

Peace, War and Modernity in International Relations Theory

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Rethinking modernity means getting new perspectives on the modalities of war and peace. Furthermore, rethinking modernity is essential for our understanding of what is outside the West. Whereas the first statement stands for what I am about to discuss, the second thought points on my broader motivation to think about modernity. Concerning my broader motivation, especially scholars of societies and politics in the Middle East suggest that Western scholars and practitioners might not have the means to understand Middle Eastern politics, since their view of these regions is dominated by a foundational and diffuse notion of modernity – a notion which excludes or diminishes everything that is outside the logic of progress and modernization, enlightenment and secularism. According to this logic, what is outside the West is traditional and backward. This view disables a sufficient analysis of an Islamic Republic, religious fundamentalism, or religious terrorism in the 21st century.¹ However, understanding “modernity” and “the modern” as such is highly problematic. Definitions of such encompassing terms are more often than not doomed to lose their explanatory power when applied to particular contexts. In order to get closer to what modernity is and does, I plan to discuss notions of modernity in relation to war and peace from the perspective of International Relations (IR). In contemporary IR theories, we come across notions of modernity which are seen as essential for the ways in which states make peace and war. Hence, this paper is not about modernity and the Middle East. By laying out my broader motivations, however, I wanted to show that the problem of our understanding of modernity and the modern concerns more than just one single aspect of our world. Rethinking the powerful, far-reaching, and exclusive complex of what is thought as modernity and the modern, so I think, is one of the most important and interdisciplinary tasks we face in future research. By rethinking modernity ‘from the inside,’ from the perspective of Western IR scholars

¹ Scholars discussing modernity from the perspective of Middle Eastern studies, historians, anthropologists, as well as political scientists are, for example, Reinhard Schulze, Timothy Mitchell, and also Peter van der Veer. Timothy Mitchell raises his prominent “critique of modernity” (ix) in the context of British colonialism, in his book *Colonizing Egypt* as well as in further works, like in *Questions of Modernity*. Elizabeth S. Hurd reaches her critique of modernity through her discussion of secularism and laicism in International Relations, in connection to Turkey’s relation to the European Union and the relations between Iran and the USA.

on Western politics², we might gain a complementary view to those studies which focus on modernity by analyzing Middle Eastern societies and, hence, provide a perspective on modernity 'from outside of modernity,' where the West does not appear as the 'self,' but as the 'other.'

The general question I want to discuss is: How does our perception of peace and war change through the application of different conceptualizations of modernity or the modern? This discussion supposedly allows us to gain a better understanding of the ideological preconditions of war and peace, which, as we will see, are related to modernity. Hence, this discussion will address what we mean when we talk about modernity and the modern. In order to shed light on this issue, I will discuss Andrew Linklater's idea of modernity, which is laid out in his study *The Transformation of Political Community*, and compare his approach with Michael Dillon and Julian Reid's notion of liberalism as a paradigmatically modern mode of thought, conceptualized in their book *The Liberal Way of War*. Consequently, the particular questions which need to be answered are: What do the authors conceptualize as modernity or modern? How are these conceptions linked to the emergence of war and peace? And, which of these approaches is more convincing? Both approaches see rationality and the strive for Truth as well as a liberal notion of human universalism as core elements of what we might call modern and of what we might describe as constitutive for modernity. These aspects can, however, be both foundations for total destruction as well as for eternal peace. To make this clearer, let me now approach my subject from the particular perspective of IR.

Especially after the fall of the Berlin wall and with the emergence of the European Union (EU), many scholars of IR began to realize that realist approaches to international politics, with their understanding of the state system as a historical given, which is static, anarchic, and competitive (see Waltz, Mearsheimer, among others), were unable to explain a fluid world, as it was being remade (Ruggie 139-144). Furthermore, the vulnerability of super powers to non-state actors who justify their attacks by divine reason could hardly be explained by common concepts of inter-state relations and state power. Hence, post-1989/90 and post-2001 IR theorists, especially those affiliated to the constructivist school and critical IR theory, have found themselves trying to elaborate new concepts and a new vocabulary to enable us to understand the deeper structures of major processes in our world. Those deeper structures and processes especially concern the transformation of the state system and the occurrence of war as well as

² Though not from the perspective of International Relations, we indeed find critical engagement with modernity 'from the inside,' especially if we consider enlightenment as a term associated with modernity. In this connection, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno most prominently problematized enlightenment in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Furthermore, Michel Foucault takes a critical stance to our enlightened modes of thought and rule – a perspective to which I will return in this paper.

of other forms of violence, related with the dazing realization that our enlightened or modern societies were seemingly unable to prevent such tragedy. Those theorists ask, what are the modes of thought and what is the ideological basis, which lead to current events and processes in the international realm, and which might enable substantial future change.

