Power Shifts and Knowledge Production: India's Rise and Scholarship in International Relations

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Abstract

While much scholarly attention has been paid to the ways in which the rise of powers like China and India may challenge the fundamentals of the world order, there little empirically grounded research on the relationship between the socio-political conditions driving upward power shifts ("risingness") and knowledge production, particularly outside the Western core of the International Relations discipline. We show in this article that Indian scholars are more likely to portray India as a "rising power" when publishing in mainstream journals than when contributing to Indian journals. Moreover, Indian scholars publishing in mainstream journals often engage with a discourse centred on Western reference points, specifically addressing the future of the liberal international order. By contrast, Indian scholars publishing in Indian journals focus on issues relevant to the South Asian context, frequently emphasising India's non-Western roots. Finally, while contributions to mainstream journals tend to frame India's rising status predominantly from a Western, particularly American, perspective, contributions to Indian journals are more deeply rooted in India's rich intellectual traditions.

Keywords: Sociology of knowledge, International Relations, rising powers, India, power-knowledge nexus

1. Introduction

The relationship between socio-political structures and the production of knowledge has long been a central focus of reflexive and sociological studies within the International Relations (IR) discipline. This body of research has thus far offered limited insights into how power

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shifts influence knowledge production and dissemination outside the Anglo-European (or Western) core of the discipline.

[1] Scholars have only recently started to explore the relationship between power shifts and the development of "global" or "post-Western" IR theory, notably India and China.[2] Despite its significance, there is limited empirically grounded research on the relationship between the socio-political conditions driving upward power shifts (risingness) and knowledge production—in particular outside the Western core of the discipline. In short, how are power shifts reflected in academic publishing patterns?

In this article, we examine whether and how state of risingness influences knowledge production in International Relations. More specifically, we are interested in how core-periphery structures affect the content of scholarship produced by non-Western countries labelled as rising powers—the ways in which "emerging powers speak."[3] We argue that knowledge production conducted both *on* and *in* rising powers is influenced by differing discursive constitutions of what it means to be 'rising' and their relation to the core-periphery structure of the International Relations discipline.

To better understand how power hierarchies shape academic publishing in International Relations, we compare scholarship by India-based scholars published in local peer-reviewed IR journals with that appearing in mainstream ones. Our approach allows us to detail how core-periphery patterns intersect with rising powers by examining two aspects: whether scholars based in a country conventionally perceived as 'rising' tend to be positioned in the role of native informants writing about their 'home country,' and whether academic conventions within the discipline shape how a rising power is portrayed.

In the following, we critically review the literature on the interplay between positionality and knowledge production in IR. We then present our theoretical framework and methodology before examining and discussing our findings. The paper concludes by offering reflections on the broader implications for understanding knowledge production and hierarchies in academic publishing.

2. Power and Knowledge Production in IR

The sociology of knowledge itself arose from puzzles about the seeming relativity of knowledge, notably its geographical relativity, along the Pascalian notion that "what is truth on the one side of the Pyrenees is error on the other."[4] Moving from 'views from nowhere' or

[1] Stanley Hoffmann, "An American Social Science: International Relations," *Daedalus* 106, no. 3 (1977): 41-60; Robert Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium* 10, no. 2 (1981): 126-155; Steve Smith, "The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 2, no. 3 (2000): 374-402; Steve Smith, "The United States and the Discipline of International Relations: "Hegemonic Country, Hegemonic Discipline,"" *International Studies Review* 4, no. 2 (2002): 67-85; Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

[2] Wang Hung-Jen, *The Rise of China and Chinese International Relations Scholarship* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013); Peter Kristensen and Ras Nielsen, "Constructing a Chinese International Relations Theory: A Sociological Approach to Intellectual Innovation," *International Political Sociology* 7, no. 1 (2013): 19-40; Thuy Do, "China's rise and the 'Chinese dream' in international relations theory," *Global Change,eace & Security* 27, no. 1 (2015): 21-38; Deepshika Shahi and Gennaro Ascione, "Rethinking the absence of post-Western International Relations theory in India," *European Journal of International Relations* 22, no. 2 (2016): 313-334; Peter Kristensen, "States of emergence, states of knowledge: A comparative sociology of international relations in China and India," *European Journal of International Relations* 25, no. 3 (2019): 772-799; Navnita Behera, "Globalization, Deglobalization, and Knowledge Production," *International Affairs* 97, no. 5 (2021): 1579-1597; Chengxin Pan and Emilian Kavalski, *China's Rise and Rethinking International Relations Theory* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2022).

[3] Peter Kristensen, "How can emerging powers speak? On theorists, native informants, and quasi-officials in International Relations discourse," *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2015): 637-653.

[4] Steve Woolgar, *Science, the Very Idea* (Chichester: Ellis Horwood, 1988), 22.

'zero-point' epistemologies to an exploration of "know-where" shifts the focus away from how social values, personal histories, or biases shape knowledge—such a change in perspective emphasises uncovering the often-overlooked "locus of enunciation"—i.e., the specific geo-political and cultural position from which a person speaks and constructs knowledge.[5] This is a key idea in the 'Global IR' literature (also referred to as 'post-Western,' 'non-Western,' or 'worlding' IR) is the understanding that theorisations about world politics are shaped by the geo-cultural and geo-political positionality of its thinkers (i.e., geo-epistemologies).[6]

One of the earliest analyses of how international relations influenced the production and dissemination of knowledge in IR is E. H. Carr's seminal work *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939*. He argued that IR (predominantly idealist) theories were "the product of dominant nations or groups of nations" and "emanated almost exclusively from the English-speaking countries"[7]—underpinning the prevailing liberal international order established over the course of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Four decades later, Stanley Hoffmann argued that the IR discipline was an "American Social Science" born to assist US rise to power in the post-World War II. The establishment of the discipline was primarily shaped by Washington's ascent to the status of a great power, which demanded a scientific framework to legitimise its actions in world politics. The International Relations discipline provided just that[8]. Hoffmann further noted that the specific constellation in the US was aided by institutional arrangements that allowed for scholar-policy exchanges, and an intellectual predisposition for putting the scientific method to use in real-world applications.[9]

Robert Cox's oft quoted maxim—"The world is seen from a standpoint definable in terms of nation or social class, of dominance or subordination, of rising or declining power, of a sense of immobility or of present crisis, of past experience, and of hopes and expectations for the future"[10]—, beyond stating that theorisations are always for someone and some purpose, put forward the idea of how the dynamics of rising and declining power, whether of nations

[5] The concept is commonly associated with post-positivist and feminist/postcolonial epistemologies, but it has a broader intellectual lineage within IR. See, John Agnew, "Know-Where: Geographies of Knowledge of World Politics," *International Political Sociology* 1, no. 2 (2007): 138-148; Walter Mignolo, "Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom," *Theory, Culture* & Society 26, no. 7-8 (2009): 149-181; Ramón Grosfoguel, "Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political-Economy," *Transmodernity* 1, no. 1 (2011): 1-38.

