Critical Voices in a Mainstream Local: 

*Millennium, the LSE International Relations Department and the Development of International Theory*

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For almost half of its 75 years the Department of International Relations at the LSE has played host to one of the most innovative journals in the discipline. The location of *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* within the Department is not without an element of irony. The Department’s intellectual history and legacy is one that is steeped in and widely associated with the ‘English School’ and its account of order and justice within an anarchical society. Mainstream and traditional would not be unfounded characterisations of the outlook of the Department taken as a whole.1 *Millennium, on the other hand, has come to be widely associated with the more radical, dissonant, marginal, some might say wacky voices within the discipline.*

* I am grateful for comments on an earlier draft from Barry Buzan and Michael Banks.

What follows is a brief account of how this ‘odd couple’ relationship came into place and developed over time based on mutual support and admiration—if not always mutual understanding and comprehension. It provides some insights into the origins of the Journal and some of the key turning points in its intellectual and professional evolution. It is by no means a comprehensive account of either the Journal, the Department, the discipline or events in global politics during the period covered. Nor does it provide a detailed account or exposition of all or even most of the nearly 600 articles and 3,000-plus book reviews published in the Journal over the last 31 years. The balance of the narrative is weighted more towards the early years—a period less widely familiar to current readers of the Journal. Its tone is congratulatory, even hagiographic—but in the circumstance no apologies are offered for either of these tendencies.

In the Beginning . . .

It is worth noting the particular milieu within which *Millennium* arose as this has some bearing on its genesis, initial trajectories and the subsequent content within its pages. In the realm of international events, the US is bogged down in South East Asia, East-West relations are moving into the period of détente, the People’s Republic of China is slowly opening to the West, while violent conflict convulses Northern Ireland, Nigeria, Bangladesh, and Rhodesia. Just around the corner are Watergate and Nixon’s resignation, the US withdrawal from Vietnam, the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the subsequent oil crisis and rise of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and resulting Third World debt crisis.

Within International Relations (IR), the reverberations of the ‘Second Great Debate’, the subsequent ‘post-
behavioural revolution’, and the theoretical and conceptual developments that would shortly coalesce into the ‘inter-paradigm debate’ are working their way through the discipline. On the one hand, what are now widely characterised as neo-positivist epistemologies with their associated rational-choice theories and quantitative methodologies have come to dominate the discipline in the US, leaving a small, but vocal rump group of UK-based scholars still embracing their ‘classical approach’ to international politics. On the other, there is the opening of disciplinary boundaries to influences from elsewhere in the social and natural sciences. Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) and Strategic Studies have come into their own as major sub-fields, the green shoots of International Political Economy (IPE) are evident, and ecological/environmental concerns are percolating to the surface.

Outside the discipline, there are major debates and developments that would come to have a significant impact on the theoretical discourses within IR—and on the content of *Millennium*. During this formative period for the Journal there are major debates within the sociology of knowledge in light of the work of Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn, and in sociology and philosophy over the status of positivism. Grand theory returns to political theory with the work of John Rawls, while the first intimations of the debates regarding the ‘crisis of modernity’ and the problems of representation are evident in strands of German and French social theorising.

It was within this international and academic environment that Professor F.S. Northedge called together a group of students in the LSE Department of International Relations to discuss the possibility of starting a new journal. Northedge felt a certain disquiet about the existing journals on offer. His view was that they were too narrow in focus (read, too US-oriented, too much concerned with current affairs at the expense of
viewing contemporary problems and issues in a broader, historically informed context, and/or too beholden to the ‘behaviouralists’). Northerdge was also of the view that most of the major journals were too much ‘in the pocket’ of a small, self-selecting group of academics that only published pieces by established scholars who were more often than not in some way connected to the journals via their editorial boards. Moreover, the existing professional journals were too expensive, putting them beyond the reach of most postgraduate and research students. Quite probably preaching to the converted, Northedge argued that this situation could be corrected by offering an inexpensive, wide-ranging journal that would draw on the large pool of interesting research being carried out by research students and the younger members of the profession, particularly outside the US. Not only should the younger generation contribute scholarly pieces to the journal; Northedge felt very strongly that they should have a considerable hand in editing such a journal as well. He was equally adamant that the Department of International Relations at the LSE was fully capable of producing such a journal.

The first editorial meeting took place on 12 February 1971. It decided that the journal would be called *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. The first part of the name was Northedge’s suggestion and taken from a Tennyson poem:

\[
\text{And let} \\
\text{thy feet, millennium hence, be set} \\
\text{In midst of knowledge, dream’d not yet.}\]

The latter part of the title was the product of discussion amongst the newly constituted editorial board and was intended to convey an intellectual remit beyond the narrow confines of ‘international relations’ and an intellectual pluralism as a sharp counter-point to the perceived intellectual and professional hegemony of the existing journals. As the then editor, Jeffrey Golden, and
Northedge noted in a brief editorial in Vol. 2 No. 2, *Millennium* was intended to be a ‘statement of the multivarious ways in which international relations are being discussed’ and would be ‘receptive to the value of dialogue’.

