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In This Issue

This special issue of *All Azimuth* offers a selection of works encompassing the current state of the IR discipline, particularly concerning the ongoing conversation about the globalization of the discipline. Most of our articles were prepared for and presented at the 5th Annual *All Azimuth* Workshop, held online on December 12-13 in Ankara, Turkey. The workshop participants deliberated on the globalization potential of the discipline and, more importantly, what can be done, both in the global north and south, to amplify the voices of the latter. We are proud and pleased to share the fruits of this scholarly exchange that ensued from this inquiry.

Our first set of articles is primarily diagnostic as the articles empirically assess the IR discipline. One of the issues discussed concerns the oft-mentioned global division of labor between the core and the periphery. Specifically, is there indeed a tendency for the core to focus on the prestigious task of theory-production while periphery scholars must contend with the task of applying theories to country-specific cases? In “The Global Division of Labor in a Not So Global Discipline,” Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar, Peter Kristensen, and Mathis Lohaus address this question through a bibliometric analysis comparing IR journals in the Transatlantic core and selected periphery journals through data obtained from their Global Pathways Project. Their findings indeed point to an unproductive division of labor in which journals of the Transatlantic core show a strong preference towards theory-oriented and empirical research while periphery journals showcase significant home-bias through their predilection for testing theories in case study research as well as policy-oriented research.

Continuing this conversation on home-bias, our second article, “Methodological Nationalism in International Relations: A Quantitative Assessment of Academia in Turkey” by Mustafa Onur Tetik, offers an apropos assessment of Methodological Nationalism (MN) in the IR publications of Turkey. MN refers to the prevalence and replication of banal nationalism in the IR academia of Turkey. This is achieved by an analysis of the MN tendencies of prominent journals like *All Azimuth* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, as well as Ph.D. dissertations of top universities in the 2015-2019 period. Tetik discovers that there is indeed a strong tendency in Turkish IR to be more “interested in foreign policies of particular states and international hard/daily politics than theories, concepts, methodologies or abstractions,” corroborating Wemheuer-Vogelaar, Kristensen, and Lohaus’ findings about journals in the periphery.

Our third article, “Globalizing IR: Can Regionalism offer a path for other Sub-Disciplines?” by Hakan Mehmetcik and Hasan Hakses, offers an alternative pathway to globalize the IR discipline by casting a bibliographic-analytical gaze to the regionalism subfield. They find that despite the prominence of the European integration project in its inception, the regionalism field is driven today by non-Western scholars, and its agenda is shaped by non-Western regions. In this respect, non-Western scholars appear to be the real engine of regionalism study, unlike in the broader discipline.

Our initial three articles assess various components of IR scholarship and the potential to achieve a plural and global discipline through quantitative analyses, and describe possible venues of pursuing Global IR. The latter four are equally interested in identifying burgeoning trends but are additionally committed to prescribing solutions. Our fourth article, “Towards Guanxi? Reconciling the “Relational Turn” in Western and Chinese International Relations Scholarship” by Siyang Liu, Jeremy Garlick, and Fangxing Qin, for instance, compares the budding research on relational theory in Chinese, and the relational turn in Anglophone IR respectively, examining their origins, prospects, and possibilities for their unification. Relationism in Western IR focuses on interactions, practices, and processes in the context of the Westphalian international system in which states, highly static actors, constitute

the primary actors of world politics, which seems to echo notions of the prevalence of methodological nationalism. By contrast, Chinese relationalism underscores relationality not only of processes but the units themselves, showing how the identities of the actors are intersubjectively shaped by their relations. Chinese relationalism is also founded on Confucian philosophical principles and largely ingrained in Chinese culture through what can be defined as the concept of Guanxi. In contrast, Western relationalism remains a highly esoteric subject in social sciences. Combined with the prevalence of threat narratives about China in the Western IR discipline, the authors are skeptical about the likelihood of achieving a unified approach to relational theorizing in IR.

Our fifth article, “The English School and Global IR – A Research Agenda” by Filippo Costa Buranelli and Simon F. Taeuber, showcases the possible contributions the English School of IR could bring to Global IR. On the surface, the English School would not be considered an obvious choice to amplify non-Western theorizing due to its Eurocentric origin and state-centric assumptions. On the contrary, the authors argue that because of its theoretical assumptions and diverse research orientation, the English School is well-positioned to develop a research agenda that is both inclusive, reflexive, and capable of promoting epistemic justice. The English School already engages with non-Western international societies through regional and historical studies, but more work lies ahead to flesh out the School by moving beyond international and world society to a plural global society.

Further elaborating on the framework of epistemic inclusivity, the penultimate article, “Reflexive Solidarity: Toward a Broadening of What It Means to be “Scientific” in Global IR Knowledge” by Yong-Soo Eun, argues for the expansion of the very concept of science itself. The Global IR discussion cannot be divorced from the disciplinary tendency to create intellectual hierarchies and engage in gatekeeping based on epistemic preferences. This is a particularly acute problem for the IR discipline, in which “scientific” research is conflated with a narrow conception of positivist research predicated on causal inference. To this end, Eun argues that the Global IR discussion needs to extend beyond a geospatial understanding of exclusion and “instead seek solidarity with other marginalised scholars irrespective of their geographical locations or geocultural backgrounds.” Eun seeks to elevate normative and ethnographic IR research to the status of being scientifically on par with the extant, narrow, and positivist understanding of science. Eun offers “reflexive solidarity,” or auto-biographic research, as one way to achieve this.

The final contribution to this issue advances a different route to achieving a more global discipline by promoting methodological awareness and sophistication in the periphery. Ismail Erkam Sula’s article, “‘Global’ IR and Self-Reflections in Turkey: Methodology, Data Collection, and Data Repository,” argues that an important reason for the exclusion of Non-Western theorizing is due to insufficient attention to methods and a relative dearth of data repositories that could produce useful and value-added research to the broader scholarly community. A focus on this type of research can result in “local revolutions” that can connect peripheral scholarly communities with their international counterparts. Sula illustrates this argument by highlighting the important successes and research avenues created through several exemplary database projects in Turkey.

The Global Division of Labor in a Not So Global Discipline

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Abstract

Several studies have pointed to an unproductive ‘division of labor’ in the International Relations discipline (IR), notably its publication patterns, in which scholars based in a ‘core’ publish theory-building work while scholars based in a ‘periphery’ publish mainly empirical, area-oriented, or theory-testing work. The latter would thus mainly act as ‘local informants’ feeding empirical material on ‘their own’ country or region into the theorizing efforts of the ‘core’. We investigate this argument empirically using the dataset compiled by the Global Pathways (GP) project that studies the content in both ‘core’- and ‘periphery’-based and edited journals. Overall, our findings corroborate the argument about a core-periphery division of labor. Our main findings are threefold: (1) In terms of theory, we find that ‘core’ journals publish a larger proportion of theory-developing (and statistical) work and a lower proportion of analytical case studies and descriptive work than do ‘periphery’ journals. Scholars based in the ‘periphery’ are rarely published in these more theoretical ‘core’ journals (accounting for just 5.5% of articles in the journals studied here), but the published articles tend to apply theory. The main division of labor is thus not playing out within ‘core’ journals, but across the ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ worlds of publishing. In the ‘periphery’ journals, we actually find that scholars tend to publish a significant proportion of work using theory. (2) In terms of regional focus, we find that all journals and authors tend to have an empirical ‘home bias’, i.e. focus their empirical work on the region in which they are based, but that this is stronger for ‘periphery’-based journals and authors. This provides some confirmation of an unproductive division of labor where ‘core’ authors publish works about all regions of the globe, while ‘periphery’ authors have a stronger regional orientation. (3) Finally, we find evidence that some journals and authors – particularly those based in Sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia – tend to be more policy-oriented, but we find no conclusive evidence of a core-periphery gap in this context.

Keywords: International Relations discipline, Global IR, Global South, periphery, epistemic hierarchies

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1. Introduction

It is a disciplinary truism that International Relations (IR) is not a very international, but rather an Anglo-American or Western-centric discipline.¹ However, recent years have witnessed an attempt to open the discipline and its institutions to a broader range of voices and approaches from outside its Anglo-European ‘core’, what has variously been called “Third World” IR,² “non-Western” IR,³ “peripheral” IR⁴ or “global” IR⁵, “geocultural pluralism”⁶ and the like. This has led to an increasing awareness of the representational politics of IR, as seen in attempts to broaden the cultural representation within major journals. Representational politics of IR matter, even if they are sometimes excessively focused on problematic “Western/non-Western”, “core/periphery”, and “North/South” binaries.⁷ Yet the problem is broader than merely increasing the *presence* of scholarship from the ‘periphery’, ‘Global South’ or ‘beyond the West’ in research publications, textbooks, conferences and so on.⁸ To develop effective representational policies in the discipline, it is also important to interrogate *what* is published where and by whom.

Several studies have pointed to the existence of an unproductive “intellectual division of labor” in which Anglo-European-based or ‘core’ scholars produce theory-building work while scholars from the ‘periphery’ consume, apply, and test theory.⁹ Arlene Tickner (2013:631),

¹ Stanley Hoffmann, “An American Social Science: International Relations,” *Daedalus* 106 (1977): 41–60; Kalevi Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985); Ole Wæver, “The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations,” *International Organization* 52 (1998): 687–727; Steve Smith, “The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?,” *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 2 (2000): 374–402; Robert Crawford and Darryl Jarvis, *International Relations: Still an American Social Science?* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001); Helen Turton, *International Relations and American Dominance: A Diverse Discipline* (London: Routledge, 2015); Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar et al., “The IR of the Beholder: Examining Global IR Using the 2014 TRIP Survey,” *International Studies Review* 18 (2016): 16–32; Audrey Alejandro, *Western Dominance in International Relations?: The Internationalisation of IR in Brazil and India* (London; New York: Routledge, 2018).

² Stephanie G. Neuman, *International Relations Theory and the Third World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1998); Arlene Tickner, “Seeing IR Differently: Notes from the Third World,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 32 (2003): 295–324; Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin, “Still Waiting after All These Years: ‘The Third World’ on the Periphery of International Relations,” *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 6 (2004): 241–58.

³ Donald J. Puchala, “Some Non-Western Perspectives on International Relations,” *Journal of Peace Research* 34 (1997): 129–34; Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010); Robbie Shilliam, *International Relations and Non-Western Thought: Imperialism, Colonialism and Investigations of Global Modernity* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2010); Ching-Chang Chen, “The Absence of Non-Western IR Theory in Asia Reconsidered,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 11 (2011): 1–23; Andrey Makarychev and Viatcheslav Morozov, “Is ‘Non-Western Theory’ Possible? The Idea of Multipolarity and the Trap of Epistemological Relativism in Russian IR,” *International Studies Review* 15 (2013): 328–50; Yong-Soo Eun, “Opening up the Debate over ‘Non-Western’ International Relations,” *Politics* 39 (2019): 4–17.

⁴ Ersel Aydinli and Julie Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable? The Curious World of Publishing in Contemporary International Relations,” *International Studies Perspectives* 1 (2000): 289–303; Ersel Aydinli and Julie Mathews, “Periphery Theorising for a Truly Internationalised Discipline: Spinning IR Theory Out of Anatolia,” *Review of International Studies* 34 (2008): 693–712; Arlene Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo) Imperialist International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (2013): 627–46; Helen Turton and Lucas Freire, “Peripheral Possibilities: Revealing Originality and Encouraging Dialogue through a Reconsideration of ‘Marginal’ IR Scholarship,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 19 (2014): 534–57.

⁵ Amitav Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds,” *International Studies Quarterly* 58 (2014): 647–59; Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Yaqing Qin, ed., *Globalizing IR Theory: Critical Engagement* (London: Routledge, 2020).

⁶ Arlene Tickner and Ole Wæver, *International Relations Scholarship Around the World* (London: Routledge, 2009); Valerie de Koeijer and Robbie Shilliam, “Forum: International Relations as a Geoculturally Pluralistic Field,” *International Politics Reviews* (2021).

⁷ Yong-Soo Eun, “Beyond ‘the West/Non-West Divide’ in IR,” *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 11 (2018): 435–49; Peter Marcus Kristensen, “The South in ‘Global IR’: Worlding Beyond the ‘Non-West’ in the Case of Brazil,” *International Studies Perspectives* 22 (2021): 218–39.

⁸ As we clarify below, we prefer to use geographical regions rather than meta-geographies like core-periphery and its avatars. When we do use terms like ‘core’ and ‘periphery’, it is primarily to refer back to the existing literature and the division of labor claim we aim to test and therefore we use the terms in quotation marks.

⁹ Tickner and Wæver, *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, 332; Gunther Hellmann, “Interpreting International Relations,” *International Studies Review* 19 (2017): 299; Wemheuer-Vogelaar et al., “The IR of the Beholder,” 18; Barry Buzan, “How and How Not to Develop IR Theory: Lessons from Core and Periphery,” *The Chinese Journal of International*

for example, describes a “neo-imperialist” division of labor, where the “first world/North” is viewed as the primary producer of “finished goods” such as scientific theories while the “third world/South” is viewed as a source of “raw data” or, at best, “local expertise”. In this hierarchical system, the scholar from the Global South or ‘periphery’ can function mainly as “regional experts” feeding empirical and area-oriented material on their country or region into the ‘core’.¹⁰ They act as “subcontractors to a (usually Western) theory-producing core.”¹¹ Put in the terms of colonial political economy, Global South scholars are viewed not as “scholars or theorists in their own right” but as “native informants”¹² fulfilling the role of “servants” in the House of IR.¹³

Global circulation networks, in turn, transport this raw “data” to the “North” (or “upstairs” in Agathangelou and Ling’s metaphor)¹⁴ for interpretation and theory-building, repackage it into recognizable “theory” and circulate it for global consumption.¹⁵ Once again, these “advanced theoretical goods” are uni-directionally disseminated into the ‘periphery’.¹⁶ This “intellectual division of labor is anchored in the global imperial order”, Manuela Picq argues, where the Eurocentric ‘core’ retains its status as the global center of theory production while dismissing scholarship from the South as merely “case studies, not theory” and thus not “real IR.”¹⁷ But it is also hegemonic and self-reproducing in that ‘peripheral’ fields dissuade theoretical work and valorize practical applied knowledge of use to policymakers,¹⁸ thus “perpetuating their own marginalization.”¹⁹

This paper sets out to study the ‘division of labor’ argument empirically. We aim to test three dimensions of the division of labor argument: (1) that theory production and use is concentrated in a geographical ‘core’; (2) that communities of IR located in a ‘periphery’ tend to publish work that is empirically focused mostly on their ‘own’ region; (3) that knowledge production in this ‘periphery’ is more policy- and practice-oriented than is the case in the ‘core’. Methodologically, we try to test these claims bibliometrically, i.e. by studying the content of IR journal publications, as several studies in the sociology of IR have done before us. Unlike the majority of previous studies of IR, however, we not only examine publications by periphery-based scholars in ‘core’ journals,²⁰ but use the dataset compiled by the Global Pathways (GP) project to study the content of articles published in both ‘core’- and ‘periphery’-based and edited journals. By looking at both ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ journals,

Politics 11 (2018): 391.

¹⁰ Aydinli and Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable?,” 299; Orion Noda, “Epistemic Hegemony: The Western Straitjacket and Post-Colonial Scars in Academic Publishing,” *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 63, no. 1 (2020): 1–23; 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): 259–66; Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo) Imperialist International Relations.”

¹¹ Morten Valbjørn, “Dialoguing about Dialogues: On the Purpose, Procedure and Product of Dialogues in Inter-National Relations Theory,” *International Studies Review* 19 (2017): 293.

¹² Peter Marcus Kristensen, “How Can Emerging Powers Speak? On Theorists, Native Informants and Quasi-Officials in International Relations Discourse,” *Third World Quarterly* 36 (2015): 637–53.

¹³ Anna M. Agathangelou and L. H. M. Ling, “The House of IR: From Family Power Politics to the Poisies of Worldism,” *International Studies Review* 6, no. 4 (2004): 31.

¹⁴ Agathangelou and Ling, “The House of IR.”

¹⁵ Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo) Imperialist International Relations,” 631.

¹⁶ Kristensen, “How Can Emerging Powers Speak?”

¹⁷ Manuela Picq, “Rethinking IR from the Amazon,” *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 59 (2016): 9.

¹⁸ Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo) Imperialist International Relations,” 629; Arlene Tickner, “Latin American IR and the Primacy of Lo Práctico,” *International Studies Review* 10 (2008): 735–48.

¹⁹ Picq, “Rethinking IR from the Amazon,” 9.

²⁰ See, for example, Wæver, “The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline”; Aydinli and Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable?”; Peter Marcus Kristensen, “Revisiting the ‘American Social Science’ - Mapping the Geography of International Relations,” *International Studies Perspectives* 16 (2015): 246–69; Kristensen, “How Can Emerging Powers Speak?” Note that Aydinli and Mathews do include *International Studies* (India) and *International Affairs* (Russia), but in this paper, the majority of journals are based outside Europe and North America.

we are able to study whether there is a systematic division of labor in that scholars based in regions of the ‘periphery’ tend to publish work of a different nature (e.g. more empirical and less theoretical work, more on their ‘own’ region/area than on others, more policy-oriented) compared to scholars working in the regions of the ‘core’ publishing in ‘core’ journals – a key part of the division of labor argument. But more importantly, the Global Pathways data enables us to also examine if the publication patterns differ markedly when scholars from the ‘periphery’ or the ‘core’ publish in journals controlled and edited in the ‘periphery’. If we find that scholars based in the ‘periphery’ actually publish more on theory and more on extra-regional and global issues in ‘periphery’ journals, then this provides evidence that their absence or the particular division of labor in ‘core’ journals may have less to do with what scholars in the ‘periphery’ work on and more to do with who can publish what where, and who is accepted as a producer of such IR and who is not.

Our main findings are (1) in terms of theory, ‘core’ journals publish a larger proportion of theory developing (and statistical) work than do ‘periphery’ journals, and a lower proportion of analytical case studies and descriptive work. Scholars based in the ‘periphery’ are rarely published in these more theoretical ‘core’ journals (accounting for just 5.5% of articles in the journals studied here). The main division of labor is thus not playing out within ‘core’ journals, but across the ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ worlds of publishing. As we turn to the ‘periphery’ journals, we actually find that scholars based in the ‘periphery’ tend to publish a significant proportion of work using theory, even if this work is rarely published in ‘core’ journals. (2) In terms of regional focus, we find evidence that all journals and authors tend to have an empirical ‘home bias’, i.e. focus their empirical work on the region in which they are based, but that this tendency is stronger for ‘periphery’-based journals and authors. This provides some confirmation of an unproductive division of labor in which ‘core’ authors publish work about all regions of the globe, while ‘periphery’ authors have a stronger regional orientation. However, this comes with the important variation that *local-language* ‘periphery’ journals are more inclined to publish work with a global focus or on regions other than where the journal is based, while *English-language* ‘periphery’ journals tend to focus on the regions in which they are based. (3) Finally, in terms of relative policy orientation, we find evidence that some journals and authors – particularly those based in Sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia – tend to be more policy-oriented, but no conclusive evidence of a core-periphery gap is found here.

The paper proceeds first by outlining its methodology and the Global Pathways dataset. Second, we present our empirical findings with an emphasis on, firstly, theory use; secondly, regional focus; and thirdly, policy relevance.

2. Methodology and Data

The sociology of global IR has employed different methods for studying the social structure of the discipline, including studies of textbooks and syllabi²¹ or surveys among IR scholars.²² This article adds to the part of the literature that emphasizes bibliometric studies of journal

²¹ See, for example, Jonas Hagmann Jonas and Thomas Biersteker, “Beyond the Published Discipline: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of International Studies,” *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 2 (2014): 291–315; Jeff D. Colgan, “Where Is International Relations Going? Evidence from Graduate Training,” *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2016): 486–98; Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline*.

²² Daniel Maliniak, Susan Peterson, Ryan Powers and Michael J. Tierney, “International Relations in the US Academy,” *International Studies Quarterly* 55 (2011): 437–64; Daniel Maliniak, Susan Peterson, Ryan Powers and Michael J. Tierney, “Is International Relations a Global Discipline? Hegemony, Insularity, and Diversity in the Field,” *Security Studies* 27, no. 3 (2018): 448–84.

publications, which are often considered as providing the “most direct measure of the discipline itself.”²³ In contrast to surveys among scholars and investigations into how the discipline is being taught, journal publications indicate what counts as ‘real’ IR research and what gets circulated in the wider disciplinary network.²⁴ That is why journals provide a useful entry point for examining arguments about a division of labor in global IR research.

Much of the literature on the contents of IR research tends to study North American and European journals indexed by the Web of Science. Drawing on the Global Pathways dataset, we are able to cast a wider net, which allows us to examine the ‘division of labor’ thesis. To represent the ‘transatlantic core’, we study *International Organization (IO)*, *International Studies Quarterly (ISQ)*, *European Journal of International (EJIR)*, and *Review of International Studies (RIS)*. These four journals are based on both sides of the Northern Atlantic, are highly regarded according to the TRIP survey, and receive many citations in the Web of Science.²⁵ In addition, our sample includes ten ‘periphery’ journals based in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, both within and outside of the Web of Science. These were selected to provide information on a diverse set of IR communities from different world regions, including comparisons between English and local-language outlets of the same region, when possible. Taking into account some exclusions due to data and methodological concerns (see below), the sample covers 1,995 IR research articles published between 2011 and 2015.

Table 1- Composition of the Sample

Journal name	WoS	Location & languages	Articles
IO: International Organization	X	USA: English	120
ISQ: International Studies Quarterly	X	USA: English	262
EJIR: European Journal of International Relations	X	Europe: English	164
RIS: Review of International Studies	X	UK: English	286
EI: Estudios Internacionales	-	Chile: Spanish	63
FI: Foro Internacional (<i>only IR</i>)	-	Mexico: Spanish	62
RBPI: Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional	X	Brazil: English, Spanish, Portuguese	116
SAJIA: South African Journal of International Affairs	-	South Africa: English	94
CJIP: Chinese Journal of International Politics	X	China: English	73
WEP: World Economics and Politics / Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi	-	China: Chinese	428
IS_TWN: Issues and Studies (<i>only IR</i>)	X	Taiwan: English	40
WY: Wenti yu Yanjiu (<i>only IR, 2011-2012</i>)	-	Taiwan: Chinese	23
IRAP: International Relations of the Asia Pacific	X	Japan: English	70
KKSJ: Kokusai Seiji	-	Japan: Japanese	194

For each article in these journals, the authors’ institutional affiliation at the time of publication has been coded based on the information indicated directly in the journal articles, or in some cases in each (print) issue. This allows us to assign a regional base to each author. In addition to geographical base, we also investigated where authors obtained their PhD degrees. This required extensive research on authors’ biographies via departmental websites,

²³ Wæver, “The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline,” 697.

²⁴ Kjell Goldmann, “Im Westen Nichts Neues: Seven International Relations Journals in 1972 and 1992,” *European Journal of International Relations* 1, no. 2 (1995): 247.

²⁵ Mathis Lohaus and Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar, “Who Publishes Where? Exploring the Geographic Diversity of Global IR Journals,” *International Studies Review* 23, no. 3 (2021): 645–69.

professional social networks, and general web search. Both pieces of information point to specific institutions and countries, but for the sake of simplicity the results were aggregated at the level of world regions.

The existing literature on global inequalities in IR tends to operate with meta-geographical terms like ‘core’ versus ‘periphery’, ‘West’ versus ‘non-West’, and ‘North’ versus ‘South’. Such terms can surely be useful, and sometimes unavoidable, heuristic devices when describing the structural inequalities in the discipline. However, aggregating can also be seen as problematic and over-simplistic. This becomes most evident when categories are applied to the scholarly communities of entire regions or collections of regions, which are often not uniformly ‘peripheral’ or ‘core’.²⁶ Even for specific journals, it is never clear-cut. There might be good justifications for considering *International Organization*, for instance, as a ‘core’ journal, but do *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* or *Chinese Journal of International Politics* count as ‘periphery’ journals when they have senior U.S. and European academics on the editorial board and are published by Oxford University Press?

The same problem applies to the identification of author affiliation. Rather than focus on the crude categories of ‘core’ and ‘periphery’, we prefer to operate with nine geographical regions. Given the dominance of the Anglophone world in the journals we examine, and the wider discipline, we operate with distinct categories for North America, Australia and New Zealand, and the United Kingdom – what has sometimes been called the “Anglo-American condominium”.²⁷ Together with Continental Europe, these regions are often considered the ‘transatlantic core’ of IR. In addition to this, we distinguish Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia, South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. We acknowledge that these regional classifications are not unproblematic either, but they provide a more nuanced disaggregation than the more meta-geographical terms ‘core’ and ‘periphery’. It is also important to note that this classification is purely based on the authors’ *geographical location* and is *not* a study of their ethnicity or nationality. Therefore, scholars *based* in the ‘core’ may very well be nationals of a country associated with the ‘periphery’, and vice versa.

Co-authorship composition across regions is highly interesting in the context of a potential global ‘division of labor’. As several observers have noted, co-authorships can be part and parcel of the unequal global division of labor as exemplified by the case of papers “co-authored by a Western and a non-Western IR-scholar, where the latter provides ‘local empirical data’ to be used in the testing of allegedly universal theories possessed by the former.”²⁸ Even if labor in co-authored papers were not actually divided this way but the co-authorship were, say, a strategic choice for ‘periphery’ scholars to get published, as the interviews conducted by Aydinli and Mathews suggest, co-authorships may nonetheless translate into an imbalanced division of prestige where the ‘core’ scholar bolsters theoretical prestige backed by the legitimacy of regional expertise, while the ‘periphery’ scholar is not recognized for theoretical expertise.²⁹

While these kinds of co-authorships are conceptually interesting, they are exceedingly

²⁶ Kristensen, “Revisiting the ‘American Social Science’”; Helen Turton, “Locating a Multifaceted and Stratified Disciplinary ‘Core,’” *All Azimuth* 9, no. 2 (2020): 177–209.

²⁷ Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline*.

²⁸ Valbjørn, “Dialoguing about Dialogues,” 293.

²⁹ Aydinli and Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable?,” 299.

rare.³⁰ In the overall ‘Global Pathways’ dataset, 28 percent of articles are co-authored; yet most of these authors are based within the ‘transatlantic core’.³¹ Between 2011 and 2015, the 14 journals we analyze here published just 32 articles (1.5 percent) co-authored by at least one person based in a ‘periphery’ region. We refrain from analyzing these pieces quantitatively but include a list in the appendix. This omission seems unfortunate given our research interest, but it decreases the likelihood of bias in our findings. Moreover, including these few cross-regional co-authorships would also have complicated our analysis to a significant degree, as we could only guess which author was responsible for which parts of the research. To infer that ‘periphery’ scholars contributed empirical data while core-based scholars contributed the theory would only reinforce the very structure we seek to interrogate.

Apart from geographical meta-data, we have coded the *content* of articles using a detailed codebook with multiple-choice variables. Each article was assessed by at least one research assistant, who classified the contents by searching for keywords and patterns in the whole article. These choices were then reviewed by senior coders (also referred to as arbitrators) to check for consistency. The Global Pathways codebook and coding strategy is based on that developed by the TRIP project for their original journal analysis.³² Since their focus was not explicitly on the study of ‘global IR’, the TRIP codebook has been adapted to this purpose by the GP team. In this context, several new variables were introduced and values for existing variables were altered or added. The categories of interest for this article are: the usage of theory, the empirical focus in terms of geography, the overall level of abstraction and generalizability, and the inclusion of policy advice. The full dataset, list of variables, and codebook are available via the project’s website.³³

3. Empirical Findings

3.1. Theory and approach

Theory has historically assumed a central role in the social and intellectual structure of International Relations. Theory is therefore also central in the literature about core-periphery structures and a ‘division of labor’, the argument being that the ‘core’ retains a near-monopoly on theorizing (despite recent anxieties about the “End of IR theory”).³⁴ Coding for ‘theory’ in journal publications raises a more fundamental question about what ‘counts’ as theory, different concepts of theory, the boundary work involved in distinguishing ‘proper theory’ from work that is ‘atheoretical’, ‘empirical’, ‘descriptive’, ‘practical’ and so on. These delineations are a key part of the ‘core-periphery’ structures themselves, for instance when certain types of work are described as atheoretical and thus allegedly of lesser value. Furthermore, there is a real risk of implicitly applying ‘Western’ or ‘core’ concepts of theory as the only recognizable or detectable kind of ‘theory’.³⁵ In that case, we would risk finding

³⁰ See, Sébastien Mosbah-Natanson and Yves Gingras, “The Globalization of Social Sciences? Evidence from a Quantitative Analysis of 30 Years of Production, Collaboration and Citations in the Social Sciences (1980–2009,” *Current Sociology* 62, no. 5 (2014), 634–38, who discuss interregional collaborations within the Web of Science. They find that authors based in Latin America, Africa, or Asia collaborate with authors from North America or Europe at *relatively* high rates, but such co-authorships are rare in absolute terms.

³¹ See the supplement Table S-A4 in Lohaus and Wemheuer-Vogelaar, “Who Publishes Where?”

³² See, for example, Maliniak et al., “International Relations in the US Academy”.

³³ Available here: <https://global-pathways.eu/>.

³⁴ Tim Dunne, Lene Hansen, and Colin Wight, “The End of International Relations Theory?,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (2013): 405–25.

³⁵ Acharya and Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory*; Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo) Imperialist

only what we are looking for, namely the dominance of said theories.

There is no easy solution to avoid biases when it comes to theory, but to be as open as possible, we track theoretical approaches based on the labels and keywords used by the authors themselves. Such self-identification takes place whenever an author names a theoretical approach or makes use of characteristic keywords. This includes articles employing a theory to frame the article’s question and answer, those analyzing theories themselves as their main object, as well as articles using theories as sources for competing explanations. The coding includes mainstream ‘Western’ IR theories, for which we identified indicators in our codebook, such as “balance of power” for realism. Additionally, we recorded references to theoretical concepts from bordering disciplines, for example when authors directly draw on sociology or economics. We also trace what has been called ‘indigenous’, ‘localized’, ‘non-Western’, or ‘Global IR’ theories, which were coded based on geographical or cultural markers such as “Chinese exceptionalism” or “The Kyoto School.” This open-ended coding thus tracks whether articles are using *any kind of theory*, irrespective of whether it is rooted in paradigmatic IR, imported from somewhere else, or combinations thereof.

A second piece of information is assessed independent of theory usage but closely linked to it: for each article, we assess their overall approach. Our coding scheme distinguishes four potential outcomes. The most abstract type of article is primarily focused on theory development, either in the format of a purely theoretical essay or by pairing theoretical elaborations with a short empirical illustration. Another typical kind of article uses formalized techniques of ‘inferential statistics’, such as regression analysis (at times also in conjunction with short case-study vignettes). The third type of article is labelled ‘analytical case studies’ and contains different approaches such as process tracing, comparative case studies, or narrative case studies; the common denominator here is the goal of (also) engaging in causal analysis. This separates it from the fourth type of article – ‘mainly descriptive’ research, which can be of a qualitative or quantitative nature but does not involve systematic causal explanation.

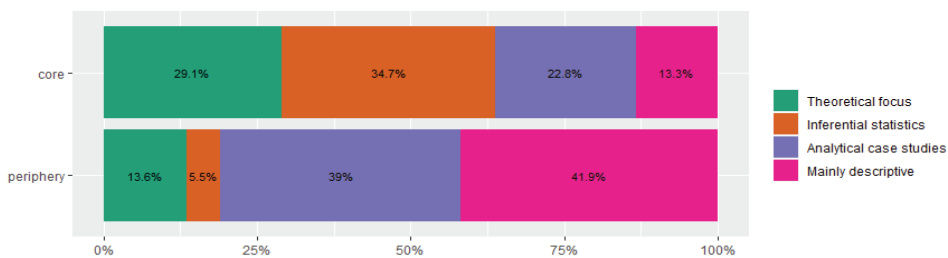


Figure 1: Approach by type of journal

Figure 1 contains our findings for the overall approach of articles. A clear difference between the two sets of journals concerns the relative emphasis on theory compared to empirics. Almost a third of the articles from ‘core’ journals have a predominantly theoretical focus, whereas this proportion is only 13.6% in ‘periphery’ journals. Among the remainder of articles with an empirical focus, ‘core’ journals often publish work using inferential statistics (34.7%, and this mainly in ISQ and IO) followed by analytical case studies and, lastly, mainly descriptive work. Meanwhile, inferential statistics are almost absent in ‘periphery’ journals. By contrast, analytical case studies and mainly descriptive are by far the most prominent general approaches.

Overall, this confirms the division of labor argument in that ‘core’ journals are much more likely to publish theory-developing work. This suggests that the bulk of *theory production* takes place in these journals, while the ‘periphery’ journals are much more likely to publish descriptive articles with or without references to theory.³⁶ However, we do find that 13.6% of articles in ‘periphery’ journals have a theoretical focus, and, more importantly, that approximately 90% of their authors are also based in periphery regions, with more than half of these holding a PhD from a university located in the periphery. Of the 29.1% pure theory articles in the ‘core’ journals, however, 95% have authors located in the ‘core’ and most of the remaining authors hold a PhD from the ‘core’.

However, when we move from theory development to the *use of theory*, we find a somewhat more mixed picture. The share of articles *using theory* is still larger for authors based in North America, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, and Continental Europe compared to authors based in Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. More specifically, scholars based in regions typically conceived as ‘core’ – North America, UK, Australia and New Zealand, and Continental Europe – publish theory-informed work in both ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ journals. Authors based in these four regions tend to publish predominantly theory-informed articles, but even more so when publishing in ‘core’ journals (around 90%). The proportion of articles with some use of theory is lower for all four regions when they publish in ‘periphery’ journals, but still above 70%.

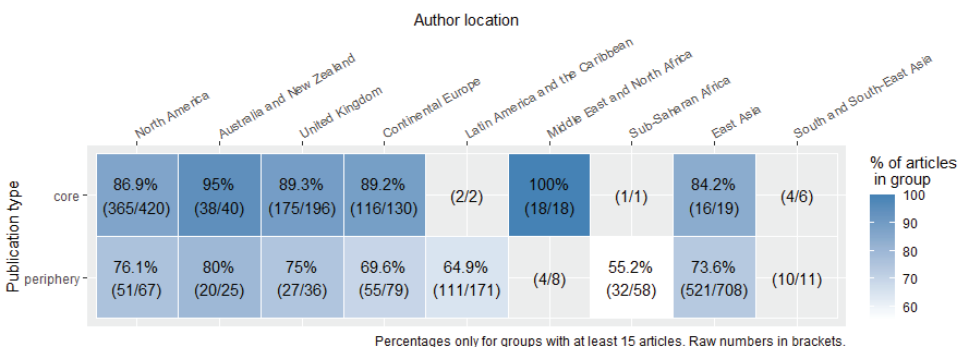


Figure 2: Share of articles using (any) theory, by author location

³⁶ See, also, Mathis Lohaus, Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar, and Olivia Ding, “Bifurcated Core, Diverse Scholarship: IR Research in 17 Journals around the World,” *Global Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (2021), doi: 10.1093/isagq/ksab033.

As we turn to the regions typically conceived as ‘periphery’, it is worth noting that there is an asymmetry in the dataset. Our sample does not contain journals based in the Middle East and North Africa, South and Southeast Asia, or Australia and New Zealand (although EJIR had Australia-based editors). Scholars based in these regions will therefore only appear in our sample if they publish outside their home region, which explains their relative scarcity. Moreover, scholars based in regions with a ‘periphery’ journal often only publish in that journal, and not in other ‘periphery’ journals. Authors based in East Asia, for example, rarely publish in ‘core’ journals, and even less so in ‘periphery’ journals based in other world.³⁷ This pattern of limited ‘periphery-periphery’ exchange confirms that most interactions happen through the ‘core’ regions.³⁸

The pattern is also striking when we consider the authors’ educational background (Figure 3). Authors with doctorates from North America, UK, Australia and New Zealand, or Continental Europe have published theoretical work in both ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ journals, although they publish a higher proportion of theory-using work in the former. Authors with doctorates from other regions, by contrast, hardly publish in ‘core’ journals at all. Just nine articles there were authored by individuals with an Asian, African, or Middle Eastern PhD (six of which have Israeli doctorates). While we lack data on some authorship records (‘unknown’ in Figure 3), it seems unlikely that those would change the pattern entirely.³⁹

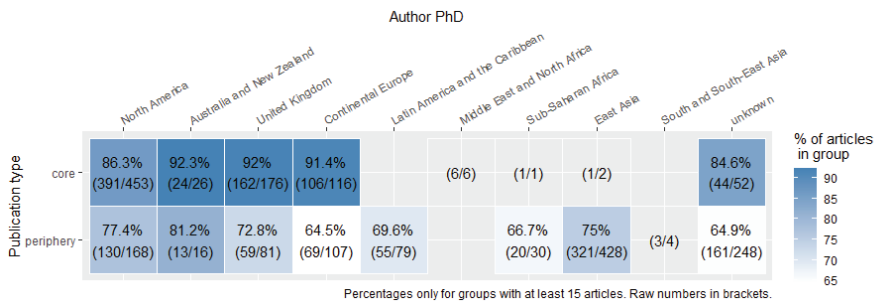


Figure 3: Share of articles using (any) theory, by author doctorate

Thus, authors based outside the ‘core’ publish theory-informed work, but they do so largely in ‘periphery’ journals. These ‘core-periphery’ structures become even stronger when we consider location of doctoral training instead of current institutional affiliation. Authors holding PhDs from ‘core’ regions have markedly more freedom of choice, indeed can publish anywhere, while authors with PhDs from ‘periphery’ regions can only publish in ‘periphery’ journals. This data furthermore illustrates that the search for what some have called ‘homegrown theorizing’ from the periphery⁴⁰ – if defined broadly as theory-informed

³⁷ See, for example, Lohaus and Wemheuer-Vogelaar, “Who Publishes Where?” show that journals typically have large clusters of local authors.

³⁸ Thomas Risse, Frank Havemann, and Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar, “Theory Makes Global IR Hang Together: Lessons from Citation Analysis.” Freie Universität Berlin Repository (2020), doi: 10.17169/refubium-28510. In our whole sample, 956 articles in ‘periphery’ journals are authored by individuals based anywhere in Latin America, Africa, the MENA region, or Asia. In 927 of these cases (97 percent), author and journal region are identical. The numbers are similar if we compare PhD region to journal region (with 533 out of 543, or 98 percent, being identical). Also see, Lohaus and Wemheuer-Vogelaar, “Who Publishes Where?”

³⁹ Of the 52 ‘core’ journal authors with ‘unknown’ doctorates, 27 have jobs in the United Kingdom, 14 in Continental Europe, 10 in North America, and 1 in Australia/New Zealand. It seems likely that their doctorates will be distributed similarly to the overall sample.

⁴⁰ Aydinli and Biltekin, *Widening the World of International Relations*.

work produced by scholars trained in the periphery – still has very low chances of being published in ‘core’ journals. But it thrives in ‘periphery’ journals. This, again, underlines the importance of establishing and maintaining ‘periphery’ journals like *All Azimuth* for a more global IR.

3.2. Empirical focus

The diverging empirical foci of ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ IR have also been discussed in the literature on the unequal patterns of publication in the discipline. One of the main critiques has been that scholars in the ‘periphery’ or ‘Global South’ are put into a problematic position as sources of primary empirical material about ‘their own’ country or region, rather than as subjects of theorizing about international relations more generally. That is, in the term employed by Gayatri Spivak and several observers in IR, a position of ‘native’ or ‘local’ informants.⁴¹ The division of labor, Tickner argues, results in a situation where much “peripheral scholarship tends to description of local or regional events and problems instead of conceptualization of the world, serving at best as ‘raw materials’ for the grand narrative constructed by theorists of the core.”⁴² Like area studies, Tickner contends, peripheral IR engages mainly in empirical description that answers to the ‘local’ rather than the ‘universal’.

We study this argument by coding the ‘region(s) under study’ for each article. This multiple-choice variable captures for which geographical locations the articles discuss empirical evidence. If an article addressed German-Japanese relations, for instance, this would be counted for both Western Europe and East Asia. Studies addressing countries spread across all world regions without any particular emphasis, for example analyzing the statistical effects of IMF lending, are coded as global. This allows us to study the ‘local informant’ argument, and the extent to which journals tend to publish works mainly about their ‘own’ region. To provide a fine-grained picture, we distinguish twelve regional markers: Western and Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Oceania, Global, and ‘None’ in case of purely theoretical or abstract articles.

⁴¹ Ilan Kapoor, “Hyper-self-reflexive Development? Spivak on Representing the Third World ‘Other,’” *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2004): 630; Inanna Hamati-Ataya, “IR Theory as International Practice/Agency: A Clinical-Cynical Bourdieusian Perspective,” *Millennium* 40 (2012): 642; Kristensen, “How Can Emerging Powers Speak?”

⁴² Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo) Imperialist International Relations,” 637.

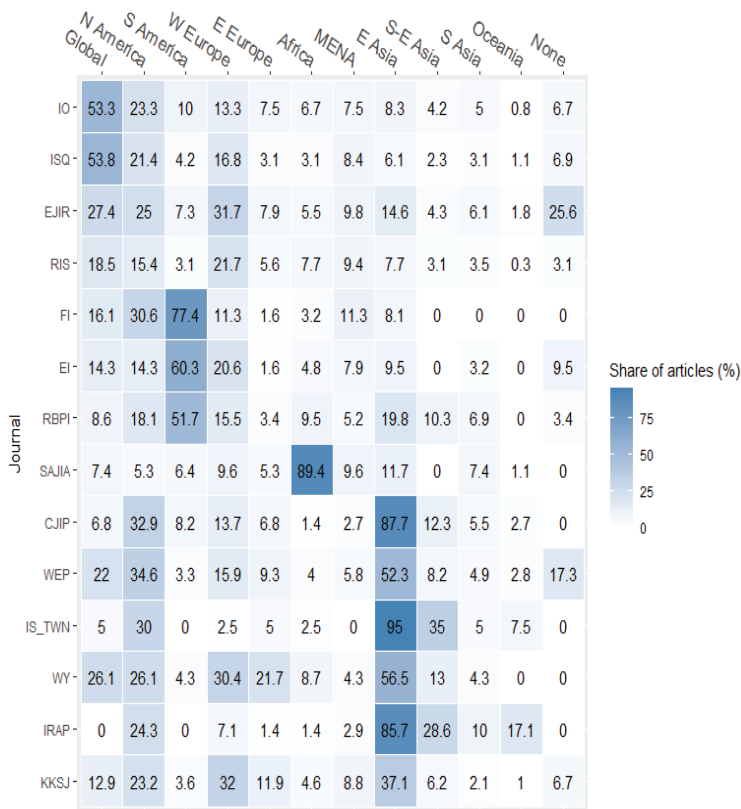


Figure 4: Region(s) studied by journal

We find that most journals tend to have a ‘home bias’ towards studying the region in which the *journal* is based. Yet, as figure 4 and especially figure 5 illustrate, this home bias is relatively weaker for ‘core’ journals. Articles operating at the ‘global level’ are also more present in IO and ISQ while purely abstract articles (region ‘none’) are more present in EJIR. Conversely, the ‘home bias’ is high in several ‘periphery’ journals. 85 to 95 percent of articles in the *South African Journal of International Affairs* (South Africa), *the Chinese Journal of International Politics* (China), *Issues and Studies* (Taiwan) and *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* (Japan) study the journals’ own region.

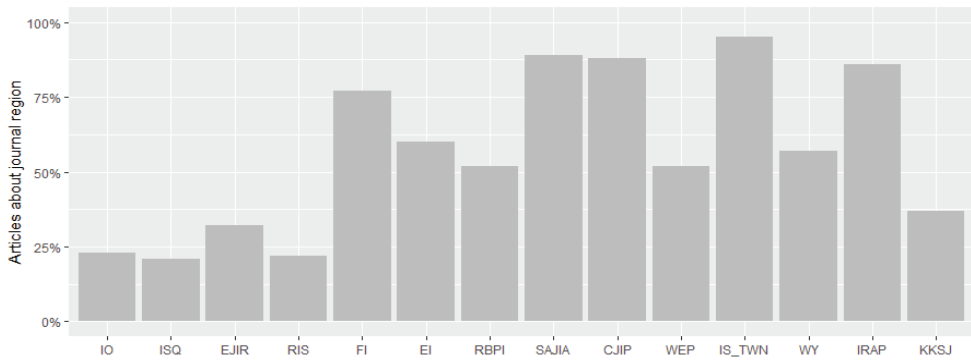


Figure 5: Home bias per journal

Note that SAJIA, CJIP, IS, and IRAP are all *English-language* ‘periphery’ journals. The empirical ‘home bias’ is less pronounced in *local-language* journals like *Wenti yu Yanjiu* [Issues and Studies] in Taiwan, *Kokusai seiji* [International Politics] in Japan, or *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* [World Economics and Politics] in China. This suggests that Anglophone ‘periphery’ journals serve to debate regional issues with the (Anglophone) world, as the mission statements of journals like CJIP and IRAP suggest. In other words, one might say that these outlets are used to ‘tell the world about their region’. Conversely, local-language journals are used to ‘tell the region/country about the world’. They publish more articles that study other world regions, like Europe and North America, or that adopt a global scope.⁴³ This brings us to how different regions are covered in our sample of journals (figure 6).

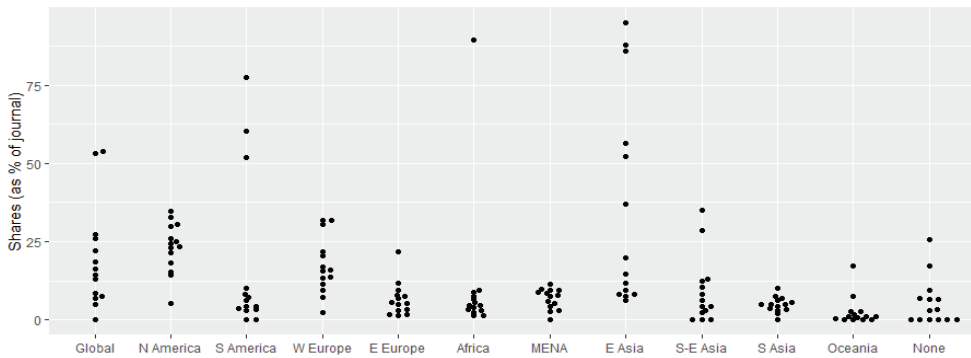


Figure 6: Popularity of regions

One notable trend here is the fairly even coverage of North America, which is being studied in around 15-35% of articles across all journals (with the exception of SAJIA). Virtually all ‘periphery’ journals (again, except SAJIA) tend to publish a significant number of articles focused on North America (on average 24% of articles). This rate is greater than

⁴³ Sabine Mokry, “Chinese International Relations (IR) Scholars’ Publishing Practices and Language: The ‘Peaceful Rise’-Debate,” in *Globalizing International Relations - Scholarship Amidst Dives and Diversity*, ed. Ingo Peters and Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 157.

even that of the ‘core’ journals’ tendency to study North America. A similar pattern, albeit at lower levels, emerges for Western Europe. But the reverse is not true, as ‘core’ journals predominantly publish articles with a ‘global’ scope or that study North America and Western Europe. For Latin America, Africa, and East Asia, figure 6 shows that they are either popular objects of study – in their ‘own’ journals, indicated by the high values in the graph – or hardly featured at all. Not surprisingly, the least-frequently studied regions are those without their ‘own’ journals in our sample (MENA, South Asia, Oceania).