[6] Arlene Tickner, "Core,eriphery and (neo)imperialist International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3(2013): 627-646. See, for criticism on this point, Ferit Ozkaleli and Umut Ozkaleli, "De-worlding IR theory," *Postcolonial Studies* 25, no. 2 (2022): 192-209; Tarak Barkawi, Christopher Murray, and Ayşe Zarakol, "The United Nations of IR: Power, knowledge, and empire in Global IR debates," *International Theory* 15, no. 3 (2023): 445-461.

[7] Edward H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939* (London: Macmillan, 1939), 67, 101. According to Carr: "For the past hundred years, and more especially since 1918, the English-speaking peoples have formed the dominant group in the world; and current theories of international morality have been designed to perpetuate their supremacy and expressed in the idiom peculiar to them," 74.

[8] Recent research has shown that charitable foundations, think tanks, and elite knowledge networks in the United States have been instrumental not only in constructing and sustaining American hegemony but also in shaping what is often referred to as the liberal international order. See, David Atkinson, *In Theory and in Practice: Harvard's Center for International Affairs, 1958-1983* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Nicolas Guilhot (Ed.), *The Invention of International Relations Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Kees van der Pijl, *The Discipline of Western Supremacy, vol. 3* (London: Pluto Press, 2014); Parmar, Foundations of the American Century; Inderjeet Parmar, "Transnational Elite Knowledge Networks: Managing American Hegemony in Turbulent Times," *Security Studies* 28, no. 3 (2018): 532-564; Inderjeet Parmar and Shihui Yin, "American foundations, think tanks and the liberal international order," in *Handbook on Think Tanks in Public Policy,* ed. D. E. Abelson, B. Mulroney, S. K. Hudson, and C. J. Rastrick (Cheltenham: Edgar Elgar, 2021), 86-98. Similarly, critical scholars contend that American-centered international relations theory has advanced ideas that have been utilized to serve U.S. foreign policy objectives and continue to contribute to the maintenance of Western dominance. Ido Oren, "International relations ideas as reflections and weapons of US foreign policy," in *The Sage Handbook of the History,hilosophy, and Sociology of International Relations,* eds. Andreas Gofas, Inanna Hamati-Ataya, and Nicholas Onuf, (London: SAGE, 2018), 399-412.

[9] Hoffmann, "An American Social Science."

[10] Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders," 128.

or social classes, serve as key factors shaping how scholars theorise about world politics. In the same vein, Ken Booth argued that "the institutionalization of the subject [of IR] and its development underlines simply and clearly the crucial relationship between the global distribution of power and global production of knowledge."[11] Steve Smith has also argued that the discipline of International Relations is shaped by the power dynamics of US hegemony, serving to reinforce Western interests, identities, perspectives, and policy agendas.[12] Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan also contended that Western IR "rode on the back of Western power."[13] Acharya further noted that "Changes to the global distribution of ideas will increasingly accompany changes to the global distribution of power," and asked "whether the development of distinctive schools of IR theories are the exclusive preserve of great powers"—to answer himself that that this would not be "unusual given the historically close nexus between power (Britain, Europe, and the USA) and the production of IR knowledge."[14]

Much of this research focuses on the established powers, particularly the United States and, to some extent, Great Britain. Carr, for instance, concentrated on the power-knowledge dynamics within established powers, offering little insight into rising powers. He noted, however, that rising "have-nots" favoured realist approaches to world politics over liberal ones, prioritising power over ideals, and embracing change over maintaining the status quo.[15] Hoffmann also said little about the IR of rising challengers to US predominance, in large part because American political pre-eminence in his analysis meant that IR had fared "badly, by comparison, in the rest of the world."[16]

It is surprising, however, that with the rise of major powers from non-Western regions, such as China, this voluminous literature has overlooked key parts of the power-knowledge nexus. The co-constitution of risingness and knowledge production cannot be assumed to unfold in the same way for rising countries such as China or India as it did for the US or the UK in the past. The rise of the United Kingdom and the United States has often been associated with the early development of the academic discipline of International Relations (e.g., its first departments, chairs, journals, and think tanks). In contrast, contemporary rising powers face the challenges of entering an established international order and a discipline that is widely viewed as US-centric and (neo)imperialist. The entrenched Western-centric structure of the field restricts knowledge production in these rising powers, limiting their ability to reshape or challenge the established institutional frameworks.

While the rise of the United States and UK has been linked to the emergence of the early institutionalisation of the academic discipline of IR (its first departments, chairs, journals, think tanks, etc.), contemporary rising powers face a latecomer dilemma in the broader international order and by consequence, in knowledge production: they rise into a discipline that has been characterised as both US-centric and (neo)imperialist.[17] The sedimentation of

[11] Ken Booth, "75 Years On: Rewriting the Subject's Past—Reinventing Its Future," in *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond,* eds. Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysai Zalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 331.

[12] Smith, "The Discipline of International Relations," 394; Smith, "The United States and the Discipline of International Relations," 69; Steve Smith, "Singing Our World into Existence: International Relations Theory and September 11," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (2004): 499-515, 507-513.

[13] Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 18.

[14] Amitav Acharya, "Dialogue and Discovery: In Search of International Relations Theories Beyond the West," *Millennium* 39, no. 3 (2011): 619-637, 625; Amitav Acharya, "Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds: A New Agenda for International Studies," *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2014): 647-659, 656.

[15] Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*.

[16] Hoffmann, "An American Social Science," 43, 48.

[17] David Long and Briam Schmidt, *Imperialism, and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005); John Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760-2010*

a Western-centric disciplinary structure means that knowledge production in contemporary rising powers is constrained by the institutions that have already been established.

