

Introduction

'Progress'. The term is a comforting and familiar one. It connotes the seductive allure of a better life; it conveys hope in humanity's telluric destiny. 'Progress', it seems, speaks to us all. Yet when we seek to define it more precisely, it becomes elusive. The field of operations of those who accept the definitional challenge is itself defined by conflict and contradiction, perhaps best exemplified by two seminal accounts of the 'idea' written at a sixty-year interval: J. B. Bury's *The Idea of Progress* (1920) and Robert Nisbet's *History of the Idea of Progress* (1980). Whilst Bury inaugurates his narrative with the bold claim that "the notion of progress, which now seems so easy to apprehend, is *of comparatively recent origin*" (Bury, 1920: 6; my italics), the opening lines of the Nisbetian text declare, conversely, that "no single idea has been as important in Western civilisation *for nearly 3000 years*" (Nisbet, 1980: 4; my italics). Further inspection of the literature on 'progress' only compounds our confusion: does 'progress' intimate the continuity of linear time or the rupture of revolutionary upheavals? Is 'progress' a materiality which looks one in the face or an idea one harbours in the mind? Do we work for 'progress', or does 'Progress' work for us? Such questions elicit no consistent responses in this literature; it appears we must either sign up to our preferred definition, or renounce our enquiries.

This dissertation argues for a third resolution. By drawing on Foucauldian understandings of power/knowledge, it suggests 'progress' might be more gainfully considered as *discursive practice*. Such a framework, in underlining the reliance of ontology on the circulation of discursive régimes of truth/knowledge, disputes that one could deduce a material essence to 'progress' independently of the discourse which invokes it. In emphasising the ontological rather than merely descriptive work realised by discursive practices, such an understanding also queries the extent to which any discourse on 'progress' could lead a purely ideational life. And in signalling that any discourse owes its currency to the power relations which bestow upon it its status as truth/knowledge, such a standpoint also obliges us to ponder the political dimensions of any discursive régime. Such a framework might not provide an answer to the definitional contest; but it does, perhaps, impute us to change the question. Rather than contemplate what 'progress' as 'idea' or 'material reality' *is*, then, this dissertation will attempt to ask instead what 'progress' as discursive practice *does*, and what type of political effects such 'doings' produce.

It will be proposed that these questions can be studied in the context of colonial and contemporary literature on international trusteeship. This is *not*, 'essentially speaking', a dissertation about trusteeship; it is a dissertation which critically examines how a certain discourse, when deployed in

trusteeship texts, can be observed to produce certain regular effects with specific (political) consequences. As 'critique', from a discursive position, cannot aspire to claim that any discourse is 'wrong' or 'false' in its assertions by reference to a 'truer' 'reality' taken to exist extra-discursively, if our enquiries find the effects of a discourse on 'progress' dangerous or undesirable, the 'alternative' cannot be 'the truth about progress'; 'alternatives' can only be discursive. What such critique can achieve is the denaturalisation of those (inevitably political) 'realities' whose politicality, and discursive contingency, appears concealed. Such is the objective here.

Chapter One will thus propose a (necessarily rather schematic) genealogy of 'progress' in which relevant literature, mentioned above, will be reviewed. The opportunity will then be taken to offer a more comprehensive presentation of the Foucauldian framework whose assumptions this dissertation adopts. A more detailed account of 'progress' as discursive practice will then be rendered. The second chapter will examine the effects of such a discourse in colonial and contemporary texts which advocate (a revival of) trusteeship. Its conclusion will specifically aim to consider the political consequences of such discourse. Chapter Three will probe the texts of authors who, informed by the (pluralist) international society approach, pointedly reject trusteeship as a legitimate international practice, thus offering a challenge to the commentators examined in the previous chapter. It will be asked to what extent such oppositional narratives challenge or re-inscribe the discourse discussed above. The conclusion will draw together the findings of the preceding chapters, before (briefly) suggesting alternative avenues in international relations texts in which the workings of a similar discourse might be profitably explored.

Chapter One

‘Progress’: a genealogy

So, as we have noted, ‘progress’ is somewhat awkward to define, “though not for want of definitions on offer” (Cowen and Shenton, 1995: 28). This chapter will attempt to review the assorted ‘definitions on offer’ in literature which concerns itself with furnishing an historical account of ‘progress’. It will aim to probe not only the output of those styled as the most significant purveyors of ‘progress’, but also to ponder the conclusions reached by the reviewers of their work, with particular reference to the numerous definitions of ‘progress’ such commentators tend to advance. Given the remarkably conflicting nature of these diverse definitions, it is fortunate that the mode of analysis favoured here is genealogical; such an ‘effective’ historical approach is not troubled by the untidy discrepancies and irresolvable contradictions which upset the ‘law of coherence’ obeyed by the chroniclers of ‘continuous history’ (Foucault, 1991c: 87-8; 1972: 149). In its survey of those who have advocated ‘progress’, then, this genealogy will prepare to encounter – but not search *for* – discontinuity and contradiction; it thus does not aspire to “increase differences but [...] refuses to reduce them” (Foucault, 1972: 171). It will adopt from the first a dis-identification with the object of study (‘progress’), for it does not assume that “words have kept their meaning” (Foucault, 1991c: 76; Scott, 2004: 267). Its objective is not to track down the “immaculate origins” of ‘progress’ in a bid to distil its “exact essence” but to record the singular scenes in which ‘progress’ has played many a different rôle (Foucault, 1991c: 78). The chapter will conclude by suggesting an alternative manner of characterising ‘progress’ to that embraced by commentators discussed here; such an alternative will provide a platform from which to observe the workings of ‘progress’ in the texts examined in following chapters.

One need hardly execute an exhaustive exploration of the literature in order to apprehend that “the typical Greek was a backward-looking animal” ill-placed to fashion any ‘authentic’ notion of ‘progress’ (Dodds, 1973: 624; Whitrow, 1988: 46). And yet, the timeless Platonic world of unchanging Forms, asserts Bassett, commits society to “execute infinite progression” towards its unattainable archetype, curtailed only by periodic destruction of the cosmos (Bassett, 1928: 474-5). Aristotelian notions of the actualisation of a nature (*physis*) already potentially present, declares Nisbet, also intimates ‘progress’: “what else but political progress is his depiction of the development of the *polis* from family to village to confederation?” (Nisbet, 1980: 32). Hellenistic science and its successes of discovery and invention are also alleged to provide “expectation and actual experience of progress” (Dodds, 1973: 633); Lucretius, Archimedes and Seneca posit

epistemological ‘advance’, invoking posterity as well as past ages in their writings (Edelstein, 1967: 143-169). If, for Edelstein, “recognition of man’s [sic] limitations distinguishes classic from modern progressivism” (Edelstein, 1967: 55), a majority of commentators view such classical offerings as inimical to, or insufficient for, the founding of any ‘genuine’ concept of ‘progress’. The ‘limitations’ imposed by an adherence to cyclical history and an accompanying belief in degeneration exclude indefinite linear ‘progress’ (Bury, 1920: 7-19; Pollard, 1968: 15-18); obdurate theories of Forms and static cosmologies permit “no open future and no such thing as invention” (Dodds, 1973: 629; Carvounas, 2001: 4); a conception of ‘history’ as mere “empirical data belonging to the flux” precludes any appreciation of an intelligible, developmental sequence (Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965: 33-40). If ‘authentic’ ‘progress’ requires linear time, History, an open future, and moral not merely epistemological improvement, we can conclude with Ginsberg that classical musings “hardly amount to an anticipation of a theory of progress” (Ginsberg, 1973: 634).

If the intellectual climate of classical antiquity is largely deemed unpropitious to the emergence of ‘progress’, that of the mediæval period, dominated by an Augustinian conception of history, is generally characterised as positively hostile to it (Bury, 1920: 21; Whitrow, 1988: 85; Ginsberg, 1973: 636). Although Christian temporality posits the uniqueness of historical events and emphasises futurity – seemingly vital ‘ingredients’ for ‘progress’ - it is regularly claimed that within this period “the notion of progress could have no meaning” (Sampson, 1956: 19). As the end of history would result from apocalyptic outside intervention, the “orientation of eschatology is not of the same order as modern futurity” (Carvounas, 2002: 8). Such commentators seek to claim ‘progress’ exclusively for modernity; yet it is also asserted that the studied ire inspiring the Augustinian text was directed not only at peddlers of cyclical history and millenarism but also fellow Christians who claimed that “under the auspices of Christianity, the world had made concrete progress and further progress could be expected” (Mommsen, 1951: 357). That an Augustinian disposition hostile to earthly ‘progress’ prevailed in this period might be admitted; that the mediæval mind was generically unqualified to posit a ‘progress’ which must await modernity for its conception, however, appears dubious. If “Augustine’s book was written to *combat* the idea of mundane progress”, the unavoidable conclusion is that earthly ‘progress’ *had* already been both conceived as an ‘idea’ and asserted as ‘material’ fact (Sampson, 1956: 18; my italics).

Once again, most commentators figure the Renaissance as a “backward-looking era” whose intellectual scaffolding successfully militated against the genesis of any concept of ‘progress’ (Whitrow, 1988: 132; Zisel, 1945: 330; Koselleck, 2004: 27). Nevertheless, a fascination with antiquity and corresponding denunciation of the “thousand years of desuétude” which followed it,

alongside a burgeoning interest in science, fuels the notorious ‘quarrel of Ancients and Moderns’ prompting certain scholars to deduce (modern) ‘progress’ (Keller, 1950: 240; Norgaard, 1994: 49). Pollard finds that with Descartes “the idea of progress takes on its full sense in the modern world” (Pollard, 1968: 231; Sampson, 1956: 25)¹. With ‘nature’ established as unchanging and firmly divorced from the hand of God, Cartesian absolutism guarantees that “once a problem is solved, it is solved forever”, allowing ‘progress’ to be quantitatively measured and to unfurl inevitably, *provided that* the Cartesian method is religiously (or reasonably?) followed (Schouls, 1989: 115-7). Epistemological advance serves the higher goal of promoting “greater autonomy resulting from an expanding mastery over nature” and possesses a clear eudæmonic dimension (Schouls, 1989: 102-129). Fontenelle deploys the Cartesian tenet of a timeless mechanistic nature to contend that “nature has in her hands a certain dough which is always the same ... she fashioned Plato and Homer out of no finer clay” (Fontenelle, 1966: 241: my translation). Epistemological ‘progress’ inevitably occurs as humans with uniform capacities gradually exhaust the supply of erroneous ideas. But such offerings fail to furnish ‘genuine’ accounts of ‘progress’ for certain commentators; the revolutionary Cartesian method proscribes ‘progress’, for “fundamental to the idea is the premise of historical continuity” (Nisbet, 1980: 102-16; Bury, 1920: 68)²; Fontenelle’s epistemological ‘progress’ with no necessary social parallel, concludes Bury, anticipates but does not inaugurate ‘authentic’ ‘progress’, which must await the advent of modernity.

Commentators tend to concur to a greater extent that (modern) ‘progress’ is indeed both a subject consciously debated and a goal earnestly pursued by the Encyclopædists/Economists whose theories precede the French Revolution. Locke’s exposure of morals as conventional had permitted the elaboration of a new theory of human perfectibility; human nature may well remain universal and stubbornly unchanging, but “it did not follow that human behaviour was likewise beyond the power of social control” (Sampson, 1956: 40). Montesquieu’s researches intimated not the relativity of human nature, but the endorsement of cultural particularities as “so many permutations on a fixed theme” (Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965: 118). Both suggested ‘progress’ could be pursued by seeking to understand timeless human nature and exploit one’s findings by adjusting institutional and social contexts such that its potential could be fulfilled. For Helvétius, then, unlimited ‘progress’ was possible once one grasped that “the vices of a people are always hidden at the bottom of its legislation” (Helvétius, quoted in Sampson, 1956: 51); for Godwin, by detecting and manipulating the laws of the human mind, one would demonstrate that “man [sic] is susceptible to perpetual

¹ This formulation is also advanced with regard to Bacon (Zilsel, 1945: 346; Vickers, 1992: 496).

² Abrupt social contractarian ‘progress’ would also be evinced on this definition (Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965: 119). Conversely, Carvounas finds such “abstraction from all past and present social relations” indispensable for the emergence of ‘progress’ predicated on a future-oriented modern subject (Carvounas, 2001: 10-12).

improvement” (Pollard, 1968: 80). Enlightenment ‘progress’ is thus “relatable to the order of knowledge, to transforming ‘unknowns’ into ‘knowns’” (McGrane, 1989: 73); yet for certain commentators, the bold assertions of Helvétius and Godwin still fail to constitute ‘progress’ proper, for they lack a crucial historical dimension (Koselleck, 2004: 266; Stanley, 1969: xix).

