

**Contemporary “Dissidence” in American IR:  
The New Structure of Anti-Mainstream Scholarship?**

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*Dissidence in IR, as in any other social field, reflects both an identity and a practice of opposition to the system. While the fact of dissidence is largely manifested in its very discursive occurrence, this article attempts to go beyond the performative nature of dissidence in order to identify the collective, common ground that unites self-acclaimed dissident scholars, to understand whether they form an objectively constituted social group, and to what extent they encompass dissidence in the field. Based on the analysis of a survey sent to American IR academics, this article shows that contemporary dissidence in American IR is structured not only by its opposition to mainstream IR, but also by internal divisions between the first generation of now established Critical dissidents, and an emerging group of Constructivist scholars who do not claim, but do practice, a clearly dissident and more marginalized scholarship.*

***Introduction:***

***Whose Language is the “Language of Exile”?***

That International Relations (IR) is a divided discipline is hardly debatable today\*. From the self-acclaimed and real margins of the field, a significant number of its scholars have increasingly expressed discontent with its state of affairs, narrow identity, and characteristic tendency toward dualism, parochialism and ostracism, among others. While there are many ways wherein the discipline can be said to divide and be divided, one of the most interesting discursive practices related to these various divisions is that which mobilizes the notion of “dissidence” as a self-conscious, antagonizing mode of disciplinary identification. This strategy has been successfully used by Richard K. Ashley and R.B.J. Walker (1990b, 1990c) in their

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introductory and concluding articles to the 1990 special issue of *International Studies Quarterly*: “Speaking the Language of Exile: Dissidence in International Relations” (1990a).

Ashley and Walker’s contribution reveals the undeniably performative nature of dissidence: once spoken, the sign creates its referent as much as it signifies its actual existence. To a large extent, therefore, the *fact* of dissidence is largely contained in its own discursive occurrence (Bourdieu 1989). However, since part of the dissident project in IR is to create a more *reflexive* and *self-critical* understanding of IR as a field of knowledge production, it is necessary to investigate dissidence from a distance, as a properly social, collective phenomenon, apart from the more subjective expressions of dissident thought that are manifested in individual or collective publications and conference gatherings. The question from which this paper originates is a simple one: “Who are those who *claim* and *practice* dissidence in IR today?” The objective is not to compile a list of dissident IR scholars or writings. It is rather to understand what characterizes contemporary dissident scholarship as a collective, rather than individual, phenomenon, to identify the lines of contention along which dissident IR scholarship positions itself within the field, but also to understand whether dissident IR has undergone any significant transformation since its emergence in the 1980s.

The present article thus offers some of the findings of a survey sent to U.S. IR scholars<sup>1</sup> in April 2008<sup>2</sup>. The concern with U.S. IR stems from the alleged “American” identity of the field, which, since Stanley Hoffmann’s famous *Daedalus* article (1977), has been largely commented on and corroborated by more recent empirical research (Holsti 1985, Krippendorff 1989, Waever 1998, Smith 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, Crawford and Jarvis 2001, Agathangelou and Ling 2004, Waever and Tickner 2009). There are two reasons for this focus. Firstly, since the notion of dissidence is only meaningful as a *correlative* concept, the empirical investigation of dissident scholarship should start from the “system” to which dissidence applies, or the so-called “mainstream” scholarship it defines itself against. It is therefore meaningless to speak of dissidence in the absolute. Secondly, since American IR is said to represent the core, center, or “hegemon” of international IR scholarship (Holsti 1985; Smith 2002), it is within it that dissidence and the discourse on dissidence gain their greatest significance. This article therefore focuses exclusively on *American* dissidence in *American* IR, which should analytically be assumed to be different from *non-American* dissidence against *American* IR, or *non-American* dissidence in *non-American* IR. Consequently, it does not provide any answers to the question of whether, or to what extent, IR is “still an American social science” (Kahler 1993, Smith 2000, Jarvis 2001). It rather attempts to determine what contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> The term “American,” as it appears in the title, will therefore be consistently used here to refer to U.S. scholarship.

<sup>2</sup> The survey, which had been approved by the Institutional Review Board of American University of Beirut, was sent via email to approximately 1,000 IR scholars working in U.S. institutions. It was designed and made available to respondents on the website [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com), which guaranteed their anonymity. The list of scholars was compiled on the basis of the directories of the American Political Science Association and the International Studies Association, as well as the directories available on the websites of different departments and research centers of more than 250 American institutions of higher education, including the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Since the point of the research was to assess an American “field”, and *not personal trajectories* of individual scholars, the list did not exclude non-American scholars working in the U.S., nor did it include American scholars working abroad. These individuals were chosen on the basis of their IR-related academic activities (teaching and/or research), regardless of the kind of departments hosting them (Departments of Political Science, IR, or International Studies; Research Centers). In order to avoid introducing a personal bias in this study, no *a priori* definition of IR informed the selection process: any scholar whose teaching or research activity was related to any object of world politics, international phenomena, and IR-related domestic politics (foreign policy) was selected. Scholars who did not fit this criterion were excluded from the list, regardless of their official affiliation with IR or International Studies departments. 104 scholars completed the online survey in April 2008.

*American IR* has become, and what new patterns have emerged since the first generation of “dissidents”.

The survey was, then, specifically designed to approach American IR based on the social, political, academic and IR-related characteristics of the U.S.<sup>3</sup> It aimed to gather four sets of information related to four sets of factors whose correlations could be hypothesized: *sociological*, *ideological*, *institutional-academic*, and *intellectual-academic* factors. While the sociological and institutional variables used here were exclusively “objective,” most of those included in the other two categories were “subjective,” that is, pertaining to the respondents’ opinions, as well as their views on IR, their practice of it, and the state of the discipline as they perceive it<sup>4</sup>. Several hypotheses were tested that rested on two separate notions of dissidence. The first notion is induced from the respondents’ own use of the term to define and position themselves within the discipline (hereafter, “Dissidence”). In the survey, the categories “Mainstream” and “Minority” constituted the alternative groups respondents could identify with, with the additional option of rejecting all three categories for those who could not clearly identify with any of them. The second notion of dissidence used here is constructed independently of the respondents’ self-labelling behavior (hereafter, “*dissidence*”). It rests on the assessment of the theoretical/paradigmatic orientations of the respondents as specified in their answers, and addresses American IR as an objectively divided/structured discipline.

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<sup>3</sup> This informed the selection of the categories of answers offered to the respondents. For instance, with respect to political leanings, the categories of “Democrat” and “Republican” were included, while they would not have been equally significant for a survey addressed to European scholars. Similarly, with respect to institutional positions, the categories reflected the ones in use in American academia in terms of rank (Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor) and tenure.

<sup>4</sup> The survey is composed of 29 questions: Questions 1 to 5 focus on sociological indices (age, gender, sexuality, parents’ profession, nationality); Questions 6 and 7 on ideological views (religious and political respectively); Questions 8 to 19 pertain to the respondents’ professional profile (degrees, rank, tenure, affiliation, membership in associations and editorial boards, publications, extracurricular activities, awards, conference participation); and Questions 20 to 29 to their perceptions and assessment of the field of IR (importance of IR theory in teaching and research, IR fields of interest, IR objects of study, theoretical approaches used, epistemological/methodological orientations, self-labelling, satisfaction with the state of IR, assessment of diversity, relation of IR to other social sciences, and factors influencing research choices). All questions were mandatory except Question 12 on University Affiliation, for the sake of total anonymity. Questions pertaining to privacy included a ‘do not wish to answer’ option.

Most of the six hypotheses were related to American IR scholars' perceptions of dissidence, or "self-labelling"<sup>5</sup>:

1. *Dissidence can be correlated with specific socio-economic factors;*
2. *Dissidence can be correlated with specific ideological orientations;*
3. *Dissidence can be correlated with specific institutional/academic capital;*
4. *Dissidence corresponds to theoretical or paradigmatic divisions/oppositions in the discipline;*
5. *Dissidence does not exactly match dissidence as revealed by scholarly practice;*
6. *Dissidents use alternative modes of institutional activity or academic and public channels to express their dissident voices in or outside of the discipline.*

The paper presents the main findings that pertain to these hypotheses, most of which have been confirmed, with, however, important nuances that need to be addressed. On the one hand, the sociological profile of contemporary American IR scholars points to the greater importance of ideational/ideological factors than material ones as common characteristics for those who claim dissidence in the field. More than age, gender, socio-economic background, or academic capital, the respondents' religious, political, and disciplinary culture constitute discriminating variables that establish a line of fracture among different groups of American IR scholars, and single out Dissidents as a socially constituted group that occupies a specifically antagonistic intellectual position within the field *and* its larger socio-political environment. On the other hand, the respondents' scholarly practice shows

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<sup>5</sup> The author acknowledges that "dissidence" as a "label" rarely has a neutral connotation. It has in the past been used to ostracize "others" in the field and in this sense it conveyed an accusatory and negative meaning. It has also been used as a means of expressing dissent, and self-acclaimed "dissidents" do not necessarily represent "marginalized" scholarship (see Crawford 200:153-4). Whether dissidence as a self-acclaimed practice directly results from dissidence as an "accusation" is, however, not a concern for this article, which is rather interested in the empirically grounded fact that there are IR scholars who today actually choose to define themselves as dissidents, regardless of what motivates them to do so, or what they believe are the benefits/drawbacks of being labelled as such.

that Dissidence in contemporary American IR does not encompass the whole range of dissident scholarship currently produced in the U.S. More importantly, the differences in terms of both sociological and intellectual trends between those who *practice and claim* dissidence and those who *practice it but do not label it as such*, point to the co-existence of two different groups of scholars, and therefore of two socio-intellectual cultures of dissidence.

The first is representative of the first generation of IR dissidents, and still claims dissidence as a mode of self-identification and intellectual/academic antagonization. Endowed with a greater academic and institutional capital, and grounded in an anti-establishment stance that is reflected in its religious and ideological leanings, it engages international politics from an intellectual perspective that is *systemically* opposed to the mainstream orientations of the discipline, mainly from a Neo-marxist, Critical tradition. The second group of actual dissident scholars seems to represent a more recent – and younger – dissidence that is not inclined to define itself as such, and that engages international politics and IR itself from a wider range of marginal or contested approaches that can be viewed as doubly marginalized, insofar as these scholars occupy the *intellectual margins* of the field as defined by its mainstream paradigms, while also having a *lower institutional capital* that separates them from the now-established dissidents of the first generation.

Finally, this second generation of dissident scholars seems to be less inclined to cross the boundaries that separate the academy from the wider public sphere than their predecessors were and still are willing to. In light of recent discussions pertaining to IR scholarship's social and moral responsibility (Smith 2002, 2004, Agathangelou and Ling 2004, Tickner 2006, Ackerly and True 2008, Ish-Shalom 2008, Tickner and Tsygankov 2008, Author forthcoming 2011) the paper concludes by addressing the implications, for both dissidence and IR, of this apparent disengagement from the wider social realm IR is inscribed in.

***American IR Dissidents:  
Where Do They “Come From”?***

It is legitimate to hypothesize that scholarly dissidence in IR is related to – or expresses – other forms of *social or intellectual dissidence* that find their expression within IR and even *vis-à-vis* IR, insofar as intellectual and social backgrounds affect the reasons for becoming an IR scholar, the selection of problems to be investigated within the field, and the ideological, axiological or normative frameworks within which scholarly activity is produced, among others. More generally, it is important to identify the extraneous variables that influence or shape the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1980) of IR scholars – in terms of both *dispositions* and *practice(s)* – and the production of a scholarly and intellectual dissidence within the field. In the history of American Political Science, for example, the intellectual/academic division produced by the rise of Behaviorialism as a new cognitive and praxeological paradigm for the social sciences was intimately related to the co-existence and opposition of different communities of scholars, endowed with different forms of academic and institutional capital, and characterized by different socio-intellectual backgrounds (Gunnell 1993, Somit and Tanenhaus 1967). The dissidence of “traditionalist” scholars *vis-à-vis* the “scientific” mainstream of the discipline was particularly related to the experience, dispositions, and ethos of the generation of European *émigrés* who contributed to the anti-mainstream scholarship of the 1960s (Gunnell 1993, 2006). While a systematic and multi-levelled mapping of American IR scholarship – of the kind Pierre Bourdieu proposed in *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu, 1984) for French academia – cannot be carried out within the restricted methodological framework of this paper, it is nonetheless possible to identify at least some of the relevant factors that contribute to the manifestation of dissident scholarship as a socially constituted phenomenon. The first part of this article, then, aims to draw a sociological portrait of the different

groups of American IR scholars, and determine how American IR *Dissidents* and *dissidents*<sup>6</sup> are located with respect to their colleagues.

When asked how they position themselves in the field, 11.5% (12) of the respondents identified themselves as Dissidents, while 46.2% (48) considered themselves Mainstreamers, 27.9% (29) declared to belong to the – or a – Minority, and 14.4% (15) were “Not Sure” about their institutional locus – hereafter, the Undecided<sup>7</sup>. Significantly enough, *all* Dissidents are Americans<sup>8</sup>. Men are slightly more represented than women (83% of Dissidents are men against 75% for the whole sample), but there is no direct association between these two variables. Dissidents are, however, significantly older than the other groups (Chart 1), with the highest rate of individuals aged between 40 and 60 (58.33%) *and* above 60 (25%). They are also the most represented category of scholars in the latter age-group, as they constitute approximately 35% of its population, while only 20% of scholars aged 60 and above are Mainstreamers, who constitute a significantly younger group of academics. Minority and Undecided respondents, on the other hand, are overall younger than the Dissidents and older than the Mainstreamers, although their profile is significantly closer to the latter than to the former (Chart 1). These results indicate that contemporary *self-acclaimed* dissidence is still representative of the first generation of dissidents in IR, which appeared in the 1980s<sup>9</sup>.