3. Rising in a Neo-imperialist Discipline

Much work has demonstrated how the core-periphery structure of IR impacts the quantity, quality, and recognition of scholarship beyond the Western core.[18] Research on publication patterns highlights a hierarchical division of labour, with Western scholars predominantly producing theoretical works, while scholars in the periphery largely focussing on empirical and area-specific studies.[19] Tickner characterises this entrenched a theoretical-empirical divide within IR as a "neo-imperialist" division of labour, where the Global South is treated as a source of raw data, with Southern scholars, at best, regarded as providers of local expertise and primarily functioning as regional specialists.[20] Non-Western IR scholarship has thus been confined to a more 'regional' and 'empirical' scope—permitted to contribute with 'thought,' yet deemed incapable of producing 'theory' on par with the West.[21]

This division may explain why critical scholarship on the power-knowledge nexus has often focused on overlooked theories or the possibilities and challenges of developing innovative outside the West, particularly in rising powers. While this is an important area of study, especially in fostering a more inclusive and globally representative IR theory landscape, it provides limited understanding of how disciplinary power structures influence the broader academic discourse on rising powers and their "risingness."[22]

3.1. Native Informants

Tickner's description of the IR discipline as neo-imperialist aligns with Spivak's influential critique of Western knowledge production and the role assigned to non-Western scholars in it.[23] According to Spivak, intellectual elites in non-Western regions are often called upon by Western scholars to serve as "native informants," representing the identity and interests of the

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Smith, "The United States and the Discipline of International Relations."

[18] Arlene Tickner, "Seeing IR Differently: Notes from the Third World," *Millennium* 32, no. 2 (2003): 295-324; Anna Agathangelou and L. H. M. Ling, "The House of IR," *International Studies Review* 6, no. 4 (2004): 21-50; Navnita Behera, "Re-Imagining IR in India," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7, no. 3 (2007): 341-368; Kristensen, "How can emerging powers speak?"; Peter Kristensen, "Revisiting the "American Social Science"—Mapping the Geography of International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 16, no. 3 (2015): 246-269; David Blaney and Arlene Tickner, "Worlding, Ontological Politics and the Possibility of a Decolonial IR," *Millennium* 45, no. 3 (2017): 293-311; Behera, "Globalization"; Barry Buzan and Amitav Acharya, *Re-Imagining International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Mathis Lohaus, Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar, and Olivia Ding, "Bifurcated Core, Diverse Scholarship," *Global Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (2021): 1-16; Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar,eter Kristensen, and Mathis Lohaus, "The Global Division of Labor in a Not So Global Discipline," *All Azimuth* 11, no. 1 (2021): 3-27; Fabrício Chagas-Bastos, Erica Resende, Faten Ghosn, and Debbie Lisle, "Navigating the Global South Landscape," *International Studies Perspectives* 24, no. 4 (2023): 441-466.

[19] Ersel Aydinli and Julie Mathews, "Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable? The Curious World of Publishing in Contemporary International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 1, no. 3 (2000): 289-303; Arlene Tickner and Ole Wæver (Eds.), *International Relations Scholarship Around the World* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Barry Buzan, "How and How Not to Develop IR Theory: Lessons from Core and Periphery," *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 11, no. 4 (2018): 391-414; Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar, Nicholas Bell, Marianna Navarette Morales, and Michael Tierney, "The IR of the Beholder," *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 16-32; Murat Ergin and Aybike Alkan, "Academic neo-colonialism in writing practices: Geographic markers in three journals from Japan, Turkey and the US," *Geoforum* 104, (2019): 259-266.

[20] Tickner, "Core," 631.

[21] Omnia El Shakry, "Rethinking Arab Intellectual History: Epistemology, Historicism, Secularism," *Modern Intellectual History* 18, no. 2 (2021): 547-572.

[22] Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan. "Why is there no non-Western international relations theory? An introduction," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7, no. 3 (2007): 287-312; Behera, "Re-Imagining IR in India"; Audrey Alejandro, *Western Dominance in International Relations? The Internationalization of IR in Brazil and India?* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

[23] Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

subaltern subject. The native informant thus "speaks difference" by informing the Western scholar of "concrete experiences" taking place outside of the West. Central to the concept of native informant is the question of identity and the irreducibility of difference. Although the native informant may be called upon to represent the subaltern, the native informant can only re-present (or "stand in for") the subaltern. Neither the distinction between the Western scholar and the informant nor the distinction between the informant and the subaltern can be entirely closed. In other words, the native informant remains foreign both to the subaltern and to the Western gaze.[24] Khan, for instance, reflecting on the pressures of being a Pakistani scholar in the United States, notes the expectation that their research focuses on Pakistani women—they remark, "the native informant is an authority on third-world women. The authority of my claims, however, is continuously deferred to the Western academy for legitimisation."[25] The native informant is thus not only required to speak about the Other but is also compelled to frame their insights in terms that align with Western scholarly norms.

The practice of native informant speech may offer non-Western scholars a pathway to recognition within the core, but it also entrenches (neo)imperial structures that distort and diminish access to knowledge production in the periphery. The subjectivity of the native informant is rendered invisible and constrained. Central to this erasure is the divide between the universal and the particular: while the native informant is confined to representing a specific perspective, the Western scholar is afforded the authority to articulate universal truths—which redirects disciplinary focus toward a narrowly conceived, empirically driven, and regionally constrained form of scholarship defined by a process of 'self-othering.'[26]

It is important to distinguish native informant speech from a broader 'home bias.' Recent studies indicate that Political Science scholars, in general, are more inclined to focus on the regions where they reside.[27] What differentiates native informant speech from home bias is its orientation toward "first world intellectuals interested in the voice of the other."[28] In other words, native informant speech involves self-othering: it presents the self as the Other. To gain attention, native informant speech must align with Western interpretations of the Other.[29] An Indian scholar researching India is no more an example of native informant speech than an American scholar researching the United States. The critical distinction lies in the representational practice of self-othering, which stems from Western-centric discourses and disciplinary structures, setting native informant speech apart from simple home bias.

[24] The term 'native informant' has often been employed to critique the inherently unequal relationship between a privileged researcher and an underprivileged research subject. Scholars have questioned, for instance, whether and how it is possible to engage with previously silenced voices without reinforcing the totalizing notion of the native informant's authenticity. While the concept has primarily been used to interrogate the native informant as the object of research—the one being studied—the issue of native informing also extends to the researcher's role. See, Jay Maggio, ""Can the Subaltern Be Heard?": Political Theory, Translation, Representation, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak," *Alternatives* 32, no. 4 (2007): 419-443; Sourayan Mookerjea, "Native Informant as Impossible Perspective: Information, Subalternist Deconstruction and Ethnographies of Globalization," *Canadian Review of Sociology* 40, no. 2 (2003): 125-151; Cynthia Wood, "Authorizing Gender and Development: "Third World Women," Native Informants, and Speaking Nearby," *Nepantla* 2, no. 3 (2001): 429-447.