It is only with the advent of the French Revolution, Koselleck maintains, that “history gains a temporal dimension” (Koselleck, 2004: 10). The revolutionary present “registers its contemporaneity in terms of a qualitatively new self-transcending temporality” (Osborne, 1992: 71). This is the predicament of modernity³: “the past can throw no light on the future”, now apt to kindle “expectations of a better life, just on the horizon” (Carvounas, 2001: xii-4). Contemporary geologists reject the Biblical chronology of the regnant Newtonian orthodoxy, allowing time “to be treated as a variable independent of the events it marks” (Fabian, 1983: 13)⁴. But ‘time’ is appropriated by History, whereupon “History ‘as such’ assumes the character of an independent object possessed of a quality of infinite beneficence for the first time” (Stanley, 1969: xxii; Rorty, 1978: 219)⁵. Didactic/exemplary ‘histories’ become ‘History’ in the collective singular, henceforth the domain of the unique and unrepeatable event. No longer the by-product of an understanding of the laws of human nature, ‘progress’ becomes a law of History itself. For Koselleck, then, “the concept of ‘progress’ is first minted at the end of the eighteenth century”: ‘real’ ‘Progress’ requires ‘History’ (Koselleck, 2004: 266). Such a concept is exemplified by Condorcet’s sketch of ten periods of History evidencing a ‘progress’ “with no other term than the duration of the planet [...] it will never be reversed” (Condorcet, 1795: 3). Kant’s History evidences a discernible ‘progress’ at the level of the species that has *already* occurred independently of human intentions, according to Nature’s teleology (Kant, 1970a: 42). Yet Kant writes at the moment at which humankind is becoming capable of shedding heteronomy and *consciously* pursuing (moral) ‘progress’, such that his “teleology does not preclude human individual effort; it demands it” (Carvounas, 2001: 26; Wood, 1998: 70). Future ‘progress’ here is “only a thought” but will become a fact as enlightenment inevitably proceeds, providing “artificial measures” curtailing freedom are averted (Kant, quoted in Shell, 1995: 94; Kant, 1970b: 59). Herder retains History and the universal human subject embodying a “striving for perfection”, but adds the caveat that all universals must be assessed “within the actuality of the particular”, where the particular constitutes the socio-cultural whole within which ‘progress’ unfurls (Herder, quoted in Barnard, 1969: 60)⁶. Where Helvétius and Godwin had predicated ‘progress’ on a calculated transformation of malleable human behaviour,

³ ‘Modernity’ is taken not as a period but an attitude, a mode of relating to the present. See Osborne (1992); Foucault (1984).

⁴ The Biblical time-scale is questioned prior to its categorical dismissal by Lyell in 1830 (Fabian, 1983: 12).

⁵ Foucault notes the same turn-of-the-century epistemic shift inaugurating ‘History’ (Foucault, 1996: 245).

⁶ Perhaps Vico’s influence should be mentioned here. See Berlin (1990: 60-89).

they had “never doubted that man [sic] in general has always been what he is” (Barnard, 1969: 35). Herder deploys History to arrive at a different conclusion: “rather than history illustrating eternal truths about human nature, history became the progressive development of that nature” (Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965: 138). If Enlightenment ‘reason’ required historicisation, one nevertheless discovered that there was something altogether reasonable about History.

The nineteenth-century witnesses ‘progress’ enthroned as “a regnant principle”, buttressed, we are informed, “by some striking material evidence” (Bury, 1920: 324; Chambers, 1958: 198). Hegelian philosophy endorses History as ‘progress’ yet differs from its Kantian forebear by surfacing “only when actuality is already there cut and dried” (Sampson, 1956: 206). Whilst evidence of the gradual realisation of freedom, “the absolute end and aim of this world”, confirms ‘progress’ retrospectively, to offer an account of future ‘progress’ would be to “fancy an individual can overleap his [sic] own age, jump over Rhodes” (Hegel, quoted in Carvounas, 2001: 54, 67). Marx upholds contra Hegel the “need for a theory of midwifery” which will permit humankind to ‘jump over Rhodes’ (Carvounas, 2001: 67-72). Although the Dialectic is useful, “the Idea is mystifying” (Nisbet, 1980: 259); it is the iron *material* (and progressive) laws of History which must be discerned such that true human emancipation can be prepared. The search for laws of History evidencing ‘progress’ is re-routed into a search for laws of ‘progress’ itself in Saint-Simonian and Comtean undertakings; here, for the first time, “progress realises an independent life” (Bury, 1920: 278). Both place ‘progress’ on surer scientific footing by ratifying the mediæval period as an essential stage in a progressive History, thereby cancelling the critique of those who held “if there had been one lapse ... there could be others” (Pollard, 1968: 12). Saint-Simon strove to construct a positivist History of ‘progress’ which would inform people “WHAT WILL HAPPEN, how it will happen and who will do it” (Simon, 1956: 318). This is not of the order of Cartesian inevitability which promised ‘progress’ *provided that* the method was adopted. Rather, it is inevitability *tout court*; Saint-Simonian interventions aim merely at “making people aware of what they were going to do anyway”, in the hope that obstructive individuals and their unprogressive ideas could be forestalled (Simon, 1956: 319). Comtean ‘progress’ assaults society according to equally relentless laws; though these could not be countered, their discernment would at least allow their reconciliation with order (Cowen and Shenton, 1995: 8). In the same period, Mill, equally convinced of the need for “orderly progress”, stressed its contingency on human individuality and the related rejection of custom its true expression required (Harris, 1956: 171; Mill, 1989: 70). It was, on his view, and in opposition to Saint-Simonians, eminently possible that ‘civilisation’ could (re)descend into ‘barbarism’ (Mill, 1989: 93).

Perhaps the most significant validation of nineteenth-century ‘progress’ arrives as a result of “the Darwinian blow” (Bowler, 1989: 7). Though only a wilful misreading of Darwin’s evolutionary model, based on a “branching tree with no central trunk ... no particular goal” (Bowler, 1989: 12-13), could yield the view that “all phases of universal development are aspects of a general progressive scheme designed to create order out of chaos”, evolutionism nevertheless handed vital ammunition to ‘progress’ (Fabian, 1983: 12; Rist, 1997: 42)⁷. Where Vico had insisted upon the *historical* character of ‘humanity’ and geologists increasingly signalled the *historical* character of ‘Nature’, the Cartesian/Newtonian barrier between ‘human’ and ‘animal’ had throughout maintained its integrity. This dichotomy collapsed when Darwin’s text officially “reasserted man’s [sic] animality ... man is once again a rational animal” (McGrane, 1989: 93). ‘Progress’ became an ontological matter, attaching to the human body itself. Victorian evolution-inspired faith in ‘progress’ did not foster any consensus on its character or mode of operation, however. Some explained ontological ‘progress’ by appeal to a ‘parallelism’ which stressed the pivotal rôle of stimulating environmental conditions; others favoured a cyclical understanding which augured the eventual onset of degeneration, convinced that “divine Providence not human effort was the driving force of History” (Bowler, 1989: 75). ‘Progress’ may well have acquired the status of ‘regnant principle’ in this century; yet it is worth noting that on many commentators’ definitions, a good number of its purveyors here chronicled do not present ‘authentic’ notions of the concept. As the work of *Geist* rather than individual agents, Hegelian ‘progress’ contradicts the “positing of progress and providence as incompatible” (Pollard, 1968: 97) and lacks the future-oriented and eudæmonic qualities ‘essential’ to the concept (Bury, 1920: 7). Marxist and Saint-Simonian versions supply a fixed destination to ‘progress’ which upsets the notion of ‘indefinite perfectibility’; Mill’s qualms over a re-descent into ‘barbarism’ preclude a necessarily uni-directional History; social evolutionism quite simply removes human agency from the ‘progressive’ equation.

Accounts of ‘progress’ often draw to an end by presenting a narrative for the twentieth-century in a singularly cheerless tone (Nisbet, 1980: 317-348; Whitrow, 1988: 179-183; Wagar, 1967: 62). Ginsberg’s appraisal strikes the note: “from the end of the nineteenth-century, doubt about the reality of progress began to be heard more and more frequently” (Ginsberg, 1963: 647). Freud and Heisenberg are usually cited in the context of an irrevocable offensive on the epistemological foundations of human rationality and physical science, both so crucial for ‘progress’ (Bowler, 1989: 199; Marcus, 1961: 128; Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965: 266). For Nisbet, the decline of Western ‘civilisation’, loss of faith in ‘reason’ and twentieth-century racisms and nationalisms confirm that presently “progress can breathe only with the greatest difficulty” (Nisbet, 1980: 348). A surfeit of

⁷ At times encouraged by Darwin himself (Bowler, 1989: 144; Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965: 225).

‘doubters and discontents’ begin to denounce the vacuity, illusion or duplicity of the term⁸. Whether ‘progress’ has indeed fallen to “a low and sorely beset status in our century” (Nisbet, 1980: xx), or instead exhibits a notable resilience, will be discussed in more detail below; of interest here is the stark choice commentators tend to deduce from contemporary scepticism: trust must be averred in a rehabilitated ‘progress’ or acquiescence in “the mythology of nihilism” conceded (Ginsberg, 1973: 649; Pollard, 1968: 184; Carvounas, 2001: 105).

We take our leave of this literature on ‘progress’ much enlightened yet still unable to define the term comprehensively; indeed, it appears that it is precisely this urge to offer an incontrovertible definition of ‘progress’ which unifies the literature whilst simultaneously rendering its conclusions so contrary. Although beset by internal contradictions, then, this literature is chiefly engaged in a move to decide what ‘progress’ *actually is*. If we fall in with Bury, for whom ‘genuine’ ‘progress’ *requires* esteem for the past, indefinite futurity, human agency and a eudæmonic thrust, Aristotle, Fontenelle and even Kant must be relinquished. Especially dubious are Hegelian and Saint-Simonian offerings in which “the idea of progress *lapses* into the idea of Providence” (Bury, 1920: 5; my italics). Nisbet widens our choice, yet the mandatory “step by step historical continuity” disqualifies Descartes and Bacon (Nisbet, 1980: 102). Pollard’s insistence that ‘progress’ be eligible for “scientific predictions based on laws” (Pollard, 1968: 9) is at odds with a widespread insistence on human agency; Koselleck’s requisite that ‘Progress’ perforce express a philosophy of History banishes numerous contributions, for “History is itself a historical phenomenon” of relatively recent date (Young, 1990: 74). If we amalgamate these definitional exclusions, Aristotelian ‘progress’ appears too bounded, Cartesian ‘progress’ too ruptural, Hegelian ‘progress’ too providential, Marxist ‘progress’ too Hegelian, evolutionary ‘progress’ too involuntary; Condorcet alone satisfies each of these multiple ‘authenticity’ criteria. If we reverse the exercise and combine definitional inclusions, we find *all* aforementioned writers invoke ‘authentic’ ‘progress’, even Augustine (Nisbet, 1980: 21). A second feature broadly characterising this literature is a tendency to divorce ‘progress’ as ‘idea’ from ‘progress’ as ‘material reality’. Although commentators posit ‘progress’ principally as a matter of faith, then, it is nevertheless periodically evoked as a matter of fact. Thus we are informed more than once that “the *idea* of progress ... was an expression of *real* progress” (Keller, 1950: 240; italics in original; Nisbet, 1980: 19; Dodds, 1973: 633; Pollard, 1968: 15). Implicit here is the notion that in certain epochs, ‘progress’ can be simply *seen*; in the main, however, ‘progress’ is “only a *thought*”, “an essentially benign *idea*”, despite being occasionally *corrupted* by racisms or nationalisms (Kant, quoted in Shell, 1995: 94; Nisbet, 1980: 289; my italics). This dualism helps convey dissent along pre-ordained lines; ‘progress’ is largely critiqued on account of an absence of

⁸ Spengler, Toynbee, Proudhon and Sorel are oft-cited names (Nisbet, 1980: 322; Young, 1990: 19; Ginsberg, 1973: 637; Stanley, 1969).

coincidence between its material and ideational planes; the problem is ideology or deception, the response, a more democratic 'progress' or capitulation to nihilism (Stanley, 1969: xxxvi; Ginsberg, 1973: 649).

How might one characterise a recurrent systemacity of notions without incurring the obligation to discipline and exclude those which do not correspond to the stated requirements of one's elected list of ingredients? How might one query rather than implicitly assume the relationship between the 'progress' one *says* and the 'progress' one *sees*? How might one problematise 'progress' without operating within a framework which either infers/laments its self-evident presence or manifest absence? Perhaps this task could be gainfully undertaken by considering 'progress' as *discursive practice* rather than theory, idea or material reality. In order to clarify the framework of analysis employed below, a diversion into what is understood by 'discursive practices' might be expedient.

Discourse: what *différance* does it make?