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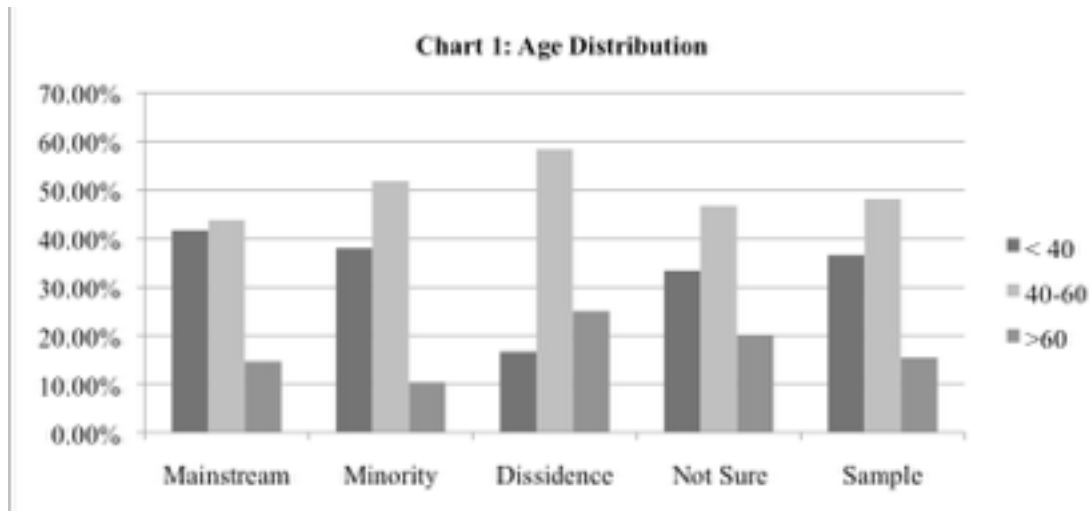
<sup>6</sup> In order to prevent any confusion between the subjectively constructed categories of respondents, i.e., the labels chosen by the respondents themselves to define their position within the field, and the objectively constructed ones that are here used to describe actual dissidence, the former will be distinguished by the use of a capital letter (Dissidence/Dissidents, Mainstream/Mainstreamers, Minority, Undecided).

<sup>7</sup> Although they were given the option to comment on their choice, only 1 out of 104 respondents actually left a comment. There is thus no direct, subjective explanation of how and why respondents describe themselves the way they do.

<sup>8</sup> 91.3% (95) of the respondents are Americans, of whom 6 have a double nationality.

<sup>9</sup> Assuming a standard academic career, more than 75% of contemporary Dissidents (aged 45 and above) were university students or young scholars in the mid-1980s, when Dissident scholarship in American IR had started to establish itself, if not institutionally, at least intellectually.





The variable of age should, however, be associated with those of *rank and tenure*, which, given the rules governing academic promotion in the U.S., are here treated as interdependent. In the sample under study, almost all Professors are tenured (30 out of 31), as well as 22 of the 25 Associate Professors; none of the Assistant Professors is. It is reasonable to consider that rank and tenure, as indicators of *institutional capital*, are significant variables when it comes to both how academics are positioned in the field, and how they perceive themselves to be. With regards to dissidents, a lower institutional status may be directly related to the type of scholarship they produce, if they are “sanctioned” by the system for not conforming to the standards set by “mainstream” scholarship. IR is clearly structured along these lines when it comes to the editorial policies of its leading journals (*International Organization*, *International Security*, or *International Studies Quarterly*, as opposed to the *Review of International Studies*, *International Studies Review*, *Millennium*, or less visible ones like *Alternatives*), and the disproportionate weight these journals have in validating the scholarship of those who publish in them (Waever 1998, Jarvis 2001, Agathangelou and Ling 2004). Scholars engaging more dissident or marginal venues may gain greater visibility within the circle of like-minded scholars, but may be heavily undermined in their own departments if these conform to the standards of the discipline as a whole.

Institutional capital is also related to scholars’ *perceptions* of their own institutional locus. That dissidence leads to a real institutional “marginalization” does not mean that all marginalized scholarship is so because of its dissident nature.

Scholars who fail to achieve a measure of academic recognition may claim that their lower institutional status reflects the risk they incur in their “opposition to the system”. On the other hand, and perhaps paradoxically, some IR scholars<sup>10</sup> suggest that it is actually the most “established” scholars who are likely to gratify themselves with as controversial a label as that of “dissident”. Robert Crawford thus notes that although the “myth of marginalization” is one of the key narratives of dissident IR scholarship, the latter’s “leading exponents”

have achieved remarkable prominence in the discipline they purport to reject, publishing in flagship journals and prestige book series (...), occupying prominent positions on influential and central editorial boards, holding memberships in, and helping to run, professional associations of IR scholars, attending conferences, teaching IR courses at accredited universities – leading, in short, ostensibly normal academic lives (Crawford 2000:157).

Most of the scholars Crawford mentions to illustrate his point – Richard Ashley, James Der Derian, R.B.J. Walker, Jim George, David Campbell, Michael J. Shapiro, Christine Sylvester, Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski (Crawford 2000:157) – are predominantly non-U.S. scholars working in non-U.S. institutions. The idea that dissident scholars – or at least Dissident ones – are less “marginalized” than they claim themselves or their scholarship to be can therefore not be taken for granted in the specific case of American IR. The academic profile and trajectory of Richard Ashley, in particular, should not be generalized or constituted as an exemplar of American IR dissidence. Crawford is right in pointing to the irony that surrounds the publication of the ultimate dissident manifesto by two established IR scholars (Ashley and Walker) in the flagship journal of the International Studies Association (*International Studies Quarterly*), while the manifesto itself presents dissident scholarship as “writing in the language of exile” from the “margins” of the discipline (Ashley and Walker 1990b, 1990c). While it may be true that “real marginals do not have the luxury of proclaiming their peripheral status from disciplinary center stage” as Ashley and Walker did (Crawford 2000:157-8), there is

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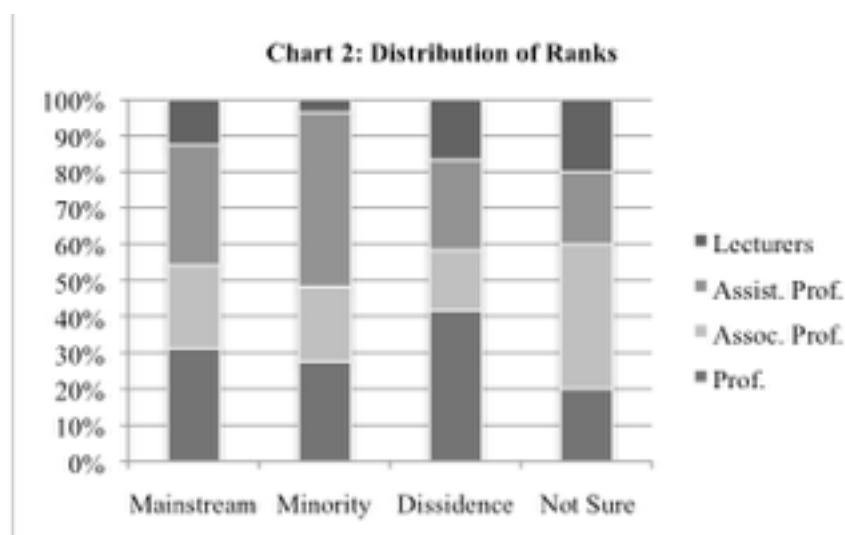
<sup>10</sup> Including one of the respondents to the survey.

no reason to assume that their ability to do so is either causally related to the nature of their scholarship, or that it is in any way representative of the fate of other, less visible dissidents. It is, therefore, by looking at the institutional capital of different IR scholars that one can get a sense of how this particular variable may impact their visibility or position in the field.

The findings of the survey point to a more nuanced analysis. As shown in Table 1, the highest percentage of tenured academics is found among the Dissidents, with its corollary, illustrated in Chart 2, that this group also includes the highest percentage of Professors:

Table 1: Tenure

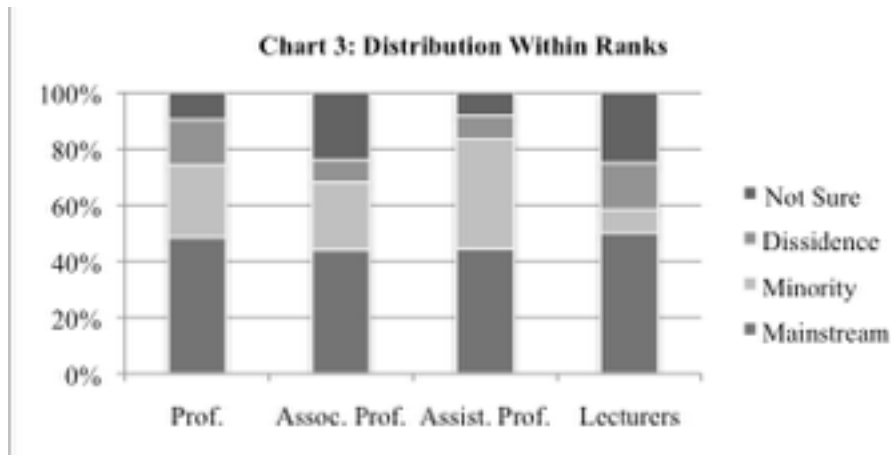
Mainstream	50% (24)
Minority	44.80% (13)
Dissidence	58.30% (7)
Not Sure	53.30% (8)
Sample	50% (52)



This, however, is not sufficient to establish a correlation between Dissidence and either rank or tenure. In fact, the differences observed are more directly related to *gender* and *age*.

As far as gender is concerned, women are less tenured than men because they are also more numerous at the non-tenured professorial ranks (48% of women are Assistant Professors, and 16% of them are Lecturers), and they happen to be more preponderant in the Minority (31% of Minority respondents are women, against 24% of average female representation), which explains why this category is more populated with Assistant Professors and non-tenured academics. On the other hand, Dissidents have a higher rate of men amongst them, and men are relatively more tenured than women (respectively 55.7% and 32%), which explains why Dissidents have the highest rates of both Professors and tenured scholars. In addition to this, Dissidents being on average older than their colleagues in other categories, they are also more likely to be tenured and to occupy higher institutional ranks. While this shows that they have acquired a high degree of institutional capital, it is not possible to determine whether they did so *despite* or *independently of* the allegedly “dissident” nature of their scholarship.

In any case, there is a lack of significant statistical association between rank and self-labelling in general – and by extension, between self-labelling and tenure – as illustrated in Chart 3. As long as one focuses on dissidence as a self-defining label, and therefore on Dissidents as representative of dissident scholarship, the observation that Dissidents are on average better established than other scholars appears to be legitimate. It is also, however, misleading insofar as it ignores the positioning of those scholars who may not present themselves as dissidents, but who nonetheless occupy a clearly anti-mainstream position in the field as a whole. To develop this point further, one has to pursue the mapping of American IR by constructing a more comprehensive picture of actual dissidence, which is what the paper does gradually.

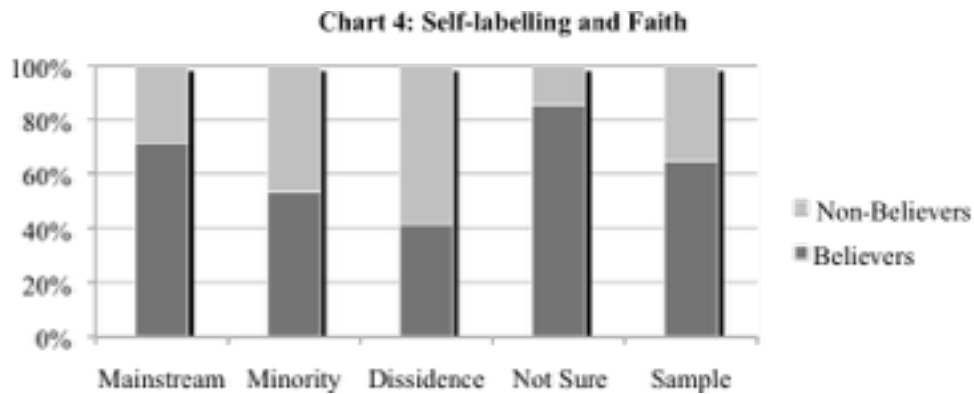


As opposed to the variables presented above<sup>11</sup>, those pertaining to the respondents' *ideological* views are more clearly associated with self-labelling practices, which suggests that these variables are important factors influencing or possibly even determining Dissidence/dissidence in American IR. Religious and political leanings are here discussed first.

Respondents were asked to identify with one of eleven religion-related groups: Atheist (14.4%), Agnostic (19.2%), Protestant (24%), Catholic (18.3%), Orthodox Christian (1%), Jewish (11.5%), Muslim (1.9%), Hindu (1%), Buddhist (0%), Confucian (0%) and Other (4.8%)<sup>12</sup>. For the most represented groups, for which a test of association is statistically relevant, religious membership is not significant with respect to self-labelling practices: there is no particular relation between being a Catholic and being a Dissident, etc... The significant variable is rather *religiosity* itself: by collapsing the categories Atheist and Agnostic on the one hand, and all the others on the other, the relationship between the two variables becomes more obvious, as illustrated in Chart 4:

<sup>11</sup> The analysis of the respondents' socio-economic background (based on their parents' professions) was not conclusive.

