“Ethnocentrism in IR: Interest and aversion of our discipline for the study of cultural reflexivity”

by

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Social sciences aim at meeting the criteria of scientifcality traditionally expected in natural sciences - a major requirement being that researchers rid themselves of prejudices (i.e. anything related to their social origins, personal experiences, etc.) in order to reach a certain level of objectivity. Indeed, whether one tries to explain or to comprehend a social fact, he or she must exhibit “epistemological vigilance" in order to avoid improper analogies or misinterpreting the motives of actors.

Following this reasoning, anthropology appears to be an extreme case in social sciences since the researcher and the actor studied barely share the same culture. They do not speak the same language and, therefore, have different ontologies since the way they split reality into words is different. While being rooted in different networks of significations and values, they also do not give the same meaning to their actions and apply different rationalities.

Considering this situation, researchers in ethnology have conceptualised what they consider to be a bias that has to be taken into consideration: ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism can be defined as both the belief in the superiority of one’s culture and the practice of judging other culture according to the standards of one’s own.

International Relations (IR) is another social science in which the researcher and the actor under scrutiny barely share the same culture. Indeed, IR research can adopt three different patterns with regards to the relation between the culture of the researcher and that of his or her object of study:
- The researcher may study objects from “closely related” cultures (originating for example from the same region as his/hers)
- The researcher may study objects from “distant” cultures (originating for example from other regional areas), and finally
- The researcher may study mixed systems such as the world system (including both similar and distant cultures).

Therefore, considering the nature of this discipline, it is easy to imagine that International Relations could find a great interest in the study of ethnocentrism and what we may call cultural reflexivity. Cultural reflexivity can be understood as a systematic attitude in which the scientist is committed to reflecting upon his/her cultural anchorage and the effects it can have on his/her scientific production. In the context of this study, culture will be considered as a set of both mental and physical practices – habits, values, representations – that regulates the activity of the subject, and that by its proximity with the one of others will identify different subjects/individuals as belonging to a same group.

Moreover, in a more contextual manner, International Relations’ current theoretical dynamics tend to go along the lines of this introspective questioning. Indeed, since the 1980’s, the introduction of problems raised in other social sciences has led to the problematization of the field of IR in different ways. The discussion generated, often known as the “4th Debate” has encouraged meta-theoretical studies resting on epistemological questionings resulting in a revival of reflexivity. For Steve Smith, the inaugural discourse made by Robert Keohane for the International Studies Association in 1988 represents the best illustration of the situation. On the epistemo- and methodological levels, the “4th Debate” opposes the “rationalist” camp which defends a positivist position to the

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“reflectivists” whose post-positivism aims to question the consensus “about how we know what we claim to know”.vi

Both sides of the debate assume cultural reflexivity is not an object of study in IR. However, no empirical studies appear to have tested this proposition. My work here endeavours to change this state of fact by counting and analysing the occurrences of cultural reflexivity markers in the field. Furthermore, I will also test two hypotheses as for the reasons why cultural reflexivity is only but a marginal subject in this discipline.

This paper has three main objectives. First, the core elements of cultural reflexivity and ethnocentrism will be detailed based on an overview of the literature in anthropology and linguistics. Second, the relevance of cultural reflexivity vis-à-vis of IR will be demonstrated by underlying three arguments put forward by scholars from the discipline. Finally, I will measure the sensitivity of the field of IR with regards to the question of cultural reflexivity through two empirical studies. A lexicometric analysis based on a corpus of more than 100,000 articles (from 15 IR journals between 1906 and 2011) will count the occurrences of ethnocentrism and its substitute concepts. Then, two hypotheses on the causes of the marginality of cultural reflexivity as an object of study in IR will be tested by examining the 371 articles that do mention “ethnocentrism” (selected from the 100,000 articles previously mentioned).

I. INTEREST OF CULTURAL REFLEXIVITY IN REDUCING THE ETHNOCENTRISM OF AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

Cultural reflexivity includes different types of reflexivity, each one relating to a different kind of “group culture”. Thereby, cultural reflexivity can apply to referents such as “class”, “national”, “scientific” or “disciplinary” culture. In this paper, the extent of cultural reflexivity will be narrowed down to what I have identified as the key concept of cultural-centred practices in social sciences: ethnocentrism. As we will now see, ethnocentrism represents a spontaneous inclusive/exclusive attitude that may be controlled by the practice of cultural reflexivity. First, I will present the state-of-the-art in social sciences about the study of ethnocentrism in order to understand the nature of the phenomenon. I will begin with an overview of the main theories about the functions of ethnocentrism, that is to say why ethnocentrism links, affectively and cognitively, the subject to his/her group of belonging. However, considering the epistemological ambition of this paper, I will then focus on the way ethnocentrism affects knowledge production. Indeed, the literature on the effects of ethnocentrism through language and discourse appears to be of the upmost interest for the current interrogations of the discipline of International Relations.viii Finally, cultural reflexivity is based on the premise that ethnocentrism may vary and that, with some experience, this variation may be controlled. I propose to conclude this first part with a reflection on this statement.

A. The functions of ethnocentrism : the anthropological level

Few classifications exist about the competing scientific interpretations of ethnocentrism. The most famous one, elaborated by Robert LeVine and Donald Campbell in 1972, focuses primarily on the causes of the phenomenon.viii
Even though considered as detrimental when exacerbated\textsuperscript{x}, ethnocentrism is mainly depicted as a legitimate phenomenon from an anthropological point of view, as it ensures necessary functions for societies. Coined for the first time by William Graham Sumner in 1906 in his book \textit{Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals}, the definition of ethnocentrism has lined up until today with a strong functionalist tradition. For Sumner, ethnocentrism represents a pragmatic adaptation of man facing an environment composed of potentially conflicting entities. According to him, a group’s survival rests on its capacity to generate appropriate feelings, to promote peace and homogeneity within itself (e.g. agreement on local values) while maintaining some level of xenophobia in order to favour self-defence mechanism.

