

# CONVERSATIONS ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH

## The Coloniality of Global Knowledge Production: Theorizing the Mechanisms of Academic Dependency<sup>1</sup>

CAROLINE M. SCHÖPF

*Increasing calls to decolonize global knowledge production highlight the necessity of understanding the causes of inequality in global knowledge production, or 'academic dependency.' While theories of academic dependency or dimensions thereof already exist, there is a shortage of comprehensive accounts of the mechanisms creating and re-inscribing academic dependency. Integrating and extending previous theorizations, this article presents such a theory: I show how global academic stratification grants the academic core a standard-setting position, giving it power over the globally most highly valued mechanisms of evaluating research. This pressures academics anywhere on the globe to orient their research toward the preferences of the academic core (i.e., Global North ones). Further, the global stratification of the research degree system, with both core and periphery academic elites being trained in the core, strengthens Northern intellectual lineages and enhances North-to-South flows of academic influence, while disrupting Southern intellectual traditions and stifling South-to-North flows of academic influence. The stronger power of core academics in core-periphery collaborations centers Northern concerns and marginalizes Southern ones. English as the global academic language further privileges academics from Anglophone countries. This creates an inward-orientation of Northern knowledge production, producing over-theorized and Eurocentric knowledge lacking corrective feedback from the South, while creating an outward-orientation of Southern knowledge production, yielding fragmented, undertheorized knowledge disconnected from local concerns.*

**KEYWORDS:** academic dependency, coloniality of knowledge, decoloniality, Eurocentrism, postcolonialism

## INTRODUCTION

Academics from the Global South have long pointed out the coloniality of knowledge—distortions and biases embedded in academic knowledge—stating that privileged perspectives and ways of knowing, foremostly Western/Global Northern ones, are being centered, while perspectives and ways of knowing of subalternized and oppressed populations, foremostly those of the Global South, are being sidelined, suppressed, or erased (Dussel 1993; Grosfoguel 2011; Mignolo 2002, 2009, 2012). They have called for decolonization of knowledge production (S. F. Alatas 2003; Patel 2014; Santos 2014) and have also pointed toward important structural inequalities within global academia (S. F. Alatas 2003; Hountondji 1990; Patel 2014) and related them to Eurocentric biases in the knowledge generated. Coloniality of knowledge challenges the core of academia's mission: to create correct and undistorted knowledge that considers all perspectives. In a globally integrated world, it is vital to ensure that academia creates globally accurate and applicable knowledge.

For this, it is vital that calls pointing out distortions and biases in knowledge and knowledge production are taken seriously by academics worldwide, and that measures are implemented to rectify these problems. One important step toward this is to improve our understanding of the problem through theories offering in-depth explanations of the mechanisms leading to coloniality of knowledge. Important theorizing already exists: Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) has emphasized the fundamental role of colonialism itself in creating coloniality of knowledge.

The literature on academic dependency has highlighted the core-periphery structure of global academia (Altbach 1975, 1977; Gareau 1985, 1988, 1991). S. F. Alatas (2003) explains and theorizes the dimensions of academic dependency. Hountondji (1990) has provided a detailed account of the outward-orientation ('extraversion') of Southern academia and knowledge production. S. H. Alatas (1972, 2000) has described the subjectivities and mindsets that distorted knowledge production creates in the North ('academic imperialism') and in the South ('captive mind') and explained some traits of academic dependency. Patel (2014) has pointed toward the infrastructure and resource aspects behind this distorted knowledge production. Chew (1997, 2005, 2008), studying knowledge production in 'cultural peripheries,' has discussed problems arising from the inflated reception of foreign knowledge, the suppressed reproduction of the disciplinary community, and exclusion of indigenous knowledge.

Kim (2012) shows how Korean graduate students in the US both experience subalternization and contribute to US global academic hegemony.

While these accounts are of tremendous value, there is still a shortage of theories that offer a comprehensive and detailed account of the mechanisms of academic dependency. This article extends, integrates, and elaborates on existing work, producing a systematic theory of academic dependency that (1) highlights the roots of academic dependency in colonialism and contemporary global inequalities, (2) illuminates the effect of the globally stratified structure of academia, (3) systematizes and extends previous theorizations of how the global stratification of academia enables venues and media of research dissemination (journals, publishing houses, and conferences) as well as core-periphery collaborations to pressure academic periphery researchers into compliance with academic core (i.e., Global North) perspectives and views, while privileging academic core researchers, their perspectives, and their work. (4) I also identify two neglected mechanisms exacerbating coloniality of knowledge, the globally stratified research degree system and the status of English as the global academic language. (5) I explain how these mechanisms interact to strengthen academic core-to-periphery (North-to-South) influence and knowledge flows (S. F. Alatas 2003), while stifling reverse flows, ultimately leading to the outward-orientation of the academic periphery that Hountondji (1990) and S. H. Alatas have discussed, as well as in the academic core creating an inward-orientation and what S. H. Alatas (2000) has described as intellectual imperialism.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW: EXISTING PERSPECTIVES ON ACADEMIC DEPENDENCY**

A vital contributor to coloniality of knowledge was colonialism itself, a point Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) emphasizes, building on the work on Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986). Colonialism directly created a main arch of coloniality of knowledge by invading the mind of colonized people through epistemicides, linguicides, culturecides, and alienating colonized people from their heritage (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020).

Other researchers have discussed how the stratified structure of global academia and the inequalities embedded in it—also caused by colonialism—link to distorted knowledge production. The most important tradition in this regard is the literature on academic

dependency (S. F. Alatas 2003; Altbach 1975, 1977; Garreau 1985; 1988; 1991). Academic dependency has been defined “as a condition in which the social sciences of certain countries are conditioned by the development and growth of the social sciences of other countries to which the former is subjected” (S. F. Alatas 2003, 603). It is inspired by economic dependency theory. It assumes a core-periphery structure of global academia, with the periphery dependent on knowledge production in the core. It observes that data collection and reception of the finished research output take place in the periphery (the Global South), while theorizing and meta-theoretical activities are conducted in the core (the Global North) (S. F. Alatas 2003; Altbach 1975; Gareau 1985). The contribution of academic dependency approaches is that they show how contemporary academic inequalities were initiated by colonialism and are maintained by economic inequality (S. F. Alatas 2000; Altbach 1975, 1977; Gareau 1985, 1988, 1991). However, most works fall short of a full account of the specific structures and mechanisms through which academic dependency leads to coloniality of knowledge.

The most important, detailed, and comprehensive theory of academic dependency to date is the seminal work by Syed Farid Alatas (2003). He specifies vital elements of academic dependency, including dependence on the following: ideas, media of ideas, technology of education, aid for research and teaching, investment in education, and Western demand for the skills of Third World social scientists. He describes the core-to-periphery flow of knowledge, including theory, metatheoretical analysis, research agendas and methods, and articulates what he calls the ‘division of labor in the social sciences’: Theoretical, comparative and other country-research occurs in the academic core, while the academic periphery is confined to empirical work, single case studies and research on one’s own country. He also describes the academic periphery’s dependence on the academic core’s media of ideas (books, journals, conference proceedings, etc.). Further, he describes how the Global South is dependent on the Global North’s resources, such as technology, aid for research, and investment in education, and how Eurocentrism can be inscribed in these Northern resources. These are vastly important building blocks for the theory articulated here. I extend his analysis by explaining how these elements of academic dependency come into existence through the core-periphery structure of academia in conjuncture with its stratification and ranking systems, as well as economic and coloniality-of-power inequalities. I also present

a comprehensive theoretical framework that explains the factors leading to the core-to-periphery flow of knowledge described by S. F. Alatas. Furthermore, I explain the factors bringing about the core-periphery flow of influence that is responsible for the global division of labor in academia and for the periphery's dependence on the core's medias and venues of research dissemination.

Others have also explained important parts of the phenomenon. Paulin Hountondji (1990) describes the core-periphery flow of academic influence, with theorizing taking place in the ruling country/metropole and (former) colonies confined to a role of data collection and importing inventions from the North, which alienates them from their own intellectual traditions. He also delivers a sophisticated account of the outward-orientation (which he calls 'extraversion') of Southern knowledge production and describes the strong pressures of Southern scholars to address issues of interest to a Western public instead of issues that may benefit their own society. However, he does not explain which forces create such pressures or shape the core-periphery flow of academic influences.