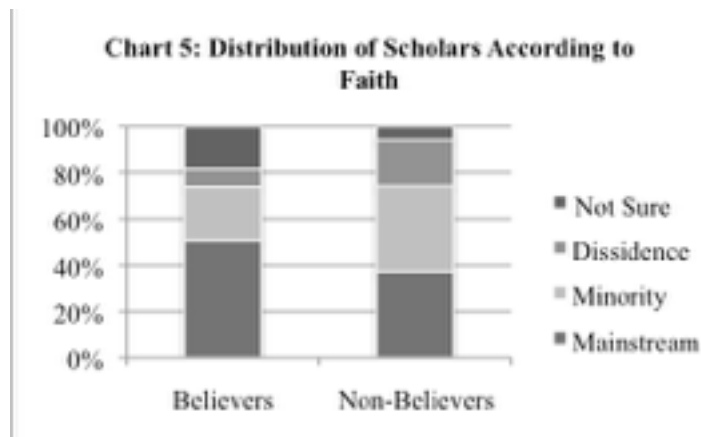
<sup>12</sup> Four respondents (3.9%) refused to disclose their religious preference.



Respondents were thus divided into Believers and Non-Believers, a division that reveals a statistical association between the variables of faith and self-labelling ( $\chi^2 = 8.038$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=0.0452$ ). The proportion of Believers in the sample is 65%, distributed as follows: 85.71% of Undecided and 71.74% of Mainstreamers are Believers, against about half of Minority respondents (53.57%) and less than half of the Dissidents (41.67%). The proportion of Non-Believers thus rises from 35% for the whole sample to 58.33% for the Dissidents. Similarly (Chart 5), Dissidents and Minority respondents are much more represented among Non-Believers, while Mainstreamers and Undecided IR scholars are under-represented in comparison with the overall sample. The Believers are more significantly distributed among these categories, as half of them are Mainstreamers, against 7.7% of Dissidents and 23.07% of Minority respondents, while 18.46% of them are Undecided about their position in the field. This variable gains its greater significance when associated with the respective intellectual/academic orientations of these four groups of respondents, as shown later in this paper<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Most Dissidents and Minority scholars engage Marxist/neo-Marxist, Critical, or Postmodern approaches to world politics, which entail a deconstructive, sceptical, and reflexive attitude toward grand narratives and “ideology” in general.

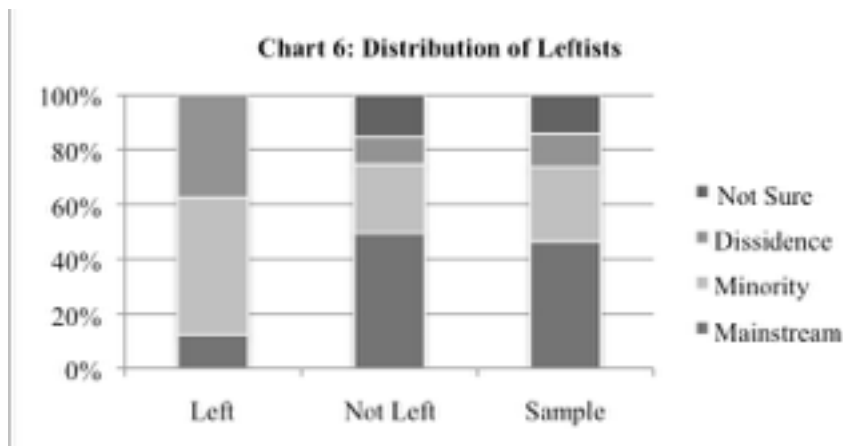


The second ideological variable here considered pertains to the respondents' political views<sup>14</sup>. Some (but not all) political categories are statistically associated with self-labelling. These include the categories of Liberal, Leftist, Social-Democrat and Anarchist, which are associated with Dissidence and the Minority<sup>15</sup>. Generally speaking, two significant, *constructed* categories are particularly important. The first is related to IR scholars' distribution along the Left-Right ideological division. Chart 6 shows the preponderance of Dissident and Minority scholars on the (strictly defined) Left of the political spectrum, which includes the categories Leftist, Socialist, and Communist. The percentage of Dissidents and Minority respondents is significantly increased, whereas the Mainstreamers, who constitute 46.2% of the population under study, only compose 12.5% (1) of the Left<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> Respondents were given the choice among the following political groups: Democrat, Republican, Liberal, Leftist, Socialist, Communist, Social-Democrat, Anarchist, Feminist, Green, and Other.

<sup>15</sup> Here are the results of the tests of association for each of these: "anarchist":  $\chi^2= 16.131$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=0.001$ ; "liberal":  $\chi^2= 10.842$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p= 0.0126$ ; "left":  $\chi^2= 9.876$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=0.0196$ ; "social-democrat":  $\chi^2= 8.888$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=0.0308$

<sup>16</sup>  $\chi^2= 9.664$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=0.0216$ .



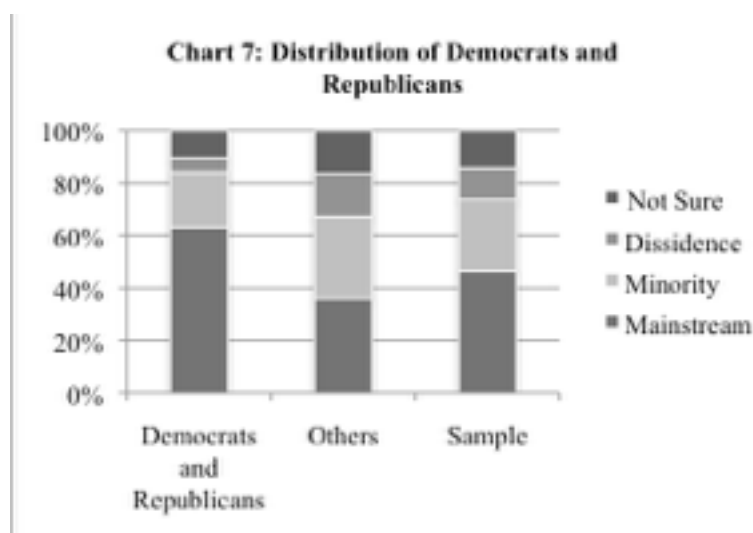
The Dissidents are also the most homogenous group with respect to political identifications, as they are found in only 6 of the 11 suggested categories: Democrat (8.33%), Republican (8.33%), Leftist (16.67%), Socialist (8.33%), Social-Democrat (33.33%), and Anarchist (25%). While they constitute approximately 40% of the Left as defined previously, only one out of four Dissidents belongs to this political group. Their overall ideological orientations suggest that they mainly occupy the Center-Left (Social-Democrat), Left (Leftist, Socialist) and Radical (Anarchist) segments of the political spectrum. It is also worth noting that unlike some respondents from the other three groups, *none* of the Dissidents refused to disclose their political leanings, which suggests that Dissidents are less inclined than others to consider this issue a *private*, rather than *public*, matter<sup>17</sup>.

The corollary of this ideological position is also manifested by a second, differently constructed category, which signifies the division between the American political “establishment,” as represented mainly by the Democratic and Republican groups, and the rest. Chart 7 shows that it is very unlikely to find IR Dissidents within the two major American parties. Since none of the Dissidents identified his/herself as a Liberal, the inclusion of this latter category into the “establishment” would reduce Dissidents to an even more marginal place. This denotes the radical ideological position of IR Dissidents on the American political scene: the fact that *all* of them are Americans suggests that their rejection of the established ideologies is that of insiders who are socialized within their national politico-ideological system, rather than that of

<sup>17</sup> Again, this point needs to be related to Dissidents’ intellectual orientations and to their relationship to the public sphere, as developed in the next sections of this paper.



outsiders whose system of political values is imported into a different politico-ideological setting.



In addition to the variables pertaining to the Dissidents' religious and political views, a third variable was added to the ideological factors under study, namely, academic diplomas. It may seem odd to include such an institutional factor with what are usually considered as properly "ideological" ones. The reason for doing so is twofold. Firstly, since we are dealing with a group of academics, academic diplomas cannot be significant as academic *degrees*, that is, to signify the degree of education obtained by these individuals. As such, they do not allow us to discriminate among IR *University scholars*. Similarly, they cannot be used as indicators of differentiated socio-economic statuses. Therefore, it is not as *degrees* that these diplomas are considered here, but rather as (signifying) a *culture*. Given the characteristics of the American liberal university system, the academic origins of IR scholars can be expected to be more diverse than in other national systems, especially European ones. Given also the status of IR within American social sciences, and particularly within Political Science (PS) – most IR scholars are trained and work in PS, rather than IR departments – it is legitimate to hypothesize that IR scholars may share different academic/intellectual cultures and that these differences may introduce important variations in their attitude towards IR as a discipline (including its subject-matter, methodologies and relation to other social sciences) and their position within it.

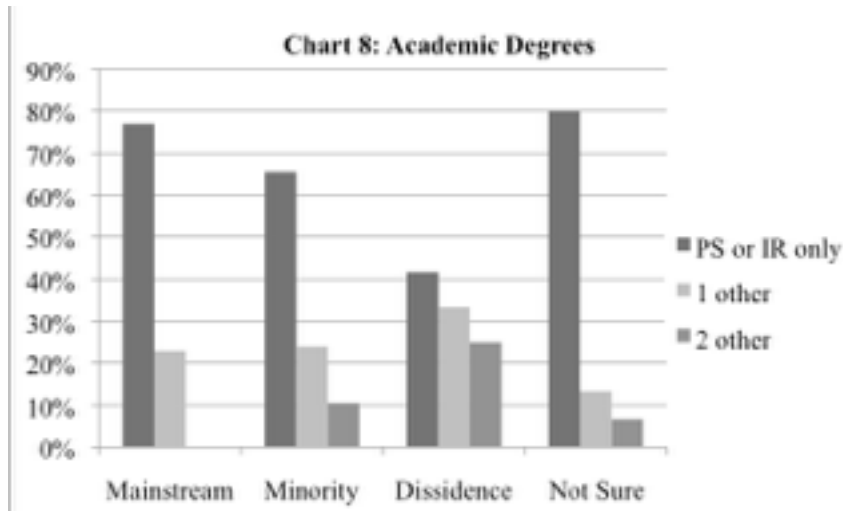
For this reason, academic diplomas are here included as an ideological indicator in the sense that they signify the kind of intellectual and academic training

IR scholars have received, and that since this training predates their status as IR scholars, it can be said to contribute to their view of the world and to their intellectual/academic culture, with all the systems of values, preferences, and norms such a culture implies and entails. If one is willing to consider the training of IR scholars as an important factor in shaping their broadly-defined cultural and ideological mindset, and to also consider that religious, political, and cognitive ideologies function in similar ways, that is, as action- and thought-structuring belief systems (Kuhn 1962, Feyerabend 1993), the following will be appreciated as informative with respect to D/dissident IR.

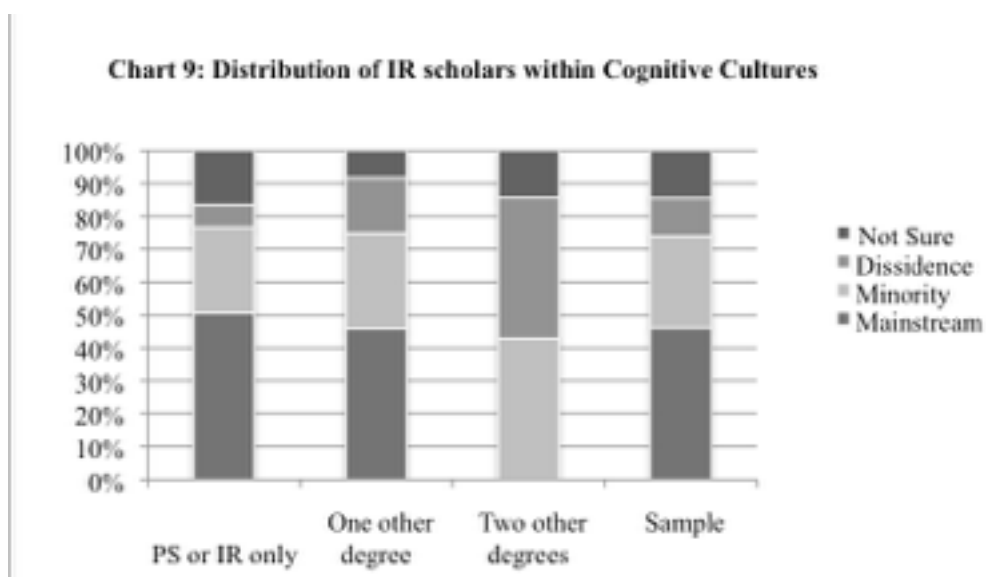
Most respondents (72%) graduated with PhD degrees in PS, rather than IR (17%), with a significantly different distribution at the Masters level (51% for PS and 24% for IR). PhDs from other disciplines (History, Philosophy, Law, Economics, Sociology or Mathematics) are a clear minority, even when respondents have obtained their Masters degree in one of these fields (57% of those who did have opted for a PhD in PS or IR). While it could be said that PS and IR have become more inclusive in their approaches and methodologies since the time when graduates from other disciplines were more easily found amongst their scholars (especially during the earliest phases of the Behavioral Revolution), and that this openness could explain the said observation, it appears nonetheless that the field of specialization is intimately related to how American IR scholars perceive themselves in the discipline, especially in the case of Dissidents.