In addition to the title of the Journal, another of Fred Northedge’s lasting legacies to the Journal was its distinctive logo, designed by his daughter, then a student at St. Martin’s and reworked by Sylvester Bone. The distinctive ‘Millennium’ against a rising orb has graced the Journal’s cover ever since.

While Northedge continued to provide guidance and advice to the Journal’s editors and editorial board, he took a back seat and handed complete editorial control over to the students on the assumption that they would have a better sense of what were the new, cutting-edge issues in the discipline, and would be more open to publishing innovative and challenging material, both from other research students and rising stars within the academy.³

It is worth underscoring the students’ editorial control of the Journal. While there are now several student-led and/or edited academic journals, at the time *Millennium* was unique in giving students the power to accept or reject articles for publication. In a set of processes and procedures which were put in place from the Journal’s earliest days and which continue to be followed, pieces submitted to the Journal would be sent out to academic referees and then placed before the student editorial board for consideration.⁴ In a deliberative and democratic process that would make Habermas smile, the editorial board meets once a week and engages in a frank, sometimes heated discussion of the merits of a particular piece and then democratically decides whether or not, and with what conditions, to accept it for publication. This editorial power is considerable, potentially idiosyncratic (given a membership that can change from week to week, let alone year to year) and has been occasionally wielded against the
'great and the good' of the discipline in a manner that has ruffled feathers and put a few egos in a state of ill temper. Equally at variance with the practices of most academic journals whose editors were and still are appointed/anointed in something akin to a conclave of bishops electing a new Pope, all the major editorial posts of *Millennium* are democratically elected from amongst those students who take an active role in its production, with editorial teams and editorial boards often reflecting the cosmopolitan character of the LSE and IR Department student body. In a further distancing from standard operating procedures, these editorial posts could only be held for a single volume. This was partly to ensure that the Journal did not come under the sway of any particular students, that its editorial stance was always fresh as each new set of editors would define the Journal’s agenda for the year in which they were editing it, and partly a pragmatic response to the annual turn-over in the student membership of the editorial board. The Journal was initially produced via mimeo graphic reproduction at the LSE with secretarial support provided by the Department and the School’s reprographics department printing the copies. Three issues were to be produced each year mirroring the three terms of the typical UK academic year—a quirk that continues to this day. With a print run of around a hundred, the spiral bound first issues of the Journal were sold for the princely sum of 20 pence to members of the staff at the LSE, students at the LSE (and their family and friends) and a few at other UK institutions. The contents of these first issues were true to the initial ethos of the Journal. They included pieces by research students, some by members of staff at the LSE, a few by high profile individuals. They also covered a broad range of topics: arms control and non-proliferation, international law, the merits of Marxian-informed international theory, development issues, the politics of the United Nations (UN), Soviet foreign policy, the military-industrial
complex, MNCs as international actors, the Vietnam peace agreements and the use of force in international relations.

With Vol. 3, the Journal took on a more professional feel. It moved from ‘in-house’ production to being properly typeset and lithographically produced by an outside printing firm. It developed a standard size and format, institutionalised an editorial house style regarding endnotes (later changed to footnotes) and -ise rather than -ize spellings. Along side this improvement in its presentation, the Journal’s subscription base was starting to build. The balance was still decidedly tilted towards individuals (and a consequent high turnover as a number of these were students who often did not renew their subscriptions once they left the LSE) but with a steady rise in the number of libraries taking the Journal, including those overseas. By Vol. 3, prices had doubled— to 40 pence per issue.

**Consolidating an Identity: An Inter-Paradigmatic Journal**

By the mid-1970s, Millennium had in place an underlying ethos of intellectual and academic pluralism, a functioning—if occasionally prone to crisis—editorial management and decision making process, a steadily growing subscription base and a developing reputation, both within the UK and increasingly overseas. The last two elements were connected to the first. All were reflected in the Journal’s self-identity that started to consolidate from Vol. 3 onwards. This, in turn, was connected to and animated by wider developments and debates within the discipline, particularly as they were reflected in the research interests of staff and especially the students in the Department.

Important in understanding this consolidation is a shift in the source and content of the academic advice and support provided to the Journal. While Northedge was a
central figure in helping to establish the Journal, it was Michael Banks who came to have the more profound impact on the intellectual and theoretical traditions that the Journal would explore. Through his ‘Concepts and Methods of International Relations’ lecture series, Banks had become one of the main advocates of developing theoretical positions that would constitute a counter-weight to the intellectual and praxeological dominance of political realism. In developing these ideas, Banks was one of the first individuals within the discipline to latch on to Kuhn’s arguments and in particular his notion of ‘paradigms’ and to use this as the basis for arguing that IR had now entered its third ‘great debate’—what Banks would famously characterise as an ‘inter-paradigm debate’.

For better or worse, these and similar ideas took hold in the discipline. Increasingly, they also took hold among members of the Journal’s editorial board—many of whom would have attended Banks’s lectures and participated in his seminars, not to mention taken advantage of the ease of access to him and the length of time he was willing to spend talking to students about international theory.