Syed Hussein Alatas has contributed two vital concepts, the 'captive mind' (1972) and 'academic imperialism' (2000). According to S. H. Alatas, the 'captive mind' is a consequence of Western hegemony and arises at higher academic institutions under conditions of being dominated by and uncritically imitating Western thought. It is uncreative and unoriginal and follows stereotypes. It has a fragmented outlook and is alienated from the important issues of the local society. Furthermore, it does not realize its own captivity and the reasons for it (S. H. Alatas 2000). 'Academic imperialism' is defined as "domination of one people by another in their world of thinking" (ibid., 24) and is conceptualized as having the following dimensions: (1) exploitation, extraction of "raw data" which is then theorized by the (former) colonizer without the input of scholars from the (former) colony; (2) tutelage, the assumption that Westerners know more about all things than people of the Global South and that true understanding could only arise from learning from the West; (3) conformity, that Southern scholars are expected to conform to Western preferences in terms of theories, methodologies, or choice of topics; (4) the secondary roles Southern scholars are expected to play, including attitudes that they are only suitable for such roles, and a refusal to give them prominence at international journals or control over international publications and journals; (5) an 'academic civilizing mission' assuming that the West has to "develop" academia

in “underdeveloped” societies according to the Western model; (6) and inferior scholars from the Global North coming to a Southern country to reinvent themselves as experts of local knowledge and embarking on successful academic careers there.

S. H. Alatas also describes instances of the North-to-South flow of academic influence—elaborating for example how research based on Southern data that was theorized in the North without Southern inputs is then sold as textbooks to the South—and he gives instances of differences in resources influencing power relations, such as well-funded Northern researchers using Southern collaborating scholars for mere data collection roles, excluding them from any intellectual contributions. For both these instances, S. H. Alatas stresses that the reverse scenarios would not happen. Under the concept of ‘academic imperialism,’ S. H. Alatas thus subsumes vital dimensions of the Eurocentric, patronizing and disdainful attitudes toward the academic periphery that core academics are prone to develop under conditions of academic dependency, describes instances of the ‘core-periphery flow of academic influence,’ and explains how academic dependency can function as glass escalators for core academics in the periphery. However, he falls short of, and does not intend to, provide a full theory of how academic dependency creates coloniality of knowledge.

Dipesh Chakrabarty’s *Provincializing Europe* (2000) also describes asymmetries of knowledge production: There is an ‘inequality of ignorance’: Europe is a silent referent that non-European scholars need to refer to when writing about their own societies and histories, but not vice versa. Europeans are routinely theorizing about all of humanity while remaining ignorant of most societies of the globe, except European ones (Chakrabarty [2000]2008, 28–29). While Europeans can speak as subjects, subalternized groups “can only be spoken for and spoken of” (41). For Chakrabarty, these have severe effects on the knowledge produced: Many of the key concepts used to talk about modernity are deeply rooted and shaped in European history (4). Influenced by the unique histories of Europe, these ideas cannot be fully universal (xiii). Another negative effect is ‘historicism,’ which for Chakrabarty is the belief that modernity and capitalism began in Europe, and the habit of measuring all societies on the yardstick of Europe and labeling those that are different from Europe as backwards (8). For Chakrabarty, this has led to “[t]he tendency to read Indian history in terms of a lack, an absence, or an incompleteness that translates into “inadequacy”” (32).

Sujata Patel (2014, 605), building on Alatas and Hountondji, understands ‘captive mind’ and ‘extraversion’ as the unequal “production, distribution, consumption and reproduction” of knowledge on a global scale. She states that the syndromes of these phenomena are reflected in the teaching and learning processes, in the framings of syllabi, in research design and the choice of methods and methodologies, and criteria applied to evaluating academic work and accepting it for publication. She highlights the importance that “intellectual, human, physical and capital resources” (ibid.) play for reproducing this, along with the necessary infrastructures, such as technical equipment, libraries, archives, publishing houses, and journals, as well as professional intellectual culture connecting knowledge producers and consumers. Patel thus stresses the stratified nature of global knowledge production and the role of resources, and hints at the role of control over media of research dissemination. However, she does explain how all these factors work together to produce academic dependency and does not touch on the globally stratified nature of research degrees, North-South collaborations, and English as a global academic language.

Focusing on the case of philosophy in Japan and China, Matthew Chew (1997, 2005, 2008) has researched the problematics of global academic stratification and knowledge production for what he calls the academic cultural periphery. Chew identifies, among others, four key problems: (1) the international stratification of academic organizations; (2) the inflated reception of foreign knowledge (Chew 1997, 110–150; Chew 2008); (3) the suppressed reproduction of the disciplinary community, including the suppression of local graduate training (Chew 1997, 110–202); (4) indigenous knowledge being negatively affected by knowledge compartmentalization according to Western notions (Chew 1997, 69–109) and by exclusion of traditional scholars from “modern” academic institutions (Chew 2005).

Jongyoung Kim (2012) describes vital aspects of the structures influencing and disadvantaging non-Western (in his case, Korean) graduate students at US universities. Specifically, he shows (1) how these students both benefit and are marginalized by the USA’s concentration of forms of academic capital, (2) how interactions with senior scholars usher them toward compliance with US standards and perspectives, (3) how Korean students experience linguistic and cultural disadvantage vis-à-vis US-born (especially White) graduate students, may be perceived as less productive, and report

incidents of neglect or discrimination by supervisors, and (4) how the eurocentrism embedded in texts and bodies in the US academy may also foster forms of hegemonic consent among a number of Korean graduate students. While Kim thus describes vital components of academic dependency, he does not analyze these findings in a context of a general theory of academic dependency. His focus lies in understanding the subalternization of Korean graduate students in the context of US educational hegemony.

While key aspects of the mechanisms of academic dependency have thus been theorized, there is a shortage of comprehensive theories integrating them and filling in the missing parts.

## **THE MECHANISMS LEADING TO COLONIALITY OF KNOWLEDGE**

Global Southern academics have long emphasized the ‘coloniality of knowledge.’ By coloniality of knowledge, they mean that knowledge is not only situated in specific locations within hierarchies of gender, class, race, and sex (Haraway 1988), but also within the global power structures that are remnants of colonialism and are being maintained and re-inscribed by contemporary global inequalities (Mignolo 2002; Grosfoguel 2002; Santos 2014). The concept ‘coloniality’ is part of the Latin American Modernity/Coloniality school of thought. For them, ‘coloniality’ is intrinsically entangled with ‘modernity.’ Grosfoguel (2002, 206) defines ‘coloniality’ as “cultural, political, and economic oppression of subordinate racialized/ethnic groups by dominant racial/ethnic groups with or without the existence of colonial administrations” Enrique Dussel, the founding father of the Modernity/Coloniality school, pointed out the Eurocentric, colonialist, and racist beliefs underpinning European philosophy (e.g., Dussel 1993, 1995). The Peruvian Sociologist Aníbal Quijano (1998, 2000) contributed the central concept ‘coloniality of power.’ Quijano highlights how power relations centered around global capitalism structure the globe. These power relations were created by European colonialism, which also imposed a global racial hierarchy and dispersed Western, Euro-centric knowledges (Quijano 2000). Walter Mignolo (2002) maintains that the forms of ‘colonial difference’ initiated by colonialism and re-inscribed by contemporary processes also extend to the realm of knowledge, forming what he calls ‘coloniality of knowledge.’ Western or Global Northern ways of



knowing are centered, emphasized, and misrepresented as neutral or universal knowledge. Ways of knowing of Southern, subalternized, or oppressed people are excluded or marginalized, and either not recognized as knowledges, or forced into tight compliance with European knowledge systems (Grosfoguel 2011; Mignolo 2002, 2002, 2009; Santos 2014). This ‘cognitive empire’ not only causes ‘cultural schizophrenia’ and alienation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020). It also encourages the construction of a “developing world” whose difference to Europe are cast as “backwardness” and whose people are characterized by a long list of “lacks,” “deficits,” and “inferiority,” justifying external interventions such as colonization or contemporary structural adjustment programs (Chakrabarty 2000; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012). As a remedy against coloniality of knowledge, Mignolo suggests ‘epistemic delinking,’ drawing on work by African scholars Amin, Nkrumah, and Ngugi wa Thiongo (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020). While important features of coloniality of knowledge have already been described, the literature lacks a comprehensive explanation that illuminates the mechanisms leading to this privileging vs. suppression of perspectives within global knowledge production.

My theory of the mechanisms of academic dependency begins with its historical cause—colonialism—and the contemporary external factors maintaining it—global power relations (i.e., the ‘coloniality of power’)—and elaborates how these factors created a stratified academia with a core-periphery structure.