Other roles have also been attributed to ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism has been considered as an answer to the dilemma of trust: “Common membership in a salient social category can serve as a rule for defining the boundaries of low-risk interpersonal trust that bypasses the need for personal knowledge and the costs of negotiating reciprocity with individual others.”\textsuperscript{x} Because it presents one’s own culture as normal and as the most adapted, it also facilitates the transmission of culture across generations,\textsuperscript{x} or, as claimed by sociobiologists, the transmission of genetic heritage through “kin selection and ethnic nepotism.”\textsuperscript{xii}

Moreover, it seems worth noting that the different empirical studies conducted during the 20\textsuperscript{th} century in different geographical and cultural areas have led to a broad consensus among specialists that ethnocentrism is a universal phenomenon.\textsuperscript{xiii}

B. The manifestations and effects of ethnocentrism: the linguistic/discursive level

Considering the need to use language and discourse in scientific production, a reflection about the links between ethnocentrism and the linguistic/discursive level of scientific production may be the best way for social scientists to engage in cultural reflexivity. As we will see, language and discourse enables ethnocentrism to have effects on cognitive and social levels. On the cognitive level, language both reflects the socio-cultural location of the researcher as well as legitimises ethnocentrism by reifying the existing conceptual and linguistic categories. On the social level, through images, representations and the hierarchy of categories, discourses endowed with authority (such as scientific authority) may materialize ethnocentrism through social and political effects.

First, cultural reflexivity aims at breaking the illusion that one language may comprehend and explain the whole reality _ i.e. the alleged universality of categories. Indeed, following the tradition initiated by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf, cultural reflexivity lays on the postulate that language is not a neutral veil between subject and object, but that it rather plays a role in the creation of knowledge.\textsuperscript{xvi} Language organises our way of perceiving the world as well as develops heuristic functions through series of connexions the linguistic system may generate on its own.\textsuperscript{xvi} Benjamin Whorf underlines how the categories subject/object developed by Aristotle, basically at the core of our mode of thinking, are not universal. Indeed, if European languages stress what is considered to be \textit{defined things}, the Hopi’ language rather tends to consider reality as a \textit{set of events}, a gradation of “earlier/later” replaces for instance European languages linear conjugation. However, the everyday practice of language results in a reification of categories\textsuperscript{xvii} and encourages people to consider as universal the categories of their own language. A more scientific approach, however, should attempt to distance oneself from the mediation of the
ethnocentric nature of language in order to better understand the relation between the subject and its perception of reality.

Second, meaning cannot be induced only by reference to the linguistic system. Interpretation appears inevitably linked to symbolic and cultural nets of significations. This “extra-linguistic” substance, often neglected, needs to be taken into account in the exercise of translation as well as in the understanding of the role of language in the construction of social and political organisation and hierarchy.

Thus, cultural reflexivity also aims at highlighting the hierarchical dynamics at work in the situation of utterance. Following Bourdieu: “Trying to understand the power of linguistic appearances, seeking in the language the principle of the logic and efficiency of langage d’institutions, it’s forgetting that authority is given to language from outside”. As will be illustrated in part II. B. and II. C, ethnocentrism may represent a social and political resource for the actors able to dominate a scientific field through the imposition of one’s ontology in a discipline and the authority science has in society.

C. Can we work on our ethnocentrism ? Individual, historical and cultural variations

After having exposed the causes of ethnocentrism and the way it may influence scientific and social production, I will analyse the extent to which cultural reflexivity may modify one’s ethnocentrism.

Before considering how scholars in International Relations and other social sciences may use cultural reflexivity to control their ethnocentrism, we need to know whether ethnocentrism is likely to vary. According to the literature in psychology and anthropology, it appears that the degree of ethnocentrism may vary contingent to individuals, groups and periods. Indeed, the symptomatological lecture of ethnocentrism made by Theodor Adorno links ethnocentrism to the frustration generated by authoritarian education and allows for a measuring of the phenomenon via an “ethnocentrism scale”.

Another type of variation may appear between societies, considering that values such as heterophily or practices such as endogamy are not equally shared. In the same way, ethnocentrism may evolve over history. Thus, some authors express their concern facing the weakening of Western ethnocentrism since World War II. According to them, the guilt associated to the holocaust may be one of the phenomenon’s root causes.

Considering the variability of the phenomenon, other academics have tried to isolate, among the less ethnocentric people, the characteristics that once spread will diminish the ethnocentrism of other people. Some studies conclude that the level of education is inversely proportional to the degree of prejudice. Others put forward the possibility for an individual to enlarge his/her perception of what constitute his/her groups of belonging by integrating former out-groups into larger groups of belonging. Indeed, ethnologists have observed that less ethnocentric people “will tend to identify with the widest possible group, ultimately with humanity as a whole, and to resist regarding any group as an outgroup.”

Thus, the study of the absence of ethnocentrism towards Americans among the inhabitants of Romonum Island led Marc Swartz to the conclusion that this attitude does not represent a lack of ethnocentrism of this group – still very present toward other groups – but rather a capacity of this population to consider Americans as belonging to the same group as themselves. Following this reasoning, some methodology teachers have tried to steer their students towards a higher awareness of their ethnocentrism by systematising this kind of cultural reflexivity into their curriculum.
II. CULTURAL REFLEXIVITY: A STAKE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES?

In this second section, I will analyse the different arguments IR scholars have put forward in favour of a better recognition of the importance of cultural reflexivity in the field. The aim here is to connect the theoretical presentation of ethnocentrism as presented earlier with the current needs of the discipline. In order to do so, three arguments will be exposed as to why cultural reflexivity should be taken into account on scientific, social and political grounds. Indeed, cultural reflexivity appears to enhance the heuristic potential of pluralism, to limit academic parochialism and to stress the social and political consequences of the lack of cultural reflexivity in IR.

A. Assessing the scientific potential of cultural pluralism

This part will endeavour to demonstrate how theoretical and epistemological pluralism rely partly on the cultural and sociological diversity existing in the field of IR. Though, for those who consider that from scientific pluralism stems different beneficial interpretations of the world, which in turn serve to enhance the scientficity of the discipline, cultural reflexivity offers promising perspectives. I will first underline the geographical character of theoretical and epistemological diversity before connecting them to the concept of “geocultural epistemologies”. I will then highlight the steps taken by some Chinese scholars who explicitly refer to Chinese culture as a heuristic device.

The epistemological mapping of the discipline ...

Before suggesting a causal link between the existence of national disciplinary traditions and cultural diversity, it appears necessary to underline the correspondence between geographical and theoretical/epistemological variations by presenting what is now called a “mapping of the discipline”. Taking the results of the TRIP survey we can note that if a majority of US scholars claim to follow a positivist epistemology, other national communities define themselves as non-positivist or post-positivist, with the exception of scholars from Hong Kong and Israel.

As underlined by Ole Waever, this diversity is geographically materialized in the content of publications. By studying the articles of the four American and British journals he considers as the most influential in IR, he concludes on the existence of meta-theoretical specialisation on each side of the Atlantic Ocean. The three “rationalist” paradigms represent 77,9% and 63,9% of the articles published in American journals but only 42,3% and 17,4% in the British ones. Inversely, articles considered as “reflectivist” represent 7,8% and 25% of the articles published in US journals but 40,6% and 40,4% in the British ones.