The primary analysis of the results indicated a statistical degree of association between having a degree in PS (whether at the Masters or PhD level) and self-labelling, while having a degree in IR was non-significant, which indicates that being academically integrated into IR before starting one's academic career has the effect of reducing differences in perceptions of the academic self, by socializing the members of the community into a common identity. A closer look at the data revealed that the actually significant factor was having at least one degree in a field other than either PS or IR. Since having one such degree was significant, it was hypothesized that having two such degrees would confirm the association even more. This was indeed confirmed by the statistical results, as illustrated in Chart 8: the percentage of those

having a degree in either PS or IR decreases from more than 70% for the Mainstreamers to about 65% for the Minority and about 40% for the Dissidents, while the percentage of those having one or two degrees from other disciplines follows an inverse evolution among these three groups. As far as Dissidents are concerned, the *majority* of them obtained degrees in other disciplinary fields.



The percentage of Mainstreamers is also the highest among those who only have degrees in PS or IR. It goes down from 51% to 46% among those who have one degree in another discipline, and it drops to *zero* in the non-PS-IR group. On the other hand, the percentage of Minority and Dissident IR scholars has an inverse evolution: it increases with the number of degrees other than PS or IR – from 26% to 29% and 43% for the Minority, and it more than doubles each time for the Dissidents, going from 7% to 17% to 43% (Chart 9):



Undecided IR scholars, on the other hand, follow a different distribution: their presence is the lowest among those who have two different degrees, which suggests that being exposed to both types of disciplinary specialties (PS-IR and non-PS-IR) increases the capacity to situate oneself within the field of IR. The results are therefore informative, especially since this variable chronologically precedes self-labelling within IR, even more certainly than do religious/political orientations. As far as Dissidents are concerned, this shows that perceived dissidence *in IR* originates from initially belonging to, and being trained in, a non-specifically “political” field of specialty (given the contemporary division of labor among the disciplines). Since American PS/IR have been particularly impacted by statism, empiricism, positivism, and a more or less behavioral approach to political phenomena centered on the U.S. as a state and a primordial international actor (public policy, foreign policy), it is reasonable to consider that a culture acquired outside of PS/IR would introduce a significantly different intellectual approach to *the political*, rather than a specifically non-political approach.

These findings suggest, on the one hand, that the *habitus* of IR scholars is already significantly shaped at the earliest stages of their academic trajectory, and that Dissidents in particular *enter the field as Dissidents*. As shown in the following section, this is in line with their greater openness to interdisciplinarity, as they also engage the discipline from sociological, normative, philosophical, or constitutive approaches that Mainstreamers are more likely to reject. On the other hand, this also suggests that promoting dissident scholarship – or at least breaking the pattern of intellectual and hence institutional “marginalization” – entails promoting interdisciplinarity at the institutional and curricular level.

### ***The Scholarly Practice of Dissidence:***

#### ***Engaging the Margins of IR***

The following section aims to complete the portrait of American IR dissidents with respect to what is commonly perceived as *the* domain of dissidence in IR, namely, IR scholars’ intellectual positions vis-à-vis IR and the practice of IR

scholarship. The intellectual-academic variables used here are meant to identify the respondents' preferences in terms of subject-matter, methodology, and epistemological/theoretical frameworks of inquiry. Table 2 presents the general IR-related fields of interest for the whole sample of scholars, in ranking order:

Table 2: Respondents' Fields of Interest

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	IR Theory	53.80%
2	International Political Economy	44.20%
3	Foreign Policy Analysis	40.40%
4	International Organizations, Regimes & Alliances	39.40%
5	Conflict Resolution	38.50%
6	Peace Studies	27.90%
7	Strategic Studies	25.00%
8	International Law	22.10%
9	Social Theory	18.30%
	International History	18.30%
11	Political Philosophy	17.30%
12	Economics	16.30%
13	Philosophy of Knowledge/Science	14.40%
14	Ethics	13.50%
15	Normative Theory	12.50%
	Discourse Analysis	12.50%
17	International Political Sociology	11.50%
18	Sociology of Knowledge/Science	10.60%
19	Environmental Studies	9.60%
20	Feminist Studies	4.80%

Since IR Theory constitutes the exclusive or main research focus of 54.8% of the respondents, it is not surprising to find it at the top of this list. This highlights the fact that “theory” is no longer such a marginal object of study, even within American IR, which has traditionally been more concerned with empirical research and less inclined to engage the theoretical or metatheoretical discussions that necessarily entail

a questioning or reconsideration of the discipline's central epistemic and conceptual tenets. The ordering of the other subfields nonetheless reveals a preponderant interest in disciplinary domains that are specifically concerned with *states* and *material* manifestations of world politics, while those fields that entail a greater diversity of actors and less material approaches are found in the lower half of the list. Among these 20 fields of interest, 5 are statistically associated with self-labels and are all found in this lower, "marginal" part of the table. These are Social Theory, Political Philosophy, International Political Sociology, Discourse Analysis and Ethics<sup>18</sup>.

The case of Social Theory is particularly important because IR's relationship to the other social sciences has fluctuated since the establishment of the discipline. Within its specifically American setting, the paradigmatic status of Realism and especially Neorealism has operated a closure on its ability to communicate with cognate fields of study (sociology, anthropology, linguistics, history), the exceptions which confirm the rule being some forms of philosophical inquiries in the early days of American Realism (Niebuhr 1947, Morgenthau 1946, Thompson 1966) and the great influence of (micro)economics with Neorealism (Waltz 1979). The current situation seems to reflect this state of affairs. While Social Theory ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in the list of overall preferences, with a response rate of 18.3%, it is the Dissidents' first choice with 66.7% of responses, and is also significant for Minority respondents with a rate of 31%; interestingly enough, *none* of the 48 Mainstreamers expressed interest in this field. It is thus specifically associated with Dissidents and Minority respondents, as 42.1% of those who chose Social Theory belong to the first group, and 47.4% to the second.

Political Philosophy (rank 11 in Table 2 with 17.3%) is another field that is specifically associated with Dissidents (41.7%) and Minority respondents (34.5%), while it comes almost last for Mainstreamers and Undecided respondents (respectively 4.2% and 6.7%). Among those who chose Political Philosophy, 55.6% belong to the Minority, and 27.8% to the Dissidents, against only 11.1% of Mainstreamers and 5.6% of Undecided scholars. Again, these results point to the

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<sup>18</sup> Feminist Studies could be added, but with a lesser degree of statistical relevance, since only 5 respondents chose this field.

marginalizing and persistent effects of the “prescription for a rigorous philosophy-avoidance strategy for the practicing social scientist” (Lapid 1989:235), which is in accordance with the general promotion of a positivistic understanding of “science” within American IR, at least since the Behavioral Revolution. The fact that a great majority of American IR scholars is not even *interested* in political philosophy as a relevant realm of inquiry for their research on world politics signifies that for those scholars who engage international reality from a normative, ethical, or post-positivist perspective, it is not only difficult to find interlocutors within the “hegemon,” but also unlikely that their research agendas, *problématiques*, assumptions, and methodologies will be accepted as relevant or legitimate *for* IR and *as* IR.

Going farther down the list of marginal fields of interest, International Political Sociology (IPS), which ranked 17<sup>th</sup> for the overall population with a response rate of 11.5%, is promoted to a better position for both Dissidents and Minority respondents (respectively 33.3% and 17.2%), while it obtains only 4.2% of response rate for Mainstreamers and 6.7% for the Undecided scholars. Dissidents and Minority respondents alone constitute 75% of those interested in this subfield (33.3% and 41.7% respectively), a proportion which converges with their preference for Social Theory more generally.

Discourse Analysis comes next in terms of degree of association. With an overall average of 12.5%, it ranks 15<sup>th</sup> among all fields of interest. Among the 13 respondents who chose Discourse Analysis, only one is a Mainstreamer, six are Minority respondents, and the remaining six are equally distributed between Dissidents and Undecided scholars. Among these three groups, this choice is slightly more significant for Dissidents with a rate of 25% against 20% for the two others. In addition to being a non-traditional methodological approach to social reality, Discourse Analysis is by definition grounded in a given ontological view of the world that gives significance to language as both a *reflection* of ideational and material social structures, and as *constitutive* of them to a large extent. Scholars who engage Discourse Analysis as a legitimate methodology for the study of world politics

therefore necessarily acknowledge the ontological significance of language – as well as shared knowledge and culture – for IR itself (see below).

Finally, Ethics is the last “marginal” category associated with self-labelling. It is specifically associated with *Minority* respondents, with a rate of 27.6%. They also constitute 57.1% of those who chose this category, which reveals the importance of philosophical and normative approaches to this particular group of scholars, and positions them clearly against the epistemic and theoretical tenets of the leading mainstream, positivist paradigm in American social sciences, with all the dichotomies and ontological divisions this paradigm entails (see below).

Table 3 sums up these associations, showing that the preferences of Dissident scholars are almost systematically opposed to those of the Mainstreamers, which are generally situated in the upper part of Table 2. In Table 3, a “positive association” means that the given theme is specifically associated, as a preference/rejection, to the mentioned group, while a “negative association” means that the given theme is statistically rarely or never mentioned as a preference/rejection by the mentioned group, *and* that this rarity is also characteristic of the said group.

Table 3: Association between Fields of Interest and Self-labelling

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Field of Interest</b>	<b>Positive Association</b>	<b>Negative Association</b>
1	Social Theory	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream
2	Political Philosophy	<i>Dissidence</i> , Minority	
3	IPS	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream
4	Discourse Analysis	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i> , Not Sure	Mainstream
5	Ethics	Minority	Mainstream

A similar method was used to determine the respondents’ preferences in terms of subject-matter. Tables 4 and 6 present the respondents’ answers to two questions pertaining to IR’s object(s) of study, namely, “what themes IR should be *most* concerned with” and “what themes IR should be *least* concerned with”. Combining these two questions allows us to draw a more accurate picture of IR scholar’s preferences, since it not only permits to determine their perceptions of IR’s subject-



matter, but also of what they consciously reject outside of the field's concerns and legitimate objects of inquiry<sup>19</sup>.

Table 4: Themes IR should be MOST concerned with:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	War	61.50%
2	Globalization	60.60%
3	Peace	51.00%
4	The Structure of the International System	49.00%
5	Power	47.10%
6	Ethnic Conflicts	46.20%
7	Interdependence	44.20%
	IR Theory	44.20%
9	Transnational Relations	34.60%
10	International Trade	33.70%
	The Environment	33.70%
12	Ideologies	32.70%
13	Terrorism	30.80%
14	Norms	29.80%
15	Political Hegemony	27.90%
16	Economic Hegemony	26.90%
17	Religion	23.10%
18	The Balance of Power	21.20%
19	Cultural Hegemony	19.20%
	Nuclear Deterrence	19.20%
21	Revolutions	17.30%
	Arms Control	17.30%
23	Knowledge	16.30%

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<sup>19</sup> A comparison of these two tables (4 and 6) shows that the two sets of answers are globally symmetrically opposed, and thus coherent. It should be noted, however, that these only represent the general hierarchy resulting from the computation of individual answers. The fact that War is the most frequent theme and the Media the least frequent one in Table 4 does not imply that this opposition is itself an ontological one. In other words, it does not mean that War and the Media are mutually exclusive as a subject-matter for the respondents, or that any ontological opposition of this sort can be deduced from the reading of these two tables. In fact, the 6 respondents who think that IR should be most concerned with the Media ranked War, Globalization, Peace, Power, and Ethnic Conflicts even higher than the sample population. A more detailed analysis is needed to identify ontological oppositions, which cannot be carried out within the scope of this paper.

24	The National Interest	14.40%
	Alliances	14.40%
26	Individuals	13.50%
27	Social Integration	12.50%
28	Language	11.50%
29	Technology	9.80%
30	Propaganda	7.70%
31	The Media	5.80%

Of these 31 themes, 11 are statistically associated with self-labelling. A summary of these associations is presented in Tables 5 and 7 below, wherein themes are ranked according to their degree of statistical association.

Table 5: Association between Preferences in terms of Subject-Matter and Self-labelling:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Positive Association</b>	<b>Negative Association</b>
1	Cultural Hegemony	<i>Dissidence, Minority</i>	Mainstream
2	Language	Minority	Mainstream
3	Knowledge	Minority	Mainstream, Not Sure
4	International Trade	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i>
5	Economic Hegemony	<i>Dissidence</i>	
6	Political Hegemony	<i>Dissidence</i>	
7	Ideologies	<i>Dissidence, Minority</i>	
8	Interdependence	Not Sure	<i>Dissidence</i>
9	Alliances	Not Sure, Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i>
10	Propaganda	<i>Dissidence, Not Sure</i>	Mainstream

The themes listed in Table 5 can thus be divided among the 4 groups of respondents, with an indication of some clear oppositions. Cultural Hegemony and Ideologies, for example, are the specific objects of study of Dissidents and Minority scholars, the first being excluded from the preferences of the Mainstreamers; on the other hand, Alliances are the specific preference of Mainstreamers and Undecided scholars, and are excluded from the preferences of Dissidents. These share some concerns with the Minority (Cultural Hegemony, Ideologies), or the Undecided

respondents (Propaganda), while others are specific to them alone, namely, Economic Hegemony and Political Hegemony. The themes they are most likely to dismiss as a subject-matter of IR are International Trade, Alliances, and Interdependence, which are all specifically Dissident rejections. These excluded themes are presented in Table 6 below in ranking order:

Table 6: Themes IR should be LEAST concerned with:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Language	37.50%
2	Individuals	30.80%
3	Social Integration	27.90%
4	Propaganda	25.00%
5	The Media	21.20%
6	Technology	16.30%
7	The National Interest	15.40%
8	Cultural Hegemony	14.40%
	The Balance of Power	14.40%
10	Economic Hegemony	9.60%
11	Revolutions	7.70%
	Ideologies	7.70%
13	Knowledge	6.70%
	Alliances	6.70%
	Nuclear Deterrence	6.70%
	Norms	6.70%
17	The Environment	5.80%
	Terrorism	5.80%
	Religion	5.80%
20	Political Hegemony	4.80%
	Globalization	4.80%
	IR Theory	4.80%
23	Arms Control	3.80%
24	International Trade	2.90%
	Ethnic Conflicts	2.90%
	The Structure of the International System	2.90%

27	Interdependency	1.90%
28	Power	1.00%
	Transnational Relations	1.00%
	War	1.00%
	Peace	1.00%

When it comes to identifying what lies outside of IR’s subject-matter, only five of the 31 themes are meaningfully associated with self-labelling (Table 7): as expected, Interdependence and Alliances are specifically singled out by Dissidents, while Minority scholars are characterised by a rejection of Arms Control; the Mainstreamers unsurprisingly reject Propaganda as well as the Minority’s specific theme, Language.