## 1. THE HISTORICAL CAUSE OF ACADEMIC DEPENDENCY AND THE CONTEMPORARY FACTORS THAT MAINAIN IT

The primary initiator of academic dependency, as well as coloniality of knowledge itself, was colonialism. Europe’s military conquest of almost the entire non-European world created the conditions of possibility for Europe to impose coloniality of knowledge by forced miseducation of colonized peoples (Ngugi Wa 1986; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020) and to initiate academic dependency (Grosfoguel 2011). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020, 3–4) writes:

Under Euro-American-centric modernity, epistemology was instrumentally and strategically deployed in accordance with the coloniser’s model of the world, whereby Europe and North America were put at the

centre. The worlds of indigenous people of Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean and other places became subjected to 'discovery' paradigm and colonisation. Epistemology became highly political in the service of the cognitive empire . . . . Science became a tool of imperialism, which enabled capitalist extractivism.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020), drawing on Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), shows that colonialism created what he calls the 'cognitive empire' through systematic miseducation and desocialization (e.g., in mission boarding schools), causing 'cultural schizophrenia,' dissonances and alienations through the invasion of the mind of the colonized. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020, 5), the 'cognitive empire' dimension of colonialism caused "epistemicides (killing of existing endogenous knowledges), linguicides (killing of existing indigenous languages and the imposition of colonial languages), culturecides (killing of indigenous cultures and setting afoot cultural imperialism) and alienation (exiling of indigenous people from their languages, histories and cultures, and even from themselves)." Through these processes, colonization itself caused the fundamental strata of the coloniality of knowledge.

Colonialism also initiated academic dependency. It allowed Europeans to position their own knowledge as the only true or "scientific" knowledge (Grosfoguel 2011), erasing other forms of knowledge by categorizing them as folklore, myths, or superstition (Grosfoguel and Mielants 2006), backwards and unable of renewal, self-correction, and innovation. This went hand in hand with images of colonized peoples as incapable of higher-level thought or scientific analysis (Dussel 1993).

Colonialism thus first initiated the core-periphery structure of global academia, establishing Western Europe as the academic core, while first labeling the colonized and non-European territories as non-academic or non-thinking zones (Dussel 1993), and then—much later—allowing them subalternized participation as the academic periphery (Hountondji 1990).

Colonialism also installed the global matrix of power that Quijano (2000) calls 'coloniality of power.' This matrix of power is a main driver that nowadays continues to re-inscribe coloniality of knowledge. Through colonialism, Europe positioned itself on top of the matrix's various global hierarchies: economic, racial, political, linguistic, cultural/aesthetic, media/informational, etc. (Quijano 2000; Grosfoguel 2011). In all these axes of power, Europe installed

itself as the most powerful player and as the global standard. These forms of power allowed Europe—and later the Global North—to manipulate the global flow of resources and the way resources are valued and recognized, creating a North–South inequality in terms of the resources that academics have at their disposal.

Colonialism caused vast economic inequality, which persists today (Wallerstein 1976, 2004). It instilled a relationship of unequal exchange between the Global North and the Global South. Workers in the Global South are being underpaid, while large amounts of profits and resources are unjustly funneled toward the Global North (Cardoso and Faletto 1979; Prebisch 1950; Singer 1950). This increases the GDPs of countries in the Global North while decreasing the GDPs of countries in the Global South. Increased or decreased GDPs mean increased or decreased economic resources that can be invested in academic institutions. This can mean different amounts of academic resources, such as journal subscriptions, libraries, larger salaries that attract more productive faculty members, lower teaching loads for faculty allowing them to devote more time to research, larger amounts of funding for research projects leading to larger datasets and more sophisticated analysis (Csepeli, Örkény, and Scheppele 1996; Patel 2014). Larger amounts of academic resources can thus be converted into greater amounts of academic output and/or greater sophistication of such output. Hence, unequal access to financial resources—caused by economic inequality—is a fundamental cornerstone of academic dependency.

Colonialism also caused a global racial hierarchy, positioning Whites as the globally most esteemed race (Cox 1959; DuBois 1935; Quijano 2000; Robinson 2000). The colonial legacy leaves us with both firmly entrenched structural racism and with positive associations of Whiteness and negative associations of racialized phenotypes (Grosfoguel 2016). Contemporary global economic and other inequalities re-inscribe both structural racism and racial stereotypes. Such racial hierarchies shape the perception of individuals: Whiteness tends to be associated with seniority, excellence, and importance, whereas racialized individuals are often read as low-skilled or low-status (Schöpf 2018). These factors are likely to privilege White academics in a variety of settings and encounters, while harming racialized academics.

British Imperialism and (Settler-)Colonialism also firmly entrenched English as the Global Academic language (Phillipson 1992), granting a strong advantage to native English speakers (e.g., Kim 2012). Cultural, aesthetic, and informational hierarchies and

power relations further increase perceptions of professionalism and facilitate networking for Global Northern persons, while having the opposite effect for Global Southern individuals (Schöpf 2018). Political hierarchies also help Northern academics and disadvantage Southern ones, for example concerning the ease or difficulty with which visas can be obtained (Albayrak-Aydemir 2020).

Thus, colonialism and its aftereffects (1) positioned part of the Global North as the academic core, (2) shifted the relations of the economic and other forms of resources that the academies of different countries have at their disposal—increasing the amount of resources that core academics enjoy, while decreasing the amount of resources that periphery academics have—and (3) created structures that privilege Northern (especially White) academics, while constituting obstacles for Southern academics.

## 2. THE STRATIFICATION AND CORE-PERIPHERY STRUCTURE OF GLOBAL ACADEMIA

Global academia is characterized by a core-periphery structure (Altbach 1975, 1977; Gareau 1985, 1988, 1991). Following S. F. Alatas (2003, 602), I define the academic core as countries (1) that publish their research in globally esteemed and relatively highly ranked journals and publishing houses and present it at globally important conferences, (2) whose scholarship has global reach, (3) whose knowledge production is directed by locally originated impulses and criteria, (4) who influence academies and knowledge production in other countries, and (5) whose academic communities are highly esteemed on a global level. The academic periphery is defined as the opposite: countries (1) whose academic output is seldom published in globally recognized journals and not regularly presented at globally important conferences, (2) whose scholarship is not read at a global level, (3) whose knowledge production is being strongly influenced or even determined by impulses from other countries, (4) who do not influence overseas academic communities or their knowledge production, and (5) whose academies are largely deemed irrelevant or sometimes even stigmatized on a global level. Some countries inhabit an intermediate position, both exerting and receiving influence. Therefore, the academic core and periphery should be understood as the end points of a spectrum. This core-periphery spectrum is of course only just one aspect of the complex and multi-dimensional web of global and local academic power relations, but focusing on this

one aspect helps the article gain clarity.<sup>2</sup> While this core-periphery structure roughly overlaps with the North-South divide, not all parts of the Global North belong to the academic core, and no institutions of the Global South belong to the academic core. The terms ‘academic core’ and ‘Global North’ as well as ‘academic periphery’ and ‘Global South’ are sometimes used interchangeably in this paper, but this is to be understood as a shorthand of the above definition.

Empirically measuring the power relations in global academia may entail analyzing the prestige of academic institutions as well as that of venues and media of research dissemination, or examining indications of academic success, such as citations. Examples include analyzing university rankings, the locations of highly ranked journals, and the locations of authors of highly cited papers.

According to QS World University rankings (2020), among the 100 highest ranked universities, 29 are in the US. Second is the UK, with 18 universities. Asia has 25 universities among the top 100, 23 of which are in economically developed regions such as China’s coastal cities (6), Japan (5), Korea (5), Hong Kong (5), and Singapore (2). Continental Europe has 16 universities ranked within the top 100, Australia six, Canada three, Latin America one. The highest ranked university in Africa is ranked 198.

An analysis of the globally highest ranked journals shows that among the top 100 journals of all disciplines, 63 are based in the US, 32 in the UK, and the remaining 5 are based in Continental Europe. When analyzing the top 1,000 globally highest ranked journals, 477 are based in the United States, 287 in the United Kingdom, 228 in Continental Europe (most of them in Western Europe), 5 in Asia, and the remaining 3 in Canada (Scimago 2020a, all subject categories, sorted according to h-index, accessed in November 2020). A similar if less severe picture emerges when examining which journals are listed on major ranking sites. For example, among the 588 journals contained in the Scimago (2020b) “Social Sciences (miscellaneous)” category, only 39 journals are based in Latin America, 30 in Asia, and 3 in Africa (accessed in November 2020).

