in 2004; if the Singaporean elite resolve for a transition, it would likely be a smooth one. Was Japan in a similar situation at the turn of the previous century? If so, how? The response is essayed below.

The following discernible points in the period at the turn of the twentieth century (x, for shorthand), and, the immediate post-Second War period (y, for shorthand) demand a closer attention.

➢ In both x and y cultural differentiation was essentially lacking, and new cultural, pluralist drives were meagre. Thus at y, a situation in which the military wing was annihilated, no major cultural differentiation occurred sponsored by the Japanese themselves. In fact, trust was reposed by the populace in the emperor.

➢ In both x and y elaborate structural differentiation failed to occur. In x, the military was consistently ascending the power ladder, while in y, the structure

established by the Occupation forces was, actively or passively, accepted by the populace. Besides, opposition to Occupying forces, either through guerilla warfare or well-organized efforts hardly prospected at t_1.

➢ From x to y, the major Corporate Agent (CA)$^\phi$ was army and preponderant majority of the populace was reduced to the category of Primary Agents (PA)$_\phi$. In the intervening period, barely any new, significant CA emerged, while the ranks of the PA swelled and fresh regroupings were unworkable. Correspondingly, the populace had little exposure to new ideas which could mould their lives.

➢ From x to y, structure, culture and agency did not undergo radical stratification, if any, stratification. This is attested by few pluralizing activities, the diminution of corporate groups, and lack of new opportunities for role-play other than jingoism.

➢ In both x and y, the core properties in the private realm, i.e. the family pattern, patriarchal structure, dominance based on gender and age, etc. remained broadly unaltered.

➢ The Confucian ethic of loyalty remained paramount and continued uninterrupted, though in different guises. In medieval period, it extended to the feudal lord, in the Meiji period, to the state, and, in the post-Second War period, to the *kaisha* or the Japanese companies.[704]

➢ The trait of working collectively, than engaging in individualistic pursuits also continued to inhere in the Japanese from x through to y.

$^\phi$ Is employed in both singular and plural, as per textual need.

➢ In both *x* and *y*, the vertical structuring of society continued unaltered.

➢ The *P-Properties*[705] were what the people had to rely upon after the Second War defeat and its ravages. As actors, they had no other option. Transformative capabilities too inhere in them, but they emerge as a result of further interaction. The argument that the Japanese relied upon prior powers/properties to mould these very properties can be accepted, just as the Iraqis are doing now. These properties served at two levels: one, at self-organization and, two, at being organized by others, in and through the emerging relational patterns.

➢ Cognitively, there were few impressions on the mind, collectively or individually, which could open and expand their mental horizons. The military had fanned jingoism for which the cardinal value of 'loyalty' in the Japanese society came handy.

In summation, the core powers/properties of Japanese society scarcely underwent large-scale or radical change; the claim can therefore be made that what transpired after the Second War was a possibility earlier too. This, of course, was one possibility, amongst others. The matter therefore is less of whether democratization should be credited to Japanese elites or Occupation elites. This also demonstrates that the self same properties that propel militaristic regimes may well be conducive, albeit in different measures, depending upon context, for democratization too. Thus the point is underscored that instead of seeking the ostensive properties in society, or some empirical indices, transitions are

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[704] On this point, see Smith (1985) *op. cit.*, p. 37, wherein, he rightly says that the 'Confucian past casts a very long shadow over contemporary Japanese society'.

facilitated more so by the *stag* relationship and the various configurations obtaining between structure and agency.

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[705] See chapter 5.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

11.1 Prefatory remarks

This research was undertaken to answer the question – what makes democratic transitions possible? Having conducted the research, the concluding chapter now ties together all threads of the arguments and the results thereof to present the final fabric. The appraisal focuses on: *How is this research different from others? What difference does it make?*

The chapter begins by reviewing the bases for the study, including its justification, and the merit of the methodology adopted. Then follows a detailing of the research outcomes and an explanation of their further—practical and theoretical— implications. Subsequently, the limitations of the research are enumerated; importantly, none of the limitations invalidate the findings of the research. Finally, the directions in which this research can be further explored are indicated.

The thesis has interrogated fairly recent studies on democratic transitions and, thereupon, illumined that they have avoided or inadequately resolved the 'genetic' question, i.e. *what makes X (democratic transitions) possible?* Most studies are structured around a few empirical predicates or discursive tools. The singular reliance upon indices/variables, such as economic correlations, struggle between social groups, or different phases of democratic transitions obstructs

chasing stratified and differentiated social reality.[706] Some non-realist accounts are thus anchored at first-level descriptions, or pivot on empiricism. This compromises explanatory power by marginalizing ontological depth.

In making the case for a scientific study of democratic transitions, the research has argued that gravitation is required from mere descriptions/predictions to mechanisms-approach-cum-causal explanations. The former is (i) often rooted in empiricism, (ii) generally seeks regular associations/patterns in social reality, and (iii) are usually predicated on 'event ontology'. Some interpretations of post-1989 events—the collapse of the erstwhile communist regimes—were an exercise at grand predictions, such as the eventual triumph of liberal democracy ('end of history')[707]. Not only did these predictions lack convincing explanatory power, they also turned out to be wrong. Analogously, the so-called 'third wave' of democratization[708] shed inappreciable light on democratic transitions' underlying mechanisms. As the claim stretched across space and time, a pre-requisite was a 'least common denominator'—which could be a matrix of common structures, relations, or mechanisms and their powers/properties for democratization—which however remained unstated. In this absence, the claim is at best a collation of facts, while attributing properties to the ('democratic') events with retrospective effect. By contrast, a critical realist account such as that offered here is capable of looking at causality

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[706] That the chase must yield to capturing social reality is a *non sequitur*. At any rate, capturing social reality is incongruous with ontological reality. Nevertheless, there is a charm in the chase for it opens up fresh frontiers and informs about new layers of social reality.
[707] See Fukuyama, Francis (1993) *The End of History and the Last Man*, (new edition), London: Penguin.
[708] Refer chapter 3 of this thesis.

correctly and so offering a more effective explanation properly so called. To reiterate, causal explanation does not imply that it will predict when democratic transitions will occur in specific regions or in what manner will they unfold in non-democratic countries.

A decade after the fall of the Iron Curtain, there is a discernible perplexity – Where are we heading vis-à-vis democracy? What makes democratic transitions possible? Why success is elusive despite euphoric throngs? The recent failure of the *Orange Revolution* in Ukraine evidences that mere gathering of groups, desire for democratic transition by ecstatic people, etc. are inadequate factors for democratic transitions.

The slogans of *democracy in dark times*[709] are laments at explaining democracy's status, though with increasing difficulty. If democracy has an *intrinsic power* to keep things in apple-pie order, then how could times have become dark; alternatively, if times have become dark, then claims about democracy's intrinsic power to deliver need to be taken with a pinch of salt. In this baffling and somewhat depressing background, a fresh approach was called for, as the pendulous swings from hyper-optimism to hypo-pessimism were woolly. The portents were prevalent for thinking and acting anew; it was a matter of picking the right signals, and doing something about them in the right manner to portend a better explanative. The research attempted to raise qualitatively different questions: *How else* can democratic transitions be studied? What *other*

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[709] See, for example, Isaac, Jeffrey C. (1998) *Democracy in Dark Times*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 1-18 *et passim*. Refer chapter 3 (pp. 166 ff.) for a brief deliberation.

explicative can be profitable for explaining democratic transitions? These appetizers spurred distinct possibilities for the main course.

Sheer criticism of the previous studies would have been a meaningless exercise, unless a new window of explication was opened up to take the exercise a full circle. It is not that criticism *per se* is insignificant; an aphorism catches this significance – criticism precedes and fosters creation. Therefore, a possible way to go beyond criticism was to examine the explanans from a new explanandum. Concomitantly, a review of original ontological positions was deemed necessary. These steps were taken and the research reoriented itself by shedding the common penchant merely for the observandum (the observed object/s) or reductandum (the reducible object/s). By criticizing the empirical mode of inferences, accumulation of data through observations, and their computation, which was not providing core answers to the genetic question, a need was established 'for a clean break, rather than for some "transgression"'.[710] Thus, to address the aforementioned deficiencies, preliminary enquiries were conducted for a deeper, penetrating approach. These enquiries revealed that critical realism could possibly fit the bill. Subsequent enquiries reposed faith in the decision. On this count, the research could raise the question: what is the *generative structure of society* that facilitates democratic transitions? Thus a space was opened up for a non-anthropocentric approach that repudiated society as a mere aggregate of agents/events, but respected powers/properties proper of agency and society.

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[710] Cf. Bourdieu (1990) *op. cit.*, p. 4.

An overview has already been provided of how previous studies on democratic transitions have neglected the relational pattern of society with its attendant powers/properties (both enabling/constraining). As a result, these accounts could not effectively transcend 'explanations' beyond agents (individual or collective), elites, events, preferences, dispositions, economic indices, and the like. The relational-level enquiry has hitherto remained rather mysterious, because like any other mystery, it requires appropriate tools and lexicon to breach the mysterious spell. By adopting and applying critical realism the mystery was sought to be bracketed, thereby opening a new explicatory window.

After questioning the recent literature on democratic transitions, the research project contended that at heart of the matter was the issue of structure and agency, which unfortunately, has either been neglected or taken-for-granted or insufficiently dealt with. The relational pattern being society's life-breath, it is rooted in structure and agency's interaction. Howbeit, in most social studies, the two categories had been erroneously perceived as opposite ends of a continuum, with no mediating ground. A conceivable option was to enter the debilitating debate by being *for* or *against* reification or reductionism (structure or agency, respectively). As this approach had mystified the issue, it was abandoned. By engaging the realist approach, a different view was entertained, viz. that of *interplay* between structure and agency. It was acknowledged that both are independent categories, irreducible to each other, and each has its own emergent

powers and properties. Notwithstanding this characteristic, both are also closely intertwined.

In the analyses that followed, Margaret Archer's work, which advocated a realist approach to morphogenetic transformation, served as a good beginning point. It aided in formulating arguments against the inadequate previous studies and, developing and advancing arguments for a realist approach. The key idea was that society is irreducible to persons; as a corollary, the properties which a society possesses are irreducible to persons situated therein.[711] Accordingly, descriptions akin to 'individualism', as also 'determinism' vis-à-vis democratic transitions were interrogated and, thereupon, rejected and refuted. Thereupon, it was argued that what ties and binds people into a social fabric is a set of rules, norms, positions, etc. Without an understanding of what occurs in this grey area, a better understanding of democratic transitions has remained somewhat elusive. Various approaches, such as those discussed in chapter 3, have been, to some extent, inattentive to this grey area.