Table 7: Association between Ontological Exclusions and Self-labelling:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Positive Association</b>	<b>Negative Association</b>
1	Interdependence	<i>Dissidence</i>	
2	Arms Control	Minority	
3	Language	Mainstream	
4	Propaganda	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i>
5	Alliances	<i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream

To complement their preferences in terms of subject-matter, respondents were asked to specify the paradigms/theories/approaches they adhere to (Table 8). Although the different paradigmatic and theoretical approaches are here ranked according to their respective response rates, this table contains more information than this ranking suggests. Firstly, it is difficult to impose on the respondents a strict definition of the terms “paradigm” and “theory,” or assume that they share the same understanding of how these different frameworks are articulated to one another. Secondly, some of the categories listed below are obviously more inclusive than others, whether at the epistemological, ontological, or methodological level, and are consequently not

equally exclusive of one another. More importantly, since these categories cover different *orders* of cognitive discourse<sup>20</sup>, the analysis of individual responses shows combinations that would seem intuitively self-contradictory (such as realism and idealism) whenever interpretation is based on a unidimensional understanding of these terms. Despite these problems, and since one cannot assume that all IR scholars can spontaneously or easily generate a systematic and nuanced map of the different systems of thought and research programs they adhere to, the choice was made to include a great variety of disciplinary “labels,” and allow the respondents to freely choose from them and add others as well.

Table 8: Paradigms/Theories/Approaches adhered to<sup>21</sup>:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Constructivism	31.70%
2	International Political Economy	30.80%
3	Liberal Internationalism	25%
4	Neoliberal Institutionalism	24%
5	Positivism	18.30%
6	Critical Theory	17.30%
7	Realism	16.30%
8	Democratic Peace Theory	15.40%
9	Transnationalism	13.50%
	International Regime Theory	13.50%
11	Behaviouralism	11.50%
	Complex Interdependence Theory	11.50%
13	Game Theory	10.60%
	Normative Theory	10.60%
15	Pluralism	9.60%
16	Classical Realism	8.70%
	Neoliberalism	8.70%

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<sup>20</sup> For example, the terms “realism” and “idealism” can be understood as referring to IR paradigms (Realism and Idealism), and therefore mainly to the epistemic and conceptual tenets of a given approach, or as referring to ontological positions (ontological realism/idealism).

<sup>21</sup> \*\* indicates that the answer was suggested by the respondents themselves.

	Just War Theory	8.70%
	Emancipatory Theory	8.70%
20	Feminism	7.70%
	Cosmopolitanism	7.70%
22	Dependency Theory	6.70%
	Globalism	6.70%
	Integration Theory	6.70%
	Neoclassical Realism	6.70%
	Neomarxism	6.70%
27	Defensive Realism	5.80%
	Idealism	5.80%
	Marxism	5.80%
	Postmodernism	5.80%
31	Balance of Power Theory	4.80%
	Constitutive Theory	4.80%
	Hegemonic Stability Theory	4.80%
	Historical Materialism	4.80%
	Imperialism	4.80%
36	Communitarianism	2.90%
	Complex Adaptive Systems Theory	2.90%
	Legal Positivism	2.90%
39	Post-internationalism	1.90%
	Political Psychology**	1.90%
41	Chaos Theory	1.00%
	Fourth World Theory	1.00%
	Offensive Realism	1.00%
	Post-behavioralism	1.00%
	World Systems Analysis	1.00%
	Global South Critique**	1.00%
	Historical Institutionalism**	1.00%
	Foreign Policy Making**	1.00%
	English School**	1.00%

Of the 49 theoretical frameworks listed in Table 8, 12 are statistically significant in relation to IR scholars' self-labelling (Table 9).

Table 9: Association between theoretical frameworks and self-labelling:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Paradigm/Theory</b>	<b>Positive Association</b>	<b>Negative Association</b>
1	Critical Theory	<i>Dissidence</i> , Minority	Mainstream, Not Sure
2	Historical Materialism	<i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream, Not Sure
3	Constructivism	Minority	
4	Emancipatory Theory	<i>Dissidence</i> , Minority	Not Sure
5	Marxism	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream, Not Sure
6	Postmodernism	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream, Not Sure
7	Dependency Theory	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream
8	Neoliberal Institutionalism	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i>
9	Positivism	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i>
10	Democratic Peace Theory	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i> , Minority
11	Classical Realism	Not Sure, <i>Dissidence</i>	
12	Behavioralism	Mainstream	Not Sure, Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>

Again, it is possible to divide these theoretical orientations and single out some oppositions between, on the one hand, Dissidents *and* Minority scholars, and on the other, Mainstreamers. (The Undecided IR scholars seem to constitute too eclectic a group to be included in the well-defined oppositions that appear here). Mainstreamers and Dissidents are once again almost always opposed: all of the theoretical preferences of Mainstreamers are specifically rejected by Dissidents, and all but one of the Dissidents' specific preferences (Classical Realism) are specifically rejected by the Mainstreamers. These significantly include Marxist-related approaches (Historical Materialism, Marxism, Critical Theory, Dependency Theory). On the other hand, Dissidents have a negative statistical association with the Mainstreamers' preferred theories and approaches, of which Neoliberal Institutionalism is the most significant one statistically for the overall population. Another significant Dissident rejection is Positivism, which is to a large degree incompatible with this group's general ontological orientations (Cultural Hegemony, Ideologies, Propaganda).

While most of these oppositions constitute the traditional lines of contention between “mainstream” and “dissident” IR scholarship since the 1980s, the case of the Democratic Peace Theory is worth singling out here, given its preponderance since “September 11” in theoretical, political and ethical discussions in the field. Perhaps more than any other predominant theoretical framework, it has also drawn the attention of contemporary “reflexive” IR scholars who, while adhering to different schools of thought, have converged in a common deconstruction and questioning of its implications for the moral and social responsibility of IR scholarship (e.g., Steele 2007, Ish-Shalom 2008).

The Minority also shares four theoretical orientations with the Dissidents, while it is *specifically positively associated with Constructivism alone*. Constructivism, however, is so frequently mentioned across the sample that it is in itself a *less exclusivist* orientation than the other ones singled out here<sup>22</sup>. This is clearly manifested in the fact that none of the three other groups (including Mainstreamers) is specifically *negatively* associated with Constructivism. These results concur with the view that Constructivism can hardly be considered a clearly defined “third paradigm,” as is sometimes suggested in contemporary IR textbooks (Barkin 2003:338), and that it is compatible with a diverse range of schools of thought, such as Realism (Barkin 2003), Neoliberal Institutionalism (Sterling-Folker 2000) or Feminism (Locher and Prügl 2001). It also explains why Constructivism has been so widely opposed within the field, from both the positivist and post-positivist extremities of the IR spectrum, and validates the claims of many scholars who consider Constructivism to have either failed to distance itself from the *epistemic* and/or *ideological* commitments of positivist/liberal IR scholarship (Hopf 1998, Sterling-Folker 2000) or failed to provide a clear alternative to both positivist and post-positivist ontological stances (Patomäki and Wight 2000).

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<sup>22</sup> As an indication of the high degree of compatibility between Constructivism and other theoretical frameworks, it is worth noting that Constructivism and only 13 of the other 48 theoretical frameworks listed previously happen to be *mutually exclusive* according to the survey results: Foreign Policy Analysis, Fourth World Theory, Game Theory, Global South Critique, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Historical Institutionalism, Imperialism, Legal Positivism, Organizational Theory, Political Psychology, Post-behavioralism, Post-internationalism, and World Systems Analysis.



Tables 5 and 9, when considered together, provide coherent information as to the overall specific orientations of the different groups of respondents. As Mainstreamers are more specifically interested in state-related and material international phenomena (Alliances, International Trade, Interdependence), they – unsurprisingly – more specifically than others engage materialist approaches to world politics (Neoliberal Institutionalism, Positivism and Behavioralism). Dissidents, on the other hand, are systematically oriented towards class-struggle-related phenomena, both material and non-material (Hegemony broadly understood, Ideologies, Propaganda), most of which are ontologically objectifiable within less “statist” and non-positivist approaches to the political (Critical Theory, Postmodernism). The preferences of the Minority broaden even more the scope of “the political,” by including Knowledge and Language as significant objects of study for IR, which suggests that they are more inclined than others to engage both IR and world politics in a *reflexive* manner (Lapid 1989, Linklater 1992, Guzzini 2000, 2005, Lezaun 2002, Lynch 2008). These choices are thus unsurprisingly associated with “critical” and “constructivist” theoretical approaches – or better, with “Critical Constructivism” understood as a form of Constructivism that does not refrain from addressing “its own participation in the reproduction, constitution, and fixing of the social entities” it objectivates (Hopf 1998:184).

These trends are generally confirmed by the analysis of the respondents’ epistemological and/or methodological preferences. Table 10 below ranks these preferences as expressed by the totality of respondents.

Table 10: Epistemological/Methodological approaches to the study of world politics:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Qualitative	47.10%
2	Empirical	41.30%
3	Comparative	37.50%
	Interdisciplinary	37.50%
5	Analytical	35.60%
6	Theoretical	34.60%
7	Quantitative	29.80%

8	Scientific	28.80%
9	Positivist	26.00%
10	Intersubjective	25.00%
11	Pragmatic	24.00%
12	Sociological	20.20%
	Inductive	20.20%
14	Critical	19.20%
15	Rational	17.30%
16	Rationalist	15.50%
17	Hypothetico-Deductive	12.50%
	Normative	12.50%
19	Philosophical	11.50%
20	Meta-theoretical	10.60%
21	Materialist	7.70%
	Subjectivist	7.70%
23	Objective	6.70%
24	Moral	4.80%
	Deconstructive	4.80%
26	Heuristic	3.80%
27	Idealist	2.90%
28	Objectivist	1.00%

Again, the values associated with the most well-defined epistemological/methodological approaches are also the most directly informative. The table shows for instance that more than 25% of the respondents are “positivists,” and although the term is certainly less ambiguous than “scientific,” the latter gets only a slightly higher response rate, which could mean that most IR scholars have become used to associating the notion of “scientificity” to “scientism” and “positivism”. The results also reveal what approaches remain “marginal” in the field, such as the normative, the philosophical, the meta-theoretical, or the deconstructive (by and large, what Robert Keohane (1988) termed “reflective IR”), all of which entail questioning the epistemic, ontological, and conceptual tenets of mainstream IR, as well as threatening its *autonomy* as a cognitive field of production that identifies its realm of inquiry as

being defined by the exclusive material and statist characteristics of the “international system”.

Table 11 reproduces the associations between the four groups of scholars and 17 such preferences.

Table 11: Association between epistemological/methodological frameworks and self-labelling:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Epistemology/Methodology</b>	<b>Positive Association</b>	<b>Negative Association</b>
1	Critical	Dissidence, Minority	Mainstream
2	Quantitative	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i> , Not Sure
3	Deconstructive	<i>Dissidence</i>	Mainstream, Not Sure
4	Positivist	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i>
5	Meta-theoretical	<i>Dissidence</i> , Minority	Mainstream
6	Intersubjective	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>	
7	Scientific	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i> , Not Sure
8	Rationalist	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i> , Minority, Not Sure
9	Materialist	<i>Dissidence</i>	Not Sure
10	Empirical	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i> , Not Sure
11	Philosophical	Minority	Mainstream, Not Sure
12	Interdisciplinary	Minority	
13	Normative	Minority, <i>Dissidence</i>	Not Sure
14	Rational	Mainstream	<i>Dissidence</i>
15	Moral	Minority	Mainstream, Not Sure
16	Sociological	Minority	
17	Subjectivist	Minority, Not Sure	Mainstream

Although some of the terms used here are not as self-explanatory as the theories referred to above, there is a general coherence between the associations presented in Table 11 and the previous ones. On the side of the Mainstreamers, all

qualifications denote a specifically positivist attitude, including – unsurprisingly – the categories Positivist, but also Quantitative, Scientific, Empirical, Rationalist or even Rational. They are also specifically characterised by a rejection of Critical, Meta-theoretical and Subjectivist epistemologies, along with a rejection of Deconstruction they share with the Undecided respondents. Overall, the negative associations involving Mainstreamers reflect a systematic lack of concern for reflexive, meta-discourse, which is confirmed by their simultaneous adherence to “positivist” approaches and their rejection of what they seem to regard as the opposite, namely “philosophical” ones (Philosophical, Moral). The Dissidents *and* Minority respondents share the other end of this opposition, the latter being equally open to sociological and philosophical approaches, which suggests that they are less exclusive in their epistemic conceptions, and are more likely to reject the rigid dichotomies that positivism entails, such as “facts vs. values”, “science vs. philosophy”, or “descriptive vs. normative”, which become irrelevant and even questionable from the perspective of social, *constitutive* IR theory (Author, Forthcoming 2011). Overall, the degree of these groups’ disciplinary “openness” is also illustrated by the fact that only 52.1% of the Mainstreamers consider that IR is “necessarily dependent on all other social sciences,” against respectively 62.1% and 66.7% of the Minority and Undecided respondents, and 83.3% of the Dissidents.