[25] Shahnaz Khan, "Reconfiguring the Native Informant: Positionality in the Global Age," *Signs* 30, no. 4 (2005): 2017-2035, 2025.

[26] Sukalpa Bhattacharjee, "Towards a Theory of Native Informant," *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no. 14-15 (2001): 1194-1998; Kristensen, "How can emerging powers speak?."

[27] Yoonjin Song, "The Landscape of Comparative Politics: Which Regions and Countries Have Had High Profiles in Comparative Politics Journals?," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 52, no. 2 (2019): 325-331; Matthew Wilson and Carl Knutsen, "Geographical Coverage in Political Science Research," *Perspectives on Politics* 20, no. 3(2022): 429-447.

[28] Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," 79.

[29] Bhattarcharjee, "Towards a Theory."

Native informant speech operates as an ontopolitical act, not merely representing a political community but actively defining the community's identity by anchoring it to a specific territorial space.[30] Hence, native informant speech reproduces Western ontological representations of a certain region as being linked to a certain kind of political community. An Indian scholar acting as a native informant is not only expected to inform the Western intellectual about India, but also to do so through the prism of (competing) Western discourse(s).

The question is, then, how do Western ontopolitical representations of India as a rising power influence Indian scholarship? The answer here is far more nuanced than the binary distinction of whether a given piece of Indian scholarship is theoretically or regionally-empirically oriented. It raises the deeper question posed by Çapan: "[w]hich politics are being enabled, supported, and given voice to in our efforts to be 'inclusive'?"[31] Drawing on Spivak, Kapoor cautions against "the dangerous assumption that one can encounter the Third World, and especially the Third World subaltern, on a level playing field."[32] Thakur reinforces this, stressing that "performative practices of 'inclusion' and 'diversity' may not necessarily address the structural factors that perpetuate exclusion in the academy."[33] This is the core of what the concept of native informants brings to light: it specifically directs attention to the enduring forms of ontopolitical coloniality, even when non-Western voices are included in mainstream discourse.

4. Theoretical Expectations

Discursive representations of a state as rising create a 'discursive space' for local scholars to engage with and be recognised by the Western core.[34] However, as noted earlier, occupying this space often entails conforming to Western frameworks and representations. An Indian scholar observed, fo instance, that the attention and recognition associated with being from a perceived rising power comes with an expectation to address topics directly tied to the identity of 'risingness'—such as Indian foreign policy or power transitions—even if one's research focuses on areas like African politics or the UN.[35] In essence, the visibility gained from embodying 'risingness' is accompanied by an implicit obligation to speak to issues closely aligned with this 'rising' identity.

The discursive space for attention and recognition which is opened by the discourse of 'rise' then calls for a particular kind, or subset, of native informant speech. Rising power speech taps on Western discursive representations of the 'rest' and captures articulations that fit within the ontopolitical assumptions that are most prominent within Western academic discourse about the world order and the challenge rising powers pose to it.[36] The translation of an upward power shift into part of a state identity (risingness), for our purposes, is thus not treated as an indicator of a state's economic and military prowess, but rather as an identity

[30] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 102-103.

[31] Zeynep Çapan, "Being International and/or Global?," in *Globalizing International Theory: The Problem with Western IR Theory and How to Overcome It*, eds. A. Layug and John Hobson (New York: Routledge, 2023), 98.

[32] Ilan Kapoor, "Hyper-self-reflexive development?," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2004): 627-647, 631.

[33] Monika Thakur, "Navigating Multiple Identities: Decentering International Relations," *International Studies Review* 23, no. 2 (2021): 409-433, 413.

[34] Kristensen, "States of emergence."

[35] Ibid, 785.

[36] Manjari Miller, "The Role of Beliefs in Identifying Rising Powers," *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 9, no. 2 (2016): 211-238; Ayşe Zarakol, "'Rise of the rest': As hype and reality," *International Relations* 33, no. 2 (2019): 213-228.

that is established through discourse.[37]

To study how scholarship in rising powers is influenced by rising power speech, we take advantage of a key characteristic of native informant discourse: it is self-othering and directed towards the Western gaze. When a country is frequently labelled as a 'rising power' within Western discourse, scholars performing the role of a native informant in this given country will often also be expected to inform the West of India *as* a rising power, performing a 'rising power speech.' By implication, we should expect that rising power speech is more prevalent in Western discourse than in 'local' discourse.

5. Methodology

Our analysis examines Western discourse through what we refer to as mainstream journals and 'local' discourse through domestic-local journals. The term 'local' serves as a pragmatic analytical distinction, defined by the specific focus of this study: in this case, India. Comparing the scholarship produced by academics in rising powers, as published in 'local' journals and mainstream journals, allows us to explore how the discourse of rising power speech emerges and manifests in scholarship.

We focus on three empirical patterns of theoretical significance. First, we investigate how frequently scholars in rising powers act as native informants (in the narrow sense of home bias) in both mainstream and domestic-local journals. Specifically, we aim to determine whether scholars are more likely to write about their own country when contributing to mainstream journals compared to domestic-local journals. Second, we examine the extent to which scholars in rising powers represent their country as a rising power in mainstream IR journals versus domestic-local journals. Given prior research indicating that scholars in rising powers often feel compelled to address themes related to 'risingness' when engaging with a mainstream audience, it is important to assess whether this trend is reflected in the content of published scholarship.[38] Finally, we analyse how scholars from rising powers articulate their country's identity as a rising power in mainstream journals compared to domestic-local journals. This involves exploring how rising power speech influences representations of state identity and interests.

To be sure, there is no intention to explain why scholars in rising powers might engage in rising power speech. Such behaviour could stem from a range of factors, including internalised discourse, strategic efforts to 'fit in' and gain recognition, or the influence of journal criteria and peer review processes. Scholars in rising powers are not a monolithic group, and we consider it both unproductive and problematic to speculate on their motivations. Instead, our study takes the discourses present in the scholarship of rising powers as the primary object of analysis.

[37] Miller places a strong emphasis on the fact that significant economic and military capacities are inherent to the status of a rising power, coupled with a 'will to pursue,' framed within a narrative indicating that this rise aims at potentially achieving great power status. As stated above, we do not assume that possessing abundant material capacities is a sine qua non condition for a state to be considered a rising power. The narrative framing risingness, however, is a condition that reflects the state's risingness condition. See, for a discussion, Manjari Miller, *Why Nations Rise: Narratives and the Path to Great Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021); Fabrício Chagas-Bastos, "The challenge for the 'rest': insertion, agency spaces and recognition in world politics," *International Affairs* 100, no. 1 (2024): 43-60).