As I read their work, Linklater as well as Dillon and Reid are convinced that the key for understanding today's wars as well as ways to achieve future peace lies in understanding what I would call a modern way of thought. Linklater is convinced that the enlargement of the "pacific core," which he sees located in Europe, and a transformation of the competitive state system into a "universal communication community," is possible (8). The key for this transformation, according to him, lies in modernity, since modernity enabled the emergence of a unique "moral configuration of Western societies" (123). The making of a world in which "dialog and consent replace domination and force" (Linklater 8) would mean to finish the "unfinished project of modernity" (Linklater 220). Linklater's notion that we need to understand modernity, or, in other words, that we have to reveal certain modes of thought which are deeply anchored in the Western consciousness, in order to explain current international politics and point to possibilities and difficulties in future foreign affairs, is shared by Michael Dillon and Julian Reid. However, their argument could not be more different from Linklater's. Dillon and Reid focus on liberalism, which is tied to modernity. "The liberal way of rule," they explain, "is (...) a modern way of rule" (83), and it is "contoured by the liberal way of war" (81). Furthermore, liberalism was, according to them, "biopolitical from its very inception" (81). From their analysis of the modalities of the liberal way of war from a biopolitical perspective, liberalism, tied to modernity, emerges as a mode of thought which includes a certain strategy for justifying war. Where Linklater would consider the modern way of reasoning as a precondition for peace, in Dillon and Reid's analysis it rather becomes the ideological frame for a certain kind of warfare.

In the light of these opposite views, it is not surprising that Linklater grounds his discussion especially in Jürgen Habermas' idea of modernity, whereas Dillon and Reid strongly refer to Michel Foucault, who was charged by Habermas as an antimodernist (Kelly 5) – a controversy to which I will return. However, to begin with, I will (1) outline Linklater's approach to modernity and its potential for future peace. Subsequently, (2) I will discuss Dillon and Reid's take on modernity before I turn to (3) the controversy between Foucault and Habermas, which will help to gain (4) a conclusive answer to my initial question: How does our perception of peace and war change through the application of different conceptualizations of modernity or the modern, and how does this discussion help us to gain a better understanding of what we mean if we talk about modernity?

(1) How does Linklater conceptualize modernity? And, how does modernity or, in other words, a modern political consciousness contribute to the achievement of a "universal communication community" (8)? Let me briefly summarize Linklater's arguments before I come to his particular idea of modernity.

Linklater develops his own position by defending his project against two anticipated objections. First, he defends his constructivist position against realist and neo-realist IR theory. Second, he defends a moral universalism against anti-foundationalist approaches, which emphasize the importance of the acknowledgement of difference.

Concerning the first issue, Linklater disagrees with the realist notion that "states are forced to compete for military power and national security because of the absence of any higher political authority" (14) and that this form of "international anarchy embroils all states (...) in an endless struggle for security and power which frequently culminates in war" (15). Instead, Linklater argues that there is "nothing in international anarchy itself which imposes competition and conflict upon nation-states" (18). Hence, the realist notion of the state system is insufficient since it provides no perspective on how to overcome this kind of world order, but rather manifests it (comp. 34-35). Following from that, especially with reference to Karl Marx' critique of ideology and notion of universal emancipation (20, 37), he makes the point that the state system must not be seen as a historical given. The state system, as sovereignty, territoriality and statehood, is a social construct, which men can overcome, since it is socially made (19). With reference to Karl Marx and Immanuel Kant's notion of historical development, he is convinced that it is "improbable that the modern sovereign state is the final stage in the development of the human capacity for creating frameworks of close political cooperation" (36). Hence, men can emancipate themselves from an anarchic state order. In this connection, it is worth mentioning that Marx and Kant, according to Linklater, "were modernists [who] believed that critical social inquiry could produce a true account of the world which would explain the meaning of human history, identify the most important logics of development from an emancipatory point of view, and sketch the outline of the first truly free society to embrace the entire species" (63) – an account which will become especially important when discussing Dillon's and Reid's approach. Linklater, as it becomes clear, wants to contribute with his study to this kind of "critical social inquiry."