The notion of ‘discursive practices’ on which I will draw derives from a Foucauldian understanding of power/knowledge. For philosophers and intellectuals, Foucault asserts, “truth does not belong to the order of power but shares an original affinity with freedom” (Foucault, 1979: 60). Acceptance of this dichotomous move is evidenced both by those who aim to bridge the gulf between ‘monastic’ truth-seekers and ‘profane’ power-holders, for “we owe a duty to speak truth to power, not hide our knowledge” (Wallace, 1996: 305), as well as by those who militate to entrench that same gulf in order to cleanse the “the truth-seeking function of academia” of its polluting alliance with power (Krippendorf, 1987: 212). Knowledge/truth, then, should either be presented to power in an attempt to shame it into accountability or kept apart from it in a bid to preserve its critical purchase. Foucault conversely endeavours to stress the *productivity* of power and its consequent rather more intimate liaison with knowledge/truth. In examples drawn from methods of punishment, Foucault disputes that the emergence of ‘the delinquent’ apparently heretofore condemned to unhappy anonymity and perpetual misunderstanding in her condition of ‘delinquency’ represents the belated discovery of a long-obscured category of ontology. Rather, ‘the delinquent’, whom the prison system professes to first encounter and then study, constitutes the *effect* of a knowledge of ‘delinquency’ (criminology) facilitated by the disciplinary and individualising practices of that same system (Foucault, 1991a: 17). Similarly, knowledgeable practices of sexology/psychiatry allow ‘homosexuality’ to become “less a habitual sin than a singular nature” (Foucault, 1979: 43). Power inheres in this possibility of deducing a “doer behind the deed” and having one’s conclusions deemed ‘knowledge’ (Butler, 1990: 142). To claim ‘homosexuality’ is *produced* by the very knowledge that delineates its contours is not to claim that such a production is merely chimerical; ‘reality’ is *but* such productions (Foucault, 1991a: 194). Knowledge here is not connected to power in the familiar sense of being at its service; rather, it is only via power relations that knowledge manages to ‘be’ knowledge at all. What counts as knowledge at any one time is therefore a *political* matter; it is also a discursive one, for “it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined” (Foucault, 1979: 100).

It is not ontological integrity which bestows ‘reality’ on objects/subjects, then, but knowledgeable discursive practices which “systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1981: 49). The example of the prison is not deployed in order to expose modern punishment as an especially power-ridden, identity-fabricating régime; rather, it serves to illustrate a “form of power that makes individuals subjects”, operative throughout modern society (Foucault, 2000: 331). Such a “power without bludgeon” functions discursively; discourse constitutes both subject and object, neither of which pre-exist themselves (Foucault, 1980a: 118). Indeed, it is the very triumph of power

to render certain objects ‘see-able’, endorse certain statements as ‘sayable’ and produce a certain reality as ‘natural’, whilst simultaneously bestowing the effect of their “exteriority to discourse” (Yeğenoğlu, 1998: 16). Such is the effect of power: “an effect called reality” (Mitchell, 1989: 235). If discursive power is deemed reality-making in its own right, a discursive analysis cannot then refrain from posing *political* questions; but it must relinquish the “exegetic attitude” apt to address such questions to a putative sub-text or pre-discursive subject, and resolve instead to remain “at the level of discourse itself” (Foucault, 1972: 54, 120, 48). Discourses, more precisely, constitute groups of statements whose rules operate “according to a uniform anonymity on all individuals who undertake to speak in the discursive field” (Foucault, 1972: 63). A discrete discourse does *not* constitute a monolithic, coherent totality in which all subjects are compelled to deliver identical or even similar utterances; indeed, discourses facilitate the advancing of discrepant and contradictory opinions, “making it possible within a particular set of concepts, to play different games” (Foucault, 1972: 37). Discursive systemacity is encountered at quite another level: in the systematic *relations* established between highly dispersed objects whose identity is never fixed (Foucault, 1972: 75).

Alongside an account of what *is* entailed by a Foucauldian understanding of discourse, it is perhaps prudent to offer a clarification of what is *not*. The discursive is not equivalent to the linguistic, the representational⁹ or the ideational, all of which invoke their opposites (the non-linguistic, the real, the material). Such dichotomies are collapsed by a discursive understanding which denies the possibility of any extra-/non-/supra-discursive realm which does not require prior (discursive) delimitation, leaving such a realm in the perverse position of having being “formed by the very discourse from which it seeks to free itself” (Butler, quoted in Yeğenoğlu, 1998: 21)¹⁰. Indeed, Foucault underlines that “a statement must have a *material* existence” (Foucault, 1972: 100; my italics). Discourse similarly should not be conflated with ideology, for to posit ideological distortion of ‘truth’ begs the question, here posed, of the status of ‘truth’ *itself*, as well as implying a superstructural location, again dependent on a prior (discursive) move (Foucault, 1980a: 118). It is furthermore mistaken to regard discourses as structures; reliance on unruly signification ensures “no discursive formation is a sutured totality” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 106). Fixation of meaning around ‘nodal points’ is always temporary, unstable and contingent; it therefore demands the exclusion or suppression of potentially subversive elements which would expose this contingency. Lack of recourse to an extra-discursive ontology also renders discursive construction dependent on constant repetition and performance; it is in variation on repetition within discursively constructed subject-positions that possibilities for ‘agency’ inhere and questions of responsibility reside (Butler, 1990: 145).

⁹ To avoid such dichotomous implications, I will refer to discursive, not representational, practices.

¹⁰ Foucault actually retains the ‘non-discursive’ (Foucault, 1972: 68, 157). I follow Laclau and Mouffe (1985:107).

‘Progress’ as discursive practice

We can now revisit the questions posed at the end of the genealogy and contemplate how a reformulation of ‘progress’ as discursive practice rather than self-evident materiality or benign idea might alter our terrain of analysis. Firstly, by defining a systemacity of notions discursively rather than taxonomically, in contradistinction to aforementioned commentators, we can style Aristotle, Descartes and Hegel as participants within a singular discursive formation despite their mutually antagonistic versions of ‘progress’. By abandoning the urge to declare what ‘progress’ *is*, a discursive understanding instead seeks systemacity in a set of relations established at “a more functional level” (Young, 2001: 401). Indeed, the contradictions and inconsistencies which upset the precision pursued by taxonomic imaginations wreak quite the opposite effect on the tenacity of discourse: they “reinforce the degree to which any discourse will be in a permanent state of interaction” (Young, 2001: 403). Secondly, by collapsing the material/ideational dichotomy, we can refigure doubters and critics as superficially opposed to, yet functionally aligned with, the discourse examined here. By rejecting the assertion that one can *simply see* ‘progress’ (for what can be ‘seen’ depends on the discourses of truth which circulate at any one time), critics who claim ‘there is no progress’/‘progress is an ideological façade’ by pointing to “the dumb existence of a reality” in which ‘progress’ is absent entrench rather than undermine such a discourse (Foucault, 1972: 49). If the power of discourse is to construct the very object it invokes, to seek a more authentic truth about that same object somehow misses the point¹¹. Thirdly, the questioning of the material/ideational dichotomy also requires a critique of ‘progress’ of a quite different order from those chronicled above. If discourse is taken as constitutive rather than merely reflective of ‘reality’, to imagine one can *just say* ‘progress’ becomes problematic. If discourse is inevitably productive, we might enquire into *what* such a discourse produces. An endeavour to decide what ‘progress’ *is* must be exchanged for the rather different task of examining what ‘progress’ *does*; such a task cannot elide the inescapably *political* quality of such discursive productions¹².

So where *does* the regularity reside which entitles us to posit a singular discourse on ‘progress’? If ‘progress’ is *not necessarily* developmental or revolutionary, eudæmonic or material, inevitable or contingent, prospective or retrospective, structural or agential, modern or ancient, ontological or epistemological, as diverse commentators strive to convince us, what might constitute an alternative

¹¹ Said sometimes does this by implying Orientalist discourse *distorts* “authentic human encounters” (Said, 1979: 68). See also Clifford (1988: 258-264).

¹² No pretension is made to assert networks of causality between particular discourses and specific policies. As illustrated below, it is quite evident that articulation within the same discourse is neither necessary nor sufficient to *cause* the espousal of any particular policy (Foucault, 1996: xv).

definition which does not approach these contradictions as inauthenticities to be sanitised or excluded? A discursive analysis would suggest that a discourse on ‘progress’ is identifiable simply on account of the regular set of relations it produces between conditions/states/modes of existence which it orders both temporally and normatively; it is, then, a strategy of a normative temporalisation. But what does such a strategy *do*? I would propose that in the literature examined, despite an absence of criteria to unite writers’ definitions, what is shared at a more functional level is a relationality posited between ‘progress’ and ‘not-progress’. As discourse operates via the exclusion/suppression of certain possibilities, might the consistently excluded (thus necessary and constitutive) condition of possibility of a discourse on ‘progress’ be the production of the primitive/savage/barbarian/underdeveloped Other exemplifying ‘not-progress’? As labelling of ‘non-progressive Others’ has varied widely¹³, I will instead allude to *anachronistic space*, a concept employed by Anne McClintock to connote those in Victorian Britain deemed “prehistoric, atavistic and irrational ... epistemological problems that could be described only by negative analogy” (McClintock, 1995: 40-56). Such a ‘space’, on my reading, is not geographical but discursive; it is a space constitutive of subjects, definable only in relation to what they are not: they are not ‘progress’. As the genealogy on ‘progress’ has demonstrated, the conceptual resources available in diverse periods (‘History’, ‘Nature’, ‘man’) differ vastly; what ‘progress’ *is* thus shifts constantly; perhaps what ‘progress’ *does*, however, is more consistent: it produces anachronistic space. Aristotelian anachronistic space contains those “contemporary barbaric peoples” not *yet* organised into a *polis* (Pieterse, 2000: 18); Cartesian anachronistic space houses those *still* ignorant of knowledge derived from first causes, which “alone distinguishes us from savages and barbarians” (Schouls, 1989: 141); Hegelian anachronistic space is exemplified by Africa, “the land of childhood ... lying beyond the days of self-conscious History” (Hegel, quoted in Salter, 2002: 32); for social Darwinists, the body of the non-European simply *is* anachronistic space (Bowler, 1989: 109). It is not therefore the identity of such space nor the policies enacted in its regard which donate unity to the discursive formation, for these are evidently dynamic¹⁴; it is, quite simply, the prior move of establishing a regular set of normatively- and temporally-ordered relations between such a space and its ‘progressive’ opposite.

The following chapters will thus enquire into what the discursive practice of ‘progress’ *does* when regularly deployed in colonial/contemporary trusteeship literature and (pluralist) international society texts which oppose its revival. In keeping with the discursive approach outlined above, the

¹³ There are important differences between these Others (for example, between the (redeemable) infantile savage and the (irredeemable) adolescent barbarian (Salter, 2002: 20-24)); I am only interested in ‘gathering’ these differences to the extent that each is the product of a normative temporalising discourse on ‘progress’.

¹⁴ ‘Polyvalent mobility’ captures the quality of particularly resilient discourses deployed for a variety of often contradictory aims (Stoler, 2002: 160).

flavour of the analysis will be neither ontological ('what *is* progress?'), epistemological ('how well do these texts *reflect/suppress/distort* a given reality of 'progress' or 'backwardness'?), nor hermeneutic ('what do commentators *really mean* by 'progress'?), but pragmatic: "a flat, empirical little question: 'what happens?'" (Foucault, 2000: 337). It will ask *what happens* in trusteeship debates when a discourse on 'progress' is invoked, what type of subjects are constituted, and, as discourse inevitably circulates via power relations, what type of politics results. But before embarking on such a textual analysis, what, it might be asked, has 'progress' to do with international relations....?

Chapter Two

‘Progress’ and the ‘international’

A genealogy which fails to yield an uncontested definition of ‘progress’ nevertheless succeeds in underlining the legitimacy of the definitional contest itself. Twentieth-century international theory queries such legitimacy. As Wight memorably asserted, ‘progress’, deemed achievable within the state by political theory, serves to produce the ‘international’ as a realm “where political action is most regularly necessitous”, rendering it an unambiguous stranger to ‘progress’ by fiat (Wight, 1995: 19-26). Indeed, a cybernetically-revived Thomas More, surely disorientated by the accomplishments of national ‘progress’, would scarcely struggle to recognise the script of “the same old melodrama” ceaselessly enacted by the repetitious temporality of the ‘international’ (Wight, 1995: 25). Whether this renders the ‘international’ home to the “theory of survival” (Wight, 1995: 32) or the necessary extension of the “theory of the good life” (Jackson, 1990a: 265), ‘domestic’ and ‘international’ remain either *immediately* (Jackson) or *ultimately* (Wight) distinct, with ‘progress’, or its (im)possibility, accounting for the partition. For many contemporary commentators, such dogged insistence on the ‘international’ as *sui generis* beyond improvement is demoted by the “spirit of 1989” which turns to contemplate ‘progress’ - or rather, *returns* to contemplations already underway before the “bizarre détour” of positivist fervour and Cold War politics (Booth, 1999: 44; Smith, 1992: 489). That “the 1990s have much in common with the post-World War I period” is evidenced by revisionist studies which uncover early debates on security communities, democratic peace and ‘progress’, figured either as *achievable* possibility (Rich, 1995: 82; Long, 1995: 313) or *inevitable* “directional historical process” (Osiander, 1998: 421-5; Schmidt, 1998a: 454). In contemporary narratives affirmative of “the teleology of the emerging international community” (Jackson, 2000: 356) and the “emancipatory potential” of international theory (Smith, 1992: 506)¹⁵, we encounter a (re)conceptualisation of international time in a vocabulary hospitable to ‘progress’.