[38] See, Kristensen, "States of emergence."

5.1. Case Selection

India's trajectory from a colonised nation to a major global player offers an interesting case for examining empirically how the state of risingness is reflected in scholarly work. India's trajectory from a colonised nation to a major global player offers an interesting case for examining empirically how the state of risingness comes to be reflected in the academic output of scholars in journal publications. Indian IR scholarship has been shaped simultaneously by its place at the periphery of the global IR discipline as well as by different Western representations of the country.[39] Indian IR also provides unique access in that it has long had a number of Anglophone IR journals that started as local journals but later became outlets for both Indian and foreign authors, though observers have still characterized them as "Indo-centric."[40]

Scholars based both in and outside India have done important recuperative work engaging with key thinkers such as Kautilya, Mahatma Ghandi, or Jawaharlal Nehru, as well as broader schools of thought such as *advaitic monism*, Hindu, Muslim or Buddhist thought and practices which take root in the Indian subcontinent.[41] Common to most of these contributions is an attempt to reconcile Indian thought with IR's mostly Western theoretical canon. In other words, this literature can largely be described as reconciliatory, dialogue-oriented (in relation to the mainstream), or post-Western.[42] It is thus striking that India-based scholars remain largely absent from mainstream journals, despite the popularity and mainstream involvement of recuperative engagements with Indian IR thought.

What then counts as 'Indian' scholarship? As we are interested in examining how embeddedness in the discursive context of a 'rising power' might affect scholarship, we study the content of articles published by *India-based* scholars in the discipline's most influential journals and Indian peer-reviewed journals respectively. We deal exclusively with articles authored by writers *based* in India, i.e. affiliated with Indian-based institutions. Contributions from Indian authors residing abroad—non-resident Indians (NRIs)—were not included, nor were scholars based outside India who published in Indian journals. For the purposes of this study, then, 'Indian' scholarship refers to the geographical positionality of the author and not the author's nationality or ethnicity.

The choice to focus on geographical positionality rather than nationality is particularly important, and contentious, in the case of India. Scholarship on India can be broadly divided into two categories: scholars based abroad, often of Indian origin, working within well-resourced, prestigious universities and think tanks, and those based in India, frequently

[39] Kanti Bajpai and Siddarth Mallavarapu, *International Relations in India* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2005). See, also, Fabrício Chagas-Bastos, Alexandre Leite, and Jessica Maximo, "A Postcolonial Mapping of Indian IR Origins," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 40, no. 4 (2019): 434-450.

[40] M. S. Rajan, "Golden Jubilee of the School of International Studies," *International Studies* 42, (2005): 195-204; Muthiah Alagappa, "Strengthening International Studies in India," *International Studies* 46, no. 1-2 (2009): 7-35; Kanti Bajpai, "Obstacles to good work in Indian International Relations," *International Studies* 46, no. 1-2 (2009): 109-128; Rajesh Basrur, "Scholarship on India's International Relations," *International Studies* 46, no. 1-2 (2009): 89-108.

[41] See, for instance, Behera, "Re-Imagining IR in India"; Navnita Behera, "*International Relations in South Asia* (London: SAGE, 2008); Jayashree Vivekanandan, *Interrogating International Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Amirta Narlikar and Aruna Narlikar, *Bargaining with a Rising India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Shahi and Ascione, "Rethinking"; Behera, "Globalization, Deglobalization"; Aparna Devare, "Dialogical International Relations," in *Routledge Handbook of Postcolonial Politics,* eds. Olivia Rutazibwa and Robbie Shilliam (New York: Routledge, 2018), 385-399; Adam Lerner, "Collective Trauma and the Evolution of Nehru's Worldview," *International History Review* 41, no. 6 (2018): 1276-1300; Deepshikha Shahi, *Advaita as a Global International Relations Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2018); William Long, *A Buddhist Approach to International Relations* (Cham: Springer, 2021).

[42] See, also Deepshikha Shahi, "Foregrounding the Complexities of a Dialogic Approach to Global International Relations," *All Azimuth* 9, no. 2 (2020): 163-176.

operating under far more challenging conditions.[43] Some studies therefore choose specifically to focus on "Indians *working in India*."[44] To examine the impact on academic discourse of being educated in India or being recognised as a scholar of Indian origin, using a more 'ethnic' or 'national' definition of 'Indianness,' the study must extend beyond India-based institutions to include scholars based abroad. However, determining which non-resident Indian scholars to include can be challenging, as it involves defining a scholar's 'Indianness'—whether through their education or through performative identity markers.

Our goal is not to pinpoint the impact of any particular definition of 'Indianness.' Rather, it is the discursive consequences of working both *in* and *on* India which we are interested in exploring. We are interested in the relations between the ontopolitics of geographic situatedness and scholarship. The Indian locus of enunciation is understood, again, as "the geo-political and body-political location of the subject that speaks."[45] In some cases, non-resident Indians associated with foreign-based institutions may experience similar pressures to perform native informing as those associated with India-based institutions—but that is the topic for another study. Therefore, we focus solely on scholars affiliated with India-based institutions to explore the relationship between geographic situatedness in a 'rising power' and academic discourse.

Our decision to focus our study on how IR is practiced in India does not imply that non-resident Indian scholars, or even non-Indians, cannot engage in 'Indian IR.' They certainly can, but we are specifically interested in how scholars *based in India* constitute India's rise, assuming that the socio-political, institutional, and intellectual context influences knowledge production. Transnational networks and connections also play a role, of course, and Indian scholars based in India may have been trained abroad and maintain significant international interactions.

Data Collection. We collected and analysed data from Indian scholarship published in both Indian peer-reviewed journals and mainstream IR journals. For the mainstream journals, we initially identified 58 journals in the 'International Relations' category from the Web of Science (WoS) database, each with a Journal Citation Indicator (JCI)[46] exceeding 1. Most of these journals also ranked among Scimago's top 150 with the highest *h*-index in the 'Political Science and International Relations' category for 2021. Recognising that WoS incorporates interdisciplinary journals, which could have inflated JCIs, we cross-referenced the two databases to exclude journals with disproportionate influence in other academic fields. A subsequent collective qualitative assessment discussed among all authors led us to remove journals not strictly related to IR. The final mainstream journal sample thus included 49 journals and 79 articles, published from January 2000 to December 2021.