Concerning the second issue, Linklater defends a certain moral cosmopolitanism or universalism which he sees grounded in Kant's idea that "the whole human race comprised a single moral universe" (36) and which he later refines utilizing Habermas' notion of discourse ethics and communicative action (77-108). His notion of universalism is crucial, since it is closely related to his conceptualization of the "universal communication community" (8). On the other hand, especially concerning my further discussion on Dillon and Reid's

approach, it is important to emphasize Linklater's idea of liberalism, which emerges from this part of his discussion.

Concerning his moral universalism in relation to the "dialogic community" (85), Linklater argues that "a thin conception of universality which defends the ideal that every human being has an equal right to participate in dialogue to determine the principles of inclusion and exclusion which govern global politics" (107, also 48-49) is not affected by the critique that claiming a universal morality might become a dominating force that fails to ensure "responsibility to otherness" (47). To conceptualize his idea of an international "universal communication community" (8), Linklater transfers what Habermas calls discourse ethics or practical discourse to the international realm.

In this connection, Habermas explains that "Argumentation insures that all concerned in principle take part, freely and equally, in a cooperative search for truth, where nothing coerces anyone except the force of the better argument" (Habermas 1990, 198). Language is thereby the ultimate medium of communication since its inherent telos is finding a consensus (Habermas 1984a, 287; see Linklater 48, 77-108). Hence, the universality of Habermas' discourse ethics and Linklater's cosmopolitanism lies not in the content of what is understood as the good life, but in the form, in other words, in the way a consensus on what is to be seen as the good life is achieved. Due to this principle, the "universal communication community (...) enlarges the range of differences which can be publicly expressed" (107); the sharp divides between the domestic and international realm, as Linklater concludes, ought to be bridged by discourse (see 215).³ However, as Linklater emphasizes, though "all societies have the capacity to participate in a universal communication community" (111) it is modernity as a particular Western phenomenon, which is "distinguished from other epochs by the greater depth of the commitment to this normative ideal" (111, also 121-123).

Achieving the "universal communication community" (111) in the international realm would mean to overcome what Linklater calls the "totalizing project" (comp. 213). In this connection, Linklater adds a further aspect to his theory which concerns the idea of citizenship. Hereby Linklater argues that the emergence of the nation state brought, on the one hand, exclusive principles like sovereignty, territoriality and statehood into being, notions which lead to regimes like Nazi-Germany or Russia under Stalin (213). On the other hand, the very resistance against totalizing tendencies lead to the proclamation of rights to secure the citizens from state power and, hence, enabled the emergence of citizenship as a particularly inclusive principle (see chapt. 4 and 5, esp.

³ This notion is indeed reminiscent of the motto of the European Union: "United in Diversity." According to the homepage of the EU, "The motto means that, via the EU, Europeans are united in working together for peace and prosperity, and that the many different cultures, traditions and languages in Europe are a positive asset for the continent" (see 'The EU at a Glance,' online). As mentioned above, it is Western Europe where Linklater locates the pacific core, which has to be enlarged (8-9).

146-147). Embracing the idea of citizenship as “the most potent response to increased state power” (9), goes for Linklater hand in hand with supporting discourse ethics, in order to achieve “social relations which are more universalistic, less unequal, and more sensitive to cultural differences” (7) on a global level.