In order to explain those national variations, Waever introduces a framework inspired by the sociology of science. This model includes some explicit and implicit cultural variables such as “cultural, intellectual style”. By analyzing the influence of “national traditions” in the evolution of IR in the United-States, the United-Kingdom, France and Germany, Waever pursues a research cluster started in the 1980’s. Attended by Arlene Tickner, he then extended his work to the study of 15 research traditions thanks to his collaboration with researchers belonging to these different national communities.

... As a reflect of Geocultural epistemologies
Tickner and Waever’s work does not only observe disciplinary diversity but also represents a strong advocate for such diversity. For them, this diversity of research traditions expresses the existence of what they consider to be Geocultural epistemologies: “How does one ask about IR in different places without assuming either some a-spatial and a –temporal conception of the field or privileging core IR as normality? In what sense do the different efforts unearthed constitute ‘IR’ and what would it take for the discipline to recognize them as such?”xxxvi The interest of their approach lays on its capacity to include the interactions occurring between sources from different geocultural epistemologies on both theoretical and epistemological levels.xxxvii

To understand the effects of the diversity of geocultural epistemologies, we can link this concept with what Nishida Kitaro has called “metaphysical viewpoints”.xxxviii These mental frameworks indeed represent the link between culture and ontology from which the production of International Relations cannot escape. For example, Kitaro describes the difference between western and eastern metaphysics: “I think that can distinguish the West to have considered being as the ground of reality, the East to have taken non-being or nothingness as its ground. I shall call them reality as form and reality as the formless respectively.”xxxix As underlined by Hwa Yol Jung, this difference may have important implications for social sciences since culture “underwrites ningen or interhuman relationships.”xl Indeed, methodological individualism, based on the notion of “the individual” represents an incongruity for a mental system based on the “non-being” and that insists on the relations between subjectsxli rather than on the subjects themselves.xlii

Therefore, the awareness of the researcher towards belonging to a specific cultural geoepipistemology not only invites him/her to cultural relativism, it also questions his/her capacity to judge the literature available in other national communities since his/her reference frame might appear unsuitable for its understanding. For instance, let us take the case of Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan’s article “Why is there no non-Western International Relations Theory? An introduction”, to explore the hypothesis “Non-Western IR theories do exist, but are hidden” in depth and question our capacity to perceive and integrate the available foreign literature.xliii

The case of Chinese International Relations

Among the different trends composing Chinese IRxlv, some scholars tend to question the “generalisation of western pathos in the field.”xxlv Indeed, Chinese meta-theoretical discourse on IR has formulated the capacity of the Chinese discipline to represent an alternative to Western IR thinking thanks to their use of Chinese cultural resources. For Yiwei Wang, International Relations in China since 2000 has entered a period of disciplinary construction that announces the emancipation of the Chinese academic community.xlvi

Song Xinning goes one step further by defending that a part of Chinese academia has always intended to use classical Chinese literature in its practice of IR. This appropriation has followed different ways. Some scholars make the connection between western and Chinese theories. xlvi Other studies discuss traditional Chinese thought with regard to IR paradigms. “Confusing Confucius in Asian Values? A Constructivist Critique” questions, for example, the realist interpretation of Confucianism? made by some authoritarian Asian regimes.xlviii Chinese scholars appear to be concerned by presenting Chinese concepts in a way that can be understood by international scholars operating under
other mental frameworks. As an example we can take the concept of “sinocentrism” and the way it is explicated in the article “Selling Culture: Ancient Chinese conceptions of ‘the Other’ in Legends.”

B. Cultural reflexivity against academic parochialism

The concept of ethnocentrism also concerns smaller, more restricted groups than just whole civilisations. Considering the arguments of IR scholars against academic parochialism, it seems that the practice of cultural reflexivity may apply to groups such as a national scientific communities or scholars sharing the same paradigm. Indeed, it appears that sometimes scholars consider their group of belonging as a norm that should be institutionalized rather than promoting dialogue and exchanges between their different positions. In this sense, the practice of cultural reflexivity allows to explicit those socio-anthropological dynamics that drive the discipline. After having stressed some of the authors defending this argument and the consequences of parochialism they put forward, I will take the example of the US academic scene, which appears to be the most popular case study for ethnocentrism in IR.

Measuring academic parochialism

IR authors often refer to parochialism as the tendency of academic entities to organize in an endogenous way. This parochialism may qualify an individual researcher, a group of academics or a national community.

We can first refer to the pioneer work of Alker Hayward and Thomas Biersteker, which analyses the quotas of different paradigms mentioned in notebooks. This study led them to talk about IR as an “interdiscipline”, i.e. a discipline composed of different sub-disciplines, since the different trends were evolving without referring to one another. The case of group parochialism has been well explained by Margaret Hermann, with her emphasis on the role of academic identity in the definition and closure of academic debate: “This discussion has portrayed these differences in a stylized fashion but it is based on such distinctions that we define who we are professionally and what we believe and that we distinguish ourselves, our interests, and what we do from others. Indeed, it is based on these differentiations that we build our stereotypes about “the others.” And in turn, we become advocates for a particular way of viewing and studying the world and argue against those we view as different or opposed to our way of thinking.

As for national communities, the works of Kal Holsti (1985) and Jörg Friedrichs (2004) about the nationality of the authors quoted in the textbooks appear to be very interesting. Friedrichs concludes that even if “big” IR European communities “became more reliant on their own scholarly production” rather than the US production since the early 1990’s, European scholars barely quote scholars from other European countries. It appears that most books in international relations outside of the Anglophone countries are written for national audiences with a strong emphasis on national policy problems.

Effects of parochialism on the scientific debate

In stressing the sociological dynamics of academic parochialism, cultural reflexivity denounces the idealist vision of academic dialogue and allows for a better understanding of
the consequences of such practice. Following Hermann, the main consequences of parochialism appear to be the limitation of knowledge and interest for what is written outside one’s group of belonging resulting in a restriction in the scope and scientificity of IR.

Therefore, Hermann underlines that “the consequent lack of communication and interaction often breeds distrust and the formation of stereotypes concerning the research of those who do not share our perspective.”

Case study of parochialism: the United States

US IR academia appears to be the most studied case study when it comes to talk about parochialism in the discipline. Through the study of scientific discourse, academic practices and attitudes, authors underline how US scholars tend to think of their habits as “normal” and for the greater good. They also tend to think in universalistic criteria and for all the discipline. As we will see in the next part, the lack of reflexivity such a dominant scientific community may lead to the establishment of one kind of practice as a norm in terms of language, networks of proof-reading, publication and scientific training.