For the India-based journals, two peer-reviewed India-based IR journals were listed in the WoS, namely *India Quarterly* and *Strategic Analysis*. To broaden our scope, we consulted with senior Indian IR scholars and reviewed sociology of IR studies in India, allowing us to include four additional peer-reviewed journals: *International Studies*, *IUP Journal of*

[43] David Malone, C. Raja Mohan, and Srinath Raghavan, "India and the World," in *Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy,* eds. David Malone, C. Raja Mohan, and Srinath Raghavan (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015), 3-20, 5.

[44] Bajpai, "Obstacles," emphasis in original.

[45] Grosfoguel, "Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies."

[46] The Journal Citation Indicator (JCI) is a standardised metric that measures the average citation impact of articles in a journal compared to others within the same discipline. A JCI score above 1 indicates that the journal receives more citations than the average in its field.

International Relations, *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations*, and *South Asian Survey*. From these six India-based journals, we sampled 100 articles. In total, we have thus analysed and surveyed 55 journals and 179 articles.

Journal articles allow us to delineate 'mainstream' and 'non-mainstream' contributions based on a common set of criteria. Including policy reports or academic monographs in our analysis would require an independent assessment of each individual piece and make our conceptualisation of mainstream far less stringent (e.g. should monographs be included based on total citations or publisher?). Furthermore, journals continue to constitute the core of the discipline. Compared to other forms of academic publishing, journals provide the "most direct measure" of disciplinarity because they sanction what counts as IR and what gets circulated in the wider discipline.[47] Although our method of data collection excludes other relevant forms of academic publishing, it enables us to stringently survey the contents of the mainstream of the discipline.

Analytical Strategy. We employed a two-step strategy to analyse our data. We first conducted a quantitative content analysis to gauge the proportion of the articles authored by India-based scholars within both mainstream and India-based IR journals that focus empirically on India and represent India as 'rising' versus those that do not. This allowed us to interrogate the first two of the three empirical patterns of interest mentioned above. Here, we used two coding categories: (1) whether the primary subject of the article was India, as determined by the title, abstract, or introduction; and (2) whether India was characterised as a 'rising power.' These coding categories were binary ('yes' = 1; 'no' = 0) and applied to the academic articles in their entirety. When determining if an article's subject area focused on India, we looked for mentions of India as a state or geographical region, as well as references to Indian historical figures such as politicians, or aspects of Indian history, culture, or philosophy within the article's title, abstract, or introduction. For articles that centred on India, we further coded for descriptions of the country as a 'rising power,' using one of the following terms: 'rising,' 'emerging,' or 'awakening.' We also included descriptors like 'major' or 'great' power, scrutinising the entire manuscript for these terms. The term 'nuclear power' was additionally incorporated given that India's nuclear agreements are often cited as a significant indicator of its rising power status.[48] The second step was a discourse analysis on articles identified as depicting India as a 'rising power' as part of the quantitative content analysis. In doing so, we were able to show how India's identity as a rising power was represented differently when scholarship was directed towards Western core journals as compared to Indian journals.

6. Quantitative Content Analysis

The proportion of articles focusing on India as their subject area is consistent across both journal groups. In mainstream journals, 58.6% of articles focus on India, closely matching the 59% in Indian journals. The *Washington Quarterly* is the most prominent in the mainstream set, contributing 26% of India-centric articles. It is followed by the *Journal of Strategic Studies* at 13%, *International Affairs* at 11%, and *Globalizations* at 9%. Within Indian journals, the

[47] Ole Wæver, "The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 687-727; Peter Kristensen, "International Relations at the End: A Sociological Autopsy," *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (2018): 245-259.

[48] Miller, "Why Nations Rise."

prevalence of India-focused articles varies, from 42.8% in the *IUP Journal of International Relations* to 71.4% in the *South Asian Survey*. In other words, Indian scholars are not more likely to speak about India when addressing the readership of mainstream IR journals than when addressing those of Indian peer-reviewed journals. These findings align with previous research, indicating that the native informant hypothesis, in its narrowest definition of home bias, does not apply.[49]

It is worth, however, distinguishing analytically between home-bias and native informant speech as a discursive act of speaking through Western assumptions about the self as Other. As a discursive act, we did find initial quantitative support for the notion that Indian scholars occasionally assume the role of a local informant when addressing the Western core of IR. Among articles with India as their subject area, India is described as a 'rising power' more frequently in the mainstream IR journals. In our sample, 51.7% of the articles in the mainstream journals with India as their subject area describe India as a 'rising power,' whereas this is only the case for 37.3% of the articles in the Indian peer-reviewed journals. These findings suggest that the primary effect of native informant speech lies not in shaping the choice of area of study (although this may still occur), but rather in how the home region is discursively represented when it is studied.

7. Discourse Analysis

Although our quantitative content analysis allows us to assess the overall prominence of 'rising power' discourse across our sample, it tells us little about how the meaning of India's risingness may be constituted differently between the two journal groups. We thus conducted a comparative discourse analysis on the articles identified as depicting India as a 'rising power.' We focused on the construction of India's identity as a 'rising power' in relation to the world order, both spatially and temporally. 'Spatially' refers to India's positioning in relation to the liberal international order, whereas 'temporally' means the evolving narratives or shifts in India's identity and interests as implied by the concept of 'risingness.'

7.1. 'Rising India' Discourse in Mainstream Journals

In mainstream journals, India's rise is framed within discourses on the liberal international order and anxieties about its durability. India is frequently portrayed as an "awakening democratic giant"[50] and represented as a staunch ally of the US, particularly in countering China's "not so peaceful rise."[51] While its geographic position in South Asia is noted, India is contextualised as a safeguard for the US-led international system. In other words, it is important that India is located outside of the West only insofar as it allows India to act as a first line of defence against China.

The identity of a rising India is thus, broadly speaking, represented as a supplement to the United States and in opposition to China. Interestingly, although all the articles analysed were specifically focused on India, the United States features almost as prominently as India itself. Indian foreign policy is almost exclusively discussed through the lens of American interests. Sridharan, for instance, argues that India cannot secure its own strategic autonomy without

[49] Wemheuer-Vogelaar et al., "The Global Division."
[50] Kanti Bajpai, "Add Five E's to make a partnership," *The Washington Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2001): 83-94, 83.
[51] Harsh Pant and Premesha Saha, "India, China, and the Indo-Pacific," *The Washington Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (2020): 187-204, 188.

the US, and that strengthening Indo-US ties will be of mutual benefit.[52] The vantage point is also distinctly American when Pant argues that the "election of Narendra Modi is perhaps the best news that Washington could have hoped for in U.S.-India relations."[53] Similarly, Ollapally and Rajagopalan frame their analysis of *Indian* foreign policy challenges around four specific policy areas of particular interest to the *United States* (US-India relations, arms control, Iran, and India's relations with the Third World and the non-aligned movement).[54] Although India is the subject of analysis, the country is analysed for a US audience and with the purpose of benefitting and informing US foreign policy interests.