It is hardly surprising, then, that the content of the Journal during this period broadly reflected the contemporary academic and intellectual climate, along side a continued engagement with contemporary issues in world politics. Amongst a broad range of material published, three topics or themes become prominent within the pages of the journal: debates about international theory itself, particularly the development of theoretical alternatives to political realism; North-South relations, particularly their economic dimensions; and East-West relations.

In the realm of theory, the Journal published pieces on the sociology of international law, the credentials and desirability of ‘sub-field dominance’, the balance of power, the scientific vs. classical approaches, and world systems analysis. Most prominent were discussions of
interdependence, transnationalism and claims regarding an evolving world society. The Journal’s foray into these theoretical issues is exemplified in one of the more (in)famous theoretical exchanges between James Rosenau and Fred Northedge over the importance of ‘transnationalism’ as a phenomenon in global politics and its implications for international theory.8

North-South issues came to the fore in pieces on the purpose and desirability of foreign aid, the post-73 oil crisis, the Brandt Report and the subsequent calls for a ‘new international economic order’, as well as contributions to the wider debates on deepening global inequalities, on development and dependency.

The third prominent topic was East-West relations in the context of the proxy wars, détente, and arms control negotiations. The Journal published pieces on the Vietnam peace agreements, the Middle East conflict, the SALT I and II negotiations, nuclear proliferation issues, tensions within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on its 25th anniversary, Ostpolitik, and US-Soviet relations. The analysis in many of these pieces reflected the optimism of the time regarding détente. All this was to change in the late 1970s and through the 1980s, as détente slowly collapsed in on itself and the ‘New Right’ consolidated its attacks on what it perceived as the weaknesses inherent in Western policies towards the Soviet Union. The range of these concerns/issues became the focal point for contributions to Vol. 9 No. 2—the first Special Issue of the Journal.9

On the back of interest in the last two themes—North-South issues and East-West tensions—Millennium also sought to extend its profile through the sponsorship of academic conferences and the organisation of a public lecture series. To this end, it gained funding from the Ford Foundation to mount a major conference on North-South relations in 1978. The following year it again raised funding from the Ford Foundation, this time for a conference exploring the themes of arms control and security in
Europe at the beginning of what would come to be characterised as the Second Cold War. Many of the figures that participated in the conference would go on to hold important positions within the Reagan and first Bush administrations.

This was followed by other annual conferences on subjects such as Latin America and the political economy of development, East-West technology transfer, and contemporary social theory and the problem of war and peace. These conferences were highly successful in raising the Journal’s profile, attracting participants from the realms of academia, government and the media. In most cases, each conference resulted in an edited book that served to further enhance the Journal’s prestige and raised its profile within the discipline, particularly outside the UK. The costs—both financial and human—of running an annual conference, however, would soon become too high and after the 1985 conference on social theory and war and peace, the Journal stopped sponsoring a major annual conference. The tradition would be revived only from 1996, when the Journal came to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

In the late 1970s, again with a view to enhancing its profile, the Journal gained funding from Chase Manhattan bank for a series of annual public lectures to be delivered by prominent figures in the field of IR on contemporary issues. The lectures would subsequently be published in the Journal. While the first two lectures by Raymond Aron and Ernest Gellner went off quite smoothly, the relationship between the Journal and the bank went down hill quite rapidly from the third lecture onwards. Delivered by Johan Galtung, he used the occasion to ‘bite the hand that was feeding him’ that evening. In the course of revisiting his ‘structural theory of imperialism’ he mounted a fierce attack on the institutions of the North and their role in the growing gap between the haves and have-nots, with Chase Manhattan bank as the whipping post for the purposes of his argument. The leading figures from the
bank squirmed uncomfortably in their seats and unsurprisingly the scheduled post-lecture dinner was abruptly cancelled. Needless to say, Chase Manhattan was not best pleased. A lunch at the bank was arranged to discuss future invitations. The bank made clear its dissatisfaction and hoped the Journal would invite someone more ‘mainstream’. While asserting its independence in designating the speaker, the Journal attempted to accommodate the views of the bank and the following year invited John Kenneth Gailbraith to deliver the lecture.

Gailbraith’s lecture was one of the more memorable public lectures delivered at the LSE during the 1980s. It took place in the Old Theatre with members of the audience crammed into every available space and students literally sitting at Gailbraith’s feet as he delivered his lecture. If anything, its effect on the audience from the bank was worse than Galtung the year before. Gailbraith delivered a scorching critique of Reaganomics and Thatcherism as the bank’s representatives once again fidgeted nervously in their seats. The problem was that, whereas Galtung could be dismissed as a ‘radical, left-wing crank’, it was hard to get more mainstream and establishment than Gailbraith.

Ali Mazrui delivered the last of the lectures. As with the previous two lectures, it did not contain an argument that the representative of Chase Manhattan found easy to digest. Its five-year commitment over, the bank declined to renew the agreement to fund the lecture series.