It is in such a context that, according to Bain, “the resurrection of trusteeship and the notion of civilisation in which it is intelligible must be situated” (Bain, 2003a: 155). The concept of trust comprises various consistent features but “does not specify a practice of a peculiar sort” (Bain, 2003a: 63). Burke’s early formulation emphasises that authority over persons legitimated by

¹⁵ I will (briefly) discuss such narratives in the conclusion.

‘chartered’ rights should be “exercised ultimately for their benefit”¹⁶ in the form of a trust whose essence is “to be rendered accountable” (Burke, 1899: 439). If to benefit the governed is trusteeship’s ambition and accountability its essence, what compels its establishment? Bain suggests “trusteeship assumes the claim to rule must be subject to a test of fitness”, a test self-styled trustees believe their wards have failed (Bain, 2003a: 21)¹⁷. Yet by implying “not only administration of property but development of the ward” (Wright, 1968: 11), trust also supposes such inadequacy enjoys a temporary quality; supervised ‘progress’ answers “the dilemma posed by the manifest inequality of the human condition” (Bain, 2003a: 176). Trusteeship thus furnishes us with a valuable site from which to probe the workings of a discourse on ‘progress’, to which, as an international practice, it can be seen to doubly appeal: via the embodiment of its own ‘progressive’ assumptions by definition as well as by virtue of its assault on the ‘anti-progressive’ temporality of the international¹⁸.

Before turning to trusteeship texts, a note on the putative difference between ‘progress’ and ‘development’ is perhaps required. ‘Development’ as intentional practice is sometimes figured as a nineteenth-century invention providing an orderly counterpoint to ‘progress’ as inevitable process (Cowen and Shenton, 1995: 3). Although the Saint-Simonian/Comtean variant of ‘progress’ was certainly offset by planned ‘development’, we have also noted that ‘progress’ is not *essentially* a “natural process without intentionality” (Cowen and Shenton, 1995: 6). Indeed, it has more usually been constructed as an outcome contingent on human agency, whilst ‘development’ has frequently appeared as ‘natural’ process (Rist, 1997: 29). The distinction between ‘progress’ which *just happens* and ‘development’ which one *intentionally implements* cannot then be sustained; one can resolve to *make* ‘progress’ just as one can undertake to *do* ‘development’. As such contradictions nourish rather than undermine discourse, the categorical distinction sometimes asserted between ‘progress’/‘development’ is understood to occur *within* a singular discursive formation; I will thus proceed to consider ‘development’ an integral component of the discourse on ‘progress’, not its rival or antithesis. This chapter will thus ponder the work realised by such a discourse in terms of its regular effects in colonial and contemporary trusteeship texts and will conclude by reflecting on the type of politics which results.

¹⁶ This is already present in Vitoria (1991: 251, 291).

¹⁷ We may thus consider it paternalism. See Dworkin (1968) and Fotion (1979).

¹⁸ Colonial texts only exemplify the former, pre-decolonisation trust territories not being considered ‘international’ (Bull, 1984: 126).

Attractive children, adolescent peoples

A brief survey of colonial trusteeship literature confirms a veritable abundance of references to both ‘progress’ and ‘development’ (Barnes, 1935, 1938; Hetherington, 1978; Hodgson, 1932; Huxley, 1932; Leyes, 1928; Lugard, 1926a, 1926b; MacDonald, 1907; Mill, 1926; Robinson, 1965; Smuts, 1928; Van Maanen-Helmer, 1929). This discursive unanimity contrasts sharply with the markedly heterogeneous and often mutually antagonistic quality of views on questions concerning the motivations of empire-builders, the behaviour of colonial powers¹⁹ and the optimum method by which to ensure the maturation of what all agree are “adolescent peoples” (Barnes, 1935: 154). One current of commentators advocates a swift and revolutionary *tabula rasa* approach to ‘progress’: “and it is a progress which need occasion no regrets, for we are not destroying any old or interesting system, but simply introducing order into blank, uninteresting, brutal barbarism” (Eliot, quoted in Doty 1996a: 60; Bain, 2003a: 48; Bowler, 1989: 2). This is countered by those who seek to recall “what a valuable gentleman [sic] Time is” (Malcolm, quoted in Bain, 2003a: 48), a position often coupled with a more affirmative appraisal of the value of ‘native traditions’ (Mill, 1926: 139; Lugard, 1926a: 217; Hetherington, 1978: 65). Such a stance, perhaps best exemplified by Lugardian Indirect Rule, attracts the ire of ‘radical’ critics seeking to instigate a “more rapid modernising with the explicit goal of independence” (Leyes, 1928: 26; Barnes, 1935: 155; MacDonald, 1907: 109). As constraints of space augur ill for a wholly comprehensive discussion of this literature, I will focus selectively here on debates over Lugardism, which provide an interesting entry-point from which to explore the discursive workings of ‘progress’/‘development’.

For Lugard, “progress and evolution are a law of nature”; ‘progress’ is, primarily, an ontological matter (Lugard, 1926a: 91). ‘Progress’ is figured as a sweeping force of Comtean inexorability and social Darwinist substance, embodied by the ‘higher races’ which beset atavistic African society “for good or ill”, much as the ‘progressive’ Romans assailed the “wild barbarians of these islands” (Lugard, 1926a: 5, 618). The coming of the European thus requires the ‘primitive’ “to cope with ideas 1000 years in advance of his [sic] mental equipment” (Lugard, 1926a: 215, 75). Such modest equipment left to its own devices has evolved neither “a written language ... an approach to culture” nor anything resembling an ethics; its innate character is animalistic, child-like, though not wholly unlikeable (Lugard, 1926a: 72; 1926b: 64). In such circumstances, ‘development’, the careful process by which Europeans direct change (Smuts, 1928: 60), must constitute a slow affair; to favour haste would beckon chaos by demanding “an acrobatic feat in evolution of which humanity is quite

¹⁹ See, for example, Lugard (1926a: 615-8), Barnes (1935: 11), MacDonald (1907: 109).

incapable” (Lawley, quoted in Hetherington, 1978: 65). ‘Order’ is a nodal point in a discourse on ‘development’ which advocates Indirect Rule as the system adequate to cushioning the initial blow of ‘progress’: continuity is thereby bestowed on native life, subjects prompted to ‘develop’ by dint of “their own efforts, in their own way” and “slavish imitation of Europeans” avoided (Lugard, 1926a: 209-15). ‘Development’ will never yield a subject possessing the personal initiative and inborn responsibility proper to “English-speaking races”; it should aim instead to produce a more efficient, yet still peculiarly African, subject (Lugard, 1926b: 66). Such an evolutionist reading of ‘progress’ is increasingly condemned by inter-war commentators as racist and retrograde; Indirect Rule is styled “a vehicle of reaction not progress” prone to licence “the preservation of mental atrophy natural to primitive barbarism” (Hetherington, 1978: 142; Hodgson, 1932: 404). A new faith in native *potential* is affirmed, for “there is no evidence of any natural incapacity in Africans” (Leyes, 1928: 25). Hadn’t the Swazi, with a little instruction, successfully “lifted himself [sic] out of the slough of barbarism” (Hodgson, 1932: 405)? ‘Progress’ becomes fastened around a new nodal point: “there was growing conviction *education* would be key to development of all kinds” (Hetherington, 1978: 110; my italics). Leyes strikes the note: “It is our duty to ... share our relative enlightenment, for which we deserve no credit, with the less enlightened, whose ignorance is no fault of their own” (Leyes, 1928: 121). ‘Progress’ shifts to constitute an epistemological matter, its absence ascribable to “lack of opportunity” rather than ontological primitiveness (Leyes, 1928: 25). A more robust engagement implementing “policies based on knowledge and research” into “the thought of native peoples” and offering “speedy training” would surely guarantee ‘progress’ towards self-government (Hetherington, 1978: 20; Van Maanen-Helmer, 1929: 276; Barnes, 1935: 288). That this could ensue within a foreseeable future, significantly condensing the long stretch anticipated by Lugardian evolutionary time, is demonstrated by the figuring of trustees as “schoolmasters anxious to retire” (Leyes, 1928: 26).

To return to our original question, *what happens* when a discourse on ‘progress’/‘development’ is consistently articulated in such texts? Certainly, the elaboration of a settled definition of ‘progress’ and a consensus on trusteeship policy does *not* happen; there is an evident (and surely irreconcilable) gulf between evolutionism-inspired Indirect Rule and speedy education-based ‘modernisation’ followed by full independence. Understood ideationally, ‘progress’ might be undercut or enfeebled by such definitional contradictions; indeed, a majority of commentators from chapter one would surely dispute that social Darwinist Lugardism could even qualify as ‘progress’ in the first place. Understood discursively, however, such tensions can be regarded as ultimately reinforcing of a discourse whose “*citationary nature* ... functions to anchor its power” (Yeğenoğlu, 1998: 81; my italics). *What happens* by dint of such recurrent allusions to ‘progress’/‘development’ is not, then,

that one succeeds in coming to know the essence to which such terms refer; no more does one manage to grasp the nature of the lack whose mirror image they provide. *What happens*, quite simply, is that a regular set of *relations* is consistently posited between such terms and their opposites, resulting in the production of what I have called anachronistic space, whose character, cause and cure might shift, but whose very *existence* is never disputed. ‘Progress’/‘development’ in the debate over Lugardism thus supply a discursive space whose effects perhaps furnish an illustration of “the double bind of oppositional discourse” (Doty, 1996a: 67). In taking issue with the racist tenor of a Lugardism which deems ‘enlightened’ ideas unsuitable for the ‘mental equipment’ of native subjects, ‘radical’ commentators succeed in disputing ontological ‘primitiveness’ whilst simultaneously entrenching a set of relations discursively established at a more functional level which produce such subjects as *presently* anachronistic, on account of a (more amendable) epistemological ‘backwardness’. They thus contest the lowly status of (their) ‘mental equipment’ only to endorse the lofty status of (our) ‘enlightened’ ideas and end up concluding with Lugard that, *for the time being*, no “programme of education could be generated from inside Africa” (Hetherington, 1978: 110).

Such a ‘double bind’ in which colonial tropes are at once challenged and rehearsed occurs, I would argue, because of the asymmetrical subject-positions produced by the ‘progress’/‘development’ discourse. As trusteeship opens a discursive space in which utterances are delivered not *about* ‘progress’ but *in terms of it*, a prior move is realised before debate commences: the production of ‘progressive’ subjects who *know* or *can debate* the meaning of ‘progress’ and another group of subjects whose “minds are not capable of so great an effort” (Mill, 2002: 487). As ‘progressive subject’, Lugard respects difference whilst knowing himself a representative of the most ‘evolved’ racial type; Leyes, another ‘progressive subject’, refuses such hierarchy only to fall foul of the “paradox of ethnocentric egalitarianism” (Young, 2001: 32), a logical conclusion only if one has already established that ‘our’ ideas are indeed the ‘progressive’ ones. Certain ‘radical’ commentators occasionally appear to question ‘progress’ itself. Hodgson’s disgust at the disagreeable superiority displayed by trustees, an attitude which “should ... be repudiated by ‘civilised’ people”, impels her to muse “perhaps, after all, we are *not yet* civilised” (Hodgson, 1932: 408; my italics). Barnes arrives at a similarly startling conclusion: “Western civilisation is progressive in its command over nature, but *perhaps in no other way*”; even such material ‘progress’ only inaugurates “the ‘living death’ of modern civilisation” (Barnes, 1935: 55, 154; my italics). Yet such extraordinary statements do not provoke the disruption of the categorical distinction between ‘civilised’ and ‘primitive’; they merely serve to remind those who mistakenly champion race or capitalism of the fundamentally ethical dimension of ‘progress’. Even if ‘we’ are *not yet* ‘civilised’ or have sometimes wrought ‘bad

progress', it is nevertheless supposed that 'we' are still more 'civilised' than 'them' and thus singularly equipped to identify 'good progress' in the guise of humanitarian/'philosophical' as opposed to 'material' 'civilisation' (Barnes, 1935: 55). Nothing valuable, it is intimated, can emerge from anachronistic space, excepting the "*undisclosed possibility* of life we all feel in relation to children" (Barnes, 1935: 155; my italics). The effect of the 'progress'/'development' discourse here is thus to produce anachronistic space and its corresponding subjectivities; the consequences of such productions will be discussed in the conclusion to this chapter, following a discussion of contemporary trusteeship literature.