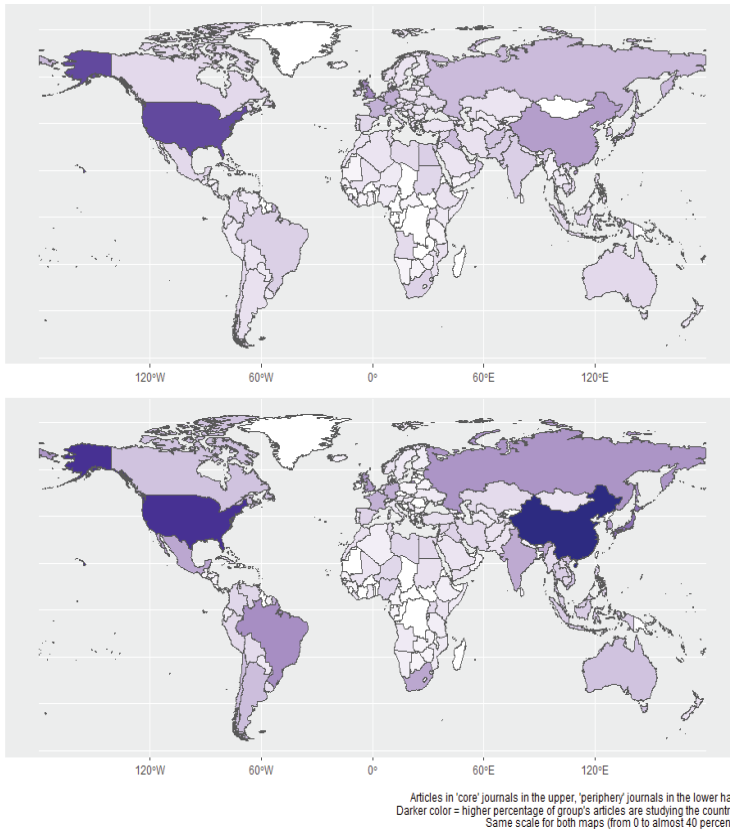


Figure 7: The world of IR as seen in core and periphery journals

A more granular way to visualize the divergent empirical foci is by contrasting a global map of which countries are covered in ‘core’ journals vis-a-vis the ‘periphery’ journals (figure 7). On the one hand, ‘core’ journals tend to primarily cover major economies and military powers like the United States (21.5%), secondarily Europe as a whole (9.7%), the United Kingdom (7.9%), Germany (3.7%), France (3.4%) and then China (5.3%), Russia (2.5%) and Japan (2.3%). Apart from that, they tend to have a comparatively higher focus than ‘periphery’ journals on Europe and the United Kingdom and, more notably, specific countries with strong security interests (Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, Pakistan, Egypt).⁴⁴

⁴⁴ See also, Cullen S. Hendrix and Jon Vreede, “US Dominance in International Relations and Security Scholarship in Leading Journals,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 3 (2019): 310–320.

The ‘periphery’ journals, on the other hand, predominantly publish work on China (37.9%), the United States (29.1%), and Japan (12.3%). These results resemble the ‘core’ journals in the attention paid to large economies and influential states, such as members of the UN Security Council (with even more attention on the United States than in ‘core’ journals). In addition, however, the ‘periphery journals’ have different priorities to some extent (see annex, table A-1). They focus much more on their own ‘home’ states (Brazil 7.3%, Japan 12.3%, Mexico 4.3%, Chile 2.4%, South Africa 4.4%), and on neighboring countries (like Argentina 2.4%, Korea 5.3%, Vietnam 2.3%, Thailand 1.4%). This could be seen as an equivalent to the ‘core’ journals’ focus on states that concern their security and foreign policy interests. It is worth noting further that all the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) generally receive more attention in ‘periphery’ journals. As figure 4 showed, the Brazilian journal RBPI is the journal outside East Asia and Africa with the most articles on those regions.

Taken together, the data on ‘empirical focus’ sheds new light on the division of labor hypothesis: ‘core’ regions are covered by most journals worldwide, whereas ‘periphery’ regions are covered more extensively by journals based in such regions. This largely confirms the argument made by critics of the ‘division of labor’ in IR, namely that work empirically oriented towards ‘core’ regions like North America and Europe is viewed as ‘general IR’, while work on ‘periphery’ regions is viewed as regional or area studies.⁴⁵

A different way to examine the empirical ‘division of labor’ argument is by looking at the share of articles without any specific regional or country focus. Put differently, this concerns the share of articles with a ‘global’ empirical focus or no such focus at all. This is another way of capturing abstract forms of reasoning that tend to decontextualize, or even devalue context, both of which are likely to occur with the implementation of inferential statistics, formal modeling or theoretical arguments. Figure 9 (‘global or abstract focus’) thus covers both articles with the universalist ambition of providing generalizable empirical findings at the highest possible ‘global’ level (for example via large-n quantitative papers) and/or high levels of abstraction with no empirical or regional focus (typical of theorizing or formal modeling papers).

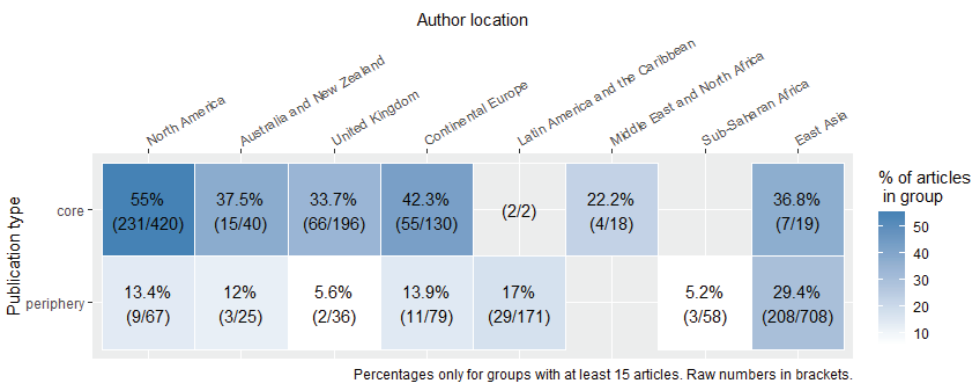


Figure 8: Share of articles with global or abstract focus

⁴⁵ A similar pattern emerges when we compare the regions under study in articles by authors from different world regions (see annex, figure A-1).

As the figure shows, authors based in North America and continental Europe tend to publish articles with a ‘global or abstract’ focus almost exclusively in ‘core’ journals and to a much lesser extent in ‘periphery’ journals, where the vast majority of articles are regionally oriented in some way. Scholars based in the ‘periphery’ tend to publish a lower percentage of ‘global or abstract’ articles both in ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ journals - with the proportion and absolute number highest for scholars based in East Asia.

3.3. Policy prescription

A final dimension of the division of labor argument is that IR in certain, mainly peripheral, regions tends to be more applied or policy-oriented. Practical orientation is partly captured in the above two parts on general approach and empirical focus, but an additional indicator for policy orientation is whether articles contain explicit policy prescriptions (figure 9).

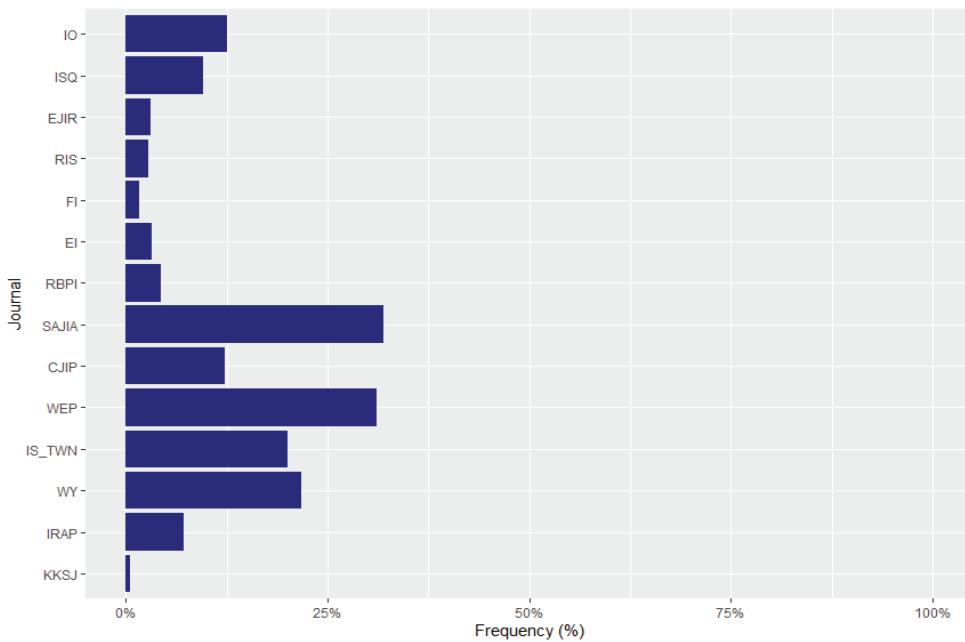


Figure 9: Share of articles with explicit policy advice, by journal

When looking at the journal level, we find that articles in the China-based journal *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* and the *South African Journal of International Affairs* contain policy prescriptions in around 30% of the articles, followed by the two Taiwan-based journals *Issues and Studies* and *Wenti yu Yanju*. However, the two US-based journals *International Organization* and *International Studies Quarterly* also contain policy prescriptions in more than 10% of the articles. The journals *least likely* to publish articles with policy prescriptions are in fact the Japanese journal *Kokusai Seiji*, the Chilean *Estudios Internacionales*, the Mexican *Foro Internacional*, the Brazil-based *Revista Brasileira de Politica Internacional* as well as the UK-based *Review of International Studies* and the *European Journal of International Relations*. That the journals based in Latin America are among those least likely to include explicit policy prescriptions is surprising considering that the region has

been characterized as concerned with “lo práctico” and “practical knowledge susceptible to being translated into policy formulae”.⁴⁶ In sum, there is no clear evidence that journals based in the ‘Anglo-European core’ are more or less likely to publish policy-oriented work.

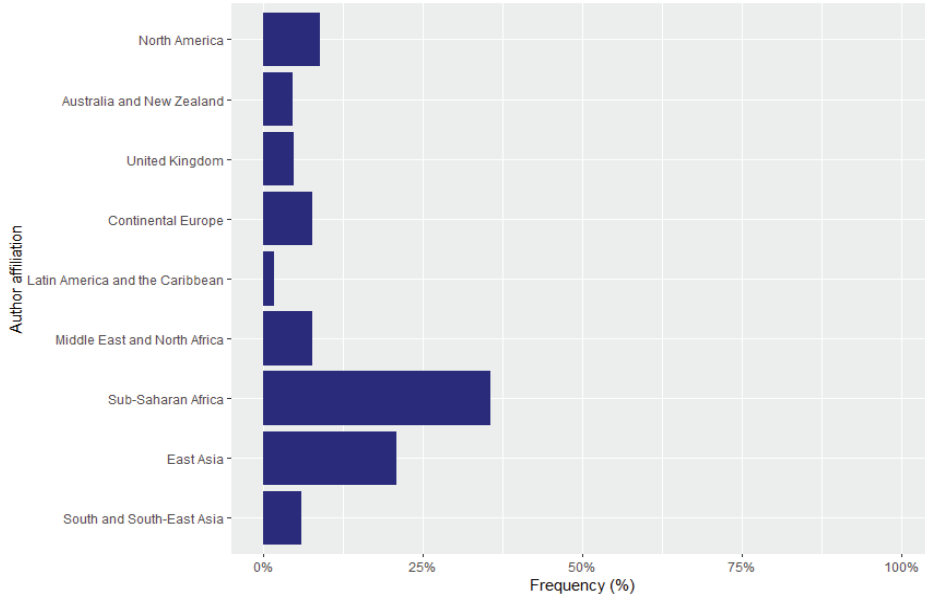


Figure 10: Share of articles with explicit policy advice, by author affil.

If we turn to the author level, authors based in Sub-saharan Africa (mainly publications in SAJIA) and East Asia also stand out as most inclined to offer explicit policy advice in articles. But apart from these, there is no clear evidence that scholars based in ‘core’ or ‘peripheral’ regions are more likely to provide policy advice in their academic work (see figure 10).

However, policy advice is not *per se* an indication of a relatively more ‘regional/local’ as opposed to a more ‘global/universal’ focus. Such advice could, in principle, be offered to actors in other regions, international organizations or NGOs. So, in order to connect fully to the division of labor thesis, further research would also have to examine whether the prescriptions are aimed at ‘local’ audiences. Although there is no clear ‘core-periphery’ pattern concerning the share of policy advice, we do find that policy advice tends to be based on very different approaches. In ‘core’ journals, 50.9% of the articles containing policy advice are based on inferential statistics, 20.8% are based on analytical case studies, and 17% on a mainly descriptive approach. In ‘core’ journals, furthermore, articles coded as global in scope or no regional focus are, in fact, more likely to include policy advice than articles with a regional focus. In ‘periphery’ journals, by contrast, most articles containing policy advice are descriptive in approach (56.3%), followed by analytical case studies (32.2%) and very few are based on inferential statistics (3.5%). This pattern is, of course, consistent with the general approaches in those journals (figure 1), but even more outspoken.

⁴⁶ Tickner, “Latin American IR and the Primacy of Lo Práctico,” 745.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper set out to examine the argument about the existence of a ‘division of labor’ in IR along core-periphery lines, with a dominant ‘core’ publishing most of the theoretical work and a dominated ‘periphery’ publishing empirical, descriptive, and area-specific work. Methodologically, it should be noted that the paper’s findings are based on comparative analysis of an admittedly limited sample of articles published in four ‘core’ and eight ‘periphery’ journals over the course of five years (2011-2015). As we have noted throughout, this has a bearing on the results. We can only encourage further research on a more expansive sample of journals and especially including journals from regions not covered here, such as Eastern Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, or Oceania.

Differences in sample composition also make it difficult to directly compare our findings to earlier comparative analyses of IR scholarship. Some of the journals studied here, such as the *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, were founded quite recently.⁴⁷ On the one hand, the growth in journals likely translates into more room for diversity, both in terms of *who* publishes and *what* is being published. This trend is illustrated by the fact that the Web of Science now collaborates with SciELO to incorporate sources (not only) from Latin America and the Caribbean. Even within the predominantly English-language Web of Science, the share of social science articles published by European and East Asian authors has grown between 1980 and 2009 at the expense of North Americans, whose share dropped from 62 to 49 percent.⁴⁸ Presumably, the market share of articles authored in the ‘periphery’ is growing even more strongly in journals *outside* the WoS. On the other hand, a growing chorus of voices does not automatically equal dialogue and engagement. It may well be that IR scholarship as a whole remains insular, as various sub-communities do not engage with each other in meaningful ways. Some of our findings here and elsewhere support this rather pessimistic view.⁴⁹ Moreover, the quantity of publications does not directly translate into visibility or impact as measured by citations. Questions about the ‘division of labor’ between different research communities are more pressing than ever. Our findings in this article suggest that ‘core-periphery’ patterns exist within the chosen journals. However, the results also nuance, and in some ways challenge, the simplistic reading of a dominant ‘core’ and dominated ‘periphery’.

Scholars based in the ‘periphery’ publish a significant proportion of work using theory in ‘periphery’ journals, but these articles rarely make it into ‘core’ journals. This seems to provide evidence that the particular hegemonic constellation has less to do with what scholars in the Global South work on, and is more so a product of gatekeeping on the part of the ‘core’ concerning what constitutes permissible IR (theory). However, it is also possible that self-selection mechanisms are at work. Maybe scholars based in the ‘periphery’ do not submit theoretical work to ‘core’ journals because they anticipate very low chances of acceptance. Submission data including comparative rates of rejection would be necessary for more research in this direction. Moreover, this paper has studied the *usage*, but not necessarily the *production*, of theory. It is therefore, in principle, still possible that theory-use basically covers a rehashing of mainstream IR theories produced in the ‘core’, perhaps applied to novel

⁴⁷ As an anonymous reviewer put it: ‘What does it tell us that some of the journals investigated for this study did not exist 15-20 years ago?’

⁴⁸ Mosbah-Natanson and Gingras, ‘The Globalization of Social Sciences?’, 630–32.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Risse, Havemann, and Wemheuer-Vogelaar, ‘Theory Makes Global IR Hang Together’.

empirical cases, but in essence reproducing a division of labor where the ‘core’ produces and the ‘periphery’ consumes theory. Other studies have shown that explicitly “non-Western” theory is quite rare but can be found in East Asian journals; at the same time, many articles both in the ‘core’ and the ‘periphery’ draw on combinations of theories, which may be a sign of eclecticism and/or innovation.⁵⁰ Probing this further would require additional fine-grained assessments of how theory is used and developed, which seem difficult to conduct at a larger scale.

In terms of empirical focus, we find that *all* journals and authors tend to have an empirical ‘home bias’. This is more pronounced in the ‘periphery’ journals, while authors and journals based in the ‘core’ publish more works with a global or non-regional empirical focus. Overall, the data on empirical focus confirms the existence of an empirical ‘division of labor’ where ‘core’ authors and journals publish more widely about all regions of the globe, while ‘periphery’ authors have a stronger regional orientation. However, some nuances are worth mentioning. We do *not* find evidence that scholars based in the ‘periphery’ routinely gain access to ‘core’ journals as ‘informants’ or ‘local experts’ providing insights on their home region. Instead, they hardly publish there at all. More such cases might emerge when taking into account co-authorship between researchers from different world regions; yet, given the rarity of cross-regional collaboration in our sample, the potential impact is limited.

In addition, home bias is universal but differs in degree. In all four ‘core’ journals, the respective home regions are the most frequently studied *individual* regions; but in contrast to the ‘periphery’ journals, they come in third place after globally oriented and purely abstract research. Lastly, it should be noted that the local-language journals in Latin America and East Asia have home biases around 50%, with Mexican *Foro Internacional* as an outlier (75%). This is significantly lower than in the Anglophone ‘periphery’ journals. Journals addressing the domestic audience, in other words, routinely publish works with a more global or outward-looking focus. At the same time, they retain a strong interest in their home region, which may reflect the authors’ desire to achieve practical policy relevance⁵¹ and/or the goal of studying one’s own region because it is overlooked by the ‘core’ parts of the discipline.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that an empirical ‘division of labor’ – and the home bias in particular – is thus not necessarily and exclusively a product of global core-periphery structures forcing ‘periphery’ scholars into a rigid role of ‘local experts’. This explanation does not afford much agency to scholars based in the ‘periphery’, who, after all, also tend to publish regionally oriented works in journals based and controlled in the ‘periphery’. It may also be a response to empirical gaps in the ‘core’ discipline and/or local policy needs. In that regard, ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ are perhaps not really that different, each with their home biases and no clear evidence that one has a clearer policy orientation than the other.

What do our results mean for the wider ‘Global IR’ project and the potential for change in the discipline? Here it is important to be aware of the path dependencies at play. Reputation and prestige are sticky, indeed self-reinforcing, and it is hard to change the existing hierarchy. The role and identity of certain journals as, say, the key outlet to send theoretical work employing social theory such as EJIR is not changed in the short term. At the same time, ‘periphery’ journals that have a ‘policy’ or ‘home bias’ in their mission statement may also

⁵⁰ Lohaus, Wemheuer-Vogelaar, and Ding, “Bifurcated Core, Diverse Scholarship”.

⁵¹ Tickner, “Latin American IR and the Primacy of Lo Práctico.”

tend to attract work from their home region.⁵² The wider political economy of publishing must also be taken into account here. Publishers may have a certain interest in maintaining the profile of a journal. Career incentives for authors, e.g. in scholarly communities in which publishing an article in a particular set of journals is crucial to making a career, may also not always favor an opening up of the field.

Therefore, even if some of the more prestigious journals based in the ‘core’ have been launching initiatives to be more accepting toward a wider array of submissions, including in languages other than English, it remains an open question whether this can lead to real change as long as their editorship remains tied to a particular geographical region. Journals that do have a rotating editorship mostly seem to move their bases around the (Northern) Atlantic, if they move across regions at all. There are also other causes to be skeptical of attempts at opening up, be it the journals trying to attract more submissions from outside the ‘core’ or the International Studies Association (ISA) increasingly entering the global conferencing market with ‘regional’ chapters and conferences (while the main event remains in North America). A legitimate question seems to be whether these developments challenge the hegemonic status of American IR or in fact reinforce it. Put differently, is ‘American-IR-turned-Global’ the same as a ‘Global IR’? If the status of the ‘core’ remains intact, it is unclear how much will change by adding some ‘regional’ chapters, especially if these obtain only the status of ‘regional IR’ studying their own regions.

This leads to a wider discussion about the limits of a representational ‘opening up’ of IR. As several recent works have emphasized, the need to address diversity (and core-periphery structures) goes way beyond the representational level.⁵³ Having more publications in major IR journals authored by scholars based in the Global South would not in itself challenge the wider core-periphery structures of the global discipline.⁵⁴ This requires a more fundamental change of what counts as ‘permissible’ and ‘proper’ IR.

⁵² We would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for this point.

⁵³ See, for instance, Zeynep Gulsah Capan, “Decolonising International Relations?,” *Third World Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2017): 1–15; Eun, “Opening up the Debate over ‘Non-Western’ International Relations””; Maiken Gelardi, “Moving Global IR Forward – A Road Map,” *International Studies Review* 22, no. 4 (2020): 830–52; Audrey Alejandro, “Diversity for and by Whom? Knowledge Production and the Management of Diversity in International Relations,” *International Politics Review* (2021), doi: 10.1057/s41312-021-00114-0.

⁵⁴ Capan, “Decolonising International Relations?”

Annex

Table A.1- Countries most frequently studied in 'core' and 'periphery' journals

Name	Mentions in ...core	...periphery	gap (% points)
China	40 (5.3%)	404 (37.9%)	32.6%
Japan	17 (2.3%)	131 (12.3%)	10.0%
United States	162 (21.5%)	310 (29.1%)	7.6%
Brazil	9 (1.2%)	78 (7.3%)	6.1%
Korea	10 (1.3%)	56 (5.3%)	4.0%
Russia	19 (2.5%)	68 (6.4%)	3.9%
Mexico	6 (0.8%)	46 (4.3%)	3.5%
South Africa	8 (1.1%)	47 (4.4%)	3.3%
India	10 (1.3%)	43 (4%)	2.7%
United Kingdom	60 (7.9%)	61 (5.7%)	2.2%
Argentina	4 (0.5%)	26 (2.4%)	1.9%
Europe	73 (9.7%)	85 (8%)	1.7%
Afghanistan	15 (2%)	4 (0.4%)	1.6%
Israel	15 (2%)	4 (0.4%)	1.6%
Chile	6 (0.8%)	26 (2.4%)	1.6%
Viet Nam	6 (0.8%)	24 (2.3%)	1.5%
Iraq	19 (2.5%)	12 (1.1%)	1.4%
Australia	6 (0.8%)	21 (2%)	1.2%
Canada	6 (0.8%)	21 (2%)	1.2%
Oman	10 (1.3%)	1 (0.1%)	1.2%
Thailand	2 (0.3%)	15 (1.4%)	1.1%
Lebanon	8 (1.1%)	1 (0.1%)	1%
Pakistan	10 (1.3%)	4 (0.4%)	0.9%
Indonesia	6 (0.8%)	15 (1.4%)	0.6%
Egypt	10 (1.3%)	8 (0.8%)	0.5%
Germany	28 (3.7%)	38 (3.6%)	0.1%
France	26 (3.4%)	36 (3.4%)	0%

Note: This list includes all countries that are being studied in at least 1% of articles of either the 'core' or the 'periphery' journals. All other countries were mentioned less frequently. The list is sorted by the size of the gap between the two groups of journals (see last column).

Table A.2- Articles co-authored by at least one scholar based in a ‘periphery’ region

Journal	Article	Author count	Countries of affiliation
IO	Explaining Mass Support for Agricultural Protectionism: Evidence from a Survey Experiment During the Global Recession	2	United States, Japan
IO	International Systems and Domestic Politics: Linking Complex Interactions with Empirical Models in International Relations	3	United States, United States, China
IO	The Politics of Private Foreign Aid: Humanitarian Principles, Economic Development Objectives, and Organizational Interests in NGO Private Aid Allocation	3	United States, United States, Brazil
IO	When Are Sanctions Effective? A Bargaining and Enforcement Framework	2	United States, Korea
ISQ	Dominant Forms of Conflict in Changing Political Systems	2	Korea, United Kingdom
ISQ	Screening Out Risk: IGOs, Member State Selection, and Interstate Conflict, 1951-2000	3	United States, Singapore, United States
EJIR	America’s military interventionism: A social evolutionary interpretation	2	China, Singapore
RIS	Cosmopolitanism and the culture of peacebuilding	2	China, United Kingdom
RIS	Doha stalemate: The end of trade multilateralism?	2	United Kingdom, Trinidad & Tobago
RIS	Modernity, boredom, and war: a suggestive essay	2	Belgium, China
FI	Balance de la política exterior de México en el sexenio de Felipe Calderón bajo los tres niveles de análisis: límites y alcances	2	Mexico, United States
EI	Costos para la Región de Arica y Parinacota incurridos por el cumplimiento del Tratado de Paz y Amistad de 1904 y otras facilidades concedidas por Chile a Bolivia	2	United Kingdom, Chile
EI	La diplomacia chilena hacia los países árabes : entre posicionamiento estratégico y oportunismo comercial	2	Brazil, France
RBPI	As relações econômicas internacionais do governo Geisel (1974–1979)	2	United States, Brazil
RBPI	Brasil e a cooperação em defesa: a construção de uma identidade regional no Atlântico Sul	2	Brazil, United Kingdom
RBPI	Mao’s steps in Monroe’s backyard: towards a United States-China hegemonic struggle in Latin America?	2	Mexico, United States
RBPI	Potências emergentes na ordem de redes: o caso do Brasil	2	Germany, Brazil
RBPI	Reviewing horizontalization: the challenge of analysis in Brazilian foreign policy	2	United States, Brazil
SAJA	Regional economic integration in Africa: impediments to progress?	2	Japan, South Africa
CJIP	The English and Chinese Schools of International Relations: Comparisons and Lessons	2	United Kingdom, China
WEP	America’s Military Interventionism: A Social Evolutionary Interpretation	2	China, Singapore
WEP	Intellectuals’ Pursuit of Being Great Power during Republican Era: A Study on Knowledge Building and Diplomatic Practice Based on the Literatures of International Studies, 1912-1949	2	Germany, China
WEP	Monetary Allies and RMB Internationalization: Explaining PBC’s Currency Swap Diplomacy	2	China, United States
WEP	New Development in Theory of International Politics	2	China, United States
WEP	On the Aftermath of Repeated Episodes of Tension: An Analysis of Bilateral Disputes in East Asia	2	Singapore, United Kingdom
IS_TWN	Mainland China Debates U.S. Pivot/Rebalancing to Asia	2	China, United States
IS_TWN	Rethinking China’s Strategy for Border Disputes: Chinese Border Policy toward Central Asia, 1991-2011	2	Korea, United States
IS_TWN	Transitional Security Pattern in the South China Sea and the Involvement of External Parties	2	United States, Taiwan
IRAP	Crouching tiger, lurking dragon: understanding Taiwan’s sovereignty and trade linkages in the twenty-first century	2	New Zealand, Taiwan
IRAP	External threats, US bases, and prudent voters in Okinawa	2	Japan, United States
IRAP	Japan’s reconceptualization of national security: the impact of globalization	2	Singapore, United States
IRAP	Studying Asian and comparative regionalism through Amitav Acharya’s work	5	Germany, United States, Belgium, Japan

Note: The list was created by first selecting all articles co-authored by individuals based in at least two different world regions (n = 114) and then narrowing this down to articles with at least one co-author based in Latin America, Africa, or Asia (n = 32). In comparison, 1,995 articles in our sample are either solo-authored or co-authored within the same world region.

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Methodological Nationalism in International Relations: A Quantitative Assessment of Academia in Turkey (2015-2019)

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Abstract

This article seeks to expand the discussion on Methodological Nationalism (MN) within the discipline of International Relations (IR), to contribute to MN literature from the perspective of IR studies and to evaluate the prevalence of MN in the field by the quantification of selected works. To achieve these goals, the article, firstly, recapitulates the general MN literature and critically evaluates this discussion in IR. Later, it identifies the forms of MN as they appear in IR with two faces: Level of analysis (nation-as-arena) and unit of analysis (nation-as-actor). Secondly, the article proposes a method to assess the prevalence of MN through quantification. Finally, the article applies its method to IR works to address the question of how widespread MN is in academia in Turkey. The findings demonstrate the proportional pervasiveness of MN within the IR community of Turkey, which is part of the “periphery” in the discipline. The findings also let us draw some hypothetical conclusions, which have the potential to be a springboard for further research on the MN-IR nexus.

Keywords: Methodological nationalism, level of analysis, International Relations, Turkish academia, quantitative assessment

1. Introduction

The rise of populist nationalism/xenophobia in the “West” and the anti-Western nationalism in the “East” contaminating rational political deliberation and processes have recently become much debated topics. Even though they are deemed a form of backlash to the socio-economic effects of hyper-globalization on local populations, nationalist sentiments and discourses are not novel phenomena. Miscellaneous shades of nationalism have been sneaking into our minds and daily lives as “banal”¹ practices for so long that we do not even recognize them as such. The social scientific literature is one of the strands of the nationalistic ecosystem that naturalizes the nation-state order among societies. Social scientists problematize various aspects of rising populism and “denaturalize” banal nationalisms, but the question remains: How much does academia itself normalize the nation(-state) as the default configuration of political and societal order? To criticize their own role in this naturalization and to broaden the contours of social inquiry, scholars came up with the concept, and critique, of “methodological nationalism” (MN).

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¹ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

Despite the growing interest in other disciplinary traditions, the social scientific literature on MN is dominated by sociology, more specifically by migration studies. MN is not less pertinent to International Relations (IR) than to sociology, yet it is apparently understudied in the discipline. This article seeks to expand the discussion on MN within the discipline of IR, to contribute to MN literature from the perspective of IR studies and to evaluate the prevalence of MN in the field by the quantification of selected works. To achieve these goals, the article first recapitulates general MN literature and critically evaluates the discussion in IR. Later, it identifies the forms of MN as they appear in IR with two faces: Level of analysis (nation-as-arena) and unit of analysis (nation-as-actor). Secondly, the article proposes a framework to assess the prevalence of MN through quantification. This methodical venture can be considered the first attempt in the literature to quantitatively assess MN and that might be developed and applied in alternative settings with modifications. Although the prevalence of MN in academia is often alleged, as can be seen in the literature used in this article, there is a lack of a methodically systemized empirical study to prove this contention. Therefore, MN discussions mostly stay at the theoretical level.

Finally, the article applies its method to IR works to address the question of how widespread MN is in the academia of Turkey as a “peripheral” country. As Pinar Bilgin conveyed in her empirical work, IR studies in Turkey are deemed globally “peripheral” in the discipline because of their dependence on the theoretical and methodological paradigms grown in the “core/center” countries.² Peripherality is germane in the context of MN owing to the intellectual division of labour in academia, including the discipline of IR, in which universal theorizing is primarily the business of the core whereas the periphery is busy with the particularities and/or case studies.³ Scholarly interest in “national” particularities/localities as the case studies of the theories grown in the core has great potential to lead a researcher to become epistemologically entrapped by MN. Turkey objectively qualifies for this criterion as a quintessential example of a peripheral country where IR studies are steadily expanding and attention to foreign policy has piqued in recent years. Furthermore, as Chiara Ruffa states, a researcher can adopt a “convenience case selection approach” and choose a single case because of linguistic capability (Turkish) and the research interest of the author.⁴ Nevertheless, this subjective point may prove to be invaluable as it may lay the groundwork for comparative research contrasting MN in the core and the periphery.

This article methodically selects and hand-codes relevant research articles and PhD theses based on their MN orientations. The findings demonstrate the proportional pervasiveness of MN among the IR community in Turkey and lets us draw some hypothetical conclusions, which have the potential to be a springboard for further research on the MN-IR nexus. This article itself might seem to be trapped into the epistemological circle of MN, and it is thus self-contradictory. However, this research is neither a normative/critical political theory piece nor a critique of MN. The goal of the article is to point out the forms of MN in the discipline of IR and to empirically reveal its prevalence in the IR academia of Turkey as an example of a “peripheral” country. Therefore, there is nothing performatively contradictory in that this article is also epistemologically “nationalist”.

² Pinar Bilgin, “Uluslararası ilişkiler çalışmalarında “merkez-çevre”: Türkiye nerede?” *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 2, no.6 (2005): 3–14.

³ Arlene B. Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo)Imperialist International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 627–46.

⁴ Chiara Ruffa, “Case Study Methods: Case Selection and Case Analysis,” in *The SAGE Handbook of Research Methods in Political Science and International Relations*, ed. Luigi Curini and Robert Franzese (London: Sage, 2020), 1138.

2. Methodological Nationalism

Anthony D. Smith argued in 1979 that the study of “society” equates to the analysis of nation-states’ societies almost without question.⁵ This society/nation-state equation has been known as MN. In social scientific inquiry, MN is framing modernity with a national principle, taking “national” societies or states for granted as the “natural” units of analysis and the territorialization of social scientific imagination through the boundaries of nation-states.⁶ In a nutshell, MN means the self-isolation of social scientific inquiry into exclusive and sealed national “containers”⁷ consolidating the nation-state system. The criticism of MN, thus, rapidly became fashionable within the critical circles of various disciplinary fields, most significantly in sociology, to ensure that the nation-state framework is not the only epistemological ground to empirically study and analyse societies, politics, or economics.⁸ As Sutherland observes, “Though scholars across the humanities and social sciences have been questioning nation-state-centric analyses for some time, the academy is still far from a Kuhnian paradigm shift away from MN”.⁹

The level of the invisibility of ideology as a natural and universal habit determines its degree of power.¹⁰ Since nationalism, as a “banal” practice, “is present in the very words which we might try to use for analysis”, a researcher can only modestly “draw attention to the powers of an ideology which is so familiar that it hardly seems noticeable.”¹¹ The employment of MN in a study is not necessarily a testimony of the ideological or political nationalism of the researcher.¹² On the contrary, there are debates in various countries, including Turkey¹³, on academia for supposedly being the bastions of “left-wing” or “liberal”¹⁴ bias and hegemony. Nationalism studies, especially, were criticized for their biased investigation of nationalism to prove that it is a form of “false consciousness.”¹⁵ MN is not essentially tied to the political orientation of a scholar, which makes nationalism ubiquitous and successful as an ideology.

The weight of nation-states in social scientific inquiry is not a ramification of nationalists’ sinister central plan. Firstly, social scientific inquiry requires limited societal and spatial contexts or levels of analysis. MN has an apparent capacity to solve the problem of contextualization because “it treats the territory of the nation-state as a clearly delimited context, characterized by a unified set of institutional arrangements and a relatively high

⁵ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1979), 191.

⁶ Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism and the Study of Migration,” *European Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 2 (2002): 221–25.

⁷ Ludger Pries, “Configurations of Geographic and Societal Spaces: A Sociological Proposal between ‘Methodological Nationalism’ and the ‘Spaces of Flows,’” *Global Networks* 5, no. 2 (2005): 167–90.

⁸ Anna Amelina, Thomas Faist, Nina Glick Schiller, and Devrimsel D. Nergiz, “Methodological Predicaments of Cross-Border Studies,” in *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-Border Studies*, ed. Anna Amelina, Thomas Faist, Nina Glick Schiller and Devrimsel D. Nergiz (New York: Routledge, 2012), 2.

⁹ Claire Sutherland, “A Post-Modern Mandala? Moving beyond Methodological Nationalism,” *HumaNetten* 37 (2016): 89.

¹⁰ Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991).

¹¹ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 12.

¹² Herminio Martins, “Time and Theory in Sociology,” in *Approaches to Sociology*, ed. John Rex (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 276.

¹³ The discussions related to the conservatives’ failed “cultural hegemony”: “Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Sosyal ve kültürel iktidarımız konusunda sıkıntılarımız var,” *Hürriyet*, May 28, 2017, accessed December 24, 2021, <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-sosyal-ve-kulturel-iktidarimiz-konusunda-sikintilarimiz-var-40472482>; Nur Vergin, “Bilim camiasi ve taninma isteği,” *Doğu-Batı Düşünce Dergisi* 7 (1999): 45; Burcu Sezer, “Türkiye’de kültürel iktidar tartışmaları: Cins dergisi üzerinden bir değerlendirme” (Master’s thesis, Ankara University, 2019).

¹⁴ In the American sense of the term: John F. Zipp and Rudy Fenwick, “Is the Academy a Liberal Hegemony? The Political Orientations and Educational Values of Professors,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (2006): 304–26; Matthew J. Wilson, “The Nature and Consequences of Ideological Hegemony in American Political Science,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 52, no. 4 (2019): 724–27.

¹⁵ Pavlos Hatzopoulos, *The Balkans Beyond the Nationalism and Identity* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008), 15–6.

degree of social, cultural, political and economic homogeneity.”¹⁶ Secondly, there must be units of analysis for social scientific endeavours. Nation-states supposedly have been the most coherent (considering their size) and significant “unitary” political organizations to whom anthropomorphic actorhood is ascribed by researchers more easily than others since, at the latest, the beginning of the 20th Century. It is not a coincidence that the critiques of MN are pioneered or promoted by scholars studying migration or globalization. Their areas of expertise propel them to transcend the traditional societal and spatial boundaries of nation-states under the contemporary circumstances of increased global connectivity and mobility. As globalization widens and deepens, it becomes hard to use a particular nation-state with fixed and sealed borders as the ontological or epistemological ground in scholarly works. These critical scholars offer alternative contexts and units of analysis to unchain their own and others’ scientific investigations from the epistemic constraints of MN.¹⁷

3. Methodological Nationalism in International Relations

The discussion on MN is more prominent in sociology than in other disciplines, but it is also highly relevant for IR.¹⁸ In IR, nation-states are naturalized as “units” representing a “societal” identity that exclusively belongs to a fixed, sealed and socially constructed “space”. The nation-state is “a spatial configuration [that] brings together identity, territory, and the management of lethal violence in such a way that it can be conceptualized as a unit, and that unit interacts with other similarly constituted units.”¹⁹ IR traditionally engages in disclosing the patterns of interrelations of these societal units, namely nation-states, the organizational agents of societies in the inter-national system. The concept of inter-“national” is deemed a misnomer by some critical voices in IR because, according to them, what we observe in the system is inter-“state” relations. The “inter” prefix reinforces boundaries instead of making them porous.²⁰ The national ontologically precedes the international because “nationally bounded social was also the origin and the cause of the international”.²¹ The orthodox geopolitical distinctions of “inside-outside” or “internal-external” are predicated on the territorialized space of the nation-state. The comparative analyses of IR essentially function on the basis of MN.²² Studies of regionalism in IR are also often premised upon MN, which reifies the dichotomy between “region” and “state.”²³ The focused side of these dichotomies in an IR work determines the investigative level of analysis.

Even though some have argued that “Immanuel Wallerstein’s world-systems theory,

¹⁶ Anja Weiß and Arnd-Michael Nohl, “Overcoming Methodological Nationalism in Migration Research Cases and Contexts in Multi-Level Comparisons,” in Amelina et al., *Beyond Methodological Nationalism*, 68.

¹⁷ Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande, “Varieties of Second Modernity: The Cosmopolitan Turn in Social and Political Theory and Research,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 61, no. 3 (2010): 409–43; e.g. Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, Princeton (NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

¹⁸ Daniel Chernilo, “Methodological Nationalism and the Domestic Analogy: Classical Resources for their Critique,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 23, no. 1 (2010): 87.

¹⁹ Fiona B. Adamson, “Spaces of Global Security: Beyond Methodological Nationalism,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 1, no. 1 (2016): 30.

²⁰ Agnes Katalin Koos and Kenneth Keulman, “Methodological Nationalism in Global Studies and Beyond,” *Social Sciences* 8 no. 327 (2019): 2.

²¹ Zsuzsa Gille, “Global Ethnography 2.0: From Methodological Nationalism to Methodological Materialism,” in Amelina et al., *Beyond Methodological Nationalism*, 91.

²² Ulrich Beck and Natan Sznaider, “Unpacking Cosmopolitanism for the Social Sciences: A Research Agenda,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 57, no. 1 (2006): 385.

²³ Shamar Hameiri, “Beyond Methodological Nationalism, but Where to for the Study of Regional Governance?” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63, no. 3 (2009): 430.

in the early 1970s, was the first systematic break with methodological nationalism,²⁴ the critique of MN is understudied in the discipline of IR. We can identify two rationales behind this oversight. Firstly, MN is the “disciplinary default position” for IR; basic conceptual distinctions, theory-building, and construction of cases and data in the discipline are mainly based on MN in the field.²⁵ The “international system argument” of mainstream IR, preaching that the international system is composed of formally analogous national units, is immanent to MN.²⁶ IR traditionally “assumed that nation-states are the adequate entities for studying the world.”²⁷ The nation has been considered as “the most comfortable resting place” because it is “a stable point of focus.”²⁸ The discipline is “almost entirely constructed on the assumption that humanity is inevitably and unchangeably divided into nation-states,”²⁹ which is the meta-theoretical premise of MN.

Secondly, the critique of MN in the discipline is disguised within critical theories. The supposed over-valuation of nation-states is shared by the most influential paradigms of IR, and MN is challenged by critical approaches, which are at the periphery of the discipline.³⁰ The hegemonic paradigm of *state-centrism*, and its by-products like the conceptual dichotomy of inside-outside, are the concomitants of MN in IR. For this dominant axiom, state-centrism in IR is as natural as being tree-centric in a theory of the forest.³¹ State-centric approaches “operated with assumptions of methodological nationalism that treat the state as a natural social and political form.”³² Critical theories, which have echoed in IR in the form of the aforementioned dominant principles, have problematized the nation-state-centric creed of MN without being vocal about MN’s label.³³ Radhika Mongia refers to this state-centrism as “methodological stateism” as a form of MN.³⁴ To Daniel Chernilo, the critique of the dominant theoretical principle of the *domestic analogy* in IR is a reflection of broader debates on MN.³⁵

Ulrich Beck and Natan Sznaider propose the “methodological cosmopolitanism” of the discipline of sociology to replace MN³⁶ in IR, as it has been suggested that studying world politics as a globally “single socio-political space” instead of an “international system” composed of multiple sealed territories would more properly reflect the current conditions of the world.³⁷ In disciplinary practice, for instance, we observe that the authors/editors of one of the most used introduction textbooks of IR worldwide state that they intentionally

²⁴ Gille, “Global Ethnography 2.0,” 93.

²⁵ Gunther Hellmann, “Methodological Transnationalism – Europe’s Offering to Global IR?” *European Review of International Studies* 1, no. 1 (2014): 28.

²⁶ Daniel Chernilo, “The Critique of Methodological Nationalism: Theory and History,” *Thesis Eleven* 106, no. 1 (2011): 104.

²⁷ Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration: An Essay in Historical Epistemology,” *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (2003): 580.

²⁸ J. David. Singer, “The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations,” *World Politics* 14, no. 1 (1961): 78.

²⁹ Koos and Keulman, “Methodological Nationalism,” 8.

³⁰ Koos and Keulman, “Methodological Nationalism,” 8.

³¹ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 9.

³² Adamson, “Spaces of Global Security,” 29.

³³ Hannes Lacher, “Putting the State in Its Place: The Critique of State-Centrism and Its Limits,” *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 4 (2003): 521–41; Robert W. Cox, “Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory,” in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

³⁴ Radhika Mongia, “Interrogating Critiques of Methodological Nationalism Propositions for New Methodologies,” in Melina et al., *Beyond Methodological Nationalism*.

³⁵ Chernilo, *Methodological Nationalism*; Martin Shaw, *Theory of the Global State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Justin Rosenberg, “Why is There no International Historical Sociology?” *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2006): 307–40.

³⁶ Ulrich Beck and Natan Sznaider, “Unpacking Cosmopolitanism”.

³⁷ Jens Bartelson, “From the International to the Global?” in *The SAGE Handbook of the History, Philosophy and Sociology of International Relations*, ed. Andreas Gofas, Inanna Hamati-Ataya and Nicholas Onuf (London: Sage Publications, 2018).

named the book as “The Globalization of *World Politics*” instead of *International Relations/Politics*.³⁸ Furthermore, there is also the historical sociology aspect of the nation/state question in IR. Historical Sociology in IR does not only question the nation-state system in terms of the validity of presumed cohesion between nation, territory and government, but it also problematizes the very definition of the state as we know and employ it in our works today.³⁹ These reflexive outlooks to the disciplinary paradigms and axioms such as nation-state-centricity indicated the criticism of MN without directly mentioning the concept.

4. Two Forms of Methodological Nationalism in International Relations

The scholarly critiques of MN in IR challenge the tacit naturalization of the nation-state system through scientific discourse. The critiqued axiomatic forms of MN appearing in IR can be outlined as follows: (1) national units’ isolation and self-sufficiency, (2) natural, normal or given political borders, (3) the neat dichotomies and distinctions such as domestic/international or inside/outside, (4) the priority of national sense of belonging over other individual identities, (5) the uniformity/similarity of states and individuals, (6) the state-centric perspective on actorhood, (7) territory-population-national identity cohesion.⁴⁰ The list can be expanded, yet these are the main conceptual pillars of MN attacked by the pundits. These controversial axioms of MN spring from two major analytical issues within IR: Level and unit of analysis questions.

MN is built on the compression of two main contexts: societal (national) and spatial (territorial) analysis; “an exclusive and mutual embeddedness of social and territorial space.”⁴¹ “States are either conceptualized as actors (corporate agents) or arenas (territorial spaces)” in which national identity and territory are intertwined.⁴² The conceptualization of IR research through the prism of the nation-state system reflects these two main contexts as “unit of analysis (actor)” and “level of analysis (arena)” because the (nation-)state “is the most frequently studied unit or level of analysis in international relations.”⁴³ As Berkowitz argues, the question of level or unit of analysis in IR research manifests itself as the methodological problems of “using aggregate data in statistical analyses,” “defining actors in international relations theory” and “describing the relationship between systems and the actors within those systems.”⁴⁴ These problematiques are also germane to the unbearable lure of MN in IR.

(1) *Level of analysis (nation-as-arena)*: The term “level of analysis” entered the conceptual lexicon of IR through David Singer’s discussion⁴⁵ of the “three images” of Kenneth

³⁸ John Baylis, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

³⁹ Fred Halliday, “State and Society in International Relations: A Second Agenda,” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 16, no. 215 (1987): 214–30; John M. Hobson, “The Poverty of Marxism and Neorealism: Bringing Historical Sociology back in to International Relations,” La Trobe Politics Working Paper no. 2 (Melbourne: La Trobe University, School of Politics, 1994); John M. Hobson, “The Historical Sociology of the State and the State of Historical Sociology in International Relations,” *Review of International Political Economy* 5, no. 2 (1998); Stephan Hobden, *International Relations and Historical Sociology* (London: Routledge, 1998).

⁴⁰ Hüsrev Tabak, “Transnationality, Foreign Policy Research and the Cosmopolitan Alternative: On the Practice of Domestic Global Politics,” in *A Transnational Account of Turkish Foreign Policy*, ed. Hazal Papuççular and Deniz Kuru (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 45–56.

⁴¹ Ludger Pries and Martin Seeliger, “Transnational Social Spaces: Between Methodological Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism,” in Amelina et. al, *Beyond Methodological Nationalism*, 220.

⁴² Adamson, “Spaces of Global Security,” 21.

⁴³ William B. Moul, “The Level of Analysis Problem Revisited,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 6, no. 3 (1973): 494.

⁴⁴ Bruce D. Berkowitz, “Levels of Analysis Problems in International Studies,” *International Interactions: Empirical and Theoretical Research in International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2008): 200–01.

⁴⁵ J. David. Singer, Singer, “International Conflict: Three Levels of Analysis,” *World Politics* 12, no. 3 (1960): 453.

Waltz⁴⁶, “the principal prophet of neorealism”⁴⁷ in IR. The search for the “context” or “level” within which we examine a topic leads us to the “level of analysis” question.⁴⁸ To Waltz, there are three “levels of analysis: the individual, the state and the state system.”⁴⁹ Later, Singer denounced the “trichotomization” of the issue, “simply eliminated the individual level and kept Waltz’s other two images.”⁵⁰ He contended that there are two “widely employed levels of analysis: the international system and the national sub-systems.”⁵¹ Waltz’s first level, the individual, is an integral component of national sub-systems. The dualistic level of analysis distinction is highly pervasive in various mainstream IR paradigms, including constructivism (reductionist-systemic analysis / macro-micro levels/agent-structure debates).⁵² Both of these prepotent levels of analysis (international and state levels) are ontologically predicated on the nation-state as the institutional axis separating the layers of IR research.

Though the nation-state is overwhelmingly taken as a “unitary actor” at the “systemic level (international) analysis,”⁵³ it is also a “level” which is “an agglomeration of individuals, institutions, customs, and procedures.”⁵⁴ IR scholars often focus on sub-national units/individuals, but they still deem these agents within a national whole/context. Even when an IR study does not employ the nation-state as a monolithic actor, it may fall into MN’s trap by investigating alternative actors via a national framework as a sealed “arena.” Explaining and understanding IR through the aforementioned sub-national actors or objects make the nation-as-arena the universe of the units under scientific foci. Cities, sub-regions, supra-regions, cyber-space or the world system as a whole might be alternative spatial contexts/universes to the nation-as-arena unless their definition or operationalisation in research is reliant on the nation-state from the very beginning (e.g. Antalya as a “Turkish” city vs Antalya as a “Mediterranean” or “touristic” city).