Studies of citations reveal comparable patterns. In science disciplines, for example, the countries that publish the most articles are the US, China, the UK, Germany, Japan, India, Italy, France, Korea, and Canada (OST 2019, 24). However, not all of these papers are equally cited. When measuring the distribution of the top 1 percent of the most-cited publications, the share of China, which occupies the second place, is only half that of the United States, although China publishes nearly as many papers as the US (*ibid.*, 31). The UK

occupies the third place, and the top 10 includes Western European countries, Australia and Canada. Some Asian countries follow in the top 20, with India being the only underdeveloped country among them. Thus, the science papers that receive the most attention globally emanate from the US, China, the UK, and Western European countries. When analyzing the citations contained in the top 1 percent most highly cited articles in Web of Science, the stratification becomes even more obvious: 44.10 percent of the citations in these leading articles link to US papers. The UK is next with 7.79 percent, followed by Germany (5.79 percent), Japan (4.71 percent), China (4.25 percent), and Canada (4.04 percent) (Bornmann, Wagner, and Leydesdorff 2018, analyzing papers published between 2004 and 2013).

Although an investigation each of these empirical indicators shows a slightly different outcome, a clear picture emerges of the US as the inner core of global academia, followed by the UK and Western Europe. Developed regions in Asia as well as Canada and Australia appear to inhabit a semi-peripheral status, while Africa is most peripheralized.

Belonging to the academic core means having greater amounts of academic power and prestige, whereas being part of the academic periphery means having lower amounts of both. There is a path dependency element in place here: higher amounts of academic resources, status, and position allow the academic core to maintain its position as center more easily (Patel 2014). The status as academic core, or the center of academic excellence, also produces a certain amount of symbolic capital, which attracts intelligent and hardworking people and their work, and thus further solidifies the academic core's status.

These effects are exacerbated by the fact that global academia is stratified (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020) and increasingly relies on explicit ranking mechanisms such as global university rankings, impact factors (Luyt 2009; Shih and Wu 2009), and measures of academic productivity tied to tenure. Often determined by the academic core (Shahjahan and Morgan 2016), such rankings mask political and ethical decisions underlying their construction that would otherwise be contested and conflate them into what appear to be objective and unambiguous measures of productivity (Luyt 2009). The commodification of higher education is likely to exacerbate these processes by creating stronger pressure to pursue the above metrics. It can be assumed that the more stratified an academic system is—its

components being perceived as ordered in a clear hierarchy of quality and value instead of as diverse, heterogeneous, and not necessarily rank-able—the greater the effect that initial position and resources will have.

In this stratified global academic system, the greater academic power and prestige of the academic core and the greater amount of resources at its disposal lead to core institutions and their academic activities being positioned toward the top of global rankings, whereas periphery institutions and their activities are positioned toward the bottom of global rankings. This grants the academic core a standard-setting function and allows it to determine which methods count as adequate and what degree of sophistication must be adopted, what data quality counts as good enough, which concepts and theories can be employed, which bodies of literature should be reviewed and which can be ignored, findings from which countries count as relevant, etc.

The stratified core-periphery structure of global academia also encourages ‘brain drain’ (Hountondji 1990; S. F. Alatas 2003), since intelligent and hardworking scholars from the academic periphery may often be attracted to the symbolic capital/prestige of the academic core and to the higher salaries. There, a part of them may be pressured or socialized toward (partial or full) compliance with academic core (i.e., Northern) standards, concerns, and perspectives (Kim 2012).<sup>3</sup> Productivity and mental resources that could be used for Southern goals are thus used up partially or fully in the service of Northern academia (S. F. Alatas 2003).

Being part of the academic core also means a geographic concentration of power and influence, whereas in the periphery, power and influence are overall less and additionally geographically dispersed. Power and influence are here understood in terms of leading scholars, highly ranked universities, top conferences, etc. There is rarely a need for core scholars to leave the core, whereas for scholars from the periphery trying to build their career, frequent visits to the core—usually at the very least once a year to the top global conference, which is often in the US—are important. This means that researchers based in the academic core need to invest less time and resources to attend important events or for networking. The saved time and resources can then be invested toward greater productivity. Conversely, scholars based in the academic periphery often face considerable time investments and massive expenses (Albayrak-Aydemir 2020). Scholars from the Global South do not only face much greater travel and accommodation expenses in

proportion to their salaries than scholars from the Global North (ibid.). They often need to undergo both expensive and extremely bothersome and humiliating visa application processes, which may end in denied entry with non-reimbursed costs. The uncertainty and delays of visa applications often cause them to buy their ticket at the last minute for a steeply increased price (Albayrak-Aydemir 2020; Elsahar 2018; Knight 2019; Redden 2019; Zimmer 2019).

A geographic concentration of academic power and influence also means advantages in networking, acquiring social capital, exposure, and mutual inspiration. Academics based in the academic core are likely to have greater chances or frequencies of meeting leading researchers in their field, exchanging ideas with them, and receiving feedback from them (Kim 2012). This gives academics based in the core an additional advantage and helps them to greater recognition of their work.

### 3. MECHANISMS THAT INCREASE THE VALUATION, CIRCULATION, AND RECOGNITION OF NORTHERN KNOWLEDGES, WHILE DECREASING THAT OF SOUTHERN KNOWLEDGES

I argue that the stratification and core-periphery structure of global academia leads to a set of mechanisms that systematically increase the valuation, circulation, and recognition of research produced in the academic core, while simultaneously decreasing the valuation, circulation, and recognition of research produced in the academic periphery. The academic core overlapping with the Global North means: These structures increase the valuation and attention that knowledge rooted in Global North perspectives receives. They also decrease the valuation and attention that knowledge rooted in Global South perspectives receives<sup>4</sup>.

The specific mechanisms are the following: (1) differential valuation and stratification processes occurring through what I call 'venues and media of research dissemination' (journals, publishing houses, and conferences), (2) the global stratification of the research degree system training the next generation of academics, (3) unequal power distribution along a core-periphery axis within collaborations, and (4) the advantage that English as the global academic language grants to native English speakers.



These mechanisms enhance academic core-to-periphery flows of influence, while blocking periphery-to-core flows of influence. Thus, core-to-periphery flows of knowledge are increased, while the reverse flows are stifled. As I explain below, this ultimately enhances Eurocentric knowledge production in the academic core, while blocking corrective feedback from the academic periphery/Global South.

### 3.1. The Stratification of Venues and Media of Research Dissemination

The stratified structure of venues and media of research dissemination (conferences, journals, publishing houses, etc.), with the academic core controlling the most highly ranked ones (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020), functions to privilege research by core academics, while penalizing and discriminating against research by periphery academics. Venues and media of research dissemination are vital mechanisms of assigning value to and ranking research. The greater global academic power and prestige of the academic core and the greater amount of resources at its disposal causes the journals, conferences, and publishing houses, which the academic core has disproportionate control over, to be positioned toward the top of global rankings (S. F. Alatas 2003; Kristensen 2015; Noda 2020). Conversely, venues and media of research dissemination of the academic periphery are being positioned toward the bottom of global evaluation systems. The push for productivity in the neoliberal university increasingly pressures academics to submit their research to highly ranked journals or conferences (Shahjahan and Morgan 2016). This creates incentives for scholars both from the academic core and the academic periphery to focus on academic core venues and media of research dissemination, and thus to tailor their work to fit the criteria of these venues. In core venues and media of research dissemination, research is likely to be evaluated and selected by core scholars according to core criteria. (For example, Murray et al. (2019) found that only 2 percent of the peer reviewers of the examined journal were from developing countries, whereas 56 percent of the peer reviewers and 62 percent of the editors were from the US.) This creates a global landscape where the highly ranked, prestigious venues and media of research dissemination are more likely to select research reflecting academic core problems, perspectives, approaches, and concerns (i.e., often that of the Global North; Fouad 2018)—whereas those venues and media

of research dissemination and research degrees that value research reflecting academic periphery problems, perspectives, approaches, and concerns (i.e., often Global Southern ones) are globally low-ranked.

The fact that the standards that must be abided by in order to have one's research showcased in globally high-ranked venues and media of research dissemination are set by the academic core has a problematic effect: It often either excludes or undervalues Southern research, or leads to its distortion.

Academic periphery research often must be pressed into tight compliance with the standards and views of core venues to get accepted for publication or presentation (Gunasekara 2020). Often, this not only means complying to Northern methodological approaches but also to Northern concepts, theoretical approaches, research agendas, and bodies of literature, running the risk of truncating and distorting the research to suit these (ibid.).