Before coming to Linklater’s explicit account of modernity, it is worth examining his idea of liberalism. In relation to his support for universalism against anti-foundationalist accounts, Linklater demands to create a “society of states” which incorporates “ethical commitments to the community of humankind” (75). This demand includes the idea that we can find “some essential truth about the nature of humanity” (75). Despite objections (especially from Richard Rorty), Linklater seems not to disagree with the idea that these truths are the particular truth of “the community of twentieth-century liberals” (75). As I have shown, Linklater refers to a thin version of universalism and, as he states, “a thinner notion of progress that refers to the expanding circle of human sympathy which ought to be the aim of those who identify with the liberal community” (76). However, this notion of sympathy seemingly supersedes the idea of a universalism which only concerns a principle or the form, but not the content. What is here referred to, though only implied by Linklater, is the value of human life in its individuality, beyond external attributes; referring to a “moral and political community,” whose “constituency (...) is as extensive as the human race itself” (Linklater 76). This normative implication which goes beyond the mere principle of discourse ethics is also acknowledged by Habermas, who raises the question “Can one formulate concepts like universal rightness, the moral point of view, and the like independently of any vision of the good (...)?” – a question which he leaves unanswered (Habermas 1990, 205, my emphasis).⁴ Linklater acknowledges this aspect by revealing his own political opinion. He states that “the good liberal will adopt a critical stance towards the boundaries of community on the grounds that there is more to the moral life than the special ties and obligations between fellow-citizens united by the accident of birth” (76).⁵

What we can see from here is that liberalism goes in its aims far beyond the state or civil society. It is the human race, and the essentials of human life, beyond differences, that Linklater embraces. Hereby it is the search for the essential truth about the nature of humanity that might lead to success. These connections between human life and the search for truth beyond all boundaries as attributes linked to liberalism,

⁴ In this connection, it is furthermore worth mentioning that Habermas must admit that discourse ethics indeed “disengage problematic actions and norms from the substantive ethics (Sittlichkeit) of their lived contexts, subjecting them to hypothetical reasoning without regards to existing motives and institutions” (Habermas 1990, 207). He admits that the realization of his principle needs a “form of life that meets it halfway” (Habermas 1990, 207).

⁵ That Linklater seemingly identifies liberalism with critical theory might be seen as contentious, but is secondary for this discussion.

will not only reappear in Linklater's notion of modernity, but also become crucial for the subsequent discussion on Dillon and Reid's notion of the liberal way of war.

From the above outlined argumentation emerges Linklater's idea of modernity. Modernity appears hereby as a period of history in which a certain "moral configuration of Western societies" (123) became evident. Hence, it is not only a historical period, but a period bound to a certain region: Western Europe and the US. Modernity is for Linklater thereby connected to enlightenment, a term which he appears to use synonymously, though without explaining it further; he wants his social theory to contribute to the completion of the "unfinished project of modernity or Enlightenment" (22, also 122). Furthermore, it appears that his notion of liberalism, as discussed above, is closely connected to what he understands as modernity. The particular connections between liberalism, enlightenment and modernity are rather blurry in Linklater's discussion. However, the mutual appearance of the terms as well as the overlapping attributes of these ideas in his text suggests reading those terms as associated and inter-connected.

Concerning the particularities of those modern moral configurations, Linklater utilizes Habermas' approach to modernity, who refers to Max Weber's theory of rationalization. Like Habermas and Weber, Linklater believes that the West, seen as a particular civilization, underwent an encompassing process of rationalization which concerned all areas of society, especially in the course of the 18th and early 19th centuries. This process of rationalization, according to Weber, was related to the disappearance of all transcendental sources of power and ordering, especially religion.⁶ However, the disappearance of religion and the emergence of provable knowledge with causality as a determining principle led for Weber not to a more free society, but to a substantial loss of meaning among modern men and finally objectification and repression of the individual through a rationalized market and state. In the face of these developments, society now becomes an "iron cage" (Linklater 120). This metaphor, Linklater explains, "captured Weber's despairing belief that modernity is ultimately dedicated to intensifying social control" (120).

However, Habermas, with whom Linklater agrees, argues against Weber that the rationalization of society did not only lead the state and the market to develop in problematic ways. More importantly, only the ability to raise rational arguments, free from all transcendental forces, enables the individual to participate in discourse ethics. This disposition, which is one result of the rationalization process, is therefore the ultimate key for discourse ethics and communicative action, which might be understood as a form of communication which is meant to negotiate common norms. The "dialogic potential," Linklater explains further, "which is inherent in communicative action can be glimpsed in

⁶ In this connection Weber employs his famous term of *Entzauberung* of religion (comp. Habermas 1984a, 160).

the practices of liberal democracies" (121). And, Linklater adds, "the modern West represents a major advance in the development of moral-practical rationality, and dialogic potentials are embodied in liberal-democratic institutions to an unusual extent" (121).