The fact that English is the vernacular language of International Relations reduces the need for US scholars to learn foreign languages, since, for instance, they do not feel the need to do so for their career advancement. Their capacity to realise the ethnocentric character of the use of one language is therefore neutralized. Facing this situation, some scholars like A.J.R. Groom have stressed the “professional responsibility” of English-speaking scholars to learn other languages. Indeed, US scholars are often attacked on their monolingualism. However, other English-speaking communities appear to be linguistically more parochial. 0% and 6% of researchers from Israel and Hong-Kong respectively say that they are only able to do research in only one language, but this number is more important in Ireland (40%) and in New-Zeeland (43%) than in the US (27%).

Dealing with publications, we can note that foreign journals – even when famous and published in English – are not very popular among US scholars while US journals are widely read in other scientific communities. If we take the ranking of the most influential IR journals made by the TRIP survey, it is worth noting that British Journals are not likely to be read by US scholars. This can be illustrated by the case of the British journal Review of International Studies, which is mentioned as one of the five best IR Journals by 47% of British scholars and 53% of their New-Zeeland counterparts, but only mentioned by 4% of US scholars (whereas 70% of British scholars mentioned the US journal International Organization).

The same is true for scientific training since the US exports much more PHD trainings than it imports. Indeed, if half of the IR scholars in Hong Kong and Singapore have been trained in the US (and one third in Canada, New-Zeeland and Israel), only 4% of US scholars obtained their PhDs abroad.

Moreover, Kim Nossal denounces the parochialism of proofreading procedures as the main cause for the approximation of US textbooks. Among the cases he studied, the example of a picture caption in Joshua Goldstein’s handbook (1996) is poignant. The caption reads: “Refugee camps in Hong Kong”. It is interesting as there were no refugee camps in Hong Kong in 1987 when the picture is supposed to have been taken. For him, this type of mistake directly results from the fact that among the thirty-one scholars who proofread the book, only one was non-American - he was Canadian. Nossal underlines the Americano-centric character of the textbooks by highlighting the existence of two kinds of discourses.
The description of the US is made with a laudatory tone (e.g. the texts dealing with “hegemonic stability theory”) whereas the description of non-American groups insists on their accessory character (“the unimportant other’s qualified by Nossal), as shown by the revealing anecdote of the description of the Salomon Islands in Daniel Papp’s book.\textsuperscript{lvii}

Finally, what needs to be taken into account is that the parochialism of the US discipline appears to be engendered by its lack of reflexivity. Indeed, the mathematization of social sciences and the popularity of the theory of rational choice do not seem to have worked towards questioning the ethnocentrism in this community.\textsuperscript{lx} As mentioned by Chris Brown: “The real irony is that if American social science was more parochial it would have a better chance of getting things right. It is not American parochialism that is the problem; it is the lack of American parochialism that is the problem.”\textsuperscript{lxx}

C. Is cultural reflexivity shedding light on the relations between power and scientific establishment?

“Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it.”\textsuperscript{lxii} For the post-positivists, this means that in order for a discourse to remain official and recognized, it needs to lie on mechanisms that ensure its legitimacy. In the same way, a discourse considered as “true” is endowed with the capacity to establish a network of significations that enable power to appear natural. Stressing the interaction between science and power gives rise to new perspectives in the study of the implications and motivations of scientific discourse.\textsuperscript{lxii} Consequently, discourse performativity – i.e. the capacity of discourse to materialize into social and political effects\textsuperscript{lxiii} – represents another stake for the use of cultural reflexivity.

In an intercultural context, cultural reflexivity highlights the violence and alienation that may result from universalist positions. It insists on the importance of acknowledging the situation of utterance in analysing the authority of the different voices and their relative capacity to impose their representations.

In this part, I will demonstrate the way scientific discourse relies on power in order to legitimate itself before underlining the way power may use science to its own benefits. Finally, I will expose an overview of the potential consequences of a lack of reflexivity within this specific relationship.

How academic ethnocentrism appears to be sustained by material dominance

As we saw, parochialism appears to be stronger in the U.S. than in other countries, which reflects the asymmetric nature of the academic relations in the field. Following this reasoning, some scholars have underlined the “non international” structure of IR academics\textsuperscript{lxiv} and how meta-theory represents an “important stabilizer of the American hegemony over the discipline”\textsuperscript{lxv}.

Cultural reflexivity appears relevant since the institutionalisation of a specific ethnocentrism also seems to participate in the maintaining of hegemony as it enables the development of a disciplinary field according to one’s own perception and interests. Indeed, if certain elements of U.S. universities have promoted the emergence of U.S. IR leadership (important adaptation capacity, high level of specialisation and invention of departmental structures\textsuperscript{lxvi}), Waever underlines the role of scientific discourses in maintaining the U.S. in a predominant position. He puts forward that the main activity of U.S. IR researchers is to
draw the borders of the discipline; i.e to define what must be included or excluded from the field of research.\textsuperscript{lvii}

This establishment of U.S. ontology combined with an international division of labour enables the auto-regulation of the system. On the one hand, the academic hierarchy produced in the U.S. is reproduced on an international level through the hierarchy of institutions (e.g. journals, universities and congresses) and the control of channels of information that focus on what happens in U.S. IR. Waever underlines the roles of the Great Debates in exporting U.S. interests and criteria to the whole discipline.\textsuperscript{lviii} On the other hand, the peer reviewing system invites scholars to engage in the U.S. debates so as to enhance their career perspectives and create the need for non-American scholars to Americanise themselves if they want to enter the “one big national market.”\textsuperscript{lix}

The Indian IR academia may offer a good contrast and stresses the consequences of such a situation. As Navnita Chadha Behera comments: “there is no Indian school of International Relations”.\textsuperscript{lxx} Facing the question of the legitimacy of intellectual sources, some Indian scholars admit to not being able to overcome Western gramscian hegemony.\textsuperscript{lxxi} Given these conditions, the majority of works produced in India can be qualified as “subsystemic”, according to the expression of Acharya and Buzan.\textsuperscript{lxxii} In other words, they apply to local and regional contexts while using theories and concepts developed in the Western world. By way of example, the works of Tellis (2001), Karnad (2002) et Basrur (2005) on nuclear deterrence can be mentioned.\textsuperscript{lxxiii}