Modern debellations, hapless individuals

A swift perusal of contemporary literature advancing trusteeship as a possible remedy for ‘failed states’/‘war-torn territories’ confirms Nisbet’s fears: ‘progress’, textually omnipresent in its colonial predecessors but presently “somewhat tainted and worn out” (Sbert, 1993: 194), appears indeed to have fallen to “a low and sorely beset status” (Nisbet, 1980: xx; Chopra, 2000; Helman and Ratner, 1993; Indyck, 2003; Johnson, 1993; Kaplan, 2002; Langford, 1999; Lyon, 1993; Mallaby, 2002; Pfaff, 1995; Wilde, 2001). As I have suggested above, however, it is not so much a *word* that we seek to pursue as a *discursive practice*; this requires tracking down not an item of vocabulary but a *set of relations* productive of a regularity in dispersion. It is advanced here that this set of relations is currently produced by a discourse on ‘development’, not *functionally* separable from ‘progress’ at a discursive level, even if, linguistically, it constitutes a discrete term. It is the perpetual figure of the ‘development’ bank and agency, then, which suffuses the contemporary intertext on trusteeship, alongside certain other discourses instituting a similar relationality. As in their colonial forebears, dissension abounds in contemporary texts; questions pertaining to the duration of trusteeships, responsibility for the ‘anarchical’ state of hypothetically/actually-entrusted territories, trustees’ rôle and the integrity of their intentions draw no consistent responses. In a certain sense, however, the fervent debates over the desirable socio-economic end-state of entrusted societies encountered, for example, in Barnes (1935: 292) is absent in contemporary literature, in which capitalism and liberal democracy appear to receive the unanimous nod. As constraints of space again prevent thorough discussion, I will examine three principal ways in which ‘progress’/‘development’ can be seen to effect its discursive operations in these texts.

When Burke outlined the contours of a responsible trusteeship policy, Britain was in India and had already fabricated a “map of misgovernment”; the causal responsibility thereby incurred suggested Britain was “in a special manner engaged to the redress” (Burke, 1899: 440, 497). Instituting a trusteeship in the contemporary world presents a dilemma of rather more extensive proportions; before standards of accountability and length of mandate can be debated, the question of *which* territories should be entrusted greets commentators. It is in their answers to that question that we encounter a familiar, though inverted, set of discursive relations; where ‘progress’ has previously occupied the discursive limelight, producing anachronistic space as its necessary underside, in these texts anachronistic space takes centre stage whilst ‘progress’ shifts to constitute the invisible norm. States which appear as likely candidates for contemporary trusteeship thus display all the symptoms of a “descent into anarchy” (Helman and Ratner, 1993: 3; Mallaby, 2002: 2; Indyck, 2003: 54; Lyon, 1993: 107; Pfaff, 1995: 6). Rent by scenes of “divisive and fratricidal policies”, “hysterical tribalisms ... insensate and feral struggles conducted by ignorant and uprooted, anomic young men”

betraying “the emotional immaturity of teenage fighters”, they constitute exemplars of “a postmodern barbarism” (Kaplan, 2002: 64; Pfaff, 1995: 3-6; Gros, 1996: 459). What happens when such discursive practices appealing to Hobbesian imagery²⁰ are deployed as the choice mode of engaging with such violence? Without referring explicitly to ‘progress’ or ‘civilisation’, anachronistic space is produced in the form of barbaric, adolescent subjects whose behaviour is constructed not merely as deplorably violent, but as emblematic of a pre-modern, irrational, chaotic and ultimately aimless sort of violence unfit for the twenty-first century. ‘Progressive’ subjects are constructed as those who recognise such violence as what ‘we’ used to do: “We know all about that. Look at our history ...there is no invidious moral distinction between us” (Pfaff, 1995: 6). There may be no moral distinction, but there clearly is a temporal one; such is the set of relations installed by a discourse on ‘progress’.

Once it is accepted that such Hobbesian territories must be rescued via trusteeship, what rôle does the discursive practice of ‘progress’/‘development’ play? Although ‘development’ has long formed part of international aid packages, it is noted that “an obstinate group of countries has refused to respond to these approaches” (Mallaby, 2002: 3); such areas defy conventional ‘development’ frameworks and thus compel a more robust and intrusive intervention to “put them back on a progressive course” (Pfaff, 1995: 6). ‘Development’ will be instituted with World Bank and IMF assistance (Chopra, 2000: 29; Indyck, 2003: 54; Kaplan, 2002: 46; Mallaby, 2002: 7); it will entail ‘community-’ and ‘nation-building’ (Indyck, 2003: 54; Wilde, 2001: 605), instruction in ‘good governance’ and ‘democratic political culture’ (Mallaby, 2002: 4; Pfaff, 1995: 6), fostering of ‘civil society’ and ‘empowerment’ (Chopra, 2000: 30; Kaplan, 2002: 51-6; Pfaff, 1995: 3) and ‘economic restructuring’ (Kaplan, 2002: 45; Pfaff, 1995: 6). ‘Underdeveloped’ subjects are likened to ‘hapless’ individuals “utterly incapable of functioning on their own”, hopelessly in need of an injection of dynamism from the ‘developed’ world (Helman and Ratner, 1993: 12). They are constructed as presently unable to handle power or sever themselves from ‘militants’, but “would get their state in three years ... if they were seen to be assuming their responsibilities” by ‘developed’ monitors of their ‘performance’ (Indyck, 2003: 56-62). They must undergo “an introduction to local democracy” provided by international ‘experts’ able to “prepare them, by example and prescription, for sound representative government” and separate them from ‘militant’ leaders deemed illegitimate (Chopra, 2000: 30-36). In Kaplan’s extensive document, ‘underdeveloped’ subjects emerge as immature, recalcitrant and bemused by globalising economic forces beyond their comprehension. As such subjects tend to suffer “the administrative equivalent of aid dependency [...] Western powers want local parties to accept responsibility for their futures sooner rather than later” (Kaplan, 2002: 51, 41).

²⁰ The ‘state of nature’ and its relation to ‘progress’ will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3, below.

If the ‘development’ process is hurried, however, ‘underdeveloped’ subjects will fail to elect the type of futures which ‘developed’ Westerners know are most suitable for them; they might still “choose the safe option ...of the same nationalist parties” or avoid voting for “the measures necessary [for] a ... self-sustaining economy” (Kaplan, 2002: 41, 53). Unschooled in democratic culture, such subjects must “learn from their experiences under the watchful eye of international specialists” (Kaplan, 2002: 51). Such ‘specialists’ constitute the ‘developed’ subjects capable of ‘monitoring’ a potentially-biased local judiciary, assessing “the ability of local leadership to meet benchmarks” and overriding ‘free and fair’ election results which instate ‘unsustainable’ policies; ‘developed’ subjects can thus exercise exceptional powers responsibly (Kaplan, 2002: 35, 63, 52). Recourse to ‘development’ discourse here produces anachronistic space in the form of ‘underdeveloped’ subjects whose political preferences and behaviours emerge unfit for the contemporary world, whilst simultaneously securing the ‘developed’ status of the subjects who propose/implement a trusteeship.

As Foucault maintains, no statement is uttered in splendid isolation, but “always belongs to a series ... always plays a rôle among other statements” (Foucault, 1972: 99). The statements of contemporary trusteeship literature resonate with their colonial predecessors, recalling them even as they update them. Although Johnson provides an example of somewhat atypical candour, the sentiment that a precipitous curtailment of colonial governance has engendered a world in which “some countries are *not yet fit* to govern themselves” (Johnson, 1993) is encountered in diverse texts (Helman and Ratner, 1993: 4; Kaplan, 2002: 51; Lyon, 1993: 106; Pfaff, 1995: 4). The colonial ‘development’ problem of Lugard and Leyes returns to haunt a contemporary international society confronted by the ‘failed state’: it is the same problem (lack of ‘development’), but one is now differently placed to be able to solve it (due to a lack of colonialism). Robinson asserts this position quite plainly: “the *fundamental basis* of colonialism has not been abolished suddenly by accession to independence” (Robinson, 1965: 93; my italics). That this ‘fundamental basis’ concerns the responsibilities of the strong and ‘developed’ to the weak and ‘underdeveloped’ confirms the logic that “the dilemmas of trusteeship remain ... ‘the problems of the world’” (Robinson, 1965: 94). If former trustees, armed with ‘knowledge’ acquired during their tenure, could be persuaded to effect an altruistic return to their respective trust territories, the ‘development’ task could be concluded (Pfaff, 1995: 5); or, if that “is too reminiscent of colonialism”, a UN-lead ‘guardianship’ might be preferred (Lyon, 1993: 108). Until real ‘progress’ is realised, however, forsaking the trust a second time must not be entertained: “we must not repeat the mistakes of the 1960s” (Johnson, 1993). Such discursive practices produce anachronistic subjects who lack ‘development’ and ‘progressive’ subjects capable of diagnosing and administering such lacks; subjects who pursued independence are constructed as hot-headed adolescents prematurely seeking power whilst lacking the fundamental

capacities required for its effective practice. That “precipitous withdrawal” (Kaplan, 2002: 51) vitiated the transformation of anachronistic space “provides a ready set of explanations for ‘third world’ failure” (Doty, 1996a: 153). Such discursive practices thus set up a continuity between colonial and contemporary ‘problems’, both of which are framed in the language of ‘progress’.

Conclusions

Throughout this chapter, I have suggested that a regular effect of ‘progress’ as a discursive practice consistently deployed in trusteeship literature is to produce anachronistic space and its native subjectivities. But, it might be asked, why does this matter? If all subjectivities are unavoidably discursive and all discursive practices inevitably productive – if, in a discursive world, “there is no sub-text” to which we might appeal (Foucault, 1972: 119) – why should *that* discursive effect (anachronistic space) be censured in favour of any other? Indeed, if power relations are conceived as intrinsic to *all* social life rather than as problems “whose radical effacement one could perhaps dream of” (Foucault, 2000: 343), does all hope of impartial criticism not surrender to “pan-textual relativism” (Østerud, 1996: 386)? Yet, if the positing of all discursive practices as inherently political robs us of any uncontested (non-political) grounds for critique, this move also permits us to interrogate those discourses whose own politicality appears concealed. Indeed, it impels us to do so; such is the “political task ... inherent in all social existence” (Foucault, 2000: 343). If the production of anachronistic space is the effect of ‘progress’/‘development’ discourse, I would suggest the effect of this production is precisely to suppress this ubiquitous ‘political’ aspect. Such discourse, in short, works to *depoliticise* debate, ‘depoliticisation’ denoting not *non-performance* of political actions, but, more alarmingly, *non-acknowledgment* of the intrinsic politicality of actions performed.

By discursively constructing ‘failed states’ as housing an incomprehensible, senseless violence characteristic of ‘barbarians’ and devoid of objectives, conflicts are shifted from the category of twenty-first century political dynamics to that of “temporary aberrations on the road to development and security” (Duffield, 2001a: 132). Temporalising discourse which constructs violence as issuing from anachronistic space sidesteps the political engagement such violence demands; for, “however much it assaults a régime of sense, violence is never senseless” (Dillon, 1998: 548). Such Hobbesian understandings permit the ‘failed state’ to be viewed as an anarchical security threat, impelling a response by which it is “bracketed and addressed in terms of emergency” (Dillon and Reid, 2000: 124) via “the Rolls Royce of conflict management strategies” exemplified by trusteeship (Kaplan, 2002: 84). The (intrinsically violent²¹) politics of emergency/securitisation and ‘conflict management’ encouraged by temporalising discourse depoliticise to the extent that they “move an issue out of the realm of politics” (Hansen, 1997: 377) towards the domain of government élites and technical policy, where it can no longer be discussed or contested.

²¹ ‘Exceptional’ violence from ‘civilised’ powers in ‘barbaric’ zones is no novelty. See Salter (2002: 38-42).

Commentators note that trusteeships are “*not* primarily answerable to the people whose territories they administer ... [they] are democratically deficient”; trustees operate with “virtual impunity” (Kaplan, 2002: 58, 77; Chopra, 2000: 29). Such arrangements are enabled by “a discursive doubleness” positing a temporal lag between commentators and residents of anachronistic space, ensuring that events in entrusted territories “are to be read *otherwise*” (Bhabha, 1985: 73-4; italics in original). Temporalising discourse affords one the possibility of simultaneously holding forth *on liberty* whilst sponsoring “a vigorous despotism” for those who “have no spring of spontaneous improvement in themselves” (Mill, 1926: 134). When Lugard affirms that “if there is ... desire for independence, it is because we have taught them the value of liberty” (Lugard, 1926a: 618), he takes credit for the transmission of emancipatory ideas whilst dismissing the legitimacy of their status when uttered by ‘primitive’ subjects; ‘liberty’ tripping off the tongue of the ‘primitive’ is to be read *otherwise*. When ‘underdeveloped’ subjects vote against market-oriented solutions/privatisation, it becomes possible for ‘free and fair’ election results to be read *otherwise* (Kaplan, 2002: 53). That such essentially *political* acts can occur without discussion is only imaginable when the subjects on whose behalf they are perpetrated have already been constructed as harbouring anachronistic political preferences undeserving of regard by definition. The discursive naturalisation of hierarchically-ordered subject positions which allows acutely political issues to be decided by ‘international experts’ is thus profoundly depoliticising²².