Several aspects of Millennium’s activities through this period are worth noting. Firstly, in terms of content there is not a great deal that sets the Journal apart from other journals at the time. Secondly, although there is a constant undercurrent of concerns with theoretical issues, a great deal of what the Journal publishes in this period might be broadly characterised as ‘high journalism’ or current affairs, with a predominance of FPA of individual countries or contemporary issues. Thirdly, and relatedly, is the
degree to which Millennium was an active participant in
what might now be characterised as the ‘international
public sphere’—the realm of decentralised, democratic,
cosmopolitan discourse that provides the context for
the articulation and discussion of social demands and our
understanding of the ‘political’ and ‘political community’.
This has particularly been pursued via the conferences and
public lectures the Journal has organised.

While the second of these trajectories—the current-
affairs, FPA focus—would continue through the Journal’s
second decade, in the following years the Journal would
undergo a period of significant change in two areas: its
commercial and financial well-being, and its academic
content and theoretical orientation. Commercially and
financially, from Vol. 10 the Journal entered into a three-
year publishing arrangement with Martin Robertson.
Although this was not renewed, the changes put in place
during this period, along with the IT revolution and the
rise of desktop publishing packages, would subsequently
provide the Journal with the secure financial footing it
had lacked up to that point.

Theory is Always . . .

When Millennium started its second decade, the political,
economic, social and academic milieu was dramatically
different from that in which it was established:
revolutions had taken place in Nicaragua and Iran, the
Soviet invasion of Afghanistan marked the start of the
‘second’ Cold War, and the ‘New Right’ had consolidated
its political hold in the US and western Europe. Within
IR, a number of important developments are discernible:
regime theory arrives on the scene; normative theory,
particularly concerning the ethics of war, emerges;
nationalism comes into view; democratic peace theory is
about to take off; and there are continuing explorations of
interdependence, transnationalism and associated
theoretical positions, along with the further articulation of structuralist/neo-Marxian positions. In the face of these alternative perspectives there are (re)statements and (re)assertions of political realism—including, most importantly, Hedley Bull’s English School/Grotian account of international society and Kenneth Waltz’s structural realism.\textsuperscript{14}

In social and political theory, there are continuing discussions on epistemology, the character of modernity and the rise of postmodernism. There are important contributions from some of the central figures in contemporary continental political theory, as well as a rapidly growing secondary literature on them. In addition, the liberal-communitarian debate is unfolding, while feminism is consolidating as a major theoretical position.

In this context \textit{Millennium} undergoes a transition that would see it move from being a journal concerned with both the theoretical and substantive content of competing paradigms to one that was located firmly within and making major contributions to some of the most important theoretical developments and debates within the discipline.\textsuperscript{15} For better or worse, by the end of its second decade \textit{Millennium} would be widely associated with the post-positivist, critical turn in international theory.\textsuperscript{16}

Central to this development within the Journal and the wider discipline was the publication of Vol. 10 No. 2 in the summer of 1981. The importance of this issue is twofold: it is the first self-consciously ‘theoretical’ Special Issue and it contains Robert Cox’s landmark piece, ‘Social Forces, States and World Order: Beyond International Relations Theory’.\textsuperscript{17} Published two years after Waltz’s \textit{Theory of International Politics} it was to become a central touchstone in the counter-discourse to the ontological and epistemological hegemony of the ‘neo-neo consensus’.\textsuperscript{18}
Cox’s contribution set out a number of powerful positions that continue to echo in IR theoretical discourses: the distinction between ‘problem-solving’ forms of theory and critical theory; the collapse of the false distinction between theory and practice; the need for historically nuanced accounts of how current social, political, and economic practices came into being; a normative impulse; and a praxeological concern. All of these would come to be central characteristics of various forms of critical international theory. All of these were summed up in Cox’s now famous aphorism, ‘theory is always for someone or for some purpose’. While not necessarily novel or earth shattering in the wider realm of social and political theory, such was the insular and cocooned nature of IR theory at the time that his interventions were like thunderbolts.

Both within the discipline and in the Journal, the opening salvos of critical international theory did not produce an immediate deluge of similar interventions. It would be another six years before the Journal returned to these concerns in a sustained fashion: first in the form of contributions in and responses to the Special Issue on ‘The Study of International Relations’ in Vol. 16, particularly the claim that ‘critical theory represented the next stage in international theory’, and more concertedly with the Vol. 17 which was remarkable for its theoretical content across all three issues and in particular the dual contributions in the opening toward post-structural/postmodern theorising and bringing gender to the fore in international theory.

The contributions in Vol. 17 No. 2 mark the full turn of the Journal on a post-positivist theoretical course that would make it the site of several important theoretical interventions in the discipline. In particular, the ‘Introduction’ on philosophical traditions by James Der Derian, Nick Rengger’s re-reading of classical international theory and Richard Ashley’s ‘double reading’ of Bull’s *Anarchical Society* all provide clear
examples of the kinds of intrusions and disruptions that were to follow in the wake of drawing on/in post-structuralist/postmodernist theory. The agenda was clear: to subvert dominant networks of representation through a process of deconstructing the hierarchical privileging of concepts and practices within world politics in order to create the space in which the ‘other’ could speak and act. The aim was no less than to reinscribe theory/practice in global politics.