“Ethnocentrism projection” and its role in political hegemony

Besides the post-positivists, this relationship of domination and intellectual production has also been the battle cry of neo-gramscians since Robert Cow introduced the concept of hegemony in International Relations.\textsuperscript{lxxiv} One of his main arguments was that hegemonic power is required to diffuse its ontology in order to convince the majority of secondary powers that its intentions are beneficial to them: “World hegemony is expressed in universal norms, institutions and mechanisms which lay down general rules of behaviour for states and for those forces of civil society that act across national boundaries.”\textsuperscript{lxxv} Therefore, knowledge is not universal but localized. It is produced by intellectuals in order to promote the interest of the dominant class of the hegemonic country\textsuperscript{lxxvi} : “There is... no such thing as theory in itself divorced from a standpoint in time and space. When any theory so represents itself, it is more important to examine it as ideology, and to lay bare its concealed perspective.”\textsuperscript{lxxvii}

This statement joins, in a more radicalised manner, the theory of soft-power as defended by Justin Vaïsse in his article, whose title is self-explanatory: “La projection d’un ethnocentrisme : facteur de puissance?” (“Ethnocentrism projection : a power factor?”). This article deals with the power potential embedded in the ethnocentrism of scientific discourses. Vaïsse defines ethnocentrism as having three characteristics: “a feeling of superiority”, “a content” and “categories, referents and criterias” proper to each culture.\textsuperscript{lxxviii} By postulating that U.S. IR influence maintains US material preponderance, Vaïsse defends the capacity of this country to export a world-vision as a political tool. He underlines the interest the United-States can have in dominating the discipline and questions the implications the double scientific and political American hegemony.\textsuperscript{lxxix}

He considers that scrutiny should be focused on “ethnocentrism of category” since this kind of ethnocentrism appears to be the most likely to interact with the political sphere:
the legitimacy and the compliance to the international system relies mainly on the agreement to the values that support IR: once accepted this framework and its categories, everything else is negotiate and this negotiation contributes to strengthen the whole system." Vaïsse underlines the potential political benefits the US can have from concepts such as "international community, "governance", "empowerment", or "coalition of the willing".

Performativity : the social and political consequences of academic discourse

Robert Cox, as well as other IR scholars, has classified theories according to the relation they could have with the “real” world. Cox’s typology identifies two kinds of theories: “problem-solving theories” that take the world as granted and “critical theories” that interrogate the knowledge-making of the world. Cultural reflexivity therefore engages all scholars to practice critical theories by reflecting on the origins of the knowledge he/she has access to (i.e. linguistic and conceptual categories, examples, literature...) and the effects of his/her discourse each time he/she tries to understand and explain the world.

As an example of such reflectivist practice, post-colonialism aims at challenging expertise discourse and emphasizes the permissive role of representations for domination. This paradigm insists on normative and assimilationist processes in the literature about Southern countries which are considered by “mainstream” literature as naturally doomed or yearning to become “Western”. Along with other post-positivevists, post-colonialists have initiated a deconstruction of speeches of authority aiming at the emergence of a fairer world for the different cultures composing it. The binary division of the world, both semantically and geographically, is thus denounced as one of the main vectors of post-colonial ethnocentrism. Indeed, post-colonialists insist on the naturalising effects suggested by implicit analogies of binary pairs.

As suggested by Robert Vitalis in his article about racism in U.S. IR historiography and theory, the same appears to be true for the discourse about the discipline: “Contemporary writing about IR in the US shares with all other domains of American culture a powerful tendency, in Toni Morison’s words, toward ‘silence & evasion’ about the ‘Afro-American presence’.” For him, this “norm against noticing” has two main causes. On the one hand, white domination shapes our vision of the world and of its history. On the other, the choice of theories lies on prejudices that establish the “Anglo-American core” as a privileged place of intellectual production. This racism has different consequences: black authors are eluded from the history of the discipline – e.g. Dubois in the case of anti-imperialistic literature and the racist parts of classical opus are voluntarily forgotten such as “the world racial balance of power” in the writings of Admiral Mahan. For Vitalis, it is therefore necessary to take into account “the complex effects of America’s past ‘racial dictatorship’” in order to make IR historiography fairer, both ethically and scientifically. The stake of cultural reflexivity in IR is all the more important since it traditionally stages groups of different cultures, and can therefore easily reproduces and exports national hierarchies.

III. TESTING THE DEGREE OF CULTURAL REFLEXIVITY IN IR : A STEP TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE STATE OF THE DISCIPLINE

After having analysed the arguments of scholars in favour of a better acknowledgment of cultural reflexivity, we can note that this literature assumes that cultural
reflexivity is not an object of study in IR. However, no empirical studies appear to have tested this proposition. My work here endeavours to change this state of fact by counting and analysing the occurrences of cultural reflexivity markers in the field. Furthermore, I will also test the two following hypotheses as for the reasons why cultural reflexivity is only but a marginal subject in this discipline: first, there is a thematic incompatibility between cultural reflexivity as an object of study and the traditional scope of International Relations. Second, there is an epistemological incompatibility between the alleged positivism of “mainstream” IR and the question of cultural reflexivity.

Those studies are to be considered as preliminary works that will enable an opening of new perspectives and propose new questionings. Please keep in mind their partial and non-exhaustive character as they represent only but the initial phases of my PhD thesis’ data collection and hypotheses testing

A. Is IR culturally reflexive?

Methodology

This study relies on a corpus of 100,618 articles selected from the 15 journals considered to be most influent in IR during the 20th century. The nature of discourse and ethnocentrism mechanisms as put forward in the first parts of this article motivated my choice of a survey of international academics instead of a bibliometric ranking. Indeed, the study of relations between power and discourse needs to take into account the role of IR scholars’ perceptions since it relies upon symbolic and authoritative means of domination. Moreover, I chose “the most influent” journals since those journals, endowed with the most authority, are considered to be the most performative ones. Moreover, they represent what tends to be labelled “the mainstream”.

Contrarily to other lexicometric studies whose purpose is to compare journals between themselves, I elected to take the whole corpus as a unity of analysis. The objective is to have a sample of the kind of documents IR scholars have access to when using an academic subscription such as JSTOR – which represents the digitized archives that familiarises IR students with the research done in the discipline. Therefore, the fact that periods of analyses vary between journals is not important as long as the study covers the broadest period possible.

What terms to choose in order to measure cultural reflexivity in a discipline is a difficult task. From the theoretical literature in anthropology I have identified the concept of ethnocentrism as the key marker of cultural reflexivity. For two years now, I have been searching IR reflexive literature for words that represent signs of cultural reflexivity and act as substitutes for ethnocentrism.