Less dramatic, more everyday, yet equally depoliticising, effects are also produced by statements on ‘development’ which join a flourishing intertext comprising “a powerful semantic constellation” distinguished by a technocratic, managerial vocabulary, dubbed “dev-speak” (Esteva, 1993: 8; Ferguson, 1994: 259). The sweeping conversion of societies proposed in contemporary trusteeship texts²³ thus appears as a technical trajectory between two self-evident, pre-plotted points. Such temporalising, technical discourse obscures the *governmental* quality of ‘development’, operative through “the conduct of conduct” (Dean, 1999: 10); by coming to ‘know’ modalities of conduct proper to ‘hapless individuals’, ‘development’ aims to conduct them towards “the rationalities of liberal modernity” (Duffield, 2001b: 8; Hindess, 2001: 375). Despite the fact, then, that temporalising discourse presents ‘development’ as “a *quantitative* increase in capacity, it acts as a *qualitative transformation of subjectivity*” (Dean, 1999: 70; italics in original)²⁴. By assigning a temporal quality to patterns of conduct, acutely political interventions broadly transformative of

²² I am not suggesting here that temporal discourse prevents the affording of *moral* consideration to entrusted subjects, but rather that it serves to deny them a *politics*. See Parekh (1995: 92-4).

²³ Often in a similarly technocratic vocabulary. See Chopra (2000: 36); Johnson (1993); Kaplan (2002: 63); Mallaby (2002: 4).

²⁴ On colonial/‘development’ discourse as productive of forms of subjectivity, see Memmi (1991: 56); Manzo (1997: 390-401); Pigg (1992: 506); Nandy (2002: 116); Shrestha (1995: 268).

societies and identities can proceed without political debate. That such interventions frequently fail on their own terms, prompting a renewed search for ‘real’ ‘development’ (or ‘progress’ in colonial times), might not guarantee the ‘underdeveloped’ eventually enjoy the lifestyles of the ‘developed’, but *does* ensure that intervention into ‘underdeveloped’ regions and a hierarchisation of subjectivities are normalised in the meanwhile (Abrahamsen, 2002: 25-32, 17; Ferguson, 1995: xiv; DuBois, 1991: 22). It is difficult to imagine the ‘development’ apparatus performing its business, “depoliticising everything it touches” (Ferguson, 1995: xv), without acknowledging that it proposes to operate on what has already been discursively produced as anachronistic space.

Whilst the discursive practice of ‘progress’/‘development’ encourages a systematic framing of the trusteeship problematic which normalises certain arrangements and facilitates certain policy choices, it also obscures alternative framings from view. The possibility that violent conflict might constitute “a function ... of the way in which development is now ideologically embraced by all ... institutions of liberal peace as an unrelenting project of modernisation” (Dillon and Reid, 2000: 118) is abolished if that conflict is addressed *a priori* as a problem of ‘development’. If the ‘failed state’ constitutes a manifestation of ‘underdevelopment’, that the ‘real state’ might not represent the ultimate destination in political community for all the world’s peoples becomes difficult to articulate (Morton and Bilgin, 2002: 74). As a lack of familiarity with democracy is the peculiar problem of the ‘underdeveloped’ subject, questions pertaining to the undemocratic nature of ‘development’ institutions such as the World Bank or the undemocratic tampering with democratic election results cannot be posed (Doty, 1996a: 136-7). If colonialism and ‘development’ are fundamentally *reactive* enterprises concerned with combating anachronistic space, that they themselves represent systematic (and problematic) practices *productive* of such hierarchical subjectivities in the first place becomes unintelligible. By addressing a problematic *in terms of* ‘progress’ or ‘development’, then, the ‘problem’ becomes *internal* to anachronistic subjects, whose (necessary) relation to ‘progressive’ subjects becomes obscured.

The global effect of the production of anachronistic space in these texts is to *facilitate* (not cause) a series of dubious and asymmetrical engagements (securitisation, trusteeship, colonialism, ‘development’) whilst siphoning off the very *political* dimensions of these engagements themselves; such depoliticising resolutions obscure the fact that the prior classification of anachronistic space constitutes a political issue in itself. In this regard, Indyck’s assertion that “the aim would be to focus on depoliticising this process through trusteeship” is particularly apt (Indyck, 2002: 65). Whilst ‘depoliticisation’ for Indyck implies a desirable neutrality achieved via transcendence of politicality, on a discursive view, ‘depoliticisation’ suggests the technologisation of a politicality which cannot

be transcended. Whilst I would concur with Indyck that depoliticisation is indeed an effect of trusteeship, on account of a discourse on 'progress'/'development' to which it must appeal in order to assert its temporariness and justify its implementation, I would disagree that this is desirable. On the contrary, it is dangerous.

Chapter Three

International Society and the Intertext

An alternative narrative which aims to counteract contemporary proposals for trusteeship is encountered in the work of Robert Jackson and Will Bain. Operating “in the idiom of the international society approach” (Bain, 2003a: 8), they uphold the enduring value of anti-paternalist and pluralist norms which veto a universalising Brehznevian urge in favour of ‘the Sinatra doctrine’: in post-decolonisation international society “everyone can do it their way” (Jackson, 2000: 168, 400). Such a stance displays considered esteem for the ‘diversity’ evidenced by assorted “ways of life, that while alien and perhaps detestable, are valuable to some people and therefore require no further justification” (Bain, 2003a: 181); a procedural international ethics capable of preserving “the effective equality of incommensurables” is thus in order (Lummis, 1993: 45). Non-intervention is the international norm corresponding to such a pluralist stance; this entails a dual referentiality for state legitimacy rendering domestic revolution justifiable where external intervention is not and demanding that international society adopts “the politics of as if” should the former not be forthcoming (Walzer, 1985: 224)²⁵. On such a reading, to implement a trusteeship, “a self-assumed responsibility leading to a self-initiated action, based on a self-righteous outlook” (Jackson, 2000: 413), would evidence an international comportment affirmative of a quite different set of norms: those befitting a *universitas*. Such a “cooperative enterprise defined by the pursuit of shared goals and values” (Jackson, 2000: 356) in which ‘progress’ can be discussed and teleology affirmed, does not accurately describe contemporary international relations whose *societas*-inspired norms trusteeship necessarily violates. This chapter will suggest that such a counter-narrative avoids the paternalism of trusteeship and its attendant universalising discourse on ‘progress’/‘development’ at the price of producing a distinct anachronistic space of its own; it furthermore reinscribes a similarly universalising discourse whilst electing an alternative response to its effects.

Before proceeding to examine such texts, it is perhaps prudent to acknowledge the intellectual framework within which their authors operate and emphasise how this differs from the one employed here. Both Jackson and Bain embrace philosophical idealism, endorsing a Collingwoodian distinction between a ‘natural’ world external to thought and a ‘human’ world whose “reality is constructed from ideas” (Jackson, 1990: 6; 1993: 113; Bain, 2003a: 9). The ‘human’ world is no less ‘real’ than the ‘natural’, but demands *understanding* of the ‘reality’ humans have constructed

²⁵ Jackson’s defence of *societas* is more pronounced in *Global Covenant* (2000) than *Quasi-States* (1993), in which he is more critical of Walzer (1993: 173-186).

themselves (*verum-factum*) rather than causal *explanation*. This is achieved by probing “what was in the mind of the people involved”, referring not to “an unchanging human *nature*” but to a universal human *subject*; indeed, “*being human* is the principle source of insight into human relations” (Jackson, 2000: 99, 71, 15; my italics). International theorists should interrogate ‘real-world events’ whilst remembering “the project of the practitioner is to *shape* the world ... that of the scholar to understand and explain it” (Jackson, 1995: 60; 1987: 520; my italics). Although complete value-freedom is rejected, ‘detachment’ is encouraged, for “promoting our values is a political, not academic orientation” (Jackson, 2000: 58, 83-88). Jackson is thus vexed by the ‘postmodern’ suggestion that academic knowledge, like any other, inheres in power relations and possesses a ‘reality-*shaping*’ quality. Surely, “if theory is the expression of political interests, political science is neither science nor scholarship: it is politics” (Jackson, 2000: 52). This chapter credits Jacksonian texts with more sway than their own author grants them. It proposes, contra Jackson, to seek meaning not ‘in the mind of people involved’, but in the intertext in which their work inevitably participates. It denies subjects can control the ‘meaning’ of their textual output, as if ‘meaning’ were “a fresh word that comes only from themselves and remains forever close to the source”, and a text merely an “object one holds in one’s hands” (Foucault, 1972: 211, 23). By joining an intertext viewed as constitutive of subjectivities rather than a mere location in which pre-constituted subjects speak, academic discourse contributes to the (unavoidably political) construction of ‘reality’ in spite of itself. It is to such constructions that we now turn.

‘Progress’: a state of one’s own?

As mentioned above, trusteeship upsets pluralist international society by both avowing “the superiority of a particular conception of the good life” and foisting it on others unbidden; such “a paternal relation between equals is always wrong”, the ‘equals’ in this case being sovereign states (Bain, 2003a: 159, 192). Does such a figuring of ‘equals’ successfully escape the production of anachronistic subjectivities identified previously as the (depoliticised) effects of the ‘progress’/‘development’ discourse embraced by trusteeship advocates? If, for Bain, “progress ... is better described by the word *perfection*”, the postcolonial world, “where human and international society, the universal and the particular, form a *perfect* identity”, itself constitutes a manifestation of ‘progress’ (Bain, 2003a: 189-91; my italics). In an ‘Aristotelian’²⁶ post-decolonisation international society, which confirms the state as “the natural end of all human associations”, outside of which “the good life is an impossible ideal or an inchoate fiction”, *universal* ‘progress’ can be said to have *already* occurred: the human *physis*, already given in the beginning, realises its true potential once each member of humankind resides in a *polis* of her own, within an international society which treats all “as if they were true Greeks” (Bain, 2003b: 66-7; 2003a: 173). The sovereign state affords unique possibilities for ‘politics’, that is, “an ongoing dialogue about the desirable, just and good”, and individual ‘sovereignty’: “the realisation of human potential, the development of the faculties and virtues that separate human beings from the subhuman and the superhuman cannot be fulfilled fully outside the life of a state” (Bain, 2003a: 191). In short, “to be fully human, one must be a citizen” (Bain, 2003a: 191). Such ‘progress’ is facilitated within the state, explains Jackson, by dint of its capacity to provide security, without which “there would be no place for the individual, no arts, no letters, no society” (Hobbes, quoted in Jackson, 2000: 187). The guarantee of an efficient arrangement against “those who live outside the restraints of civilised life: barbarians” supplies the politics and society the state of nature withholds (Jackson, 2000: 187-8; 1995: 63; Bull, 2000: 2020). The *universal* ‘progress’ realised by humankind’s organisation into discrete states is complemented by the *particular* ‘progress’ thereby permitted within each, as members find themselves “free to seek their own collective conception of the good life” (Bain, 2004: 6). Such a ‘progressive’ structure does not, however, automatically ensure further ‘progress’ within its borders. Indeed, “independent statehood may be a necessary condition of living well, but experience shows it is not a sufficient condition for the realisation of the good life” (Bain, 2003b: 67; Jackson, 2000: 308). Yet trusteeship provides no justifiable remedy: by seeking to restore ‘sufficient conditions’ for the ‘good life’, it cancels the independence upheld as its ‘necessary condition’, thereby “repudiating the essence of what it is to be human” (Bain, 2003a: 173). In violating the universally applicable ‘progress’

²⁶ Though Aristotle’s *polis* was not as sharply bounded as its modern counterpart (Walker, 1993: 66-7).

exemplified by sovereignty and universalising a particular version of ‘progress’ applicable only to a particular political community, trusteeship doubly offends such a stance.