The second major theoretical intervention in international theory and the agenda of the discipline came in the form of the second Special Issue in Vol. 17 on ‘Women and International Relations’. It is now difficult to imagine, but at the time this was the first sustained discussion of these issues in IR. Pointedly noting the absence of such concerns from the wider discipline, evident even in their absence from the three previous theory Special Issues of Millennium, the contributions to Vol. 17 No. 3 forcefully drove home the extent to which international theory and practices were not gender neutral but deeply embedded with gendered constructs. Sharing the epistemological and ontological concerns of other forms of critical international theory, the contributions demonstrated the manner in which the division between the ‘public’ and the ‘private’ played themselves out in the practices of world politics, particularly in the realm of development. Explicit or implicit in these interventions is a concern with marginalisation and social exclusion, and the dissolution of the dominant theoretical and institutional edifices.

The Special Issue was followed up in Vol. 18 No. 2 with a ‘discussion section’ on ‘Women and International Relations’. This included a piece by Robert Keohane in which he attempted to rationalise the contribution of some (but not all) forms of feminist theory—which in turn promoted a scathing response from Cynthia Weber highlighting how Keohane’s piece encapsulated all the
‘normalising’ strategies that radical forms of feminist theory were attempting to unmask and overturn.\textsuperscript{28}

Theoretical concerns would continue to manifest themselves in \textit{Millennium} over the next three volumes—including pieces on relativism and ethics, re-reading classical (international) political theory, feminism and peace studies, the causes of war debate, postmodernism and international theory, historical sociological takes on the state and violence, the English School and the ‘good life’, and Gramscian IPE. Some of these contributions could be located within a broadly post-positivist agenda. However, the majority of the pieces in the Journal explored both mainstream and new agendas from fairly traditional perspectives. The inverse would be the case in the Journal’s third decade.

\textbf{Millennium: Journal of Critical International Studies?}

As was the case with the founding of the Journal and the start of its second decade, the opening of \textit{Millennium}’s third decade coincides with dramatic changes in world politics: the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War and the implosion of the Soviet Union and its associated alliance structure; Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait; pro-democracy demonstrations in Tianamen Square; and the end of apartheid in South Africa. Over the horizon were a string of complex humanitarian emergencies and genocide in Rwanda.

Within the discipline, there were two competing trends: one was intellectual closure; the other was a continued orientation towards intellectual and theoretical pluralism, generating new positions and perspectives, often in reaction to the aspect of closure. The aspect of closure was exemplified in the ‘debate’ between neorealism and neoliberalism, and in particular their differing views on explaining the nature of cooperation,
and eventually coalescing into the ‘neo-neo’ consensus. Not unconnected to the neoliberal agenda was the consolidation of IPE as a major aspect of the study of international relations.

Aspects of theoretical pluralism and innovation were connected with previous ongoing debates inside and outside the discipline, as well as thinking through the meaning and impact of the end of the Cold War. Among these developments were: the agent-structure debate which would eventually transmogrify into constructivist theories of IR; the rise of normative theory and the arrival of the cosmopolitan-communitarian debate; further articulations of the English School and the appellation of ‘international political theory’; the debates over the ‘end of history’, the democratic peace, and the ‘clash of civilisations’; and the beginnings of what would eventually be cast as issues of ‘global governance’. The period was also characterised by sustained statements in further developing forms of critical and postmodern international theory, as well as feminist international theory.

Within social and political theory there were ongoing discussions about the nature and character of modernity and the postmodern, as well as major contributions to the ongoing development of feminist political theory. An outgrowth of these developments was discussions and debates surrounding notions of identity, politics and the political, and (nonfoundational) ethics.

Within this post-Cold War political and academic environment, Millennium entered a period of sustained theoretical engagement and established itself as one of the most important voices in international theory, publishing challenging and innovative contributions that articulate alternative, sometimes dissonant, theoretical perspectives and explore subject areas with which IR has had little or no serious engagement. For all intents and purposes, Millennium’s self-identity consolidates into a journal of post-positivist or critical international studies.
The critical orientation of the Journal—and the broad understanding of what this entails—is evident in the contributions published in this period. Three aspects of the Journal’s work bring this into sharper focus: the content of the Special Issues; the dialogues on critical thematics that have taken place within and across different issues (and even volumes) of the Journal; and the thematic focus of the books that have come out of its conferences and Special Issues. Alongside the main articles, these have especially made an impact on the agenda of IR theory, often anticipating new trends and challenging old paths of research.

Special Issues

Since Vol. 20, 13 Special Issues have been published containing a rich array of diverse topics, themes and theoretical perspectives. These are

- *Reimagining the Nation* (Vol. 20, No. 3, 1991)
- *Beyond International Society* (Vol. 21, No. 2, 1992)
- *Culture in International Relations* (Vol. 22, No. 3, 1993)
- *Social Movements and World Politics* (Vol. 22, No. 3, 1994)
- *Ethics and International Relations* (Vol. 27, No. 3, 1998)
- *Gendering ‘the International’* (Vol. 27, No. 4, 1998)
- *Territoriality, Identity and Movement in International Relations* (Vol. 28, No. 3, 1999)
- *Images and Narratives in World Politics* (Vol. 30, No. 3, 2001)
- *Pragmatism in International Relations Theory* (Vol. 31, No. 3, 2002).
Through a reading of the contributions to the Special Issues, as well as those in other issues of the Journal, a number of themes stand out. These give an indication of the range of theoretical issues, concerns, questions, concepts and approaches associated with the post-positivist turn in international theory that have been articulated, addressed and developed within the pages of *Millennium*.