In this context, it was endeavoured to interpret democratic transitions via realism which expedited a refined treatment of structure and agency. Consequently, three 'frames' were posited in a social reproduction/transformation 'sequence', including democratic transitions: (i) structural/cultural conditioning – bequeathed by the past generations along with their emergent powers/properties which could be either constraining or enabling; (ii) 'social interaction' – the present continuous action/ interaction by agents by chiselling their activities on the received social structures; and (iii) 'social

elaboration' – the upshot of (i) and (ii). By essaying this framework, some recent accounts' shortcomings,[712] such as being moored only to the 'present tense' were combated. Collaterally, the definition of democracy itself was in need of reconsideration and revision, especially in terms of the potential aftermath of (failed) explorations towards democracy. Schematically, this is presented as follows:

Previous structures	Present action/interaction	Future outcome
x	*xy*	*xyz*

Table 1 The residual influence of past on democratic evolution

In the tabular presentation, x = past structures; y = present action/interaction with past structures; and, z = future outcome(s). In an inescapable conclusion of the proposition that no society changes *in toto*, the residual influence, in varying degrees, of x will remain in any future outcome. This substantiated in *a fortiori* manner that democracies cannot be of singular morphogenetic form. Just as no two trees are similar (albeit a tree is a tree is a tree), so are no two democracies. This has to do with contingency, emergentism, pre-existing structures (at time t_1) and the ensuing activities. The differential democratic functioning of Canada, France, India, Japan, New Zealand, amongst others, attests this. The future functioning of these countries too should partake of the past structures and processes.

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[711] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 97.
[712] These accounts were critically examined in chapter 3.

The research also unsettled the view that 'public sphere', liberal media, institutionalization of democracy, such as in parliamentary or presidential forms, have *sui generis* properties or autonomy to generate radical change.[713] It was suggested that these presuppositions of hypostatization were unfounded and sometimes misleading. The society's relational patterns left their signature on all realms, including these. In other words, ground was prepared for stating that there was no compelling evidence to imbue these and related concepts with any greater significance than they deserved. It was averred, to borrow a phrase from Alexander Wendt, *democracy is what people make of it*,[714] in a particular society, with the diluting phrase – not in circumstances entirely of their choosing.

To ascertain the verity of theoretical assumptions, Japan served as a case study. Although an 'unconventional' case, it yielded useful insights. The all-encompassing notion that USA played a stellar role in Japan's reconstruction and democratization demanded a closer scrutiny. If a foreign power's intervention could spawn democratic transitions, then many other countries too should have metamorphosed into somewhat democratic frames, though in varying degrees. This premise would also imply that countries' past structures could be wholly superseded. Alternatively, if popular leaders alone could lead their countries to democratic transitions, then most African and Asian colonies would have become democratic by now, as they all came to be ruled by popular leaders initially. Both these premises are dubious: neither did Japan wholly supersede its past

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[713] See § 3.5, chapter 3 of this thesis.
[714] See Wendt, Alexander (1992) 'Anarchy is what states make of it: The social construction of power politics', *International Organization*, 41, pp. 335-370. This of course is within the structural framework of constraints and possibilities.

structures, which find manifestation even today in work culture, etc. nor did most Asian or African countries become truly democratic. Indeed, there was more to democratization than met the eye; this held true for Japan's case too. A fresh theoretical modelling was necessitated to describe *social structure*, how and in what manner connections obtained between its different parts and how they impinged upon democratic transitions. Groundwork was prepared for formulating such modelling and it was subsequently applied to Japan to verify its core assumptions. The modelling affirmed the theoretical premises: democratic transitions are implicated in relational-cum-mechanism based patterns than being pegged only to actions, behaviour, or 'present tense' activity. The past is present, in some measure, in the present activities. The results of the research validated the conception that there is a continuum between past, present and future. This then permitted a basis for contesting previous studies in an emphatic manner and asserting the significance of a relational-pattern-cum-mechanism based modelling of democratic transitions. The groundwork for modelling dissolved some commonly held assumptions about democratic transitions which are referred to below.

11.2 Conclusions about the Research Problem

At its inception, the research project had emphasized the significance of ventures towards winnowing appearance from reality. By specifically importing and applying this concept to democratic transitions, an additional terrain was uncovered for explicating the subject matter. A move was made from first level explications, i.e. commonsensical, empirical meanings of democratic transitions

to second and third order explanations, viz. the unobservable powers/properties of social objects in an intersectional framework. This imparted an impetus to further expand the scope of enquiry and cull new impressions.

A scientific account, *inter alia*, must state why things are the way they are, at any given point in time. *Why is X, X?* Put differently, why are non-democratic countries in the situation they are. Championing liberty, celebrating democracy simply by denouncing authoritarianism has limited utility. Indeed, Hume's law—non-derivability of *ought* from *is*—has overwhelmingly remained intact and indissoluble.[715] In contradistinction to such narratives, this research has submitted a systematic and measured view of explaining why things are the way they are, which should go some way in understanding the putative factors of democratic transitions from a different perspective.

11.3 Conclusions about the Research Questions

The research had raised five main points for investigation (see *Introduction*). Based upon the analyses, further confirmed by the articulation of the modelling, as also its negotiation with Japan's study, the following comments are proffered. (1) It has been argued that by ignoring analysis of structural agential dimension vis-à-vis democratic transitions, a shadow is cast on the *core* of the subject matter. It is akin to parachuting into an unknown territory without prior

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[715] As for Hume's law, realism confronts it on *terra firma*. In any process of philosophical reconstruction, four stages can be identified.[715] They are: (1) identification of the problem (2) indication of the sources of the problem (3) condemnation of the problem matrix, and (4) enunciation of favourable actions that can redress the problem. The caveat is that any heedless removal of the initial problem or extermination of its source may probably lead to greater misery; hence the need to exercise caution.

reconnaissance activities. To follow likewise in the subject matter may lead to speculative characterizations, which are, as already attested, oft distant from practical social context. Metaphorically, structure and agency are the innards of societal health/disease. Ignoring the visceral entities in any societal prognostication may generate a weak explanative.[716] (2) It has been demonstrated that a model of social morphostasis/morphogenesis can ill-afford slighting the categories of structure, culture and agency, their autonomous powers, and their variegated configurations and subsequent permutations and combinations. These features are indispensable in a deeper understanding of democratic transitions, as powers, properties, tendencies act transfactually. They are neither favourable nor unfavourable *per se*, though the results at the level of events might be characterized as such. There is a complex array of such circuits and it is an onerous task to precisely pinpoint which mechanism has produced a certain action. (3) The research has informed that some non-realist models have been unable to extricate themselves from the empiricist mode. Consequently, an understanding beyond the observables and the connected sweeping generalizations has broadly remained inconceivable. (4) Realism, it has been elucidated, promotes a scientific account rooted in underlying processes. The search is for mechanism-based explanations rather than 'constant conjunctions'. This automatically opens a vast canvas to portray social processes, including democratic transitions. Furthermore, the temptable assumption that crisis-situations, such as upheavals, overthrow of authoritarian regimes, etc. necessarily

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[716] This does not bind conducting democratic studies *solely* on structure and agency. Studies with pluralist hue, as also other strains, are surely welcome. What is stressed here is that *stag* insights

introduce and afford greater possibilities for change is resisted here, as change can also occur in long 'silent' periods without manifest social tremors. It has been argued that change is both continuous and discontinuous and a single theory of change and/or democratic transition is questionable. (5) That agents have untrammelled play of their activities is mythopoeic. They are constrained by past activities, cannot commence activities *ab initio*, but have to work on the received social structures. They have no other option. However neither does this limit human intentionality, though constrained, nor does it render them passive objects for it is through their action that whatever change occurs, will occur. This inevitably pronounces the existence of past feeding into the present, and present, which would feed into the future and so on. Realism thus encourages appreciating longer temporal spans, wherein, structural, cultural and agential sequences can be out of synchrony. This instantaneously injects the significance of emergentism, contingency and conditioning in the open realm of society.

11.4 What the research has shown in the case of Japan's transition

The research has shown

1.   The inadequacies of democratic models, such as modernization approach (Lipset), transitions approach (Rustow), historical-structural approach (Moore Jr.), as well as explanations, such as civic culture (Putnam), or paths to democracy (Stepan), in their applicability to Japan's transition. This then kindled the need for a better explanative

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should not be ignored.

which would probe into more enduring objects than some indices or mere events.

2. That the self same structure, in broad terms, can support both a democratic or authoritarian regime. This holds true for all democratic societies. Nowhere does the cut off date of transition show a drastic departure from previous structural powers and properties. Japan was a full fledged military power up to middle of 1945, when it lost the Second War. However, it soon embarked upon a democratic path after the 1945 period. The clues to the *how* of democratic transitions therefore lie not only in the 'present tense' events, but in the past too in conjunction with interplay of structure and agency.

3. The significance of necessary and internal relations, and, contingent relations and external relations in democratic transitions. Correlatively, the significance of structural/cultural configurations has also been underlined. Accordingly, in Japan's case, the structural configuration during the Tokugawa period was shown to conform to *necessary compatibilities*. Likewise, the cultural configuration during the Tokugawa period was also shown to conform to *necessary compatibilities*. These configurations generated a particular set of social properties.

4. A much longer chronological span is useful in the explanatory exercise. In Japan's case, the chronological span commenced from the Tokugawa period. It was shown that the societal powers, properties

of this period played a role in the nature of transition. Thus, the research gravitated away from 'indexicalism', i.e. only the present exists towards considering a longer time span.

5. That by analytically rupturing society into culture, structure and agency, and their emergent powers, better purchase is afforded in explaining democratic transitions.

6. That democratic transition has more do to with the underlying interaction between structure and agency, rather than imbibing democratic, liberal values or norms at time t_1. In the immediate aftermath of the Second War defeat, the Japanese, although acquainted with some liberal tenets, had not imbibed them; this was reflected in the conservative social/family structure, deference to age, non-equality amongst sections of populace, vertical structuring of society, etc.

7. The disproportionate role in strategizing towards transitions between Corporate Agents and Primary Agents. In Japan's case, the decision to transit to democracy was taken by the influential samurais rather than the common populace. That the structural configuration enabled this decision is also an important factor.

8. The relevance of the *first order relations* (bargaining power), *second order relations* (negotiating power), and *third order relations* (reproductive versus transformative power). Their status was shown

in the three *Pulses* and the manner in which they impinged upon the unfolding of history.

9.   The relative influence of structure and/or culture on each other and what this portends for transitions. On a related note, the constellation of conjunction/disjuncture between structural and cultural morphogenesis was also assessed. In Japan's case, the status position of structural and cultural configurations was reassessed in *Pulse III* and their implications for democratic transition were also discussed.

10.   The role of underlying mechanisms, such as memory & identity, boundary setting, role playing & retro democracy, and competitive conflict, in conjunction with interplay of structure and agency in explaining Japan's transition.

11.   The stratification of social structuring in Japan in domains of the *real* (such as, structuring of structures, past structural, cultural conditioning, various combinations and permutations of structure and culture in Japan), the *actual* (such as, the turn of events, Taisho democracy, rise of Japanese militarism, and US Occupation), and the *empirical* (such as, various reforms introduced in Japan during the Occupation) brought forth the richness of society and their relevance in Japan's transition.

12.   In sum, the research moved from the first order explanation, such as events, ostensive activities, particular persons, events, and socio-economic indices to the next order, such as underlying structures,

their powers and properties and how they impinge upon democratic transitions.

11.4 Theoretical implications of the research

The theoretical implications of the research are presented *infra*.