If Southern authors cannot or do not want to press their research into a fit with Northern criteria, it often gets rejected and ends up in low(er)-ranked venues and media. This may happen due to the following reasons: (1) Unattainability of Northern standards with Southern resources. The quality standards that are perceived as 'excellent' (especially in terms of methodology) and the resources and time that must be invested to reach these standards can be unattainable for academics in underdeveloped countries, who operate with much smaller research grants, much higher teaching loads, and much more limited access to literature, equipment, and other resources (e.g., Fouad 2018). (2) 'Cultural capital-hoarding' by the academic core: Research design and academic writing does not purely rely on logic but has a cultural component. For example, in Sociology, the structures that abstracts, introductions, and literature reviews in top journals follow are becoming more and more codified (Canagarajah 2002). Not structuring one's paper according to (academic core) readers', editors', and reviewers' expected patterns may confuse or disgruntle these and be penalized. Writing cultures may become entangled with perceptions of logic and rationality. However, publicly available information on what exact writing patterns core journals, publishing houses, or conferences expect is scarce<sup>5</sup>. The main venue to learn how to write up or present research according to academic core habits are PhD programs at core institutions, and it is exceedingly difficult to learn this through other routes. Academics trained in the periphery may often lack the cultural knowledge necessary to get their research showcased in academic core venues. The disproportional power of the

Global North over globally highly ranked journals, publishing houses, and conferences is thus an important factor that creates barriers and obstacles to Southern perspectives.

On the other hand, the core-periphery structure and strong stratification of global academia also function to overvalue academic work produced by core scholars and channel it toward higher-ranked venues than it would objectively deserve on a global level. This happens because the core's vast amounts of (financial and other) resources can be used to create highly sophisticated, state-of-the-art research designs (for examples, see Fouad 2018), and because high amounts of core-relevant cultural capital can be channeled into creating manuscripts that exactly fit the reading habits of Northern editors and reviewers, and are thus perceived as highly "polished" and "sophisticated." Furthermore, their social capital may help core academics have their work accepted into highly-ranked venues<sup>6</sup>. These mechanisms function as glass escalators for academic core work, while working as glass ceilings or obstacles for academic periphery work. Through them, academic core scholarship that from a global perspective may be biased, trivial, or even oppressive may make it into top-ranked core venues. Simultaneously, globally much more relevant scholarship from the academic periphery may be excluded. This may result in a disproportional amount of the academic work that is internationally perceived as high-standard, and that is widely read, being produced in the academic core. Even if research on the academic periphery/Global South is published, it is frequently published by scholars from the academic core, or by scholars from the academic periphery trained in the academic core and socialized toward core views.

Editors of academic core journals, for instance, are often from the academic core and frequently recruit core reviewers (e.g., Murray et al. 2019). Reviewers tend to evaluate papers that correspond to their views or theoretical perspectives more favorably than articles that contradict them (Mahoney 1977). Reviewers from the academic core may evaluate articles mainly from academic core perspectives, concerning for example relevance, adequacy of data and analysis, suitability of reviewed literature and employed theories, quality of writing, or accuracy of English. Thus, such reviewers may penalize papers that are relevant to academic periphery/Global Southern concerns rather than to academic core/Global Northern ones; that collected and analyzed data on academic periphery/Global Southern budgets; that were not able to attain the size, complexity, or

sophistication that would have been possible on a Northern budget; that reviewed and engaged academic periphery/Global Southern literature and theories and did not have access to paywalled academic core journals; that are written according to academic periphery writing styles; or that could not afford an English editor (Curry and Lillis 2018). Such papers may be rejected for these reasons, even if from a global perspective, they contain vital contributions. Conversely, biased or trivial papers by core academics may get published in top venues, since the authors can and do shape their research design and writing to exactly fit core editors' and reviewers' preferences. Similar processes may take place in Northern publishing houses.

Globally important conferences entail systemic privilege for core academics and systemic discrimination and obstacles for periphery academics in three main ways: concerning abstract selection, having one's research and its relevance understood, and networking success. Such conferences are often organized by teams of mainly core (and sometimes semi-periphery) academics. These frequently select and group abstracts according to academic core/Global North criteria. Often, abstracts are expected to be written following a certain structure. Differing structures may be perceived as messy, unclear, or amateurish. Conference organizers may also prefer to accept abstracts from academics they know. Also, as explained above, visa hassles and travel expenses for intercontinental flights and accommodation put a much higher burden on Southern academics and often exclude them (Albayrak-Aydemir 2020; Elshahar 2018; Knight 2019; Redden 2019; Zimmer 2019).<sup>7</sup> These factors decrease the number of Northern conferences Southern academics can attend.

Conference organizers may often be concerned with maximizing the attendance of speakers. If groups are perceived to be less likely to attend, some conference organizers may tend to reject their abstracts in favor of groups that are perceived as guaranteed to attend. Further, core conferences tend to center academic core/Global Northern speakers, who often find themselves in prime-time sessions, presenting topics that resonate with those of other speakers and with the audience. Academic periphery/Global South speakers are often fewer in number, find themselves in sessions disconnected from their research topic, face an audience that is unfamiliar with the context of their research, and find it difficult to provide enough information to make their case within the brief presentation time slots. Due to coloniality of power shaping perceptions, the networking experience

is also privileged for core academics, while being discriminatory for periphery academics. Racialized phenotypes, Southern accents, and Southern habitus are often read as signifying juniority or unimportance, whereas Whiteness, native English accents, and Northern habitus are read as signaling seniority and importance (Schöpf 2018). Combined, such mechanisms take the shape of systemic discrimination for periphery academics while constituting systemic privilege for core academics.

Of course, periphery academics have greater power over periphery venues and media of research dissemination. However, the globally low valorization of these means that core academics do not usually face pressure to showcase their research in Southern conferences or journals. In contrast to their Southern counterparts, Northern academics are free to do so only under the most favorable circumstances, and they especially do not experience any pressure to abide by periphery standards or perspectives. Conversely, core academics may turn into sought-after experts in the periphery and can leverage this to their own advantage (S. H. Alatas 2000). Their symbolic capital as members of the academic core helps them to achieve high valuation and recognition at periphery venues. For example, it is common to see core academics (especially White ones) of varying levels of expertise as invited speakers at (semi)periphery academic events—where they may be perceived to signal excellence and to “upgrade” the event from a local one to an international one. Additionally, peripheral institutions may often actively seek out their participation (Shih 2010) and offer them extra incentives<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, the global academic core-periphery structure and stratification place the globally highly valued venues and media of research dissemination in the hands of core academics. Before research is globally recognized as “good,” it has to undergo scrutiny according to academic core viewpoints (i.e., those of the Global North). This frequently results in the recognition and valuation of academic core (i.e., Global North) perspectives and concerns as well as core forms of academic cultural capital, while devaluing or sidelining periphery/Global Southern forms thereof. This process blocks the periphery-to-core influence that would exist if all academic work was evaluated from a global viewpoint. It thus cuts off corrective feedback from the academic periphery, which otherwise could rectify Eurocentric biases in academic core scholarship.

### 3.2. The Global Stratification of Graduate Education

This stratification, with the globally top-ranked research degrees being situated in the academic core, functions to advantage core-origin graduate students and to disadvantage periphery-origin ones. It also suppresses graduate training in the periphery (Chew 1997, 128–136) while inflating graduate training in the core. It further stifles the development of research lineages in the periphery, while strengthening research lineages in the core. All these factors strengthen core-periphery flows of knowledge, while creating barriers to periphery-core flows of knowledge.

Specifically, the academic core containing the globally most prestigious universities causes a large amount of the smartest and most hardworking PhD students from the academic periphery to receive their PhD training in the academic core (Hountondji 1990). This means that the most competent academics from both the academic core and the academic periphery receive a crucial part of their academic socialization in the academic core. There, they often face Eurocentric curricula (Maerk 2012), which are centered around Northern, White, middle-class, male, and heteronormative perspectives (e.g., see Margolis and Romero 1998 for the case of Sociology). Students asking for the inclusion of non-White scholarship risk being perceived as rude and facing exclusion (Margolis and Romero 1998). Thus, students often only learn the positioned, partial, and biased Eurocentric version of their discipline's knowledge, without being exposed to Southern critiques thereof.

Frequently, academic periphery PhD students will work with academic core supervisors, thesis committees, and mentors. They may often be subjected to a certain amount of pressure to select topics, approaches, or bodies of literature that resonate with these senior academics. These people will also advise students to select topics and approaches that they deem 'marketable' in the academic core, in terms of appearing relevant to academic core journals and hiring committees (Kim 2012). 'Marketable' research will often reflect problems, views, and concerns prevalent in the Global North, which frequently differ from concerns in the Global South or those of racialized minorities that in this process get deselected (Margolis and Romero 1998). Pursuing projects that study racism and colonialism is frequently discouraged and devalued (for US academia see Margolis and Romero 1998; Harris et al. 2017). If graduate students are encouraged by their supervisors to do research in their home country, it will often be through an academic core perspective, using core theories and

speaking to core concerns, while often ignoring theories, literature, and approaches from their home country. Not following the advice and preferences of senior faculty is risky and can make it difficult to find committee members, to obtain recommendation letters, and to be evaluated positively within the department (Margolis and Romero 1998). This may make students shy away from pursuing projects from a dedicatedly Southern or decolonial lens. This way, the globally most hardworking and intelligent academics may get ushered toward Eurocentric topics and approaches.