Apart from the Undecided IR scholars who are clearly less homogeneous than the other groups, it is possible to establish that self-labelling practices are associated with a clear intellectual opposition among IR scholars, one that is also strongly related to similar ideological/political worldviews. The notion that claims of dissidence within IR can be related to exogenous claims of dissidence is therefore corroborated here. These comparisons also suggest, however, that the subjective notion of dissidence does not fully reflect the scope of the discipline’s intellectual divisions, nor does it provide an accurate mapping of its “margins”: there are indeed many common characteristics the self-proclaimed dissidents share with those who simply feel they do not belong to the “majority,” and to a lesser extent, they share some of these with at least some of the respondents who are unable to choose among these labels. The findings presented so far therefore already point to an important conclusion, namely,

that contemporary dissidence in American IR cannot be reduced to those whose claim to dissidence has made visible as systemic opponents to mainstream scholarship, and that actual dissidence is itself structured along important intellectual and ideological differences that a sociology of the discipline cannot ignore.

***Dissent and Discontent:***

***A Dissident Diagnosis of IR's State of Affairs***

In relation to the previous analysis of American IR scholars' intellectual approaches, the great variations in scholarship revealed above are meant to produce different perceptions of the field's state of affairs, and therefore different degrees of satisfaction with its condition. The first explored here is properly endogenous to IR and is restricted to IR scholars' assessment of its intrinsic features. The second one is more exogenous as it includes features that pertain to the overall setting in which IR scholarship is produced.

Respondents were first asked to express their satisfaction with IR as a discipline at eight different levels, among which the degree of "diversity in the field," and then to specify how they assessed this diversity. Table 12 shows their perceptions of the state of the discipline, with an indication of the highest values for each level in bold.

Table 12: Satisfaction with the state of IR as a discipline:

	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Not a Concern</b>
1. Methods of Inquiry	30.80%	<b>36.50%</b>	29.80%	2.90%
2. Status Among Other Social Sciences	21.20%	<b>38.50%</b>	26%	14.40%
3. Academic Legitimacy	18.30%	27.90%	<b>44.20%</b>	9.60%
4. Scientific Legitimacy	21.20%	<b>43.30%</b>	20.20%	15.40%
5. Cognitive Progress	20.20%	<b>38.50%</b>	19.20%	22.10%
6. Impact on Public Policy	<b>58.70%</b>	25.00%	7.70%	8.70%
7. Moral Engagement	<b>45.20%</b>	35.60%	7.70%	11.50%
8. Diversity in the Field	<b>32.70%</b>	29.80%	28.80%	8.70%

The issue that concerns respondents the least (in relative terms) is that of “cognitive progress” in IR, while they are most concerned with IR’s “methods of inquiry”. On the other hand, the issues on which they are more likely to have an opinion are IR’s “impact on public policy,” its “academic legitimacy,” the level of “diversity in the field,” and to a lesser extent, the level of its “moral engagement”. Among these, the highest level of dissatisfaction concerns IR’s impact on public policy, over which more than half of the respondents agree; it is also with regards to this issue that the respondents are the least satisfied. While they do not agree over IR’s academic legitimacy as much, they are generally more satisfied with it than with any other concern, and this is validated by the fact that this issue also ranks last on the scale of dissatisfaction. It can also be deduced that the most controversial issues are those pertaining to IR’s methods of inquiry and the level of diversity in the field, which are two significant concerns for a great majority of respondents, and on which they are almost equally divided.

With respect to the four groups of IR scholars under study, the degree of satisfaction follows an undeniable trend, as shown in Table 13 below:

Table 13: Group Satisfaction with the state of IR

	Most Satisfied	Least Satisfied	Most Dissatisfied	Least Dissatisfied
1. Methods of Inquiry	MA	D	Mi	MA
2. Status Among Other Social Sciences	MA	D	MI, NS, D	MA
3. Academic Legitimacy	MA	D	D	MA
4. Scientific Legitimacy	MA	D	MI	MA
5. Cognitive Progress	MA	D	D	None
6. Impact on Public Policy	MA	D	MI, NS	D
7. Moral Engagement	MA	D	D, MI	MA
8. Diversity in the Field	MA	D	D	MA

Generally speaking, the Mainstreamers (MA) are always the most satisfied respondents whatever the domain concerned; with one exception, they are also systematically the least dissatisfied group. On the other hand, the Dissidents (D) are

always the least satisfied group; in fact, *none* of the Dissidents is satisfied with either *the state of IR's methods of inquiry, its status among other social sciences, its scientific legitimacy, or its impact on public policy*. The Dissidents are also, along with the Minority (MI), and to a lesser extent the Undecided respondents (NS), the group that has the highest rate of dissatisfaction, with the exception of domain 6, for which they are statistically the “least dissatisfied” of all groups merely because of their higher rate of “neutral” responses.

Since IR scholars are mostly divided on the subject of IR's degree of diversity, it is particularly interesting to compare their views on this specific issue. Fortunately, they were asked to specify their assessment of the degree of diversity in the field at four different levels corresponding to epistemic diversity (“definition of IR as a science”), ontological diversity (“definition of IR's subject matter”), methodological diversity (“methods of IR”) and theoretical diversity (“theories of IR”). As far as overall diversity is concerned, 50% of the Dissidents are dissatisfied with it, against 37.9% of the Minority, 33.3% of the Undecided respondents, and 25% of the Mainstreamers. The following results show that the main difference among them is a different assessment of the actual level of diversity existing in the field, with a greater contrast concerning IR's definition as a science and the definition of its subject-matter.

As far as epistemic diversity is concerned, 40% of the Dissidents cannot tell whether the degree of epistemic diversity in the field is high or low, and more than 30% of them cannot tell whether it is healthy or problematic. A majority of them (58%) is in favor of a diversified definition of IR as a science and one third of them believes that the degree of such diversity is currently “low and problematic,” a view they also share with one third of the Minority, and 27% of the Undecided group. There are, on the other hand, only 8% of Mainstreamers who think the same. For the latter group, the most represented opinion is that epistemic diversity is “high and healthy” enough: about 35% of them think so, against less than 23% of respondents found in other groups.

The satisfaction of the Mainstreamers with the degree of diversity in the field is further confirmed with regards to IR's subject-matter: 74% of them find diversity to

be “high and healthy,” a view they share with a majority of Undecided respondents, and only one third of both Dissidents and Minority scholars. Although the majority of scholars in each group is in favor of diversity with respect to IR’s objects of study, Dissidents disagree again over the assessment of its current level in the field, since 40% of them consider it to be “low and problematic”. The same proportion of Dissidents shares a similar diagnosis with regards to the scope of methodological diversity in the field, as do 36% of the Minority and 35% of the Undecided respondents, against only 18% of Mainstreamers, a majority of whom (56%) believes the degree of diversity is “high and healthy” enough. Finally, the question of whether IR is diverse enough at the level of its theoretical production splits the Dissidents in two, bringing them closer to their colleagues in the other groups, a majority of whom believes the degree of theoretical diversity is “high and healthy,” the Mainstreamers being as always the most satisfied group among all. On the other hand, the Dissidents are still the least satisfied with the level of theoretical diversity.

For each of these four issues pertaining to diversity in the field, a great majority of respondents expressed a preference for diversity, whatever the group they belong to<sup>23</sup>. The differences among them, then, concern their assessment of how much diversity is needed, and whether it is achieved or not. Mainstreamers are systematically satisfied with the degree of diversity achieved, which they find positive. Dissidents and Minority respondents, on the other hand, are not satisfied as they feel that more diversity is required. Beyond their mere factual value, these results suggest that the implicit criterion that underlies these scholars’ satisfaction/dissatisfaction is related to their definition of IR as a field of cognitive production, that is, to their perceptions of the real/legitimate *boundaries* of the discipline and of the actual boundaries of the social realm it studies. Insofar as a majority of Dissident and Minority scholars have come to IR from different social sciences that engage social reality from perspectives that are less constrained by the tenets of mainstream

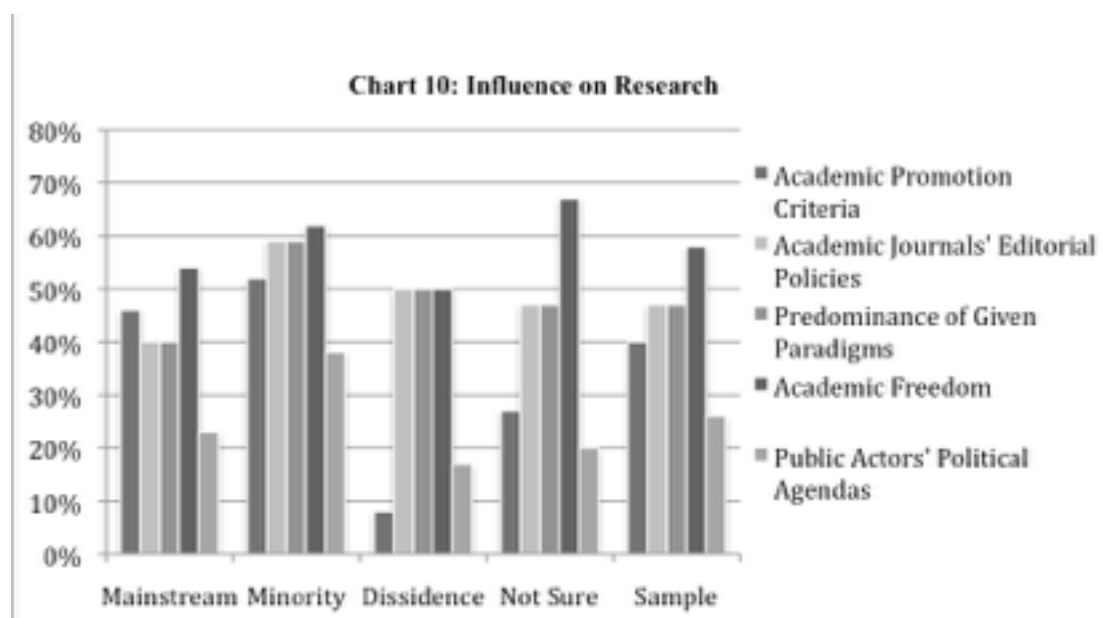
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<sup>23</sup> The general preference for diversity was deduced by computing the answers of those who considered diversity to be ‘high and healthy’ and those who considered it to be ‘low and problematic’, and disregarding those who did not have an opinion on the issue. The results show that 37.40% of respondents are in favour of epistemic diversity (30.70% against); 60.60% of them are in favour of ontological diversity (21.20% against); 47.10% of them are in favour of methodological diversity (42.30% against) and 53.90% are in favour of theoretical diversity (31.80% against).



American IR scholarship, “diversity” in IR takes on a different meaning for those scholars. While Mainstreamers will view diversity as reflecting a plurality of approaches, methodologies, and inquiries that remain in accordance with the central tenets of positivism, materialism and statism, Dissidents and Minority scholars perceive diversity as entailing a stretching of the discipline’s scholarship beyond the limits set by mainstream IR scholars. The more diversity the latter will develop, the less, therefore, the former will be satisfied with the state of the discipline.

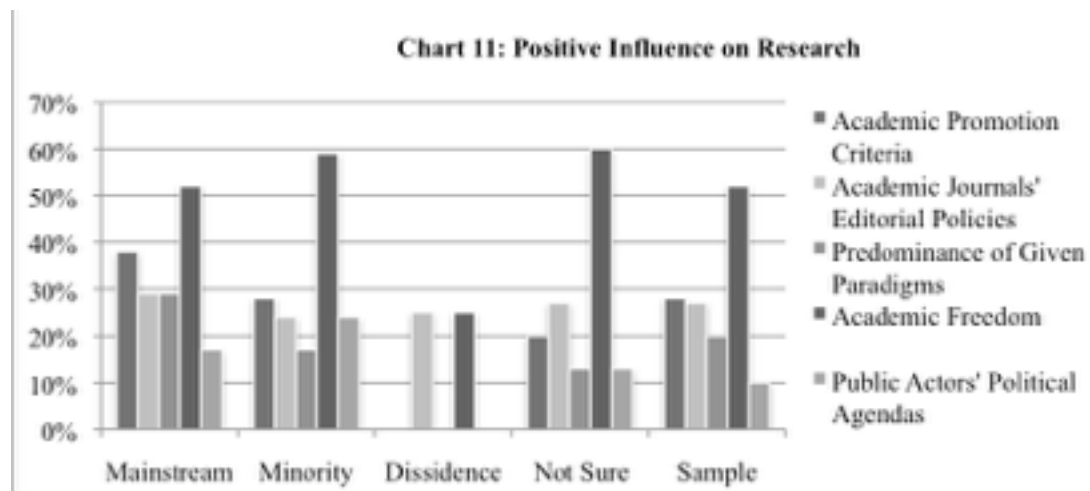
To complement their degree of satisfaction with the most endogenous features of IR, they were asked to specify how five (mostly exogenous) factors influenced their research, namely, the criteria for academic promotion, the editorial policies of academic journals, the predominance of given paradigms in the field, the degree of academic freedom, and the political agendas of public actors. Chart 10 shows the degree of general influence (positive and negative) each of these factors has for the four groups of scholars, disregarding the respective proportions of respondents who said that these factors had “no particular influence” on their research (these can be deduced from the Chart).