The research has proposed that in theoretical formulation, unobservables should also be emphasized though without denigrating the observables. The focus is on underlying mechanisms underpinning societal actions, events, etc. Societal continuities/change cannot be explicated by recourse to the observables. By focussing on society as a totality, objects such as social space, hierarchical units, gender bias, etc. can be understood. In its entirety, it is like a 'superorganism'[717] in more than a metaphorical sense for components, generically, swim and sink together, as one component can rarely 'advance' unless other societal parts or segments also advance. Stated differently, no component is absolutely autonomous or in isolation from others. Example: the widespread economic, social, cultural, technological, metamorphosis in India set in motion since 1990s. Previously, most of these domains were static, but given favourable environmental conditions, equally matched by intrinsic fecund conditions for change and spurred by the agential decisions, the country is taking leaps in many directions. Bangladesh and Pakistan stand in stark contrast to India's development, even though they were part of India prior to 1947. This underscores the significance of *stag* relationship in any social transformation as it unfolds in real time.

The research prevents any attempt at oversimplifying the complex interactions betwixt social mechanisms. The following implications merit a special mention.

Firstly, the research has shifted concentration to an ensemble comprising structures, relations, powers, properties and mechanisms to explicate democratic transitions. There is thus a qualified displacement of objects in 'splendid isolation' to connections amongst them. By according preeminence to relational properties, there is a shift from reductionism[718] to emergentism. By the same token, the research has attempted to shift to a scientific interpretation of democratic revolutions, as distinct from scientism.[719] The research therefore disregards the empiricist view that the objects of enquiry are completely closed and described.[720] It resists treating them as unstructured for they are neither empirically given nor determinate/undifferentiated. It is therefore apt to know what kinds of things societies/people are prior to considering whether they can be studied scientifically. In this pursuit, the research stresses the role of underlying mechanisms in democratic transitions and discountenances regularities in phenomenon or predictions about reality. *Secondly*, the exposition of a differentiated temporal dimension, as also a stratified human agency has distilled differential rates of change and unfolding of democratic process. *Thirdly*, the stratification of social reality itself into the domains of empirical, actual, and real

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[717] No reification is alluded to here.

[718] 'Reductionism' has a pejorative hue attached to it in contemporary times. However, this research distances itself from this fad, as presumptive evaluation about reductionism is mischaracterized. The issue varies from context to context, and if reductionism can explicate any stratum of social reality in a convincing manner, it should be given full marks for that.

[719] Refer § 1.3 and § 1.6, chapter 1 of this thesis.

[720] Refer footnotes 130, 131, chapter 1 of this thesis.

or 'deep' has enlarged and enriched the ontological field of the subject matter. *Fourthly*, by explicitly arguing that structures and generative mechanisms are generally out of phase with the events, the research contravenes those findings which are in interface with the happenings only.[721] This *pari passu* rejects the vain search for regularities in evidencing democratization. Antithetically, an actualist description of democratic transitions faces an 'impossible dilemma'[722] when it is confronted with a matrix devoid of regularities or where conjunctions do not obtain. This confounds its task of pronouncing generalizations which, for empiricist philosophy, are rooted in regularities. The case for mechanism-based explications, as distinct from correlations, is thus strengthened in *a fortiori* manner. The research has also provided what can be called T^3, wherein $T^3 =$ transcendental refutation (t_a), transcendental analysis (t_b), and transcendental demonstration (t_c).[723] By t_a the research has shown how some non-realist accounts of democracy are inconsistent with science; by t_b it has shown that the pre-requisite conditions of science cannot be sustained by these accounts; and, finally, by t_c it has shown what conditions enable such accounts to flourish. *Finally*, the research has aimed to enhance the credibility of the relational-pattern-based approach. This is sketched below, wherein, the letter A stands for the relational modelling articulated in chapter 5 and B_n (1,2,3...n), its consequences; the icon ' ' stands for 'leads to'. By B_n, it was illustrated how the relational pattern impinges upon all societal networks, institutions, etc. so much so that institutional system (B_1), constitution (B_2), or party system (B_3) etc. will be, in

[721] Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 9.
[722] Cf. Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 10.

some degree, a reflection of the same. This is unmistakable in both intra-society and inter-societal comparisons.[724] It would be an incommensurable, nay, unattainable situation if, say, Rwanda has institutional functioning identical to America but daily social practices antipathetic to it. It can safely be inferred that there is a reciprocal relationship between institutions and practices.

Situation I	*Situation II*	*Situation III*
A ⬜ B	A ⬜ B_1, B_2, B_3	A ⬜ B_1, B_2, B_3
If B is true, A is credible	If B_1, B_2, B_3 are similar, A is substantially more credible	If B_1, B_2, B_3 are different, A is much more credible

11.5 Practical implications of the research

Besides theoretical implications, the research also has practical implications. Steering away from sheer consequential effects, it contributes towards understanding what could possibly invigorate strategic mobilization strategies towards democratization.

The practical implications can be broadly categorized as having implications in (α) democratic countries, and (β) non-democratic countries. Policy makers and the populace in (α) would need to cognize that effects of democracy cannot be collapsed with its causes. Democrats in the mould of carpetbaggers, as in Afghanistan, Iraq or Haiti have failed to demonstrate democracy's *designing*. How democracy emerged in democratic countries, this research has attempted to show, is not necessarily translucently evident to the

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[723] For a detailed articulation of the terms see Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 120.
[724] See Stinchcombe (1968) *op. cit.*, p. 20, wherein he discusses such a mode of presentation for stronger theories. However the research disagrees with him on the issue of finding more and more empirical matches for the theory, as the *sole* criteria for its validity.

contemporaneous or the consequent actors; the causes might well be opaque to them. This is perceptible in many failed democracy-designing experiments by no less than democrats who enter non-democratic countries and employ those same modes which they believe led to democracy in their country. This authenticates ontological depth of social reality, its independent existence from human knowledge, but is no impediment to devising strategies, irrespective of their results. Hence, an involved range of strategies could serve as a set of complementary efforts to the more prosaic efforts of holding elections, contriving democratic constitutions, and so on. Pinpointed expounding of such strategies is beyond the research's scope, but can be a site for further research. As for (β), both policy-makers and the populace in non-democratic countries, who aspire for democratic transition, a full understanding of 'how democratic transitions occur' (or X) is not a necessary condition. This is because X constitutes an intransitive dimension of which there could be transitive interpretations, as well as approaches to comprehend the same. Stated thus, pedagogic lessons about democratization are not mandatory. Agential activities occur in real time whose consequences—both intended and unintended—agents are unable to fully foresee in the open realm that society is. This however is no deterrent to both democratic literature and practice to innovate on the lines of structural agential interaction. An understanding of the least and the most resistant areas to democratization in a society could be more illumining in devising strategies. It is in the area of least resistance that novel changes can be introduced. As they gather momentum, a case can be built for reforms in other realms too.

Secondly, the research should go some way in informing the civil society actors that their attempts at overthrowing the state are rather misconstrued, and perhaps mistaken, too, at least in that construal where state is demonized and mischaracterized solely on account of its accomplishments or, more precisely, non-accomplishments. This is another typical case of co-mingling causes and effects. The causality would barely alter by change of actors, i.e. *if* the civil society actors gain ascendance. This has been proven in many Indian provinces where groups/leaders from 'below' waged struggles, acquired power too through democratic elections and reached 'up', but failed to deliver, *inter alia*, because they themselves confronted the self-same constraints. Stated differently, such contemplations of mere change of actors delivering results suffer from 'voluntarist' accounts, as if 'musical chairs' amongst actors can resolve penetrating problems. Without in any way denigrating the activities of civil society actors, the research bodes more practicable approaches. Of course, this comment does not deter agitation or protest against governmental inefficacy; what it does contend is the discernment rooted in presumptuous inefficacy of governmental actors and efficacy of civil society actors, especially, as both are conditioned by the same societal influences. As such, the focus needs to be enlarged to reckon with the positions too and their concomitant powers/properties.

Thirdly, the research advocates a view for democratic transitions that can be stated thus: activating new mechanisms and/or deactivating some previous mechanisms without falling into the voluntarist trap. This is unpacked as follows.

Agential activities in play with past conditionings tap into underlying mechanisms, though without necessarily being fully aware of the same, which generate a new set of norms and practices. Concomitantly, these processes deactivate some past practices, which give a further fillip to the already activated mechanisms. To understand this strategy, a handy example is capitalism.[725] The subtle role of capitalism in subduing certain problems[726] associated with passion, honour, revenge killings, duelling, idling away time, etc. needs reiteration and broader recognition.[727] A workable description of change is that capitalism deactivated old mechanisms appertaining to the heretofore mentioned facets of life and, activated another set of mechanisms, such as greed, consumption, accumulation, display of wealth, and the like.[728] None of this has happened by way of designing, but more so by unleashing some activities, in a particular social context which, then, gathered their own momentum contributing to not only intentional, but also unintentional consequences. To usher in democratic transitions, similar strategic moves—of activating and deactivating mechanisms—could be useful.

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[725] The research is not concerned here with taking issue whether capitalism *per se* is desirable or undesirable; it has a limited aim of showing how it has activated, deactivated certain mechanisms and how they have impinged upon social change. For an absorbing account on the subject, see Wood, Ellen (1995) *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[726] Doubtless, it has generated some problems too.

[727] *Cf.* Mueller, John (1989) *Retreat From Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War*, New York: Basic Books, p. 11. Mueller cites various examples, in addition to the aforementioned ones, such as slavery, burning of heretics, infanticide, laughing at the insane, or flogging which also are now in disuse. This is so because at some stage in history such practices were perceived to be uncivilized and repugnant. Societies then avoid such issues not because they 'become rationally unthinkable. Rather, the option never percolates into their consciousness as something that is available-that is, it has become *subrationally unthinkable*'. This research adds that activation of some mechanisms and deactivation of others is closely related to this process.

[728] Capitalism's merits or demerits are beyond this research's scope.

The research suggests practical and viable ways of attempting change in contrast to the 'vulgar' utopian schemes.[729] It is convenient to launch onslaughts on a given 'undesirable' reality by articulating and setting up an idealized model. Yet, such schemes can contribute only to 'temporary reprieve' for if they are not to be dismissed as wholly utopian, they should be historically possible.[730] Employing pure logic especially in *a priori* fashion is 'absolutist' if it does not take account of historical practice. This implies that analysis should be epistemically relativist in which both premises and conclusions remain contingent facts. This is not to efface all *a priori* reasoning, but to state that they cannot 'legislate in advance'. Were this to be the case, then science would simply be the realization of philosophy than an enterprise by itself!

11.6 Limitations

In attempting to keep the research compact, a detailed and comprehensive historical narrative has not been offered, as detailed historical accounts abound. A shift in favour of structure and agency has facilitated enquiry into otherwise disregarded themes. Despite the miniaturization of historical accounts, nowhere in the foregoing have they been denigrated. It has been parsimoniously striven for integrating historical happenings with deeper processes. This is to say modelling has been practical than purely abstruse, i.e. over and above what it seeks to explain.

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[729] Not all utopian schemes can be categorized as vulgar, as some may be viable.
[730] Cf. Bhaskar (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 121.

By deliberately choosing an unconventional case, that is Japan, rather than the popular ones, new insights have been brought to the fore. Although a single case study was undertaken, its results are broadly applicable to other cases too. None of the limitations invalidate the findings of the research.

11.7 Avenues for further research

The research has desisted from advancing any claim that its findings are synonymous with social reality. This is in tandem with epistemological relativism and ontological reality. Concordantly, the possibility of improving upon the findings remains. **Further** research can be undertaken in four domains. (1) Development and application of methodology. (2) Development and modelling of democratic transitions on such lines.