(2) *Unit of analysis (nation-as-actor)*: Despite the upsurge in diversification, the “nation-state remains the basic unit of analysis in IR”⁵⁵ up to the present time. Nation-states are presumed to seek survival, power and interests as unitary “actors,” although the decision-making power is vested ultimately in individuals on behalf of nation-states.⁵⁶ IR is primarily concerned with what states do and how their policies influence other states, and thus IR is largely about states.⁵⁷ However, considering the nation-state as an “individual” actor possessing self-reliant agency turns the nation-state into a “unit” instead of a “level.” “A level is a methodological tool employed only in relation to a specified unit.”⁵⁸ In the case of the nation-as-actor, the nation-state is the chief unit in the universe of agents in IR, which is “the systemic level.”

⁴⁶ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

⁴⁷ Hugh Gusterson, “Realism and the International Order After the Cold War,” *Social Research* 60, no. 2 (1993): 285.

⁴⁸ A. Nuri Yurdusev, “‘Level of Analysis’ and ‘Unit of Analysis’: A Case for Distinction,” *Millennium* 22, no. 1 (1993): 78.

⁴⁹ Singer, “International Conflict”.

⁵⁰ Owen Temby, “What are Levels of Analysis and what do they Contribute to International Relations Theory?,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 24 no.4 (2015): 723.

⁵¹ Singer, “The Level-of-Analysis,” 78.

⁵² Temby, “What are Levels,” 721–42; Wendt, *Social Theory*.

⁵³ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 2010).

⁵⁴ Singer, “The Level-of-Analysis,” 88.

⁵⁵ Herbert C. Kelman, “The Role of the Individual in International Relations: Some Conceptual and Methodological Considerations,” *Journal of International Affairs* 24, no.1 (1970): 3–4.

⁵⁶ Arnold Wolfers, “The Actors in International Politics,” in *Theoretical Aspects of International Relations*, ed. William T. R. Fox (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959).

⁵⁷ David A. Lake, “The State and International Relations,” in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 41.

⁵⁸ Temby, “What are Levels,” 737.

Nuri Yurdusev criticizes Singer's usage of the level of analysis interchangeably with unit of analysis. To him, "level of analysis and unit of analysis are not identical, but interwoven" because when the former is about the framework/context of a study, the latter is concerned with the actor/object/unit/entity of the scientific inquiry.⁵⁹ Likewise, Owen Temby argues that "the ontological question, 'who and what are the actors?', is different from the methodological question, 'what level of analysis are we using?'"⁶⁰ A level of the lower layer becomes the unit of the higher layer.⁶¹ "For example, the bureaucracy level is the system at the individual level and the unit at the nation state level."⁶² The deployment of the nation-state as a unit within an IR work is a textbook case for MN. Civilization, tribe, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic class, institution, social movement, business, religion and even simple material-biological objects like "paprika"⁶³ are alternative units to be employed in IR research to overcome the theoretical boundaries. However, if these units are positioned as a unit within the context/framework of a nation-state, it would mean that the work still remains within the paradigm of MN (e.g. Hungarian paprika).

5. Methodology

This article aims at measuring the extent of the prevalence of MN in IR academia on territorial Turkey⁶⁴ via the quantification of contemporary methodological nationalist praxis. There are three methodical steps to assess MN's proportional pervasiveness:

Stage 1 – Primary Sources: It is necessary to decide which academic literature has the potential to clue us into the regularity of MN. Since academic journals and dissertations are fundamental scholarly platforms and works, they are taken as the primary academic sources. It is also necessary to set a purposive and operable timeframe. The numbers of theses and journals and the timeframe need to be limited with objective parameters to acquire manageable and representative data. The timeframe is limited from 2015 to 2019 because 1) the collected data have to be recent to display contemporary situation,⁶⁵ 2) considering the immensity of collected data to evaluate, temporal restraint was a must to have a doable task,⁶⁶ 3) fewer years of data would not be adequate to demonstrate whether the quantitative findings are representative of the overall inclination of the present.⁶⁷ To determine the most relevant cases among the universe of IR journals and theses in Turkey, these paths are followed:

Journals: Scimago Journal & Country Rank of Scopus database (Elsevier)⁶⁸ is used to filter scholarly IR journals in Turkey based on their scientific influence. There are four journals under the Political Science and International Relations subject category from Turkey. These journals are All Azimuth, Journal of Economic Cooperation and Development

⁵⁹ Yurdusev, "Level of Analysis," 80.

⁶⁰ Temby, "What are Levels," 729.

⁶¹ Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 8.

⁶² Temby, "What are Levels," 726.

⁶³ Gille, "Global Ethnography 2.0".

⁶⁴ The work is related to the institutions and journals in Turkey's territory. Therefore, PhD dissertations completed by Turkish academics in the institutions beyond Turkey's borders are disregarded.

⁶⁵ Data was collected during 2020. So, the most recent complete annual data was from the year of 2019. A further comparative study might analyze earlier works with the present ones to show the possible change in the IR Academia in Turkey.

⁶⁶ The author needed to examine hundreds of PhD theses and articles separately. The half of the last decade was representative of the current situation and manageable.

⁶⁷ The findings of last one or two years might have cause sampling bias, because the findings of a year have a potential to be specific to that particular year. Covering five years gives us contemporary circumstances in overall.

⁶⁸ <https://www.scimagojr.com/>

(JECD), *Uluslararası İlişkiler* (International Relations) and Insight Turkey. Nevertheless, a methodical filtration is necessary to have a healthier source selection and analysis. JECD is eliminated because the journal belongs to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, which is an international organisation. Insight Turkey is disqualified for the sake of the objectivity criteria of this research. Since Insight Turkey is not a general IR journal but is primarily devoted to Turkey's affairs, it has great potential to cause sampling bias. The journal's name itself already indicates MN. Therefore, the research articles that were published in "All Azimuth: A Journal of Foreign Policy and Peace" by the Center for Foreign Policy and Peace Research, İhsan Doğramacı Peace Foundation, and "*Uluslararası İlişkiler*" by the International Relations Council of Turkey during the last five years (2015-2019) are adopted as the sources of academic journals. *Uluslararası İlişkiler* and All Azimuth are also considered two of the top Turkey-based IR journals by the IR community in Turkey.⁶⁹ Publications other than original research articles such as book reviews, editorial notes, commentaries, translations and conference presentations are disregarded for this analysis. Special issues are not taken into consideration either since their case uniformity distorts the objectivity and balance of the data. Besides, there are articles in journals written by scholars with non-Turkish institutional affiliations. They are counted in the total figures, but the results of these researchers are also given separately in the analysis.

Theses: The Turkish Council of Higher Education's (YÖK) theses archive (*Ulusal Tez Merkezi*/the National Centre of Theses)⁷⁰ is used to filter IR PhD theses submitted to universities in Turkey. However, in this case, it is essential to decide which universities can be considered more significant than others. To assess the popularity of IR, the data collection procedures were based on YÖK's "Atlas of Higher Education Programs,"⁷¹ which ranks universities in Turkey depending on the preferences of the most successful students. This factor indicates the popularity and achievements of universities in the Turkish context and the Atlas's online portal sorts the academic programs based on academic departments. The YÖK Atlas provides objective criteria to select universities. The top ten IR (including "Political Science and International Relations" programs) departments (Koç, Bilkent, Galatasaray, ODTÜ, Boğaziçi, Bahçeşehir, Kadir Has, Ankara, Dokuz Eylül and Yeditepe Universities) that have PhD programs were chosen.⁷² All IR PhD theses written in these universities (which are in the archive regardless of whether they are embargoed) during the last five years (2015-2019) are taken as the academic dissertation sources.⁷³

Stage 2 – Coding Scheme: As previously noted, MN comes into view in IR research with two faces: Level of analysis (nation-as-arena) and unit of analysis (nation-as-actor). Therefore, the article scrutinizes the selected academic resources to identify whether each study employs nation(-state) as the level or the unit of its analysis. In the cases that nation

⁶⁹ Aydın and Dizdaroğlu, "Türkiye'de uluslararası ilişkiler," 20.

⁷⁰ "Ulusal tez merkezi," YÖK, <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>

⁷¹ "Yükseköğretim program atlası," YÖK, <https://yokatlas.yok.gov.tr/>.

⁷² According to *YÖK Ulusal Tez Merkezi*, there are 36 universities (ODTÜ, Kırıkkale, Marmara, Sakarya, İstanbul, Ankara, Sabahattin Zaim, Uludağ, Trakya, Ege, Yeditepe, Yalova, Yıldırım Beyazıt, Galatasaray, Hacettepe, Gelişim, Gazi, Akdeniz, Yıldız Teknik, Bahçeşehir, Karadeniz Teknik, Kocaeli, Kadir Has, Boğaziçi, Maltepe, Pamukkale, Onsekiz Mart, Dokuz Eylül, Bilkent, Selçuk, Abant İzzet Baysal, SüleymanDemirel, Koç, Harp Akademileri Komutanlığı, Fatih, Bilgi) in total that produced IR PhD graduates in Turkey between 2015 and 2019. Ten universities were singled out because 1) considering the amount of data, a workable limitation was necessary, 2) around 1/3 of total number of universities were selected to make the sample representative. The top universities were preferred because 1) they mostly produce more PhD graduates than the other universities, and 2) their reputation, academic publicity and presumed high quality make them more relevant.

⁷³ There is a possibility that the PhD dissertations in the peripheral (*taşra*) Turkish universities stay more in the MN's epistemological circle than the central universities investigated here. There might be a further comparative study on this topic.

is not methodologically operationalized in either way, but as any other object or abstraction within the analysis, we cannot impute MN to such works. MN types in theses and articles are coded as level (LA) and unit (UA) of analysis, and nation(-state) as object of analysis (OA) is not considered methodological nationalist practice. Whereas the types of UA are various, such as academia, individuals, educational institutions, politicians, concepts, states, etc., level types are limited to systemic, international and national LA.

Systemic Level: Is comprised of works exclusively focused on theoretical and methodological issues, merely discussing ideas of individuals and the global system. Such works are coded as OA because nation(-state) is neither level nor unit in these analyses.

International Level: Constitutes works based on the interstate relations or foreign affairs of a particular state. Such studies are coded as UA because nations appear as actors in such studies.

National Level: Refers to the publications investigating sub-national institutions and actors. These studies are coded as LA since units are analyzed within a national framework. Besides, comparative studies are coded as “cross-national”. They are put under the category of national LA.

The figures are coded by their publication years, as well as journal or university affiliations. These separate figures are aggregated as the final findings. Their percentages are also calculated because the numbers of articles and theses fluctuate by year, journal and thesis. Additionally, the articles and theses regarding Turkey are also coded as Turkey-R to show the extent to which academia in Turkey is inward-looking. To unravel the weight of comparative studies, the numbers and percentage distributions of cross-national level works are also presented. The works that have multiple units and levels of analysis are coded in by the interest priority of the study and marked as multi-level or multi-unit studies.

Stage 3 – Content Interpretation: The researcher first read abstracts of all the works to determine their levels and units. If the abstract did not spell out the analytical characteristics of a work, then the researcher went through the details of the article or thesis. Although the conceptual pair of level and unit of analysis is defined in general terms, their operationalization during research is not clear-cut and does not allow the researcher to resort to the automated or computational coding of content. The majority of examined studies did not contain explicit information about their LA and UA. Therefore, the researcher’s personal evaluation was necessary, and hand-coded content analysis was the appropriate way to measure the prevalence of MN. Even though “coding is not a precise science; it’s primarily an interpretive act”⁷⁴, hand-coding has critical pitfalls, such as the error margin of interpretation of the content and possible human-related arithmetic miscalculations. The latter is escapable and easily curable since it is basic math. The former aspect, on the other hand, can be addressed by scrutiny and setting clear objective parameters. Some works had suffered from serious ambiguities, internal contradictions, or omissions. Hence, clarifications regarding definitions and interpretations were essential. Below are main explanatory notes deduced from the complexities the researcher faced during the interpreting and coding processes:

1. Even though theoretical investigations regarding national academic traditions, such as Chinese IR, Iranian school of thought, etc., are systemic analysis of ideas, they are coded as “national” LA and multi-level.

⁷⁴ Johnny Saldana, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (London: Sage Publishing, 2012), 4.

2. If non-state actors or any civil society agents are defined through a national character functioning on the international plane (e.g. Chinese companies), the nation is accepted as UA. If these civil units' operations are analyzed within a national framework, the nation(-state) is taken as LA.

3. Sub-national/state actors or arenas bearing national character (e.g. Kurdistan Regional Government, Catalonia) are counted as national units or levels.

4. If a work focuses on the influence of national institutions such as congress, political parties or individuals on foreign policy making, nation(-state) is considered as arena/level. Nevertheless, if foreign policy institutions or instruments of a state (e.g. public diplomacy, intelligence services) are analyzed on the international plane, nation(-state) is accepted as UA.

5. For works in which a national institution operates within the national framework of a second nation-state, the level is deemed as international, and the article is coded as UA and multi-level.

6. The studies whose interests specifically lied in methodology or theory are located in the systemic level unless one has a particularly-analyzed case study. Otherwise, the level and unit of the case are taken into consideration.

7. The articles dealing with the nation-state in a non-essentialist/anti-foundationalist way that aims for a critical, theoretical, geneological or conceptual exploration are coded as OA and systemic level because the nation (-state) is not taken as given/axiomatic fact or institution.

6. Methodological Nationalism in IR Academia in Turkey (2015-2019)

IR academia in Turkey has put itself under meticulous scrutiny and self-criticism in terms of both pedagogy and literature in recent years. This is not necessarily a symptom of self-negation, self-confidence, nor self-colonization of minds. It is, rather, a manifestation of an emerging scientific collective agency and self-consciousness. We can locate four main reasons behind this development: 1) The Republic of Turkey's active role in international and regional politics. 2) The growing interest in IR studies in Turkey. 3) The rising numbers of publications in high-ranking journals by Turkish academics. 4) The rising self-awareness of the "Turkish IR community" as a distinct scientific collective and a local disciplinary identity. The combination of burgeoning academic productivity, collective self-awareness and interest has resulted in a chunk of disciplinary genealogy⁷⁵ and reflexivity⁷⁶ works by Turkish IR academics.

For instance, Ersel Aydın and Gonca Biltekin contend that Turkish IR academics are still part of a "fragmented community that does not actively engage in scholarly debates" and

⁷⁵ Gencer Özcan, "'Siyasiyat'tan 'Milletlerarası Münasebetler'e: Türkiye'de uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininin kavramsal tarihi," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 17, no.66 (2020): 3–21; Boğaç Erozan, "Türkiye'de uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininin uzak tarihi: Hukuk-ı Düvel (1859-1945)," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 11, no. 43 (2014): 53–80.; İlter Turan, "Progress in Turkish International Relations," *All Azimuth* 7, no.1 (2018): 137–42; Korhan Yazgan, "The Development of International Relations Studies in Turkey" (Ph.D. diss., University of Exeter, 2012).

⁷⁶ Mustafa Aydın and Cihan Dizdaroğlu, "Türkiye'de Uluslararası İlişkiler: TRIP 2018 Sonuçları Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 16, no. 64 (2019): 3–28.; Ali Balci, Filiz Cicioğlu, and Duygu Kalkan, "Türkiye'deki uluslararası ilişkiler akademisyenleri ve Bölümlerinin akademik etkilerinin Google Scholar verilerinden hareketle incelenmesi," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 16, no. 64 (2019): 57–75; Hakan Övünç Ongur ve Selman Emre Gürbüz, "Türkiye'de Uluslararası İlişkiler Eğitimi ve Oryantalizm: Disipline Eleştirel Pedagojik Bir Bakış," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 16, no. 61 (2019): 23–38; Erkan Ertoşun, "Türkiye'de Siyasi Tarih Çalışmaları: Metodoloji Sorunu ve Bir Çözüm Önerisi Olarak Örnek Olay Çalışması," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 12, no.48 (2016): 117–33; Alâeddin Yalçınkaya and Ertan Efegil, "Türkiye'de uluslararası ilişkiler eğitiminde ve araştırmalarında teorik ve kavramsal yaklaşım temelinde yabancılaşma sorunu," *Gazi Akademik Bakış* 3, no. 5 (2009): 1–20.

emphasize the scarcity of quantitative works that would “help Turkish IR build the foundations upon which synchronized theoretical and methodological development can be based”.⁷⁷ In another study, Aydın and Mathews pointed out that there is a visible underachievement of IR academics in Turkey regarding the development of homegrown theorizing. IR academia in Turkey is overwhelmingly interested in the application-level theorizing which is, basically, either the non-confirmation of existing theories in line with the peculiarities of locality or straightforward adoption of a theoretical model produced in the “core”.⁷⁸ Likewise, Pinar Bilgin and Oktay F. Tanrısever argue that IR academia in Turkey suffers from parochialism because it mainly engages in either “telling Turkey about the world, [or] telling the world about Turkey”.⁷⁹ This study on MN in Turkey’s IR community displays a parallelism with the existing self-reflexive literature. The prevalence of MN in Turkey seems to be a natural extension of the abovementioned parochialism, theoretical and methodological dependency, and peripherality of IR academia in Turkey.

Even though nationalism is a pervasive ideology among the Turkish public and a hot topic among scholars, MN is understudied in social sciences in Turkey. Handan Akyiğit’s recent article on MN, which is not directly relevant to the discipline of IR, does not address MN in academia. The study mainly focuses on nationalism theories to follow the roots of MN, but ends up confusing and conflating political nationalism with MN because the article takes MN in a very broad sense and disregards the nuance that MN is a strictly academic concept.⁸⁰ Hüsrev Tabak’s work is the only noteworthy assessment of MN in IR academia in Turkey.⁸¹ However, his work on “the study of foreign policy in Turkey” suffers certain limitations. Firstly, despite the strong theoretical backbone, the illustrative source selection seems to be arbitrary and constrained for the sake of producing a neat theoretical categorization/periodization. Secondly, although the study eloquently introduces the concept, the analysis intermingles political nationalism and MN, causing conceptual confusion. His work focuses on the political instrumentalization of MN more than the meta-theoretical uniformity created by it. In another work, he critiques MN and goes beyond the constraints of the “national condition” via the application of “domestic global politics framework” to the Syrian civil war.⁸² Even though this study is an original contribution to the critical literature to MN and an operationalization of an alternative methodology in a case related to “territorial” Turkey, the objective of the piece is not the evaluation of IR academia. The research and analysis here aimed at overcoming the shortcomings of the literature by systemic quantification of data and stripping MN off from political-ideological connotations in the scientific realm.

6.1. Academic Journals (*All Azimuth* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler*)

The following graph sheds light on the prevalence of MN in highly esteemed territorially Turkey-based IR journals between 2015-2019:

⁷⁷ Ersel Aydın and Gonca Biletekin, “Time to Quantify Turkey’s Foreign Affairs: Setting Quality Standards for a Maturing International Relations Discipline,” *International Studies Perspectives* 18, no. 3 (2017): 267–87.

⁷⁸ Ersel Aydın and Julie Mathews, “Turkey: Towards Homegrown Theorizing and Building a Disciplinary Community,” in *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, ed. Arlene B. Tickner and Ole Wæver (Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 214–15.

⁷⁹ Pinar Bilgin and Oktay F. Tanrısever, “A Telling Story of IR in the Periphery: Telling Turkey About the World, Telling the World About Turkey,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 12, no. 2 (2009): 174–79.

⁸⁰ Handan Akyiğit, “Metodolojik milliyetçiliğin eleştirisi,” *İnsan ve Toplum* (2020), doi: dx.doi.org/10.12658/M0434.

⁸¹ Hüsrev Tabak, “Metodolojik ulusçuluk ve Türkiye’de dış politika çalışmaları,” *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 13, no. 51 (2016): 21–39.

⁸² Tabak, “Transnationality, Foreign Policy,” 41–68.

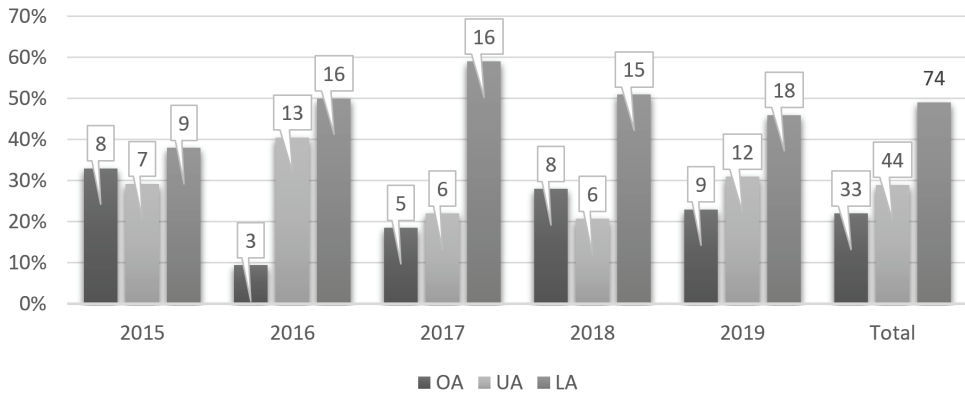


Figure 1: Research Articles

The bar graph displays the proportions of how nation(-state) is operationalized (level, unit or object of analysis coded as LA, UA and OA) in 151 research articles of respected and methodically selected Turkey-based IR journals. 30 (%19.9) of them are written by researchers from non-Turkish institutions.⁸³ The numbers at the centre of columns are actual figures of articles. The first thing drawing attention in the graph is the prevalence of nation(-state) as LA, or *nation-as-arena* in other terms. The total numbers of articles taking the nation(-state) as a plane or framework that supposes the nation-state as a “container” of “domestic” interactions are almost equal to the nation(-state) as an actor and object, combined. Around 49% of the articles published in these journals between 2015-2019 focused on “internal” units within the nation-state arena. Various units of analysis such as political parties, elites, academia, exchange programs, education, parliaments, militaries, constitutions, and individuals among other things, are analysed at the national level. Approximately 9% of all articles are comparative studies focusing on domestic actors in a cross-national way. The proportion of LA is evidently higher than these two other meta-theoretical operationalizations of nation(-state) each year. We can infer that the IR literature (academic journals) in Turkey is mainly interested in developments “within” the framework of nation(-states) to explain international facts and events. This mainly “second image” oriented-ness of the IR literature in Turkey is in tandem with Turkish academics’ interest in constructivist⁸⁴ and neo-classical realist⁸⁵ approaches embracing domestic politics in theorizing. This form of MN seems to be the most prevalent one in the academic journals.

The rate of implementing nation(-state) as the main actor in the articles, namely UA, is around 29% among the covered research articles. The researchers axiomatically accepted the nation-states as unitary individual actors and analysed their relations with other fellow individual nation-states at the international level, mostly conducting foreign policy analyses of various nation-states. The personification of states as unitary actors strengthened further

⁸³ 1) The institutions of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are accepted as non-Turkish since they are not territorially or institutionally part of Turkey. 2) The first authors’ affiliation is taken into account in the articles which have multiple authors. 3) Turkish authors from non-Turkish institutions are coded as non-Turkey affiliated.

⁸⁴ Mustafa Aydın and Korhan Yazgan, “Türkiye’de uluslararası ilişkiler akademisyenleri eğitim, araştırma ve uluslararası politika anketi – 2011,” *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 9, no. 36 (2013): 3–44; Aydın and Dizdaroğlu, “Türkiye’de uluslararası ilişkiler,” 13.

⁸⁵ Celil Yiğit, “Türk akademisinin realizmle imtihanı veya realizmi kullanma kılavuzu,” *Panorama*, March 18, 2020, accessed August 7, 2020, <https://www.uikpanorama.com/blog/2020/03/18/turk-akademisinin-realizmle-imtihanı-veya-realizmi-kullanma-kılavuzu-celil-yigit/>.

the naturalization of nation-states for IR academia in Turkey. According to our findings, only around 22% of covered research articles disregarded nation-(state) as a unit or level, but they brought nation-(state) into play as any other object within the analyses, which put spotlights on other various units like individuals, education, concepts, theories, methodology etc. at the systemic level. 78% of research articles in the two most relevant academic IR journals in Turkey can be considered within the circle of MN. 50% (15) of institutionally foreign-affiliated scholars' articles took the nation-state as the level of analysis, 27% (8) of them are coded as the unit of analysis and 23% (7) of the works used the nation or the state as the object of analysis. These findings reveal to us that the statistical change brought by non-Turkish institutional affiliation is negligible since their particular level of MN was 77%, which is almost the same as the general average (78%).

These results substantiate the contention that Turkish academia, as part of the global periphery, does not showcase much interest in theoretical-conceptual construction endeavours in IR but mostly engages in hard, day-to-day and region-based international politics.⁸⁶ This situation indicates an important conclusion that the pervasiveness of MN is also related to centre-periphery relations within the IR discipline. One would expect fewer instances of MN in IR publications from the core. Cross-checking this argument will be the topic of a follow-up research study covering and comparing countries from both "centre" and "periphery." Moreover, 37% of the covered articles are directly related to Turkey. This proportion does not reflect the results of TRIP (Teaching, Research and International Policy) 2018 surveys in Turkey.⁸⁷ TRIP results show that only 9% of IR scholars in Turkey define their main area of research/expertise as Turkish foreign policy.⁸⁸ On the contrary, this 37% is roughly in parallel with Aydın and Biltekin's findings showing that 32.5% of the articles in all ISI journals and 35.1% of the studies in the four significant Turkey-based/focused journals⁸⁹ contain the word "Turkey".⁹⁰ These figures are possibly an indication that IR scholars in Turkey write about Turkish affairs once in a while regardless of their main area of expertise. The results here show that the number of works on Turkish foreign policy is significant but not overwhelming in academia in Turkey. In a nutshell, findings derived from All Azimuth and *Uluslararası İlişkiler* research articles reveal that the most notable IR academic journal literature is profoundly methodological nationalist ($\approx 78\%$) either in an epistemological or ontological way.

6.2. PhD Theses

The graph below points out the degree of MN in PhD theses written in the most respected IR programs in Turkey between 2015-2019:

⁸⁶ Emre İşeri and Nevra Esentürk, "Türkiye'de uluslararası ilişkiler çalışmaları: merkez-çevre yaklaşımı," *Elektronik Mesleki Gelişim ve Araştırma Dergisi* 2 (2016): 17-33.

⁸⁷ According to its website (<https://trip.wm.edu/>), TRIP is a project that "gathers data and publishes analysis on the discipline of international relations". It "particularly interested in how scholars and policy makers use IR research to make sense of contemporary international politics." It produces data through surveys with IR faculty worldwide to examine teaching and research trends in the discipline of IR.

⁸⁸ Aydın and Dizdaroğlu, "Türkiye'de uluslararası ilişkiler," 9.

⁸⁹ Bilig, *Uluslararası İlişkiler, New Perspectives on Turkey, Turkish Studies*.

⁹⁰ Aydın and Biltekin, "Time to Quantify Turkey's Foreign Affairs," 267-87.

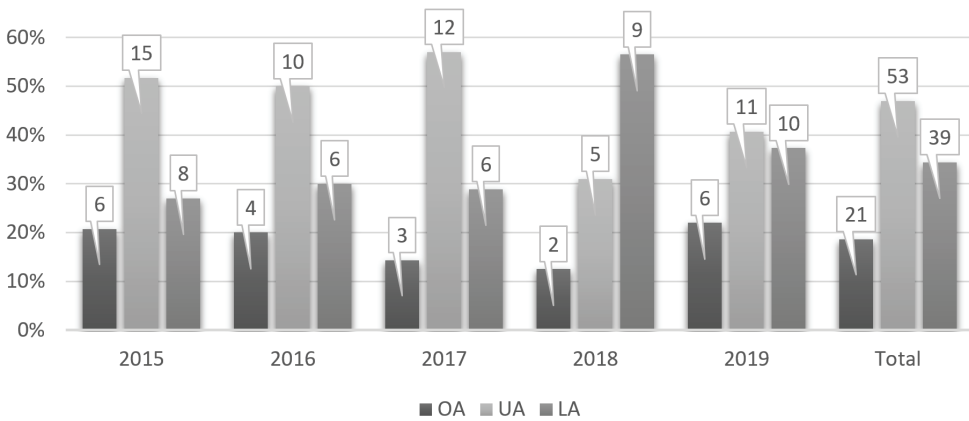


Figure 2: PhD Theses

In comparison with research articles, PhD theses are more comprehensive works that are able to contain vast coverage of issues related to the selected topic or unit. The findings deduced from 113 selected PhD theses exhibit some parallels and divergences with the covered research articles. The first noteworthy dissimilarity is the proportional disparity between the two forms of MN, nation-as-arena and nation-as-actor. Unlike in academic journals, researchers in Turkey are more inclined to use nation (-state) as a UA more than a LA in their IR PhD theses. One can speculate where this difference stems from. For instance, the technical restraints of article-level works might impel scholars to narrow their focus down to the particularities of a nation-state. Whatever the reason is, around 47% of the PhD theses under scrutiny have taken nation (-state) as their UA. These studies mainly analyse the foreign policies of single states along with their bilateral or multilateral relations with other nation-states. Additionally, a nation-state's interrelations with international organizations or nation-state institutions like intelligence services or public diplomacy operations within another national territory also feature prominently in the theses. This shows that scholars in Turkey are more interested in foreign policy analysis, and thus tend to portray the nation (-state) as an unproblematically unitary actor in their PhD works.

Secondly, the proportional prevalence of nation-as-arena in theses is around 34%. Early-career scholars focused on various units like migrants, reforms, companies, parties, ethnic politics, ideological groups etc. within a national framework. This form of MN confines these units to the neatly separated boxes of nation-states. Nevertheless, some of these works are also comparative studies. Around 12% of theses are cross-national works but still operate at the national level. This leaves around 19% of the works to adopt the nation(-state) as a non-focused object at the systemic or international level. The systemic level theses' main interests are theoretical and conceptual critique or building. Besides that, some dissertations at the international level of analysis focus on various units like international organizations, international courts, IR discipline etc. Even though nation-states appear as units in such works, they are not the UA but subordinate or secondary factors/actors among others. \approx 81% of the systematically filtered PhD theses are methodologically nationalist one way or another. This proportion approximates to the number reached in the IR literature of academic journals (78%). Moreover, around 35% of dissertations are directly related to Turkey, which

is a figure also similar to that derived from the journals (37%). Considering these journals and universities are the most “international” ones, we can easily reach the conclusion that, at least, roughly 4/5 of IR academia in Turkey is methodologically nationalist, reproducing banal nationalist discourse within the social scientific environment that indirectly informs the general Turkish public and perceptually naturalizes and legitimizes the idea that the world is composed of competing nations and strictly demarcated exclusive territories.

7. Conclusion

Ulrich Beck and Natan Sznaider argue that a social scientist, as an “observer,” conducts MN by taking politically nationalist actors’ normative and socio-ontological claims as given facts. This normative claim is that “every nation has the right to self-determination within the context of its cultural, political and even geographical boundaries and distinctiveness.”⁹¹ The social scientist also turns into a social actor operationalizing a normative perspective as a tacit act that “naturalizes” an “ideological” position. Beck suggests “methodological cosmopolitanism” to overcome the problems caused by MN, which is not only an epistemological alternative for widening transnationality and the “cosmopolitan condition”⁹² of the present but also an opposite ideological stance itself. Beck withdraws to the point that “nation-states will continue to thrive,” but he also asserts that “national organization as a structuring principle of societal and political action can no longer serve as the orienting reference point for the social scientific observer.”⁹³ Although Beck and other critiques of MN claim the opposite, MN cannot be considered a “false consciousness” or a “scientific error.” It is a matter of ontological or epistemological choice. Nation-states’ dominating role in our modern world is an undeniable fact and thus their epistemological weight in social sciences is not surprising. Nation-states exist in various forms regardless of whether we normatively condone the universality of the nation-state system or not. Instead, MN is a type of “meta-theoretical bond” restraining the contours of social scientific research and is problematic, but indeed is not an “error.” Although it always contains the risk of an oversimplification of a complex world for ideal-typical convenience, to call MN an error would mean that the vast majority of the whole social sciences literature is erroneous.

This article highlighted the neglected role played by MN in IR research. It suggested that MN appears in IR literature in two garments: Level and unit of analyses. The prevalence of MN in social sciences has been widely argued. To quantitatively demonstrate whether this contention is empirically erected on solid ground, this study delved into the universe of IR research articles and PhD theses in Turkey. Methodically-determined primary sources granted us the proportional prevalence of MN in the context of IR academia in Turkey. According to the findings, $\approx 80\%$ (journals: 78% and theses: 81%) of the covered works are methodologically nationalist. This means only one out of five studies transcended the frontiers of MN. The causes of such prevalent methodological praxis is debatable. It might be peripherality, academic dependency, nationalistic political culture or scientific indolence. Whatever it is, the results witness that the IR community in Turkey overwhelmingly

⁹¹ Beck and Sznaider, “Unpacking cosmopolitanism,” 384.

⁹² Ulrich Beck, “The Cosmopolitan Condition Why Methodological Nationalism Fails,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no.7-8 (2007): 286–90.

⁹³ Ulrich Beck, “The Social and Political Dynamics of the World at Risk: The Cosmopolitan Challenge,” The 26th Annual Congress of the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP), 2012, accessed September, 18, 2021. https://www.aesop-planning.eu/download/file/en_GB/aesop-silver-jubilee-congres-is-ankara-11-15-july-2012-facts-figures/lecture-by-ulrich-beck.

reinforces the meta-theoretical normalization of nation(-states) in research. Considering the spill-over effect of the reproduction of MN literature, the lack of a statistical decreasing trend in MN in our findings, and global and local developments in nationalist policies mutually feeding themselves with academia, a significant breakthrough from this epistemological axiom does not seem near. Furthermore, nation (-state)'s role in studies either as a level or a unit also does speak for the disciplinary IR tradition in Turkey. The findings pointed out that the IR community of Turkey as a peripheral country is more interested in foreign policies of particular states and international hard/daily politics than theories, concepts, methodologies or abstractions. $\approx 80\%$ is certainly high number, but to demonstrate the relative significance of MN in Turkey, we need a further comparative research. A comparison with a "core" country has a great potential to contribute to our understanding of disciplinary centre-periphery relations in IR.

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Globalizing IR: Can Regionalism offer a path for other Sub-Disciplines?

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Abstract

Global International Relations (IR) research promotes more spaces for a broader spectrum of histories, insights, and theoretical perspectives beyond the conventional dominant Western ones in the IR discipline. The primary goal of this paper is to highlight that the study of Regionalism has a significant role in supporting the initiative of 'globalizing IR' by representing a sub-discipline that is open to new ideas, theories and methods, especially those emanating from non-Western contexts. As such, Regionalism is one of the sub-disciplines of IR and International Political Economy (IPE) with a tremendous potential to showcase global-IR trends. This article utilizes a bibliometric analysis as a proxy for mapping out the diverse and complex intellectual structure of Regionalism as a sub-discipline of IR. Our findings indicate that the remarkable rise in the total number of contributions from non-Western scholars to the Regionalism literature in the last decade suggests that unlike the theory generating mainstream studies Regionalism studies have become dominated by non-European/non-Western contexts.

Keywords: Regionalism, regions, Global-IR and regionalism, bibliometric analysis of regionalism

1. Introduction

International Relations (IR) is largely accepted as a science rather than an art, even though there is no strong consensus about what the field/discipline might constitute.¹ When IR is considered a social science discipline, two points draw our attention. The first is that the discipline contains debates on almost any topic, rather than having general integrity or harmony. Indeed, we see that this extends even to debates over the very meaning of discipline itself.² What is IR? What should the core field of interest and unit of analysis be? Who or what are the major actors in world politics? At what levels should we perform our analyses

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¹ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, "Must International Studies Be a Science?," *Millennium* 43, no. 3 (2015): 942–65.

² Morton A. Kaplan, "Is International Relations a Discipline?," *The Journal of Politics* 23, no. 3 (1961): 462–76; Barry Buzan and Richard Little, "Why International Relations Has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to Do About It," *Millennium* 30, no. 1 (2001): 19–39; Martin Wight, "Why Is There No International Theory?," *International Relations* 2, no. 1 (1960): 35–48.

of these actors? Where do we draw the boundaries between IR and other social sciences, such as history, political science or economics? Finally, where should we look to find the origins of this discipline? These are the first few questions that come to mind in defining IR as a field of social inquiry. Since these controversies are so ubiquitous in the discipline, “IR scholars clarify the theoretical evolution of the discipline through major debates (Great Debates) whose very existence is not entirely clear”.³ Based on these and many other related debates, we may refer to IR as ‘a discipline of debates’.⁴

Secondly, aside from its argumentative nature, the field seems to be an American social science.⁵ One dimension of this claim is about its unhealthy and biased structure in regarding the production of theories (knowledge claims) or the ‘privileg[ing of] epistemic ways of knowing’ (methodologies).⁶ Despite almost half a century of attempts at reducing American-centrism in the discipline, American IR remains a global agenda-setting force.⁷ Via a sequence of constantly repeated narratives, the prevailing academic orthodoxy has made IR incapable of opening spaces for non-western inferences.⁸ In this structure, American and European academics are responsible for the development of concepts and theories, while the burden of providing case studies and testing theories in non-Western contexts is carried out by others. Similarly, global agenda-setting—the process of originating, legitimizing and successfully lobbying for a specific policy issue in the economic or security realm—is widely perceived as a Western-only activity. Non-Western thought is rarely regarded as a viable source for constructing authentic IR knowledge.⁹ That is, the American/Western theorists set the agenda by having a privileged position that amplifies their epistemic voice in deciding what knowledge is useful for IR and how we can (re)produce it. In Acharya’s words:

IR scholarship has tended to view the non-Western world as being of interest mainly to area specialists, and hence a place for “cameras,” rather than of “thinkers” for fieldwork and theory-testing or “when considering the ideas that have shaped IR thinking, why do we make so much of Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, and Kant, but not Ashoka, Kautilya, Sun Tzu, Ibn Khaldun, Jawaharlal Nehru, Raul Prebisch, Franz Fanon, and many others.”¹⁰

In addition to this type of Eurocentrism,¹¹ there are exclusionary practices that also manifest themselves in the arbitrary publication standard-setting, gatekeeping, and the marginalizing of alternative narratives, ideas, and methodologies.¹² Overall, IR is a fragmented discipline and its fragmentation is frequently attributed to intra-disciplinary differentiation along

³ Ray Maghroori and Bennett Ramberg, *Globalism versus Realism: International Relations’ Third Debate* (Westview Press, 1982), 24.

⁴ Hakan Mehmetcik, “‘Türkiye’de uluslararası ilişkiler çalışmaları ve ‘neden Batılı olmayan bir uluslararası ilişkiler teorisi yok?’ sorusuna cevap aramak,” *Journal of Faculty of Political Science* 50 (2014): 243-58.

⁵ Stanley Hoffmann, “An American Social Science: International Relations,” *Daedalus* (1977): 41–60; Ersel Aydınli and Gonca Billekin, *Widening the World of International Relations: Homegrown Theorizing* (Routledge, 2018); Ole Wæver and Arlene Tickner, “Geocultural Epistemologies,” in *International Relations Scholarship around the World: Worlding Beyond the West* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2009), 1: 1–31.

⁶ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, “Must International Studies Be a Science?,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43, no. 3 (2015): 942-65.

⁷ Arlene B. Tickner, ed., *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, 1st ed. (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2009).

⁸ Wæver and Tickner, “Geocultural Epistemologies”.

⁹ Oliver Stuenkel, *Post-Western World: How Emerging Powers Are Remaking Global Order*, 1st edition (Malden, MA: Polity, 2016).

¹⁰ Amitav Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds: A New Agenda for International Studies,” *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2014): 647–59.

¹¹ Audrey Alejandro, “Eurocentrism, Ethnocentrism, and Misery of Position: International Relations in Europe—A Problematic Oversight,” *European Review of International Studies* 4, no. 1 (2017): 5–20.

¹² Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations*; Joseph MacKay and Christopher David LaRoche, “The Conduct of History in International Relations: Rethinking Philosophy of History in IR Theory,” *International Theory* 9, no. 2 (2017): 203–36.

epistemological, theoretical, methodological, topical and national/regional dividing lines.¹³ Although more diversity and plurality dominate IR today than did in the years when the discipline first developed in the early 1920s, there is still much to do in order to address such examples of ethnocentrism and exclusion.¹⁴

Global IR, sometimes referred to as Non-Western IR or post-Western IR, is one of the important visions in IR scholarship in its departure from the practices of eurocentrism, ethnocentrism and exclusion.¹⁵ Global IR scholars' point of departure is instigated by the IR discipline itself being too Western-centric.¹⁶ Global IR scholars aim at facilitating greater inclusivity and diversity in IR by opening up spaces for a broader variety of histories, perceptions and theoretical insights, particularly those beyond the West.¹⁷ Therefore, Global IR is not a theory, but rather an aspiration. Acharya notes that the key challenge for Global IR scholarship in this vision is to develop original homegrown concepts and approaches and to apply them to other contexts, including Western cases,¹⁸ which overall requires going beyond the ideal types of normative reference points provided by Western typologies, conceptions and theories.

Global IR is also an aspiration for a more diverse and plural discipline that goes beyond the unequal and unjustified division of labor (theory building in the West, theory testing in the Rest), and it envisages an agenda-setting role for non-Western scholarship. There has been a growing awareness of, and discontent with, the limited and Euro-American-centric framing of dominant ideas in IR.¹⁹ In this sense, Regionalism is one of the sub-fields that epitomizes the Global IR aspiration in real life, as 'regional worlds' provides a better understanding of global politics by bringing many diverse insights, practices and perspectives into IR.²⁰ In view of globalizing/pluralizing/diversifying the disciplinary agenda, regional worlds are 'broader, inclusive, open and interactive'. Hence, the concept of 'regional worlds' is not only a demand for increased attention to regions but also a critical step toward a better understanding of world politics by highlighting the diverse experiences and perspectives of various actors on the international stage. In a way, Regionalism serves as a means for expanding and enhancing existing knowledge, including concepts, methodologies and empirical underpinnings.²¹

When Regionalism first appeared as an intellectual sub-field in the aftermath of the Second World War,²² it was more about 'European Integration' than anything else.²³ Though the European experience has been essential to the study of Regionalism, both history and modern practices demonstrate that it is not the only model to draw upon.²⁴ Retrospectively, Latin

¹³ Stephen Aris, "Fragmenting and Connecting? The Diverging Geometries and Extents of IR's Interdisciplinary Knowledge-Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* (2020), doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066120922605>.

¹⁴ Nathan Andrews, "International Relations (IR) Pedagogy, Dialogue and Diversity: Taking the IR Course Syllabus Seriously," *All Azimuth* 9, no. 2 (2020): 267–81.

¹⁵ Acharya, "Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds"; Maiken Gelardi, "Moving Global IR Forward—A Road Map," *International Studies Review* 22, no. 4 (2020): 830–52.

¹⁶ Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, "Why Is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory? Ten Years On," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 17, no. 3 (2017): 341–70.

¹⁷ Yong-Soo Eun, "Opening up the Debate over 'Non-Western' International Relations," *Politics* 39, no. 1 (2019): 4–17.

¹⁸ Acharya, "Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds".

¹⁹ Amitav Acharya, Melisa Deciancio, and Diana Tussie, eds., *Latin America in Global International Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 3.

²⁰ Acharya, "Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds".

²¹ Beatrix Futák-Campbell, *Globalizing Regionalism and International Relations* (Bristol University Press, 2021), 3–4.

²² Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 3–6.

²³ Alexander Maxwell, "Regionalism and the Critique of 'Eurocentrism': A Europeanist's Perspective on Teaching Modern World History," *World History Connected* 9, no. 3 (2012): 49.

²⁴ Louise Fawcett, "The History and Concept of Regionalism," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science

American, Middle Eastern or Asian Regionalism have earlier roots compared to the European journey. Following their independence in the nineteenth century, South American nations were among its early supporters. One of the first works on Regionalism was written not by a European, but by an Indian academic.²⁵ In 1945, there were only two regional organizations in the world (the Southern African Customs Union established in 1910 and the Arab League established in 1945). Despite the fact that research and practice on European regionalism is one of the most significant and elaborated on in Regionalism studies, Regionalism Studies are not a uniform, unique or linear process; rather, it has evolved through phases, influenced by a variety of causes and actors. Rather than solely studying European integration, since the 1990s many researchers have intentionally included non-European contexts and cases, seeing them as more relevant to the study of Regionalism.²⁶ Accordingly, Regionalism as a practice and theory has since grown into a truly diverse and complex phenomenon with contributions from different parts of the world. Thus, the non-Western world also has a greater influence on the Regionalism literature by making significant contributions to the discipline.

The remainder of the article discusses why Regionalism is an exemplary sub-field in terms of globalizing IR studies. This is achieved by way of reviewing the literature on Regionalism and conducting an empirical analysis with the use of bibliometric data collected from the Web of Science (WoS) database.

2. Regionalism as a Practice and a Field of Study

As a polysemic term, Regionalism refers both to practices of region formation and to a subfield of IR.²⁷ Since the early 1990s, globalization of trade and investment flows has been accompanied by increased efforts at regional economic governance. As a practice, Regionalism now constitutes an element of an increasingly complex system of governance operating at a variety of levels in which questions about public goods, welfare, economic organization and political participation are addressed. Yet, as a practice, Regionalism is generally associated with regional organizations (ROs). Indeed, there has long been a global upsurge in various forms of regionalist projects in different parts of the world. By now, almost every country in the world has formal relations with at least one form of regional organization.²⁸ In nearly every part of the world, regional organizations have been created or have acquired fresh impetus. Many regionalist projects have been revitalized or expanded, including, among others, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Southern Common Market (Mercosur). ASEAN survived the Asian crisis and became the center of East Asian regional cooperation, while other regional organizations were established in Eurasia (the Eurasian Economic Union, EEU) and South America (the Union of South American Nations, UNASUR). Most significantly, with the initiation of African Continental Free Trade Area

Research Network, 2012), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2193746>.

²⁵ Amitav Acharya, "Comparative Regionalism: A Field Whose Time Has Come?," *The International Spectator* 47, no. 1 (2012): 3–15.

²⁶ Shaun Breslin, ed., *New Regionalisms in the Global Political Economy: Theories and Cases*, 1 ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 139.

²⁷ Filippo Costa Buranelli and Aliya Tskhay, "Regionalism," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (2019), doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.517>.

²⁸ Amitav Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics," *World Politics* 59, no. 4 (2007): 629–52; Richard Baldwin, "21st Century Regionalism: Filling the Gap between 21st Century Trade and 20th Century Trade Rules," (WTO Staff Working Paper ERSD-2011-08, no. 56, 2011), 24.

(AfCFTA), Africa and the African Union are on track to provide for continental free trade and regional integration.²⁹ In terms of contemporary regionalism practices, we should pay greater attention to Africa, Asia, Eurasia and Latin America rather than Europe. Furthermore, governments not only formally engage in some kind of regionalism, but actively participate in regionalist processes with the engagement of a multitude of corporate and civil society players through the phenomenon we call regionalization.³⁰

Economy and trade are important drivers of regionalism.³¹ In this sense, Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) are one of the most important aspects of regionalism practices today. As modern RTAs have become more and more complex in their scope and content, they have grown significantly in recent years and are now a key trade policy feature for almost every country. Over time, the history of RTAs also indicates that negotiations are increasingly cross-regional and exist between developed and developing countries, while today a large proportion of agreements also take place between developing countries. Although RTAs were originally driven mainly by the European Union and the United States, today's RTAs, especially RTA negotiations, are concentrated in Asia³²

In addition to these various aspects and insights in practice, Regionalism as a theory represents the body of ideas, values and policies that aim to create a region or, in another sense, a type of unique and geographically-limited world order. The phenomenal growth in numbers of ROs and the range of their activities over the last century has correspondingly generated much interest in the study of Regionalism itself. However, its meaning and content have evolved substantially since its inception in the early 1950s. Over the years, Regionalism has increasingly shifted away from Europe (both as a place of academic development and as an analytical case study) to address non-European and, more generally, non-Western and postcolonial domains, questioning theoretical and epistemological eurocentric concepts in IR. In this sense, Regionalism today is defined using post-neo-liberal,³³ post-hegemonic,³⁴ porous-regionalism³⁵ terminologies.

We often contextualize and historicize Regionalism in various clusters. Early Regionalism, new Regionalism, and comparative Regionalism are the common names for these clusters.³⁶ Yet, today we have arrived at inter-trans-cross Regionalism as increasing contacts between

²⁹ "About the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)," AfCFTA - African Continental Free Trade Area, accessed September 23, 2021, <https://afcfta.au.int/en/about>.