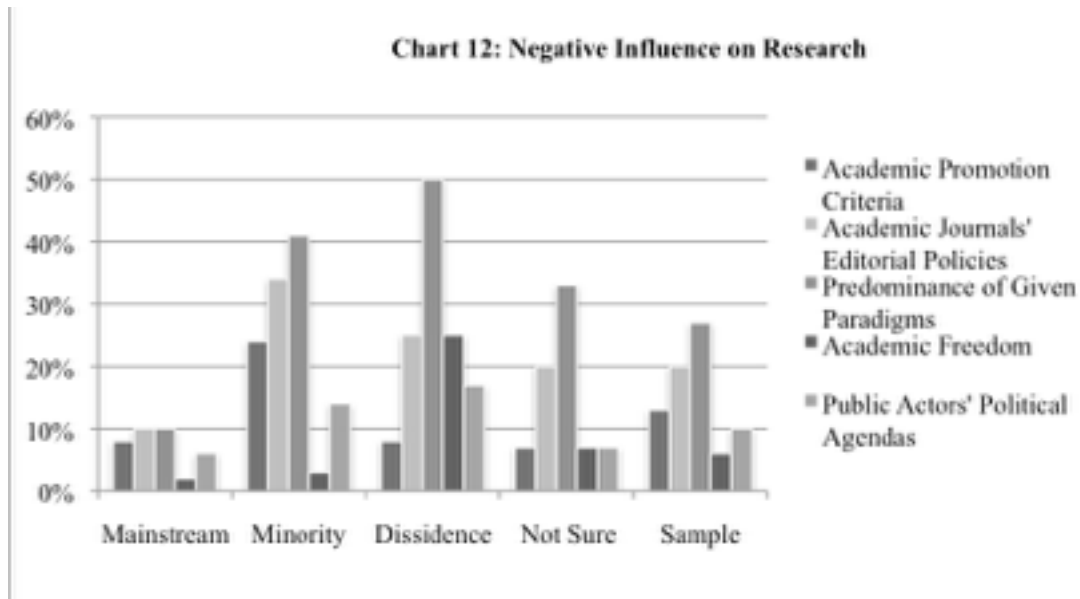


By comparing the responses provided by the different groups with the sample population, some first observations can easily be made. First, the degree of academic freedom is the most influential factor perceived to affect research across the

population, and should therefore be viewed as characteristic of American academia rather than of IR itself. Editorial policies and the predominance of given paradigms go hand in hand for all respondents, while the criteria for academic promotion and the agendas of public actors have different degrees of influence for the four groups of scholars. The overall degree of influence is the highest for the Minority respondents, more than half of them being influenced by the four properly “academic” factors here considered, while they also are more concerned than others by external political factors, which may point to their more fragile situation within the field. Charts 11 and 12 specify the actual impact of these variables on the respondents, and reveal some important differences among these groups.

The values pertaining to “positive influence” (Chart 11) correspond to the percentages of respondents who declared that a given factor “promoted” their research. The Dissidents are clearly singled out here, as they claim to be positively affected by two factors only: the degree of academic freedom and the editorial policies of academic journals. While the degree of academic freedom is systematically praised by more than a majority of respondents from other groups, only half as many Dissidents acknowledge its positive impact, and just as many consider that it has a negative impact on their work (Chart 12).





As far as the specifically academic factors are concerned, Mainstreamers are always more satisfied than the other groups. Their degree of satisfaction is mostly obvious with regards to the criteria for academic promotion – which suggests that they feel comfortable about the concordance of their research agendas with the general academic trend of the field – but it is also significant when it comes to assessing the impact of the field’s intellectual orientations. It is important to relate two specific variables here: editorial policies and the predominance of IR paradigms. The comparison of the respective degrees of positive influence of these two factors suggests the coexistence of two phenomena. On the one hand, respondents feel unequally satisfied with the predominance of paradigms in the field, as shown by the simultaneous reading of Charts 11 and 12. On the other hand, and while the degree of dissatisfaction with academic journals’ editorial policies follows a similar trend, the percentage of respondents who feel their research is promoted by these policies is quite similar for the 4 groups. This suggests that there is a greater intellectual plurality *among academic journals* than there is *in the field as a whole*, and that at least some journals can be said to counterbalance what most Minority, Dissident and Undecided scholars feel is a monopolization of IR by some specific paradigmatic orientations.

This points to the importance of non-mainstream IR journals in providing the less established scholars in the field – that is, mainly the Minority – with the means to promote their research agendas and academic production, since their lower institutional status puts them in the most fragile position in the overall academic

hierarchy. It also points, however, to a difficult dilemma for these scholars, who may be losing on the institutional level while successfully pursuing their research agenda. Dissident scholars, who now enjoy a higher institutional status, can afford to publish in the venues of their choice without being threatened by institutional sanctions, thereby reducing their dissatisfaction to the less existentially problematic issue of having to co-exist with opposing leading paradigms that no longer constitute a threat to their academic advancement. Minority scholars, on the other hand, take the risk of being institutionally marginalized and undermined precisely if they target those venues where they have better chances of gaining visibility. From this perspective, it is unlikely that the multiplication of non-mainstream or “dissident” journals will significantly affect their institutional or academic position, unless they enjoy a benign or supporting environment, that is, find suitable departments that share or tolerate their research agendas. It may be, therefore, that the disciplinary “ascension” of this generation of IR dissidents can be better promoted by a collective effort that involves the support of the earliest generation who now occupies a more comfortable and influential position in the field.

### ***Reaching Out Beyond the System:***

#### ***Dissidents and the Public Sphere***

The purpose of this last section is to determine whether Dissidents engage the academic and public space differently than others. The variables considered here pertain to the nature of their academic activities and their scope, especially in comparison with the wider public sphere. The first indicator of academic involvement concerns IR scholars’ membership in editorial boards of academic journals. As shown in Table 14 below, Dissidents are neither more nor less involved than other groups<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Given that only a few respondents specified which journals they are or have been affiliated with, it is not possible to determine whether these quantitative similarities hide important qualitative differences. The previous results pertaining to the respondents’ degree of satisfaction with the editorial policies of academic journals as opposed to the predominance of given paradigms in the field suggests that there are enough academic journals out there to satisfy the intellectual and institutional needs of Mainstreamers and Dissidents alike, and that if there is such an association between the two variables, it is the nature of the journals that would be relevant, rather than the fact of being part of their editorial boards.

The values are significant only for the Undecided scholars, as only 20% of them are members of editorial boards, against an average of 44.20% for the whole sample.

Table 14: Membership in Editorial Boards of Academic Journals

Mainstream	45.80%
Minority	51.70%
Dissidence	50%
Not Sure	20%
Sample	44.20%

The second indicator pertains to IR scholars' involvement in international conferences. As shown in Table 15 below, 74% of IR scholars participate in conferences held outside of the U.S. Significantly enough, *all* dissidents do. Since they are all American citizens, one cannot posit that the obstacles that could explain a lower rate of international conference travelling do not equally apply to them, such as geographical distance and language or cultural barriers. In fact, Dissidents also travel more frequently to more distant destinations such as the Middle East or Asia (Table 16).

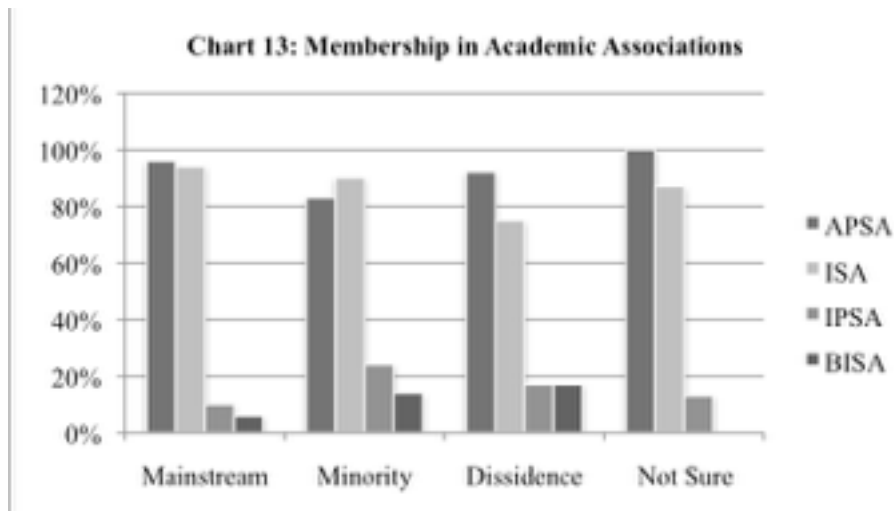
Table 15: Participation in Conferences outside of the US:

Mainstream	70.80%
Minority	72.40%
Dissidence	100%
Not Sure	66.70%
Sample	74%

Table 16: International conference destinations

	Canada	UK	Continental Europe	Middle East	Asia
Mainstream	35.40%	35.40%	52.10%	6.30%	6.30%
Minority	41.40%	31%	48.30%	10.30%	13.80%
Dissidence	<b>58.30%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>33.30%</b>
Not Sure	26.70%	33.30%	40%	6.70%	6.70%
Sample	38.50%	35.60%	51.90%	9.60%	14.40%

The results, then, suggest that the Dissidents and Minority respondents are slightly more “international” than the two other groups. This impression is confirmed by their higher rate of membership in non-US based academic associations, (Chart 13), with a higher rate of membership in the International Political Science Association (IPSA) and the British International Studies Association (BISA). The Dissidents are also less likely than other groups to be members of the International Studies Association (ISA), a fact that should be of some concern to the ISA itself.



In addition to their having a more “international” profile, Dissidents are also more significantly engaged in the broader *public sphere*. This phenomenon is revealed by the nature and volume of their publications. While they are not particularly distinguished by their records of published books (Chart 14), they clearly differentiate themselves on the basis of the articles they publish, as is clearly illustrated below:



Unsurprisingly, all groups mainly publish peer-reviewed articles in American academic journals, and the differences in their publishing records for this particular format are not significant. However, the Dissidents are systematically more involved than others in alternative publications, which include peer-reviewed articles in non-American academic journals, non-peer-reviewed academic articles, and newspaper articles. The first of these three values confirms the impression that Dissidents are more international than other groups, and since they participate more in international conferences and are more exposed to the international community through their membership in non-American associations, it is reasonable to assume that they are more or better connected to, and interested in, the international community of IR scholars, which is not particularly characteristic of American IR in general. The second value, concerning the number of their non-peer-reviewed academic articles, can be associated with their academic status in terms of rank and tenure: since they are mostly tenured academics, they can afford to publish articles that are not peer-reviewed, or, alternatively, they are more *solicited* than others by specific academic

journals because of their academic status. It is, however, the third value that is the most interesting one: their record of newspaper articles. As shown here, less than half of all other categories of scholars publish in newspapers, but more than 70% of Dissidents do. When all values are considered, it is also clear that Dissidents simply publish more, and engage more intensely the non-academic publication venues.

While these results are not surprising given the “activist” ethos that is associated with Critical IR, which the first generation of dissidents typically represent, they are, however, interesting and possibly alarming for Minority respondents. The importance of this issue is relative to a given conception of the social and moral role/responsibility of IR scholarship vis-à-vis the public sphere, a theme that has become recurrent specifically within the community of scholars who engage world politics and IR itself from the specific intellectual stance that characterizes Minority scholars – such as Critical Constructivists – namely, from an explicitly *reflexive* or *emancipatory* perspective (see Neufeld 1993, 1995, Smith 2002, 2004, Agathangelou and Ling 2004, Guzzini 2005, Tickner 2006, Linklater 2007, Steele 2007, Ackerly and True 2008, Ish-Shalom 2008, Lynch 2008, Tickner and Tsygankov 2008, Hamati-Ataya 2010). Given the significantly more fragile institutional position of these scholars in American IR, their lesser willingness to cross the boundaries of academia and engage public venues and debates – while they are precisely cognitively better equipped than others to make them relevant to IR as a field of knowledge-production that they perceive to be partially *constitutive* of social reality – should be an important concern. This is so at least because the traditional ethos of “value-neutrality” or “ethical neutrality,” which is characteristic of the Positivist culture of the field, has contributed to disengaging American IR scholars from the social and moral problems of world politics, and simultaneously to delegitimizing “engaged” IR scholarship (Author Forthcoming 2011). An “engaged ethos,” however, which follows naturally from the reflexive attitude that is entailed by a critical/constructivist/constitutive view of IR, can only be pursued if academics become significantly involved in public debate (Widmaier 2004). Minority scholars therefore need to develop new social/academic strategies if they are to break the insularity that currently seems to separate them from both Mainstream and Critical IR.



## *Dissidence Beyond the Dissidents?*

### *The Other Structuring Divide*

The data presented in this article allow us to draw an ideal-typical profile of American IR scholars who claim dissidence in the field. On the one hand, they are clearly distinguished from other groups by their ideological leanings, as they are more likely to be atheist or agnostic scholars who situate themselves in the center-left and left segments of the political spectrum. Their political worldview also appears to be consistently shaping their intellectual choices and academic orientations as IR scholars: their ontological preferences indicate a focused interest in conflict- and class-struggle-based phenomena, which explains their higher involvement in Marxist-oriented and critical approaches to the political, with a combination of objectivist and non- or anti-positivist methodologies, the latter permitting the objectification of ideational, non-material dimensions of world politics. On the other hand, this properly political ideological leaning is also combined with a characteristically different *cognitive* culture, which situates them at the more interdisciplinary margins of the discipline, and may contribute to their viewing themselves as “outsiders” who are nonetheless not only conscious of their differences and peculiar position in the field, but also willing to claim the latter as a powerful locus of anti-mainstream scholarly production.