Thomas Kuhn had tellingly remarked that an old, grizzled paradigm riddled with holes and fallacies would continue to predominate, despite its intrinsic flaws, until a new paradigm was introduced. The latter could then possibly replace the former.[731] Insofar as the democratic discourse is concerned, certainly not everything is grizzled or full of holes, as notable attempts abound, but where repair is required, it is hoped that this research would constitute at least an initiatory step in a direction towards different perspectivist explication and modelling of democratic transitions.

In sum, the research opens up a less over-ambitious, but more realistic-cum-scientific approach to democratic transitions. It has not promised more than

it can deliver. Summatively, the research exercise is now diagrammatically outlined via the 'thinkertoy' of SCAMPER.[732] The latterly diagram should explain this better than essaying verbosity.

The thought-inducing question	Its tackling by research project
Substitute? (this is to say – what has the research substituted and likewise below)	The research substitutes the belief that democratic transitions, as phenomena, are *sui generis*[733] in the sense that irrespective of space and time, they unravel in identical fashion in all countries by the notion that democratic transitions, in the ultimate analysis, are a sub-set of social transformation.
Combine?	The research combines the concept of *habitus* in a distinctive fashion to the M/M approach to provide an added punch to realist modelling of democratic transitions.
Adapt?	The research adapts the M/M approach by adding further insights and then applies it to Japan's transitions.
Modify/magnify?	The research modifies the conceptualization of scientific approach to democratic transitions *a la* realism, by redefining 'scientific' pursuits. It magnifies the causal-cum-mechanism based approach to democratic transitions. It also magnifies commonality between democracy-promoting and democracy-consolidating factors than driving a wedge between them.[734]
Put to other uses?	The research puts to other use the M/M model to a distinctive use for democratic transitions. The realist modelling situates democratic transitions in a distinct perspective.
Eliminate/minify?	The research eliminates the probe for regularities, invariant patterns and grand generalizations vis-à-vis democratic transitions. It also eliminates the viewpoints of explicating democratic transitions via micro-reductionary approaches or macro-scale approaches. It minifies the view that origins of democratic transitions can be known from their effects. It minifies the primacy questions of – elites vs. masses, structure vs. agency, external vs. internal factors, national vs. international causes, peaceful vs. violent means, long-term vs. short-term results, presidential vs. parliamentary system *et al.* The locus remains how these factors incorporate and congeal into the structural agential matrix. What betides would be a matter of emergentism, contingency and the ensuing activity than some pre-ordained factor.
Reverse/rearrange?	The research reverses the results of some non-realist approaches which conjoin causes and effects of democratic transitions. It further

[731] See Kuhn, Thomas on paradigms at http://archives.econ.utah.edu/archives/bhaskar/2003m09/msg00008.htm, retrieved on 7 December, 2004.

[732] 'Thinkertoys' is an appellative for devising creative techniques in various walks of life. The acronym SCAMPER evokes questions for a research problem through the following thought-inducing question-words: **S**ubstitute? **C**ombine? **A**dapt? **M**odify or magnify? **P**ut to other use? **E**liminate or minify? **R**everse or Rearrange? See Michalko, Michael (1991) *Thinkertoys: A Handbook of Business Creativity*, Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press, chapter 9.

[733] Cf. Tilly, Charles (2000) *op. cit.* According to Tilly, mechanism-based analysts disregard democracy as having a 'coherent internal logic'.

[734] For a different outlook, see Linz and Stepan (1996) *op. cit.*

rearranges the format for structural agential enquiry by examining the *interplay* of structure and agency and their significance in democratic transitions.

Table 2 What the research has performed

The research has therefore filled a research gap in the literature on democratic transitions, which can be synopsized like this (a) it has brought centre-stage a more systematic, scientific, non-anthropocentric approach to studying democratic transitions by employing non-event ontology; (b) it has accentuated a shift from atomistic events to understanding interplay of structure and agency for democratic transitions; (c) it has made a distinctive study of Margaret Archer's morphogenetic model vis-à-vis democratic transitions; (d) it has supplemented this model with mechanisms to develop it further as a realist modelling of democratic transitions; and (e) it has applied this to Japan's transition and shown some distinctive results. All in all, it has proposed a critical realist approach, in general, to the understanding of issues such as democratic transitions.

Appendix
A brief history of modern Japan[735]

Japan or *Nippon* or *Nihon* is a set of archipelago lying in the North Western

Pacific Ocean. It is situated between latitudes 31 to 45 degrees North. As the

geographical area is not compact, four main islands can be identified: starting

from north to south, traversing diagonally, they are—Hokkaido, Honshu,

Shikoku and Kyushu. The present capital, Tokyo, lies in Honshu, which is the

largest of all the islands. Japan with an area of 377,801 km^2 occupies 0.3% of

world geographical area. Comparatively speaking, Japan is smaller than France

in size, and larger than Portugal.

Surrounded by sea, there are no landlocked neighbours of Japan. The

nearest neighbours off the sea are Korea and China; the former lies 100 miles

away while the latter lies 500 miles away. The relative geographical isolation has

played a role in imbuing Japan with a distinct national identity. It is one of the

few countries with a homogeneous population: a single Mongoloid race (except

for a miniscule population of Ainu in the northern region), a common language,

viz. Japanese or *Nihongo*, and a relatively small geographical size, all of which

contribute to a sense of unity. As for natural resources, nature has not been

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[735] This is too involved a topic to be dealt with briefly. Yet the exercise has been undertaken to trace the main signposts in Japanese history. The objective is to provide a snapshot to the unacquainted. However, the narrative does not provide a step-by-step development of Japan's democratization. This has been dealt with at some length in the main text. Moreover, the political developments in the post-1945 period have not been detailed, as they were not deemed necessary. A detailed presentation of Japanese history is also not deemed necessary as the study has already made a case for an ontological distinction between events, and, structures and mechanisms.

munificent; Japan is dependent on other countries for energy resources, some minerals etc.

The Japanese emperor symbolizes and also personifies unity of the nation. According to mythology, the Japanese imperial family or emperorship descended from the Sun-goddess in 600 BC. This was propagated via oral tradition and was recorded at the earliest in about eighth century AD in the Japanese texts of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. The emperor's position was sacrosanct. Consequently, in the midst of civil strife and frequent change in military rulers, the emperorship continued unblemished. The significance of the emperor is reflected in the manner almanacs are prepared in Japan: each new emperor commences a new (historical) era and his life years are counted as calendar years.

Due to its geographical location, the main contact of Japan was with Korea and China in the ancient times. The Japanese script is heavily indebted to Chinese pictographic script—*Kanji*, though the spoken language has evolved differently. It was around the fifth century AD that *Kanji* was officially adopted. A set of phonetic script is also employed, viz. *hiragana* and *kata kana* (the latter for foreign words).

The influence of Japan's nearest neighbours, viz. China and Korea is manifest in the religious ethos especially Confucianism, Shintoism and Buddhism. Unlike other ancient civilizations, such as Chinese, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, or Indian, Japan does not have an elaborate religious or

philosophical framework. Even in the contemporary period, religion does not occupy a major place either in the public or private sphere.

As for governance in the ancient times, the political affairs were initially commanded by the imperial family. Twelfth century onwards, the military rulers were visibly in command of regions by virtue of physical, numerical strength. Nevertheless, the position of the emperor was beyond question, as he occupied a divine place in the Japanese annals of history. All the same, the powers for day-to-day governance gradually passed into the hands of the military rulers. As a consequence, a dual system was in vogue for many centuries: the emperor was based at Kyoto, the imperial capital, and the military government, generally away from Kyoto. The emperor often granted the military rulers the title of *shogun*—an abbreviated form of *Sei-i-tai-shogun*, i.e. a 'great general who subdues barbarians'. These titles frequently passed down the lineage and became dynastic in nature. The military administration for the *shogun* was designated *Bakufu*.

Up to the sixteenth century, there was no unified rule in Japan. Regional rivalries were rife. The rulers of a region often bestowed local chieftains or warlords with local authority, as long as they paid obeisance to them at regular intervals. Around this period, emerged two leaders, viz. Oda Nobunaga[736] and Toyotomi Hideyoshi who unified the country under a single command.

Of the many conflagrations in medieval Japanese history, a significant landmark is the battle of Sekigahara (1600). Amongst rival contenders for power, Tokugawa Ieyasu emerged victorious and received the title of *shogun* in 1603.

Thenceforward, the dynastic rule continued uninterrupted unto the mid-nineteenth century when the next significant landmark, viz. the Meiji Revolution occurred. During this two and a half centuries' rule, the capital of military rule remained at Edo (subsequently Tokyo).[737] The territorial governance can be stated thus: the Tokugawa family through its bureaucracy directly ruled about a fourth of the entire territory; the remaining territory was divided into about two hundred and fifty units which were ruled by *daimyos* or feudal lords. These were further categorized as 'hereditary nobles' or *fudai* and the 'outside nobles' or *tozama*. The former had allied with the Tokugawa family in its rise to power while the latter had opposed it; consequently, the latter were not fully trusted and not bestowed with posts in the Tokugawa administration. Though the *daimyos* remained more or less autonomous in their functioning, a system of regulation and control, nevertheless, remained in function over the *daimyos*. A unique system of control was the 'alternate attendance' or *sankin-kotai* system, whereby the more powerful nobles had to remain in court attendance at Edo for a part of the year; subsequently, when they returned to their domains, they left behind their families at Edo during that absence, as 'hostages'.

The Tokugawa policy of *sakoku* or seclusion, beginning early seventeenth century, was enforced systematically. This 'closed country' policy aimed for

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[736] The Japanese names are stated in the traditional Japanese manner—family name first, followed by the given name.

[737] Tokugawa Ieyasu presuming his progeny to be mediocrities set about instituting a self-preserving framework which would absorb their idiosyncrasies. It remained in good stead for about two centuries. See Beasley (1969) *op. cit.*, p. 19.

political stability and stymied all subversive elements. Thus Japanese were barred from foreign voyages and foreigners were debarred from alighting in Japan.[738] Consequently, while Japan remained in relative 'splendid isolation', the West made rapid strides in scientific and technological development of which, Japan remained largely unaware. This is in sharp contrast to the period prior to seventeenth century when limited contact with the West had acquainted Japan with some of the technological advances, such as the clock, and, scientific developments, such as the heliocentric theory.

Japan was still a feudal country in many respects in 1800.[739] Thenceforth, ruptures began to appear. Money economy led to debilitation of feudalism which was further aggravated by financial chaos in the establishment. Irrespective of these problems, a distinct social fabric woven by the Tokugawa regime, both intentionally and unintentionally, was manifest: fixed stratification of society – samurais, farmers, artisans and merchants, in that pecking order. A meticulous code was in operation covering norms of dress, behaviour, food, etc. It was a society where 'every man knew his place'.[740] Interspersed with Confucian ethics, the prime virtues were loyalty and filial piety. In the family/social structure, the wife was subordinate to the husband, the son to the father, and the subject to the ruler. Death while performing duty for the overlord was the apex of the pyramid of unflinching loyalty. In this framework, the *bushido* or the code of conduct for

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[738] The only exceptions were Chinese and Dutch merchants who could visit Nagasaki.
[739] It is a moot point whether Japan was truly feudal; Beasley ascribes to the view that it was. See Beasley (1969) *op. cit.*, p. 3.
[740] Beasley (1969) *op. cit.*, p. 11.

the samurai or warrior-class formed the bulwark, which was gradually adopted by other sections.