³⁰ Börzel and Risse, *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism*, 8.

³¹ Arzu Al and Hakan Mehmetcik, "Economic Regionalization and Black Sea in a Comparative Perspective," *Siyasal Bilimler Dergisi* 5 (2017): 33–45, <https://doi.org/10.14782/sbd.201.54>.

³² "Regional Trade Agreements and The Multilateral Trading System," Discussion Paper for the G20 (WTO, September 21, 2015), 20, accessed August 8, 2021, http://www.g20.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/8.G20-Discussion-Paper_RTAs-and-MTS.pdf.

³³ Asa K. Cusack, "Venezuela, ALBA, and the Limits of Postneoliberal Regionalism," in *Venezuela, ALBA, and the Limits of Postneoliberal Regionalism in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Asa K. Cusack (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2019), 191–212; Asa K. Cusack, *Venezuela, ALBA, and the Limits of Postneoliberal Regionalism in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Springer, 2018).

³⁴ Jose Briceno-Ruiz and Isidro Morales, *Post-Hegemonic Regionalism in the Americas: Toward a Pacific–Atlantic Divide?* (Taylor & Francis, 2017); Helen Leslie and Kirsty Wild, "Post-Hegemonic Regionalism in Oceania: Examining the Development Potential of the New Framework for Pacific Regionalism," *The Pacific Review* (2017): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2017.1305984>; Pia Riggirozzi and Diana Tussie, "Rethinking Our Region in a Post-Hegemonic Moment," *Post-Hegemonic Regionalism in the Americas. Towards a Pacific vs. Atlantic Divide*, 2017, 16–31.

³⁵ Baogang He and Takashi Inoguchi, "Introduction to Ideas of Asian Regionalism," *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 12, no. 2 (2011): 165–77; Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi, eds., *Beyond Japan: The Dynamics of East Asian Regionalism* (Cornell University Press, 2006).

³⁶ Shaun Breslin and Richard Higgott, "Studying Regions: Learning from the Old, Constructing the New," *New Political Economy* 5, no. 3 (2000): 333–52; Fredrik Söderbaum, "Early, Old, New and Comparative Regionalism: The Scholarly Development of the Field," (KFG Working Paper Series No. 64, Freie Universität Berlin, 2015), https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2687942; Fawcett, "The History and Concept of Regionalism".

different regions have grown into a significant phenomenon in recent decades.³⁷ This is a very significant development as granting regions agency in IR along with nation-states requires whole new sets of thinking and theories. Many of these new sets of ideas, perspectives and theories derive from non-Western contexts or an amalgam of Western and non-Western interactions.

However, inter-trans-cross Regionalism is still a poorly understood phenomenon and the literature on these new forms is scant,³⁸ with much of it concerning intra-regional dynamics and relations while the inter-trans-cross regional relations remain neglected. Further study on these concepts and re-thinking regions themselves and Regionalism are required in light of contemporary global transformations.³⁹

3. Regionalism and Globalizing IR

When it comes to the task of globalizing IR, Regionalism studies offer a very distinct example. Even though deep-rooted Eurocentrism and a certain degree of exclusionary practices still guide substantial research clusters in this sub-field, it is more dynamic than ever and reflects a position that is more conceptually aware of non-Western thinking and practices.

Today, there is a broad consensus that the Global South presents distinct social, political, economic and security challenges that necessitate a set of regional knowledge different from Western typologies, conceptions and theories. In general, non-Western Regionalism is full of concerns about the ability to preserve boundaries, while regional systems tend to have low levels of formality and light bureaucracy, ultimately resulting in non-binding results in certain cases.⁴⁰ Moreover, structural and extra-regional influences are more to the fore and are conceptualized by non-European Regionalism studies.⁴¹ Furthermore, Regionalism is not so much about liberalizing trade and fostering democracy in many areas of the world today, nor is it geared strictly toward security goals when it comes to non-Western cases.⁴² Recognizing that Western and, in particular, European concepts and theories have been of little use in making sense of these predicaments, heterogeneity in knowledge production along epistemological, theoretical and methodological lines is an indispensable development. Indeed, researchers of the new Regionalism have firmly rejected the ‘Eurocentrism’ of the classic theories of integration since the 1990s and created better theoretical approaches to explore regionalism in regions other than Europe.⁴³

However, as underlined in the introduction, it is no longer enough to state that IR is suffering from Eurocentrism. The second-order challenge for those who wish to drive IR

³⁷ Hakan Mehmetcik, “Bölgeselcilik çalışmalarında bölgeler üstü ve bölgeler arası ilişkiler: Avrupa Birliği ve Afrika Birliği ilişkileri örneği,” *International Journal of Political Science and Urban Studies* 7 (2019): 72–84.

³⁸ Francis Baert, Tiziana Scaramagli, and Fredrik Söderbaum, eds., *Intersecting Interregionalism: Regions, Global Governance and the EU*, United Nations University Series on Regionalism, vol. 7 (Dordrecht ; New York: Springer, 2014); Gian Luca Gardini and Andrés Malamud, “Debunking Interregionalism: Concepts, Types and Critique—With a Pan-Atlantic Focus,” in *Interregionalism across the Atlantic Space*, ed. Frank Mattheis and Andréas Litsegård (Springer, 2018), 15–31; Heiner Hänggi, “Interregionalism: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives,” (Paper prepared for the Workshop “Dollars, Democracy and Trade: External Influence on Economic Integration in the Americas,” Los Angeles, CA, May 18, 2000).

³⁹ Mehmetcik, “Bölgeselcilik çalışmalarında bölgeler üstü ve bölgeler arası ilişkiler”.

⁴⁰ Söderbaum, “Early, Old, New and Comparative Regionalism”.

⁴¹ Aysegül Sever and Hakan Mehmetcik, “Regional Organizations and Legitimacy,” in *The Crises of Legitimacy in Global Governance*, ed. Gonca Oguz Gok and Hakan Mehmetcik (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2021).

⁴² Edward D. Mansfield and Etel Solingen, “Regionalism,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 13, no. 1 (2010): 145–63.

⁴³ Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, “Identity Politics, Core State Powers, and Regional Integration: Europe and Beyond,” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12982>; Amitav Acharya, “How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism,” *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (2004), doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818304582024>.

forward is to show that ideas and theories originating from non-Western contexts can be extended beyond their particular national or regional contexts.⁴⁴ That's why, the argument here is that this type of practice and theory of Regionalism has important ramifications beyond the respective geography of each. To map out emerging non-Western contributions to the Regionalism literature, we have conducted a bibliometric analysis.

4. Bibliometric Analysis

4.1. Material and method

Bibliometric analysis is a statistical classification and examination of the contents of publications in a journal, book or other types of field directory. It was first named 'Statistical Bibliography' by E. Wyndham Hulme in 1923⁴⁵ and later brought to the literature as 'bibliometric' by Pritchard and Gross with the idea that the term would be more understandable.⁴⁶ Bibliometric studies allow quantitative evaluation of literature through a number of indicators and can be used to assess the incidence of different fields of study. By considering the citations mentioned in any of a series of articles, bibliometrics may also be used to evaluate the importance of a given article to a specific area.⁴⁷ In any case, most of these quantitative field inputs are based upon existing publications in indexed science databases. It is possible to analyze the development in any scientific literature through main parameters such as most frequently used keywords, most cited publications, inter-author relations, country of origin, etc.⁴⁸

This article conducts an explanatory statistical analysis using bibliometric data collected from the WoS database, which is among the most widely used tools for generating bibliometric data in the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences. WoS initially consists of three ISI citations indexes (Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Scientific Citation Index, and Social Sciences Citation Index), and its coverage extends back to 1956 for the Social Sciences Citation Index and 1975 for the Arts & Humanities Citation Index.⁴⁹ To identify all potential matches of the relevant works in the database, we used a precise match search approach that uses a single search term and locates all exact matches in the recorded field. Our search term was 'Regionalism' since it hints at all the relevant works in the database.

In our study, 883 documents on Regionalism were examined in the WoS database. These were all published from 1980 through 2021. When the non-field studies in the category of area studies were cleared from the data set, 866 documents were examined. There remained 852 documents when unrelated or missing contents were removed. Of these, 385 were articles and 27, books. There were 802 authors, with 1.08 documents per author. The annual average number of publications was 10.8.

⁴⁴ Amitav Acharya, "An IR for the Global South or a Global IR?," *E-International Relations* (blog), October 21, 2015, accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.e-ir.info/2015/10/21/an-ir-for-the-global-south-or-a-global-ir/>.

⁴⁵ Edward Wyndham Hulme, *Statistical Bibliography in Relation to the Growth of Modern Civilization* (London: Butler&Tanner, 1923).

⁴⁶ Alan Pritchard and Ole V. Groos, "Documentation Notes," *Journal of Documentation* 25, no. 4 (1969): 344–49.

⁴⁷ Ozge Kilicoglu and Hakan Mehmetcik, "Science Mapping for Radiation Shielding Research," *Radiation Physics and Chemistry* 189 (2021), doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.radphyschem.2021.109721>.

⁴⁸ Stephen Majeji Lawani, "Bibliometrics: Its Theoretical Foundations, Methods and Applications," *Libri* 31 (1981): 294.

⁴⁹ Lokman I. Meho and Kiduk Yang, "A New Era in Citation and Bibliometric Analyses: Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar," *ArXiv:Cs/0612132*, December 23, 2006, <http://arxiv.org/abs/cs/0612132>.

4.2. Result and discussion

With any keywords, the search results from WoS consist of a list of articles ordered by keyword significance. To reveal patterns and developments in the literature on Regionalism, a co-word analysis was used, which can be seen in Figure 1. This analysis consisted of all of the articles and their respective keywords such as regional integrations, regional order, regional organizations, etc. The co-word analysis shows that ‘Regionalism’ as a keyword is the most representative keyword among others when it comes to overall Regionalism studies.

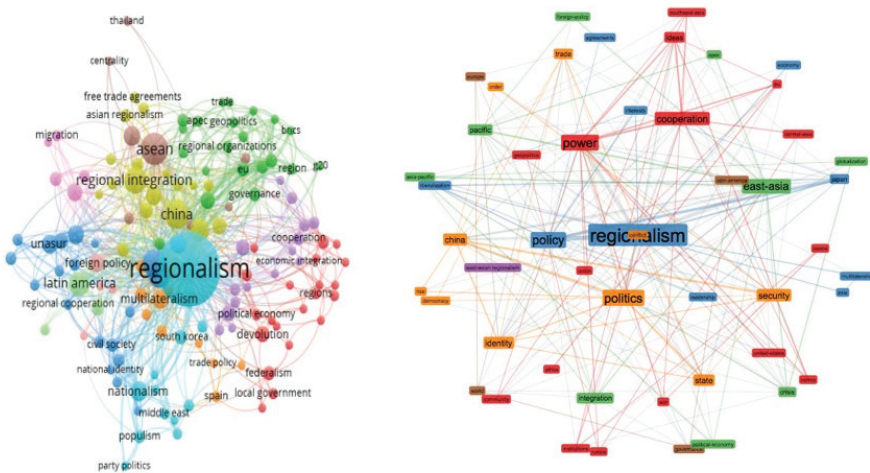


Figure 1: Keywords and Co-occurrence of keywords

Conventional bibliometric approaches such as author and journal co-citation analyses lead to insightful findings. For example, co-word analysis, which counts and analyzes the co-occurrence of keywords in publications on a given subject, can provide an immediate picture of the actual content of the overall literature. From this point, it can be argued that the content of the literature on Regionalism has now broadened to reflect the Global South’s social, political, economic and security predicaments.

The number of documents per year related to the given keyword ‘Regionalism’ is listed in Figure 2. There were 866 published articles indexed by the WoS between 1980 and 2020, and after data clearance, 852 entries were included in our analysis. The growing interest in

Regionalism studies among scholars in the last decade is clear in this figure.

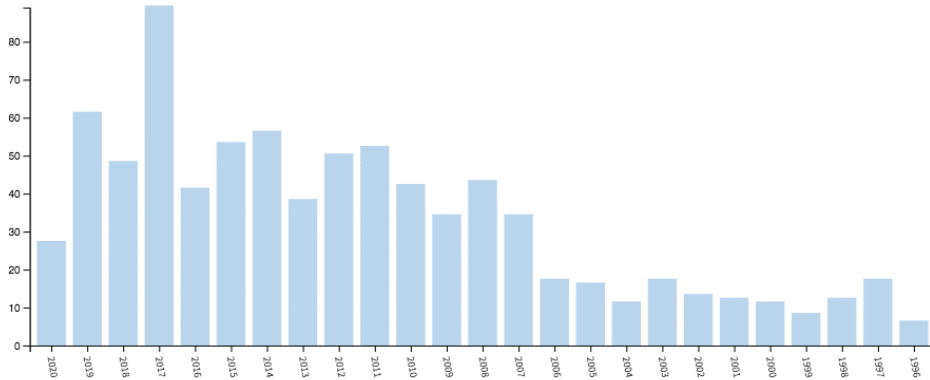


Figure 2: The number of articles per year

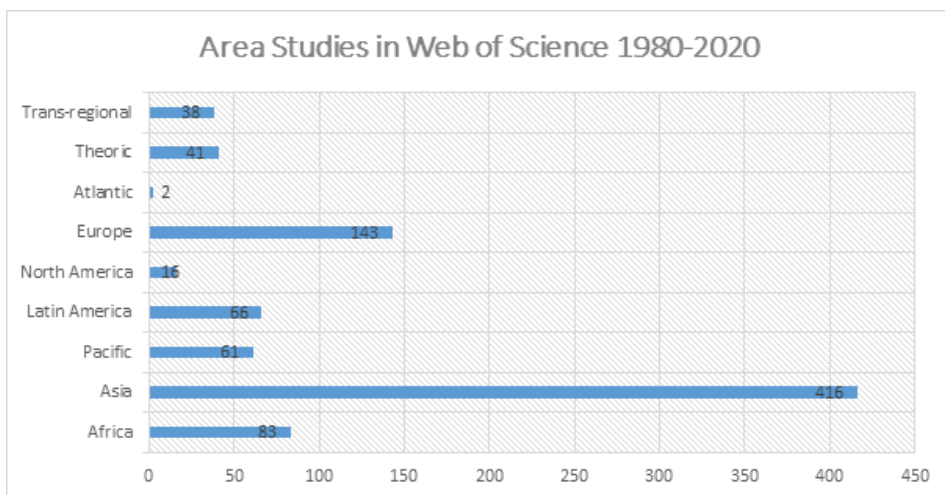


Figure 3: Area Studies in WoS (1980-2020)

One critical purpose of this research is to classify which regions these papers are studying. This information is reflected in Figure 3 above. Concerning the study of Regionalism, the bibliometric data distinguishes the following applications: Trans-regional studies (38), Regionalism theories (41), US-European dynamics (2), EU-related research (143), North American Regionalism (16), Latin American Regionalism (66), Pacific (61) and Asian Regionalism (416), and finally, African Regionalism (83). According to the compiled data, only 145 (Europe+Atlantic) articles were in the European context. The rest deal with the non-European context. Almost half of the entire 883 published articles indexed by the WoS between 1980 and 2020 are on Asia and Asia-related topics. Given the dominance of Latin American, African and Asian related research in the literature, we can verify our earlier contention that Regionalism studies are no longer dominated by the EU per se, but are now mostly non-European/non-Western in context, and particularly Asian.

Figures 4 and 5 below provide the number of articles on Regionalism in terms of country of origin and by institution. From the figures, we see that most studies still originate from Western countries and institutions. Similarly to the dominant trend in IR literature, many of these publications originate in the US. Yet, a closer look at current cross-national collaborative publications on Regionalism indicates that despite asymmetries between the amount of knowledge production between Western (American and British) and Non-Western countries, several non-Western institutions have come more to the fore over the years. In particular, the extent of cross-national collaboration indicates that Regionalism has become a global literature that flows extensively beyond borders.

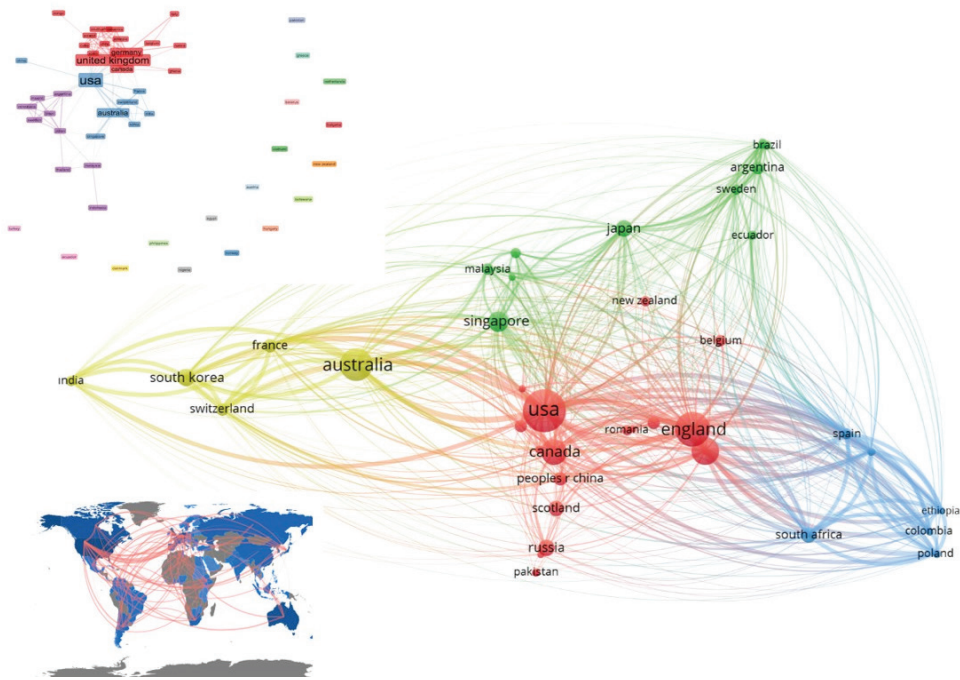


Figure 4: Publication by Country and Cross-Collaboration Map

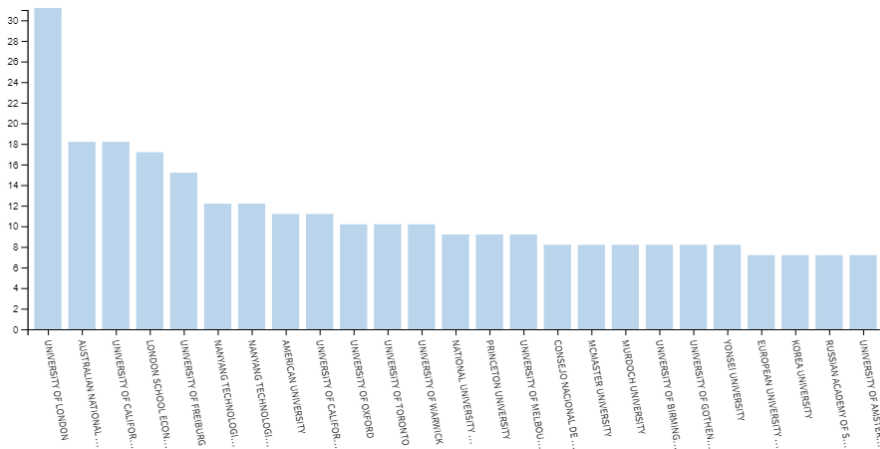


Figure 5: Publication by University

Co-citation analyses are a good way of analyzing the discipline’s intellectual structure. We conducted an author- and paper-based approach in building the co-citation networks. When it comes to authors, Western domination can be seen. Figure 6 shows publication by authors and Figure 7 illustrates the impact of specific papers within a citation network. Both figures are informative about the contribution to the literature from Western and non-Western areas. While some of these authors are originally from the South, they study and work in Western countries, and therefore they are listed as Western scholars in the publication by country and other collaborative study maps.

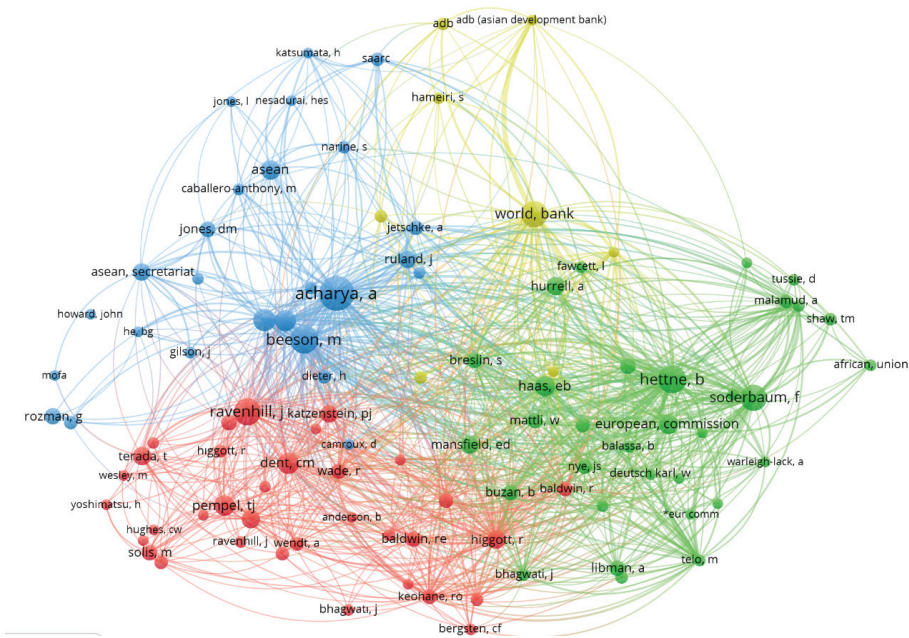


Figure 6: Author Citation Network

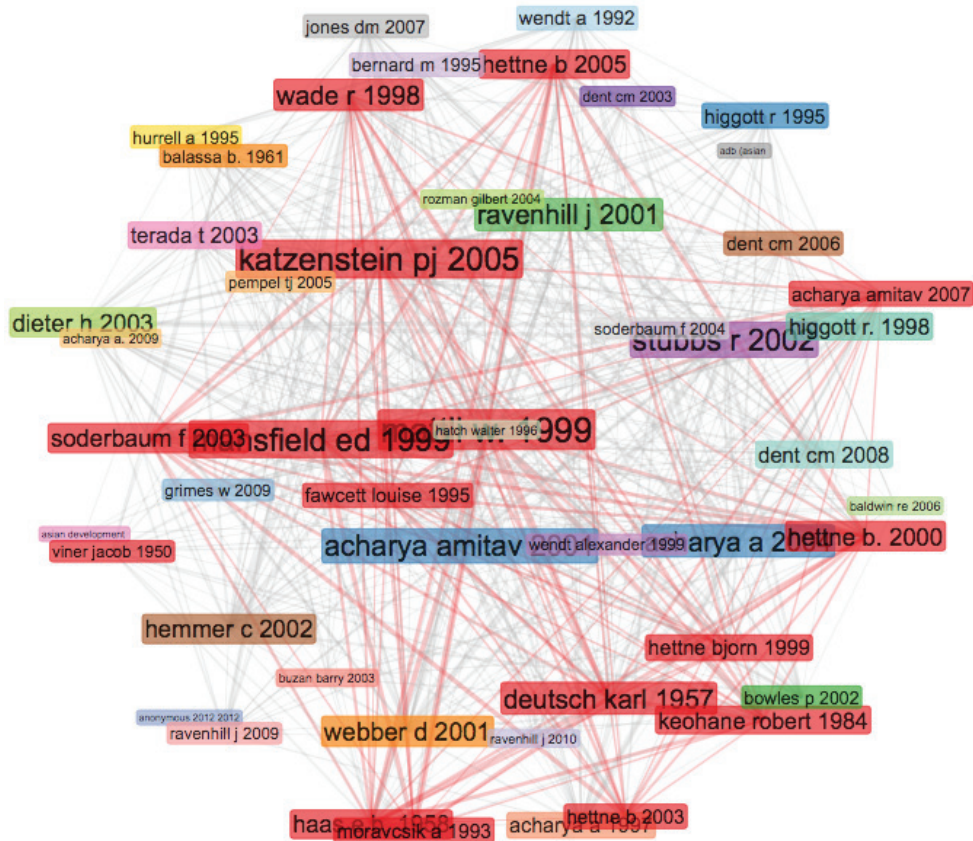


Figure 7: Paper Citation Network

In order to find out the exact picture of the South’s contribution, we have organized the data to visualize the Western and Southern contribution to Regionalism literature as separate entries. Figures 8 and 9 are two important figures from which we can attribute specific contributions coming from the South. In these figures, the left-hand side of Figure 8 shows how many papers were produced by Southern names independent of where they study and work. The right-hand side of Figure 8 does the same for Western names. These two figures also reveal what topics are studied by these Regionalism scholars. It is clear from these figures that both Southern and Western scholars overwhelmingly work on Asia. Figure 9 illustrates the increasing interest in Asian studies from both Southern and Western scholars in the last decade. African and Latin American subjects are common for Western scholars along with more dominant European Regionalism. This is one indicator that Regionalism is a field where Global IR trajectories are relatively well-met not just in terms of growing attempts to challenge Western centrism and to give more room and voice to the Global South, but also in terms of developing concepts and approaches from the latter’s unique context and applying them in other places.

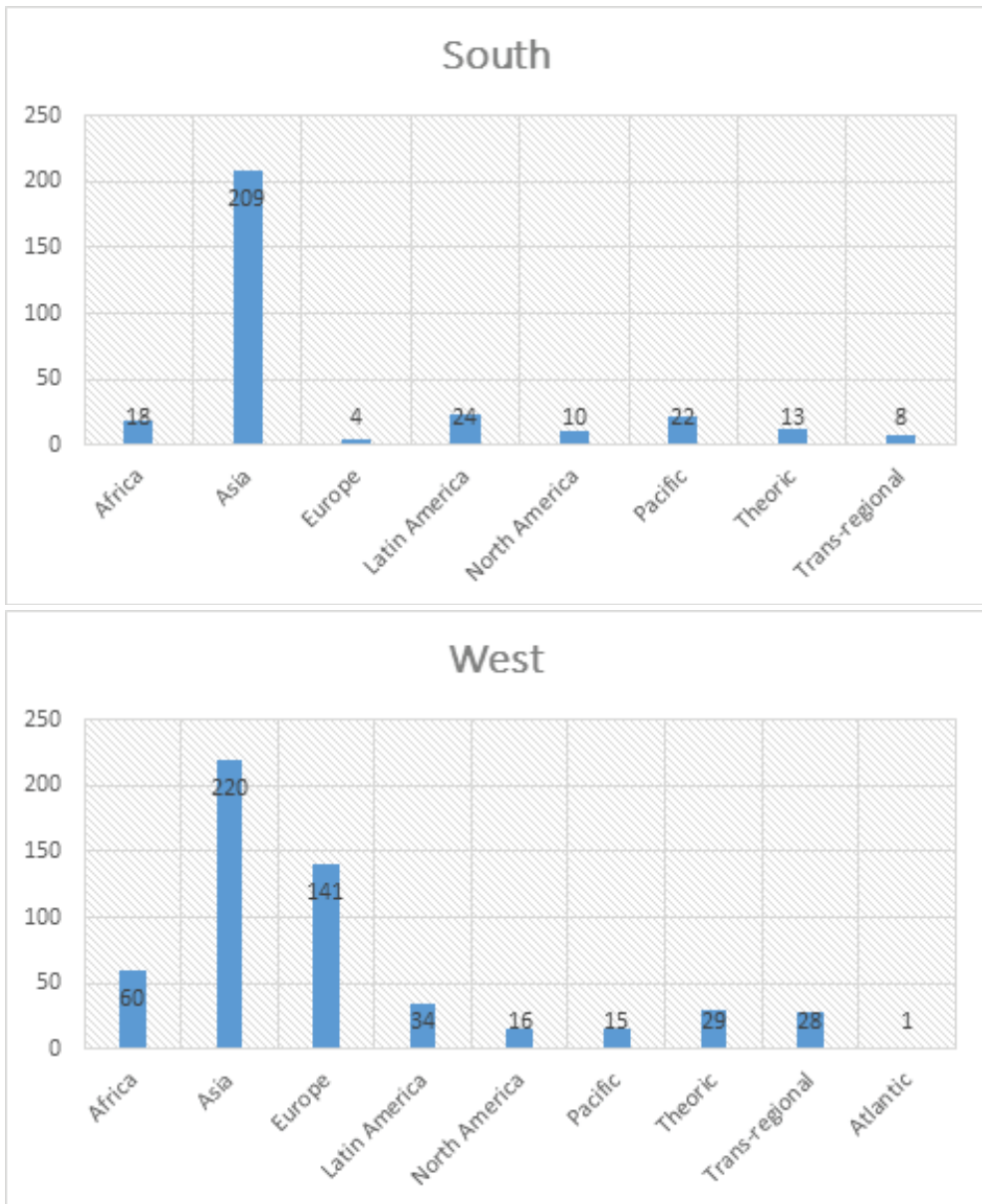


Figure 8: Paper Produced by Southern and Western Authors and their topics.

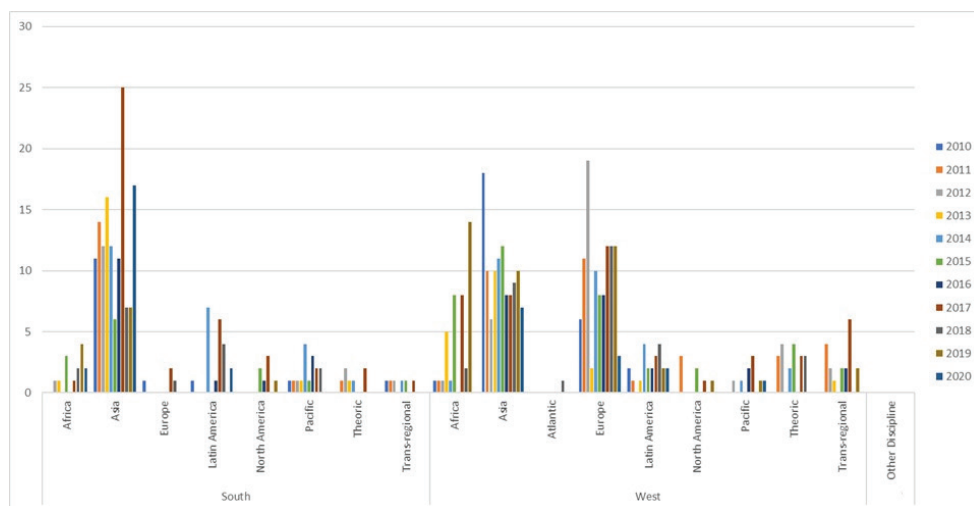


Figure 9: Paper Produced by Southern and Western Authors and their topics 2010-2020

5. Conclusion

IR is a hierarchical discipline, and diversity along theoretical, topical and national/regional dividing lines is not always apparent. The simplest way to detect diversity is to look for contributions from non-Western scholarship. However, it would be naïve to try and understand the extent of diversity in IR scholarship by looking at how many knowledge claims exist. Contrary to general expectations, research trends in IR communities (both Western and non-Western) are quite similar in terms of epistemology and methodology.⁵⁰

Global IR scholars are encouraging greater IR inclusiveness and diversity by opening up spaces for a wider spectrum of histories, perspectives, and theoretical insights, particularly those beyond the West. The primary driver for this paper is to illustrate that the study of Regionalism is in a prime position to promote the ‘Global IR vision’ since it genuinely represents such a field that is open to new thoughts, theories and approaches from non-Western societies in particular.

We conducted a bibliometric analysis as a proxy to chart the diverse and complex intellectual structure of the literature on Regionalism with contributions from various areas of the world. The first observation of the paper is that Regionalism studies are more diverse than ever, evolving, self-innovating, and becoming more conceptually conscious of non-Western theory and practice, even though some study clusters are still driven by deep-rooted Eurocentrism along with some degree of exclusionary practices. Secondly, the specific bibliometric analyses, such as the co-word approach, show that Regionalism literature is now conscious of the problems related to the social, political, economic and security predicament of the Global South. That trend is also verified by the number of contributions from Southern scholars on Regionalism. Correspondingly, the phenomenal rise in the total number of submissions from non-Western academics and publications in the last decade has created enormous interest in problems of the South in Regionalism studies.⁵¹ Therefore, we see

⁵⁰ Eun, “Opening up the Debate over ‘Non-Western’ International Relations”; Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar et al., “The IR of the Beholder: Examining Global IR Using the 2014 TRIP Survey,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 16–32.

⁵¹ Alexei D. Voskressenski, “Introduction,” in *Non-Western Theories of International Relations: Conceptualizing World*

that Regionalism studies are now overwhelmingly in non-European/non-Western contexts, particularly in Asia, rather than in European contexts.

Finally, the results extracted from the data also indicate that the curiosity of both Southern and Western academics in non-Western regions has risen over the last decade. Asian, African and Latin American issues have become popular among Western academics as well. This is one of the metrics that show us that Southern issues and theories are not just studied by Southern scholars but also by their Western counterparts.

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Towards Guanxi? Reconciling the “Relational Turn” in Western and Chinese International Relations Scholarship

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Abstract

In recent years, the “relational turn” in International Relations (IR) theory has attracted extensive attention. However, the limitations of the substantialist ontology of mainstream (Western) IR theory means that it encounters difficulties and dilemmas in interpreting the evolving international system. Against the background of the rapid development of globalization and regional integration, the reality of world politics is constantly changing, and increasingly shows obvious characteristics of interconnection and high interdependence. In this context, there is insufficient research comparing the Western and non-Western versions of the “relational turn”. Relational ontology may be able to provide a bridge between Chinese Confucian philosophy, Western philosophy, Western sociology, and mainstream western IR theories capable of generating productive synergies. However, there are major theoretical and cultural obstacles to be overcome if a reconciliation of the Western and Chinese versions of relationalism is to be achieved.

Keywords: Relationality, guanxi, relational ontology, Confucianism, international relations (IR) theory

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the “relational turn” of international relations (IR) theory has attracted much attention. IR scholars have begun to evaluate whether relationality can provide a new space for the development of constructivist ontology in IR theory.¹ At the same time, because of the proposal that a truly global IR is needed,² the discussion of non-Western versions of relational theorizing has become increasingly relevant.³ Both Western and non-Western IR scholars have participated in the discussion of global relational theory. Most notably, Chinese scholars such as Qin Yaqing have begun to work on relational theory based on traditional Chinese culture.⁴ In other words, as Paes and Linares point out, the discipline of IR “has progressively taken on the relationality implicit in its name”, and relational perspectives other than the Western one “have also emerged from other geo-linguistic traditions. A dialogue between two of the most well-established perspectives on relational theorizing, the Anglophone and the Sinophone, appears”.⁵

So far, this dialogue about relational theory between the West and the non-West is preliminary. The discussion is limited to each side’s own cultural conditions, and scholars only have a deeper understanding of the relational concepts and logic with which they are familiar. The discussion does not delve deeply into the degree of acceptance and integration of theories of non-Western relationality with respect to mainstream (Western) IR theory, let alone the comparison of Western and non-Western relational theory. Yet this state of affairs is easily understandable when one takes into account the fact that the discipline of IR has always been Western-centered.⁶ Two decades ago, the historical judgment was made that IR was “an American social science”,⁷ and “at the new millennium ... the US academic community still dominates the discipline”.⁸ The debate about relational theory has only become a dialogue between Western and non-Western theories in a truly globalized sense more recently.⁹

In this setting, the preliminary formation of global research does not mean that Asian and Western academic circles have a unified and clear understanding of the notion of the “relational turn” or “global relational theory”. Furthermore, the impact of relational theory on the ontology and epistemology of IR theory in the post-Western era, and whether non-Western relational theory contains a basis for acceptance and integration by mainstream IR theory, have not been fully explored.

Thus, by drawing on these debates, the main focus of the article is to try to explore the commonalities and differences of the “relational turn” in theoretical IR debates in China and

¹ David M. McCourt, “Practice Theory and Relationalism as the New Constructivism,” *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2016): 475.

² Amitav Acharya, *Rethinking Power: Institutions and Ideas in World Politics: Whose IR?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

³ See Astrid H. M. Nordin et al., “Towards Global Relational Theorizing: A Dialogue between Sinophone and Anglophone Scholarship on Relationalism,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 5 (2019): 570-81; Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Daniel H. Nexon, “Reclaiming the Social: Relationalism in Anglophone International Studies,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 5 (2019): 582-600; Yaqing Qin and Astrid H. M. Nordin, “Relationality and Rationality in Confucian and Western Traditions of Thought,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 5 (2019): 601-14.

⁴ Qin Yaqing, “Relationality and Processual Construction: Bringing Chinese Ideas into International Relations Theory,” *Social Sciences in China* 30 (2009): 5-20.

⁵ Lucas de Oliveira Paes and Lucia J. Linares, “Letter from the Editors,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 5 (2019): 569.

⁶ Homeira Moshirzadeh, “The Idea of Dialogue of Civilizations and Core-Periphery Dialogue in International Relations,” *All Azimuth* 9, no. 2 (2020): 221-27.

⁷ See Stanley Hoffman, “International Relations: An American Social Science,” *Daedalus* 106 (1977): 41-60.

⁸ Steve Smith, “The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?,” *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 2, no. 3 (2000): 374.

⁹ Deepshikha Shahi, “Foregrounding the Complexities of a Dialogic Approach to Global International Relations,” *All Azimuth* 9, no. 2 (2020): 163-76.

the West. The first two sections review the formation of the “relational turn” and “relational theory” in the Western and Chinese traditions. The second section points out the present inadequacies of the dialogue between East and West. It discusses the ontological dilemma faced by mainstream Western IR theory in explaining the real world in its full empirical complexity, pointing out that the tension between reality and theory pushes Eastern and Western IR scholars to reflect on the ontological assumptions of mainstream theory.¹⁰ The last section reflects on the prospects for unifying Western and Chinese relational theory, concluding that there are many obstacles to overcome if the seemingly incompatible and contradictory assumptions underlying the two strands of relational theory are to be somehow brought into ontological and epistemological alignment.

2. The Relational Turn in Anglophone IR Theorizing

In Anglophone IR theory the “relational turn” is inspired by the broader social sciences. Since the 1950s, relationalism has become an important research topic in the field of social science and has contributed to the so-called “relational turn” in IR theory. Indeed, it was the “relational turn” of sociology scholars against substantialist thinking that inspired IR scholars to turn to relationalism. Philosophical and sociological theories such as pragmatic philosophy and practical theory thus provide an ontological foundation for relational research in IR.

Transactionalism in Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy shows that “systems of description and naming are employed to deal with aspects and phases of action, without final attribution to ‘elements’ or other presumptively detachable or independent ‘entities,’ ‘essences,’ or ‘realities,’ and without isolation of presumptively detachable ‘relations’ from such detachable ‘elements’”.¹¹ Thus, it is possible to draw the conclusion that “the very terms or units involved in a transaction derive their meaning, significance, and identity from the (changing) functional roles they play within that transaction”.¹² Individuals or structures can be understood “as dynamic in nature, as unfolding, ongoing processes ... in which it makes no sense to envision constituent elements apart from the flows within which they are involved (and vice versa)”.¹³ In other words, relations are inherently transactional and inseparable from the processes within which they are nested. Relationalism thus stands in opposition to a substantialist (realist) philosophy which perceives actors as discrete entities bouncing off each other like billiard balls and remaining effectively unchanged by the interaction.

Bourdieu’s theory of practice has exerted great influence on the development of Western relationalism. Bourdieu opposes substantialist theory and advocates relationalism. For Bourdieu, “le réel est relationnel” (“the real is relational”).¹⁴ The notion of the relational is so central to Bourdieu that he preferred to speak not of his “theory” but rather of a “system of relational concepts”.¹⁵ He claims that “what exist in the social world are relations – not interactions between agents or intersubjective ties between individuals”,¹⁶ but objective

¹⁰ For a full discussion of the shortcomings of mainstream IR theory and the need to incorporate complexity thinking and analytic eclecticism in a pragmatic, syncretic theoretical-methodological framework, see Jeremy Garlick, *The Impact of China’s Belt and Road Initiative: From Asia to Europe* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2020), Chapters 2 and 3.

¹¹ John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley, *Knowing and the Known* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1949), 108.

¹² Mustafa Emirbayer, “Manifesto for a Relational Sociology,” *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 2 (1997): 287.

¹³ Emirbayer, “Manifesto,” 289.

¹⁴ Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 97.

¹⁵ Willem Schinkel, “Sociological Discourse of the Relational: The Cases of Bourdieu & Latour,” *The Sociological Review* 55, no. 4 (2007): 712.

¹⁶ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *Invitation to Reflexive*, 97.

relations. Ignatow and Robinson explain that “Bourdieu defines a field as a network or configuration of relations between social positions in which positions and their interrelations are determined by the distribution of economic, social, and cultural capital”.¹⁷ In other words, in his view, all actions of an actor are carried out in a certain field, and the field is a network or a configuration of objective relations existing between various positions. In this way, the world and the actors are interdependent in the world of relations. However, Bourdieu believes that the mutual influence and construction of the field and actors still have a certain degree of objective independence. This means that even Bourdieu’s thought reveals traces of the influence of Western substantive thinking.

Emirbayer argues that “the key question confronting sociologists ... is the choice between substantialism and relationalism”.¹⁸ Inspired by his work, the seminal work of Jackson and Nexon is regarded as the beginning of the “relational turn” in Western IR, since it reveals the shortcomings of substantialism.¹⁹ The majority of IR theories are based on a positivist-based, state-centric substantialism. As far as the ontology of IR is concerned, we can try to “think of ties before subjects since it is often useful to do just that”, although “we are accustomed to thinking of subjects before ties”.²⁰ To study IR without substances and their variable attributes, Jackson and Nexon propose a processual/relational approach that focuses on four key concepts: processes, configurations, projects, and yoking to world politics. However, they explain in full neither what the term “relationalism” signifies nor the theory that “relations precede the state”.²¹ Nonetheless, their “processual/relational” research approach emphasizes that the process of relations operation plays an important role in state behavior. At the same time, Jackson and Nexon link the concept of ‘relations’ primarily to the legitimacy of discourse among actors.

Subsequently, Colin Wight²² identified four levels of social structure from the perspective of relational philosophy: the level of material exchange (resources, material endowments); the level of cross-subject activities (rules, norms, systems, etc.); social relations (classes, identities); and intersubjectivity of actors (identification, etc.). According to Wight, the relations between the various levels of the structure constitute the overall structure of the social world. Due to the complexity and diversity of its multiple structural relations, current IR is gradually evolving into global social relations.²³ That is to say, actors are situated in a processual relationship based on practice. The structure of international relations is in a dynamic state of continuous generation and development, and because of the diversity of the social world, the structure does not exist and develop in isolation but rather appears as a manifestation of multiple structures.

McCourt addresses the significance of relational theory to the development of constructivism by proposing a “practice-relational constructivism”.²⁴ Aiming at the limited ontology of American constructivism, he contends relationalism and practice theory “tackle a set of unhelpful dichotomies”, such as “agency versus structure”, “ideationalism versus

¹⁷ Gabe Ignatow and Laura Robinson, “Pierre Bourdieu: Theorizing the Digital,” *Information, Communication & Society* 20, no.7 (2017): 952.

¹⁸ Emirbayer, “Manifesto,” 282.

¹⁹ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Daniel H Nexon, “Relations before States: Substance, Process and the Study of World Politics,” *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 3(1999): 291-332.

²⁰ Jackson and Nexon, “Relations Before States,” 304.

²¹ Jackson and Nexon, “Reclaiming the Social,” 587.

²² Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*. Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), doi:10.1017/CBO9780511491764.

²³ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations*, 296-9.

²⁴ McCourt, “Practice Theory and Relationalism”.

materialism” and “constitution versus causation”. He identifies the necessity of a turn to relationalism and practice theory to expand the ontology of constructivism. Doing this productively reopens the ontology which has been unduly narrowed in much constructivist theory, explaining that “the value of practice theory and relationalism is to keep IR scholarship sensitive to the social and cultural contexts in which international politics takes place”.²⁵ However, although the “theory of practical relations” is based in social constructivism, not all practical and relational theories are suitable for constructivism.²⁶ The debate on the categorization of relational theory and the relationship between relational theory and constructivism thus remains to be further explored.

Uniquely among non-Chinese scholars, Kavalski offers a broader understanding of relationality in contemporary IR theory which incorporates elements taken from Chinese thought.²⁷ He argues that “relationality suggests modes for understanding, explanation, and encounter that are simultaneously attuned and open to the contradictions, challenges, and opportunities of a dynamic and unpredictable global life.”²⁸ He analyzes the ontology of relations from the perspective of values, narratives, and practices, positing that “normative agency emerges in a community, not in a vacuum.”²⁹ Connecting relationalism to the Chinese concept of *guanxi* 关系, ‘relations’), Kavalski argues that it “is the relational (rather than the rule-based) nature of *guanxi* that backstops the dialogical outcomes of its effects.”³⁰ That is to say, the state and its national interests do not really exist. It is the continuous dialogue between states that forms the state. By engaging with the phenomenon of relationality, he points out that the effects of relationality are foreshadowed by engagement with the Chinese concept of *guanxi*. This invokes the complexity of global life and showcases the novel and meaningful opportunities generated by relationality for innovations in IR theorizing.

The theoretical significance of these discussions of process and relations lies in the exploration of a new research space beyond what has previously been covered in Western IR theory and practice. However, most Western IR scholars who have worked on relationalism tend to return, consciously or unconsciously, to substantialist study of international phenomena. For example, in an empirical article, Jackson applied “relational constructivism” to explain the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s formation. From this paper, it can be seen that Jackson’s “process” is concerned with identifying how actors legitimize their actions through discourse. The author’s discussion is actually more about the study of entities than relations between actors.³¹ Jackson’s approach is roughly similar to linguistic constructivism, and does not completely focus on the analysis of processes in relations. This lack of connection between the implications of relationalist theory and its application to empirical studies, evidenced by the tendency to fall back on substantialist analysis, is typical of Western approaches to relationalism in IR.

²⁵ McCourt, “Practice Theory and Relationalism,” 475.

²⁶ Jackson and Nexon, “Reclaiming the Social,” 582.

²⁷ See Emilian Kavalski, “Guanxi or What is the Chinese for Relational Theory of World Politics,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 18, no. 3 (2018): 397-420; Emilian Kavalski, “The Guanxi of Relational International Affairs,” *Chinese Political Science Review* no. 3 (2018): 233-51; Emilian Kavalski, “Chinese Concepts and Relational International Politics,” *All Azimuth* 7, no.1 (2018): 87-102.

²⁸ Kavalski, “The Guanxi of Relational International Affairs,” 247.

²⁹ Emilian Kavalski, “The Struggle for Recognition of Normative Powers: Normative Power Europe and Normative Power China In Context,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 48, no. 2 (2013): 262.

³⁰ Kavalski, “Chinese Concepts,” 96-7.

³¹ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, “Relational Constructivism: A War of Words,” in *Making Sense of International Relations Theory*, ed. Jennifer Sterling-Folker (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2006), 139-55.

3. The Rise of Relational Theorizing in Sinophone IR

Since the 1990s, the globalization of the academic study of international relations has generated a budding consciousness in China of the implications of Western theoretical innovation for Chinese IR scholarship. Alongside this new awareness, scholars have begun to examine the possibility of generating “homegrown” theories based on traditional Chinese philosophy, culture and values. Consequently, and as a key part of the development of IR studies in China, Chinese scholars have made significant progress in relational theory research. Crucially, the Confucian concept of *guanxi* (in the sense of social relations) has been used by scholars such as Qin Yaqing and Feng Zhang as the foundation of an emerging school of relationalist theorizing containing characteristics derived from Chinese philosophy.³²

Based on the experience of Chinese society over thousands of years, *guanxi* is generally given a central position in Chinese conceptions of society derived from both the practical activities of people and the theories of scholars. The concept has a layered and fluid framing since the term possesses a very rich range of meaning and a polymorphous character. As an illustration of the latter, *guanxi* has been translated into English in various ways: as an intricate and pervasive relational network, as particularistic ties, as friendship, but also as connection, exchange, and even social capital. However, no single definition can summarize the whole picture of *guanxi*. Although possibly confusing to non-Chinese, the concept’s multifariousness grants it a flexibility which has made it useful as “an enabling platform for contingent innovation”.³³

Guanxi is embedded in Chinese culture. Ancient Chinese thinkers such as Confucius and Mencius repeatedly emphasized the concept as it provides a means for reconciling differences in interests between self and others. In the modern era, the research of Chinese sociologists – led by Fei Xiaotong – demonstrates that in marked distinction from the individualist-based society in the Western world, traditional Chinese society is relations-based.³⁴ In Western society individuals are independent of each other like bundles of straw standing in a field, held together by social contracts and organizations. In contrast, the social structure of China can be imagined as a stone dropped into water from which ripples form: everyone is the center of the circle from which their social relations are launched, and each circle and each ripple are connected by specific relations.³⁵

However, in the study of the social sciences, including international politics, the concept *guanxi* is generally so frequently used that it is not given any specific theoretical meaning. Yet, as Kavalski realized, *guanxi* is “... one of the words which make up the Chinese term for 'International Relations' – *guoji guanxi* ... In this respect, it should appear surprising that there has been so little attention to the meaning and content of the terms that go into the making of the Chinese phrase for IR.”³⁶

It was only when Chinese IR scholars such as Qin Yaqing put the term into the framework of modern IR theory and Chinese experience that the meaning of *guanxi* and Chinese relationality in IR was re-discovered.