The first of these is the re-examination and radical re-working of the mainstream agenda and lexicon of the territorialised, sovereign nation-state and the dominant discourse and practices that underpin it, including the interrogation of discipline defining concepts such as ‘anarchy’ and ‘international society’. Of particular interest is an exploration of how the dominant discourses of IR are constructed, maintained, resisted or eroded. Linked to this is the excavation of the epistemological and ontological assumptions underlying these and alternative discourses.

The second theme is an engagement with discourses of identity, the problem of subjectivities, and the construction of self/other distinctions. Closely linked to this is the concern with the thematic of borders, territoriality and order as well as the associated dynamics, politics and ethics of inclusion and exclusion. This, in turn, links into explorations of our changing understandings of gender, culture, and religion.

Thirdly, there is an interest in exploring the possibilities of ameliorative epistemology, of poiesis, and of ‘imaginative (re)construction’ as the basis for theoretical, practical and ethical ways of engaging with and managing difference in a world of value pluralism. This manifests itself in the explorations of possibilities for plural allegiances, for non-territorial expressions of identity, the deterritorialisation of politics, and the development of a post-Westphalian political order. Closely linked to this is an interest in exploring the strategies by which this might be pursued, ranging from
the use of aesthetics to the potentially transformative role of particular social and political agents such as social movements, to the prospects for cross-civilisational dialogues, to the articulation and invocation of non-foundational ethics.

Dialogues

Millennium’s critical orientation and its commitment to dialogue is further evident in some of the exchanges that have ensued within and across its pages. These have sometimes been encouraged (if not engineered) by editors; sometimes they have developed in a more spontaneous and organic fashion as a consequence of submissions in response to a piece already published.

An example of these dialogues can be seen in the exchange on the nature and tasks of critical international theory as well as in the exchange initiated by Justin Rosenberg on ‘classical social analysis’ and the ‘international imagination’. Other examples would be the exchange between David Campbell and Daniel Warner on Emmanuel Lévinas and non-foundational ethics in international relations; between Christian Heine and Benno Teschke and their critics on historical materialism, dialectic and international theory; between Martin van Creveld and his critics on ‘feminising the military’; between Fred Dallmayr and his respondents on the nature and possibility of a ‘global conversation’; and the discussion of Hardt and Negri’s path-breaking book, Empire.

Conference Volumes

A third manifestation of Millennium’s critical orientation and commitment to debate can be found in its freestanding conference volumes, and in particular those which resulted from its 25th anniversary celebrations in
1996. As part of these celebrations, *Millennium* organised a two-and-a-half day conference. Presenters and participants were invited on the basis primarily of some sort of connection with the Journal over the two-plus decades: either as a former member of the editorial teams or as a contributor. Panels were organised on the basis of the papers that were offered in a way that attempted to make some sense of the diversity of topics. In the aftermath of the conference, it became evident that it was possible to group many, though by no means all, of the conference papers under three broad themes that again reflected core concerns of post-positivist international theory: an interrogation of our understanding of the political, an engagement with the possibility of movement beyond the cosmopolitan-communitarian divide in international ethics, and an examination of our understanding of the state and identities in late modernity.

**Conclusion: Millennium, the Political and the ‘International Public Sphere’**

What are the implications and consequences of *Millennium’s* evolution over a 30-year period? Where does it leave us in terms of the initial vision of Fred Northedge and his group of students back in February 1971? In many ways, the journey travelled through the pages of the Journal has been true to the initial ethos of that group of individuals. *Millennium* has been, and continues to be, a place of intellectual pluralism and diversity, a site of dialogue where new ideas are developed, a safe haven for those seeking to articulate positions, orientations and perspectives that are at odds with the dominant discourses in the discipline. It still provides a place in which contributions from research students will rub shoulders with the great and the good.
of the discipline. And, at least at the level of student subscriptions, it is still financially accessible.

One consequence of maintaining its underlying ethos has been its non-participation in some of the mainstream theoretical orientations and debates within the discipline. For example, it has made very little contribution to the neorealist-neoliberal debate. Given its own ‘reflectivist’ theoretical agenda this is hardly surprising and probably no great loss to either the ‘neo-neo debate’ or the Journal. More surprisingly, it has made only limited direct contributions to the development of constructivism in international theory, with the exception of Friedrich Kratochwil’s notable review of Alexander Wendt’s *Social Theory of International Politics*. This is to the Journal’s detriment, and possibly due to the neo-neo infused direction that the major approach to constructivism ended up adopting.

A major implication is connected to the arguments Rosenberg develops in his ‘classic social analysis’ article. This is the charge that in the move to a primary engagement with theory, and in particular post-positivist theory, *Millennium* has lost touch with the substantive, the political, the praxeological. Stuck in the nether reaches of meta-theory it has become abstract and detached from the ‘real stuff of international relations’. Curiously, this is a charge that is levelled at it both from the more traditional, mainstream members of the discipline (and the Department) who think the Journal is uninterested in serious empirical research, and from the Marxist-informed left who support the call for a critical international theory but bemoan the lack of identifiable social agents of change and transformation.