The time to draw the 'curtain' of seclusion came around the mid-nineteenth century which was not entirely of Japan's own volition. Prior to this period, some sections of Japanese were aware of British exploits in China and were apprehensive of their own somewhat precarious situation. The hitherto efforts of the Western powers, such as Britain, France, as also Russia and America to get foothold in Japan and thus augment their trading capabilities had remained unsuccessful. Yet their economic interests compelled them to force open trade facilities with Japan. At that time, anchoring at more ports was useful for refuge, replenishment of water supplies, and getting coal facilities at the local coal stations to rev up the then steamships.

The turning point came in 1853 when America was keen to force the matter. Accordingly, Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived in July 1853 at Edo and delivered a letter from the American President demanding opening up of trading relations. After delivery of the letter, however, Perry withdrew to the southern tip of Japanese archipelago, i.e. at Okinawa stating that he would return after winter. The incident was enough to shake the nation out of its slumber. Though Perry withdrew for a while, the sheer awe that the size of his ships and guns struck among the Japanese at the port, continued to haunt their decision whether to open the ports or not. The Tokugawa officials were aware that their antiquated guns were no match for American weaponry.

In this background, the ruling clique was divided into groups: one group was for opening up trade relations given the asymmetrical relations between America and Japan, while the other group was against any contact with the foreigners. The latter was also the counsel of the imperial family and (most) daimyos. This was in part due to their being placed far from the place of action, i.e. Edo where the 'black ships', as they were called by the Japanese, had arrived. Notwithstanding the popular opinion against the foreigners, the Tokugawa *Shogunate* was not in a commanding position to uphold the popular view by challenging the Americans. Hence, when Perry returned to Edo in February 1854, a treaty was immediately signed with America, thereby, opening up trade and ports. Britain, Russia and Holland followed suit. Often the treaties retained a clause on 'extraterritoriality', i.e. foreign nationals could not be tried in Japan; they could be tried in *their* consular courts, as per their laws. This clause existed in the 'unequal treaty' system too which the West had imposed on China. Another humiliating facet of the 'unequal treaty' system was that the host country (in this case, Japan), too, could impose a tariff, at most of 5% on foreign imports. The net result of these developments was the erosion of credibility of the Tokugawa *Shogunate* which was perceived as incapable of standing up to foreign pressure.

During the national turmoil, or more precisely of national humiliation, anger was vented against Westerns, as also incompetent local rulers by attacking or killing them. In the midst of eroding central power, a further blow came with the abandonment of the 'double attendance' at Edo. Congregations at Kyoto, the

imperial base, increased to repose faith in the emperor as the symbol of resistance against the foreigners, as also against the Tokugawa policies. The catchphrase of the times was—*sonno*, i.e. 'honour the emperor', and, *joi*, i.e. expel the barbarians or the foreigners. In the meanwhile, Tokugawa *Shogunate* attempted to rehabilitate itself by refurbishing administration, by sending embassies or foreign missions, and also ushering in some technological advancement. Howbeit, all these endeavours seemed too little and too late.

In the emerging cracks in the power structure, some regional samurais began to assert themselves. Collaterally, the powerful factions, such as the Choshu, Satsuma and Tosa, mainly from Western Japan collaborated and seized control of Imperial Court in January 1868. By proclaiming themselves as rulers under the shadow of the emperor, they sought to elevate their status, actions and objectives over those of the shogun. Tokugawa *Shogunate* collapsed swiftly and, the power vacuum at Edo was filled immediately by the new clique who comprised young samurai mainly from Western Japan and influential court nobles. Edo was retained as the capital and renamed as Tokyo, or 'eastern capital'. The reason for samurais being at the forefront can be stated like this. The *daimyos*, in point of fact, rarely ruled actually; perforce, they had to stay at Edo for a considerable period. Additionally, much time was spent in moving in and out of Edo. As such, feudal retainers or samurais often governed the fiefs. It was this group of able samurais who played a distinctive role in the Meiji Restoration.[741] Another point may be clarified here.

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[741] Fitzgerald (1974) *ibid.*, p. 210.

The twin slogans of *sonno* and *joi* of course weighed upon the elite. As for the latter, the elites were prudent enough to realize that time then was not ripe for expelling the foreigners—given the lack of socio-economic, technological development, so there was no escaping them; the former, of course remained the touchstone of governance and all reforms were carried out in the name of the emperor. The period, beginning 1868, was designated Meiji, i.e. 'Enlightened Rule', and continued till the demise of the then emperor in 1912. Meiji Restoration is the rubric for the entire period—1868 to 1912, as also the gamut of socio-economic, political reforms. Literally, Restoration stood for restoring the pristine glory of the imperial rule of antiquity. Yet the changes that were unleashed were forward-looking and not backward-looking. There is no gainsaying that the West served as the role model for much of transformation.

The overarching motto of the reform movement was *fukoku kyohei*, i.e. 'a rich country and strong military'. This was symbolized in the Charter Oath or the Five Articles of Oath which the emperor issued in April 1868: (i) deliberative assemblies shall be widely convoked and all matters decided by public discussion; (ii) unity of mind between the government and the governed, and, augmentation of the economy; (iii) both officials and the common people shall achieve their aims; (iv) absurd customs of yore shall be abandoned; (v) knowledge shall be sought throughout the world.

In creating and filling new posts, Japanese tradition was not lost sight of. The top posts were given to court nobles and daimyos who had cooperated with the ruling elites in the Restoration. All the same, their powers were essentially

ceremonial. The real powers to design policies rested with the samurais and lower court nobles. The eldest person in this real working group was Iwakura Tomomi, at forty-three years. The Japanese tradition was again evident in the manner of arriving at decisions: collective and not individual; collaborative and not competitive. Thus the energy of the leaders was harnessed towards building the nation, as distinct from mustering support for any one particular leader.

The geographical area was divided into prefectures for governance. By 1871, the local heads as also their domains were abolished and, centrally appointed governors were deployed to rule them. The daimyos showed no resistance and obeyed obsequiously. None the less, they were paid generously with government bonds. The upshot of centrally appointed governors was the forging of a further link between the central and local government. In this changing scenario, a matter for consternation was the possibility of samurais venting their anger who for centuries had subsisted on feudal privileges along with the daimyos. To counter such a possibility, they were paid hereditary stipends for a while, which too were finally terminated by paying off the remaining amounts in lump-sum payment. As it turned out, this deprivation of privileges too did not perpetuate any major crisis.

To augur equality in a hitherto class-divided society, all class restrictions were legally abrogated rendering legal equality a reality in 1871. In 1873, universal conscription was ordered, thereby revoking the synonymity of militarism with any privileged class. The army regimentation was modelled first

like the French and then the Prussians. The navy was modelled like the British. To maintain civil order domestically, a police force was also created.

The Western world presented a canvass with varied hues, from which the Japanese leaders picked and chose what they found best in a particular country; they replicated the same, and probably better so than the host country. Thus it was not a case of wholly replicating all the traits of any one particular country.

Finance Ministry was created which formed the fulcrum of administration. Experiments were conducted in banking too. Initially the decentralized American banking was tried which was subsequently given up for a more centralized banking on the Belgian model. *Yen* was adopted as the monetary currency in 1871. These developments affected the social structure of society. Though previously merchant class was frowned upon, such notions increasingly began to change.

The changes gradually elevated the prestige of the government both domestically and internationally. The reforms also became a tool of linking the country in a single thread. Thus with each reform, the central government also affirmed and asserted its authority.

A Department of Public Works was instituted in 1870 to enhance transmission and communication which was considered an important ingredient in achieving national objectives. To this end, telegraph lines were laid across the breadth of the country. Internationally too, in a short span of time, that is by 1871, Japan was linked by cable with Shanghai and Vladivostok. In the same year, a postal system too was created which was further expanded subsequently.

By the next year, a railway line was also in place, from Tokyo to Yokohama, traversing a distance of 19 miles. Plans were afoot for linking other cities similarly. Electric power was harnessed from the rivers and dispersed all over Japan. Developments were also unleashed for municipal water and gas system.

The cause of equality was furthered by Department of Education (*Monbusho*) which was created in 1871. It sought to expand education systematically. Consequently, both elementary and secondary, and, advanced educational institutions were set up. Tokyo University was set up in 1877 which even now remains the most prestigious of Japanese Universities. Although private and missionary educational institutions were also set up, the government-funded imperial universities were the loci of unfolding developments. Gradually, educational qualification became the yardstick for merit and prestige than wealth or descent. Education also became a handmaiden of government policies. Compulsory education was introduced. Capable students were handpicked and send abroad for studying Western ideas, institutions and technology.

Instruments were also set in motion to improvize ports, modernize munitions industry, develop mines and devise pilot plants in various industries. Some industries were in a nascent stage during the Tokugawa rule, such as shipbuilding and consumer industries. These efforts were further expanded during the Meiji rule. Mechanization of silk-reeling, as also industrialization of cotton spinning/weaving led the way.

Tokugawa *Shogunate* had sent a few embassies abroad, but they were meagre in their aims. Meiji Japan sent grand embassies whose principal aim was

revocation of the humiliating 'unequal treaty' system. Iwakura Mission (1871-1873) was one such embassy that, *inter alia*, went to USA, Britain and Prussia. Though the principal aim was not realized, the embassy members increasingly became aware of the hiatus between Japan and the West vis-à-vis the socio-economic and, especially technological developments. Spurred by what they saw, upon their return they furthered their efforts at transforming Japan into a modern country. With West perceived as a model for learning, the slogan in the 1870s and early 1880s was *bummei kaika*, i.e. 'civilization and enlightenment'.

The surge of the broad spectrum of activities required huge finances. As the pace of reforms was fairly quick, the financial situation was rendered precarious. Ingeniousness, through measures such as retrenchment, selling off non-strategic industries to the private sector *et al.* led to the improvement of the financial situation. The private industries too were beginning to make profits. Commencing with the fine performance of cotton spinning mills in the mid-1880s, an avalanche-like success occurred for many industries. Towards the end of the nineteenth century Japan had truly become an industrialized nation.

The opportunities for flourishing trade and commerce remained open. These opportunities were seized upon by many samurais, as also many newcomers to the realm of commerce. Increase in wealth led to inequalities too. The *zaibatsu*, i.e. the 'financial clique' comprising a core group of few businessmen came to possess immensely disproportionate wealth. *Zaibatsus* were conglomerates that spread their reach over a broad spectrum of industries. These included banking, foreign trade, manufacturing and shipping. Notwithstanding

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this diversity, at the top, ultimate control over all these was exercised by a select few commercially powerful families. Some of the prominent *zaibatsus* were Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo and Yasuda. The immense wealth at their disposal facilitated huge investment in projects that were not entirely risk-free. Government often took recourse to seeking such investments. This gradually opened a space for *zaibatsus* to influence national politics. This was buttressed by the fact that they were the chief means of financial support to political parties. So much so, it was held that one party (the Seiyukai) received Mitsui funding, while the other received Mitsubishi funding. The past social practices were reflected in the vocation system. A unique feature of the vocation system was life long membership and security of the employees. There was also a graded increase in salary upon longer tenures of service. Employee loyalties vis-à-vis firms and corporations were (and still are) very strong and led to personal bonds, at least initially. Japanese firms are oft-described as an extension of Japanese *ie* (household). The significance of these factors in promoting a specific work-culture cannot be downplayed, which played a pivotal role in Japanese development.