³² Works using elements taken from Chinese approaches to relationalism include: Qin Yaqing, *A Relational Theory of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); and Feng Zhang, *Chinese Hegemony: Grand Strategy and International Institutions in East Asian History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015).

³³ Kavalski, “Guanxi or What,” 403-4.

³⁴ See Xiaotong Fei, *From the Soil: The Foundations of Chinese Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

³⁵ Qin, “Relationality and Processual Construction,” 7-8.

³⁶ Kavalski, “Guanxi or What,” 400.

In fact, the concept of *guanxi* has been incorporated into theorizing in many academic fields in China. The complex texture of the term can be understood from its wide use in the literature on business administration, organization studies, intercultural communication, psychology, and sociology.³⁷ These fields offer “a huge repository of information about the meaning and practices of *guanxi*”.³⁸ However, it is Chinese scholars of IR who have put *guanxi* and relational theory on the research agenda in the sense of disciplinary innovation in the past two decades, since they have advocated the establishment of a theoretical system incorporating elements of both Chinese and Western relationalism.

The most systematic research achievement in Sinophone research into relationalism in IR theory is Qin’s relational theory of world politics.³⁹ Qin’s thinking about relationalism is embodied in a series of assumptions called the “*guanxi* world.” He argues that “at the metaphysical level, the world is conceived as being composed of continuous events and ongoing relations rather than substantial objects and discrete entities”.⁴⁰ The basic unit for observing the world is the relationship. This is obviously different from the atomic ontology of Western mainstream IR theory. In the *guanxi* world, the most important relations are the *guanxi* between people or between human actors. Individuals are no longer entities independent of each other and independent of the external environment, with their own attributes, as understood in individualistic societies. Accordingly, “[t]he *guanxi*-oriented view holds that an individual’s life is not complete and that it can only have meaning through its connection to others. Without others, the attributes of the individual lose their meaning.”⁴¹

In other words, the *guanxi* world does not deny the existence of individuals but emphasizes that the identity of individuals is formed in social relations, and the meaning of individuals can only be expressed in social relations. Therefore, unlike the western IR universe under the influence of “ontological substantialism”, which is “composed of discrete and self-subsistent actors”, in the view of *guanxi*, “the world represents itself always as a complexly related whole”⁴² – a *guanxi* world.

In Qin’s relational theory, the basic analytical framework of relational theory is processual constructivism. He proposes “[a] relational theory of world politics with relationality as the metaphysical component of its theoretical hardcore. It conceives the IR world as one composed of ongoing relations, assumes international actors as actors-in-relations, and takes processes defined in terms of relations in motion as ontologically significant”.⁴³

“Relationality” is thus defined as the core of the process, while “process” – defined as relations in motion – plays a crucial role and constitutes a driving factor alongside rationality in IR. In other words, the process consists of complex and interrelated dynamic relations. It is also the space-time domain of the operation of relations and the key to practical activities. To maintain the process is to maintain relations, as a result of which identity is also constructed. In this way, process plays a crucial and irreplaceable role in socialization.⁴⁴ Thus, although the concepts of relations and process here are ostensibly drawn from Chinese Confucian

³⁷ For instance, in the field of psychology there is Kwang-Kuo Hwang’s *Foundations of Chinese Psychology: Confucian Social Relations* (New York: Springer, 2012).

³⁸ Kavalski, “The Guanxi of Relational International Affairs,” 234.

³⁹ Qin, *A Relational Theory of World Politics*.

⁴⁰ Qin, “A Relational Theory of World,” 35.

⁴¹ Qin Yaqing, “Rule, Rules, and Relations: Towards a Synthetic Approach to Governance,” *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3, no. 2 (2011): 117-45.

⁴² Qin, “A Relational Theory of World,” 36.

⁴³ Qin Yaqing, “A Relational Theory of World Politics,” *International Studies Review* 18, no.1 (2016): 33.

⁴⁴ Qin, “Relationality and Processual Construction,” 8.

culture, Qin's relational theory is also clearly influenced by elements of constructivism in Western IR theory.

Another strain of relational theory that draws on Confucian culture is Chih-yu Shih's "balance of relationships" theory. Upon observing the interaction between great powers and small states, Shih discovered an interesting problem: great powers do not necessarily suppress small states as the realist theory of balance of power based on strategic political and military alliances predicts. He therefore posits a "balance of relationships" theory, which "draws on Confucianism and compares Confucian self-restraint with liberal self-restraint".⁴⁵ Shi's emphasis on Confucian culture means that his approach is "different from the mainstream IR theory that only manages calculable and apparent national interests".⁴⁶

Shih's balance of relations theory rests on the ontological assumption "that relations precede the state".⁴⁷ Unlike Western realism, which argues that the international system is anarchic and states' behavior is driven by a self-help imperative based on national interest,⁴⁸ balance of relations theory "conceptualizes relationality as the prevailing condition, alongside anarchy, that defines international politics."⁴⁹ Shih explains that this "relationship-driven system neutralizes the absolute concern for power that exists under realist projections of international anarchy".⁵⁰ The international community is regarded as a loose group, and the relationship between members inside and outside the group is not fixed but changes. "Relationship" means that if the state cannot connect its own existence with the approval of others under the condition of anarchy, it will be difficult to survive. Since "[t]he size of a country ceases to be a primary determinant of expected behavior",⁵¹ relations become an important factor. Relationships are conceived "as a process of mutual constitution"⁵² in which identity is generated intersubjectively.

Empirical evidence shows that in the Confucian concept, the Confucian constituency neither likes challenging authority for system stability nor does it approve of authoritarian control to maintain a harmonious system.⁵³ Shi points out that "[e]vidence likewise suggests that if the systemic identity is weak, the constituency of relations and balances shows higher support for inclusive, not enforceive, leadership to restore governability".⁵⁴ That is to say, when long-term interests conflict with short-term interests, short-term interests (such as political, economic, military, and cultural demands) should give way to ambiguous but fundamental long-term interests (harmonious order). In other words, the primary mechanism of Shi's balance of relations theory is the mitigation of power relationships in favor of cooperation and dialogue. On the basis of bilateral communication, concessions, agreement, and reciprocity are reached. Thus, unlike Qin's theory based on multilateral relations, Shih's balance of relations theory is based on a Confucian interpretation of bilateral relations.

Zhao Tingyang is another representative promoter of the "relational turn" in Chinese IR.

⁴⁵ Chih-yu Shih, "Relations and Balances: Self-Restraint and Democratic Governability under Confucianism," *Pacific Focus* 29, no. 3 (2014): 351.

⁴⁶ Chiung-Chiu Huang and Chih-yu Shih, *Harmonious Intervention: China's Quest for Relational Security* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 6.

⁴⁷ Chih-yu Shih et al., *China and International Theory* (London: Routledge, 2019), 8.

⁴⁸ The most well-known exposition of self-help in the anarchic international system is Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

⁴⁹ Shih et al., *China*, 21.

⁵⁰ Shih et al., *China*, 10.

⁵¹ Shih et al., *China*, 10.

⁵² Shih et al., *China*, 1.

⁵³ Shih, "Relations and Balances," 351.

⁵⁴ Shih, "Relations and Balances," 351.

He proposes a theory of “Tianxia” (all-under-heaven) based on his philosophical research into traditional Chinese culture.⁵⁵ “Tianxia” theory utilizes a “home country-world” analytical framework based on the principle of coexistence. This is very different from Western realism, which posits anarchy in the international system and conflict between countries. Zhao frames his theoretical approach as “international relations dominated by social relations, which is not premised on conflict opposition, but the establishment of long-term relations.”⁵⁶ Tianxia theory thus emphasizes “taking coexistence instead of existence as the basic problem of ontology”.⁵⁷ Only in forming social relationships can people determine the meaning of their own existence and the existence of others. In the international sphere, this principle of coexistence is applied to nations instead of people.

Research based on relationalism and traditional Chinese culture is also represented in the work of other scholars. L.H.M. Ling, a Chinese American scholar, draws on Taoist ideas of dialectics and criticizes Eurocentric approaches to world politics. She analyzes important issues such as the relations of “self-other” in international affairs. She argues that “Daoist dialectics offer a relational perception of world politics, emphasizing the complementary and contradictory relationships between actors.”⁵⁸ Based on the concept of traditional Chinese *guanxi*, Emilian Kavalski proposes going beyond the dichotomous cognitive model of “hegemon-challenger” in regarding China’s rise as a socially negotiative practice.⁵⁹ Ling Wei conducts an empirical study into the regional practice of relational theory.⁶⁰ Dingding Chen analyzes the new relational model of great power between China and the United States.⁶¹ These IR scholars put concepts with Chinese ingredients such as “process”, “balance of relationships” and “Taoist dialectics” at the core of their relationalist approaches.

Thus, in developing relationalist theory based on Chinese culture and philosophy, the work of numerous scholars is expanding the discipline’s horizon, in the process laying a foundation for a possible synthesis between Western and non-Western theoretical perspectives. However, as the following section will demonstrate, there are many obstacles – philosophical and cultural, ontological and epistemological – to such a reconciliation.

4. Towards *Guanxi*? Attempting to Reconcile Western and Chinese Relational Theorizing

The attempt to transcend the substantialist ontology of mainstream IR theory (which is entirely Western in origin) is the common starting point of Western and non-Western relationalism. However, in seeking to employ relationalism to break through the constraints of substantialist ontology, Western scholars draw more on Western sociology and philosophy, while Chinese scholars draw more on traditional Chinese culture and philosophy. In this context, the further exploration of Chinese relational logic brings the possibility of new developments in IR

⁵⁵ See Zhao Tingyang, “The Theory of Universal Existence: Interpersonal relationship and Mind,” *Philosophical Researches* 8 (2009): 22-30; Zhao Tingyang, “To Deepen Enlightenment: From Methodological Individualism to Methodological Relationalism,” *Philosophical Researches* 1 (2011): 90-3.

⁵⁶ Chih-yu Shih, “Asian Local School of International Relations Research,” *Quarterly Journal of International Politics* 3 (2010): 57-8.

⁵⁷ Zhao, “The Theory of Universal Existence,” 26.

⁵⁸ L.H.M. Ling, “Worlds beyond Westphalia: Daoist dialectics and the ‘China threat,’” *Review of International Studies* 39 (2013): 549–68.

⁵⁹ Kavalski, “Guanxi or What,” 397–420.

⁶⁰ See Ling Wei, “Balance of Relations: ASEAN Centrality and the Evolving Regional Order,” *World Economics and Politics*, no.7 (2017): 38–64.

⁶¹ See Dingding Chen, “Cooperation Conflict and Processual Constructivism: The Case on Sino-U.S. Relations,” *World Economics and Politics*, no.10 (2016): 59–74.

theory.

In the last few years, there have been some attempts by Western IR scholars to compare and reconcile Western and Chinese IR relational theory. Most notably, in 2019, the *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* (CRIA) published a special issue on “Global relational theorizing.” In this issue, Paes and Linares acknowledge that the relational turn in IR “goes beyond the English-speaking core of the discipline. Relational perspectives have also emerged from other geo-linguistic traditions”.⁶² Meanwhile, Jackson and Nexon argue that “thinking from relationalism as the starting-point allows us to better appreciate how differences between and among relationally-inclined scholars form a complex tapestry of debates internal to relationalism broadly understood.”⁶³ Another article in the CRIA special issue identifies “points of comparison and contrast, convergence and divergence”⁶⁴ between Sinophone and Anglophone scholarship on relational IR theorizing.

In the same issue, Qin and Nordin make a more detailed comparative analysis of relationality and rationality in Confucian and Western traditions of thought.⁶⁵ They take the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as an example to illustrate that relations enjoy a more prominent ontological position in the traditional Confucian practice emphasizing community rather than individual rationality. The ASEAN example reveals that “different cultural communities draw from different background knowledge and have different practices.”⁶⁶ The CRIA special issue also contains further discussions on the relationality between self and other in Chinese and Western thought,⁶⁷ and feminist issues in the relational theory of IR.⁶⁸

Although the CRIA special issue is only a preliminary step towards dialogue between IR scholars from the East and West, in which different ideas collide, it suggests that an inclusive (dialogic) approach rather than an either-or approach to the development of IR theory can be more conducive to knowledge production. As Shahi points out, it is essential to develop “an intellectual strategy that emphasizes deeper dialogues, two-way communications, and ideational exchanges between the West and the non-West.”⁶⁹ Therefore, in order to fully evaluate the academic significance of the global “relational turn”, it is necessary to go beyond the differentiated narrative framework of the East-West cultural divide and explore the commonality of the “relational turn” in theoretical and empirical terms. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that there are significant problems to be overcome if such a dialogue is to be established, since there are fundamental differences between the Western and Chinese versions of relationalism. These differences stem from the distinct intellectual traditions on which the two versions rest.

Western IR theory originated from the rationalist tradition established in ancient Greece, which was inherited by Europe and subsequently the whole of Western intellectual culture. As a result, instrumental rationality became the philosophical foundation of economics and political science. Since the establishment of the IR discipline based on instrumental rationality one hundred years ago, the influence of Western mainstream IR theories has spread throughout

⁶² Paes and Linares, “Letter from the Editors,” 569.

⁶³ Jackson and Nexon, “Reclaiming the Social,” 582.

⁶⁴ Nordin et al., “Towards global relational theorizing,” 570.

⁶⁵ Qin and Nordin, “Relationality and rationality.”

⁶⁶ Qin and Nordin, “Relationality and rationality,” 601.

⁶⁷ See Astrid H. M. Nordin and Graham M. Smith, “Relating Self and other in Chinese and Western thought,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no.5 (2019): 636–53.

⁶⁸ See Marysia Zalewski, “Forget(ting) Feminism? Investigating Relationality in International Relations,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no.5 (2019): 615–35.

⁶⁹ Shahi, “Foregrounding the Complexities,” 1.

the world, shaping the global academic discourse system of IR. The development of Western IR theory has gone through several major paradigm debates, eventually resulting in the three mainstream theoretical paradigms of realism, liberal institutionalism, and constructivism. However, since the late 1990s, Western mainstream IR theorizing appears to have entered a cul-de-sac, even producing conjecture, in one case, about the possibility of the “end of International Relations theory.”⁷⁰ In essence, a range of ontological and epistemological reflections on the state of IR theory, including debates concerning relationalism, are reflected in “complaints about the death of IR theory [which] reflect social developments in the field.”⁷¹

One of the important reasons for this dilemma is that ontological assumptions in mainstream Western IR theory appear to exclude the possibility of explaining change in the international system. The current theoretical ontology based on the work of Kenneth Waltz is essentially a static model of actors in an international system with fixed characteristics. It cannot therefore provide an explanatory model for the phenomenon of lasting change to the international system.

According to Waltz’s structural realist model, which relies on rationalism as its foundation, the international system is assumed to be composed of discrete, interacting units: nation states. The “structure” of the international system is said to be “anarchic”. This term refers to an international system which lacks a world government, and in which every nation-state actor is responsible for looking after itself, rendering the international system a “self-help system”. The system is thus composed of self-regarding units, which primarily seek to survive. Nation states are the only entities in international relations that have the centralized legitimate authority to use force to look after themselves. Sovereign states are thus the constitutive units of the international system, and the primary actors in world politics.⁷²

Neoliberal institutionalism also adheres to rationalist thinking. It emphasizes the use of international institutions by states to further their interests through cooperation. Robert Keohane views institutions and international regimes (defined by Krasner as “principles, norms, rules, and decision making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given issue-area”)⁷³ not as substitutes for world government but as important factors to weaken conflicts and enhance cooperation. In Keohane’s view, institutions and regimes can exist and function independently without relying on the power of hegemony. In other words, neoliberal institutionalism considers the institutions and international regimes established by the hegemonic state as another kind of substantive existence in the international system.⁷⁴

The ontology of constructivism, as interpreted by the perspective’s most famous theorist Alexander Wendt, holds that “the structures of human association are primarily cultural rather than material phenomena, and against rationalism that these structures not only regulate behavior but construct identities and interests”.⁷⁵ Wendt and other constructivists assume that international structure is determined primarily not by material capabilities of

⁷⁰ See Tim Dunne, Lene Hansen and Colin Wight, “The End of International Relations Theory?,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 405–25.

⁷¹ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Daniel H. Nexon. “International Theory in a Post-Paradigmatic Era: From Substantive Wagers to Scientific Ontologies.” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 543–65.

⁷² Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 88–92.

⁷³ Stephen D. Krasner, “Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables,” *International Organization* 36, no. 2 (1982): 185.

⁷⁴ See Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

⁷⁵ Alexander Wendt, “The State and the Problem of Corporate Agency,” in *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 193.

states, but by ideas shared intersubjectively between states. The shared ideas here refer to social knowledge, as opposed to power and interests: the latter tend to be emphasized by neorealists and neoliberal institutionalists.

An ontological problem with the theory of constructivism – shared with neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism – is that defining attributes such as the generic identity of the state and individual identity do not change as a result of interaction. Based on the assumption of the independence of structure and unit, there is no ontological difference between constructivism, structural realism, and neoliberal institutionalism. All three mainstream IR theories are substantialist. The substantialist assumption of the inherent stability of the units and their separation from the interactive practice-based process excludes the possibility of changes in the components and composition of the international system.

The ontological assumption that the world is composed of independent entities with a stable nature is a typical reflection of the standard Western thinking mode of substantialism. Substantialism classifies the actions of entities as “self-action” and “inter-action”.⁷⁶ In the self-action approach, actors choose to act according to rational choices. Entities do not change their “primary” characteristics, which “make an entity a particular kind of entity”.⁷⁷ In the inter-action approach, “entities no longer generate their own action, but rather, the relevant action takes place among the entities themselves. Entities remain fixed and unchanging throughout such inter-action, each independent of the existence of the others, much like billiard balls or the particles of Newtonian mechanics”.⁷⁸

The unaltered nature of substantialist ontology makes it difficult to explain change in IR. In fact, Jackson and Nexon have introduced these criticisms and analyses into IR research: “Most theories in IR cannot adequately account for ‘change between systems’ (e.g. between the ‘feudal system’ and the ‘early state system’), and the same difficulties explaining such changes undermine efforts to elucidate the dynamics of ‘change within systems’ (e.g. shifts in the balance of power in a ‘multipolar system’).” They point out that the contradiction intrinsic to the theory is that “[s]ubstantialism requires that substances have invariant characteristics which are unaffected by changes in variable attributes”.⁷⁹ This kind of contradiction is widespread in substantialist assumptions about units such as actors and structures in mainstream Western IR theory, which is the fundamental reason for its lack of explanatory power concerning change in the international system.

The substantialist ontology of mainstream Western IR theory is also difficult to reconcile with the highly interrelated and fluid real world. With the accelerated development of economic globalization, regional integration and multi-polarization of the current era, a highly mobile reality is taking shape. In Zhao Tingyang’s contra-Western theoretical model, “[t]he international political concepts defined by the nation-state system, imperialism, and hegemony model are gradually losing their correspondence with the fact of globalization.” Indeed, changes in the structure of the international system “are changes in the way the world exists”.⁸⁰ The 21st century world contains such a highly interconnected set of international social networks that globalization itself has brought about changes in the international

⁷⁶ Emirbayer, “Manifesto,” 282–83.

⁷⁷ Jackson and Nexon, “Relations Before States,” 296.

⁷⁸ Emirbayer, “Manifesto,” 285–6.

⁷⁹ Jackson and Nexon, “Relations Before States,” 296–7.

⁸⁰ Zhao Tingyang, *A Possible World of All-under-the-Heaven System: The World Order in the Past and for the Future* (Beijing: Citic Press Group, 2016), 1–2.

system. The increasing number of non-state actors and other forces in IR have made the world a place of complex interactivity in which previous assumptions about the leading role of nation states are being undermined, and ever-evolving processes of change are generating an emergent, altered reality.

Thus, systemic change, which involves a change to the structure of the international system itself, is taking place in the contemporary world. This change is primarily embodied as changes “in the international distribution of power, the hierarchy of prestige, and the rules and rights”.⁸¹ In general, the rise of the overall power of emerging countries, allied with the unresolved financial crisis which has been ongoing since 2008, has brought about a trend of a declining hegemon (the US) being challenged by rising powers (led by China). This has resulted in the replacement of the existing unipolar or bipolar model of global power by an emerging multipolar prototype which will inevitably bring about changes in the system.

An additional factor affecting the structure of the international system is that the nature of the world’s security threats after the Cold War is different from the traditional war-based security threats in the Westphalian system. The world today faces a complex and interconnected raft of non-traditional security threats such as poverty, disasters, epidemic diseases, international terrorism, climate change, financial crises and environmental issues. These emerging issues impact the functioning of the international system and in the process inevitably alter it. The impact of non-traditional security threats implies that the range of theoretical models proposed by mainstream (Western) IR theory based on the interaction of nation-states in an anarchic international system is not adequate to explain the new, emerging situation in the 21st century.

Systems change, unlike systemic change (defined as change within the system), is a change to the system itself. Some important changes in international reality, such as economic globalization and regional integration, have not brought essential systems changes, but the concept of sovereignty has shown a tendency to relaxation. Specifically, this phenomenon is caused by two aspects of reality. On the one hand, the diversification of actors in the international system brought about by economic globalization and regional integration has blurred the concept of national sovereignty. The strengthening of social forces in the international system has produced a large number of non-state actors. Non-governmental actors, such as international organizations, regional organizations, and international civil society, have become important factors influencing international affairs in terms of agenda-setting, normative advocacy, and so on. In this context, the connotation of national interest and its means of realization have changed considerably. The internal affairs that originally belonged to a country are often affected by external forces or require international solutions (such as in non-traditional security areas) due to their influence beyond borders. In other words, participation in international organizations and the conclusion of international agreements are premised on the externalization of domestic politics to some extent and the transfer of partial sovereignty, which makes national sovereignty ambiguous. In addition, the formation of regionalized international communities has further weakened the concept of sovereignty. The acceleration of regional integration has created a more dynamic regionalized international community. As neoliberal institutionalists point out, the increasing influence of intergovernmental organizations (such as the European Union) and other integrated

⁸¹ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 42.

cooperation platforms - such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), “10+3” (ASEAN China, Japan, and South Korea), and the North America Free Trade Area (NAFTA) – challenge the idea of nation-states as the primary arbiters of international affairs.⁸² The phenomenon of regional integration itself weakens the notion of absolute sovereignty.

In summary, the post-Cold War international reality challenges the ontology of mainstream Western IR which posits sovereign states as the main actors. Although systems change has not yet appeared in full, the substantial nation-state and atomic interactive mode can no longer describe the transitional state of today’s globalizing world. Although the academic world of IR senses the tension between theory and practice, Kayaoglu points out that the “Westphalian narrative” in IR “prevents international relations scholars from theorizing cross-civilizational and cross-regional interdependencies [and] thwarts the accommodation of pluralism in an increasingly globalized world. It is time for IR scholars to do away with it”.⁸³

However, there is no doubt, based on the evidence presented above, that any attempt to “do away with” mainstream IR theory and replace it with relationalist-based theorising is going to be easier said than done, as the final section in this article will demonstrate.

5. Discussion and Conclusion: Where Next for *Guanxi*?

As we have seen, there are significant ontological differences between Chinese and Western scholars’ positions on relationalism. Specifically, first, the concept of “relations” is given a rather different emphasis by Chinese and Western IR scholars, which creates an inevitable dialogical tension. Western relational theory focuses on practice, discourse, and process analysis in the framing of IR as primarily concerned with interstate relations. Western relational theory focuses on the background and discourse of relations, but always with fixed, unitary states as the primary actors and focus of analysis. In the Western conception, relations may be fluid, but the actors remain essentially unchanging. In contrast, in the Sinophone sphere the elaboration of relational theory draws on the resources of traditional Chinese philosophy. China’s “*guanxi*” is not only a strategic “relationship” exchange, but also emphasizes the original and basic “connection” between actors. The identities of the actors are inherently linked to their interaction, meaning that relations are an integral part of intersubjective identity construction. Relations and actors are not seen as separate substantive entities, but as inter-active and co-constituting. In *guanxi*-based theory, actors therefore are not fixed, unchanging units, but are themselves constituted by their interactions and the relationships formed. Thus, there are subtle but important differences between Chinese and Western IR scholars in terms of their understanding of relational ontology.

There are sometimes similarities and overlaps in positions too. For instance, Jackson and Nexon’s notion of “relations before state” is similar to Zhao Tingyang’s “co-existence precedes existence”. However, on this point, Qin takes a different position. In Qin’s relational theory, relations and the individual actor co-exist and are mutually constitutive, meaning that they are fluid and not to be seen as fixed entities. Qin’s relationalism is therefore a direct challenge to Western IR’s substantialism and the conscious or unconscious cognitive biases of scholars who tend to adhere to mainstream IR theory. Qin sets relationalism on a radically new ontological footing based on traditional Chinese thought which alters the conception of

⁸² Keohane, “After Hegemony”.

⁸³ Turan Kayaoglu, “Westphalian Eurocentrism in International Relations Theory,” *International Studies Review* 12, no. 2 (2010): 197–217.

actors and the nature of the relations between actors.

World politics is undoubtedly moving towards an increasingly fluid space of ever more complex relations between actors. Relations are ubiquitous in various forms and are an indispensable element of society. However, the dominant position of substantialist mainstream theory that the modernization process is driven by rationality often suppresses the basic element of relationality in both theoretical constructions and practical life. Therefore, the attempt to make the transition from substantialist theory to relationalist theory has become an important feature of contemporary social thought. The IR field, as a latecomer to the relational turn, still has arduous tasks in terms of theoretical construction, agenda expansion, and, above all, changing the cognitive and ontological approach of scholars.

Relational ontology reveals the social mechanisms inherent in the realm of the international and points out a dynamic direction for IR theory. Building on this idea, the main problem for academic IR to consider is not to seek to explain the international system as a fixed, synchronic structure, but to analyze the development and evolution of the international system over time. Scholars need to ensure that theoretical frameworks account for dynamic interactions and the evolving identity of actors. Theorizing in IR needs to move on from static Newtonian and Cartesian dualist models to ones which take account of dynamic complexity and emerging phenomena.⁸⁴ If Western and Chinese models can somehow be reconciled, and Chinese theoretical elements accepted by Western IR scholars, then a new synthesized relationalism may present a way forward for moribund IR theory. In other words, it is necessary to put the relations back into International Relations.

Hypothetically, therefore, the need to develop a relational analytical framework provides a bridge between Chinese Confucian philosophy, Western philosophy, Western sociology and mainstream (Western) IR theories. The significance of relational ontology in Chinese IR theory lies not only in a new understanding of relations, but, more importantly, stems from the fact that it proposes issues and agendas that could not previously be conceived within the framework of mainstream IR theory due to cultural and cognitive biases. Relationalism opens up space for the innovation of IR theory in the context of a world of intercultural interaction, and promotes the development of a truly globalized IR.⁸⁵ In short, to promote the in-depth development of the study of relational IR theory requires the joint efforts of Chinese and Western IR academia, with room for contributions from other non-Western scholars from the rest of the world as well. To transcend cultural barriers and promote the study of global relationalism is the intrinsic requirement of the relationalist worldview.

However, there are numerous obstacles to this pleasant vision of a newly relationalist IR theory. Most importantly, there is the difficulty for Western scholars of accepting a Chinese vision of how IR theory should be reconfigured. This difficulty is based not only on theoretical grounds, but also on deep-rooted cultural, philosophical, historical, cognitive, and political factors. For the West, any products of China – including scholarly theories – are perceived as linked to the Chinese state. Thus, Zhao's relationalist-based *Tianxia* theory is interpreted by one prominent Western scholar as an attempt to justify the emerging global hegemony of the Chinese state.⁸⁶ The fact that China has a one-party authoritarian system

⁸⁴ Emilian Kavalski, "Complexifying IR: Disturbing the 'Deep Newtonian Slumber' of the Mainstream," in *World Politics at the Edge of Chaos: Reflections on Complexity and Global Life*, ed. Emilian Kavalski (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 253-72.

⁸⁵ Acharya, "Rethinking Power".

⁸⁶ William Callahan, "Chinese Visions of World Order: Post-Hegemonic or A New Hegemony," *International Studies Review* 10, no. 7 (2008): 749-61.

with a communist party in government also unfortunately creates an intrinsic obstruction to Chinese scholarship being taken seriously in the West.

Apart from such scholarly considerations, “China threat” discourse tends to prevail in many Western depictions of China’s rise, including books written by figures influential in the US administration.⁸⁷ China’s lack of soft power and worsening image in the West – particularly from about 2017 onwards – hinders the promotion of joint research.⁸⁸ Since Chinese students and scholars are sometimes viewed as security threats in Western countries, the consequence is an inherent difficulty in building cooperative academic networks. Lack of trust is also increasingly evident in Chinese policy towards the West, largely as a reaction to the generally hostile reception that China gets there. Overall, the lack of trust between China and the West is a severe impediment to cooperation on scholarship in the social sciences. It is difficult, therefore, to see grounds for optimism in terms of Sino-Western cooperation on the ongoing project of reformulating IR theory on the basis of relationalism.

There is another important connected obstacle. While relationalism based on *guanxi* culture has a long tradition in China with deeply felt historical roots, Western relationalism is largely a theoretical construct residing mainly in scholarly texts published from the 1990s onwards. Relationalism in the West has no public face, lacks celebrity intellectuals to espouse it, and is essentially unknown to the general population. The fundamental difference in public and scholarly engagement with relationalism – deep cultural and historical roots in China versus essentially no general awareness in the West – presents a very serious obstacle to productive dialogue on the topic. Even the Western scholars who research relationalism address it on a theoretical level and fail to appreciate the cultural, historical, and even emotional content that relationalism has for Chinese people. The problem here is that, given the generally negative view of China in the West and the connected lack of understanding of Chinese culture and history, it cannot be expected that most Western scholars or the public would give serious consideration to Chinese relationalism. At present it seems a very difficult task even to raise awareness of the topic among Western IR scholars.

Thus, there are serious impediments to any attempt to introduce relationalism into the mainstream of IR theory in any meaningful way. Reconciling Western and Chinese perceptions of the role of relations in IR appears to be similarly difficult. Nevertheless, as this paper has attempted to demonstrate, there are very good reasons to believe that the attempt must be made if IR theory is to move forward to encompass the complex reality of the interconnected and interdependent 21st century world. We live in a world in which understanding the relations between international actors, who are themselves shaped by the resulting interactions, is essential if we are to generate meaningful insights in the field of IR; and it is only by drawing on the acquired wisdom of both Western and non-Western traditions that progress can be made in developing the study of relationalism in IR. Serious efforts need to be made by scholars of both Western and non-Western origins if the deep theoretical insights of Chinese relationalism are to be used effectively to generate a new, dynamic version of IR theory.

⁸⁷ Two notable books in the “China threat” genre written by authors influential in the Trump administration are: Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China’s Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York: Henry Holt, 2015); and Peter Navarro and Greg Autry, *Death by China: Confronting the Dragon – A Global Call to Action* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011).

⁸⁸ Laura Silver, Kat Devlin, and Christine Huang, “Unfavorable Views of China Reach Historic Highs in Many Countries,” *Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes & Trends*, October 6, 2020, accessed October 24, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/10/06/unfavorable-views-of-china-reach-historic-highs-in-many-countries/>.

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The English School and Global IR – A Research Agenda

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Abstract

This paper explores the different ways in which the English School of International Relations (ES) can contribute to the broader Global IR research agenda. After identifying some of the shared concerns between the ES and Global IR, such as the emphasis placed on history and culture, the paper proceeds with discussing what the authors believe to be the areas in which the ES can align itself more closely with the ideas and values underpinning Global IR: a more thorough engagement with the origins of global international society rooted in dispossession, violence, and colonialism; a more localised and diverse understanding of 'society'; a sharper and more grounded conceptualisation of 'the state' as a basic ontology; an embracement of the interpretivist principle of charity; and a problematisation of assumptions of 'globality' of international society. The paper concludes with a tentative research agenda, emphasising the value of fieldwork, local practices and languages, archives, and a theorisation of international society that is grounded in the very social contexts being investigated.

Keywords: English School, Global IR, Eurocentrism, locality, grounded theory

1. Introduction – The English School and Global IR

In recent times, International Relations (henceforth IR) as a discipline has been undergoing a series of transformations both in the *topic* of the inquiry (what is studied, and how) and in the *professional structure* that informs it (who studies what). This is observable, for example, in the progressive expansion of scholarship on race and decoloniality, as well as in the sustained calls for inclusion of contributions, voices, and perspectives from the Global South with the objective of truly globalising IR. In fact, recognition of the need for globalising IR has far deeper roots 'in the lineage anticipated by Hoffmann 1977, Bull 1985, Cox 1981, Alker 1984, Holsti 1985, Ashley 1987 and it is now taken up by scholars from both the Global North and the Global South who use different terms like "worlding"¹. The 'international' has progressively made room for 'the global', meant as the totality of actors, voices, perspectives,

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¹ Petition to ISA, September 2020, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://smsjm.vse.cz/english/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/post/250/Petition-to-ISA-GG.pdf>.

and experiences that constitute world politics in its multiplicity and diversity: states, nations, refugees, displaced people, civil movements, guerrillas, women, indigenous people, queers, religious movements, animals, and many more.² This expansion has been accompanied by debates on ‘subjugated knowledges’ pertaining to how ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies that are not necessarily rooted in the Global North (nor in Western political thought and philosophy) can take their rightful place next to what have so far been considered canonical, established bodies of thought and traditions through a process of epistemological decolonisation.³

Crucially, these debates have been advanced by several scholars, professionals, and analysts from the Global South who are now, at last, having a more prominent voice within international, yet still profoundly Western-dominated, professional institutions. As a small, and by all means not exhaustive example of this, not only has the International Studies Association (ISA) started including abstracts in languages other than English, such as Spanish and French, in some of their journals (e.g. *International Studies Review*, outside the ISA circuit see e.g. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* among others), but also a new fully open-access journal, *Global Studies Quarterly*, has been founded with the aim of being ‘open to all methodological approaches to questions of international politics, or the intersection of global politics with economy, society, or culture’ and to ‘encourage submissions from scholars and regions that are often underrepresented in academic journals’.⁴ These debates have focused on the need and the desirability of ‘decentring’ or even ‘provincializing’ IR⁵ from both ‘the state’ and ‘the West’ as an uncontested site of knowledge generation and dissemination, encouraging and indeed promoting a plurality of voices and perspectives that have thus far been ‘subaltern’ to the mainstream discipline.

What is at stake here, though, is more than pluralism. It is a broader normative understanding of epistemic justice based on inclusivity, respect, openness, and attention to the contributions coming from ‘the periphery’ (again, geographical, i.e., from the Global South, but most importantly *disciplinary*, here understood as being at the fringes, disregarded by big journal outlets, unlikely to be funded, and similar experiences) – it is a fundamental discussion about *whose knowledge (also) counts and is recognised*. As part of the process of further institutionalisation, some ISA members have launched the initiative to create a new section named ‘Global IR’ within the organisation.

But what, exactly, is ‘Global IR’? In this paper, we take a very broad approach to Global IR, considering it in all its facets: a research programme, an agenda, a social (academic) movement, a normative ideal, an initiative, and an ‘aspiration for greater inclusiveness and diversity’ with an open and non-prescriptive character. It has its roots in non-Western, post-Western, post-colonial scholarships, and rests on six main features.⁶ First, Global IR advances the idea of a pluralistic universalism, that IR theory should not be based on a one-size-fits-all approach to international politics but should rather embrace different perspectives and

² James Tully, *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity*, The Seeley Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

³ Ananya Sharma, “Decolonizing International Relations: Confronting Erasures through Indigenous Knowledge Systems,” *International Studies* 58, no. 1 (2021): 25–40; Karen Tucker, “Unraveling Coloniality in International Relations: Knowledge, Relationality, and Strategies for Engagement,” *International Political Sociology* 12, no. 3 (2018): 215–32.

⁴ “Global Studies Quarterly – About”, accessed December 4, 2020, <https://academic.oup.com/isagsq/pages/About>.

⁵ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* (Princeton University Press, 2007).

⁶ Amitav Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds: A New Agenda for International Studies,” *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2014): 647–59.

display awareness of its multiple historical and social foundations. Second, it promotes the endeavour to derive concepts and theories from the specific historical experiences, ideas, institutions, and intellectual perspectives of *Western and non-Western societies alike*. This is in line with Chakrabarty's point that 'Western analytical and theoretical categories remain indispensable but inadequate'.⁷ Third and following from this, Global IR seeks to subsume existing theories within a framework of plurality and equality, as opposed to rejecting them. Fourth, it emphasises the role of regions as sites of global dynamics.⁸ Fifth and linked to the previous point is the idea that researchers should transcend 'eschewing cultural exceptionalism and parochialism by favouring comparative perspectives and the search for broader understandings of local contexts'.⁹ Sixth and finally, Global IR embraces a broad understanding of 'actors' and 'agency', stressing the importance of both statist and non-statist ontologies, and of 'how actors (state and non-state), through their material, ideational, and interaction capabilities, construct, reject, reconstitute, and transform global and regional orders'.¹⁰

Against this background, one may ask what the position of the English School (ES) is, with ES meant both as a body of intellectual and scholarly research as well as a community of scholars. Amitav Acharya, one of the most resounding voices of the Global IR movement,¹¹ has maintained that the ES, 'despite [its] biases and limitations, has offered concepts such as "international society," which ha[s] genuinely broader applicability beyond the UK or Europe and [is] used by scholars in other parts of the world'.¹² Yongjin Zhang has also made a similar point when arguing that 'as Asian scholars take Western IR, and more particularly American IR, as the foil to drive their intellectual and theoretical innovation, the ES serves more than an inspiration by example for aspiring non-Western approaches to theorizing IR'.¹³ From an ES-insider perspective, we would like to add that the ES as a scholarship might not be the most obvious choice in terms of driving an academic career given both the prominence of 'American IR', or other scholarships, in mainstream IR journals and also the tension-field of conceptual discussions and critiques that the ES community is engaged in and confronted with.

The particularly favourable position of the ES with respect to contributing to Global IR scholarship is mostly due, as we shall see later, to its attentiveness to culture, norms, history, and social processes that inform IR and make up international relations in practice. Recent high-quality ES publications, such as 'The Globalization of International Society',¹⁴ 'Global International Society: A New Framework of Analysis',¹⁵ and 'The World Imagined',¹⁶ all feature 'the global' and 'diversity' as subjects of inquiry, and recent interventions in ES

⁷ Andrew Hurrell, "Beyond Critique: How to Study Global IR?," *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 150.

⁸ Melisa Deciancio, "International Relations from the South: A Regional Research Agenda for Global IR," *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 106–19.

⁹ Felix Anderl and Antonia Witt, "Problematising the Global in Global IR," *Millennium*, 49(1) (2020): 11.

¹⁰ Acharya, "Global International Relations (IR) and Regional," 651.

¹¹ For a recent and friendly critique of his agenda, see Anderl and Witt, "Problematising the Global in Global IR".

¹² Acharya, "Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds" 651, footnote 10.

¹³ Yongjin Zhang, "The Global Diffusion of the English School," in *Guide to the English School of International Studies*, ed. Cornelia Navari and Daniel Green (Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 236.

¹⁴ Tim Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit, eds., *The Globalization of International Society* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

¹⁵ Barry Buzan and Laust Schouenborg, *Global International Society: A New Framework for Analysis* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

¹⁶ Hendrik Spruyt, *The World Imagined: Collective Beliefs and Political Order in the Sinocentric, Islamic and Southeast Asian International Societies*, LSE International Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

debates have displayed a prominent disposition towards enlarging the scope of analysis of ES theory as well as its members' reflexivity and positionality. In addition, one may also note that, while much is yet to be done, some collaborations between exponents of the ES and proponents of the Global IR agenda have already fruitfully contributed to the debate and the work in progress of making the ES more aware and self-reflexive with its Eurocentric epistemological and theoretical foundations. This has happened both before and concomitantly with the current debate on the need for a Global IR.¹⁷

In light of these considerations, the present paper asks the following questions: *How can the ES contribute to the Global IR agenda? What makes the ES suitable for this task, if at all, and what is still left to be done?* To answer these questions, the paper will focus on the main tenets of the ES (first section) to then elaborate on what we call "areas for potential engagement" (second section) before moving to a series of proposals to narrow the gap between the Global IR agenda and the ES one (third section).

To be sure, the paper does not intend in any way to be prescriptive and deterministic in the sense of suggesting that the ES must engage with Global IR and that the claims made here are the only plausible ones. Rather, the arguments provided in these pages want to serve as a springboard for discussion to explore how the ES (again understood as a theory, as a body of research, and as a community of scholars) can contribute and add to constructing a more encompassing, just, and representative IR. Furthermore, as a last note before delving into the argument of the paper, our respective positionalities as authors should be contextualised, if briefly. In writing this paper, we are situating ourselves in the debate on the need for Global IR from the perspective of male, European (by birth and by intellectual upbringing), early-career scholars who consider themselves as part of the ES and who are currently actively taking part in the workings of the English School section at ISA. Our perspective, therefore, is that of two scholars fully embedded in the discipline with a particularly privileged angle on the inner working(s) of the ES both as a body of research and as a community of scholars. It is thus primarily this angle that informs the perspectives and the arguments presented in the paper.

2. The Main Tenets of the English School Research Programme

It would be very, perhaps far too ambitious to recap and condense all the main features and theoretical, analytical, and methodological components of the ES research programme in the space of a paper section, especially when entire collections and volumes have been devoted to each of these aspects.¹⁸ Yet, for the purpose of this section, we will make the effort to focus on those *fundamental* traits of the ES that distinguish it from other theories in IR, and especially on those that are susceptible to alignment with the Global IR agenda.

Perhaps the easiest way to start off is to resume the narrative where Acharya stopped,

¹⁷ 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; Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives On and Beyond Asia* (Taylor & Francis, 2009); Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, "Why Is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory? Ten Years On," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 17, no. 3 (2017): 341–70; Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).

¹⁸ Among others, see Andrew Linklater and Hidemi Suganami, *The English School of International Relations: A Contemporary Reassessment*, 1st ed. (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Barry Buzan, *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Polity, 2014), 201; Cornelia Navari and Daniel Green, eds., *Guide to the English School in International Studies*, 1st ed. (Chichester, West Sussex ; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014); Cornelia Navari and Tonny Brems Knudsen, eds., *International Organizations in the Anarchical Society* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2019).

namely the concept of *international society*. In its hallmark definition, a society of states is ‘a group of like-minded states’ that ‘conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another and share in the working of common institutions’.¹⁹ Differently from an international *system*, which pertains to mechanic, anomic, and physical interactions, the concept of society involves a degree of ‘sociability’ that keeps actors together within a normative framework made of norms, rules, and institutions. The concept of international society has been reframed in recent years, with Dunne and Reus-Smit²⁰ eliding the distinction between system and society and with Barry Buzan²¹ distinguishing between an inter-*state* society with a statist ontology and an inter-*human* society, which makes room for non-state actors, too.²² Yet, the main point to make here is that, as Acharya noted, the concept of international society has over the years found universal applicability, and not just in Europe. Especially since the ‘regional agenda’ of the ES took off in the late 2000s,²³ international societies have been analysed, studied, and connected to the global, mostly Western-interpreted international society, thus showing the wide and functional applicability of the concept as maintained by Acharya himself.

The second main tenet of the ES is its attention and sensitivity to *culture* and *history*. The fundamental part that culture plays in international relations has always been a hallmark of ES theory since the times of the British Committee of IR, although it must be said that its conceptualisation and its role in the upholding of international order have changed over the decades. In the ‘classical’ ES, culture was seen and interpreted as a fundamental precondition for order, and cultural homogeneity was seen as a blueprint, an essential component for the formation of an international society. Such was the importance of cultural unity as the basis for international order (and such was the essentialism with which culture was treated!) that the process of decolonisation that took off after WW2 was framed as a possible ‘revolt of the rest against the West’ and as a destabilisation of international order tout-court.²⁴

In more recent times, culture has found its autonomous place within the analytical framework of the ES, not necessarily as a basis for international society (which can be seen as capable of forming, developing, and surviving in a more pluralistic, functionalist logic) but as a potential element that informs *Weltanschauungen*, practices and interpretations of norms of specific (regional) international societies and world societies at the inter-human level.²⁵

¹⁹ Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Macmillan, 1977), 13.

²⁰ Dunne and Reus-Smit, *The Globalization of International Society*.

²¹ Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society?: English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²² The notion of such an inter-human society has been termed *world society* but remains undertheorised. For a recent contributions and debate on the same see the special issue in *International Politics*, 55 no. 1, 2018.

²³ Barry Buzan and A. Gonzalez-Pelaez, eds., *International Society and the Middle East: English School Theory at the Regional Level*, 2009 ed. (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Laust Schouenborg, *The Scandinavian International Society: Primary Institutions and Binding Forces, 1815-2010*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012); Linda Quayle, *Southeast Asia and the English School of International Relations - A Region-Theory Dialogue* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Barry Buzan and Yongjin Zhang, eds., *Contesting International Society in East Asia* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Bettina Ahrens and Thomas Diez, “Solidarisation and Its Limits: The EU and the Transformation of International Society,” *Global Discourse* 5, no. 3 (2015): 341–55; Jorge M. Lasmar, Danny Zahreddine, and Delber Andrade Gribel Lage, “Understanding Regional and Global Diffusion in International Law: The Case for a Non-Monolithic Approach to Institutions,” *Global Discourse* 5, no. 3 (2015): 470–96; Yannis Stivachtis, “Interrogating Regional International Societies, Questioning the Global International Society,” *Global Discourse: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Current Affairs and Applied Contemporary Thought* 5, no. 3 (2015): 327–340; Filippo Costa Buranelli, “Global International Society, Regional International Societies and Regional International Organizations: A Dataset of Primary Institutions,” in *International Organisations in the Anarchical Society* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

²⁴ Mustapha Kemal Pasha, “Decolonizing the Anarchical Society,” in Suganami, Carr and Humphreys, *The Anarchical Society At 40*, 92–110.

²⁵ Spruyt, *The World Imagined*; Andrew Phillips and Christian Reus-Smit, *Culture and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

The attention to culture within the ES has also been revived within recent debates on the desirability of pluralism,²⁶ as well as on syncretic and vanguardist approaches to culture and their impact on international order.²⁷ With respect to differing interpretations of institutions – for example, in the sense of solidarist or pluralist interpretations – the notion of *polysemous* institutions in, e.g., regional international societies, has been developed and employed in recent ES contributions, outlining an avenue for research focused on the discursive elements between practitioners of international relations.²⁸

Furthermore, regarding history and its connection(s) to IR, one may say that the ES was born with it. Figures such as Herbert Butterfield, Donald Mackinnon, and Sir Michael Howard within the British Committee of IR were historians by training, and some of the classic works of ES thinkers were markedly history-based and devoted ‘to the “history of international society” as a means to understand and reconstruct international life in the past and the present’.²⁹ Moreover, also in recent times, history has informed many of the works within the ES.³⁰ Yet, what is important to note is that the ES’ view of history is based on the rejection of the Realist reading of history as recurrence and repetition, as well as of the teleological one of Liberalism. In the words of Dan Green, ‘one of the great strengths of the English School (ES) has always been its expansive, sophisticated engagement with international relations history, which, unlike other IR approaches, is wedded to neither repetition (realism) nor teleology (liberalism, Marxism)’.³¹ As a matter of fact, in more precise terms, one may say that the ES approaches history in a more idiographic way³² and is rather marked by the waxing and waning of specific institutions of subsequent international orders (this last point is very well captured and efficiently rendered by the metaphor of the pendulum proposed by Adam Watson in his treatise on the evolution of international society).³³ At the same time, the idiographic approach to history within the ES does not rule out a diachronic one, which in fact allows for the study of different orders across time.³⁴

A third, fundamental component of the ES theoretical apparatus, inherently linked to the concepts of international society, culture, and history, is that of the *world political system*. This is ‘the world-wide network of interaction that embraces not only states but also other

²⁶ John Williams, *Ethics, Diversity, and World Politics: Saving Pluralism From Itself?* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

²⁷ Barry Buzan, “Culture and International Society,” *International Affairs* 86, no. 1 (2010): 1–25.