Different set of terms have been chosen referring to different sub-analyses:

1) Ethnocentrism and its substitutes
   - family substitutes:
     ➢ The degree of occurrences of these words reflects the degree of cultural reflexivity in the discipline
2) Some “group-studies” emancipated terms
   - “nationalism”, “ideology, “racism”
   ➢ The degree of occurrences of these terms show that IR scholars think about group-
   studies problems (i.e. allegiance, identity, community…) but rely on another kind of
   literature than the words of the first group

3) Words referring to “group-studies” analyses used in their common sense
   - “Parochialism”, “chauvinism”, “open-mindedness”, “egoism”, “prejudice”,
   “stereotype”
   ➢ The degree of occurrences of these words shows that scholars think about group-
   studies problems (i.e. allegiance, identity, community…) with a low level of theory

4) Markers of reflexivity
   - “reflexivity”, “historicity”, “objectivity”, “subjectivity”
   ➢ Does IR make its reflexivity explicit?

5) Benchmarks referring to major objects in IR
   - “war”, “state”, “culture”

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Substitute concepts</th>
<th>ethnocentrism 0,37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sociocentrism 0,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>group-centrism 0,02</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ethnicity 2,27</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ethnicity 0,003</td>
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<td></td>
<td>episteme 0,037</td>
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<td></td>
<td>eurocentrism 0,07</td>
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<td></td>
<td>americanocentrism 0,001</td>
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<td></td>
<td>occidentalism 0,03</td>
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<td></td>
<td>cosmopolitanism 0,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>orientalism 0,18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) “Group-studies” emancipated terms</td>
<td>nationalism 10,83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ideology 11,96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>racism 1,36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Concepts used in their common sense</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chauvinism 0,49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>open-mindedness 0,08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>egoism 0,34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Markers of reflexivity</td>
<td>prejudice 2,93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stereotype 0,53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reflexivity 0,15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>historicity 0,13</td>
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<td></td>
<td>objectivity 2,11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subjectivity 0,72</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Benchmarks</td>
<td>war 49,03</td>
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<td></td>
<td>state 53,06</td>
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<td></td>
<td>culture 15,17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>Period Studied</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Organization</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Security</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Studies Quarterly</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Political Science Review</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Politics</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal of Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Journal of International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of International Studies</td>
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<td>Millennium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security Studies</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Affairs</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of Intern. Political Economy</td>
<td>1906 – 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percentage of occurrences of the term “ethnocentrism” & its related terms in the 15 journals considered to be most influential in International Relations in the 20th century (1906-2011)
Conclusions

The main conclusion we can draw from these results is that cultural reflexivity is marginal in the discipline since the average occurrences of the terms of group 1) is only 0.31%. Besides, the occurrences of the term ethnicity are largely above average (2.27%). This may be explained by the fact ethnicity refers to social and political actors rather than scholars (as we will see later, the term ethnocentrism refers to both in almost the same proportion).

The average occurrence of the second group is 8.05%. It means that a large number of scholars use group-studies concepts but most often in a non reflexive manner. Moreover, a study of the way concepts of group 1 and group 3 have been introduced in IR may enable to understand why scholars are not keen on to use terms of group 1.

0.28% of articles use a term of group 3. The authors using terms of group 3 may be interested in having access to the literature accumulated in other social sciences about terms of group 3 and terms of group 1.

The test on group 4) reveals that reflexivity is not made explicit in the discipline (only 0.15% of the articles mentioned the term “reflexivity”). The higher presence of the term “objectivity” may confirm the positivist tendency of this corpus. The high presence of the term “prejudice” may be explained by the fact “prejudice” is homonymous with the verb to prejudice somebody.

B. Why is cultural reflexivity such a marginal issue in IR?

Since the only voices promoting cultural reflexivity have expressed themselves about this topic (as presented in part II.), cultural reflexivity does not represent a debate in International Relations. In order to counterbalance this fact, I have developed Hypothesis 1 as a fictive hypothesis that can represent one of the possible replies back of the “mainstream” to their post-positivist opponents. Based on the few “mainstream” academics who have expressed themselves on cultural reflexivity, I suggest that most “mainstream” scholars simply believe that this question does not belong to the IR scope of research.

On the contrary, hypothesises 2 summarizes the explanation most largely shared by post-positivist authors: positivism is incompatible with reflexivity.

The objective of this part is to show both sides that the image they may have of IR cultural reflexivity is not empirically verified and appears to be biased by their own positions within the fourth debate. Indeed, ethnocentrism appears to be a traditional object of the discipline since the 1960’s, used in a reflexive manner and in articles dealing with all the core topics of the discipline.

I will demonstrate this by analysing the uses of “ethnocentrism” in the 371 articles mentioning this term in the corpus of entries from the 15 IR journals, as detailed earlier.

Hypothesis 1: Thematic incompatibility between cultural reflexivity and the scope of IR

This hypothesis defends that IR is a discipline defined by its object. This object may be clearly defined, as expressed by Karl Holsti for whom IR studies should dedicate themselves to “the causes of war and the conditions of peace/security/order.”

Or it can be rather vague but motivated by a will of disciplinarity against the dissolution of IR. Culture and
ethnocentrism may therefore be considered as outside the scope of the discipline, and consequently, cultural reflexivity as well: “The logical positivist bias for observable and preferably measurable processes and behaviour led to research agendas that excluded ideas, perceptions, meanings and values which did not lend themselves readily to quantification.”

**Hypothesis 2: Epistemological incompatibility between cultural reflexivity and positivism**

It is often assumed that positivism considers science and culture as two separated universes, therefore excluding ethnocentrism and cultural reflexivity from IR scholars’ epistemological training. Post-positivists scepticism attacks the alleged objectivity of discourses and representations, while also insisting on the role played by positivism in the lack of reflexivity in the discipline.

**Results**

**Study 1) Variation of the occurrences of the term ethnocentrism between periods in percentage**

A parallel study counting the total of articles published for each period enables a conversion in percentage and a comparison of the percentage of occurrences of the term “ethnocentrism” between periods.

![Graph showing variation of ethnocentrism occurrences between periods](image)

This study tends to invalidates hypotheses 1) and 2) since ethnocentrism appears to be a traditional subject of the discipline since the 1960’s, even if it is marginal.

**Study 2) Distribution of the different uses of the term “ethnocentrism” in the corpus**

I selected three types of uses of the word “ethnocentrism”:
- “indigenous”: ethnocentrism referring to the actors’ behaviour
- “reflexive”: ethnocentrism referring to scientific production
- “object”: ethnocentrism considered as an object of study, or the articles referring to the literature about ethnocentrism or to an article which title contains the word ethnocentrism.\textsuperscript{cxiv} 
(“non available” represents the articles I could not read because of the access limitations imposed by academic subscription)

This study shows that the use of ethnocentrism as an object of study and as a reflexive tool exist in “mainstream” IR. It therefore invalidate hypotheses 1) and 2).