Whilst Bury would expel an Aristotelian definition from an inventory of authentic examples of ‘progress’, a discursive reading enquires into the effects such statements produce and queries whether these tally with others we have noted. What *happens* when it is announced that ‘to be fully human, one must be a citizen’? Although “everyone is an insider” (Bain, 2003b: 71) in contemporary international society, I would argue nevertheless that modes of political organisation which do not correspond to the historically specific “spatio-temporal resolution between universality and particularity” represented by the state are produced as anachronistic space by such endorsement of Aristotelian ‘progress’ (Walker, 1993: 78). The discursive deployment of the familiar state of nature trope produces ‘progressive’ subjects, who detect the need to exit anarchical conditions, alongside the corresponding anachronistic subjects, who remain unpleasantly ensconced in them. Such imagery makes anachronistic space of indigenous modes of political organisation against which the modern state was theorised, as well as of contemporary aboriginal peoples, thereby “relegating ... aboriginal life-ways irretrievably to the distant past” (Beier, 2002: 109; Manzo, 1995: 499). Similarly constructed are Romany communities, whose residence in Europe pre-dates the Westphalian moment, yet find presently “that without a territory or an aspiration to one, a people is effectively written out of the script” (Haughey, 1999: 146; Dillon, 1999: 133). Anachronistic space is also produced in the form of assorted ‘social’/‘local’ movements which become trivial “pre-political disturbances” in a discourse which maintains that the achievement of “enclosure makes politics possible” (Magnusson, 1990: 52; Walker, 1993: 152).

It is also claimed that the state furnishes the (necessary if not sufficient) container in which future, *particular*, ‘progress’ can unfurl, as ‘the community’ “strive[s] for a good life that is distinctly its own” (Bain, 2003a: 169). Accordingly, “historically and ontologically prior” individuals “*come together* in pursuit of some common purpose” and found a political community (Jackson, 1995: 63; Bain, 2004: 13; my italics). Security arrangements against ‘barbarians’ are installed and contractors proceed to an ‘ongoing dialogue’ during or after which the ‘good life’ might greet or elude them (Bain, 2003b: 191). ‘Barbarians’ appear here as self-explanatory and external; in a discursive reading, they play a rather more weighty rôle. If subjects are viewed as performatively constituted rather than components of a pre-social ontology, the sorting of ‘barbarians’ from ‘citizens’ appears neither a straightforward task nor the work of a moment. In asserting sovereignty, the state claims to represent an “identifiable sovereign presence – ‘the people’”; yet if citizen-subjects cannot be said to pre-exist the discourse which invokes them, they must “exist in a conceptual double time” (Doty,

1996b: 125). By pointing to the 'barbarian', the (in)security discourse "establishes a certain economy of differentiation" which simultaneously produces the 'citizen' (Dillon, 1999: 129); anachronistic space is therefore the requisite and continually-produced effect of the construction of 'the community' in which 'progress' in a pluralist world is assumed to unfurl.

“Better reign in Hell...?”

Until this junction, I have argued that pluralist counter-narratives do not forfeit the discourse of ‘progress’ encountered in trusteeship texts and do not therefore avoid the production of anachronistic space; yet in averring the intrinsic value of sovereignty, such a reading appears at least to avoid *singling out* ‘failed states’ as an anachronistic space in need of Western ‘development’. However, such an account only provides half the story recounted by international society texts; the other half exhibits a more particular engagement with the question of ‘failed states’²⁷, evident in earlier Jacksonian texts, to which the reader of Jackson’s and Bain’s work on trusteeship is referred via foot-notes²⁸. Such offerings furnish ample textual evidence of a corollary to the sovereignty narrative, which, I will suggest, re-inscribes the ‘progress’/‘development’ discourse detected in trusteeship literature whilst advocating a different response towards the anachronistic space it produces.

For states housing citizens who “out of passion ... and appetite cannot be counted upon to fulfil the obligations of life in society” and regions where “wars of the third kind” disclose “a curious inversion of Hobbes’s security dilemma”, one quite easily perceives “the need for some kind of international trusteeship” (Bain, 2003b: 73; 2003a: 141-3; Jackson, 2000: 295, 304). Indeed, the debate over contemporary ‘state failure’ is, it is intimated, unsurprising and rather familiar: like decolonisation, it embodies a dilemma encapsulating the very quintessence of North/South relations: “deprivation of independence for the underdeveloped or perpetuation of underdevelopment for the independent?” (Jackson, 1990: 135). The “international change of ideas” characterising independence is ‘real’ and important (Jackson, 1993: 130; 1990: 28); a body of phenomena termed ‘underdevelopment’ persists, however, at quite another ontological level, “since it is a condition deeply rooted in economic, social, cultural and even psychological facts exceedingly difficult to alter” (Jackson, 1990: 109-10). At decolonisation, colonies were “still almost entirely illiterate ... with no understanding of the workings of a modern state and the responsibilities of citizenship ... plagued by divisions deeply rooted in language and custom” (Jackson, 1990: 86; Jackson and Rosberg, 1986: 20). As contemporary commentators cautioned, granting independence to countries “four or five centuries behind” equated to “giving a child of ten a latch-key, a bank account and a shot-gun” (MacMillan, quoted in Jackson, 1990: 90; Morrisson, quoted in Jackson, 2000: 304 and Bain, 2003a: 188). Did Perham not warn that “four chief obstacles” relating to ‘development’/‘readiness’ remained to be surmounted before effective independence could be

²⁷ This is much more evident in Jackson than Bain, with certain exceptions which will be noted.

²⁸ I do not wish to suppress evident differences between *Quasi-States* and *Global Covenant*, merely emphasise that many of the former’s assumptions *are* rehearsed in later work.

granted? (Jackson, 1993: 15, 123; Bain, 2003a: 142). Yet “these recommendations went largely unheeded” (Jackson, 2000: 305); the spurious exhilaration of decolonisation proceeded, delivering power into the hands of the ‘slack’ and ‘incompetent’ who lacked ‘self-discipline’ and “attachment to constitutionalism” (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982: 9; Jackson, 1993: 121).

Independence did not, then, “eliminate the problem for which trusteeship was originally instituted” (Jackson, 2000: 304). “Robinson’s view is no less true today” (Bain, 2003a: 145): the world is still divided between the “capable and infirm, organised and disorganised, experienced and inexperienced” (Jackson, 2000: 304). Accordingly, the tribulations of ‘failed states’ “seem to have vindicated the views of Perham” (Bain, 2003a: 145): colonies were *not ready* for independence. ‘Underdevelopment’ is perpetuated by a removal of the competitive pressures propelling proper political ‘development’, culminating in the acquisition of (‘positive’) sovereignty “by merits or deserts” (Jackson, 1993: 43). The World Bank’s “international knowledge régime” on ‘development’ and abundantly forthcoming international “handouts and bailouts” fail to transform the situation, for it is beyond their legitimate remit to impose on “incompetent and corrupt governments” a binding “obligation to use the foreign aid properly or productively” (Jackson, 1990: 116; Jackson and Rosberg, 1982: 22). Yet the “the political and economic backwardness that once justified trusteeship” can no longer sanction intervention (Bain, 2003a: 154); once sovereignty is instated, “there is no going back” (Jackson, 1993: 137). A ‘failed state’ may well resemble hell itself; yet, as Satan avowed, “better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven” (Milton, quoted in Bain, 2003a: 3). International society must now rely on aid conditionality, ‘development’ projects and “other military and diplomatic stratagems” to combat ‘underdevelopment’/‘incivility’ (Jackson, 2000: 312). Isolation/quarantine is particularly valuable: as it is the West whose “norms are the ones that really count” in contemporary international society, isolation can convey to the ‘uncivilised’ an “affirmation of civilised standards of conduct” without requiring forceful intervention (Jackson, 1995: 81-3)²⁹.

What is happening in these texts? The ‘development’ discourse intrinsic to the Jacksonian narrative produces European states as “self-standing rugged individualists” which “historically outdistanced the rest of the world” (Jackson, 1990: 50); anachronistic space is thereby produced in the format of pre-colonial Africa which, lacking such ‘progressive’ structures, was characterised by “continuous warfare and violent feuding” (Jackson, 1990: 69)³⁰. In bestowing the ‘rule of law’ via colonialism on such feral regions, ‘developed’ subjects ensured “colonies were ... lawful and orderly places”

²⁹ ‘Development’ and ‘civilisation’ are at times separated, at others, conflated (Bain, 2003a: 141; Jackson, 1990: 142; 1995: 118; 2000: 295). Both form part of a temporalising discourse on ‘progress’.

³⁰ See Warner (1999) for a counter-narrative.

(Jackson, 1990: 142). The rhetorical *effect* of repeated allusions to decolonisation critics (whatever the intention behind them) is to inaugurate their diagnosis as truism: ‘developed’ subjects accurately portended the disastrous fallout of a precipitate decolonisation; contemporary ‘state failure’ must be linked to such rashness. That colonial subjects were *not ready* for self-government becomes a statement possessing “this quasi-invisibility of the ‘there is’” (Foucault, 1972: 111). Yet there is ‘no going back’ to trusteeship, for “the children have all grown up” (Bain, 2003a: 189). Such discourse naturalises sovereign statehood as the ‘grown-up’ mode of political community, thereby producing anachronistic space in the form of the more childish arrangements of pre-colonial Africa. It also *continues* to produce formerly colonised subjects as anachronistic; children might become adults, but remain children – to their parents, at least. The implication is that an ‘adult’ political framework was (irreversibly) bestowed on callow youngsters whose parents now exchange intrusive authoritarianism for judicious supervisory strategies, tight-lipped laments that ‘developed’ subjects no longer control the ‘development’ process and optimistic hopes that “the quasi-state may someday be developed into a real state” (Jackson, 1987: 542).

Conclusions

Despite their explicit challenge to trusteeship proposals, international society texts nevertheless deploy a ‘progress’/‘development’ discourse productive of anachronistic subjectivities. What type of politics is facilitated by such texts? Firstly, a dual-pronged view of ‘progress’, in which the state as achieved destination exemplifies universal ‘progress’ and the state as bounded community offers the possibility of further particularised ‘progress’ results in a double depoliticisation. The production of alternative modes of political community as anachronistic via Aristotelian assertions and state of nature allusions depoliticises by setting out an account of where ‘politics’ is possible, an account not itself considered ‘political’, before arranging how to administer the “aberrations of categories” which disturb its “secular telos” (Haddad, 2003: 311; Jahn, 1999: 417). By consequence, “ongoing assimilative practices” and “continued invisibility” are licensed for ‘unclassifiable’ peoples who “are denied a politics and reduced to a political issue” (Beier, 2002: 107-8). The second assertion, that only once community is founded and bounded can ‘progress’ be debated *among ourselves*, depoliticises in its assumption that the prior and ongoing production of ‘ourselves’ is not itself a political matter. The discursive economy of differentiation productive of ‘citizen’ and ‘barbarian’, *universitas* and *societas*, reliant as it is on a signifying element which eludes essentialisation, “must be constantly made to *work*” (Walker, 1990: 22; italics in original). Such work entails that “constant discursive repairs must be made to this web of meaning” (Der Derian, 1995: 364), an ‘othering’ process “not free of violence” (Devetak, 1995: 29). Fastening ‘progress’ to identity such that each (statist) community pursues its own version dodges the (political) question of how such ‘progressive’ identity can be produced without the simultaneous, never-completed and *necessary* production of the corresponding ‘barbarian’ who is “imperfectly civil and might harm us” (Jackson, 2000: 188). Both ‘prongs’ of this dualistic view of ‘progress’ thus depoliticise by declining to consider the politics intrinsic to both founding and bounding a ‘community’.

Secondly, although defence of sovereignty obliges them to respond differently to its effects, international society texts re-inscribe a similarly universalising ‘development’ discourse to that detected in the previous chapter. Their framing of the ‘failed state’ problematic in temporal terms engenders international responses which, though less manifestly perilous than the forceful intervention and impunity implied by trusteeship, are no less depoliticising. The alternative ‘strategies’ proposed by Jackson similarly locate the root causes of ‘state failure’ in anachronistic space, sanctioning the continuance of ‘development’ interventions, discussed above, whose recent move to tether aid to ‘good governance’ is anticipated by Jacksonian insinuations that

‘underdeveloped’ subjects are incapable of rationally administering it (Jackson, 1990: 125)³¹. Once again, “several things become unthinkable in these texts” (Doty: 1996a: 156). The rôle of colonialism and the international system in contributing to conditions in ‘failed states’ is silenced by the prior affirmation that “they have a deeper problem: ‘underdevelopment’”, of internal, indeed, ‘psychological’ origins (Jackson, 1990: 136; Blaney and Inayatullah, 1996: 93). The developmental language of ‘real’ and ‘quasi-states’, ‘parents’ and ‘children’, further depoliticises by foreclosing alternative possibilities for political community and obscuring the rôle of colonial powers in obstructing such alternatives at independence (Denham and Lombardi, 1996: 8; Davidson, 1992: 183-4; Doty: 1996a: 105).