Foreign trading companies or *sogo sosha* were a unique institution. The Japanese trading companies through their extensive paraphernalia culled significant information for trade, its promotion etc. on a grand scale. Clearly, such a task would have been impossible for individual tradesmen.

In a scenario of wide-ranging changes, with the power-structure metamorphosing, disaffection in some sections of society was inevitable. The

hitherto privileged/vested interests, plus some sections of intelligentsia, bureaucracy, samurais, disaffected peasants, merchants, remnants of previous regime *et al.* were keen to have a role in the government, so as to have more profitable policies for themselves. The genesis of devising Western-type political institutions occurred in this social milieu. It was believed that these institutions would facilitate representation for all segments of society. There were sections of people who were genuinely interested in Western representative institutions, party politics, etc. Some men in the ruling clique too believed that representative assemblies and a Constitution would lend more credence to their programs and objectives. The ruling clique however was fractured about the structure and timing of the implementation of the Constitution. Eventually, this led to some leaders breaking away from the ruling clique. They played a key role in forming two parties: *Jiyuto* (Liberals) and *Kaishinto* (Progressives). The former drew its support mainly from the rural areas, while the latter from the urban areas, and the related sections thereof. On the other hand, the ruling clique proclaimed in the emperor's name that a new constitution would be adopted by 1890. With passage of time, more political parties came into existence. In 1900, *Seiyukai* was created, which remained a major political force for the next few decades; importantly, it remained pro-government.

By and by, the main leaders of the Meiji Restoration were phased out for various reasons and replaced by new ones. Ito Hirobumi was a key figure who took office at this time. He played a stellar role in the formation of the constitution. The constitutions of Britain, France, Germany, and Austria,

amongst others, were studied. It was concluded that the monarchical system with limited parliament as in Germany was more apt for Japan. Thereupon the approach remained highly meticulous: German scholars were regularly consulted for their opinion. The objective was twofold: internationally, to demonstrate to the Western world that a non-Western country too could devise a compact legal philosophical system; domestically, to further entrench and deepen the political reforms.

It was in February 1889 that the constitution was proclaimed as a gift from the emperor to the populace of Japan. The next year, i.e. 1990, it was adopted and the first Diet was elected. As with other developments, this too was the outcome of diligent homework in the preceding years. With assiduousness, experiments were conducted at lower levels to assess the viability of the possible constitutional system. Thus the initial site was the local level with nominal electorates and few powers. In 1879, the prefectural assemblies were experimented with; similarly, village, town, and city wards in 1880; and, the city assemblies followed suit in 1888. The experiments and the rich experience thereof, proved useful in the creation of the House of Representatives at the national level through the constitution. The electorate was limited (1.26% of the population), and typically comprising a miniscule proportion of adult males. The bicameral legislature comprised the House of Peers too. Together, the political system was called the Diet. Nonetheless, the elites retained the important executive powers for themselves at least initially. The trait of carrying out of systematic experiments prior to the adoption of the constitution at the national

level was reflected in other realms too while auguring new schemes. This trait has continued up to the contemporary period.

As it turned out in practice, the House of Representatives became more than a token contrivance. The elected members were not wholly obsequious to the elites. They debated issues and demanded a greater role for themselves. On this count, some sections of the elites contemplated abandoning the constitution *in toto*, but others including Ito who was its prime mover, were keen to make it function. It apparently was a symbol of 'civilized' Japan in the eyes of the West and its abolition would erase such an image. Thus aided by political manoeuvres the arrangement was continued. Citizens were also granted civil rights, as in the West. However, a proviso was inserted vis-à-vis enjoyment of civil rights, viz. that the same would be 'within the limits of the law' to ensure that the objectives of the elites were not lost sight of, as also that the political trajectory did not diverge from the main course.

In the run up to the constitution, in 1885, a cabinet system had already been adopted. It chief task was to run the central executive command. Ito became the first prime minister. The post of the prime minister remained with the elites for quite some time. A civil service framework was concomitantly put into place which was based on the German model. Over a period of time, a competitive examination was introduced for selecting brilliant students from Japanese universities, though initially the privilege rested with Tokyo University students only.

The process of implementation of a Westernized constitutional political system bore fruit soon, especially with respect to the unequal treaties. Britain finally acceded to the request of Japan for dispensing with the extraterritorial privileges for its subjects by 1899; remaining major powers followed suit. The other clause of the 'unequal treaty' system about tariffs was also dealt with: Japan was able to establish full control over tariffs by 1911. It was another step forward towards sharing an equal status with the Western powers.

Internally, to preclude squabbles between the core cabinet and the elected representatives, the new Prime Minister (Yamagata) at the turn of the century took a series of measures which strengthened the cabinet. Police laws were augmented to provide a better grip over political activities, especially insidious ones. To imbue military with autonomy, and, more precisely, to free it from political interference, it was pronounced that both army and naval ministers must be acting generals or admirals; accordingly, they were to be under direct military control. Similarly, to imbue autonomy to bureaucracy, it was pronounced that officials up to vice ministers could only be professional bureaucrats selected through the requisite civil service examination. Yamagata also contrived modification of the electoral law whose outcome was the preclusion of development of large parties. As a *quid pro quo* to the politicians, he agreed to increase the Diet seats, modify the law to increase the electorate, and adopt the secret ballot.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the old vanguard gave up the active day-to-day politics. In spite of this, they remained influential and continued to

play a role in core policies. They came to be called the *genro* or 'elder statesmen'. Domestically, Japan was making great strides in social, economic and political realms. At the international realm, Japan was flexing its muscles in the Eastern region.

Towards its north, Japan settled the issue of some contested islands with Russia: Japanese claims for Sakhalin were exchanged for Russian claims on Kurile Islands. Towards its west, lay Korea which had generally been accepted as a Chinese protectorate. A conflagration had already occurred between Japan and China over Korea in the mid-1890s. Japan with its recently modernized army routed the Chinese army. China was forced to sign a humiliating treaty, whereupon it paid a huge indemnity, ceded certain territories, and also recognized the independence of Korea. Japan also extracted some privileges for itself that had been extorted by Western powers. Despite this victory, some of the privileges were taken away from Japan by some Western powers—Russia, France, and Germany, especially with respect to the territories that China had ceded. Japan bided its time for revenge. In the meanwhile, it struck the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1892. It was prestigious for Japan, as for the first time an Asian country had signed an alliance with a Western power on equal footing. In addition, it ensured that if a conflict occurred between Japan and Russia, no Western power would intervene.

Such a war did break out between Japan and Russia in which Russia was decisively defeated. The conflict came to end with the signing of a treaty in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, USA, in 1905, whereby Japan extracted some

privileges. In 1910 it overran Korea; the annexation did not raise even a murmur from any great power. World War I provided Japan an opportunity to indulge in further aggrandizement. By declaring itself as the ally of Britain, it usurped German territories in the neighbouring region. It also extracted further economic concessions from China during the period. The conclusion of the World War saw Japan as a great power next to the Western powers and, the only Asian one.

The end of the First War witnessed the emergence of a second generation of Japanese after the Meiji Reforms had been set into motion fifty years ago. The advancements in medicine especially led to doubling of the population to 60 million during this period. In 1890, the percentage of population in the cities and towns was 10%. In a span of 30 years or so, it had galloped to 50%. Educated people working in urban areas symbolized the emerging white-collar worker. Due to rapid industrialization, sections of peasantry migrated to urban cities for jobs. None the less, the rural areas remained overcrowded. In the cities, the services improved substantially, such as transport, communication, electrification, and better education. Cheap manufactured goods flooded the market. Changes in almost all sectors of society were leading to a subtle shift in the traditional values and attitudes. There were phases of popularization of Western ideas and institutions. There were also endeavours to propagate, popularize and embrace Christianity though this activity was confined to nominal quarters. In any event, it was a reflection of pluralistic thinking. In the midst of these developments and rise of newfound interests, ultranational and ultraconservative views were also disseminated. Side by side, socialist ideas also

became popular in some quarters. This became more pronounced after the Russian Revolution. There was also a spurt of literary activity, as compared to the early Meiji period wherein the literary works were confined to mere translation of Western texts. The later writings reflected the 'dilemmatic' situation in which many Japanese found themselves: on one side, caught in the double bind of new attitudes, values, lifestyle, and, on the other side, with traditional and conservative views. In any case, even earlier attempts had been made to restrain changing values.

At the political level some significant developments had occurred prior to the First War. Whereas the period from 1900 to 1912 was marked by political stability, the post-1912 period turned out to be of political flux. Some political developments contributed to this scenario. The Meiji emperor passed away in 1912 and his successor—designated 'Taisho' emperor—was mentally incapable of performing his duties which caused apprehension especially in political circles. The *genro* were no longer actively participating in day to day affairs; they deliberated on larger issues, such as appointment of the prime minister. The scenario brought to full glare a major weakness of the 1889 constitution, 'the assumption that an alter ego would exercise the emperor's powers for him'.[742] The oligarchy or the Privy Council was expected to fill the place. This however did not occur, as per plans. There was mushrooming of pockets of semiautonomous administrative units in the Japanese governmental architecture: civil bureaucracy divided into quarrelling ministries; navy in traditional jealousy

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[742] Reischauer (1970) *op. cit.*, p. 140.

with military; the Diet with mutually contending parties; and, the *zaibatsu* aiding the parties and thereby controlling them.

The trend was to change in the second half of the 1880s. In 1990, the Imperial Rescript on Education was passed. It had less to do with education than to do with reinforcement of traditional Japanese and Confucian virtues.

Insofar as dissemination of news and information is concerned, the earliest Japanese newspapers can be traced to the concluding stages of the Tokugawa period. The journalistic standards were not very high, though some attempts were made to redress the same after the Meiji Restoration. A step forward was the insertion of editorial comments which were lacking previously. The tide of the writings was generally anti-government. To stem this tide, the Press Law was enacted in 1875. As a consequence, the owner, editor, and the printer had to register themselves; *nom de plumes* were prohibited and all comments required author's signature; additionally, in case of seditious writings, the responsibility lay squarely with the editor and penalties such as fines and imprisonment could be meted out for the same. These powers were used to counter and control anti-government propaganda.

Economy was the base of the rising Japanese pyramid of development. Instead of being at odds, there was a reciprocal relationship between the economy and the military campaigns. This was a relic or residual feature of Tokugawa times. Likewise it was advantageous for both: more markets, more raw materials, cheap labour for the economy, and expansionism for military. In

tandem, big businesses also accepted government proposals for mergers and cartels. A chief aim in augmenting the economy was to build a strong nation.

Even when the civilian government was more in control, it favoured a select group of businesses which it believed had the calibre to aid the development and progress of the nation.

Japan did not have a democratic history, in the manner it is understood in the West. The strains in the political fabric were manifesting in the post-War I period. The party-based governments were beset with problems. Additionally, the notion of parliamentary democracy was still frail. The House of Representatives enjoyed no more powers than the conservative House of Peers. The emperor's powers were theoretically unlimited and this was often reiterated by imperial court and privy council officials. The prime minister was not an individual who had maximum number of representatives in the lower house; rather, he was nominated by the elites and then the nomination was put to vote. At any rate, once the party system was introduced, it bred openly competitive, divisive politics which was not to the liking of many Japanese. The latter's leanings were more towards the harmonious social fabric premissed on consensus. The nature of party politics allowed the *zaibatsu* to play a disproportionate role in power-making by virtue of their wealth (which was required by political parties). Majority of the Japanese were still attuned to the Tokugawa relic of bias against merchant class and this facet of social life—rise of *zaibatsu*—rankled them.