**Study 3) Themes and approaches of the articles including the term “ethnocentrism”**

A first reading of the articles led me to select 13 themes, which can be classified in 3 different types:
- the articles in group 1 are mainly based on the introduction of new approaches in IR which results in a new focus and interest in extra-disciplinary literature for the discipline. These perspectives are mainly cognitive approaches\textsuperscript{cxv} to ethnology\textsuperscript{cxvi} and psychology\textsuperscript{cxvii}.
- the articles in group 2 are “traditional” IR articles that at some point focus on the ethnocentrism of the actors\textsuperscript{cxviii} or emphasise on the consequences of IR scholars’ ethnocentrism.\textsuperscript{cxix} They belong to different thematic categories: Conflict & Security, “Group-studies”, “Human rights & Environment”, “Institutions & Cooperation”, “Domestic issues”, “Foreign Policy”, “Theory” (and “Other”).
- the articles in group 3 are “meta-articles”, i.e. their purpose is to introduce or comment on other IR articles: Reviews\textsuperscript{cxx} and Volume information\textsuperscript{cxxi}. 

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{TYPES OF USES} & \textbf{Percentage} \\
\hline
Indigène & 38.81% \\
Object & 32.08% \\
Reflexive & 26.15% \\
Non available & 2.96% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}
As ethnocentrism appears recurrently in themes considered as traditional topics of the discipline (for example “Conflict and security” 17.52%; “International Relations Theory” 12.37%) this study undermines hypothesis 1. The presence of articles inspired by other disciplines and the high percentage of “meta-articles” using the term “ethnocentrism” encourages me to consider that positivism and “mainstream” IR are not as incompatible with cultural reflexivity as hypothesis 2 may suggest.
Conclusion

The quantitative analyses I undertook for this presentation shows that cultural reflexivity is marginal but possible in IR since this question can already be considered as a traditional object of the discipline. This analysis offers needed empirical data to a topic that provides the discipline with challenging questionings. Neither ethnocentrism nor cultural reflexivity are epistemologically nor thematically incompatible with IR. Indeed, the literature surveyed in this study reveals that IR reflection on and practice of cultural reflexivity for five decades already is a good start and should invite more scholars to engage themselves in this field of study.

Furthermore, my finding suggests that even if the 4rth debate has tended to label reflexivity and cultural questionings as post-positivist problems, this assimilation may appear simplistic. The opposition rationalist/reflectivist induces that rationalist do not show any sign of reflexivity. Does this mean that positivist researchers do not pay attention to the way they conduct their scientific reflection? From an epistemological standpoint, cultural reflexivity represents a stake for the post-positivist as well as for the positivist academics.

On the one hand, researchers working within positivist epistemology will comply to methodological rules in order to gain optimum objectivity. The culture of the researcher is considered as an obstacle so long as it provides biases that can disrupt the natural course of the reasoning (hence the label ‘rationalist’). Cultural reflexivity can be a way to help the researcher to get rid of his/her prejudices.

On the other hand, post-positivist scholars defend that scientific theories, by engaging with abstraction, representation and interpretation, promote certain objects and conceptualise some events a the expenses of others. Theories acquire dominance not because they are more accurate but because the actors with the best resources support them. Therefore, academic hierarchy reflects and reproduces the social and political hierarchy of world politics. Following this reasoning, we can suggest that cultural reflexivity allows the post-positivist researcher to follow his/her emancipatory goal by bringing to light certain discriminative aspects of scientific discourse.

7 Psychology is another domain where much work has been done with regards to ethnocentrism. However, considering the epistemological/methodological purpose of this paper, such research appears too far from our focus point.


xxii As examples, we can refer to The authoritarian personality for which 2000 people were surveyed in the United States (1950)\textsuperscript{xxii}, and The cross-cultural study of ethnocentrism (1965)\textsuperscript{xxiii} composed of two investigations including thirty ethnic groups in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and twenty fields sites, notably Northern Canada, South Pacific and West Africa.\textsuperscript{xxiv}

xxv “Since people use different language systems, often differing in morphology, syntax, and historical and cultural context, we can analyze various language systems to see whether they imply different images of the world.” In Adam SCHAFF, Language and cognition, Mc Graw-Hill, p. 53.


xxviii “The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached. We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.” SAPIR quoted by SCHAFF in Ibid. p. 59.


xxx See for example James NEULIEP and James MCCROSKEY, “The development of a U.S. and Generalized ethnocentrism scale”, Communication Research Reports, Fall 1997, Volume 14, Number 4, p. 385-398


xxii "Since World War II, the culture of European and European-American (Western) peoples has been loaded with media dramatizations associating their ethnocentrism with historical horrors and tragedy. The resulting repression of ethnocentrism and the psychological defense of “reaction formation” have produced distortions of behavior of some Western peoples, against the survival interest of the individual or group. The positive component of ethnocentrism, that we term “ethnopreference,” is neglected, unrecognized, or suppressed." In Robert JOHN, “Ethnocentrism, Ethnopreference, Xenophobia: Peace in Race Relations—A New Understanding”, The Occidental Quarterly Online, Vol. 7, No.2, Summer 2007, p. 1

xxiii "Unless challenged and overthrown later, inbuilt prejudices imbibed in childhood go from strength: hence the finding of social psychologists that prejudice is negatively related to educational level." In REYNOLDS, Vernon, Vincent FALGER, et Ian VINE (eds.), The Sociobiology of ethnocentrism : evolutionary dimensions of xenophobia, discrimination, racism, and nationalism, London, Croom Helm, 1987, p. XX


xxviii Jordan RICHARD et ali. ‘One Discipline or Many? TRIP Survey of International Relations Faculty in Ten Countries’, Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project, The Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations, The College of William and Mary Williamsburg, Virginia, February 2009. This report represent the conclusions of a survey of 2724 IR scholars from 10 different countries.
hegemony and diversity in international theory


Ibid. pp. 10-11.


xxx I.e. "quantitative plus formalized and nonformalized rational choice."

xxx I.e. "non-postmodern constructivism and the "radicals" be they poststructuralists, Marxists, or feminist."


xxxi "Therefore I will establish an explanatory model based on general sociology of science, specific sociology of the social sciences, the literature of science, specific sociology on the history of political science, and the few existing essays on the history of IR." In Ibid. p. 693.


xxxii "Little has been done in the way of combining these two increasingly dynamic areas of research – critical, disciplinary self-reflection at the core and the periphery's revolt against IRs concept – and exploring how the IR discipline and the knowledge it prefers are shaped by core license over the periphery and how the rethinking of concepts in non-core contexts interacts with and influences disciplinary developments at large." In Ibid. p. 3.


xxxiv Ibid. p. 213.


xxvi "Ningen or being human is symbolized in two Chinese ideograms, that is, “human” and “betweenness” (aidagara): etymosinologically, to be human is to be necessarily relational or interhuman (mitmenschlich).” In Ibid. p. 9.

xxvii "Interbeing points to a relational ontology, that is, the idea that reality is nothing but a social process, or everything in the universe must be “inter-be” with everything else." In Ibid. p. 8.


xxix "I deliberately use the word ‘perspectives’ instead of ‘theory’ in the title of this book because I doubt whether the Chinese have indeed a theory of IR and also because the word ‘theory’ in China has a meaning different from our general understanding of the word.” In Gerald Chan, Chinese perspectives on international relations : a framework for analysis, New York, St Martin’s Press, 1999, p. xii.