Hence, modernity appears here as a historical epoch which enabled humankind to unfold the disposition of rational discourse as the key for the development of an ideological superstructure which might allow the achievement of peace on earth. Modernity, linked to enlightenment and liberalism, thereby stands for an alteration in the peoples worldviews, which not only embraced the idea of rational knowledge and the search for truth, but, at the same time, began to envision men in their universality – which includes, on the one hand, language and the principle of discourse ethics (the Habermasian concept which derived and further developed from the Kantian categorical imperative), and, on the other, indeed a normative vision of the good life, concerning freedom and democracy as the highest goods.

The hopes for perpetual peace are for Linklater not fully utopian. Assuming that men are particularly able to learn and further develop – an idea which appears in Habermas' theory as social evolution (see Linklater 119-123; Habermas 1984b, 153-198) – means they have the chance to overcome what he calls the ambivalences or the "dark side of modernity" (Linklater 144), which become evident in what he described as the totalizing project (123). "Maybe," explains Linklater, "visions of humanity united in domination-free communication will always be utopian. But by unfolding their distinctive moral potentials, modern societies may yet prove capable of creating dialogic arrangements which are unique in the history of world political organisation" (220). Linklater's idea of modernity, with rational knowledge as the key for understanding and consensus, can be contrasted with Dillon and Reid's approach to the liberal way of war.

(2) Concerning the liberal way of waging war, Michael Doyle remarks that liberal states are "indeed peaceful, yet they are also prone to make war" (1151-1152). They "have created a separate peace, as Kant argued they would, and have also discovered liberal reasons for aggression, as he feared they might" (Doyle 1152). Speaking with Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, we could intensify Doyle's statement by arguing that the "meaning of democracy" might be adjusted to a state's "project of ordering" (421). But what are the modalities of this kind of liberal ordering? Dillon and Reid want to go with their study "beyond the trope of the liberal conscience to the logics and imperatives of liberalism as a distinctive regime of power relations. To do that," Dillon and Reid state, "we have to attend to the correlation of liberal rule and war, and to the foundation of that correlation in the liberal commitment to make life live" (11). In their attempt to itemize what was called the liberal states' "project of ordering" (Barkawi and Laffey 421), and what appears in Dillon's and Reid's study as a complex of liberal rule and war

in relation to the liberal premise to "make life live" (11), the authors develop a strong critique against the way human beings are defined by liberal states and societies as well as against the imperatives which arise from this definition for foreign politics.

As we have learned from Linklater, "modernists" (63) like Marx and Kant believed that critical inquiry would uncover the true meaning of human history, seen as an emancipatory project, and might enable "the first truly free society to embrace the entire species" (63). Hereby Dillon and Reid would agree that this belief in critical inquiry, which indeed includes the idea of rational and therefore free thinking, was paradigmatic for modern thinking, which is closely linked to liberalism, as we have already seen in Linklater's approach. Furthermore, from Dillon and Reid's perspective, it is additionally striking that Linklater refers here to humankind as "entire species." This shift from the understanding of men as humankind to understanding men as species (Dillon and Reid 19), one could argue with Dillon and Reid, indicated the "advent of biopolitical thought" (46), hand in hand with the advent of liberalism, which "was biopolitical from its very inception" (Dillon and Reid 81). In other words, through the Kantian move of the new understanding of men as biological and creative or divine beings, we can argue with Dillon and Reid, a certain way of understanding men as biological beings came to the fore. Besides the divine aspect of men, especially if the question of how to govern society is concerned, men "simultaneously also embraced the instrumental character and promotion of species life through superior knowledge of its properties" (16). Obviously, Linklater's idea of universalism, seen from this perspective of life and the search for truth, acquires a different character. Liberalism is for Dillon and Reid connected to what they call the biohuman, the human being understood as species, as an analyzable entity made of information.

In accordance with Linklater's notion of universalism, though described from a wholly different perspective, Dillon and Reid argue that for liberals the reference object of rule and war is the species, whereby the state in its territoriality disappears as reference object. It is superseded by life as such. In this connection, Dillon and Reid explain that liberalism has always "aspired to remove war from the life of humanity, not just from the life of civil society" (83). It did so by "creating a novel alliance between man and his species existence" (Dillon and Reid 83). From this it follows that liberalism, with life as its reference object of rule and war, "kills to make life live" (88).