Academic periphery graduate students trained at academic core universities also get subalternized and channeled into a structurally disadvantaged position relative to their White academic core counterparts, which are moved toward advantaged positions by the glass escalators of privilege (see e.g., Kim 2012 on Korean vs. White graduate students in the US). The mechanisms responsible for this are the way Northern institutions discriminate against and racialize individuals (Margolis and Romero 1998), and the ways they (de) value different forms of linguistic and cultural capital, in the context of ‘coloniality of power’. These mechanisms impact both students’ quality of experience and their academic success.

Global South students in Northern graduate schools often find themselves in environments dominated by Whiteness (Brunsma, Brown, and Placier 2013) and Global Northness. A majority of the faculty are often White, especially those in the most senior positions (Davis and Fry 2019; Spalter-Roth and Erskine 2007)

It is well-documented that racialized and Indigenous students—both domestic and international ones—and faculty at US universities experience both interpersonal and institutional racism (Harris et al. 2017; Smith, Allen, and Danley 2007; Solórzano 1998), facing hostile, condescending, or paternalistic treatment, (Margolis and Romero 1998; Solórzano 1998) and racial microaggressions and hostilities (Harris et al. 2017; Swim et al. 2003). Their experiences include stigmatizations, stereotyping, exclusion, victim-blaming (Margolis and Romero 1998), and a combination of hypervisibility and invisibility (Solórzano 1998).

On campus, non-Whites frequently experience the objectifying White gaze, problematic interactions, such as rudeness or nervous and awkward behavior, and inadequate service (Swim et al. 2003). Smith, Allen, and Danley (2007) observe that racialized groups are objects of hypersurveillance. Black male university students and professors are especially stereotyped by campus police and others as “criminals,” “dangerous,” and “trespassers.”

In their departments, many racialized graduate students at US universities suffer from a lack of mentoring (Brunsma, Embrick, and Shin 2016). Others are “tracked” toward low-status positions such as community college jobs, while others have their intellectual competence questioned and are stigmatized as “affirmative action cases.” The result is a hostile environment where students of color experience devaluation and disadvantage relative to White students, who garner more of scarce resources (Margolis and Romero 1998). Overall, racialized individuals face a highly stressful and difficult environment at Global Northern academic institutions such as US universities (Harris et al. 2017).

Graduate students and faculty of color also experience forms of ‘racial profiling while teaching.’ Because many students arrive at university sheltered by “walls of Whiteness” (Brunsma, Brown, and Placier 2012), they often come with distorted knowledge about race and racism. It is not unusual that their world view is characterized by White privilege and entitlement. Many White students are among those that contest anti-racist or decolonial teachings, complain about their courses and professors, give negative evaluations, or report on faculty who teach such perspectives (Brunsma, Brown, and Placier 2012; Yancy 2016). At historically White colleges and universities, teaching about anti-racism, decolonial perspectives, racism, and racialization—or simply being Black, indigenous, or a person of color—can be stressful, anxiety-inducing, and even traumatizing.

The constant and relentless racism that many racialized individuals experience can have severely negative consequences for their mental health. Swim et al. (2003) describe the phenomenon of “racial battle fatigue,” which causes emotions such as shock, anger, helplessness, fear and anxiety, and hopelessness. A multitude of studies have testified the devastatingly negative effects of racism on both mental and physical health (for reviews see Paradies 2006; Pascoe and Richman 2009).

These various forms of racism and privilege not only impacts graduate students’ quality of experience but also their completion rates. The percentage of White PhD students that successfully graduate from a PhD program in the US is much higher than that of PhD students of color (Spalter-Roth and Erskine 2007).

Such forms of racial discrimination of course not only exclude racialized graduate students from the Global South. Similar mechanisms as the ones described in this paper operate on a nation-state level in the Global North, privileging White academics while subalternizing racialized and indigenous academics. While graduate



school and the tenure-track experience is often stressful and difficult regardless of racialization, the exclusions, stressors, and difficulties caused by racism contribute a large amount of additional obstacles to racialized and indigenous individuals, negatively impacting their chances of success. Meanwhile, White privilege functions as a 'glass escalator' that systematically ushers White academics toward senior positions at top ranked universities. This results in a disproportionately large amount of White tenured and full professors at US universities (Spalter-Roth and Erskine 2007). This leads to a stratified structure at the nation-state level of academic communities in the Global North, with the most senior and influential positions disproportionately being occupied by Whites.

In addition to racism and White privilege, different ways of valuation or devaluation of linguistic and cultural capital also impact students' success in graduate school. Native English speaking students get to read, discuss, and write in their native language. Thus, these students have a considerable advantage over those having to do so in a second language, when it comes to speedy reading, grasping the nuances of complex arguments, and articulating their thoughts in a sophisticated manner (Kim 2012). In the US—the center of the academic core—this speeds up local and native English speaking students, while slowing down non-native speaking students, especially those who did not have access to a high-quality, well-resourced English education. Such students then may appear less productive and take longer to complete their PhD. Non-native English speaking citizens of the Global North usually have the option to write a dissertation in their native language at an internationally highly ranked and well-recognized university of their home country. They thus face less pressure to obtain their PhD abroad than citizens of countries in the Global South. Overall, Global Northern PhD students' native language skills are usually valued highly and are applicable to their academic contexts, whereas Global Southern students' native language skills are often devalued and rendered useless or applicable only for certain aspects such as field work. Thus, Global Southern PhD students often painstakingly have to build excellent language skills in a second language or third, while Global Northern PhD students in many cases can invest the time into advancing their research.

Further, their Global Northern cultural capital helps Northern PhD students navigate academia and build social capital in a relatively familiar environment. Conversely, the cultural capital of Global Southern PhD students' home-countries may be severely devalued. They may face large cultural gaps, have difficulties navigating social

relations and building social capital, and may need to invest extra time into deciphering and learning unwritten cultural rules, or risk being perceived as awkward or facing cultural discrimination (e.g., Kim 2012).

These factors combined give a substantial advantage to academic core (and especially White) graduate students, while disadvantaging academic periphery graduate students. This means that academic periphery PhD students must work harder to achieve the same results as their academic core peers, or have less output to show for. Supervisors may obtain the impression that academic core PhD students are more productive than academic periphery ones, and spend more time mentoring the former, while neglecting their academic periphery students or treating them worse (Kim 2012). Overall, these structural advantages of PhD students from the academic core allow them to build stronger resumés and be more successful on both domestic and overseas academic labor markets than equally hardworking and talented periphery PhD students. These mechanisms channel the next generation of academic core, and especially White, academics toward the top of the academic hierarchy, while pushing equally brilliant academic periphery students toward inferior positions.

Furthermore, obtaining one's training in an environment where most of the past and present scholars that are recognized as excellent are from the academic core and where voices critiquing Eurocentrism are scarce or wholly absent may negatively impact periphery PhD students. It may be conducive to developing forms of hegemonic consent among some of these students, or lead them to see themselves as inferior (e.g., Kim 2012), being a factor that leads to the 'captive mind' (S.F. Alatas 1972).

Having completed their training, the best of the academic periphery students may often remain in the academic core, attracted by factors such as academic prestige, larger research grants, etc. The others may go back to the academic periphery, where often (due to the prestige of their academic core school) they may be preferred over applicants trained in the academic periphery and be hired by the periphery's top universities. There, a substantial part of them may initially pass on the Eurocentric version of the training that they received in the academic core. Over the course of their career, many academics in the Global South will become increasingly aware of the Eurocentrism embedded in Northern theory. However, they are likely to encounter barriers in transmitting these insights to new cohorts of graduate students and future academics, creating 'Southern' academic

and theoretical lineages (Chew 1997). Specifically, there may be a lack of excellent PhD students (since the best students may pursue their training in the academic core) and a lack of resources, making it difficult to provide PhD students with the same amount of training as in the core. PhD students in the academic periphery, facing differences in writing styles, theory building, literature reviews, and project sizes, may have grave difficulties acquiring sufficient amounts of Global North forms of academic cultural capital to enable them to get their research published by academic core journals or publishing houses.