At its core, India is described as a peaceful and democratic status quo power. India's nuclear non-proliferation regime plays a pivotal role in constructing this identity. According to Ghoshal, India has an "ingrained belief, that weapons of mass destruction are not meant for warfighting."[55] Although India may assert its status as a great power by possessing symbols like nuclear weapons, it harbours no intention of utilising them. To a similar effect, Sreenivasan represents Indian nuclear foreign policy as being based on a long tradition of peaceful interstate interaction and diplomacy.[56] India is constructed as an ever-peaceful country whose 'rise' to great power status should not be viewed as a cause for concern. This second image has a direct link with the first image described above. Basrur argues that India and the US seeing eye-to-eye on the question of nuclear power is a symbol of a broader restructuring of the global balance of power, the result of which is a closer alliance between Washington and New Delhi.[57] This reflects a discourse designed to reassure the United States that India, even as a nuclear power, is a democratic and benevolent ally rather than a challenge to the US-led world order.

Establishing an identity of India as a peaceful, liberal, and democratic rising power is also accomplished by spatially othering a rising China. India's peaceful rise is represented in contrast to the destabilising and threatening rise of China and, by extension, Pakistan.[58] Framing China's rise as inherently threatening portrays the foreign policy interests of the United States[59]. For instance, Chellaney argues that: "To see the Chinese rattled by U.S. missile defenses is surely an agreeable sight for India."[60] This spatial othering of China frames India as an ally in the eyes of the United States; China, not India, is portrayed as the challenger to the liberal international order. As a result, India is positioned not as a source of Western anxiety about the order's survival but as a potential solution to it. Representing India as radically separate from China, as opposed to being linked together with China as part of the BRICS countries, allows for India to be constituted as the foremost democratic power keeping the Chinese challenger at bay. India's position in the Global South is framed as a strategic advantage rather than a foreign threat to Western eyes.

In temporal terms, India's 'rise' is represented as a transition away from its previous role

[52] Eswaran Sridharan, "Where is India headed? Possible future directions in Indian foreign policy," *International Affairs* 93, no. 1 (2017): 51-68.

[53] Harsh Pant, "Modi's Unexpected Boost to India-U.S. Relations," *The Washington Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (2014): 93-112, 99.

[54] Deepa Ollapally and Rajesh Rajagopalan, "The Pragmatic Challenge to Indian Foreign Policy," *The Washington Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (2011): 145-162.

[55] Debalina Ghoshal, "India's Recessed Deterrence Posture," *The Washington Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (2016): 159-170, 161.

[56] T. P. Sreenivasan, "Bringing India's Dream to Fruition," *The Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (2010): 169-179.

[57] Rajesh Basrur, "Modi's foreign policy fundamentals: A trajectory unchanged," *International Affairs* 93, no. 1 (2017): 7-26.

[58] See, Rajesh Basrur, "Nuclear Weapons and Indian Strategic Culture," *Journal of Peace Research* 38, no. 2 (2001): 181-198.

[59] Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017). For a counterargument, See, Steve Chan, *Thucydides's Trap? Historical Interpretation, Logic of Inquiry, and the Future of Sino-American Relations* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2020).

[60] Brahma Chellaney, "New Delhi's Dilemma," *The Washington Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (2000): 145-153, 148.

as a leader of the Third World and a champion of the de-colonial movement and towards a role as a liberal and democratic 'strategic muscle.'[61] Overall, India's history as a colony is seldomly mentioned, but when it is, it is portrayed in contrast to its current rise. With this 'temporal othering' of India's historical self as a non-aligned and postcolonial leader, rising India becomes intrinsically linked to the broader stability of the international system, thereby aligning its academic focus more closely with prevailing Western-American perspectives.

7.2. 'Rising India' Discourse in Indian Journals

If mainstream journals often feature India-based scholars articulating India's rise in terms relevant to a Western audience, India-based journals focus primarily on regionally grounded issues, with particular attention to the dynamics and trajectory of South Asia's regional order. Spatially, India's rise is represented as part of a general power shift away from the West and towards Asia. The country is portrayed as a distinct Asian rising power with a responsibility for securing peace and stability in South Asia due to its geographical, cultural, and symbolic centrality in the region. As noted by Naidu, India occupies "the heart of the world's new centre of gravity, that is, the Asia-Pacific."[62] Singh and Mir further emphasise India's geographical centrality, stating that "other South Asian countries can only reach one another by crossing through the Indian territory."[63] Indian centrality is also evident as it is described as 'our country' and as a 'she' rather than an 'it' or 'New Delhi'—in stark contrast with the US-oriented discourse seen in mainstream journals.

The discourse in Indian journals frequently employs descriptors that distinguish India from Western powers, framing a rising India in spatial terms as a "developing country" or a member of the "Global South." The rise of India is not equated with Westernisation and similarity to the US to the same degree. Ghose accentuates this point by stating that "[i]f the current US Administration has a strategic world view, India does not figure in it."[64] The analysed articles acknowledge India's democratic and liberal attributes, but these qualities are less frequently linked to the West; instead, they are presented as intrinsic elements of South Asian history and culture. For instance, Chopra observes that India's democratic experiences offer a unique model that harmonises economic reform with democracy and social equality.[65] Kumari similarly argues that India propagates democracy and human rights in a manner that is distinctively non-European. India's emergence is framed within the context of a South Asian regional order—a perspective that, while distinctly rooted in South Asia, does not directly challenge other regional viewpoints. Rather than being revisionist, this approach reflects a 'non-universalist' characteristic.[66]

Furthermore, there is no juxtaposition of rising India and China in inherently adversarial terms, as is common in the discourse found in mainstream journals. Instead, India's status as the heart of South Asia is predominantly mobilised to project a responsibility for India to balance its relations with great powers without becoming a vassal of either, to ensure peace and prosperity in the region. According to Singh and Mir, all players in South Asia, including

[61] See, Sujit Dutta, "Managing and Engaging Rising China," *The Washington Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (2011): 127-144.