There are three responses that can be made to this. The first is to note that this overplays the theory/practice divide within the Journal. While it is the case that the overwhelming majority of pieces published in the first fifteen volumes were policy-oriented in nature and embraced an orientation that saw theory and practice as
two distinct domains, a considerable majority of these addressed and articulated theoretical concerns or questions that were explored via a substantive issue.

Second, although the overwhelming majority of contributions in the last dozen volumes have been theoretical in orientation they have not been without substantive content or practical political concerns—even by those authors adopting more pronounced post-structuralists positions. An incomplete list of such concerns would include: the implosion of Yugoslavia, the politics of the Middle East, security in post-Cold War Europe, environmental issues, diplomacy, peacekeeping, the role of non-governmental organisations, humanitarian intervention, globalisation, and global civil society.

The third, and most important, response takes us straight back to Vol. 10 No. 2 and the article by Robert Cox that helped consolidate Millennium’s evolution and self-identity: the argument that the distinction between theory and practice is itself a false dichotomy. To this extent, then, there is no link between theory and practice that somehow needs to be recovered or re-animated from the early years of the Journal, but a recognition that theory is itself a form of practice, a substantive act, a political act in the deepest understanding of what ‘the political’ entails. This does not deny that the praxeological questions regarding the agents of social change and transformation are important; it is to recognise that they are difficult and not so straightforward as they may have appeared to be in the past. In providing a pluralistic space for these critical endeavours Millennium has made and continues to make a real, serious and genuine contribution to the ‘international public sphere’—and long may it continue to do so with the enthusiasm, verve, innovation and panache it has shown over the last 31 years.
References

1. This is not to deny that there were and are important exceptions to this overall characterisation. Nor is it meant to imply that the contributions made from within this theoretical orientation are without merit. Indeed, for a considerable period of time in the history of IR theory, it provided one of the most important counter-discourses to North American behaviourally infused Realism.


3. He was given the title of Associate Editor. This has been accorded to each subsequent Convenor of the Department. From Vol. 10 it was also given to one of the outgoing editors as a way of ensuring smooth editorial transitions and easy access to ‘institutional memory’.

4. Typically, the editorial board is mostly composed of students on one-year taught postgraduate degrees, as well as doctoral research students and, in the early days, a smattering of undergraduates.

5. There have been occasions when these democratic processes have taken the form of affirming a single set of candidates for the post who more often than not were cajoled into editing the Journal over several sustained sessions in the Beaver’s Retreat bar at the LSE. Since Vol. 11, the two editors have been research students. Interestingly, through the mid-1980s, editing *Millennium* was seen as detrimental to the process of completing one’s PhD. Indeed, it was widely viewed by some departmental staff as a kind of black hole. However, from roughly Vol. 14 onward, the
completion rate amongst editors of the Journal has been very high and, more importantly, many have moved on into academic positions within the discipline. Yet, as the fees for pursuing research studies escalated, a number of possible editorial candidates came to the conclusion that they simply could not afford to edit the Journal.

6. Incoming editors, particularly those from North America, would have to learn that ‘Millennium’ was spelt with two ‘n’s’ and be rapidly socialised into the Journal’s editorial and stylistic nuances. In the early days there were also endless editorial debates on single vs. double quotation marks (eventually being resolved by moving to just single quotation marks), the hyphenation or not of words such as cooperation, coordination, long term, decision making, etc.

7. The growing subscriptions helped to provide the finances necessary to publish the Journal. But, adhering to Northedge’s principle that the Journal be affordable, the low cover price was not sufficient to cover all costs. In its first ten years, the Department and the LSE carried much of the real costs of the producing the Journal directly and indirectly. In addition, the Journal had successfully garnered outside financial support from the Leverhulme Foundation that ran for a five-year period. But with escalating printing costs, the Journal was moving inexorably towards a serious financial crisis.

9. A Special Issue was not an additional issue of the journal in any particular volume but an issue within a volume that had a thematic coherence. From Vol. 9 onwards, there would be a Special Issue (sometimes two, even occasionally as a genuine fourth issue) in each volume. These would become important vehicles for editors to pursue topics close to their own research interest. They also became the medium through which the Journal would make some of its most important interventions in and contributions to ongoing debates in international theory.

10. The last of these included a paper delivered by the then rising academic star, later Director of the LSE, Anthony Giddens on ‘Foucault, Violence and the Nation-state’ (paper presented at the Millennium Conference on ‘Contemporary Social Theory and the Problem of War and Peace’, 18 October 1985, London).


15. On a very rough count, in the first decade of the Journal less than 20 per cent of the articles were self-consciously about ‘theory’. In the following ten-year period this would double to about 40 per cent. By the third decade almost 70 per cent of all articles published would be ‘theory’ articles.