²⁸ Bettina Ahrens and Thomas Diez, “Solidarisation and Its Limits: The EU and the Transformation of International Society,” *Global Discourse* 5, no. 3 (2015): 341–55; Bettina Ahrens, “The European Union Between Solidarist Change and Pluralist Re-Enactment,” in *International Organization in the Anarchical Society*, ed. Tonny Brems Knudsen and Cornelia Navari (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Filippo Costa Buranelli, “Do You Know What I Mean? ‘Not Exactly’: English School, Global International Society and the Polysemy of Institutions,” *Global Discourse* 5, no. 3 (2015): 499–514; Kilian Spandler, *Regional Organizations in International Society: ASEAN, the EU and the Politics of Normative Arguing* (Springer International Publishing, 2018); Simon F. Tæuber, “Reconstructing the Silk Road: Norm Contestation in Sino-European Relations in Times of the Belt and Road Initiative,” *Rising Powers Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (2020): 31–65.

²⁹ Brunelli Vigezzi, “The British Committee and International Society,” in Navari and Green, *Guide to the English School*, 37.

³⁰ Filippo Costa Buranelli, “Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door: Russia, Central Asia and the Mediated Expansion of International Society,” *Millennium* 42, no. 3 (2014): 817–36; Barry Buzan and George Lawson, *The Global Transformation: History, Modernity and the Making of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Manjeet S. Pardi, “Mughal Hegemony and the Emergence of South Asia as a ‘Region’ for Regional Order-Building,” *European Journal of International Relations* 25 no. 1 (2018): 276–301; Carsten-Andreas Schulz, “Territorial Sovereignty and the End of Inter-Cultural Diplomacy along the ‘Southern Frontier,’” *European Journal of International Relations*, 10 December 2018.

³¹ Daniel Green, “Improving upon ‘Expansion’: Metaphors to Shape the English School’s International History,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 4 (2020): 474.

³² Linklater and Suganami, *The English School of International Relations*.

³³ Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis* (Routledge, 1992).

³⁴ Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

political actors, both “above” and “below” it’.³⁵ As a matter of fact, ‘the states system has always been part of a wider system of interaction in which groups other than states are related to each other, to foreign states and to international and supranational bodies, as well as to the states in which they are located’.³⁶ This world political system refers, ultimately, to the ontology resulting from the sum of international system, international society, and world society – an environment in which states, individuals, and all sorts of NSAs participate and coexist. This is the ‘holism’ of the English School. This, again, seems to be the perfect entry-point for Global IR research, but as we shall see, things are not that easy yet.

There are two additional points that we must elaborate on before moving on to the next section. The first one is the ES’s methodology, which can be broadly understood as *interpretivism*.³⁷ To be sure, when it comes to methodology, the ES is a broad church, within which several differentiations take place, especially when it comes to different degrees of mind-world dualism, mind-world monism, and different emphasis on either structure or agency,³⁸ with more recent contributions emphasising discourses, practices, or both.

The second and last tenet of the ES that we find relevant to the present discussion and objective of the paper is the geographical diversity of the ES in its analysis of different systems and societies – and this is inherently linked to the main tenet discussed in this section, that of international society and, more precisely, the regional turn thereof. While this was a feature of the first historical works, in particular Martin Wight’s opus and the work of Adam Watson, it is in recent times with the inauguration of the ‘regional agenda’ that different world-views and regional orders have been brought to the fore, benefitting from theoretical and analytical rigour: not just Europe (which has been criticized for being seen as the matrix and blueprint of the expansion)³⁹ but also Latin America, Eurasia and Central Asia, the Middle East, East Asia (with particular emphasis on South East Asia) and, to a lesser extent, Africa. This geographical diversity of analysis has been mirrored, although not to the same degree, by the increase in geographical diversity of scholars within the ES, which is now less confined to the UK and Europe with greater presence in other institutions, universities, and intellectual circles across the globe than it was the case before.⁴⁰

To recap before moving on to the next section, within the Global IR incipient research programme, there have been arguments made about the ES being well-positioned to contribute to disenfranchising IR from its Western/Euro-centric foundations because of several characteristic marks of the theory – its encompassing understanding of ‘international society’, and in particular its regional application to elucidate non-Western worldviews; its

³⁵ Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 276.

³⁶ Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 278.

³⁷ Mark Bevir and Ian Hall, “Interpreting the English School: History, Science and Philosophy,” *Journal of International Political Theory* 16, no. 2 (2020): 120–32; Mark Bevir and Ian Hall, “The English School and the Classical Approach: Between Modernism and Interpretivism,” *Journal of International Political Theory* 16, no. 2 (2020): 153–70. Bevir’s and Hall’s contributions are part of a whole special issue published in the *Journal of International Political Theory* (16, no.2, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/toc/ipt/16/2>) entirely devoted to interpretivism and the ES.

³⁸ Cornelia Navari, *Theorising International Society - English School Methods* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009); Cornelia Navari, “Agents versus Structures in English School Theory: Is Co-Constitution the Answer?,” *Journal of International Political Theory* 16, no. 2 (2020): 249–67; Peter Wilson, “The English School Meets the Chicago School: The Case for a Grounded Theory of International Institutions,” *International Studies Review* 14, no. 4 (2012): 567–90; Charlotta Friedner Parrat, “On the Evolution of Primary Institutions of International Society,” *International Studies Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2017): 623–30; Spandler, *Regional Organizations in International Society*; Robert Falkner and Barry Buzan, “The Emergence of Environmental Stewardship as a Primary Institution of Global International Society,” *European Journal of International Relations* 25, no. 1 (2019): 131–55; Filippo Costa Buranelli, “Authoritarianism as an Institution? The Case of Central Asia,” *International Studies Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (2020): 1005–16.

³⁹ Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, *The Expansion of International Society* (Clarendon Press, 1984).

⁴⁰ Zhang, “The Global Diffusion of the English School”.

sensitivity to history, geography, and cultural diversity; its propensity for interpretivism; and its broad understanding of international politics, which is ultimately subsumed within the category of ‘world political system’. So far, the synergy between the ES and Global IR indeed seems promising, waiting to be explored. What, then, is standing in-between? In order to understand why the ES has not yet taken Global IR fully into consideration, and to grasp the main obstacles to this process, we argue that one must look at the meta-theoretical components of the ES, especially with respect to the concept of ‘society’, at its way of conducting interpretivist research, as well as at its conceptualisation of globality.

3. The English School and Global IR - Possible Areas for Engagement, Contributions, and Synergy

From the brief discussion offered above, it would seem that the ES is well-positioned to take on the challenges posed by a meaningful and genuine engagement with making IR more global. Geographical diversity, theoretical and methodological holism, historical sensitivity, and an attention that is evenly distributed to agency and structure all have the merit of placing the ES at the heart of the process of creating a truly Global IR. Yet, one may argue that there are still areas in need of development and engagement to make the ES fully receptive to the Global IR emancipatory goals. We will begin by reviewing the issues already discussed by some prominent scholars in the most recent ES literature,⁴¹ and then move on to the areas in need of improvement that we believe are present within the ES *corpus* and that have not been yet paid sufficient heed. Importantly, the four points that follow are interconnected, and are divided only for analytical purposes. The same goes for the way in which we suggest improving on them in the next section.

The first major obstacle to a more encompassing synergy between the ES and Global IR is a thorough, systematic, and fine-grained understanding of the origins of ‘global international society’ rooted in colonialism, inequality of people, violent conquest, and suppression. What Mustapha Kemal Pasha calls a ‘decolonisation’ of the anarchical society to tackle the ‘spectrality’ of colonialism is very much needed to understand not just the main ontology that lies at the heart of the ES research programme, that of international society, but also of the ES as a community.⁴² As has been recently argued,

perhaps due to an inferiority complex in relation to American IR, the ES seems unwilling or unable to see its own position of privilege. British IR, even with its own set of problems, is well-funded, well-respected and influential. It is also at home-ground language-wise, and it has been able to put up a fight against American dominance in the discipline. In light of all this, the ES must start to question its self-image as underdog. Rather, it plays an active part in shaping the discipline, and consequently needs more reflexivity in its approach to gate-keeping and the image it reproduces of itself and of its central concepts.⁴³

The story of the globalization of international society, although now being more fine-grained and more receptive of non-Western experiences and contributions, is still very much leaning towards the category of ‘order’ as opposed to that of ‘justice’. This brings us to our second point.

⁴¹ Hidemi Suganami, Madeline Carr, and Adam Humphreys, eds., *The Anarchical Society at 40: Contemporary Challenges and Prospects* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Charlotta Friedner Parrat, Kilian Spandler, and Joanne Yao, “The English School as a Theory and a Scholarly Community,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 4 (2020): 483–86.

⁴² Pasha, “Decolonizing the Anarchical Society”.

⁴³ Parrat, Spandler, and Yao, “The English School as a Theory and a Scholarly Community,” 484. Importantly, the contribution by Friedner-Parrat, Spandler, and Yao is part of a broader discussion forum hosted by the Cambridge Review of International Affairs, 3 no. 4 (available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ccam20/33/4?nav=tocList>) in which recent and future trends of and within the ES are discussed and critically evaluated.

The second critique, which has been powerfully voiced again by Charlotta Friedner-Parrat, Kilian Spandler, and Joanne Yao, pertains to the narrative provided by ES classical scholars on the ‘expansion’ story. According to the three theorists,

although many studies on this topic take peripheral actors into account, they usually appear as passive or at best reactive, and as seeking to ‘accede’ to international society rather than actively shaping it. The ES account has thus minimized non-European agency, as well as the dynamic and constitutive nature of interactions between European and non-European agents in international history.⁴⁴

This point has been acknowledged also by Daniel Green, who has aptly argued that ‘the English School’s weakness with history has instead been Eurocentrism, epitomized in its narrative of the development in early modern Europe of the norms and practices of contemporary international society and their subsequent “expansion” out to the rest of the world through colonization and cultural imperialism’.⁴⁵ This criticism focuses on a reading of history that is mostly from Europe, by Europe, for Europe, and relies on a reading of historical processes that are somehow unilinear, deterministic, and qualitatively neutral – all features encapsulated by the term ‘expansion’. Interestingly, or perhaps tellingly, Hedley Bull himself in the preparatory writings for *The Anarchical Society* said that ‘we are not accustomed to looking to international relations from the perspective from which most of the world sees it, the perspective from the underdog’.⁴⁶

While the recent work edited by Tim Dunne and Chris Reus-Smit has done a great job in opening up new avenues for inquiry, especially on the ‘construction of the global’ as a historical product and as an analytical category, much work still needs to be done, especially to understand and reflect on other experiences and views of ‘the global’.⁴⁷ For example, while we argue that there are not necessarily so many *English* things about the ES, the lack of detailed historical accounts of the British colonisation of India and on the Commonwealth is somehow puzzling – especially for a theory and a research programme that originated in Britain in the 1950s and has always paid attention to the history of colonisation and the dynamics of imperialism over time.

As these two interrelated critiques are already present in the available literature, in the remainder of this section we venture into expanding on four additional blind spots within the ES that can potentially be addressed to build more solid bridges between the school and the Global IR project.

The first one is, partly *contra* Acharya, the meaning of society itself and its usage within ES theorisation, which hinges on a specific genealogy. As may be recalled from above, Amitav Acharya identified in the concept of international society the main overlap between the ES and Global IR, on the basis that the ES ‘has offered concepts such as “international society,” which ha[s] genuinely broader applicability beyond the UK or Europe and [is] used by scholars in other parts of the world’.⁴⁸ Yet, as recent scholarship has noted,⁴⁹ this concept

⁴⁴ Parrat, Spandler, and Yao, “The English School as a Theory and a Scholarly Community,” 484.

⁴⁵ Green, “Improving upon ‘Expansion’,” 474.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Vigezzi, “The British Committee and International Society,” 49.

⁴⁷ Andrew Hurrell, “Cultural Diversity within Global International Society,” in *Culture and Order in World Politics*, ed. Andrew Phillips and Christian Reus-Smit, LSE International Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 115–36; Spruyt, *The World Imagined*.

⁴⁸ Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds,” 651, footnote 10.

⁴⁹ Jens Bartelson, “Towards a Genealogy of “Society” in International Relations,” *Review of International Studies* 41, no. 4 (2015): 675–92; Pasha, “Decolonizing the Anarchical Society”.

of ‘society’ is very much indebted to Western sociology and political philosophy imbued with elements of Christianity, natural law, morality (*societas*), and rational individualism (mirrored in the pluralist idea of international society). Moreover, this way of understanding ‘society’ is also linked to an understanding of sovereignty as propriety (mirrored in Hedley Bull’s treatise of the fundamental rules of international order with respect to the ‘stability of possession’), again developed on the backdrop of specific intellectual, political, and societal challenges of modernity in the peculiarity of the European context. Within the intellectual genesis of the ES, ‘European international society, or states system, had taken shape against a specifically political background. Butterfield points out that it is a historically “unique” phenomenon’.⁵⁰ While for Wight ‘to belong to international society, in the early modern period, was to belong to European Christendom’, Butterfield ‘drew attention to the idea of international society embodied in the Gottingen historians’ conceptions of “the European States-System”’.⁵¹ The result is, as Jens Bartelson has noted in a critique that has perhaps not been paid the necessary heed, that

the concept of society [within the ES] carries a distinctive semantic baggage that reflects a series of intellectual commitments once made in response to problems of political and scientific legitimacy perceived to be pressing at the threshold of European modernity. As a consequence of being a point of condensation of all these concerns, there are reasons to doubt that the concept of society will be of much help when trying to make sense of the past and present of international political life outside its context of emergence.⁵²

Mustapha Pasha has echoed this critique by arguing that ‘the West can no longer authorize imperial arrangements, but it can still carry the expectation that *only its version of sociability* can triumph worldwide despite decolonization’.⁵³ As will be evident later, this pertains to what has been called the *emic* and *etic* approaches to international society⁵⁴ in a welcome and still relatively unexplored move to leverage on the anthropological insights within the ES that, as aptly noted by recent contributions, are there but are seldom acknowledged or incorporated into wider theorising.⁵⁵

Another area that the ES ought to explore more in order to further contribute to the Global IR agenda is the theorisation of the state within international society. It is only recently that the ES has started to take seriously the fact that the postcolonial world has entered global international society (see above) featuring an incredibly variegated array of statehoods and statenesses.⁵⁶ This is, perhaps, one of the strongest and deepest legacies of the ‘system’ ontology within the ES tripartition, linked mostly to segmentation, sameness, security, and mechanic interactions relating to the logics of security dilemma and balance of power in a realist fashion. This perspective, as has been noted, ‘places into context historically produced structural impediments to functionality and state effectiveness. Attention to these impediments also affords better appreciation of the impossibility of disentangling ‘inside’

⁵⁰ Vigezzi, “The British Committee and International Society,” 42.

⁵¹ Vigezzi, “The British Committee and International Society,” 41.

⁵² Bartelson, “Towards a Genealogy of “Society” in International Relations,” 689.

⁵³ Pasha, “Decolonizing the Anarchical Society,” 202-3, emphasis added.

⁵⁴ Nicholas Lees, “International Society Is to International System as World Society Is to ...? Systemic and Societal Processes in English School Theory,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 19, no. 3 (2016): 285–311.

⁵⁵ Wilson, “The English School Meets the Chicago School”; Nicolás Terradas, “The Quest for Order in Anarchical Societies: Anthropological Investigations,” *International Studies Review* 22, no. 1 (2020): 98–121.

⁵⁶ Kilian Spandler, “Regional Standards of Membership and Enlargement in the EU and ASEAN,” *Asia Europe Journal* 16, no. 2 (2018): 183–98; Robert Yates, “The English School and Postcolonial State Agency: Social Roles and Order Management in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific,” *International Theory* (2020): 1–29.

from ‘outside’, the ‘domestic’ from the ‘international’. Post-colonial state capacity lies at the interstices of both.⁵⁷ As discussed later, this is linked to the issue of ‘globality’.

The third area for engagement we would like to emphasise pertains to language and analytical categories. Here, the problem lies in the tension identifiable within the ES between *idiography* and *nomothesis*, between the particular and the general, between the contingent and the structural. This, the astute reader will notice, is inherently linked to Bartelson’s critique of ‘society’ as a prism and as an *explanans*. Already, Martin Wight, in his work on diplomatic investigations and historical state systems,⁵⁸ wondered whether to include the relations between city-states in ancient Greece under the institution of balance of power, for while on the one hand their interactions clearly resembled a balance-of-power pattern, he was, on the other hand, concerned that the category of ‘balance of power’ would have made little sense to an ancient Greek. Without categorising it as such, Wight was grappling with the issue of transferability of concepts and with what in interpretivist methodological research is known as the *migration of context* and the *principle of charity*.⁵⁹ This is especially true for that wing of the ES that is now commonly known for being ‘soft positivist’, or, as it has been called elsewhere, ‘analyticist’, and based on mind-world dualism.⁶⁰

The fourth and last area for engagement through which the ES can enhance dialogue with and contribute to Global IR would be to critically examine the meaning of ‘the global’ within ES parlance. Scholars such as Tim Dunne, Chris Reus-Smit, and Barry Buzan (alone and in collaboration with both Amitav Acharya and Laust Schouenborg) have spent a considerable amount of time and words in towards reframing and problematizing ‘the global’, both from an international and a world society perspective. Before this, a conception of the global as the result of the European expansion of international society was understood as the result of the entry of non-Western polities within the structure of rules, norms, and institutions created by and for Europeans. As Bull maintained,

the non-European or non-Western majority of states in the world today, which played little role in shaping the foundations of the international society to which they now belong, have sought naturally and properly to modify it so that it will reflect their own special interests. It should not be overlooked, however, that by seeking a place in this society they have given their consent to its basic rules and institutions.⁶¹

Now, the understanding is different. Dunne, Reus-Smit and collaborators, with a nod to global sociology, speak of ‘globalisation’ as opposed to ‘expansion’, taking into account qualitative changes that greatly informed the series of transformations underlying that very process, such as those pertaining to the moral purposes of states and sovereignty, as well as exogenous global forces that affected these very transformations, such as the rise of global capitalism.⁶² For them, ‘globality’ was a matter of ‘globalizing’ as much as ‘becoming’.⁶³ For Buzan and Schouenborg, ‘global international society’ is a problematic term in itself, and one

⁵⁷ Pasha, “Decolonizing the Anarchical Society,” 93.

⁵⁸ Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester University Press [for] the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1977).

⁵⁹ Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁶⁰ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (Routledge, 2010); Filippo Costa Buranelli, “The English School and Regional International Societies: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections,” in *Regions in International Society* (Brno Czech Republic: MUNI Press, 2014); Costa Buranelli, “Do You Know What I Mean?”

⁶¹ Quoted in Dunne and Reus-Smit, *The Globalization of International Society*, 26.

⁶² Buzan and Lawson, *The Global Transformation*.

⁶³ Dunne and Reus-Smit, *The Globalization of International Society*, 29.

that needs further theorization. Their volume on the matter is an impressive systematization and fine-grained account of four ideal-type models to illustrate the composition and structure of global international society: like-units, regional/sub-global, hierarchy/privilege, and functional differentiation.⁶⁴ With respect to the origins of global international society, they focus on ‘monocentric’ and ‘polycentric’ models, but it is the first one that takes precedence in the book.⁶⁵ Buzan has also pioneered ground-breaking work on ‘globality’ and world society, pointing at several weaknesses and inconsistencies of such analytical categorisation and offering a theorization of ‘transnational’ and ‘inter-human’ world societies, seeking to explore the political and advocacy aspects of them. What one may consider an approach for further theorisation and development to meet Global IR is to look at this diversity more closely and from different parts of the world, but more on this below.

4. A Tentative Research Agenda

Taking into account the issues and different areas for engagement within the ES identified above, how can the theory and, indeed, the community of scholars who are associated with it address them (or at least problematise them with active self-reflection) and contribute to a more global IR? The starting point for advancing these suggestions is to keep in mind that, as a necessary and fundamental step in realising the aspirations of Global IR, what matters is not only ‘who does the theorising?’ but also ‘what they say’ and what theories, epistemologies, and categories of analysis they follow.

With respect to decolonising the narrative of the expansion of international society, now called globalisation, it is fundamental that the voices, imaginaries, worldviews, and experiences of the Southern polities that came into contact with European actors (empires, but also missionaries, traders, and commercial companies) are recovered, contextualised, and put in relation with Europe in a logic of co-constitution. As Pinar Bilgin has aptly noted,

the proponents of creating a “non-Western IR theory” often rely on Eurocentric narratives on world history while failing to see the ways in which peoples and states of the global South have been the “constitutive outside”. “Constitutive outside” refers to the ideas and experiences of those people and states in the global South who have shaped the global North even as the latter are not always aware of and/or acknowledge what they owe the latter.⁶⁶

Archival work and sustained engagement with constitutive outsiders, such as the Mapuche in Latin America,⁶⁷ will benefit ES historical research by revealing alternative conceptualisations of order, of ‘globality’, and of sociability, and would make possible answering the question that, somehow paradoxically and presciently, was posed by Herbert Butterfield already in 1959: ‘What would our feelings have been if we were born Arabians or Indians?’⁶⁸ Which leads us to the second point about the category of ‘society’ itself.

As noted above, the main criticism advanced to the category of international society that is seemingly applicable to the rest of the world is that, at a deep level, it consists of metatheoretical assumptions defined by the political, social, and scientific experience

⁶⁴ Buzan and Schouenborg, *Global International Society*, Chapter 1.

⁶⁵ Buzan and Schouenborg, *Global International Society*, 41.

⁶⁶ Pinar Bilgin, “How to Globalise IR?,” *E-IR*, 2018, <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/04/22/how-to-globalise-ir/>.

⁶⁷ Carsten-Andreas Schulz, “Territorial Sovereignty and the End of Inter-Cultural Diplomacy along the ‘Southern Frontier,’” *European Journal of International Relations* 25, no. 3 (2019): 878–903.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Vigezzi, “The British Committee and International Society,” 42.

of (early) modernity in Europe. In this respect, one way to move forward towards more participation of the ES within Global IR would be to consider the category of society as an *explanandum* itself, and not anymore as an *explanans*, i.e., delving into the question of why specific forms of formal and informal relations develop and become institutionalised differently in different parts of the world. The ES would sharpen its understanding of society by looking at how different forms of relational ontologies, sociability, and interaction were and are possible, examining which values and norms inform these, and reflecting on inter-human communication and behaviour. Kinship, for example, is a fundamental category of association that is seldom, if ever, discussed in ES circles.⁶⁹ This would be in line with what has been advocated by Bartelson, in particular the adoption of the term ‘forms of human association’, not only ‘to allow for more historical and cultural variety, but also in order to draw attention to the fact that well before the emergence of the modern concept of society, the default understanding was that such forms are boundless and heterogeneous rather than bounded and homogeneous’.⁷⁰

This would also have importance for making the ES more global, especially with respect to its ‘regional agenda’. As a matter of fact, while Bartelson makes the case for using ‘forms of human association’ mostly from a historical perspective, seeking to recover ‘conceptions of human association from other parts of the world, and explore their role in the shaping of modern international relations before they were marginalised and forgotten’,⁷¹ one may argue that such an approach would also be useful to interrogate the many historical and current regional worlds and worldviews. Hence, the focus would be on what Latour describes as ‘the tracing of new associations and the designing of their assemblages’, with ‘accounting for how society is held together’.⁷²

This also comes to the fore in our respective work on Central Asia and Latin America. In Central Asia, for example, ‘sosedstvo’ (Cyrillic ‘соседство’; English ‘the neighbourhood’) is a term frequently used to describe IR in the region, a term that emphasises the role of border communities and inter-human ties there despite the violence of supra-imposed borders during the Soviet times. Telling is that across the region, a very popular proverb is ‘a good neighbour is better than a distant relative’. Timur Dadabaev, in his work on decolonising IR in Central Asia, has also highlighted the concept of ‘neighbourhood’, and investigates the norms and practices associated with it.⁷³ In Latin America, the term ‘comunidad’ (English ‘community’) is one widely used by practitioners when speaking of the region and relations between neighbours, rather than system or society, and the emphasis in narratives is on a shared history of suffering under colonial and hegemonic regimes, as well as both intra-state and political violence. Yet ‘none of this should be taken to imply that the classics of modern social theory are irrelevant to our concerns. Rather the opposite. But instead of uncritically applying their conceptions of society trans-historically and transculturally, we may instead reformulate their questions so as to gain a better understanding of a world that is ours’.⁷⁴ And

⁶⁹ Joseph Chinyong Liow, “The Kinship Factor in International Relations: Kinship, Identity Construction, and Nation Formation in Indonesia-Malaysia Relations” (PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2003).

⁷⁰ Bartelson, “Towards a Genealogy of ‘Society’ in International Relations,” 689.

⁷¹ Bartelson, “Towards a Genealogy of ‘Society’ in International Relations,” 690.

⁷² Quoted in Dunne and Reus-Smit, *The Globalization of International Society*, 34.

⁷³ Timur Dadabaev, “Decolonizing Central Asian International Relations: Central Asia in Post-Colonial Age,” (Presented at the Cambridge Central Asia Forum in collaboration with the Centre of Development Studies and GCRF COMPASS Project, 27 November 2020), <https://centralasia.group.cam.ac.uk/events/DadabaevTalk>; Filippo Costa Buranelli, “Central Asian Regionalism or Central Asian Order? Some Reflections,” *Central Asian Affairs* 8, no. 1 (2021): 1–26.

⁷⁴ Bartelson, “Towards a Genealogy of ‘Society’ in International Relations,” 692.

this takes us to the third point.

If one of the main goals of globalising IR is the inclusion of the experience, the perspective, the meaning(s) and the worldviews of peoples and collectivities from the South, then one may argue that a methodology very much rooted in ‘being on the ground’ and in the proximity of the unfolding of the ‘social life’ one intends to investigate may be apt to serve for the task at hand. A thorough discussion and critique of the New Institutional turn within the ES was conducted by Wilson, and the proposed pathway then was precisely the above. In this respect, the good news is that the ES would not have to reinvent the wheel, as grounded approaches have been around for quite a while.⁷⁵ As Cornelia Navari has noted,⁷⁶ the interpretivism that very much informs ES research can be found in participant observation, the study of memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries and journals, and even in ethnographies and grounded theory approaches as recently advocated.⁷⁷ For the outlined purpose, we side with Wilson in that a constructivist grounded theory approach specifically, in the sense proposed by Kathy Charmaz⁷⁸ rather than earlier, ontologically and epistemologically differing versions,⁷⁹ would aid the globalising effort regarding IR. Such an approach would combine the interpretation of the context investigated with a strong empiricism resulting from engagement with the primary sources used for the investigation and research.⁸⁰ In other words, the starting point for such an inquiry would be the perspectives and experiences of practitioners of and within international relations, rather than IR or ES concepts and jargon on the matter.

Research conducted in this way would ideally be supported by a desire to learn local languages, capture the subtleness of local metaphors used to depict social life, read the local literature, grasp the way in which local epics, myths, symbols, and stories have informed a particular way of life, understand the local political theory, the indigenous cosmology (understood in its etymological sense of ‘study of order’), and views of ‘the good life’. It would entail becoming acquainted with the formal and informal logics that inform specific orders in the world, with the rituals and the meanings that would give content to such order and lead to an appreciation and comprehension for diversity and differentiation. Such an approach would not necessarily dispense with indicators and ‘marks’ of sociability but would have the advantage of more groundedly (pun intended) capturing the essence of a given social condition from the perspective of those embedded in it.⁸¹

This also has potential implications for the agency-structure debate within the ES itself. As a matter of fact, this methodological ‘situatedness’ would very much shift the ES on the agency side as opposed to a more structuralist approach to order. And yet, this would be in line with both a classical understanding of the ES and the goal of Global IR to elevate the agency and the contribution of non-Western actors to a level playfield. As argued by Navari,

⁷⁵ Wilson, “The English School Meets the Chicago School”.

⁷⁶ Cornelia Navari, “English School Methodology,” in Navari and Green, *Guide to the English School*, 205–21.

⁷⁷ Wilson, “The English School Meets the Chicago School”; Terradas, “The Quest for Order in Anarchical Societies”.

⁷⁸ Kathy C. Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, 1st ed. (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2006).

⁷⁹ Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Aldine de Gruyter, 1967); Barney G. Glaser, *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory* (Sociology Press, 1978).

⁸⁰ Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldböck, *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*, 1st ed. (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2000).

⁸¹ As an example, Simon F. Taeuber at the University of St Andrews is currently carrying out grounded research into conceptions of (regional) orders and normative fabrics in Latin America in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative and contemporary Sino-Latin American relations.

actor-centred methods [...] are of relevance [to the ES] since consciously directed action is an important *explanandum* in ES theory. [And s]ince ES theories focus mainly on social man, *the social context becomes important in understanding social action*. This demands theorizing context, as well as the relationship of action to context'.⁸²

As the reader may infer, this would facilitate more interdisciplinary dialogue between IR scholars and area studies specialists towards researching *globally meaningful* and *locally informed* narratives about social orders and interactions between political communities. As Andrew Hurrell has recently argued, 'Area and Regional Studies are not about the exotic and the esoteric; as with Global History, they are simply about how we can do better social science'.⁸³ The crucial aspect to do so, methodologically speaking, is to emphasise what above has been called the *migration of context* and the *principle of charity*. In other words, making sure the account we provide as researchers is as close as possible to the meaning held by the actors within the context we are studying while at the same time making it intelligible to those outside it.

The last suggestion offered is to resume a critical theorisation of 'the global' within ES research, elaborating on the work of Buzan and Schouenborg and advancing this with respect to both relations between political communities in history (that is, relations between second-order societies) and the world society take. With respect to the former, one may argue that there is plenty of exciting work to do regarding the 'polycentric' model of the origination of global international society. Encounters between civilisations and different worldviews, where negotiations of meanings and practices revolving around different institutions collide and clash, are a fascinating and fertile site to study the syncretic approach to how the global has been formed over centuries 'on the basis of cultural diversity and fusion'.⁸⁴ This strand of research would in fact continue the excellent initial work done by some scholars within the ES.⁸⁵

If Hedley Bull argued that non-Western societies 'have given their consent to [European international society's] basic rules and institutions', then a good avenue for research would be to uncover whether this was actually consent; if yes, how this was explicated; if not, how it was resisted; and overall, how these critical sites of encounter, contestation, and clashing *Weltanschauungen* morphed into a new sociability. With respect to world society, Matt Weinert has convincingly argued that a task for future research would be the investigation of different world societies, since '[many] globalities exist (e.g., the world economy, international sport, religion, culture, and technology). Each possesses distinctive, enduring logics, behaviours, institutions, and normative commitments to coordinate and structure-activity, solve problems, and generate and refine common interests and identities. Even if such a research agenda fragments the holism of the world society concept, it nevertheless gains by its treatment as a historical and empirical reality—that is, as encapsulating discrete logics, knowledges, normative commitments, and practices that evidence the multitude of ways we are citizens

⁸² Navari, "English School Methodology," 212-3.

⁸³ Hurrell, "Beyond Critique," 151.

⁸⁴ Buzan and Schouenborg, *Global International Society: A New Framework for Analysis*, 40.

⁸⁵ Shogo Suzuki, Yongjin Zhang, and Joel Quirk, eds., *International Orders in the Early Modern World: Before the Rise of the West*, 1st ed. (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2013); John Anthony Pella, *Africa and the Expansion of International Society: Surrendering the Savannah*, 1st ed. (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2014); Andrew Phillips and J. C. Sharman, *International Order in Diversity: War, Trade and Rule in the Indian Ocean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

not merely of, but in, the world'.⁸⁶ This would not only remind us that 'the global' is always contested, negotiated, and co-constituted by different actors and meanings, but also that there are multiple, variegated 'globals' rooted in a polyphony of contributions, experiences, and histories that make up the Bullian 'world political system'.

5. Conclusions

It is undeniable that Global IR, in all its facets, is marking a turning point in the discipline and the profession of IR. In this paper, we have argued that the ES has a lot of potential to contribute to this important and desirable agenda, and we have highlighted the ways in which this *can* happen as well as the motivations as to why this *should* happen. We hope we have convincingly shown how and under what conditions, despite its limitations and despite frequent calls for its underexploited character, the ES may well prove to be an ally, and indeed a seminal contributor, to the entrenchment and development of Global IR. This is in line with recent developments within the ES, especially with respect to fostering dialogue and mutual learning with scholars from the Global South, with paying attention to institutional and normative dynamics in the postcolonial world, and with embracing multiplicity and interdisciplinarity in a rigorous fashion.⁸⁷ However, this paper cannot do justice to all the possible ways in which the ES and Global IR can work in synergy and mutually reinforce each other. Far more research and intellectual work lies ahead. That the trend is that of moving from 'international' to 'global' society seems to be a correct assessment (Buzan forthcoming).⁸⁸ Yet, exactly how the global is studied and told is a future topic for ES scholars to theorise, analyse, and understand.

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⁸⁶ Matthew S. Weinert, "World Society and the Globality of IR," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 4 (2020): 480–82.

⁸⁷ Filippo Costa Buranelli, "Is the English School Still an Underexploited Resource? And Whither the English School? An Introduction," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 4 (2020): 464–66; Green, "Improving upon "Expansion"; Raymond Hinnebusch, "The English School and the Periphery Regions: The Case of MENA and the Road Ahead," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 4 (2020): 487–90.

⁸⁸ Barry Buzan, *Global Society: A Structural Account of Humankind Since the Ice Age*, forthcoming.

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Reflexive Solidarity: Toward a Broadening of What It Means to be “Scientific” in Global IR Knowledge

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Abstract

This article shows that the problem of “West-centrism” in the study of International Relations (IR) is synonymous with the problem of the dominance of positivism, a particular version of science that originated in the modern West. How can we open up this double parochialism in IR? The article calls for reflexive solidarity as a way out. This indicates that on-going Global IR projects need to revamp their geography-orientated approaches and instead seek solidarity with other marginalised scholars irrespective of their geographical locations or geocultural backgrounds to build wide avenues in which not only positivist (i.e., causal-explanatory) inferences but also normative theorising and ethnographically attuned approaches are all accepted as different but equally scientific ways of knowing in IR. As a useful way of going about this reflexive solidarity, this article suggests autobiography.

Keywords: Global IR, non-Western IR, positivism, science, reflexivity, solidarity, autobiography

1. Introduction: “West-centrism” in IR

It is by now a well-run argument that International Relations (IR), as a discipline, is a Western-dominated enterprise. IR scholarship has long focused on and attached importance to great power politics based on “the Eurocentric Westphalian system”¹; much of mainstream IR theory is “simply an abstraction of Western history.”² Furthermore, non-Western scholars have been excluded from “the mainstream of the profession” of IR.³ Additionally, IR continues to seek “to parochially celebrate or defend or promote the West as the proactive subject of, and as the highest or ideal normative referent in, world politics.”⁴ Let us take our pedagogical practice as a case in point. Based on an analysis of what is taught to graduate students at 23 American and European universities, Hagmann and Biersteker have found that “the none of

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¹ J. Ann Tickner, “Knowledge is Power: Challenging IR’s Eurocentric Narrative,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 158.

² Buzan Buzan, “Could IR Be Different?,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 156.

³ David Lake, “White Man’s IR: An Intellectual Confession,” *Perspectives on Politics* 14, no. 4 (2016): 1113.

⁴ John Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760–2010* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1; Lake, “White Man’s IR”; L.H.M. Ling, “Worlds Beyond Westphalia: Daoist Dialectics and the ‘China Threat,’” *Review of International Studies* 39, no. 3 (2013): 549–68; Arlene B. Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo)Imperialist International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 627–46.

the 23 schools surveyed draws on non-Western scholarship to explain international politics. World politics as it is explained to students is exclusively a kind of world politics that has been conceptualized and analysed by Western scholars.⁵ Publishing provides another case in point. A recent empirical study shows that “hypothesis-testing” works by American and other Global North scholars are published “approximately in proportion to submissions” in flagship political science and IR journals, while Global South scholars “fare less well” in the review process.⁶ In fact, all the Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) survey data from February 2014 to December 2018 clearly show that a large majority of academics surveyed in 36 countries view IR as a Western/American-dominated discipline.⁷

2. A Response: “Non-Western” IR

It should therefore come as no surprise that many critical IR scholars have called for “broadening” the discipline of IR beyond “the current West-centrism.”⁸ One of the early responses to this call was to draw renewed attention to non-Western societies’ histories, cultures, and philosophies and incorporate them in the theorisation of international relations; in this context, not only the question of whether there are any substantial merits to developing a “non-Western” IR theory, but also what such a theory would (or should) look like have now been placed front and centre of the debate. Of course, as will be discussed in detail in the following section, contemporary events such as the rise of China have contributed to the development of non-Western (or indigenous) theories and concepts.⁹ Advocates of Chinese IR and (by extension) non-Western IR theory building often point out that Asia has histories, cultures, norms, and worldviews that are inherently different from those derived from or advanced in Europe.

This idea also has resonance with discontent with the epistemic value of mainstream IR theories, namely realism, liberalism, and constructivism, all of which have Western—or, more specifically, “Eurocentric”¹⁰—ontological, epistemological, and/or normative underpinnings.¹¹ Western theories, the criticism goes, misrepresent and therefore misunderstand much of “the rest of the world.”¹² It is in this respect that Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan have put together a special issue and a follow-up edited volume¹³, asking “Why is there no non-Western international theory?” *despite* the fact that “the sources of

⁵ Jonas Hagmann and Thomas J. Biersteker, “Beyond the Published Discipline: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of International Studies,” *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 2 (2014): 303.

⁶ Marijke Breuning et al., “How International Is Political Science? Patterns of Submission and Publication in the American Political Science Review,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 51, no. 4 (2018): 789.

⁷ For details, see “TRIP Faculty Survey All Countries Combined,” <https://trip.wm.edu/charts/#/questions/38>.

⁸ Buzan, “Could IR Be Different”, 155.

⁹ Yaqing Qin, “Development of International Relations Theory in China: Progress through Debates,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 11, no. 2 (2011): 231–57; Yaqing Qin, “A Relational Theory of World Politics,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 33–47; Xuotong Yan, *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011); Feng Zhang, “The Tsinghua Approach” and the Inception of Chinese Theories of International Relations,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 5, no. 1 (2012): 73–102; Tingyang Zhao, “A Political World Philosophy in Terms of All-under-Heaven (Tian-Xia),” *Diogenes* 56 (2009): 5–18.

¹⁰ Heikki Patomäki, “Back to the Kantian Idea for a Universal History? Overcoming Eurocentric Accounts of the International Problematic,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35, no. 3 (2007): 575–95.

¹¹ Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, “Why is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory? Ten Years On,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 17, no. 3 (2017): 341–370.

¹² Amitav Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds: A New Agenda for International Studies,” *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2014): 647.

¹³ Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, “Why Is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory? An Introduction,” *International Relations of Asia Pacific* 7, no. 3 (2007): 285–86; Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and beyond Asia* (London: Routledge, 2010).

international relations theory conspicuously fail to correspond to the global distribution of its subjects.”¹⁴ Since Acharya and Buzan’s seminal forum was published, there have been a great deal of studies that aim to develop new and indigenous theories through (re)discovering and conceptualising non-Western IR communities’ lived experiences and vernacular perspectives.

Yaqing Qin at the China Foreign Affairs University states that Chinese IR theory “is likely and inevitably to emerge along with the great economic and social transformation that China has been experiencing.”¹⁵ The scholarly practices of building an IR theory “with Chinese characteristics” are a case in point. Although consensus on what “Chinese characteristics” actually are has yet to be determined, many scholars hold that the establishment of a Chinese IR theory or a “Chinese School” of IR is desirable or “natural”;¹⁶ in this light, Confucianism, “Chinese Marxism,” *Tianxia*, *Zhongyong*, *Wang Dao*, *Guanxi*, and the Chinese tributary system, are all cited as theoretical resources for Chinese IR.¹⁷

3. Evolution: “Global IR”

As is clear from the above, there has been a great deal of interest in addressing Western-centric IR; this trend includes a strong and increasing commitment to the development of non-Western or indigenous IR theories among Chinese IR scholars. At the same time, however, a number of criticisms have been raised against attempts to develop non-Western IR. For example, critics point out that although theory-building enterprises in non-West contexts commonly begin by problematising Western-dominated IR, the ongoing scholarly practices and discourses associated with non-Western IR can also entail (or reproduce) the same hierarchic and exclusionary structure of knowledge production, which can fall prey to particular national interests. In this regard, William Callahan doubts the applicability of *Tianxia*. In his discussion of Chinese visions of world order, he claims that what the notion of *Tianxia* does is “blur” the conceptual and practical “boundaries between empire and globalism, nationalism, and cosmopolitanism”. Rather than help us move towards a “post-hegemonic” world, *Tianxia* serves to be a philosophical foundation upon which “China’s hierarchical governance is updated for the twenty-first century.”¹⁸ Relatedly, Andrew Hurrell¹⁹ has added that although developing culturally specific ways of understanding the world “undoubtedly encourages greater pluralism,” attempts to do so can also lead to a national and regional “inwardness” that works to reproduce the very “ethnocentricities” that are being challenged.

These concerns about the potential nativist undercurrent of the non-Western IR theory-building enterprise are indeed shared by those who pay greater attention to the issue of the West/non-West (self-other) binary when it comes to opening up the parochial landscape of IR. “Global IR” is worthy of lengthy note in this regard.

The idea of “Global IR” was first introduced by Amitav Acharya. In his presidential

¹⁴ Acharya and Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations*, 1-2.

¹⁵ Yaqing Qin, “Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7, no. 3 (2007): 313.

¹⁶ Peter M. Kristensen and Ras T. Nielsen, “Constructing a Chinese International Relations Theory: A Sociological Approach to Intellectual Innovation,” *International Political Sociology* 7, no. 1 (2013): 19; Yaqing Qin, “Recent Developments toward a Chinese School of IR Theory,” 2016, <http://www.e-ir.info/2016/04/26/recent-developments-toward-a-chinese-school-of-ir-theory>.

¹⁷ See, for example, Qin, “A Relational Theory of World Politics”; Yuan-kang Wang, *Harmony and War: Confucian Culture and Chinese Power Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Yuan-kang Wang, “Introduction: Chinese Traditions in International Relations,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 17, no. 2 (2012): 105–9; Zhang, “The Tsinghua Approach”; Zhao, “A Political World Philosophy”.

¹⁸ William A. Callahan, “Chinese Visions of World Order: Post-Hegemonic or a New Hegemony,” *International Studies Review* 10, no. 4 (2008): 749.

¹⁹ Andrew Hurrell, “Beyond Critique: How to Study Global IR?,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 149–50.

address at the annual convention of the International Studies Association in 2014, Acharya explained what Global IR is or should be. His background assumption is this: IR does “not reflect the voices, experiences ... and contributions of the vast majority of the societies and states in the world, and often marginalize those outside the core countries of the West.”²⁰ Yet, instead of arguing for a counter (i.e. anti-Western) approach, he presented the possibility of a global discipline that transcends the divide between “the West and the Rest.” In his views, IR should be a “truly inclusive” discipline that recognises its multiple and diverse foundations and histories. In this respect, the Global IR project sets out to safeguard against a tug of war between Western and non-Western IR and the subsumption of one of them in favour of the other. Being wary of *both* problems, namely the current West-centrism of IR and the potential danger of nativism in non-Western IR theorisation, it attempts to render international relations studies more inclusive and pluralistic. While recognition and exploration of local experiences of non-Western societies as yet-to-be discovered sources of theory-building is being encouraged, the Global IR project also reminds us that scholarly enterprises of this kind should not lead to a nativist or self-centred binary thinking.²¹ What Global IR scholarship ultimately seeks is to render our discipline more inclusive and pluralistic; in this respect, there is emerging literature on “dialogue” beyond the West/non-West distinction in the Global IR debate.²²

In sum, in order to address the problem of West-centrism, many IR scholars have long attempted to broaden the theoretical and discursive horizons of IR, and those attempts have gone by various names, including “non-Western IR,” “post-Western IR,” and “Global IR.” Different though the approaches are, the concern common to all of them is to promote “greater diversity” in IR knowledge and knowledge production through embracing a wide range of histories, experiences, and theoretical perspectives, particularly those from outside the West.

4. Taking Stock of Research Trends in East Asian IR Communities²³

A key question, then, is whether and to what extent these attempts to open the discipline to new perspectives or theories have paid off. To find the answer, I look at research trends in the IR communities of three key East Asian countries, namely China, Korea, and Japan, examining their theoretical and epistemological orientations. In particular, I compare them with those of mainstream (i.e. American) IR. As discussed above, Chinese IR scholars tend to be discontent with West-centrism, particularly the “US parochialism”²⁴; correspondingly, they have been trying to develop an alternative IR theory with “Chinese characteristics” for the past two decades or so. In addition, several scholars have expected that “growing interest in IR outside the core [i.e. the United States], in particular, in ‘rising’ countries such as China,” would lead to the waning of American disciplinary power while opening up new

²⁰ Acharya, “Global International Relations,” 647.

²¹ Acharya and Buzan, “Why is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory? Ten Years On,” 361.

²² Pinar Bilgin, “Contrapuntal Reading as a Method, an Ethos, and a Metaphor for Global IR,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 134–46; Karin M. Fierke and Vivienne Jabri, “Global Conversations: Relationality, Embodiment and Power in the Move towards a Global IR,” *Global Constitutionalism* 8, no. 3 (2019): 506–35; Yong-Soo Eun, “Global IR through Dialogue,” *The Pacific Review* 32, no. 2 (2019): 131–49; Christopher Murray, “Imperial Dialectics and Epistemic Mapping: From Decolonisation to Anti-Eurocentric IR,” *European Journal of International Relations* 26, no. 2 (2020): 419–42; Deepshikha Shahi, “Foregrounding the Complexities of a Dialogic Approach to Global International Relations,” *All Azimuth* 9, no. 2 (2020): 163–76.

²³ The following section draws and expands upon my earlier study. See, Yong-Soo Eun, “An Intellectual Confession from a Member of the ‘Non-Western’ IR Community: A Friendly Reply to David Lake’s ‘White Man’s IR,’” *PS: Political Science* 52, no. 1 (2019): 78–84.

²⁴ Arlene B. Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo)Imperialist International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 629.

spaces for the study of international relations.²⁵ For these reasons, there has been a reasonable anticipation that theoretical or epistemological approaches employed by the Chinese IR community are markedly different from American IR, and that Chinese scholars will make the field more colourful or critical. Given these, a careful examination of where East Asian IR communities, particularly Chinese IR scholarship, currently stand *in comparison to* American IR scholarship is a reasonable way to see the extent to which attempts to go beyond Western/American parochialism and promote “greater diversity” in IR knowledge have paid off.

4.1. American IR scholarship (as a point of comparison)

According to the comprehensive research of Daniel Maliniak and his colleagues, which analyses recent trends in IR scholarship and pedagogy in the United States using the TRIP survey data, the American IR community appears to enjoy “theoretical” diversity in the sense that no single theoretical paradigm dominates the community. It is a “limited” form of diversity, however, based on a clear commitment to positivism. Maliniak et al.’s study demonstrates that more than 70 percent of the contemporary IR literature produced in the United States falls within the three theoretical paradigms—realism, liberalism, and “conventional” constructivism—all of which lie within the epistemological ambit of positivism. Of course, constructivists are less likely to adopt positivism than scholars working within the other two theoretical paradigms; yet “most of the leading constructivists in the United States... identify themselves as positivist.”²⁶ More specifically, around 70 percent of all American IR scholars surveyed describe their work as positivist. Furthermore, younger IR scholars are more likely to call themselves positivists: “sixty-five percent of scholars who received their Ph.D.s before 1980 described themselves as positivists, while 71 percent of those who received their degrees in 2000 or later were positivists.”²⁷

The data of the most recent TRIP survey conducted in 2017 also shows that American IR scholarship remains strongly committed to positivism (see tables below).²⁸ More specifically, with respect to epistemological foundation, around 67 percent of all American IR scholars surveyed characterise their work as positivist. This result corresponds to theoretical orientations in the American IR community: they are confined to the three positivist theoretical paradigms, namely constructivism, realism, and liberalism. To be sure, there are several post-positivist variants within constructivism; yet American IR scholars are committed to one particular version of constructivism, namely the “conventional” one, and thus their constructivist work focuses mainly on social norms and institutions (60 percent) in lieu of “society,” as the former are believed to be “more readily characterized and analyzed as measurable dependent and independent variables.”²⁹

²⁵ Arlene B. Tickner and Ole Wæver, eds., *International Relations Scholarship around the World* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Acharya and Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory*; Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo)Imperialist International Relations.”