In alignment with the ethos promoted by Critical Theory, they are also characteristically more strongly involved in the public sphere, extending their activities beyond both the strictly national and strictly academic venues. Their international, public profile is also correlative with their high degree of dissatisfaction with the state of the discipline – which is by definition the typical attitude of “dissidents” to any system – and the broader environment within which it functions. These scholars, who now occupy important institutional positions within the field and American academia, are ultimately reminiscent of the ideal-type of the leftist public intellectual *à la française*, with its characteristic paradigm of “*activist*” *scholarship*. It is thus legitimate to conclude that those who *claim dissidence* in American IR do

indeed constitute a social group. The question is to what extent their profile is representative of American IR dissidents in general.

Indeed, the results presented here also suggest that these scholars do not encompass *contemporary* dissident American IR scholarship. By and large, they particularly, but not exclusively, share many common features with those IR scholars who chose to position themselves within *the* or *a* minority. As shown previously, Minority and Dissident IR scholars share some ideological, and many intellectual grounds. They are both more specifically situated on the left side of the political spectrum and more likely to be found among both the Left and the non-religious. Scholars of the Minority are also closely related to the Dissidents as far as their cognitive cultures are concerned, and this is corroborated by a similar alignment with respect to their intellectual orientations. In fact, they are to a certain extent more radical than the Dissidents themselves, at least in the way they define IR's subject-matter and in their adherence to specific epistemological and methodological frameworks of inquiry. It is, after all, among the Minority that such themes as Knowledge and Language were ranked among the most significant IR objects of study, along with the most reflexive, philosophical, and anti-positivist theoretical approaches to world politics. It is therefore interesting to understand what distinguishes these scholars who choose not to label themselves as "dissidents," but whose perception of their anti-mainstream position is clear enough to prevent their indecision. Alternatively, one would ask why, since they refuse to adhere to what they perceive to be the mainstream of IR scholarship, they do not adopt the label of dissidence to claim this counter-position.

It may be that American IR and dissidence in American IR have developed enough since the first generation of dissident scholars so that the very notion of dissidence appears to be less controversial, and therefore perhaps also a less appealing means of situating oneself in the field, to the second generation of non-mainstream IR scholars, especially if "dissidence" is associated with Critical Theory. This may explain the obvious generational gap between Dissidents and Minority respondents. There are, nonetheless, some differences between them indicating that these groups

are not merely separated by a shift in disciplinary terminology. The data actually show that the profile of Minority scholars is slightly different from that of the Dissidents.

They are, for example, more diversified in terms of religious and political orientations. With respect to the latter, Minority respondents occupy a more centered position in the left-right spectrum, as they include 27.59% of Democrats (8.33% for the Dissidents), 13.79% of Liberals (*none* among the Dissidents) and 24.14% of Social-Democrats (33.33% for the Dissidents). Dissidents are thus clearly more radical than the Minority, and also less diversified. This signifies that political ideology is a relatively less significant variable for the Minority. Given that Dissidents are more inclined to approach world politics from a more clearly leftist-radical worldview, this difference in ideological leanings may explain the differences in terms of IR-related intellectual concerns between the two groups: while Dissidents focus more specifically on conflict- or class-struggle-based theoretical frameworks and their correlated objects of study, IR scholars who belong to the Minority adhere to a more diversified anti-mainstream epistemological and ontological set of orientations. This different ideological mindset may also explain their much weaker involvement in the public sphere, which could also be combined with the fact that they occupy lower professorial ranks within academia (Table 1, Charts 2 and 3).

By and large, the scholarly dissidence of self-acclaimed dissidents in IR is also still clearly associated with Critical Theory and its affiliated approaches. The Minority, on the other hand, is mostly associated with Constructivism, which, as mentioned previously, does not in itself exclusively delineate any clear-cut ontological frame of inquiry or any specific praxeological culture. This may be related to the fact that as a “*via media*” (Wendt 1999) or a “*middle ground*” (Adler 1997), Constructivism attracts a wider spectrum of non-mainstream scholars and translates – even within more mainstream approaches – into a less coherent epistemic/ontological and praxeological “*paradigm*” for IR scholarship. It seems nonetheless that Constructivism, in the case of Minority scholars, gains its significance as a form of post-positivist epistemological approach that gives importance to their preferred objects of study, namely, *language* and *knowledge*. From this perspective, it is not surprising that Minority IR scholars are more inclined to adopt or adhere to

philosophical, moral, and reflexive attitudes with respect to world politics, that is, those attitudes that are less in tune with critical, Marxist-based, or struggle-based cognitive views, insofar as the latter are more inclined to consider language and knowledge as *superstructural* phenomena shaped by material relations of power, rather than properly *constitutive* ones.

These observations, then, suggest that *contemporary* dissidence in IR is doubly structured. On the one hand, it logically stands against what is perceived to be “mainstream IR,” which, as shown by the survey results, is coherently represented by a “core” including International Political Economy, Liberal Internationalism, Neoliberal Institutionalism, and Realism<sup>25</sup>. On the other hand, it is itself divided along ideological-cognitive lines, which separate a “cluster” of *older* dissidents articulated to Critical Theory as the cognitive space from which their leftist worldview can most naturally be expressed as a properly political stance, from a less well-defined “cluster” of less vocal dissidents who engage the more anti-objectivist and anti-positivist theoretical approaches that do not stand as diametrically opposed to the core of the American ideological establishment<sup>26</sup>. In other words, dissidence as a self-

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<sup>25</sup> This ‘core’ of mainstream IR was deduced using the following method: the theoretical preferences of the respondents were used to ‘map’ the structure of the field, by identifying those theoretical frameworks that were associated with one another, and more specifically, those that were *mutually associated* with one another, in the sense that a scholar adhering to framework A would be likely to adhere to framework B *and* vice versa. Five such mutual associations were identified: Historical Materialism/Marxism; IPE/Liberal Internationalism; IPE/Neoliberal Institutionalism; Neoliberal Institutionalism/Liberal Internationalism; and Neoliberal Institutionalism/Realism. Given the systematic opposition between, on the one hand, Historical Materialism and Marxism, and on the other, all of the other four frameworks, the last four pairs of mutually associated frameworks, which are systematically adopted by Mainstreamers and rejected by Dissidents and Minority scholars (except for Realism, which gets nonetheless lower response rates for the latter two categories), are here considered as constituting the core of mainstream IR, both in ‘volume’ (see Table 8) and in ‘coherence’: Among those who chose IPE, 33.3% also chose Liberal Internationalism, 33.3% chose Neoliberal Institutionalism, and 18.2% chose Realism; among those who chose Liberal Internationalism, 38.5% chose IPE, 46.2% Neoliberal Institutionalism, and 34.6% Realism; among those who chose Neoliberal Institutionalism, 40% chose IPE, 48% chose Liberal Internationalism, and 40% Realism; finally, among those who chose Realism, 35.3% chose IPE, 52.9% chose Liberal Internationalism, and 58.8% Neoliberal Institutionalism. In addition to that, Critical Theory and Liberal Internationalism are *mutually exclusive* according to the respondents’ choices.

<sup>26</sup> In opposition to mainstream IR, no similar ‘core’ was identified with respect to anti-mainstream IR, since, apart from the Historical Materialism/Marxism pair of mutually associated frameworks (which represent only 6.7% of all respondents), there are no systematic associations here. For this reason, the term ‘cluster’ is used to refer to the theoretical frameworks that are statistically significantly associated with Critical Theory (in particular, Emancipatory Theory, Feminism, Historical Materialism, Marxism, Postmodernism, and Constructivism) and those associated with non-mainstream affiliates of Constructivism (in particular, Emancipatory Theory, Integration Theory, Constitutive Theory, Cosmopolitanism, and Critical Theory).

acclaimed attitude appears to be a *systemic* phenomenon that is directly related to *political dissidence*, whereby IR itself is conceived by the most vocal actors of IR dissidence as a *political field of production* in which ideology broadly defined (political and cognitive) is expressive of actual relations of power as objectified in the international arena that constitutes IR's subject-matter. In opposition to this polarized, dichotomous relationship, the remaining or second-generation actors of academic dissidence in IR can be said to practice a dissidence of *political difference* (or political "distanciation") rather than one of *political opposition*, which confirms the idea that the very label of dissidence, or dissidence as a self-referring narrative, is a properly political, antagonizing means of both scholarly *self-identification* and scholarly *practice*.

These observations ultimately lead to two interrelated points. The first is that dissidence associated with Critical Theory, insofar as it is intimately related to specific ideological leanings, should be addressed with the same requirements critical theorists asked objectivist, mainstream internationalists to uphold, namely, with a minimum degree of reflexivity. Secondly, insofar as a sociology of IR can be envisaged, this reflexivity can only be achieved through an epistemology that can address knowledge and language as constitutive elements of theory. Therefore, it is worth asking whether the systemic relationship self-acclaimed dissidents have with IR mainstreamers (as shown by their systematic oppositions) does not in itself constitute a somehow more important dividing line within IR, that is, a division that is, at some other order of inquiry, more significant than the one opposing mainstream IR to non-mainstream IR. A focus on this opposition supports the distinction offered by Nick Rengger and Mark Hoffman (1992) between *critical interpretative theory* and *radical interpretativism* on the basis of a belief in emancipation or lack thereof, whereby the difference between the first and second generation of IR dissidents would be viewed not merely as expressing a disagreement over epistemic questions (foundationalism vs. anti-foundationalism, Smith 2005), but more fundamentally as indicating a substantively different attitude vis-à-vis the nature, role, and position of IR theory in IR, as well as its relationship with ideology.

From this perspective, a sociology of the discipline should probably view contemporary self-acclaimed dissidence as precisely what it has always claimed to be, namely, an essentially *political project* – one that can neither be expected to encompass the realm of *difference* in IR (George and Campbell 1990), nor to “speak the language of all exiles”. If dissidence is understood not simply as an opposition to the *dominant* view but to the *system* as a whole, it is not surprising if Constitutive, rather than Critical Theory, ends up being most powerfully antagonized within IR. Insofar as Constitutive Theory, understood as a third order of inquiry that attempts to objectivate the “discourse on IR discourse,” aspires to deconstruct the ideational foundations of the institutionalized knowledge of world politics (and therefore engages language and knowledge as central ontological elements of world politics), the kind of dissidence its producers embody can only be jeopardized by the older discourse on dissidence that is still promoted in the field. Therefore, as long as the discipline remains comfortably structured by the dichotomy between objectivist and critical theory, or other similar structuring narratives that attempt to include difference and plurality by including false paradigms such as Constructivism, the type of dissidence that attempts to extract itself from the power of metanarratives (Lyotard 1986) will remain marginal in IR (and IR theory), as is already perceived by those who find themselves, properly speaking, in the *minority*. This suggests that the “insularity” of post-positivist American IR still persists to a large extent, despite what early, non-American post-positivists had projected (e.g., Linklater 1992:78).

On the other hand, the Minority itself seems to be limited in its ability to promote its research agendas and engage the wider public sphere. While Postmodern approaches to knowledge and social reality may not be suitable for promoting a moral and social engagement of the kind Critical Theory permits and calls for, Critical Constructivism, on the other hand, certainly is. Insofar as it considers the social realm to be intimately related to its own realm of activity, Critical Constructivism undeniably entails a retreat from both the “ethical neutrality” of positivism and the “ethical indifference” of postmodernism. If the new generation of American IR scholars is to make any significant difference in the cognitive and social practice of American IR scholarship, it has to mobilize its efforts to produce the type of scholarly

and social ethos that Critical Theorists have efficiently promoted and used in the past (see Author Forthcoming 2011) to promote their intellectual and social agendas.

### ***Conclusion***

This paper engaged “dissidence” in American IR as both a *discursive* and *socio-intellectual* collective phenomenon, and aimed at revealing the contemporary manifestations of dissidence in the field as well as the structuring principles that govern its existence as an alternative to “mainstream” IR. The methodology used to pursue this objective is necessarily limited, and a more comprehensive, multi-levelled understanding of both dissident *scholarship* and dissident *scholars* can only be achieved through a combination of different approaches and different levels of analysis. Within the necessarily restricted framework of inquiry adopted here, the conclusions presented in this paper are nonetheless worth considering for future research on the sociology of the discipline, especially for those IR scholars who believe that IR should be treated as field of social production that is neither independent of, nor irrelevant for the social reality it attempts to understand or explain.

This paper shows that a new generation of dissidents has appeared in American IR that enjoys a less secure institutional position than its predecessors. It also reveals its lesser degree of homogeneity in comparison to the first generation of IR dissidents that were – and still are – more clearly representative of Critical Theory as both an intellectual and ideological/ethical stance. While the proliferation of post-positivist approaches may be viewed as reflecting the greater openness of the discipline, it is also necessary to acknowledge that this richness is sometimes achieved at the expense of non-mainstream, rather than mainstream, IR. More specifically, Constructivism’s ability to appeal to the extremities of the academic spectrum suggests that Constructivist IR scholars who adhere to a more critical form of Constructivism may be subjected to a more vicious form of “marginalization” than Critical Theorists claim to have endured, namely, the kind of marginalization that

results from being “assimilated into the discipline rather than ignored” by it (Crawford 2000:158).

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