16. It was also during this period that *Millennium* fostered its first and only band: ‘Dr J and the MPhils’. Over a one-and-a-half year period they played at several parties jointly organised by the Journal and the Department performing specially re-written cover versions of songs by, among others, David Bowie, Elvis Costello and the Talking Heads. As is so often the case, the band fell apart as its members went in different directions. The vocalist, Dr J returned to the States working in the financial sector in New York while writing airport novels, science fiction and eventually an on-line magazine; the lead guitarist
became a professor of economics specialising in transition economies; the rhythm guitarist became caught up in making contentious claims about the future directions of international theory.

17. Robert Cox, ‘Social Forces, States and World Order: Beyond International Relations Theory’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 10, no. 2 (1981): 126-55. What is not widely known is that the publication of Cox’s piece was not a foregone conclusion. It strongly divided the then editorial team with some members of the team wishing to reject it outright. It took three separate editorial board meetings to reach a consensus in favour of publication. Such was the turmoil and uncertainty created by this that in its aftermath it was agreed that contributions to future Special Issues would continue to be externally refereed, but the editorial decisions regarding which contributions to publish would not be put to the vicissitudes of the democratic processes of the editorial board, but be in the hands of editors, deputy editors and associate editors of the day.

18. It is important to note that at roughly the same time, three other theoretical interventions were also made that contributed to the developing post-positivist turn in IR theory. They were: Richard Ashley, ‘Political Realism and Human Interests’, *International Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1981): 221-26; R.B.J Walker, ‘Political Theory and the Transformation of World Politics’, *World Order Studies Program*, Occasional Paper no. 8 (Princeton, NJ: Centre for International Studies, 1980); and Andrew Linklater, *Men and Citizens in International Theory* (London: Macmillan, 1981).

20. The term ‘critical international theory’ is used here, and elsewhere in the article, in its widest possible meaning (i.e., not delimited to Habermasean-informed theory) and as synonymous with ‘post positivist international theory’.

21. Over the next five volumes of the Journal there would be theoretical contributions, for example on regime theory and normative theory, but none adopting a self-avowedly critical theory orientation. The overwhelming majority of the pieces in the Journal revert to type and cover a range of ‘inter paradigmic’ topics similar to those in the first ten volumes.


24. Special Issue, ‘Philosophical Traditions in International Relations’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 17, no. 2 (1988). However, only the piece by Ashley adopts an avowedly poststructuralist orientation.

25. Special Issue, ‘Women and International Relations’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 17, no. 3 (1988). It is worth noting that the title of the issue is neither ‘feminism and international relation’, nor ‘gender and international relations’ though a number of the pieces address both of these along with the category ‘women’. Few, if any, of the pieces are located within ‘feminist postmodernism’; most would be characterised as either feminist empiricist or feminist standpoint/feminist critical theory.
However, from this number onwards, the divergent strands of feminist international theory have been well-represented in the journal, including many from a ‘feminist postmodern’ perspective, including those in the follow-up 10th anniversary Special Issue ‘Gendering “the International”’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 27, no. 4 (1998). An interesting characteristic of many of these contributions is the extent to which they are often linked directly to a concern with practical politics.

26. Needless to say, outside IR, women, feminism and gender had been an ongoing contribution to debates in social and political theory, as well as development studies, for the better part of a decade.


29. The impetus to explore these new areas derives from the interests of each new editorial team and their own research agendas and views about what are the cutting edge topics in the discipline. For much of *Millennium*’s third decade, this was fostered and sustained by a series of PhD research workshops that ran for almost a six-year period within the Department of International Relations at the LSE. These included: an ‘International Political Theory’ workshop; a ‘Postmodernism and International Relations’ workshop; a ‘Critical International Theory’ workshop; a ‘Modernity and International Relations’ workshop; and a ‘Historical Materialism’ workshop. There were also workshops that lasted just a year in length, including one on ‘Gender and Critical Theory’
and another on ‘Pragmatism and International Theory’.

30. See also Adam Lerner and Marjorie Ringrose, eds., 
Reimagining the Nation (London: Open University 
Press, 1993).

31. See also Rick Fawn and Jeremy Larkins, eds., 
International Society after the Cold War: Anarchy and 

32. See also Dominique Jacquin-Berdal, Andrew Oros 
and Marco Verweij, eds., Culture in World Politics 

33. Sadly, this particular issue was never revised for book 
publication.

34. See also Eivind Hovden and Edward Keene, eds., The 

35. See Sarah Owen-Vandersluis and Paris Yeros, eds., 
Poverty in World Politics: Whose Global Era? (London: 
Macmillan, 1999).

36. Many though not all of the contributions in this issue 
would make this Special Issue the least post-positivist 
in orientation.

37. See also Hakan Seckinelgin and Hideaki Shinoda, 
ed., Ethics and International Relations (London: 
Palgrave, 2001).

38. See also Louiza Odysseos and Hakan Seckinelgin, 
ed., Gendering the International (London: Palgrave, 
2002).

39. See also Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, eds., 
Religion in International Relations: The Return From 

40. This issue is unique in that it includes, for only the 
second time in the pages of the Journal, the use of a 
full colour reproduction of works of art, with 
paintings by Turner, Towmbly and Bourgeois 
included in Christine Sylvester’s discussion of the 
role of aesthetics in international relations. The first