²⁶ Maliniak Daniel et al., “International Relations in the US Academy,” *International Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2011): 454.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 453-56.

²⁸ The 2017 TRIP surveyed scholars of international relations in 36 countries and 14 languages to examine teaching and research trends and foreign policy views in the IR discipline. In Unites States, a total of 4,849 individuals (i.e. IR scholars who teach or research international relations at universities in the US) were surveyed; a response rate was 31.71%. I participated in this 2017 TRIP faculty survey project as a country partner. I thank the TRIP team at the College of William & Mary for inviting me to join in the project and sharing the entire survey data and results with me.

²⁹ Christian Reus-Smit, “Beyond Metatheory?,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 599.

Table 1- Epistemological orientations in American IR scholarship

Response option	Number of response	Percentage
Positivist	949	66.80
Post-positivist	234	16.50

Table 2- Theoretical orientations in American IR scholarship³⁰

Response option	Number of response	Percentage
Constructivism	288	19.40
Realism	279	18.80
Liberalism	218	14.70
Other	95	6.40
English school	40	2.70
Marxism	40	2.70
Feminism	27	1.80

Table 2.1- Preferred versions of Constructivism

Response option	Number of response	Percentage
Norm-based/sociological institutionalism	175	60.80
Critical constructivism	67	23.30
Don't know	46	16.00

The fact that positivism remains the dominant influence in the American IR community is also clear in the classrooms of American colleges and universities. A series of surveys conducted by the TRIP project shows that IR faculty in the United States devote a great deal of time in introductory IR courses to the study or application of positivist theories, particularly realism. While its share of class time may have declined, realism still dominates IR teaching in the United States. For example, 24 percent of class time in 2004, 25 percent in 2006, and 23 percent in 2008 were devoted to this paradigm; these percentages are larger than those listed for any other theoretical paradigm.³¹ Not surprisingly, this trend is consistent with the content of American IR textbooks. Elizabeth Matthews and Rhonda Callaway's content analysis of 18 undergraduate IR textbooks widely used in the United States demonstrates that most of the theoretical coverage is devoted to realism, followed by liberalism, with constructivism a distant third.³² In short, although interest in grand theory (i.e. theoretical paradigms) has decreased in recent years, the three theoretical paradigms, namely realism, liberalism, and conventional constructivism, continue to remain the dominant influences in

³⁰ It is worth noting that among the responses, that of "I do not use paradigmatic analysis" accounts for the highest percentage (33%). This indicates that there has been a considerable increase in intra-paradigmatic (rather than inter-paradigmatic) works, such as specialised concepts creation or hypothesis formulation and testing *cohered around* certain theoretical or epistemological orientations in American IR scholarship. And as we have seen above, although there is no single theoretical paradigm that dominates international studies in the US, there is one particular epistemological position that remains dominant, namely *positivism*.

³¹ Daniel Maliniak, Susan Peterson, and Michael J. Tierney, "TRIP around the World: Teaching, Research, and Policy Views of International Relations Faculty in 20 Countries," 2012, http://www.wm.edu/offices/itpir/_documents/trip/trip_around_the_world_2011.pdf.

³² Elizabeth G. Matthews and Rhonda L. Callaway, "Where Have All the Theories Gone? Teaching Theory in Introductory Courses in International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 16, no. 2 (2015): 190-207.

American IR scholarship,³³ and there is a persistent and strong commitment to positivism as a “scientific” approach to knowledge production among American IR scholars.

4.2. Chinese IR scholarship

In order to determine what theoretical paradigms Chinese IR scholarship is committed to and what epistemological orientations it has, our research team first searched the databases of four widely-cited IR journals within the Chinese academy—*World Economics and Politics*, *Foreign Affairs Review*, *Contemporary International Relations*, and *China International Studies* and then analysed the abstracts of all of the Chinese articles published in these journals over the past in the last 10 years (2010–2020). The results show that 73 percent of the articles analysed fit within the three mainstream theories: realism (31%), particularly balance of power theory and power transition theory, liberalism (25%), and constructivism (17%). By contrast, only nine percent of the articles analysed discuss Chinese IR-related concepts and ideas, such as *Tianxia*, *Zhongyong*, *Wang Dao*, moral realism, Confucianism, Confucius, Xunzi or Hanfeizi.³⁴

These findings indicate that intellectual resources connected with home-grown Chinese IR theories, namely Qin Yaqing’s relational theory, Yan Xuetong’s moral realism, and Zhao Tingyang’s *Tianxia* theory,³⁵ do not make a significant impact on how Chinese scholars conceptualise or analyse international relations. Furthermore, the fact that the three mainstream (Western/American-derived) IR theoretical paradigms remain dominant influences in the Chinese IR community also indicates that their epistemological understanding of what “scientific” or “valid” studies of international relations should entail is largely grounded in positivism, a *particular version of science*.³⁶ Even in discussions on building an IR theory with “Chinese characteristics,” several Chinese IR scholars state that such an indigenous theory “should seek universality, generality” in order to be recognized as a “scientific” enterprise.³⁷ For example, Yan Xuetong, one of the key contributors to the development of a Chinese IR theory, emphasises the importance of scientific approaches, which he defines in positivist terms.³⁸

³³ This trend is criticised by several scholars: for example, in his recent study—which undertakes a topic-modelling algorithm analysis of 11,000 articles published over the past 25 years—Christopher Whyte (2019: 440–449) notes as follows: “factionalism based on paradigmatic training and debate... clearly influences the theoretical construction of much research” in the American IR community. Such works are less likely to be “pathbreaking.”

³⁴ This investigation is based on data gathered from the databases of two Chinese academic institutions that provide full-text articles published in Chinese social sciences journals (<http://www.nssd.org>, <http://epub.cnki.net/KNS>), including these four IR journals: China’s National Social Science Database and China’s National Knowledge Infrastructure.

³⁵ Amitav Acharya, “From Heaven to Earth: ‘Cultural Idealism’ and ‘Moral Realism’ as Chinese Contributions to Global International Relations,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 12, no. 4 (2019): 467–94.

³⁶ Patrick Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2011).

³⁷ Xinning Song, “Building International Relations Theory with Chinese Characteristics,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 10, no. 1 (2001): 68.

³⁸ Benjamin Creutzfeldt, “Theory Talk #51: Yan Xuetong on Chinese Realism, the Tsinghua School of International Relations, and the Impossibility of Harmony,” *Theory Talks* (2012).

Table 3- Theoretical orientation in Chinese IR and American IR communities

	Chinese IR		American IR	
The most frequently used theories (rank)	Realism (1) Liberalism (2) Constructivism (3)	Data analyzed: four widely-cited Chinese IR journals	Constructivism (1) Realism (2) Liberalism (3)	Data analyzed: TRIP surveys
Underlying Epistemology	Positivism		Positivism	

* Realism here points to structural realism, including offensive realism and defensive realism, not a classical variant. Liberalism here points to neoliberal/rational choice institutionalism and democratic peace not historical or sociological institutionalism. Constructivism here points to conventional and modern constructivism, not a critical and postmodern variant.

In short, the emerging Chinese IR scholarship is very much in line with American IR: both are based largely on the three positivist theories, namely realism, liberalism, and conventional constructivism. Irrespective of the intentions to develop an indigenous Chinese theory, this trend contributes to consolidating the hegemonic status of positivist international studies and the institutional preponderance of American IR.

4.3. Are other East Asian IR communities different?

Interestingly, and unfortunately from the perspective of advocates of non-Western or Global IR, a lack of attention to alternative or indigenous IR studies is also visible in other East Asian IR communities. In our analyses, my research team focused on the Korean and Japanese IR communities given their relatively large numbers of IR scholars, as well as their countries’ political and economic powers in the region. In the case of Korean IR scholarship, we examined the abstracts of all the articles published in the *Korean Journal of International Relations (KJIR)*, the most-cited Korean IR journal, between 2010 and 2020. The results show that the three mainstream theories remain at the center of discussion: of the 211 theoretical articles analyzed, 85 percent (179 articles) are devoted to realism, constructivism, or liberalism, while virtually no studies discuss Chinese IR. More specifically, 71 articles are on realism, 62 articles are on constructivism, and 46 articles are on liberalism. None of the analysed articles discuss the key terms of Chinese IR: *Tianxia*, *Zhongyong*, *Wang Dao*, moral realism, Confucianism, Confucius, Xunzi or Hanfeizi.³⁹

On the contrary, IR theory-building enterprises in South Korea show patterns very similar to those found in the US. On the one hand, Korean IR scholars, as has been the case in China, problematise contemporary IR, noting that the discipline is too American/Western-centric. On the other hand, however, they explore how to develop an alternative IR theory and how to judge its success largely from a positivist perspective, considering “generalization” as the ultimate reference point. In other words, that “any theorizing based on Korea’s unique historical experiences must be tested under the principle of generality” is a major undercurrent in the existing discussion about “Korean IR.” Correspondingly, when the meaning (or purpose) of theory is taught or discussed in an IR classroom in Korea, what is largely invoked is a “positivist” understanding of the role of theory, namely “generalizability.”⁴⁰ This trend—that positivism serves as an epistemological foundation upon which to base research, and thus theoretical analysis is narrowly confined to the three theoretical perspectives of realism, liberalism, and conventional constructivism—is also confirmed by the most recent TRIP survey data on other Asian IR communities (see the following tables).

³⁹ This investigation is based on the data gathered from the DBPIA, which provides full-text Korean scholarly articles published in social sciences journals, including *KJIR* Available at <https://www.dbpia.co.kr/Journal/IssueList/PLCT00001172>.

⁴⁰ Eun, “An Intellectual Confession from a Member of the ‘Non-Western’ IR Community,” 83.

Table 4- Epistemological orientations in Asian⁴¹ IR communities

Response option	Number of response	Percentage
Positivist	176	50.40
Post-positivist	102	29.20

The “Asian” countries surveyed include Hong Kong, Japan, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore

Table 5- Theoretical orientations in Asian IR communities

Response option	Number of response	Percentage
Constructivism	94	26.40
Realism	80	22.50
Liberalism	47	13.20
Other	30	8.40
English school	20	5.60
Marxism	15	4.20
Feminism	12	3.40

In sum, although the Global IR projects have received significant attention, generating alternative or indigenous sources for theory construction (especially in China), a few Western IR theories still remain at the centre of many Asian IR scholarships. Worse, there is little difference between epistemological trends in the American and Asian (Chinese, Korean, and Japanese) IR communities in terms of their strong commitment to positivist epistemology. This results in the predominance of a positivism-centred understanding of what counts as a “good” theory or a “valid” way of producing knowledge in IR. In other words, *despite* the facts that the once-dominant positivism has met its demise in the philosophy of science and that the philosophy of science embraces a wide variety of “legitimate” understandings of “science,”⁴² positivism continues to “usurp” the title of science in IR.

5. Reflexive Solidarity in Global IR

What the above discussion and investigation indicate is clear: the problem with the parochialism of IR, which concerns all those engaged in Global IR, is not only geographical or geocultural. Western/American dominance in the field can also be seen in the dominance of positivism, a particular version of science that originated in the modern West. A few theoretical paradigms based on positivism continue to prevail across different (whether Western or non-Western) IR communities. As discussed earlier, even those concerned with going beyond the West-centrism of IR by developing indigenous (Asian) theories or “national schools” tend to do so on the basis of a general acceptance of the positivist model of science. While expressing deep concerns about the “marginalisation” of non-Western scholarships within the field, they consider positivism as the standard way of conducting inquiry in IR. In

⁴¹ Once again, I appreciate the TRIP team for inviting me to join in the 2017 TRIP survey and sharing its raw data and results with me.

⁴² Stefano Guzzini, “The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (2005): 495–521; Jonathan Joseph, “Philosophy in International Relations: A Scientific Realist Approach,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35, no. 2 (2007): 345–59; Cecelia Lynch, “Reflexivity in Research on Civil Society: Constructivist Perspectives,” *International Studies Review* 10, no. 4 (2008): 708–21; Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight, eds., *Scientific Realism and International Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

this respect, the problem of the dominance of the West in IR is synonymous with the problem of the dominance of positivism. How can we address this double parochialism in IR? I call for reflexive solidarity—as both reflexive and intentional pivot to the “science question” and a collaborative move toward a broadening of what it means to be “scientific” in global IR knowledge.

5.1. The “science question” in IR

Obviously, it is very important to pay sustained attention to indigenous knowledge and experiences and theorise them in the study of international relations. Yet, equally importantly, such an undertaking should not resort to the geography-orientated ways of addressing the complex issue of IR’s marginalisation and parochialism. The ongoing non-Western or Global IR debates tend to approach West-centrism narrowly in geocultural terms—i.e. in terms of the geographical origins of key IR concepts, theories, or theorists. For example, non-Western IR theory-building enterprises, especially those committed to the establishment of “national school,” tend to situate their rationales along the simple binary geographical or geohistorical lines: either inside or outside of the West. Similarly, many advocates of Global IR begin their quest with geocultural concerns. In this sense, Wemheuer-Vogelaar et al. note,⁴³ “geography plays a central role in the Global IR debate,” and its literature “repeatedly categorizes scholars into ... regional and national schools.” Interestingly, their study, based on the 2014 TRIP survey data, shows that non-Western IR scholars “are more likely to have geographically bounded perceptions of IR communities” than their Western counterparts.⁴⁴

Of course, it is true that non-Western societies and their voices sit on the margins of the discipline; we must grapple with this marginalisation and underrepresentation. The point is not that these geographically-based concerns are misplaced, but that the current terrain of the Global IR debate needs to extend to the issues of epistemology (i.e. the “science question”) in order to see the extent of the parochialism of IR more clearly, and thus ameliorate it. That is, we need to critically reflect on ourselves, asking whether our research and teaching practices have been rich enough to go beyond the mainstream (i.e. positivist) view of science and do justice to a pluralistic understanding of what it means to be “scientific” (and thus “legitimate” and “good”) knowledge in IR. This critical self-reflection is necessary given that there is only one dominant epistemological view prevailing across IR communities.

Positivism, as a particular philosophy of science, does not accept local perspectives or indigenous experiences as a secure foundation upon which to produce and ensure any scientific knowledge. In positivist conceptions of science, it is “unscientific” to emphasise and/or incorporate a particular culture or the worldview of a particular nation or region into theory, for a legitimately scientific theory should seek generality and universality. Positivists maintain that “scientific” and “good” international studies ought to discern general patterns of state behaviour, develop empirically verifiable “covering law” explanations, and test their hypotheses through cross-case comparisons. Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba make it clear that generality is the single most important measure of progress in IR, stressing that “the question is less whether... a theory is false or not... than *how much of the world the*

⁴³ Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar et al., “The IR of the Beholder: Examining Global IR Using the 2014 TRIP Survey,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 16–32.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

*theory can help us explain.*⁴⁵ From this perspective, any attempt to develop an indigenous theory attentive to historically-situated local cultures or traditions is suspect because it may delimit the general applicability of theory.

What this implies is that attempts to globalise IR by embracing non-Western societies' indigenous ontologies or historical-cultural traditions need to be accompanied by attempts to broaden what we mean by scientific knowledge in international studies. Unless we rectify the mistaken conflation of science (in general) with a particular (i.e. positivist) version of science, the double parochialism of IR will likely remain unchanged.

5.2. Solidarity

This is precisely where I suggest solidarity and collaboration should come in. As noted, a globalising of IR requires a broadening of the limited understanding of science in IR; to this end, the non-Western and Global IR projects need to revamp their geography-orientated approaches by seeking solidarity with other marginalised scholars, specifically post-positivists, in order to build wide avenues in which not only positivist (i.e. causal-explanatory) inferences, but also critical and normative theorising and historicised, ethnographically-attuned approaches are all accepted as different but equally “scientific” ways of knowing in IR. Furthermore, collaboration among them is logical. The view that where a theory originates and who originates it matter a great deal is shared by all forms of Global IR projects. This assumption resonates with post-positivist understandings of theory. In contrast to positivist epistemology, in which theory is thought to be objective—regardless of where and by whom a theory is built—post-positivism emphasises that “theory is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose.”⁴⁶ In this regard, post-positivist scholarship engages in critical, normative, and constitutive theorising, as opposed to explanatory theorising. Post-positivist epistemology regards the key roles of theory as criticising a particular social order and analysing how it is constituted, with the goal of changing it. Global IR projects also intend to change the current IR scholarship, with the aim of rendering it more diverse and inclusive. Likewise, IR scholars who favour a post-positivist epistemology and reflexive theory have long entered pleas for pluralism. Thierry Balzacq and Stéphane Baele note that since the beginning of the third debate in IR, “theoretical diversity” has consistently remained “the strongest statement” of post-positivist IR scholars.⁴⁷

What is more, several post-positivist IR researchers have already begun to develop broad conceptions of science. For example, Jackson writes that different theoretical paradigms, including the “reflexivist” paradigm, should be considered equally valid (or “scientific”) modes of knowledge in IR; to this end, he calls for “a pluralist science of IR” based on “a broad and pluralistic definition of science.”⁴⁸ His call also resonates with an attitude of “foundational prudence,” a suggestion by Nuno Monteiro and Keven Ruby. They state that IR researchers need to remain “open-minded” about ontological and epistemological foundations on which to build “scientific” grounds for producing knowledge, which thus “encourages

⁴⁵ Emphasis in original. See, Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 101.

⁴⁶ Emphasis in original. See, Robert W. Cox, “Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory,” in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 227.

⁴⁷ Thierry Balzacq and Stéphane J. Baele, “The Third Debate and Postpositivism,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, (22 Dec. 2017): 2-4, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.104>.

⁴⁸ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry*, 32, 193.

theoretical and methodological pluralism” in IR.⁴⁹ In a related vein, Stefano Guzzini has proposed four modes of theorising—“normative, meta-theoretical, ontological/constitutive, and empirical”—each of which has a different yet connected “scientific” purpose.⁵⁰ Milja Kurki has also made a significant contribution to rectifying our narrow view of science and causation: building upon the conceptualisation of cause and causation advanced by critical realism, her work shows that causes can work in many different ways beyond a ‘when A, then B’ form, such ways as producing, generating, creating, constraining, enabling, influencing or conditioning.⁵¹ Non-Western and Global IR enterprises need to engage in more active dialogue with these post-positivists’ critical discussions about science and jointly open up broad avenues for determining what can count as “valid” forms of evidence and “scientific” knowledge in IR. Given all of the above, solidarity between those concerned with going beyond the West-centrism of IR and those embracing post-positivist epistemology is not just possible, but also necessary if we are to change the parochial landscape of IR and ultimately achieve a “truly” pluralistic and global IR.

5.3. Autoethnography: Praxis of reflexive solidarity

Here, an autoethnographic or autobiographical approach⁵² can be very useful for actually ‘doing’ reflexive solidarity, especially with the aim of evoking entangled empathy and solidarity.⁵³ As discussed earlier, Global IR scholarship constantly calls for “change,” emphasising the need to embrace a wider range of theoretical, historical, or normative perspectives in international studies. When our motivation is to change the current state of IR, a key step that must be taken is to “share our feelings and thoughts with others.”⁵⁴ Obviously, this sharing can only begin after telling our own stories. In effect, to reveal the personal is the very first step in any encounter with others. For example, how much do *I*—as a non-Western (Asian) IR researcher and teacher motivated to change a Western-centric IR—put my motivation/intention into action in teaching and research? What has made *me* feel discouraged and frustrated when I tried to globalise IR, using and promoting local knowledge and indigenous historical experience and literature? That is, we need to reflect on ourselves by telling our *personal* experiences—struggles, challenges, frustrations—rather than making generalised statements on what others think or what institutional and structural constraints are as if we are an ‘objective’ analyst, observing the issue at hand with a bird’s-eye view.

Surely, this is not to suggest that what is at stake in bringing about “greater diversity” in IR is only the personal. It is imperative to understand broader socio-political norms and institutional contexts that condition or constrain the acts of individuals living therein. But, again, the key here is to see social or institutional contexts *through* our own personal encounters. For instance, how has my personal and professional subjectivity been constructed,

⁴⁹ Nuno Monteiro and Keven G. Ruby, “IR and the False Promise of Philosophical Foundations,” *International Theory* 1 (2009): 32.

⁵⁰ Stefano Guzzini, “The Ends of International Relations Theory: Stages of Reflexivity and Modes of Theorizing,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 533-535.

⁵¹ Milja Kurki, *Causation in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Milja Kurki, “Stretching Situated Knowledge: From Standpoint Epistemology to Cosmology and Back Again,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43, no. 3 (2015): 779-97.

⁵² Naeem Inayatullah, ed., *Autobiographical International Relations, I, IR* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011); Naeem Inayatullah and Elizabeth Dauphinee, eds., *Narrative Global Politics, Theory, History and the Personal in International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016);

⁵³ Yong-Soo Eun, “Calling for IR as Becoming-Rhizomatic,” *Global Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (2021): 10.

⁵⁴ Funda Gençoğlu, “On the Construction of Identities: An Autoethnography from Turkey,” *International Political Science Review* 41, no. 4 (2020): 601.

deconstructed, or reconstructed within and through the prevailing norms of the IR community or the nation of which I am also a member?⁵⁵ What has encouraged or discouraged my attempts and practices to change the existing social norm or institutional makeup? How are my research and teaching practices implicated in the production or reproduction of my local IR community? In short, when we discuss social and institutional constraints that impede our motivation and action to embrace “greater diversity” in IR research and teaching, what is crucial is to tell our stories (*personal* encounters and struggles) that pass through the social constraints. “To write individual experience is, at the same time, to write social experience.”⁵⁶

This autoethnographic approach, namely to write about the self (i.e. what experiences I have had and what emotions I have felt), does help to create empathy.⁵⁷ When our stories are being told, others can always find threads of their own stories in ours. And the minute that recognition happens, it becomes the basis for the solidarity necessary for change in IR. Whenever I tell my personal stories about what made me struggle and why I felt frustrated or discouraged when I sought “doing IR differently” in the Korean academic community where positivist theories remain the dominant influence, I see my stories travelling far beyond the national or geocultural boundary, having a great resonance with others who also seek “doing IR differently” yet struggle with the prevailing norms of their local IR communities. That is, a revealing of the feeling-self is a very effective way to confront the *multiple* identities that we possess (yet often limit to one particular stratum) and find linkages across various socio-political boundaries. This is the virtue of autoethnography; I suggest that advocates of Global IR can and should use autoethnographic narratives of their everyday lived experiences, be they achievements or frustrations, to understand, critique, and change the current parochial state of IR.

6. Concluding Remarks

The extent of parochialism in IR knowledge and knowledge production can and should be examined according to various dimensions, including epistemological as well as geographical or geocultural. Unfortunately, however, the epistemology closely associated with our understandings of and approaches to science, and how it can be connected with the issue of parochialism or marginalisation, does not receive the attention it deserves in the Global IR debate. This is a serious limitation precisely because the problem we face is a double parochialism. For example, if we consider the problem of the hierarchy of knowledge not only from a geographical perspective (i.e. Western/American-centrism), but also in terms of epistemology (i.e. positivism’s dominance of the field), then the Global IR project can have far-reaching repercussions with support from post-positivist IR scholarship, whose epistemological underpinnings are marginalised irrespective of their geographical locations, be they the non-West or the West. At the same time, although a large group of post-positivist scholars express their deep concerns about the problem of hierarchies in international studies,⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Oded Löwenheim, “The ‘I’ in IR: An Autoethnographic Account,” *Review of International Studies*, 36, no. 4 (2010): 1025–48; Gençoğlu, “On the Construction of Identities,” 603.

⁵⁶ Eric Mykhalovskiy, “Reconsidering Table Talk: Critical Thoughts on the Relationship between Sociology, Autobiography, and Self-Indulgence,” *Qualitative Sociology* 19, no. 1 (1996): 131–51.

⁵⁷ There is abundant evidence, including MRI brain images, functional MRI data, and experimental data (particularly from the fields of neuroscience, psychology, social psychology, and educational studies) to demonstrate that micro-level (personal) storytelling, as compared with macro-level (general) descriptions, evoke much greater empathy.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Joseph, “Philosophy in International Relations.”; Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry*; Inanna Hamati-Ataya, “Reflectivity, Reflexivity, Reflexivism: IR’s ‘Reflexive Turn’ and Beyond,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 4 (2012): 669–94; Inanna Hamati-Ataya, “Transcending Objectivism, Subjectivism, and the Knowledge In-between: The Subject in/of

the issue of the marginalisation of knowledge production in geocultural contexts has not been raised or addressed as much as it could be in their critical and normative approaches to the problem. Put simply, while both groups are concerned with marginalisation, calling for a pluralistic field of study, their sets of concern tend to remain disparate.

In order to expand the IR discipline, the opening up of what we mean by “scientific” knowledge in IR is also vital. To move the discipline toward this broadening, critical self-reflection and collective collaboration among marginalised scholars through autoethnographic narratives and accounts are all essential. I believe that this reflexive solidarity will help to move us a step closer toward achieving a “truly” pluralistic and global IR.

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'Global' IR and Self-Reflections in Turkey: Methodology, Data Collection, and Data Repository

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Abstract

This article covers the disciplinary debates on 'global' IR and the self-reflections of IR scholars about the state of the discipline in Turkey. It argues that high quality methodological training can contribute to overcoming the dissatisfaction felt by scholars of IR in Turkey. It suggests that inclusion of IR knowledge produced in the non-core into the 'Global' pool can be achieved through local 'revolutions', and that the potential for progress in this direction lies in methodological improvement and data-collection projects. The article offers three exemplary data projects to crystalize the argument: the Social Sciences Data Repository, the Global Security Database (GloSec) and the Global Risk Assessment Dataset (GRAD). These projects aim to: disseminate data-based research and encourage data sharing among scholars in Turkey, train prospective IR scholars to produce research based on clear, replicable, and rigorous methodology in Turkey, encourage graduate students in Turkish universities to have a global scholarly outreach and talk to the global scholarly community, and contribute to IR scholarship with these local pedagogical and academic experiences. Two separate groups of researchers composed of graduate students from various universities across Turkey are trained in the ways of research design, the fundamentals of data collection, and writing research papers based on rigorous methodological design, data, and replicable findings. Thus, the paper not only discusses the diagnoses in the literature regarding the shortcomings of the International Relations discipline in Turkey, but also offers concrete directions for a potential treatment.

Keywords: Data collection, data repository, global studies, methodology, Turkey

1. Introduction

The state of the IR discipline has been a debated topic among IR scholars for approximately four decades. These debates started with criticisms of 'US-centrism', continued with the call for a more inclusive understanding of scientific knowledge production in IR, and evolved into the call for further inclusion of the 'non-core' or 'periphery' in the discipline. The shifting nature of these debates and how they have transformed already indicate that the IR discipline has truly become more inclusive in time, but as some scholars would argue, still not necessarily 'international' or 'global'. Hence, scholars have recently started to discuss the possibility of globalizing IR. The call was for IR scholars across the world to challenge

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and overcome the disciplinary boundaries set by American and Western IR scholars, thereby advancing a more inclusive and universal IR discipline. Accordingly, the literature has produced abundant studies on definitions of ways to achieve ‘global IR.’

As debates on the state of the art continued in the literature internationally, IR scholars in Turkey also had time for some ‘self-reflection’, especially regarding the state of the IR discipline in the country. Since the early 2000s, IR in Turkey has been assessed in a few studies on critical topics, including but not limited to the need for improving the theoretical contributions made by Turkish IR scholars, the underdevelopment of ‘homegrown theorizing’, and the need for improving methodological quality and training. The overall debate on IR in Turkey usually revolves around diagnosing problems within the literature with occasional suggested prescriptions to overcome them. Since this discussion has been going on for some time, we have a considerable number of prescriptions in the literature. While reviewing, analyzing, and building on some of these prescriptions, this article comes up with its own suggestions that aim to connect the disciplinary debates on Turkey’s IR with the debates on global IR.

I suggest that we may have already used much time in the diagnosis and prescription phase and overlooked the next steps constituting the treatment of these issues. Combining my observations with the self-reflections of Turkish IR scholars, I argue that the ‘underdevelopment’ of Turkey’s IR discipline is related not only to the lack of theoretical studies or lack of ‘quantitative’ methodology, but to a wider problem as well: studies frequently have an inability to establish three interrelated connections between (1) metatheory and theory, (2) theory and the empirical application, and (3) methodology and methods. Following some of the existing ‘prescriptions’ in the literature, I argue that by implementing high quality methodological training, which would enable IR students to establish these three connections, we can better foster a scholarly community that produces replicable research, homegrown theorizing, and takes part in the ‘center/core’ of global IR. To crystalize the argument and move beyond prescription, I also offer examples from ongoing projects, together with the details of their research and teaching designs.

I suggest that ‘data-collection’ may serve as a good starting point for methodology training in Turkey and discuss the scope of the *Social Sciences Data Repository*, the *Global Security Database (GloSec)* and the *Global Risk Assessment Dataset (GRAD)* as learn-in-action research projects. These three projects can serve as examples for the dissemination of data-based research and enable data-sharing among Turkish scholars, thereby aiding the accumulation of IR knowledge in Turkey. The data-collection projects aim at training prospective/early-career IR scholars in data-collection, research/project design, proposal writing, and other academic activities (teamwork, conference application... etc.). One might assume that these skills are developed in graduate programs at most universities; however, the scholarly output and the dissatisfaction in the ‘self-reflections’ summarized below indicate that the IR discipline in Turkey might benefit greatly from such ‘data-sharing’ platforms, as well as methodological ‘train-in-action’ and ‘data-collection’ initiatives.

The first part of the article reviews debates on the state of the art in IR literature. The second part assesses the self-reflections of Turkish IR scholars, their diagnoses on the shortcomings of the IR discipline in Turkey, and their suggestions to overcome these limitations. The third part gives examples from ongoing projects that may help overcome some of the shortcomings of the IR discipline in Turkey. The article concludes that high

quality methodological education is of key importance to *self-reflection in the periphery* and for *reclaiming IR from the core*.

2. From ‘Truly International’ to ‘Global’: Discussion of the ‘State of the Art’ in IR

The debate on fostering a truly ‘international’ IR discipline has continued for a considerable amount of time. Criticisms against the hierarchies, dependencies, boundaries, and geographical limitations reinforced within the discipline began around the 1970s with discussions of whether IR is an ‘American’ discipline. Since then, though seldom in the beginning, IR scholars have analyzed the development of the discipline in the non-core or non-American parts of the world. By 1977, Hoffman had referred to the formation of IR as a field autonomous from political science. However, he stipulated that such development only grounded IR as a ‘discipline’ in the United States, making it an ‘American’ social science. Presenting his dissatisfaction with the state of the IR discipline at that time, he suggested that the discipline should move away from the American ‘superpower’ perspective and towards other parts of the world.¹ In 1980, Palmer claimed that the IR discipline is not ‘an American social science.’² In his review of the then-‘state of the art’ he observed that the IR discipline was rapidly becoming ‘truly international’ and it should continue to do so through transnational dialogue among scholars. Palmer also appreciated the International Studies Association’s (ISA) efforts in creating significant ‘trans-Atlantic dialogue’ and intent to transform this dialogue into a transnational one “not confined simply to American and British scholars (...) [but also one in] which scholars all over the world will participate.”³ Such discussion has also revolved around ISA, which is one of the main professional associations of the scholars in the discipline.

In the 1990s, various scholars claimed that neither the ISA nor the IR discipline was ‘truly’ international. For instance, in her presidential address in 1995, Susan Strange argued that the ISA can serve as a “hearing-aid” for American scholars, even though they are not aware that they need it: “You -as authors and too often as editors of professional journals- appear to be deaf and blind to anything that’s not published in the U.S.A. Ask yourself when you last quoted an author or a journal outside the U.S. How many non-American journals do you look at?”⁴ Strange calls upon ISA members to develop an indiscriminatory forum open to all national backgrounds and disciplines conducting international studies. Building on these previous arguments, in 1998, Waever claimed ‘American Hegemony’ continues to influence the theoretical profile of the discipline.⁵ While he acknowledges that IR has become a ‘globalized’ discipline with the establishment of regional professional associations, he also observes how ‘American’ theories travel across the rest of the world. He claims that the emerging national IR communities are importers of knowledge, in a sense, suffering a huge trade deficit against the export of American knowledge. Waever puts forward the necessity of the ‘de-Americanization of IR’ to talk about a global non-asymmetrical disciplinary development. “The best hope for a more global, less asymmetrical discipline lies in the

¹ Stanley Hoffmann, “An American Social Science: International Relations,” *Daedalus* 106 (2019): 41–60.

² Norman D. Palmer, “The Study of International Relations in the United States: Perspectives of Half a Century,” *International Studies Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (1980): 343–63.

³ Palmer, “The Study of International Relations,” 361 [emphasis added].

⁴ Susan Strange, “1995 Presidential Address ISA as a Microcosm,” *International Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (1995): 290.

⁵ Ole Waever, “The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline : American and European Developments in International Relations,” *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 687–727.

American turn to rational choice, which is not going to be copied in Europe.”⁶ Waever seems to be more hopeful about European IR, in which he sees a professionalization without Americanization. However, he claims, this professionalization is in contrast with what is happening in the ‘true periphery’, where the main aim still was to reach America.⁷

In 2000, Steve Smith wrote that the discipline of IR is “still an American Social Science.”⁸ He presents how American understandings of epistemology and methodology continue to be dominant in IR, de-legitimizing other understandings of theory development and scientific knowledge production. He claims that the US IR community dominates IR theory and exports their adherence to one dominant theory, rationalism. Comparing the state of the discipline in the US and UK, Smith concludes that in the UK “IR is a far more pluralist subject, with no one theoretical approach dominant.”⁹

Scholars also continued to criticize the International Studies Association for being ‘North American’ and not ‘International’. While acknowledging the increase in paradigmatic debates in the IR discipline, Aydinli and Mathews argued in favor of the need for more attention on the divides between core and periphery.¹⁰ The authors call for more dialogue between the core and periphery and claim that “in the post–Cold War era of increasing globalization, neither policy prescriptions nor theory construction in IR can afford to ignore the perspectives of the true periphery that lies outside of Europe and North America.”¹¹ Based on data collected from leading scholarly journals, the authors argue that the ‘core’ does not fully acknowledge the contributions made by the periphery to the discipline. The same observation also holds for highly theory-oriented journals: “While there is overall limited dialogue, this study also shows that the more highly theory-oriented a journal is, the less likely, on average, it is to include contributors from outside of its group.”¹² The authors argue that leading journals and organizations have not been able to break the dominance of the US in IR-related theoretical debates, and call for increased dialogue between the core and periphery by assessing both sides’ responsibilities.¹³

In 2003, Arlene Tickner called for “Seeing IR Differently.”¹⁴ In her review of the then-recent literature, Tickner observed that the debates over the state of the IR discipline continued in three complementary ways. The first was the debate between post-positivists and mainstream IR theorists on the latter’s dominance over the ways of knowledge production. The post-positivist critiques demanded an expansion of the disciplinary boundaries towards a more inclusive understanding of knowledge production. The second debate was the discussion built on the history and sociology of science discussing “how social factors internal and external to the community have influenced IR thinking.”¹⁵ Lastly, the third group of studies discussed the national variations within the IR discipline, mainly comparing the US and Europe. Tickner observes the emergence of a fourth group of studies arguing for “the

⁶ Waever, “The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline,” 726.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Steve Smith, “The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?,” *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 2, no. 3 (2000): 374–402.

⁹ Smith, “The Discipline of International Relations,” 399.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ Aydinli and Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable?,” 291.

¹² Aydinli and Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable?,” 297.

¹³ Aydinli and Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable?,” 300.

¹⁴ Arlene Tickner, “Seeing IR Differently: Notes from the Third World,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 32, no. 2 (2003): 295–324.

¹⁵ Tickner, “Seeing IR Differently,” 296.

need to think differently about IR in non-core settings.”¹⁶ According to Tickner, this fourth group of studies claims that the “terminology, categories and theories” of the ‘core’ do not correspond with the realities of the ‘non-core’ or, as she calls it, the “Third World”.¹⁷ Tickner argues that listening more closely to the third world interpretations of international relations would decrease dissatisfaction stemming from the “intellectual crisis in IR” and enhance our knowledge and understanding of world problems.¹⁸ She calls for a dialogue between the third world and the ‘core’, bringing third world local knowledge into the understanding and the theorizing of international relations, thereby creating a new language of academic studies and an alternative approach to rethinking IR.¹⁹

From the 1970s to the early 2000s, debates on the state of the IR discipline have started with criticisms of US-centrism, evolved with the call for a more inclusive understanding of scientific knowledge production in IR, and continued with the call for the inclusion of the non-core into the discipline. The ways in which these debates have evolved indicate that IR has truly become more inclusive in time, but as some scholars would argue, the discipline is still not necessarily ‘international’ or ‘global’. By the late 2000s, scholars following this trajectory have argued for the inclusion of ‘IR beyond the West’, ‘Post-Western’, and ‘non-western’ in the study of IR.²⁰ Criticisms of the state of the literature and theorizing in IR have evolved from ‘American-centrism’ to ‘Western-centrism’ and ‘Eurocentrism.’²¹ Analyzing the state of the discipline with an emphasis on the relationship between the ‘core’ (or center) and non-core (or periphery) has also led to the recent debate on ‘Globalising’ IR.

As part of his presidential address at the ISA conference, Acharya puts forward a claim to develop a more inclusive discipline that incorporates diverse approaches developed in the non-core and that transcend the division between the West and the Rest.²² He observes that the IR discipline “does not reflect the voices, experiences, knowledge claims, and contributions of the vast majority of the societies and states in the world, and often marginalizes those outside the core countries of the West.”²³ In 2016, as part of the Presidential Issue of *International Studies Review*, Acharya defines Global IR as an idea that “urges the IR community to look past the American and Western dominance of the field and embrace greater diversity, especially by recognizing the places, roles, and contributions of ‘non-Western’ peoples and societies.”²⁴ He argues that IR scholarship across the world should challenge and overcome the disciplinary boundaries set by American and Western IR scholars, and thereby advance a more inclusive and universal discipline. The literature has produced abundant studies on

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 296.

¹⁸ Ibid., 301.

¹⁹ Tickner, “Seeing IR Differently”.

²⁰ Pinar Bilgin, “Thinking Past ‘Western’ IR?,” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (2008): 5–23; Pinar Bilgin, “The International Political ‘Sociology of a Not So International Discipline,’” *International Political Sociology* 3, no. 3 (2009): 338–42; Arlene B. Tickner and Ole Waever, eds., *International Relations Scholarship around the World* (London: Routledge, 2009); Pinar Bilgin, “Looking for ‘the International’ beyond the West,” *Third World Quarterly* 31, no. 5 (2010): 817–28; Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and Beyond Asia* (London: Routledge, 2010).

²¹ John M. Hobson, “Is Critical Theory Always for the White West and for Western Imperialism? Beyond Westphalian towards a Post-Racist Critical IR,” *Review of International Studies* 33, no. S1 (2007): 91–116; Acharya and Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory*; John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760–2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Rosa Vasilaki, “Provincialising IR? Deadlocks and Prospects in Post-Western IR Theory,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 41, no. 1 (2012): 3–22.

²² Amitav Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds,” *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2014): 647–59.

²³ Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR),” 1.

²⁴ Amitav Acharya, “Advancing Global IR: Challenges, Contentions, and Contributions,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 4.

definitions of ways to achieve ‘global IR’.²⁵

This summary on the evolution of debates on the state of the art in the discipline brings us to the following: ‘self-reflection in the periphery’ and ‘reclaiming IR from the core’. As this discussion is not unprecedented in global IR literature, it is also not unprecedented in Turkish IR literature. While making an assessment on ‘homegrown theorizing’ and the state of the art in Turkey, the following section evaluates Turkish IR’s engagements in self-reflection.

3. Time for Self-Reflection: Diagnosis and Prescriptions

In line with the above-mentioned international literature, a limited number of studies have assessed the state of the IR discipline in Turkey.²⁶ Aydınli and Mathews offered ‘homegrown theorizing’ as a feasible way to get Turkey’s IR discipline acknowledged by the center.²⁷ By 2008, they had highlighted the limited improvement in the center-periphery relationship, in which knowledge at the center is transferred to the periphery, since the early 2000s when scholars made solid criticisms of this dependency. The imbalance, or in Waever’s words ‘the trade deficit’, will continue unless the periphery starts bringing original local theories and concepts to the ‘global’.²⁸ They call for comprehensive studies on the original theoretical paradigms and they focus on the factors, local or otherwise, that hamper the development of such original paradigms in the periphery. Then, the authors assess the state of the art in Turkey and the probable factors that hold Turkey’s IR from becoming truly ‘international’.²⁹

Due to certain domestic political and pedagogical factors, the Turkish IR discipline has been established and, for a long time, dominated by scholars that mainly focus on descriptive historical/political studies rather than theoretical ones.³⁰ Theoretical studies started to emerge only during the 1990s, as an increasing number of scholars in Turkish IR (mostly those having graduate degrees from North American or European Universities) started to affiliate themselves with IR theory and theorizing. Yet, in their interviews with local IR scholars, Aydınli and Mathews found that even those scholars who claim to be ‘theorizing’ are continuing to import theories from the center and make empirical applications of those theories to the Turkish case. Instead of ‘application theorizing’, the authors offer ‘homegrown theorizing’.³¹ The difference, they argue, “is not simply its [application theorizing] reference to an existing body of theoretical literature however, but rather the solely confirmative use

²⁵ See among others; Pinar Bilgin, “How to Remedy Eurocentrism in IR? A Complement and a Challenge for The Global Transformation,” *International Theory* 8, no. 3 (2016): 492–501; Pinar Bilgin, “‘Contrapuntal Reading’ as a Method, an Ethos, and a Metaphor for Global IR,” *International Studies Review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 134–46; Knud Erik Jorgensen, “Would 100 Global Workshops on Theory Building Make A Difference?,” *All Azimuth* 7, no. 2 (2017): 41–58; Daniel Maliniak et al., “Is International Relations a Global Discipline? Hegemony, Insularity, and Diversity in the Field,” *Security Studies* 27, no. 3 (2018): 448–84; Eun Yong-Soo, “Global IR through Dialogue,” *The Pacific Review* 32, no. 2 (2019): 131–49; Felix Anderl and Antonia Witt, “Problematising the Global in Global IR,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 49, no. 1 (2020): 32–57.

²⁶ Ersel Aydınli and Julie Mathews, “Türkiye uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininde özgün kuram potansiyeli: Anadolu ekolünü oluşturmak mümkün mü?,” *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 5, no. 17 (2008): 161–87; Ersel Aydınli and Julie Mathews, “Periphery Theorizing for a Truly Internationalised Discipline: Spinning IR Theory out of Anatolia,” *Review of International Studies* 34, no. 4 (2008): 693–712; Ersel Aydınli and Julie Mathews, “Turkey: Towards Homegrown Theorizing and Building a Disciplinary Community,” *International Relations Scholarship Around the World* (London: Routledge, 2009), 208–22; Seçkin Köstem, “International Relations Theories and Turkish International Relations: Observations Based on a Book,” *All Azimuth* 4, no. 1 (2015): 59–66; Ersel Aydınli, “Methodological Poverty and Disciplinary Underdevelopment in IR,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2019): 109–15; Ersel Aydınli, “Methodology as a Lingua Franca in International Relations: Peripheral Self-Reflections on Dialogue with the Core,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 13, no. 2 (2020): 287–312.

²⁷ Aydınli and Mathews, “Türkiye uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininde özgün kuram potansiyeli”.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Aydınli and Mathews, “Türkiye uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininde özgün kuram potansiyeli,” 163.

³⁰ Ibid., 166–67.

³¹ Ibid., 167–71.

of that literature – offering your context as another ground for further confirmation of an imported concept.”³²

Aydinli and Mathews discuss four different ways of theorizing with examples from IR in Turkey.³³ First, pure theorizing aims at finding “coherent explanations for broad phenomena while remaining unattached to specific areas.”³⁴ Second, homegrown theorizing refers to studies aiming to develop theories bringing “entirely new patterns, understandings, and frameworks of analysis” based on local experiences.³⁵ Third, application theorizing refers to applying theories developed in the center while using the local as a case study. This is one of the frequently observed approaches among Turkish scholars. Finally, “borrowed works” or translation theorizing refers to the translation of existing theoretical works into the native language to make it “accessible to the average Turkish IR Student.”³⁶ Based on these four types of theorizing, the authors identify that although theorizing in Turkish IR has increased in the last 15 years, the discipline has not made enough progress in homegrown theorizing. The authors talk about certain ‘core’ and ‘periphery’-related reasons for the underdevelopment of homegrown theorizing in the Turkish discipline. After this diagnosis, they refer to a couple of prospects and ‘prescriptions’ for the theoretical development of the IR discipline. The authors stress some positive improvements, such as the establishment of new IR journals, organization of conferences, and emergence of new funding opportunities. They conclude by offering homegrown theorizing as the path for periphery scholars to reach the center.³⁷

Approximately a decade later, Köstem also observes similar limitations to the state of theory in Turkish IR. He states that Turkish IR studies “is still mostly focused on various regional and thematic aspects of Turkey’s foreign relations, with little original theoretical insights.”³⁸ He argues that “IR theorizing in Turkey by Turkish scholars is rare because now, in the post-Mülkiye era, our minds are occupied only with grand theories and meta-theoretical debates.”³⁹ He argues that Turkish IR imports theoretical positions from the west, which results in two side-effects: “we tend to either get lost in big theoretical questions as a result of the futile effort to explain all political phenomena with a single grand theory, or simply apply grand theories to issues of Turkey’s international relations.”⁴⁰ He observes an inclination towards abstract theoretical debates in Turkish IR, which, he argues, causes fault lines between scholars that adhere to competing theoretical positions. After diagnosing the limitations, he proposes a couple of prescriptions as well. Rather than offering homegrown theorizing, he suggests that IR scholars in Turkey should (1) adopt a theoretically pluralist position and (2) connect “their theoretical maturity with empirical knowledge” to increase their contribution to the international literature.⁴¹

In a recent roundtable discussion, Aydinli et al. discussed the possibility of homegrown theorizing while dealing with the following questions: “What is really stopping homegrown theories from moving into and becoming a respectable part of the core IR theory? What

³² Aydinli and Mathews, “Periphery Theorising for a Truly Internationalised Discipline”

³³ Aydinli and Mathews, “Turkey: Towards Homegrown Theorizing,” 213–17.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 214.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Aydinli and Mathews, “Turkey: Towards Homegrown Theorizing,” 215.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 220–21.

³⁸ Köstem, “International Relations Theories,” 62.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 63–65.

are the best ways of making homegrown theory relevant?”⁴² The authors present certain reasons for the ‘lack’ of homegrown theorizing in Turkish IR scholarship. For instance, in his discussion, Aydınli claims that the Turkish IR discipline is young and immature since the first generation of IR scholars started theorizing in the 1980s; this generation started teaching IR theory in the 1990s, when Realism was the main theory in IR. He also claims that scholars do not cite Turkish articles, that there is a lack of prior intellectual background, a lack of theoretical discussion, and a limited understanding of theory among scholars in Turkish IR.⁴³ Other reasons for the lack of home-grown theorizing are also presented throughout the discussion, including the lack of expertise in research methods, limited willingness for scholarly self-reflection, and the ways in which IR theory is taught as part of the undergraduate IR curriculum. Interestingly, a recent survey made with Turkish IR scholars (TRIP Survey), showed that many scholars identify themselves as ‘theoreticians’; however, very limited outcome is produced.⁴⁴

Scholars did not only stop with the diagnosis of ‘the lack of homegrown theorizing’ but also offered prescriptions. They suggest that an initiative for homegrown theorizing in the periphery can start with a “healthy distance” towards or “dislike” of what is happening in the center. They add, however, that most scholars in Turkey, for instance, identify themselves as part of the Western academia.⁴⁵ As such, they are suffering ‘periphery’ problems and theoretical dependency, while at the same time identifying themselves with the center. Other prescriptions on the issue include establishing groups/conferences to bring periphery scholars together, making more use of local intellectual/historical backgrounds, developing more diversified ways of teaching IR theory, and working through mid-range theorizing instead of grand-theorizing.⁴⁶ Towards the end of the discussion Jørgensen claims that there is a need for a collective action on homegrown theorizing: “All such ideas have a limited chance of materializing into something close to a collective enterprise if we do not have three things: organization, organization and organization.”⁴⁷

As a result of the need for improving the theoretical contributions made by Turkish IR scholars, an important discussion about homegrown theorizing has emerged in the last 15 years. Scholars have discussed whether ‘homegrown’ necessarily means a complete break with the ‘core’, or to what extent it must be completely ‘original’, ‘non-core’, ‘post-Western’ or ‘non-Western’. Indeed, maybe more importantly, there is no consensus among scholars on how to achieve home-grown theorizing, nor do they agree on the need for it to begin with. This discussion has been going on for a while.⁴⁸ This lack of consensus may also have caused an impasse as there are scholars who basically reject the core/non-core dichotomy. I argue that, to overcome this ‘impasse’ and the continued under-development of the IR discipline in Turkey, one needs to go beyond diagnosis and prescription and start directly with initiatives aiming at actual treatment. As most scholars taking part in the debate would agree to a certain degree, Turkish IR still needs to improve its ‘capacity’ to theorize. This capacity cannot be

⁴² Ersel Aydınli et al., “Roundtable Discussion on Homegrown Theorizing,” *All Azimuth* 7, no. 2 (2018): 101–14.