Life, as Dillon and Reid particularly criticize, is hereby however understood in biological and, as I would say, rational terms. Those enlightened inquiries for the true meaning of what men are led to the understanding of life as information; as mutable code; as a complex cosmos of inter-reacting mutable entities; which has to be governed, basically speaking, through categorization, hence, control (see Dillon and Reid 55-80, 87, see also Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero 11-13). Freedom is thereby understood in its totality, or as Dillon and Right might say,

transformed into contingency, a condition without any external or transcendental law which might constrain the living organism from the outside (see Dillon and Reid 59-62). As Dillon in his article together with Luis Lobo-Guerrero with reference to Machiavelli explains, "factual freedom was neither the freedom from rule of negative freedom, or the freedom through rule of positive freedom, but the radical contingency of 'no-rule' which, for Machiavelli, establishes an historical dialectic of (political) form and (revolutionary) event" (5). From that it follows that life emerges continuously out of this borderless cosmos of complexity. Every revolutionary event, every emergence of life, therefore unfolds as a dangerous event, from which life has to be secured. As Dillon and Reid put it, "For allied to the radical contingency of species existence is an account of species existence as a life of continuous complex adaptation and emergence. From the perspective of security and war, in particular, such a pluripotent life, characterized by its continuously unfolding potential, is a life that is continuously becoming-dangerous to itself, and to other forms of life" (85).

Before I conclude what the particularly modern aspects of Dillon and Reid's concept are, it is worth taking a closer look at their notion of species-life as code. Following Dillon and Reid, one can argue that the biologization of life, with its origins in enlightenment thought, is a process which was intensified within the last fifty years and has turned into the informationalization of life (21). This development impacts, for example, military strategic thinking and the way wars are fought (Dillon and Reid 21, 106-127). In this connection, the authors argue that "This informationalization of life first required a massive and successive reduction of language to the utilitarian demands of 'communication,' 'information' and, finally, 'code'" (21). Information as code has "come to replace function in defining what a living thing is" (Dillon and Reid 21). Furthermore, the authors argue, "In its relation to itself, the humanum of the human in the form of Man is confined to considering itself, speaking of itself, talking to itself, addressing itself and its infinite worlds, in the political economy of species terms alone, whatever those terms might be (...)" (29). What they are, if they are, and if they are worth living or dangerous to life, is decided by those in power, who categorise and accumulate power through knowledge (comp. Dillon and Reid 29); whereby these elites are for themselves caught in fear as generative principle of formation of rule as consequence of the permanent emergency of emergence (Dillon and Reid 86). Hence, language as a means of communicative action seems to be absent from modern society.

Dillon and Reid do not define modernity as such. However, their account of liberalism as ideology bound to enlightenment thought constitutes a certain, liberal, way of rule, which they indeed understand as a "modern way of rule" (83). Hereby we find the same ideas which are apparent in Linklater's approach: rationality and the idea of universalism, in other words, the idea of human equality, or rather sameness, concerning what is inherently human. However, these aspects as core elements of

the modern way of thinking and acting lead in Dillon and Reid's study to the accumulation of power, whereby the powerful as well as the categorized and organized are under constant danger. Hence, liberal regimes are prone to make war according to the biopolitical logic of "making life live."

(3) The controversy which I have established between these two approaches to foreign affairs and future politics on war and peace, from which two different interpretations of modernity emerge, can be related to a controversy between Foucault and Habermas. Linklater in his book discusses Foucault's critique against modernity. Considering Linklater's critique against Foucault, one could now assume that there exists a good side and a "dark side of modernity" (Linklater 68). Hereby Linklater states, "Foucault stresses the dark side of modernity expressed in threats to difference and diversity. His idea of the Western idea of progress was designed to reveal that everything may not be bad, but everything is potentially dangerous" (68). In this case, we would relate what Dillon and Reid discuss as the process in which life turns into information with what Habermas calls strategic actions (as counterpart to communicative action). Hence, the dark side, the biologization of life, would supersede the communicative potential which modernity provides as well. By this token Linklater interprets and counters Foucault's critique, arguing that a development towards more suppression or endangerment through rationalization is only one side of modernity (Linklater 67-75).