In 1925, universal male adulthood suffrage was effected. The Peace Preservation Act was also passed during this period, which rendered advocating any kind of change to the basic political system a crime. This compromised upon free speech and political activity. Ominously, the right wing was also becoming more strident during the period. All these features were to dent the nascent democratic institutions. A parallel development in Europe following the Great Depression was the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy. Indeed the failure of democracy in some Western countries spurred similar thinking in Japan. On the political horizon, socialist ideas too proliferated after the Russian Revolution, but could not strike deep roots into the social fabric.

The late 1920s and 1930s paved the way for rise of Japanese militarism. This was in contrast to the early 1920s when the Diet did possess a voice on many political matters. However, by 1930s the situation had see-sawed in favour of the military. Initial Japanese victories beginning the 1930s, plus the growing ultranationalist movement, indoctrination of the populace, all emboldened the army and raised nationalistic fervour. During the same period visions of Japanese Empire began to be disseminated with the specific aim of expelling Western rulers in Asian lands. Concordantly, the very title of the mission was 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere'. The nationalistic societies and movements had received a fillip after the First War and were in action during the period, though they never were to become a political force, as in Germany or Italy.

A racist hue too was inserted into the political miasma. At the Versailles Peace Conference, Japan had requested for a clause on 'racial equality'. This

however was blocked by Britain and the USA. Japan considered this as a humiliation, as it was by then a fairly advanced industrial power and on its way to all round rapid development. A further cause for the angst was the perpetual talk of 'yellow peril' in the Occident. To rub salt into the wounds, the Japanese were subsequently rendered ineligible for naturalized citizenship in the USA.

It was, amongst other factors, that in this background the military began to gain in strength. It drew the bulk of the conscripts from the peasantry who became its avid supporters. The urban-rural disparities – in culture and economy, contributed to the peasantry's disaffection and led them to join the army in large numbers; the peasantry continued to be the army's bulwark of support.

There were other factors too that promoted the rise of militarism. Japan's path to industrialization was not entirely rosy. There were negative fall-outs too. The most visible was the urban-rural hiatus, which was also described as 'dual economy': on the one hand, high productivity of modern industries, while on the other hand, low productivity of traditional handicrafts and agricultural sector. This naturally created a chasm between the rural and urban population. Despite this, Japan's economy had progressed at a fast pace from the 1880s up to the First World War. The First War had especially played a catalytic role in expanding Japanese economy. However the end of the First War led to certain changes. The Europeans returned to the Asian markets giving tough competition to Japanese goods. In the 1920s, there were bank failures, adverse foreign trade, low agricultural production, which often led to starvation in the rural areas.

The path to industrialization had ruptured the traditional social fabric predicated on personal bonds between employers and employees; consequently, frictions often arose. Another impact of the development was that from being a self-sufficient society during the Tokugawa period, Japan came to depend on other countries: for both raw materials and markets for its goods.

In the given circumstances, it did appear that imperial expansion by military had coalesced into the market mechanism for getting raw materials from the captured territories and also converting them into sites for markets. There were political nuances of the same: the Twenty One Demands imposed on China, occupation of German interests in Shantung, and sending an expeditionary force to Vladivostok, Siberia, to set up an Eastern front against the Germans. There were clear economic overtones in these decisions. Simultaneously, other events also occurred after the First War which seemed to dent this dual mobilization.

In China, a nationalistic tide was continually opposing Japanese occupation. On the international front, Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points at the Versailles Peace Conference had included the proviso that major powers should not victimize the weaker ones. Due to emerging domestic and international pressures, Japan had the choice either to relentlessly pursue its expansionist policies or to fall in line with the accepted norms of international trade. Japan, in the immediate aftermath of the First War, initially, opted for the latter option for economic growth. In line with the Fourteen Points, it even withdrew from Shantung in China becoming the first foreign power to perform this feat. Gradually however Japan realized that other major powers did not follow suit,

nor were they changing their other imperial priorities. Moreover, Japan had also to settle for an unequal naval treaty with Britain and USA on the number of battleships they could maintain: Japan was reduced to an inferior status. Likewise, on the economic front, Japanese exports were met with stiff restrictions.

By the end of the 1920s with the economy worsening, Japan was veering to the view that it had been taken for granted, and that its economic and military interests had been compromised. The West having built its empire could easily pontificate to other countries to desist from conquering territories. Japan's empire was too small and it seemed that the West wanted to curtail any further acquisition by Japan, which apparently would be against the interests of Japan. To further heap humiliation, Japanese were debarred from emigrating to the lands in N. America and Australia.

In these circumstances, the army and the navy who had hitherto enjoyed relative autonomy began to assert themselves more independently. In 1931, Japan overran Manchuria which subsequently became the puppet state of Manchukuo. This led to great nationalistic fervour, as also surge in esteem for the military. The latter was veering round to the view that the time was opportune for further expansion. Besides, military leaders believed that backing down from aggrandizement at this juncture would lower their prestige and also lessen their control over government in Tokyo. On these counts, amongst others, further forays were made into Chinese territories and Inner Mongolia. This indicated that the army was growing in dominance in deciding foreign policies, virtually

independently of the civil government and the emperor. Importantly, at this juncture, civil service posts were opened to military officers, thereby leading to a gradual permeation of the bureaucracy by the military and navy.

Gradually, the parties were to virtually lose all political power. In 1937, a further blow was dealt to the civil government when Cabinet Planning Office (CPO) was established comprising mainly of military officers. The ministry of finance which had been vested with financial coordination was divested of the same giving the military full financial power. To boost military power an Imperial Headquarter was established in 1937. This coincided with war on China. It served as a mechanism to coordinate decisions between army and navy. With addition of other devices, it became the political space where major decisions were taken to which the civil government and the emperor silently acquiesced. The acme of military aggrandizement was reached in 1941 when General Tojo Hideki became the prime minister, as also the home minister. This was emblematic of complete military control.

Though there was no organized mass totalitarian movement in Japan, there were nonetheless some visible signs of the same in arrest of socialist leaders, denunciation of communism, control of press, revision of school text-books to indoctrinate students, anti-Western propaganda, and so on. The legacy of an authoritarian past facilitated the transformation of the military rule. Much of it was intriguingly achieved within the ambit of the Meiji Constitution of 1889.[743]

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[743] As Ryosuke puts it: the 'Meiji Constitution…existed, in name only, during the war years. However, even the militarists did not try to abolish the Constitution. They had no need to do so,

The war with China in 1937 had already enabled Japan to capture the more important cities, ports, thereof, with a fair share of railways, all of which were automatically the more productive areas. Nonetheless, guerilla resistance to Japanese occupation in China began to grow. On a different but not unrelated horizon, war clouds were hovering over Europe. In this emerging scenario, Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany in 1936 to which Italy became a signatory in 1937. In 1940, the three countries signed the Tripartite Alliance. In anticipation of its future policies of aggrandizement, Japan secured its rear by signing a pact of neutrality with USSR.

Japan was thus eager to make the most of the swaying fortunes or misfortunes in Europe. France's losing ground to Germany allowed Japan to take over the French Indo-China (Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam). At this juncture, USA acted to counter Japanese moves. It adopted a policy of licensing oil shipments to Japan which culminated in a total oil embargo in 1941. To further tighten the screw on Japan, USA announced that any settlement of political issues would require that Japan relinquish all its annexations, but annoyingly for Japan, the terms of the settlement were thus to be known *subsequently* (than beforehand). Japan viewed this as completely against its interests. To offset the loss of oil, Japan indulged in a very adventurous move. In one stroke, it attacked Pearl Harbour in December 1941 thereby destroying much of American

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for anything could be accomplished by invoking the emperor's authority'. See Ishii, Ryosuke (1980) *A History of Political Institutions in Japan*, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, p. 126. Interestingly, Japanese totalitarianism has been termed as 'familial totalitarianism' contra 'racial totalitarianism' of Germany and 'state totalitarianism' of Italy. Society was viewed as a large, extended family with emperor at the centre and other social groups as linking branches. *Cf.* Abe (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 229.

battleships, while in another move it attacked the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) known for its oil resources. In the raging battle, Singapore, Philippines and Burma were taken. Thailand became a passive ally. Various other islands in the Pacific were also taken. Thus Japan came to have a vast empire with its troops in the west near the border of India and the eastern troops in the east just away from Hawaii and hovering above Australia. This was the period of Japanese empire's zenith.

It was from around 1942 that Japan began to face reverses in its territorial gains. A turning point in the War was the defeat of German forces at Stalingrad. With Germany perpetually losing ground thereafter, USA was able to focus on the Pacific rim, thereby, depriving Japan of its annexations, one after the other. With much of its empire lost, Japan's cities were subjected to firebomb raids, in the spring of 1945. These raids destroyed the cities and played a role in depleting production. At this point, with defeat staring into the eye, the Japanese leadership was dithering on surrender.

USA was adamant on an 'unconditional surrender' for Japan (as also Germany). However, in a subsequent move, the main terms for the surrender were spelt out in the Potsdam Proclamation, 1945. Japan was assured of national identity, with its populace having the right to choose the form of government; the caveat however was that Japan would be stripped of its empire, and would be occupied till it transformed into a demilitarized nation. While the Japanese leadership was still dithering, the close of the War was hastened by the dropping of atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9 respectively. On

August 14, the emperor in a radio address broadcast the surrender announcement with a message to the people—'to bear the unbearable'. More formally, on September 8, 1945 the surrender took place aboard the US battleship *Missouri* at Tokyo.

Chronology[744]

600 B.C.	Traditional date of accession of first emperor, Jimmu
A.D. 57	First recorded Japanese mission to China
538	(or 552) Introduction of Buddhism via Korea
604	Seventeen Article Constitution
607	Embassies to China revived
701	Taiho Law Code
708	Copper coins issued
710-784	**Nara Period**
710	Heijo capital, i.e. Nara founded
712	*Kojiki* compiled
713	*Fudoki*, i.e., local gazetteers compiled
718	Yoro revision of law code
720	*Nihon shoki* compiled
794-1185	**Heian Period**
794	Heian capital, i.e. Kyoto founded
838	Despatch of last embassy to China
858-1160	**Fujiwara Period**
858	Fujiwara Yoshifusa becomes first non-imperial family regent
894	Embassies to China stopped
1160-1185	**Taira Period**
1175	Founding of the Jodo (Pure Land) sect by Genku (Honen Shonin)
1185-1333	**Kamakura Period**
1191	Rinzai branch of Zen sect introduced from China
1192	*Shogun* title assumed by Yoritomo
1206	*Shinkokinshu* compiled
1232	*Joei Shikimoku* (Kamakura law code) issued
1274	First Mongol invasion
1281	Second Mongol invasion
1336-1392	**Yoshino Period (Period of the Northern and Southern Courts)**
1338	*Shogun* title assumed by Takauji

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[744] Prior to 1853, the years in the *Chronology* are as per the Japanese lunar calendar. The main source of compilation is Reischauer, Edwin O. (1970) *Japan: The Story of a Nation*, (4th edition), New York: McGraw-Hill. The chronology provides glimpses of Japanese history.