[62] G. V. C. Naidu, "India and Southeast Asia," *International Studies* 47, no. 2-4 (2010): 285-304, 286.

[63] Bawa Singh and Mohamad Arif Mir, "Geostrategic Significance of South Asia," *IUP Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 3 (2014): 7-16, 10.

[64] Arundhati Ghose, "Nuclear Weapons, Non-proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament," *India Quarterly* 65, no. 4 (2009): 431-440, 438.

[65] P. N. Chopra, "Looking Towards Asia in the Twenty-First Century," *India Quarterly* 56, no. 3-4 (2000): 1-14.

[66] Priya Kumari, "India as a Normative Power," *International Studies* 51, no. 4 (2014): 180-194.

Pakistan, should feel compelled to coordinate and accommodate one another to avoid regional interference from great powers.[67] This perspective most directly informs a modern version of non-alignment, advocating that India maintain relations with both the United States and China to preserve its strategic independence.[68] Without India becoming an independent major power, it cannot continue to promote "the peace, stability, and development of the entire South Asian region."[69] Accordingly, a 'rising India' becomes an indicative of a 'rising South Asia.'

Indian journals portray India's rise as a continuation of its historical roles as a leader of the developing world and a proponent of the non-alignment movement, emphasising its connection to South Asian history and its postcolonial legacy. This stands in stark contrast to mainstream journals, where India's rise is framed as a departure from these roles, aligning instead with a more global and Western-centric narrative. Muni and Mohan describe India as a "former colony," slowly regaining its self-confidence and material capabilities with a Nehruvian vision of becoming the leading power in the creation of a solidaristic Asian community.[70] Several other scholars follow the same path, portraying India's rise as a continuation of South Asia's history as a resourceful and geographically important area.[71] India's rise is often framed historicized as a rejuvenation of postcolonial South Asia, with this perspective portraying it as a return to its "rightful place in the comity of nations." [72] Chopra articulates this representation clearly when describing the origins of Indian secularism: "The genius of India is assimilative and receptive. It never opposed scientific enquiry: In the shaping of Indian thought so many streams have combined. […] And India, in turn, has given generously to all. It was like the Sun giving its light."[73] Hence, India's influence on world politics, both in terms of intellectual contributions and geopolitics, are represented as pre-dating India's rise. India is not *becoming* an influential and important power; it has already been one for a long time, which makes possible a representation of India's 'rise' as a rightful claim to recognition and status.[74]

8. Conclusion

In this article, we have deepened the understanding of how power shifts in world politics influence knowledge production in International Relations. We showed that Indian scholars tend to portray India as a 'rising power' to a larger degree when publishing in mainstream journals than when publishing in Indian journals. Furthermore, Indian scholars publishing in mainstream journals tend to speak to a discourse that operates with a Western reference point and specifically addresses the future of a liberal international order, whereas Indian scholars publishing in Indian journals concentrate on matters pertinent to the South Asian context and more generally stress India's non-Western roots. Last, while Indian contributions to mainstream journals often portray India's rising status from a predominantly Western,

[67] Singh and Mir, "Geostrategic Significance of South Asia."

[68] See, Girijesh Pant, "Energy Security in Asia," *Strategic Analysis* 31, no. 3 (2007): 523-542.

[69] Parvaiz Thoker, and Bawa Singh, "The Emerging China,akistan, and Russia Strategic Triangle," *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 21, no. 1 (2017): 61-83, 77.

[70] S. D. Muni and C. Raja Mohan, "Emerging Asia," *International Studies* 41, no. 3 (2004): 313-333.

[71] Chopra, "Looking Towards Asia"; Naidu, "India and Southeast Asia"; Vijay Kaul, and Tuhina Chowdhury, "India Stimulating Growth in Bay of Bengal Region," *South Asian Survey* 25, no. 1 (2018): 102-128.

[72] Shubhodeep Chakrabarti, "Operational Deficiencies in India's Defense Preparedness," *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 17, no. 2 (2013): 153-183, 169.

[73] Chopra, "Looking Towards Asia," 10.

[74] See, Chagas-Bastos, "The challenge for the 'rest.'"

particularly American, perspective, contributions to Indian journals tend to root their analysis more deeply in India's rich intellectual tradition.

It is unsurprising that IR scholars have differing views on the identity and interests of India or rising power more broadly. It is nonetheless striking that these differences seem to originate more from geographical than, say, political or intellectual cleavages. The divergence is not so much between scholars of different theoretical branches, but between Indian scholars contributing to *mainstream* versus *local* IR journals. These findings highlight the significant impact of core-periphery dynamics in IR publication structures. Our results caution against interpreting scholarship too narrowly in geographical terms, considering that work from Indian scholars takes on a quite different form depending on whether you read it in mainstream journals or Indian journals.

Further study should be dedicated to uncovering the power relations through which this pattern of rising power speech has been sustained. Autoethnographic and interview-based studies indicate that academic peer-to-peer expectations play a prominent role in this regard.[75] Turning our attention to the micro-practices unfolding in quality standards, academic review processes, and at job interviews may provide us with a better understanding of how expectations of native informants are sustained and reproduced in the everyday.[76]

If Western IR scholars, students, or practitioners are only exposed to analyses of rising powers published in mainstream IR journals, the complexity and multiplicity of perspectives that are present in rising powers will be lost. This is not to say, however, that one journal group represents a more truthful picture of the Indian scholarly discourse on India's rise. We call for attention and further study of how the political economy of publication shapes discourse: peripheral scholarship, whether by scholars based in 'rising powers' or not, might take different forms depending on the outlet.

More critically, our results emphasise the need for caution and precision in efforts to globalise the IR discipline. While expanding access to publication is important, equal focus must be placed on what is published and the terms under which 'the rest' are included. If the discursive landscape continues to be dominated by narratives centred on threats to the US-led world order, the inclusion of voices from beyond the West will fall short of achieving the possibility of a truly global IR.

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[75] Khan, "Reconfiguring the Native Informant"; "Kristensen, "States of emergence"; Karen Su, "Translating Mother Tongues," in *Feminist Field: Ethnographic Insights,* eds. Rae Bridgman, Sally Cole, and Heather Howard-Bobiwash (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 33-53.

[76] See, Michèle Lamont, *How Professors Think: Inside the Curious World of Academic Judgment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Fabrício Chagas-Bastos and Peter Kristensen, "Mapping Quality Judgment in International Relations: Cognitive Dimensions and Sociological Correlates," *Perspectives on Politics*, (2025).

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