⁴³ Aydınli et al., “Roundtable Discussion”.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Aydınli et al., “Roundtable Discussion,” 113.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Indeed, I am not so concerned with the ‘global’ core/periphery relations as much as I am concerned with the ones in my local IR academic community. Let me say that I agree with Aydınli and Mathews, that there are core/periphery relations, inside the periphery itself. Somehow the story and actors change but the core/periphery dynamics are constantly reproduced. Mathews and Aydınli, “Turkey: Towards Homegrown Theorizing”.

built in a day, but it is built over time, through accumulation of knowledge and ‘know-how’. I suggest that we may have already used much time in the diagnosis and prescription phase and overlooked further aspects of the treatment.

To this end, Aydınli and Biltekin offer another prescription similar to (but not the same as) what I present in the following section.⁴⁹ In their recent study on IR discipline in Turkey, the authors observe an expansion on the number of IR publications of scholars based in Turkey. Yet, they argue, there is limited disciplinary ‘sense of identity’ and ‘accumulation of knowledge’. This limitation, according to the authors, is the result of the lack of methodological diversity. They argue that the ‘predominantly qualitative’ nature of Turkish IR impedes debate, thereby hindering accumulation of knowledge. They suggest that increasing the use of quantitative methods may be a solution to the ‘fragmented’ IR community in Turkey. According to the authors, the use of quantitative methods and data collection would bring empirical, social, and methodological contributions to the IR discipline in Turkey as it would require scholars to “better define concepts”, establish “long-term research programs” based on data generation, and to overcome “selection bias more systematically.”⁵⁰ Through examples from different groups of literature, the authors show how certain studies were able to ‘talk to each other’ due to their clarity in terms of the methods, concepts, and approaches they use. The authors conclude with the prescription that research based on long-term and Large-N data collection and a quantitative approach may “help Turkish IR build the foundations upon which synchronized theoretical and methodological development can be based.”⁵¹ Towards the end, the authors present their point through a short discussion on the dichotomy between “critical theory” and “quantitative methodologies.” They argue that Turkish IR did not yet give a ‘proper’ chance to the use of quantitative methods and that it would be “unfortunate” and “preemptive” to start with criticisms of these methods that were not yet “given a chance to be used, challenged, and revised.”⁵²

I agree with Biltekin and Aydınli’s findings since the findings that I show in the following section indicate similar results. Yet I do not fully agree with their prescription. The authors seem to be equating “qualitative” with everything that is “not quantitative.” Indeed, what Turkish IR needs is not only more quantitative methods but instead more methods in general. I would argue that conceptual and methodological clarity are not exclusive qualities of quantitative methods but instead these qualities are at the essence of all methodological approaches.

Recently, *All Azimuth Journal* published a special issue dealing with the use of different methodological approaches by scholars in Turkey.⁵³ The special issue aimed at encouraging

⁴⁹ Ersel Aydınli and Gonca Biltekin, “Time to Quantify Turkey’s Foreign Affairs: Setting Quality Standards for a Maturing International Relations Discipline,” *International Studies Perspectives* 18, no. 3 (2017): 267–87.

⁵⁰ Aydınli and Biltekin, “Time to Quantify Turkey’s Foreign Affairs,” 268.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 283.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 284.

⁵³ İsmail Erkam Sula, “An Eclectic Methodological Approach in Analyzing Foreign Policy: Turkey’s Foreign Policy Roles and Events Dataset (TFPRED),” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 255–83; Şener Aktürk, “Temporal Horizons in the Study of Turkish Politics: Prevalence of Non-Causal Description and Seemingly ‘Global Warming’ Type of Causality,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 117–33; H. Akin Ünver, “Computational International Relations What Can Programming, Coding and Internet Research Do for the Discipline?,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 157–82; Emre Hatipoğlu et al., “Automated Text Analysis and International Relations: The Introduction and Application of a Novel Technique for Twitter,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 183–204; Özgür Özdamar, “An Application of Expected Utility Modeling and Game Theory in IR: Assessment of International Bargaining on Iran’s Nuclear Program,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 205–30; Ali Fisunoğlu, “System Dynamics Modeling in International Relations,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 231–53; Belgin Şan-Akca, “Large-N Analysis in the Study of Conflict,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 135–56; Senem Aydın-Düzgüt and Bahar Rumelili, “Discourse Analysis: Strengths and Shortcomings,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 285–305; Mustafa Serdar Palabyık, “Broadening the Horizons of the ‘International’ by Historicizing It: Comparative Historical Analysis,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018):

IR students and scholars in producing academic output based on high quality research. In his introduction to the issue, Aydınli observes that the discipline of IR in Turkey “has failed to appreciate the importance of methodology.”⁵⁴ So, following Aydınli, since research methods is the way scholars communicate and distribute scientific knowledge, we should start with ‘research methods’ training, rather than establishing new (or deepening the existing) fault lines between “quantitative vs qualitative” or “critical vs mainstream.” Therefore, I would argue, while also taking note of the increasing number of Turkish-language education programs across the country, Turkish scholars have more urgent problems and needs that revolve around methodological training. I offer the initiatives in the following section as necessary steps to contribute to the solution.

4. From Prescription to Treatment: Methodological Training in Practice

The above-mentioned self-reflections indicate that the IR discipline in Turkey did not fully acknowledge the importance of research methods in general. As Aydınli and Biltekin rightfully argue, studies using quantitative approaches are scarce. Yet, I argue, this should not imply that studies with qualitative methods are abundant in Turkey.

To start with an example, I collected data on studies published in Turkey, indexed in the Turkish scholarly index *ULAKBİM*, and that utilized the “securitization theory.”⁵⁵ I choose this theory for three purposes: 1) it is as ‘critical’ as most Turkish IR scholars studying security usually get, 2) it is mainly based on qualitative research since most studies that apply this theory do not use quantitative methods, and 3) each year approximately 4 articles get published using the securitization theory. I argue that the popularity of this theory among Turkish scholars comes from its relatively ‘easy-to-apply’ nature. When the international literature on securitization is checked, one might see that scholars who offered this theory have usually applied it to a case. So, the theory has been developed through various empirical case studies. The theory also has conceptual and methodological clarity and a step-by-step argumentation. For instance, securitization theory argues that certain issues in the social or political realm may be carried to the national security agenda by state elites, which turns those issues into threats. This is done by the discourse of policymakers and with the practices of the security professionals in the field. So, the steps are clear: 1) find an issue, 2) analyze and show the state elites’ ‘securitization’ discourse, 3) observe if it is accepted by the audience (public) as a security issue, and 4) analyze the findings. So far, the theory has been applied to many cases.

After collecting the articles published in Turkey, I asked the following question: “Does the study have a case, and if so, how does the author apply the theory?” I aimed at finding the methods that scholars have been using. Figure 1 summarizes part of the findings.

307–25; Egemen Bezci, “Secrecy and the Study of International History: Missing Dimension in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 327–38; Alper Kaliber, “Reflecting on the Reflectivist Approach to Qualitative Interviewing,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 339–57; Konstantinos Travlos, “Mobilization Follies in International Relations: A Multimethod Exploration of Why Some Decision Makers Fail to Avoid War When Public Mobilization as a Bargaining Tool Fails,” *All Azimuth* 8, no. 2 (2018): 359–85.

⁵⁴ Aydınli, “Methodological Poverty and Disciplinary Underdevelopment in IR”; Aydınli, “Methodology as a Lingua Franca in International Relations”; Ersel Aydınli, Erol Kurubaş, and Haluk Özdemir, *Yöntem, kuram, kompo: Türk uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininde vizyon arayışları* (Istanbul: Kure Yayınları, 2015).

⁵⁵ The article on securitization studies in Turkey is published in Turkish: Please see: İsmail Erkam Sula, “Güvenlikleştirme kuramında ‘söz edim’ ve ‘pratikler’: Türkçe güvenlikleştirme yazınında ‘yöntem’ arayışı [‘Speech Acts’ and ‘Practices’ in Securitization Studies: A Search for ‘Methods’ in Turkish Securitization Literature]”, *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi* 17 (2021): 85–118.

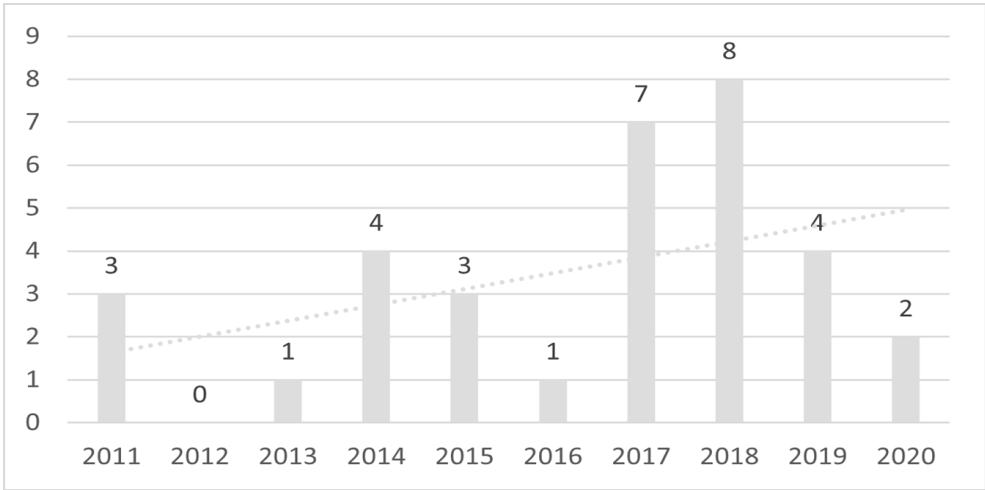


Figure 1: Turkish securitization studies by year⁵⁶

As the figure indicates, approximately four articles a year are published on securitization. The following figure shows the research questions and arguments in these studies.

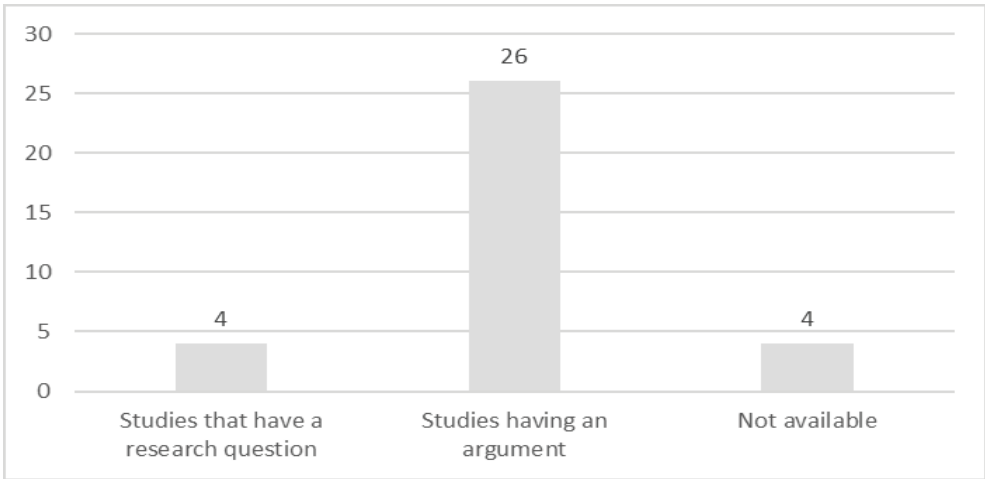


Figure 2: Turkish securitization studies: research question and argument⁵⁷

As the figure illustrates, 26 out of 34 articles have an argument. The following figure illustrates the methodological approach used by these studies.

⁵⁶ The figure is adopted and translated from Sula, "Güvenikleştirme kuramında 'söz edim' ve 'pratikler,'" 106.

⁵⁷ Sula, "Güvenikleştirme kuramında 'söz edim' ve 'pratikler,'" 110.

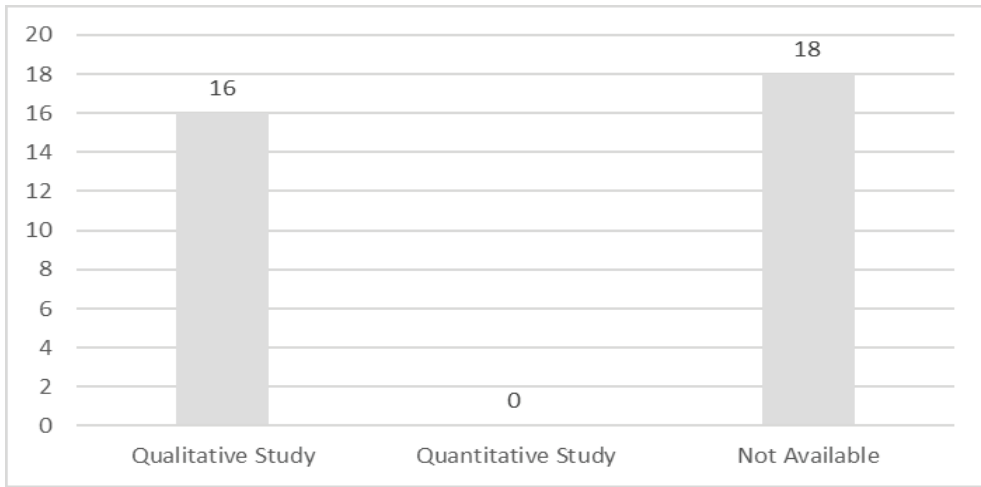


Figure 3: Turkish securitization studies: methodological approach

As the figure illustrates, more than half of those studies do not specify any methodological approach. There are no quantitative studies, but 16 studies use a ‘qualitative’ approach. I took one more step and asked, “which research method does the study take in its ‘qualitative’ approach?” The result is shown in the following figure.

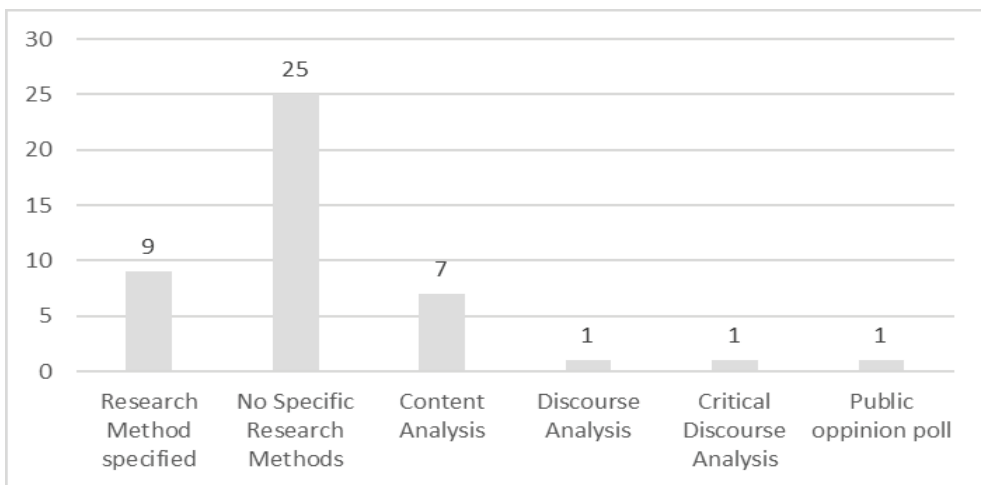


Figure 4: Turkish securitization studies: use of methods⁵⁸

When Figure 3 and Figure 4 are analyzed together, it shows that only half of those ‘qualitative approaches’ clearly refer to a specific method. In total, 25 out of 34 studies on securitization theory published in Turkey are not clear on which methods they used to ‘apply’ the theory to a case. The data that I collected shows that most studies on securitization lack “methodological clarity” even if they talk about which methodological approach they take.

⁵⁸ Sula, “Güvenlikleştirme kuramında ‘söz edim’ ve ‘pratikler,’” 111

Here, I would make an important distinction between the meta-theoretical term ‘methodology’ and the use of ‘research methods’. Methods are techniques for gathering and analyzing evidence, data, or proof from the empirical world; whereas methodology is “a concern with the logical structure and procedure of scientific enquiry.”⁵⁹ Methodology deals more with how to establish the relationship between ontology (reality/existence) and epistemology (knowledge). Here, methodology deals with the ways in which knowledge of the things we see in reality can be collected. In general, one methodological question would be ‘How can we get or produce scientific knowledge of reality?’ Hence, objectivist vs. interpretivist, or qualitative and quantitative approaches are methodological approaches. Here, I would argue ‘qualitative’ research does not imply ‘methods free’ research or an ‘anything goes’ approach. Each methodological approach directs the researcher to different ‘research methods’, that is, the tools the scholar uses to collect evidence/data/proof (or whatever one prefers to call it). Conversely, specifying the methodological approach does not directly result in methodological clarity when the author is not clear on the steps he/she used to collect proof on his/her theoretical argument.

Labeling an approach as ‘quantitative’ or ‘qualitative’ does not bring methodological clarity. We should look for more than these labels. As the figures on the use of ‘securitization theory’ in the Turkish literature illustrate, studies that refer to a methodological approach as ‘qualitative or quantitative’ are not clear on which research method is used to support the theoretical arguments. Therefore, combining these observations with the self-reflection of Turkish IR scholars discussed above, I would suggest that the actual shortcoming here is not the lack of theoretical studies or ‘quantitative methodology’ but instead it is any IR study’s inability to establish these three connections: (1) metatheory and theory, (2) theory and the empirical application, and (3) methodology and methods. These three connections are of key importance to bring methodological clarity to a research study. First, every theoretical approach has metatheoretical assumptions that determine its ontological (what to study), epistemological (what kind of knowledge to produce), and methodological (how to study) stance. While thinking about the metatheoretical assumptions behind a theoretical approach, the scholar is also directed to think about how to establish the connection between theory and the empirical case to which the theory is applied. This opens a way for the second connection between theory and case, and the third connection between methodological approach and methods. Once the scholar decides on the metatheoretical stance, she/he then starts to think about how to connect the theory with the case. The scholar needs to decide on her/his methodological approach to connect the theory and the case because doing so determines the ‘research method’ that is used to collect evidence from the social world that supports theoretical claims. Here, methodology training enabling IR students to establish these three connections would serve the establishment of a scholarly community capable of producing replicable research, homegrown theorizing, and more significantly contributing to the ‘center/core.’ So, rather than stopping at diagnosis and prescription, we may continue with an attempt for further treatment. Like Aydinli and Biltekin, I argue that “data-collection” can be a good starting point, and I add that it does not have to be ‘quantitative’.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 25.

⁶⁰ Aydinli and Biltekin, “Time to Quantify Turkey’s Foreign Affairs”.

Be it ‘quantitative’, ‘qualitative’, or ‘mixed’⁶¹, data collection is a good start towards ‘treatment’ for several reasons. First, data collection is a long learn-in-action process, and before starting it requires the researcher to think carefully about and clarify the three main phases of academic research: (1) planning, (2) implementation, and (3) analysis. The planning phase is where the researcher chooses a topic, then a research question/problem, a proposed answer/hypothesis/argument/solution, and reviews the literature. The implementation phase is where the researcher collects data/proof/evidence/information to see if his answer/hypothesis/ argument/solution has a solid ground in the empirical world and shows the results. The analysis phase is where the researcher assesses the results, discusses the validity of her/his arguments, and evaluates further implications of the findings. Any research based on scrupulous data-collection inevitably leads the scholar to clarify how methods choices are made in the process. This is more so in studies based on data than it is in studies based on application of theories to specific cases. As the studies analyzed above indicate, theory applications that are not based on data-collection often fall into methodological ambiguity, since methodological clarity may not usually be the first thing that authors or their audience expect from those types of studies. However, in data-based studies, the logic is rather simple: a researcher cannot talk about or evaluate ‘data’ without clarifying how and where she/he collected it. At least, it is going to be one of the very first things the author and their audience would look for. The methodological clarity required by data collection makes the research replicable, enabling other scholars to test the validity of the claims made by the scholar (*lingua franca*).⁶² Last but not the least, data-collection pushes the researcher to think about the three types of connections that I explained in the previous paragraph. At different phases of data-collection, the researcher must answer: What is my metatheoretical stance and methodological approach? 2) Which theory am I using (what is my argument/why am I collecting data)? and 3) How do I prove that my theory/argument holds and has solid ground in the empirical world (does my data prove the arguments I made)?

As part of this treatment in IR in Turkey, I offer an initiative and two exemplary projects that may help to develop data-collection and methodology training: 1) the Social Sciences Data Repository, 2) the Global risks Assessment Dataset (GRAD) and Global Security Database (GloSec) projects. First, the *Social Sciences Data Repository at the Global Studies Platform*⁶³ is an initiative aiming to serve as a repository for datasets produced in Turkish, or by scholars in Turkey who conduct international studies. The repository is born out of two necessities: 1) there is no such repository for studies in Turkey, and 2) there is no such precedent in the IR discipline in Turkey. If a scholar produces a dataset in Turkish, he/she either puts limited parts of it in the articles or rarely uploads it to a specific website. There is only one IR journal in the SSCI-index that occasionally publishes Turkish IR articles and that journal has recently decided to use the *Harvard Dataverse*.⁶⁴ Many other journals that publish IR articles in Turkey (either in English or Turkish) still do not use any platforms.

⁶¹ Sula, “An Eclectic Methodological Approach in Analyzing Foreign Policy”.

⁶² Aydınli, “Methodology as a Lingua Franca in International Relations”.

⁶³ The data repository is working in Turkish and is currently under development. Please see The Social Sciences Data Repository at the Global Studies Platform (*Küresel Çalışmalar Platformu Türkiye Sosyal Bilimler Veri Havuzu*) from: <https://kureselcalismalar.com/veri-havuzu-hakkinda/>. Accessed November 25, 2021.

⁶⁴ The first dataset in the Dataverse of *Uluslararası İlişkiler* was uploaded in 2019. Currently, there are 8 datasets in the platform. *Ul Dergisi*, *Harvard Dataverse*, Available from: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/uidergisi>, accessed November 25, 2021. In Summer 2021, *Ul Dergisi* has decided to switch to English as the only publication language and not to accept articles written in Turkish after December 31st, 2021.

The data repository currently targets journals that are producing Turkish articles based on datasets in IR.

Data-collection and sharing have only very recently started developing in Turkish IR. Yet, there is an increasing tendency among new generations of Turkish IR scholars, or IR scholars based in Turkey, to learn and apply various data collection methods. The data repository may serve as an alternative for this group of scholars and prospective studies published in Turkish. By uploading their data onto the Social Sciences Data Repository, researchers will be able to share and update different versions of datasets and codebooks, label their data under their name by getting Digital Object Identifier (Doi) numbers, and get a citation linked to their datasets. The aim here is to disseminate data-based research and enable data-sharing among Turkish scholars, thereby helping the accumulation of IR knowledge.

In addition to data-sharing and accumulation of knowledge, I offer that Turkish IR scholars interested in this type of research may benefit from designing ‘Social Science/International Studies Research Labs’ with graduate students to produce data-collection projects and train new generations of graduate students that can produce research outputs based on clear, replicable, and rigorous research designs, in Turkey. This sort of “learn-in action” collaborations will give graduate students in Turkish universities the ability to have a global scholarly outreach and communicate to the global scholarly community. Like some of the studies mentioned above, I believe that rigorous methodological training is key to contributing to Global IR scholarship, and should start early at graduate school. To clarify this suggestion, I present two recent initiatives: GRAD and GloSec. The Global Risks Dataset (GRAD) is a learn-in-action research project that has two specific aims: (1) Train graduate students and early-career academics on the basics of data-collection in international relations (2) Collect a comprehensive dataset for tracking down the evolution of risks and challenges against humanity since the end of the Cold War Era. The project is designed in a step-by-step structure, where each step has multiple academic outputs to help the career development of the participants.⁶⁵

GRAD is based on data collected from various sources on the evolving nature of global threats. The dataset currently contains our findings on a qualitative assessment of risks in the reports of several international institutions.⁶⁶ Currently, we have listed references to different types of risks under certain issue areas such as poverty/hunger, development/economy, health, nuclear power, technology, and the environment. The dataset contains detailed answers to the following main question: “How did ‘global threat perception’ change since the end of the Cold War and what are the causes and probable consequences of that change?” While qualitatively assessing and analyzing the reports in detail, we also quantitatively code “number of references to threats” and then establish scales on the ‘intensity’ and ‘urgency’ of these threats. We thereby find patterns of the change of these threats and their probable future direction. At the end, beside scholarly publications we will also come up with concrete policy recommendations by stressing the intensity and urgency of threats under different

⁶⁵ The research team is composed of a group of graduate students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University. Irem Ekeroglu, B. Yaren Ozer, M.Mustafa Ozturk, Aysegul Uzer, M. Onur Yalcin, Nuriye Turk. We are planning to initiate the “International Studies Research Lab” which will take control over this project and others in 2022. will expand as needed in time. Until now, we have given two seminars, produced three conference papers, and wrote two op-eds on our preliminary findings. A research manuscript on the preliminary findings of the data will be ready by summer 2022. We are planning to see concrete results (articles, conference papers, and more by the researchers of this lab) by the end 2022.

⁶⁶ The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists- Doomsday clock reports, Global Challenges Foundation – Global Risks Assessment Reports, and World Economic Forum Global Risk Assessment reports.

issue areas. Initially, the reports that we code start from immediate post-cold war (1990s) coming until now (2002). The dataset is based on our initial observation and argument that, there are catastrophic risks at a global scale that researchers have been warning the world about for decades. The world could have been, and can still be, prepared for those global risks especially when supporting data is made publicly available.

The dataset building process has pedagogical contributions as well. Through establishing a ‘research lab’ on international studies, I keep my graduate students actively involved in researching topics in their field. We also discuss the potential of writing their theses and dissertations out of their roles in the project. This type of teamwork-building activities offers the opportunity to transfer methodological skills to students. Pedagogically, I am afforded to the privilege of training prospective/early-career scholars on data-collection, research/project design, proposal writing, as well as other academic activities such as conference applications and participation, teambuilding exercises, among other things. One might assume that these skills are transferred at most graduate programs in universities, but the scholarly output and the dissatisfaction in the self-reflections summarized above indicate that the Turkish IR discipline is in dire need of more research methods instruction and, concomitantly, train-in-action data-collection projects. Indeed, the research topics that this type of work is applied might vary, yet the mechanism, or the craft of research would be standardized and transferable to various other research topics as well.

GloSec, meanwhile, is aiming to become a database for the security conceptions of aşş countries in the world. Currently, the research focuses on collecting data on Turkey’s security perceptions (Turkey’s security dataset-TurSec) with an aim to develop new datasets on other countries of the world.⁶⁷ As part of the Turkey data we analyze Turkey’s threat perception concerning the post-Arab-uprisings MENA region. We analyzed the speeches of Turkey’s policymakers and the reports of Turkish National Security Council. We are quantitatively coding the following: number of references to a specific threat, the type of threat, cause of the threat, and the source country.⁶⁸ Currently, the project relies on the hand-coding of the materials we found. In addition to data-collection the , research team regularly meets for online-lectures on several topics such as designing data collection, finding raw data, material selection/sampling, the advantages and limitations of quantitative and qualitative approaches, the advantages and limitations of hand-coding and computer-assisted coding, and other alternative approaches, all of which turn grant the project a “methods school” quality. This is not just a data-collection project but part of a combination of efforts conducted under *the Global Studies Platform*, that aims to deliver research methods training online to graduate students in Turkey. The data repository will also serve as the home for both GloSec and GRAD datasets and their bilingual (English and Turkish) codebooks will be prepared with step-by-step guidelines on data-collection to serve as examples to encourage new generations of scholars in Turkey conducting data-based research.

⁶⁷ It has similar aims with GRAD in terms of methods training yet it is different in terms of the composition of the research team. We established a team of graduate students from different universities in Turkey through the Global Studies Platform (*Küresel Çalışmalar Platformu*) which also serves as a home for the Social Sciences Data Repository. I would like to acknowledge the past and current graduate student participants of the GloSec Database project: Erol Oytun Ercan (Marmara University), Gizem Nazlı (Marmara University), Merve Tamer (Istanbul Medeniyet University), Galip Yüksel (Istanbul University) and Safiye Ergun (Middle East Technical University)

⁶⁸ This is an ongoing study. Threat categories we coded so far include: Political Instability, Economic Instability, Terrorism, Armed Conflict, Energy security, Mass Migration. The causes we identified include: Political Regime/Oppression, Foreign Intervention, Revolutionary Movements, Radicalism/Terrorism. To limit our study, we currently code Turkey’s threat perceptions that emanate from the countries in the MENA region.

5. Conclusion

The Global IR discussion seems to be a new ‘great disciplinary debate of IR’ in the making. Until now, it has mainly revolved around the discussion on developing a more inclusionary approach in the ways of doing IR research and on the appreciation of the knowledge produced in the non-core contexts. Following the *All-Azimuth Workshop* theme, this article suggests that an important step in having ‘global IR’ is ‘self-reflection’ in the ‘non-core’. However, in suggesting that, I would refrain from building a dichotomous approach that creates boundaries which separate ‘local’ scientific knowledge from the ‘global’. Instead, I would argue that there is a global ‘knowledge’ pool where the products of disciplinary communities with different local settings accumulate. While the product –scientific knowledge– itself accumulates in a global pool, the way that it is produced is highly influenced by local settings. These ‘local’ settings determine how knowledge is produced, what kind of knowledge is produced, and to what extent the end-product is brought into the ‘global’ pool. Therefore, while debating the way to achieve a more inclusionary and ‘truly global IR’, one needs to appreciate the local settings as well.

If ‘global IR’ turns into one of the so-called ‘great disciplinary debates’ in the future, I suggest that there is so much that the study of these local settings, or let us say the study of local contexts, can bring to the debate. Indeed, I would argue that the potential for ‘progress’ in globalizing IR, lies in the study of local disciplinary contexts more than it does in studies simply re-emphasizing the fact that the discipline is not ‘global’. Identifying such potential lies in the study of ‘self-reflections’ of scholars that produce knowledge in the local context. This article, therefore, took a first step in this direction.

While prescriptions differ from one study to the other, there appears to be a consensus on two general but interrelated shortcomings that the literature on IR in Turkey agree upon: (1) limited original, ‘home-grown’, or *sui-generis* theoretical contributions and (2) lack of methodological clarity. One can diagnose and think of many reasons behind these shortcomings including but not limited to: the local core/periphery relations, higher education regulations, institutional settings, the academic promotions system, incentives/disincentives of the promotion criteria, among other things. Some of these topics have already been discussed both in the literature and in academic conferences/workshops and there is probably more that can be identified through future research. I suggest, however, that the scholarly community needs to go beyond ‘diagnosis’ and do more to improve these conditions, at least by way of engaging in scholarly production.

With new generations of IR scholars entering the field, the state of the IR discipline in Turkey has become more developed compared to the 1990s and even 2000s. The IR disciplinary knowledge background in Turkey has matured enough to add more to the global IR knowledge pool. As the global IR debate flourishes in the international literature, this is an important time for IR scholars in Turkey to showcase original contributions. This article suggests that one of the initial steps in this direction may be to address the shortcomings directed by the IR scholars in Turkey. Therefore, following the path that is already offered in the literature, I submit that we start with addressing ‘methodological poverty.’ Since methodological clarity serves as a *lingua franca*⁶⁹ in academic communication, I argue that moving forward to address methodological poverty may contribute to the inclusion of IR

⁶⁹ Aydinli, “Methodology as Lingua Franca in International Relations”.

knowledge ‘made in Turkey’ in the global knowledge pool.

I also argue that the shortcomings stated in the Turkish IR literature - limited theory development and the lack of methodological clarity- can be overcome by producing research that is based on data-collection. As the figures on the use of ‘securitization theory’ in the Turkish literature illustrate, even studies that refer to a methodological approach –qualitative or quantitative– are not clear on which research methods is used to support the theoretical arguments. This way of doing research results in ambiguity about how the theory is applied to the case at hand. I suggest that thinking and establishing three connections may help scholars overcome this ambiguity: (1) metatheory and theory (2) theory and empirical application, and (3) methodology and methods. I argue that these three connections would bring methodological clarity to studies aiming to develop theories or apply theories to specific cases. I offer that designing research projects based on ‘data-collection’ can serve as a treatment to methodological ambiguity. In research based on data-collection the logic is rather simple, a researcher cannot talk about or evaluate ‘data’ without clarifying how and where she/he collected it. At least, it is going to be one of the very first things the authors and their audience would look for which leads researchers to think about the three connections even before starting to collect data.

I aim to go beyond ‘diagnosis and prescription’ and offer exemplary projects to contribute to the IR discipline in Turkey in its path to overcome its shortcomings: the Social Sciences Data Repository, GRAD and GloSec. The open access data repository will serve as a platform to let Turkish scholars openly share the datasets they produce together with bilingual (both in Turkish and in English) codebooks describing the methodological steps they take in doing their research. In doing so the repository will open ways for accumulation of knowledge, data reproduction and theory development. Such a repository may turn into a reference point for new generations of scholars willing to do data-based research and share datasets with the scholarly community. In addition to the data repository, GRAD and GloSec constitute examples of research groups based on learn-in-action data-collection. Both projects aim at training prospective/early-career scholars in data-collection, research/project design, proposal writing, and taking part in various academic activities.

To sum up, significant efforts are being directed to knowledge production in the non-American, non-European or non-core IR communities. So far, as part of the globalizing IR debate, a considerable amount of research output has been produced calling the global IR community to give more credit to the contributions of the non-core. These studies are paving the way for progress in both the IR discipline across the globe and specific local disciplinary communities. If the debate evolves into a ‘great disciplinary debate’ it may also widen a ‘sectoral niche’ to be filled in with more knowledge produced in specific local IR communities. Hence, as the debate heightens in the global IR discipline, it is also a wonderful time for ‘self-reflection’ in the non-core IR communities. I would like to end the article by crying out a message: true globalization of IR can be achieved only through local quality ‘revolutions’, and the first phase -at least in the IR conducted in Turkey- would be methodological improvement.

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Abstracts in Turkish

Pek Küresel Olmayan Bir Disiplinde Küresel İş Bölümü

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Öz

Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininde (Uİ) özellikle de yayın kalıpları bağlamında verimsiz bir 'işbölümüne', işaret eden pek çok çalışma vardır; 'merkez'deki akademisyenler daha çok kuram inşası çalışmaları yayınlarken, 'çevre'deki akademisyenler ampirik, alan odaklı veya kuramları test eden çalışmalar yayınlamaktadır. İkinci grup bu nedenle esas olarak, "kendi" ülke veya bölgelerine ilişkin ampirik materyalleri ile "merkezin" kuramlaştırma çabalarını besleyen "yerel bilgi kaynakları" olarak hareket edecektir. Bu argümanı, hem 'merkez' hem de 'çevre'de çıkarılan dergilerdeki içeriği inceleyen Global Pathways (GP) projesi tarafından derlenen veri setini kullanarak ampirik olarak araştırıyoruz. Genel olarak, bulgularımız merkez-çevre işbölümü hakkındaki argümanı desteklemektedir. Ana bulgularımız üç yönlüdür: (1) Kuram açısından, "merkez" dergilerin "çevre" dergilerine kıyasla daha büyük oranda kuram inşası (ve istatistiksel) çalışmalar ve daha düşük oranda analitik vaka çalışmaları ve tanımlayıcı çalışma yayınladığını görüyoruz. "Çevre"de bulunan akademisyenler, daha teorik olan bu "merkez" dergilerde nadiren yayın yapmaktadır (bu kişilerin yayınları, incelenen dergilerdeki makalelerin yalnızca %5.5'ini oluşturmaktadır), ancak bu makaleler kuram tatbik etme eğilimindedir. Bu nedenle, asıl işbölümü "merkez" dergilerde değil, "merkez" ve "çevre" yayın dünyaları arasında gerçekleşmektedir. Aslında "çevre"de bulunan akademisyenlerin kuram kullanılan çalışmalarının önemli bir bölümünü "çevre" dergilerde yayınlama eğiliminde olduklarını görüyoruz. (2) Bölgesel odak açısından, tüm dergilerin ve yazarların ampirik bir "ev temayül"üne, yani ampirik çalışmalarını buldukları bölgeye odaklama eğilimine sahip olduklarını, ancak bunun "çevre" tabanlı dergiler ve yazarlar özelinde daha güçlü olduğunu bulduk. Bu, "merkez" yazarların dünyanın tüm bölgeleri hakkında eserler yayınladığı, "çevre" yazarların ise daha güçlü bir bölgesel yönelime sahip olduğu üretken olmayan bir işbölümünün kısmen onayını sağlar. (3) Son olarak, bazı dergilerin ve yazarların - özellikle Sahra Altı Afrika ve Doğu Asya'da bulunanların - daha politika odaklı olma eğiliminde olduğuna dair kanıtlar bulduk, ancak bu bağlamda bir merkez-çevre uçurumuna dair kesin bir kanıt bulamıyoruz.

Anahtar kelimeler: Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplini, Küresel Uİ, Küresel Güney, çevre, epistemik hiyerarşiler

Uluslararası İlişkilerde Metodolojik Milliyetçilik: Türkiye'de Akademik Nicel Bir Değerlendirmesi (2015-2019)

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Öz

Bu makale Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ) disiplini içinde Metodolojik Milliyetçilik (MN) tartışmasını genişletmeyi, MN literatürüne Uluslararası İlişkiler çalışmaları perspektifinden katkıda bulunmayı ve MN'nin sahadaki yaygınlığını seçilen çalışmaların sayısallaştırılmasıyla değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu hedeflere ulaşmak için, makale, öncelikle genel MN literatürünü özetleyerek bu tartışmayı Uİ özelinde eleştirel olarak değerlendirir. Daha sonra, Uİ'de görüldükleri şekliyle MN biçimlerini iki yüzüyle tanımlar: Analiz düzeyi (alan olarak ulus) ve analiz birimi (aktör olarak ulus). İkinci olarak, makale, nicelleştirme yoluyla MN'nin yaygınlığını ölçmek için bir yöntem önermektedir. Son olarak, makale, bu yöntemi MN'nin Türkiye'de akademide ne kadar yaygın olduğu sorusunu ele almak üzere Uluslararası İlişkiler çalışmalarına uygulamaktadır. Bulgular, disiplindeki “çevre”nin bir parçası olan Türkiye'deki Uluslararası İlişkiler topluluğu içinde MN'nin oransal yaygınlığını göstermektedir. Bulgular ayrıca, MN-Uİ bağlantısı hakkında yapılacak çalışmalar için birer sıçrama tahtası olma potansiyeline sahip bazı varsayımsal sonuçlar çıkarmamıza da olanak sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Metodolojik milliyetçilik, analiz düzeyi, Uluslararası İlişkiler, Türk akademisi, nicel değerlendirme

Küreselleşen Uluslararası İlişkiler: Bölgeselcilik diğer Alt Disiplinler için bir yol sunabilir mi?

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Öz

Küresel Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ) araştırmaları, Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplinde hâkim Batılı geleneksel olanların ötesine geçen daha geniş bir geçmiş, içgörü ve kuramsal bakış yelpazesine alan açmayı teşvik eder. Bu makalenin birincil amacı, Bölgeselcilik çalışmalarının, özellikle Batı-dışı bağlamlardan kaynaklanan yeni fikirlere, teorilere ve yöntemlere açık bir alt disiplini temsil ederek 'Uluslararası İlişkileri küreselleştirme' girişimini desteklemede önemli bir role sahip olduğunu vurgulamaktır. Bu itibarla, Bölgeselcilik, Uluslararası İlişkiler'in ve Uluslararası Politik Ekonominin (IPE) alt disiplinlerinden biri olarak küresel-Uİ eğilimlerini sergilemek için muazzam bir potansiyele sahiptir. Bu makale, Uluslararası İlişkilerin bir alt disiplini olarak Bölgeselciliğin çeşitli ve karmaşık entelektüel yapısını haritalamak amacıyla

vekâleten bibliyometrik bir analiz kullanmaktadır. Bulgularımız, son on yılda Batılı olmayan bilim adamlarının Bölgeselcilik literatürüne katkılarının toplam sayısındaki dikkate değer artışın, teori üreten ana akım çalışmaların aksine, Bölgeselcilik çalışmalarının Avrupa dışı/ Batılı olmayan bağlamlar tarafından domine edildiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Bölgeselcilik, bölgeler, Küresel-UI ve bölgeselcilik, bölgeselciliğin bibliyometrik analizi

Guanxi'ye Doğru mu? Batı ve Çin Uluslararası İlişkiler Disiplinlerindeki “İlişkisel Dönüş”ü Uzlaştırmak

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Öz

Uluslararası İlişkiler (UI) teorisindeki “ilişkisel dönüş” son yıllarda büyük ilgi gördü. Bununla birlikte, tözcü ontolojisinden kaynaklı kısıtları, ana akım (Batı) Uluslararası İlişkiler teorisinin, gelişen uluslararası sistemi yorumlamada zorluklar ve ikilemlerle karşılaşması anlamına geliyor. Küreselleşmenin ve bölgesel entegrasyonun hızla geliştiği bir arka plana karşı, dünya siyasetinin gerçekliği sürekli değişiyor ve giderek artan bir şekilde karşılıklı bağlantılılığın ve yüksek bağımlılığın bariz özelliklerini gösteriyor. Bu bağlamda, “ilişkisel dönüş”ün Batılı ve Batılı olmayan versiyonlarını karşılaştıran araştırmaların yeterli sayıda araştırma yoktur. İlişkisel ontoloji; Çin Konfüçyüs felsefesi, Batı felsefesi, Batı sosyolojisi ve ana akım Batı Uluslararası İlişkiler teorileri arasında, üretken sinerjiler yaratma kapasitesini haiz bir köprü kurabilir. Bununla birlikte, ilişkiselliğin Batı ve Çin versiyonlarının uzlaştırılması için aşılması gereken önemli teorik ve kültürel engeller vardır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Konfüçyüsçülük, Guanxi, uluslararası ilişkiler (UI) teorisi, ilişkiselleştirme ontoloji, ilişkisellik

İngiliz Okulu ve Küresel Uİ – Bir Araştırma Gündemi

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Öz

Bu makale, Uluslararası İlişkilerde İngiliz Okulu (İO)'nun daha geniş kapsamlı Küresel Uİ araştırma gündemine katkıda bulunabileceği farklı yolları araştırmaktadır. Makale, İO ve Küresel Uİ arasındaki tarih ve kültüre yapılan vurgu gibi bazı ortak endişeleri belirledikten sonra, yazarların İO'nun Küresel Uluslararası İlişkilerin altında yatan fikirler ve değerlerle daha yakından uyuşabileceği alanlar olduğuna inandıkları mülksüzleştirme, şiddet ve sömürgecilğe dayanan küresel uluslararası toplumun kökenleriyle daha derinlemesine bir meşguliyet; daha yerelleştirilmiş ve çeşitlenmiş bir “toplum” anlayışı; temel bir ontoloji olarak 'devlet'in daha keskin ve daha temelli bir kavramsallaştırması; hayırseverliğin yorumlayıcı ilkesinin benimsenmesi; ve uluslararası toplumun "küreselliği" varsayımlarının sorunsallaştırılması gibi konuları tartışıyor. Makale, saha çalışmasının, yerel uygulamaların ve dillerin, arşivlerin ve araştırılmakta olan sosyal bağlamlara dayanan bir uluslararası toplum kuramlaştırmasının değerini vurgulayan deneysel bir araştırma gündemi ile sona ermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngiliz Okulu, Küresel Uluslararası İlişkiler, Avrupamerkezcilik, yerellik, kuram oluşturma

Küresel Uluslararası İlişkiler Bilgisinde “Bilimsel” Olmanın Anlamını Genişletme Yolunda İçebakışçı Dayanışma

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Öz

Bu makale, Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ) disiplinindeki “Batı-merkezcilik” sorununun, modern Batı'da ortaya çıkan ve bilimin belirli bir versiyonu olan pozitivizmin egemenliği sorunuyla eş anlamlı olduğunu göstermektedir. Uluslararası İlişkiler’de bu ikili dar görüşlülüğü nasıl açabiliriz? Makale bir çıkış yolu olarak içebakışçı bir dayanışma çağrısı yapıyor. Bu, devam etmekte olan Küresel Uluslararası İlişkiler projelerinin coğrafya odaklı yaklaşımlarını yenilemesi ve coğrafi konumları veya jeokültürel geçmişleri ne olursa olsun diğer marjinalleşmiş akademisyenlerle bir dayanışma araması gerektiğini gösteriyor. Böylelikle, sadece pozitivist (yani nedensel-açıklayıcı) çıkarımların değil, aynı zamanda normatif teorileştirme ve etnografik açıdan uyumlandırılmış yaklaşımların tümünün Uluslararası İlişkiler’de farklı ama eşit derecede bilimsel bilme yolları olarak kabul edildiği geniş yollar

inşa edilebilir. Bu makale, içebakışçı dayanışmayı gerçekleştirmenin etkili bir yolu olarak otobiyografiyi önermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Küresel Uluslararası İlişkiler, Batılı olmayan Uluslararası İlişkiler, pozitivizm, bilim, düşünömsellik, dayanışma, otobiyografi

Türkiye'de 'Küresel' Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Öz-Düşünömler: Metodoloji, Veri Toplama ve Veri Havuzu

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Öz

Bu makale, “küresel” Uluslararası İlişkiler üzerine yapılan disiplin tartışmalarını ve Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisyenlerinin Türkiye'deki disiplinin durumu hakkındaki öz düşünömlerini kapsamaktadır. Yüksek kaliteli metodolojik eğitimin, Türkiye'deki Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisyenleri tarafından hissedilen memnuniyetsizliğin üstesinden gelinmesine katkıda bulunabileceğini savunmaktadır. Merkez olmayan alanda üretilen Uluslararası İlişkiler bilgisinin "Küresel" havuza dâhil edilmesinin yerel "devrimler" yoluyla sağlanabileceğini ve bu yönde ilerleme potansiyelinin metodolojik iyileştirme ve veri toplama projelerinde yattığını öne sürüyor. Makale, bu savı netleştirmek için üç örnek veri projesi sunuyor: Sosyal Bilimler Veri Havuzu, Küresel Güvenlik Veritabanı (GloSec) ve Küresel Risk Değerlendirme Veri Kümesi (GRAD). Bu projeler; veriye dayalı araştırmaları yaygınlaştırmayı ve Türkiye'deki akademisyenler arasında veri paylaşımını teşvik etmeyi, Türkiye'de açık, tekrarlanabilir ve titiz bir yöntembilime dayalı araştırmalar üretmeleri için geleceğin Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisyenlerini yetiştirmeyi, Türk üniversitelerindeki lisansüstü öğrencileri küresel akademik erişime ve küresel akademik toplulukla konuşmaya teşvik etmeyi ve bu türden yerel pedagojik ve akademik deneyimlerle Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplinine katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye'nin çeşitli üniversitelerindeki lisansüstü öğrencilerden oluşan iki ayrı araştırmacı grubu; araştırma tasarımı, veri toplamanın temelleri ve titiz metodolojik tasarım, veriler ve tekrarlanabilir bulgulara dayalı araştırma makaleleri yazma konularında eğitim almaktadır. Bu nedenle, makale sadece Türkiye'deki Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininin eksikliklerine ilişkin yazındaki tanıları tartışmakla kalmayarak aynı zamanda olası bir tedavi için somut yönergeler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Veri toplama, veri havuzu, küresel çalışmalar, metodoloji, Türkiye

Aims and Scope

All Azimuth, journal of the Center for Foreign Policy and Peace Research, is an English-language, international peer-reviewed journal, published biannually. It aims:

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