It appears curious that a counter-narrative affirmative of ‘diversity’ is not more reluctant to embrace universalising discourses on ‘development’ and the state which expel ‘diversity’ from the discussion *a priori*. This becomes less surprising when it is recalled that such a narrative embraces an (extra-discursive) universal subject, permitting ‘pluralists’ to champion ‘diversity’ of ‘human’ values whilst reserving the right to ‘draw the line’ and declare, “but they must be within the human horizon” (Berlin, 1990: 11). Such a depoliticising stance overlooks “how the representation of ‘human’ is constituted and at whose expense” (Pin-Fat, 2000: 669). We might pose the same question with regard to the discursive constitution of ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’, a ‘reality’ we help *produce* each time we employ such categories. I would conclude by questioning the aptness of those Miltonian lines on ‘failed states’. Though Satan declares to Beelzebub that it is “better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven”, he then adds: “the mind is its own time, and in itself/ Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven”. Simply rendered, the identity, location and nature of ‘Hell’ and ‘Heaven’ do not suggest themselves to us; we must establish them discursively, and take responsibility for doing so.

³¹ See Abrahamsen for the depoliticising effects of ‘good governance’ (2002: 139-147).

Conclusion

On a discursive reading, the broad range of views expressed within trusteeship debates facilitates an appreciation not of the capacity of a certain discourse to homogenise thought or cause particular policies, but of the way in which it is rendered possible “within a particular set of concepts, to play different games” (Foucault, 1972: 37). The aim of this dissertation is not, then, to propose that there is but little genuine difference between the views espoused by Lugard and Leyes, or that Jackson and Johnson are fundamentally delivering an identical verdict on ‘failed states’. It would be unfair to fail to acknowledge the extent to which Bain and Kaplan are playing very ‘different games’. And yet, there is a sense in which they are playing different games on the same playing field. By unanimous deployment of a discourse on ‘progress’/‘development’, such literature contributes to the fabrication of “a space in which only certain things could be said and even imagined” (Escobar, 1995: 37). The texts achieve their unity not in the specific resolutions they sponsor, but in this ‘space called reality’ they render visible. By validating the ‘reality’ of anachronistic space, all such discourse implies the internal source of the ‘problem’ and external location of its diagnosis/cure, whilst silencing the entrenched historical and contemporary relations operating between such spaces. Although it would be erroneous to conflate the aggressive intervention of trusteeship and the (sometimes solicited, peaceable) interventions of the ‘development’ project, it remains to be noted that both alternatives confirm a terrain in which (more or less subtle) intervention is normalised.

On such terrain, it becomes imaginable, indeed reasonable, to entertain colonialism, trusteeship, securitisation and ‘development’ projects, and often, it must be conceded, armed only with the best possible intentions. The discourse which has fashioned a ‘reality’ in which these policies become conceivable, promptly proceeds to depoliticise their institution and continuation. Despite the fact that such temporalising discourse itself constitutes “a politics of time” (Fabian, 1983: x), its deployment serves primarily to depoliticise the effects of these practices. If such effects are deemed undesirable, it becomes the task of those who participate in such debates to assume responsibility for the discourse they employ, for the ‘realities’ they share in constructing.

As stated in the introduction, this dissertation has concerned itself less with the intricacies of trusteeship than with the workings of a specific discourse. Before offering some concise concluding remarks, I will (briefly and tentatively) suggest two alternative avenues in which the discourse on ‘progress’ might be probed in international relations texts. I will firstly consider ‘progress’ in a number of cosmopolitan narratives, before proceeding to examine ‘progress’ in IR theory itself.

Procedural ‘progress’?

Although contemporary trusteeship writers and international society pluralists disagree as to whether trusteeship “furthers sovereignty in the long run” (Helman and Ratner, 1993: 17) or transgresses it, because “sovereignty is not ... only for fair weather and good times” (Jackson, 2000: 208), both imply that “the ‘normal’ sovereignty model” represents the ‘ideal’ (Wilde, 2001: 591). As we have noted, such an assumption depoliticises by producing other modes of political organisation as a priori anachronistic. Cosmopolitan writers tend, however, to decline a preordained “blue-print or end-point” towards which to direct their “progressivist interpretation of international relations” in favour of the procedural tenor of the ‘process utopia’ (Kaldor, 2003: 12; Linklater, 1998: 15, 92; Booth, 1999: 44). If ‘progress’ constitutes the subject of an inclusive “free, rational, critical dialogue” (Kaldor, 2003: 12), whose precise outcomes remain unknown and cannot therefore be pre-empted by cosmopolitan divinations of what ‘progress’ *will be*, is not the (depoliticising) effect of anachronistic space thereby avoided? I would suggest that such an effect is nevertheless produced by cosmopolitan accounts which find themselves obliged to specify, if not the final shape of ‘progress’, at least the conditions which will facilitate the necessary arena from which a future ‘progress’ will emerge. Thus *prior to* an open dialogue in which diverse definitions of ‘progress’ might be debated, it has already been decided that discourse ethics constitute “the highest stages of moral learning” issuing from the “more advanced moralities” (Linklater, 1998: 121-2; 1990: 141). *Prior to* the revolutionary practice culminating in a (non-deterministic) “process of radical and progressive transformation”, it has already been decided that “the construction of Empire was a step forward” necessary for the transcendence of the ‘parochial’ (Hardt and Negri, 2001: 43). Commentators thus signal exemplary subjects who act in accordance with the normative telos they have identified, thereby producing corresponding anachronistic subjects who have failed to either discern or fall in with “the grain of history” (Booth, 1999: 59). ‘Progressive’ subjects styled as precursors of future ‘progress’ include “the multitude”, “progressive new social movements” and ‘advanced’ liberal democracies; their anachronistic counterparts are produced as those who still defend “the local”, nostalgic and “backward-looking” nationalist/fundamentalist groups and “societies where political claims are not couched in the language of citizenship” (Hardt and Negri, 2001: 411, 16; Kaldor, 2003: 97-9; Linklater, 1998: 122). The implication is that “different parts of the human convoy must perforce move at different speeds, but the important thing is that they are moving in the right direction” (Booth, 1999: 42). Such temporalising discourse short-circuits political argument by insinuating the non-contemporaneousness of certain subjects and their practices and fails to recognise the *productivity* of its own assertions which themselves ‘move things’ in certain directions and not others. Similarly to their statist counterparts, such cosmopolitan arguments for a more procedural ‘progress’ also depoliticise.

The past and the *dépassé*: ‘progress’ in IR theory

When, in 1972, Bull asked, “has 50 years of theoretical investigation of international relations led to any progress?”, he responded to his own question in the affirmative: theoretical ‘progress’ since 1919 had been tentative and somewhat restricted, but discernible all the same (Bull, 1995: 201). The “innocence” and “uncritical rectitude” of inter-war ‘Idealists’ contributed to “an unlearning of old lessons” which Realists of the 1930s recovered, whilst adding few novel insights of their own; largely “mediocre” ‘scientific’ approaches of the 1960s served at least to augment methodological rigour (Bull, 1995: 184-201). The stage is now set for “certain stout hearts” to return to “questions of substance” (Bull, 1995: 205-6). Such a reading has lately been denounced; it “endorses explicitly the notion of scientific advance”, whose effect has been to “relegate the ideas of the interwar period to the dustbin of history” (Schmidt, 1998b: 23; 1998a: 453). As mentioned above, revisionist historians espy much of value and contemporary resonance in interwar writings. The “textbook wisdom” that Realism, in jettisoning ‘progress’ in international relations, effected important ‘progress’ in international theory, becomes “ironic ... from a post-1989 perspective” (Osiander, 1998: 430). Contra Bull, Realist insistence on sovereignty betrayed “an inability to learn the lessons of modernity”; its neglect of economic ‘advance’ and boycott of ‘progress’ now seem “a historical parenthesis ... within the overall process correctly described by Idealists” (Osiander, 1998: 430). Osiander implies that Bull’s discourse of theoretical ‘progress’ makes anachronistic space of inter-war ‘Idealists’, constructed as naïve children unaware of the realities of power; as I have attempted to demonstrate, the discursive constitution of anachronistic space tends to favour the demotion/disqualification of the voices of subjects enunciating within it. It is such a demotion of ‘Idealist’ work which Osiander censures, underlining the detrimental effect of Bull’s construction for IR theory. Yet, in challenging the anachronistic space constructed by Bull’s discourse on theoretical ‘progress’, Osiander produces a distinct anachronistic space of his own; it is now Realist work which becomes “a temporary throwback”, and thus, it is intimated, of little contemporary relevance (Osiander, 1998: 430). The revival of ‘progressivist’ international interpretations is inaugurated as a manifestation of theoretical ‘progress’; and, along with power politics, Realist misgivings about the dangers of moral universalism³², for example, can be conveniently shelved. What I am suggesting here is that the ‘progress’ discourse also does work within IR theory; and that there are political consequences to constructing the other’s theory as *dépassé* (Fabian, 1983: 152).

³² See, for example, Morgenthau (1953: 11); Carr (1939: 96).

Concluding remarks

Problematizing ‘progress’ exposes one to prompt condemnation. Does one wish to sanction “a retreat into anomie ... nihilism ... and the barbarism associated with the absence of utopias”? (Kaldor, 2003: 12). Is one unaware, as the postmodern age comes to look upon ‘progress’ with a “jaundiced eye”, that “our present is becoming directionless, purposeless and ever more dangerous”? (Carvounas, 2002: 105). Indeed, the tenor of this dissertation might provoke one to enquire: am I suggesting that ‘we should no longer say ‘progress’/‘development’”? I would prefer to conclude with a different emphasis: that we should acknowledge that we cannot *simply say* ‘progress’; that in saying ‘progress’, something (political) is at stake; that, to borrow from an oft-quoted security text, ‘by saying progress, something is done’ (Wæver, 1995: 55). This is to argue, then, that “to speak is to *do* something, to add a statement to a pre-existing series of statements, to perform a complicated and costly gesture” (Foucault, 1972: 201; my italics).

I have suggested that the performative gesture of ‘progress’ yields its complicated costs in the form of the anachronistic subjectivities its relational discourse inevitably produces. McGrane proposes something similar to what I am advancing here: “progress produces primitives; primitives do not prove progress. Primitives *are* progress, the dark, velvety, *necessary* reverse underside of the concept” (McGrane, 1989: 99; italics in original). A view of ‘progress’ as discursive practice may therefore modify the way in which we might frame the rather tired alternative between continued fervent faith or “total despair” (Pollard, 1968: 204). Whilst ‘progress’ comes free if it is ‘only a thought’, ‘progress’ as discursive practice exacts a certain price (specifically, the price of producing a ‘dark, velvety, *necessary* underside’). Where ‘progress’ as abstract idea may be thought only to animate pure and exalted hopes, ‘progress’ viewed as discursive practice can be seen to play dirty little tricks. To relinquish ‘progress’ as a grand narrative may seem to foretell a world in which nihilism beckons; to renounce deployment of ‘progress’ as discursive practice might, in certain situations, represent the more politically responsible option.

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5th January, 2005

**The Discourse of ‘Progress’
and the Trusteeship Debate in International Relations**

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Abstract

'Progress'. A comforting and familiar term. 'Progress', it seems, speaks to us all. Yet those who have endeavoured to offer a more precise definition have tended to find their quest frustrating. Does 'progress' represent a provisional outcome of human agency or the relentless work of structure? Is it essentially a matter of faith or fundamentally a matter of fact? Demonstrably rooted in classical antiquity or irredeemably modern? By adopting a discursive framework informed by post-structural understandings of power/knowledge, this dissertation will not even attempt to supply such answers; it will, however, somewhat alter the questions. Rather than enquiring into what 'progress', understood ideationally, actually is, it will undertake instead to ask what 'progress', understood as discursive practice, actually does. The specific site in which such discursive workings will be examined is furnished by colonial and contemporary texts on international trusteeship. In colonial and recent work which advocates (the revival) of trusteeship, it will be argued that deployment of such a discourse does not produce a consensus on the meaning of 'progress' but does instead produce the regular effect of a discursive space constitutive of subjectivities defined as anachronistic. The consequences of such a production are, it will be argued, profoundly depoliticising. Pluralist international society texts seeking to counter contemporary proposals for trusteeship affirm the enduring value of sovereignty and pluralist, anti-paternalist norms. Although such texts offer a counter-narrative which significantly differs from that proposed by trusteeship advocates, they nevertheless deploy a similar discourse on 'progress' which, whilst resulting in alternative policy recommendations, does not escape the depoliticising effects identified previously. By emphasising a view of 'progress' as discursive practice, this dissertation will conclude by arguing for a sensitivity to the (sometimes undesirable, always political) effects such a discourse produces.

Acknowledgements

To link particular names to a comparatively short piece of work on which the verdict is yet to be delivered may appear somewhat presumptuous; in this case, however, it seems to me more presumptuous still to omit to thank certain people whose encouragement has not made this dissertation what it is (that, I am afraid, is all my doing), but has, more importantly, given me the spirit to complete it in the first place.

I would therefore particularly like to thank: **Richard Wyn Jones**, for a much-appreciated second chance; **Jenny Edkins**, for kindness, time and intellectual inspiration; and **Caroline Morris**, a lady without whose open house, kind words and warm heart, the last six months would have been twice as hard and ten times as long.

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