1338-1573	**Ashikaga (or Muromachi) Period**
1339	*Jinno shotoki* written by Kitabatake Chikafusa
1392	Northern and southern courts reunited
1439	Last of the twenty-one imperial anthologies of poetry compiled

1467-1568	**Period of the Warring States**
1542	(or 1543) Portuguese arrive at Tanegashima; firearms introduced
1549	St. Francis Xavier arrives in Kyushu; Christian missionary movement begins

1568-1600	**Period of National Unification**
1568	Kyoto seized by Oda Nobunaga
1578	Otomo Yoshishige, a daimyo of North Kyushu converts to Christianity
1582	Nobunaga assassinated; cadastral surveys started
1585	Hideyoshi appointed as *Kampaku*
1586	Hideyoshi granted surname of Toyotomi
1587	Peasants' weapons confiscated by Hideyoshi
1590	Tokugawa Ieyasu establishes himself at Edo
1592	Korea invaded; Spanish Franciscans start missionary activity
1593	Truce with Chinese armies in Korea
1597	Korea campaign resumed; Europeans & Japanese converts executed
1598	Withdrawal from Korea
1600	Tokugawa Ieyasu emerges victorious at battle of Sekigahara

1660-1867	**Tokugawa Period**
1603	*Shogun* title assumed by Tokugawa Ieyasu
1609	Dutch trading post established at Hirado
1612	Persecution of Christians resumed
1613	English trading post established at Hirado
1623	English post of Hirado abandoned
1624	Further contact with the Spanish banned
1635	*Sankin-kotai* ('alternate attendance') formalized for *tozama* (outer) daimyo
1636	Travel abroad banned
1639	Portuguese traders expelled
1641	Dutch traders transferred from Hirado to Deshima in Nagasaki
1720	Ban on import of Western books relaxed
1808	*Phaeton*, the British ship visits Nagasaki
1811	Translation Bureau established for Dutch Books
1837	*Morrison*, the American ship visits Edo and Nagasaki
1853	Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrives at Uraga
1854	Treaty of Kanagawa with America
1856	Townsend Harris, American Consul General arrives at Shimoda

1858	Commercial treaty signed with America; founding of the would-be Keio University
1862	First embassy to Europe; 'alternate attendance' system relaxed
1863	Foreign vessels bombarded at Shimonoseki
1864	Shimonoseki forts bombarded by the British, Dutch, French & Americans
1865	Foreign treaties ratified

1868-1912   Meiji Period

1868	Resumption of rule by the emperor; emperor's Charter Oath; foreign envoys received by the emperor; Tokyo (hitherto Edo) established as new capital
1871	Class distinctions abolished; *ken* (prefectures) substituted for feudal dom-ains; Iwakura Mission departs
1872	Railway line between Tokyo and Yokohama commences
1873	Gregorian calendar adopted; universal conscription launched; new land tax system adopted; Iwakura Mission returns; a new political party founded by Itagaki Taisuke
1874	Expeditionary force to Taiwan is victorious
1875	Exchange of Sakhalin for Kuril Islands with Russia
1876	Double swords worn by samurais prohibited; samurai pension commuted; uprising in W. Japan
1877	Satsuma rebellion in W. Japan; Tokyo University founded
1879	Ryukyu Islands incorporated as Okinawa Prefecture
1880	Ward, town and village assemblies established
1881	*Jiyuto* (Liberal Party) organized under Itagaki
1882	Okuma Shigenobu finds a new political party and also Waseda University
1884	Peerage created
1885	Cabinet system adopted with Ito Hirobumi as first prime minister; civil service regulations endorsed
1888	City assemblies established; local governments reorganized; *Sumitsuin* (Privy Council) created
1889	Constitution promulgated
1890	First general election for the Diet; Imperial Rescript on Education
1894	British extraterritoriality abolished; war with China; Port Arthur captured
1895	Treaty of Shimonoseki concluding the Sino-Japanese War; Liaotung Peninsula returned to China after intervention of France, Germany and Russia
1897	Adoption of the gold standard
1899	Revised treaties effective with removal of extraterritoriality
1900	Revision of the election laws; Chinese territories captured during Boxer Uprising; Seiyukai party founded
1902	Anglo-Japanese Alliance signed
1904	War declared on Russia

1905	Treaty of Portsmouth concluding the end of Russo-Japanese War
1906	Nationalization of the railways
1908	Gentlemen's Agreement on Japanese emigration to the USA
1910	Korea annexed
1911	Foreign restrictions on tariffs end

1912-1926 Taisho Period

1914	Japan declares war on Germany and captures Tsingtao
1915	Twenty-one Demands presented to China
1919	Election laws revised
1920	Japanese Mandate created over the former German islands in N. Pacific
1921	Crown Prince Hirohito's trip to Europe; Hirohito appointed prince regent
1924	Exclusion Act by USA—bans Japanese immigration
1925	Universal manhood suffrage adopted
1926	Taisho emperor dies and Hirohito succeeds

1926-1989 Showa Period (described up to 1952)

1927	*Minseito* party founded
1928	First general election under universal manhood suffrage; Communists mass-arrested; three 'proletarian' parties banned
1930	London Naval Treaty signed
1931	Manchurian 'incident'; gold standard abandoned
1932	Shanghai campaign; Manchukuo created
1935	Sale of Chinese Eastern Railway by USSR to Manchukuo; East Hopei Autonomous Regime created in North China
1936	General elections; Anti-Comintern Pact signed
1937	General elections; War with China breaks; Nanking captured
1938	Battle with Russians near Manchuria; Canton & Hankow area captured
1939	World War II begins in Europe
1940	Puppet regime installed in Nanking; political parties dissolved in Japan; Japanese forces enter northern French Indo-China; USA puts embargo on scrap iron shipments to Japan; Tripartite Alliance with Germany and Italy; Imperial Rule Assistance Association inaugurated
1941	Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact; Germany invades Soviet Union in Europe; southern Indo-China occupied by Japan; Japanese assets frozen by the USA; USA introduces licensing system for oil shipments to Japan; Pearl Harbour attacked by Japanese forces and the Pacific War begins
1942	Singapore captured; Java surrenders; Greater East Asia Ministry created in Japan
1944	Americans land in the Phillipines; B-29 bombings of Japan begin

1945	Germany surrenders; Potsdam Proclamation; Hiroshima & Nagasaki atom-bombed; Japan accepts terms of Potsdam Proclamation; formal surrender by Japan; Shinto disestablished; Moscow Agreement creating the Far Eastern Commission and the Allied Council for Japan
1946	Emperor denies his divinity; first purge directive; first postwar elections; Yoshida Shigeru of the Liberal Party as the first Prime Minister in the post-War period; land reforms enacted
1947	General strike banned; general elections; new Constitution effected; economic deconcentration law enacted
1948	General Tojo Hideki and six other major war criminals executed
1949	General elections
1950	John Foster Dulles appointed to negotiate the peace treaty; Communist purges; South Korea invaded by North Korea
1952	Administrative agreement signed regarding US bases in Japan; Peace Treaty effective; anti-American riots in Tokyo; general elections

Glossary

This thesis employs a set of concepts in a particular fashion; some of these concepts rely upon prior preliminary deliberation. The thesis also devises some neologisms and acronyms. All these are summarized hereunder.

Allochthonous democracy: Imposition or initiation of democracy by extraneous bodies/agents than by the local elements.

Autochthonous democracy: Emergence of democracy mainly from within the local elements.

Black box of democracy: An interpretation whereby the inner workings of democratic functioning in a society are taken for granted or simply assumed. Such a postulation assumes that if some known variables are juxtaposed to a non-democratic society, such as particular social structures, organizations, institutions, along with specific set of activities, it would simply replicate democracy. The formulation of input-output model emerges from this assumption. In other words, the inner workings of democracy have remained rather mysterious.

Demosynthesis: It is the evolution of democratic principles in and through social activities/practices.

Finite mentality: Finite mentality means that at time t_1, people's mental horizons open up gradually and can take in new inputs gradually, too.

Mechanism-based explanation: An explanation of social reproduction/transformation by, *inter alia*, employing underlying social mechanisms than empirical indices.

Primitive properties or P-properties: The social properties on which the agents have to rely upon at time t_1 to be themselves. Transformative capabilities too inhere in these properties, but they emerge as a result of further interaction. These properties serve at two levels: one, at self-organization and, two, being organized by others, in and through the emerging relational patterns. Example: the founders of American democracy, or the activists of French Revolution, or the participants in the Indian independence movement. These agents relied upon previous social properties and, thereby, were opaque to some inequalities which, later on were deemed so, and thereby viewed differently.

Property-peeling: The inability of people to shed all their received social traits at time t_1.

Pulse I: This corresponds to, for analytical purposes, the first phase of democratic transition(s).

Pulse II: This corresponds to, for analytical purposes, the second phase of democratic transition(s).

Pulse III: This corresponds to, for analytical purposes, the third phase of democratic transition(s).

Social *punctuated equilibria*:
Substantive societal change generally ensues from rapid bursts of transformation than gradual, incremental change.

Reciprocity: People are in reciprocal relations with many societal practices of which they themselves may be unaware of.

Retro-democracy: Two categories of retro-democracy can prevail. (i) While experimenting for transitions, the mechanisms for the same are unavailable at time t_1, and the society may non-transit to democracy. (ii) When mechanisms are unavailable for deactivating old memory/role bits and activating new memory/role bits, then also a society may continue to stay in the previous situation or slide further into chaos.

Silhouetted democracy: The attention to the broad contours of democracy, its ideals, its image, its profile, its replication in non-democratic parts *et al*. What transpires within this outline or within the lengthy shadows is neglected.

Sociation: The research treats the usage as distinct from the common sociological meaning whereby every interaction among humans is a sociation, which would also include conflict. In the thesis, sociation implies the emergence of new and distinct social forms. The term rhymes with *speciation*, i.e. emergence of new and distinct species.

Societal multiplex: A pluri-layered societal fabric with variegated, stratified objects, as also multitudinous mechanisms with transfactual powers. The metaphor of a multiplex is helpful, as it cognizes both macro- and micro-level orchestrations.

Stag approach: The structural agential approach, i.e. an approach that examines the *interplay* of structure and agency for understanding social reproduction/transformation, in general, and, democratic transitions, in particular.

Starscopes: The neologism—starscope—is a conjunction of 'star' + 'scope', wherein, the acronym s-t-a-r stands for structure, time, agency and realism. It is an analytic tool for understanding both social reproduction and transformation. It can thus also enlighten about democratic transitions, as also non-transitions.

3 D Temporality: At any turn of event, people, both individually and collectively, are differentially affected by social happenings. Agents move ahead in steps and strides than leaping into altogether new/unknown terrain. The attribute of instantaneous overhauling of whole persons is lacking in humans. 3 D Temporality or three-dimensional temporality is a useful device in understanding that changing *one* aspect of personality does not necessarily lead to a change in *all* other aspects, which are contingent upon other factors.

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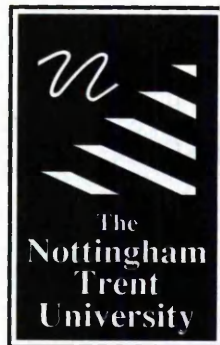
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