Ibid. p. 5.


"Moreover, is it possible to move beyond one's own ethnic, cultural, national, generational, and professional experiences and biases to explore and learn about what is happening in settings that are dissimilar? [...] Can we generalize across time, place, and people as our observation culturally, historically, and geographically bounded?" in Margaret Hermann, "One Field, Many Perspectives: Shifting from Debate to Dialogue", in Donald James Puchala (ed.), Visions of international relations: assessing an academic field, Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 2002, pp. 19-20.

Ibid. p. 17.


Answer to the question 20: "Other than your native language, how many foreign languages do you understand well enough to conduct scholarly research?." In Richard Jordan et alii, "One Discipline or Many? TRIP Survey of International Relations Faculty in Ten Countries", p. 28.

Answer to the question 42: "List the four journals in IR that publish articles with the greatest influence on the way IR scholars think about international relations." In Ibid. p. 49.

Ibid. p. 8.


"It has no oil and no industry, has not been the scene of major domestic or international strife since World War II, and is largely forgotten... For the most part, most microstates, including the Solomon Islands, are important only in that they are voting members of the General Assembly [...] Little more can be said about the Solomon Islands [...] Most [states like the Solomons] are indeed in the backwaters of international life." Cf. Daniel Papp, Contemporary International Relations: Frameworks for Understanding, Boston, Ally & Bacon, 1997, pp. 350-351.

"Because the dominant theory is universalistic, because according to the model we are all potentially rational choosers – or neoliberal economic actors, to trace rational choice theory back to its roots – American social scientists often resist the suggestion that their theories are ethnocentric, and yet at least part of the inability of some American scholars – and, of course, it is important not to overgeneralize here – to get hold of such diverse phenomena as nationalism in Yugoslavia, the rise of radical Islam, Japanese trade policy, Singaporean approaches to human rights, and Somali resentment at being "helped" by outsiders, stems from the fact that the various groups involved are not motivated by the same things that motivate the abstract persons who inhabit rational choices models." In Chris Brown, "Fog in the Channel: Continental International Relations Theory Isolated (Or an essay on the Paradoxes of Diversity and Parochialism in IR Theory)", in D. S. L. Jarvis et Robert Crawford. (eds.), International relations--still an American social science? : Toward diversity in international thought, op. cit., p. 216.

Ibid. p. 216.

"There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations." In Michel FOUCAULT, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, London, Peregrine Books, 1979, p. 27, quoted by Steve SMITH, "The United States and the Discipline of International Relations: 'Hegemonic Country, Hegemonic Discipline'", art. Cit., p. 70.


See for example : Kalevi HOLSTI, The dividing discipline: hegemony and diversity in international theory, Boston, Allen and Unwin, 1985, p. 102 and the three publications entitled : 'International Relations: still an American social science?' (Kahler 1993; Smith 2000; Crawford and Jarvis 2001)

Jörg FRIEDRICHS, European approaches to international relations theory – A house with many mansions, London, N.Y., Routledge, 2004, p. 11


Ibid. p. 697.

Ibid. p. 723.


Ibid. p. 341.


Navnita Chadha BEHERA, "Re-imagining IR in India", op. cit., p. 345.


Joseph FEMIA, "Gramsci, epistemology and International Relations theory", in MCNALLY Mark and SCHWARZMANTEL, John (eds.), Gramsci and Global Politics _ Hegemony and resistance, NY, Routledge, 2009, pp. 35.


"[This country] happens to be 1990 the most powerful country in both international affairs and the discipline itself. To a significant degree, this influences the way our discipline sees the world and also how it contributes to policy making and thereby to the world's very shape." In Arlene B. TICKNER & Ole WAEVER (eds.), International Relations scholarship around the world, p. 5.

"My own translation, Justin VAISSÉ, "La projection d’un ethnocentrisme : facteur de puissance ?", p. 238.


Ibid. p.446-447

"[It] disputes the validity of ideas and commonplaces that today figure authoritatively in academic and public discourses as 'expert knowledges' about the former colonial expanses." In Siba N.GROVOGUI, "Post-colonialism", in KURKI, Milja, SMITH, Steve et DUNNE, Timothy, International Relations Theory: Discipline and diversity, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 233.
While there is nothing natural, inevitable, or arguably even useful about these divisions, they remain widely circulated and accepted as legitimate ways to categorize regions and peoples of the world. Thinking in terms of representational practices highlights the arbitrary, constructed, and political nature of these and many other oppositions through which we have come to ‘know’ the world and its inhabitants and that have enabled and justified certain practices and policies.” In Roxanne Lynn DOTY, Imperial encounters: the politics of representation in North-South relations, op. cit., pp. 2-3.


Postcolonialism does not take it for granted that the received world is preordained and given by force of nature: the world cannot be disentangled but its base institutions and systems of value can be refashioned to reflect today’s communities.” In Siba N. GROVOGUI, "Post-colonialism", art cit. p. 232.

Roxanne Lynn DOTY, Imperial encounters: the politics of representation in North-South relations, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1996, p. 2.

“Western thinking has shielded itself from the influence of the non-West by the basic distribution in space of subject and object, and in time of developed and developing.” In Arlene B. TICKNER & Ole WAEVER (eds.), International Relations scholarship around the world. Worlding beyond the West, p. 6.


Ibid. p. 356.

See the chapter "Racism, Realism, Hierarchy, and Empire" about the attitude of the US toward "the Alaska, the Midway Islands, the Danish West Indies, the Dominican Republic, Hawaii, the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Samoa.“ In Ibid.

Answer to the question 42 of the TRIP survey mentioned earlier : « List the four journals in IR that publish articles with the greatest influence on the way IR scholars think about » See. http://irtheoryandpractice.wm.edu/projects/trip/Final_Trip_Report_2009.pdf

I omitted 3 of the original 374 articles mentioning “ethnocentrism” since they appeared twice in the publications.

Kalevi HOLSTI, The dividing discipline: hegemony and diversity in international theory, Boston, Allen and Unwin, 1985, p.8