Thus, unlike in the academic core, intellectual lineages—in which academic students develop and build upon the insights of their supervisors and train their own PhD students in this tradition—have grave difficulties developing in the academic periphery (Chew 1997, 128–36), especially lineages of internationally recognized research. These structures and processes ensure that the knowledge that is constantly being centered, built on, expanded, and refined is academic core knowledge. Simultaneously, they render academic periphery knowledge sidelined, marginalized, and forgotten (e.g., see Sitas 2014 on Fanon being reintroduced to Africa from the Global North in several waves). Together with colonialism, they are one of the reasons why many countries in the Global South are disconnected from their own scholarly traditions (Hountondji 1990; Chakrabarty 2000).

Thus, the global PhD system, embedded in a stratified academia, is a primary mechanism that promotes and spreads Eurocentric knowledge, while creating barriers to Global Southern perspectives.

### 3.3. Asymmetries of Core-Periphery Collaborations

Core-periphery collaborations such as joint research groups, joint programs, joint degrees, branch campuses or co-authorships between individual researchers also contain mechanisms that promote core-to-periphery influence and stifle periphery-to-core influence (Maerk 2012), leading to a centering of Northern knowledges and a sidelining of Southern ones (Shih 2010). Due to academic stratification and economic inequalities, the core partner in the collaboration is highly likely to have more resources and carry more prestige (Guzman-Valenzuela and Munoz-Garcia 2018). Academic core funding and prestige can be important for periphery institutions working on limited budgets and facing pressure to maximize output (S. F. Alatas 2003; Fouad 2018; Kwek 2003). Also, working with academic core

collaborators can be an important source of status and legitimacy for academic periphery scholars (Shih 2010; Shih and Wu 2012). These factors often channel the core partner toward a senior position with greater decision-making power, enabling them to impose their preferences in terms of research agendas, conceptualization, theories, methods, and the like (Fouad 2018; Gunasekara 2020). Core partners may often come with finalized research designs, reducing periphery partners to the role of mere research assistants, and imposing Eurocentric theories that are out of touch with local realities (Gunasekara 2020). Core partners may also reject periphery partner's codings or analysis, since they may not fit Northern interpretative frames (ibid.). Such processes contribute to Eurocentric knowledge production.

It is also common to see core academics hired or invited for research stays in the academic periphery, due to the prestige their academic pedigree conveys to the host institution (Shih 2010). There, due to their know-how on getting published in core journals and their (presumed) connections, they often find locals eager to work with them, doing translations and providing local knowledge (Gunasekara 2020; Shih 2010; Shih and Wu 2009). Thus, without having to invest time in studying the local language and culture, Northern academics can publish on Southern phenomena, sometimes even becoming the global expert on those (Shih 2010; S. H. Alatas 2000). Ultimately, periphery resources are used to benefit core academics.

### 3.4. English as the Academic Lingua Franca

English being the global academic language, itself due to British imperialism and contemporary US hegemony, creates conditions that facilitate the articulation of native English speaker's thinking in its full sophistication, whereas it creates barriers to the articulation, circulation, and recognition of non-native English speakers' thought. Being able to read, write, and speak in their native language allows native English speaking academics to utilize their time more effectively and thus be more productive. Meanwhile, non-native English speaking academics need to invest considerable time mastering English (Fouad 2018) and will often read and write more slowly (Kim 2012). It also allows native English speaking academics to articulate their thoughts in more nuanced and complex ways, while non-native English speakers may lack the vocabulary and grammar skills necessary for the same complexity of articulation, which may

lead to their arguments appearing more simplistic or clumsy (ibid.). Furthermore, English as the global academic language adds extra burdens or obstacles for non-native English speaking academics: They often have to use third-world salaries to pay English editors charging first-world fees, or risk angering editors and reviewers with unedited papers, which may be perceived as underdeveloped. While many academics in the Global North, such as those in continental Europe, are non-native English speakers, their vast economic resources can easily facilitate in-depth English training or pay for editing fees. Native English speakers may also dominate the writing process in North-South collaborations, sometimes distorting what non-native speaking collaborators intended to convey (Guzman-Valenzuela and Munoz-Garcia 2018).

Overall, these mechanisms aid thought from the academic core being articulated and received at its best, with low costs for core academics, while adding obstacles and costs to the articulation, dissemination, and reception of academic periphery thought.

Of course, academic stratification and inequality does not only exist at an international level, but also at national and regional levels (Zuckerman 1988). This can lead to the dominance of privileged groups and the exclusion of subalternized populations, on the axes of racialization, Indigeneity, or caste, gender, sexuality, religion, or others. Economically powerful regions or national capitals may occupy a hegemonic position, while economically disadvantaged, underdeveloped or rural areas may be excluded.<sup>9</sup> Whereas some of the mechanisms structuring these power relations may parallel the ones operating on a global level, others will differ. One example of how racial discrimination and privilege influences academic stratification on a national level can be found in section 3.2. Space constraints forbid including mechanisms operating on a national or regional level in this article, but this issue urgently needs further research.

#### 4. THE ASSYMETRY OF GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION: INWARD-ORIENTATION OF NORTHERN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION VS. OUTWARD-ORIENTATION (EXTRAVERSION) OF SOUTHERN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

The above mechanisms create a strong academic core-to-periphery (North-to-South) flow of influence (Chew 2008), while stifling academic periphery-to-core (South-to-North) flows of influence.

This one-sided flow of influence creates asymmetry in global knowledge production, an inward-orientation of core academia and knowledge production (S. F. Alatas 2003; S. H. Alatas 2000), as well as an outward-orientation of periphery academia and knowledge production (Hountondji 1990).

The core-to-periphery asymmetry in flows of global academic influence means that the creative and metatheoretical work that receives global attention is almost exclusively done in the academic core (S. F. Alatas 2003; Hountondji 1990), while similar work being done in the academic periphery is largely ignored or deemed irrelevant. Specifically, the global setting of research agendas, selection of problems and research questions, concept formation, theorization, creation and evaluation of methodologies, setting of methodological standards, and definitions of what is academic excellence (S. F. Alatas 2003; Patel 2014) are determined by the academic core, excluding the academic periphery. This carries a high risk of embedding Northern biases in them. The Global South is largely used as a site for the collection of raw data and as a market to sell finished products such as publications and teaching material such as textbooks, curricula, or syllabi (Hountondji 1990; S. H. Alatas 2000). Periphery academics end up being pushed toward applying academic core literature and theories to their own country and toward mainly focusing on doing empirical work (S. F. Alatas 2003). Both academic core and academic periphery research is oriented toward a core academia audience (Hountondji 1990), which often leads to a neglect of local priorities and needs (Fouad 2018).

The stifling of South-to-North influence leads to an inward-orientation of Northern academia and Northern knowledge production. The inner center of the academic core (currently US academia) is oriented toward itself, is self-contained, and can grow and expand on its own (S. F. Alatas 2003), whereas the outer layers of the academic core are either also inwardly-focused or oriented further core-wards. The academic periphery is largely ignored. The lack of incentives to engage academic periphery venues and media of research dissemination translates into habits of virtually only reading academic core theorists and solely reviewing core literature, often undergirded by assumptions that academic periphery literature is irrelevant, of too poor quality, or even “predatory.” Such mindsets may assume the form that S. H. Alatas (2000, 36) calls ‘intellectual imperialism’:

(1) The non-Western world has a limited degree of competence and creativity; (2) It needs the guiding hands of the West to unfold this limited ability; (3) It is receptive to compassion from the West as a younger man is willing to accept advice from an older and more experienced person; (4) It should not be left on its own to experiment with things unknown or alien to the West; (5) Whatever it has achieved in the past was incomplete and seriously defective; (6) The standards of the non-western world cannot be applied to measure the West. Only the West can measure itself and it is the West that can measure other civilizations than its own.

Intellectual imperialist mindsets can also include patronizing outlooks and beliefs that Southern academics play (and are only suited for) secondary roles and expectations that they unquestioningly conform to Northern standards (S. H. Alatas 2000).

The inward-orientation and the inward-looking reading habits lead to false generalizations or over-theorizations such as attempts to develop general or universal theories predominantly on Global Northern cases and White perspectives, which in turn contributes to embedding Eurocentrism and biases in theory (e.g., Mills 2014).

## 5. OUTWARDS-ORIENTATION OF SOUTHERN SCHOLARSHIP AND INWARDS-ORIENTATION OF NORTHERN SCHOLARSHIP

Together, the above factors embed coloniality of knowledge into academic core research: Since it is created and assessed mainly by core (i.e., Global Northern) academics and lacks the critical feedback of periphery/Global Southern scholars, it tends to be centered around Northern lived experiences, views, and concerns and shaped in ways that resonate with Northerners. For example, descriptions of the global and its inequalities continue to “forget” to take colonialism into account (Ascione 2016), and basic concepts such as race, class, and gender are theorized based on Global Northern experiences, not on a global scale. Also, Northern theories tend to portray the Global North in a positive light and downplay how the North negatively affects the South, while judging the South negatively.