For Dillon and Reid, however, (who indeed strongly refer to Foucault) modernity is not double-sided. Modernity, in their analysis of the liberal way of rule and war, appears to me as one single totalizing project, in which the individual is, so we might say, not suppressed, but rather paralyzed. In other words, there is no communicative rationality it could turn to. If language is informationalized and biologized (Dillon and Reid 23), can we still argue that language is a valid instrument for communicative action? In order to free ourselves from the total informalization, we cannot apply common liberal terms and paradigms like freedom, rights and justice. As it appears, we would have to translate our language of the political into a completely different language, which would then allows us to renegotiate what we are and how we want to live. Modernity seemingly leads inevitably to biopolitics. In modernity, it is the human species which has to be analyzed and not mankind anymore, which might have to be left, felt, loved, pitied or marvelled at its divinity (written in absence of an alternative vocabulary), in order to overcome contingency and the continually emergent emergency. A Machiavellian prince or even a Gramscian modern prince would only reproduce the letter, if we cling to this logic. Considering these findings, the Habermasian critique against the Foucaultian approach seems to be convincing; as Linklater with reference to Nancy Fraser argues: "Foucault abandoned the moral

ground which makes political resistance possible" (Linklater 70). Here we are taken into a debate on the Kantian question, "What is enlightenment?" According to Habermas, this text concerns "the will that was once revealed in the enthusiasm for the French Revolution," a will to "knowledge, that the 'analytic of truth' cannot acknowledge" (Habermas 1994, 154). For Foucault, however, this will to knowledge is "traced in modern power formations, only," as Habermas claims, "to denounce it" (Habermas 1994, 154). The relevant question which emerges from here would read: which of these approaches is more helpful for the analysis of war and peace in IR?

(4) As it becomes clear, we find here two competing conceptualizations of our modes of thought which might enable peace or war. On the one hand, we find today the EU, a growing union of states which are seemingly much less competitive than realists in IR had expected before 1989/90. Here we seemingly find the beginning of what Linklater understands as universal dialogic community. Linklater's modernity, as a historical process bound to the West, which enabled a certain rational mode of thought and corresponding form of consensus-oriented discourse which might enable peace, is seemingly unfolding. On the other hand, we have indeed learned today how to destroy human life "with unprecedented sophistication and precision" (125) in order to make life live, whereby life is understood as information (see 125). The categorization of men through the constant accumulation of knowledge in an atmosphere of permanent danger seems to be evident, as well. As mentioned in the beginning, it becomes clear that both versions define rationality and the strive for Truth as well as a liberal notion of human universalism as core elements of what we might call modern and of what we might describe as constitutive for modernity.

Which of these two modern imaginaries is more convincing? Which interpretation gives us better instruments to criticize current processes and developments in our world? Can a universal communication community make war to make life live? Those questions cannot be finally answered in this paper. However, it could indeed be shown that our perception of peace and war changes through the application of different conceptualizations of modernity or the modern.

To conclude, two remarks can be made: First, Habermas' critique is strong, since we indeed need an idea of the good life as the basis for our critique. However, at least in his text on the question "What is Enlightenment?," Foucault does acknowledge this requirement. So Foucault states, "I do not know whether it must be said today that the critical task still entails faith in Enlightenment; I continue to think that this task requires work on our limits, that is, a patient labor giving form to our impatience for liberty" (Foucault qtd. in Lemke 20). This is a form of critique which goes far beyond Habermasian ideas as of social evolution, and, as Linklater formulates, Western moral superiority – ideas which to easily turn into ideologies. Critique, understood as

patient labor, reminds us rather of those scholars who analyze Middle Eastern societies and politics, which brings me to my second remark. Reinhard Schulze is, for example, concerned with the historization of the Islamic world. Schulze criticizes that "the historiography of the Islamic world demands that the Islamic world be on principle excluded from the history of modern times because it is bound to religion," which leads to the problem that what is perceived as the Middle East or as Islam is often understood as "pre-modern culture" (2) – what does not help much, if we want to understand Islam. It is this perspective, from the 'outside of the West' and from the 'outside of the discipline of political science' from where modernity appears as a powerful and exclusive discourse, which needs to be patiently criticized rather than praised.

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