Conversely, the disproportional North-to-South influence leads to a Northward-orientation of Southern academia and Southern knowledge production, which Hountondji (1990) calls ‘extraversion.’

There is often an alienation and disconnect from one's own intellectual traditions, and theoretical lineages are scarce (Chakrabarty 2000, 7; Chew 2005; Hountondji 1990). Pressures to use academic core theories, respond to Northern concerns, and to study the South through the lens of the North (Fouad 2008) lead to fragmented and undertheorized study of local phenomena, and to a lack of South-South dialogue (Akiwowo 1980; Hountondji 1990). They also lead to a disconnect from the concerns and issues of their own national context (S. F. Alatas 2000; Hountondji 1990). Research by Southern scholars is frequently published in English and may therefore often be inaccessible to most of the population (Hountondji 1990). The prestige of academic core knowledge as "state-of-the-art knowledge" also obscures the Eurocentric biases embedded in it, and admiration for core academia can lead to the (sometimes uncritical) acceptance of core knowledge and to a sense of inferiority among Southern scholars (S. H. Alatas 2000; S. F. Alatas 2003; Kwek 2003). This can further discourage them from challenging Northern theories and engaging in theoretical and metatheoretical work themselves, a phenomenon that S. H. Alatas (1972) calls the 'captive mind.'

These asymmetries in global knowledge production, with the academic core oriented toward itself and the academic periphery under strong pressure to orient itself toward the academic core, imprints coloniality into the knowledge which is produced.

## CONCLUSION

This article presented a theory of the mechanisms leading to coloniality of knowledge. I explained how European colonialism created a globally stratified academic landscape and established parts of the Global North as the academic core. I also illustrated how contemporary global inequalities ('coloniality of power') contribute to maintaining this structure. This grants the academic core a standard-setting position and gives it power over the most important mechanisms of evaluating research and researchers (such as highly ranked journals and research degree programs or globally important conferences and publishing houses). This in turn pressures academics anywhere on the globe to orient their research toward the standards, expectations, and preferences of core (i.e., Global Northern) academics. Further, both core and periphery academic elites being trained in the core strengthens Northern intellectual lineages and enhances North-to-South flows of academic influence, while disrupting



Southern intellectual traditions and stifling South-to-North flows of academic influence. This creates an inward-orientation of Northern knowledge production, producing over-theorized and Eurocentric knowledge that lacks corrective feedback from the South, while creating an outward-orientation of Southern knowledge production, yielding fragmented, undertheorized knowledge that answers Northern questions and is disconnected from local realities, issues, and concerns. In combination, these processes lead to the distorted global knowledge structure and relations of epistemic dependency called 'coloniality of knowledge.'

The importance of fighting against these inequalities is obvious. In doing so, various strategies can be followed. They can be grouped into (a) *strategies of dismantling* and (b) *strategies of delinking*. Strategies of dismantling include strategies like the following: (1) raising awareness about the unethical discrimination against Southern scholarship in Northern academia; (2) teaching and emphasizing Global Southern Literature in Northern classes; (3) organizing events centering Southern scholars and Scholarship at Northern institutions; (4) creating spaces for Southern Academics in Northern conferences or journals (e.g., approaching Southern scholars for editor and reviewer roles); (5) insisting that Southern literature be cited in Northern academic work (e.g., in roles as peer reviewer, editor, supervisor, or mentor); or (6) providing resources and mentorship to Southern scholars.

Strategies of delinking<sup>10</sup> (Mignolo 2002) include building a nation-state-focused (or Global South-focused) academia. Such strategies may include, but are not limited to: (1) raising awareness about the problem of academic dependency at government and university administration levels, and convincing higher education officials to stop pursuing global academic rankings and benchmarks and instead build an academia focused around the domestic citizens; (2) lobbying toward the implementation of academic hiring and promotion criteria that are not tied to global measures of success but to domestic ones, which may mean giving preferential treatment to candidates who graduated from local universities and published in domestic journals; (3) encouraging publications in languages accessible to domestic populations; (4) being wary about Global North offers for funding tied to Northern-dominated projects. Either type of strategy should be complemented with activities that aim to dismantle domestic academic inequalities, for example by ensuring that domestically marginalized groups and regions are well represented among (senior) faculty and graduate students. While

academics in the Global South may select those strategies that best fit their local circumstances and possibilities, academics in the Global North have a responsibility to focus on strategies that dismantle the inequalities in global academia.

## NOTES

- 1 I wholeheartedly thank Tamari Kitossa for the dedicated reading and most helpful comments. I am grateful for the highly valuable comments of the three workshop mentors of the UP Diliman Decolonial writing workshop, including Syed Farid Alatas, Christopher Lamont, and Marie Aubrey Villaceran. This article greatly benefitted from discussions and feedback from Frankie Cruz, Fatima Sajjad, Phoebe Sanchez, and Yao-Tai Li, which added many important insights. Lastly, I am indebted to my supervisor Matthew Chew for first introducing me to the idea of global hierarchies and their important ramifications for many aspects of social formations globally.
- 2 The ever-evolving web of academic power relations, connections, and flows is influenced by a multitude of factors, including experiences of colonization, government policies, availability of economic resources, or prevalence of English or other colonial languages. These not only influence the extent to which a nation-state academia is tied into global academia, but also create a plurality of different experiences, views, concerns, and preferences in different national and regional academies. Further research is needed to create a more comprehensive understanding of this.
- 3 A full analysis of this would be much more complex and is beyond the scope of this paper. Scholar's class and social background may inform their alliances, and some Southern elites may feel Northern interests align with their own. However, other students' experiences may lead them to questioning and rebellion. Further research is needed to understand how various dimensions of graduate students' social backgrounds, traits, and experiences intersect to inform their intellectual trajectories and attitudes in the Global North.
- 4 Of course, there are also initiatives that challenge such structures and seek to empower Southern knowledges. These include the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research in South Africa, LeftWord Books in India, Ibon Foundation in the Philippines, and Global South in Thailand.
- 5 A very thorough and extensive search of the author on comprehensive explanations on how to write journal articles only turned up Belcher (2009), Schimel (2012), and Silvia (2015). Although these are very helpful, getting a paper published in venues such as SSCI Q1 or Q2 journals may be very challenging without additional mentorship. There are many other helpful books on academic writing in general, but they lack specific information on writing journal articles.
- 6 When sociologists from prestigious institutions in the academic core publish a paper in a top core journal, it is common to read them thanking

a long list of other core academics who are considered as global experts of the topics the paper covers for commenting on the article before submission, including most people who would come to mind as best-suited reviewers for the paper. Also, in sessions of highly ranked Global Northern conferences, it is not uncommon to hear session organizers mention that one of the presenters is a PhD student, mentor, or otherwise a close contact.

- 7 Online conferences and academic events may be an important tool toward democratization in this regard.
- 8 During my PhD in Hong Kong, I observed that most conferences in Hong Kong and surrounding countries had White keynote speakers and White core academics were often invited for talks or research stays. While some of them were experts in their field, a considerable amount may not be regarded as “leading experts” in their home countries.
- 9 As a reviewer helpfully pointed out, “Metro Manila HEIs have long maintained their hegemonic sway not only as centers of excellence in erudition, research and formation, but also in providing (generally) their graduates and alumni better placement, wider connections, and greater influence . . . The same applies to prestigious schools and their relationship with community colleges or lower ranked education institutions within the academic core”
- 10 Many of these strategies were suggested by Syed Farid Alatas in the 2020 writing workshop I attended.

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**CAROLINE M. SCHÖPF** is a PhD candidate of the Joint Research Group Migration, China, and the Global Context by the Max Weber Foundation and Hong Kong Baptist University. Approaching migration studies from a decolonial lens, her PhD project analyzes labor market privilege of White Western migrants in Hong Kong. Her work has been presented at international conferences including the Philippine Sociological Society's and the International, American, and European Sociological Association's annual meetings. She also convened the 2017 and 2018 workshops "Global South Perspectives: Towards Decolonization, De-Stratification and De-Centralization of Social Knowledge Production" and has been organizing decolonial sessions at the American Sociological Association and International Sociological Association. Caroline holds an MA in Japanese and Chinese studies, has lived and worked in Asia for nine years, and speaks fluent Chinese and Japanese. <caroline.schoepf@googlemail.com>