

## Diversity

**Abstract** This chapter positions the book series in the context of the growing concerns of the lack of diversity in IR. Since the 1980s, scholars have been addressing this challenge by mapping “Global IR” and promoting pluralism in the discipline. In comparison with “scholars from the Global South”, European IR scholars still have to properly engage with the specificity of their contributions to the global debate—a gap this book series aims to bridge. If academic “dialogue” implies the encountering of two distinct perspectives, in their quest for academic otherness, European scholars may have forgotten to construct their own part of the dialogical formula. The chapter illustrates how scholars around the world—and in particular in Brazil, India and China—have already done so.

**Keywords** IR diversity · Mapping IR · Global IR · IR in the Global South · Academic dialogue · Academic pluralism

The globalization of the IR discipline represents a unique opportunity to strengthen connectedness between the different sites of IR knowledge production around the world. Academic global dialogue is increasingly described as a professional goal in the discipline (Acharya 2011; Esposito and Voll 2000; Hellmann 2003; Hermann 2002; Hobson 2007; Hutchings 2011). The aim of this book series is to contribute

to this collective discussion through the unveiling of the specificities of European IR productions. To start with this endeavour, this chapter will expose the academic context, values and literature to which this series echoes.

### MAPPING AND PROMOTING DIVERSITY

Since the 1980s, IR scholars have increasingly insisted on the diversity of the discipline. As summarized by Steve Smith in this telling sentence: “In the social world, there is always more than one story to tell” (Smith 2007: 3, see also Holsti 1985). Different types of diversity have thus been explored such as methodological, theoretical, pedagogical or sociological diversity. Since 2005, the reports published by the *Teaching, Research and International Policy* (TRIP) project illustrate a consistent interest in furthering our understanding of how the field is organized globally. Doing so, it gives some insights of the criteria currently used to assess what can account for diversity in the discipline.<sup>1</sup> In the 2012 survey *Trip Around the World: Teaching, Research, and Policy Views of International Relations Faculty in 20 Countries*, scholars were, for example, questioned about the content of the syllabi they teach, their thematic and geographic areas of interest, the methodologies they use, their linguistic capacities, etc. (Maliniak et al. 2012). Other perspectives have lead researchers to highlight the plurality of world “visions” (Puchala 2002) or “metaphysical viewpoints” (Kitaro 2002: 213) existing across the field. Another example of a type of diversity that seems to have caught scholars’ attention is conceptual diversity. In the introduction of *International Relations and the Third World (History and Society)*, Stephanie Neuman explores “Concepts that do not fit”, namely “anarchy”, “the international system”, “rational choice”, “the state”, “sovereignty” and “alliances” (Neuman 1998: 2). Different volumes indeed appear dedicated to highlight the different ways in which concepts are interpreted and applied in different places. This is, for example, the case for *Thinking International Relations Differently* (Tickner and Blaney 2012), *Formação dos conceitos brasileiros* (Cervo ) or *International Relations—Perspectives for the Global South* (Chimni and Mallavarapu 20122008). Those endeavours show that IR might end up being more diverse than what has been traditionally the case (Hobson 2012).

IR production is diverse as it is geographically localized. The context of production is described as the main variable explaining the existence

of such variations. The idea that IR production is thus localized seems to be summarized in this sentence by Ole Wæver, “IR is quite different in different places” (Wæver 1998: 723). In his article “The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations”, Wæver (1998) shows that diversity is geographically materialized in the content of publications. By studying the articles of the four American and British/European journals he considers as the most influential in IR, he concludes on the existence of meta-theoretical specialization on each side of the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>2</sup> Following this observation, Wæver analyses the influence of “national traditions” in the historical evolution of IR in the USA, the UK, France and Germany. Accompanied by Arlene B. Tickner, he then extended his work to the study of fifteen cases thanks to their collaboration with researchers belonging to these different national communities in an edited volume (Tickner and Wæver 2009).

The interest of a geographical approach is explicitly defended (Agnew 2007; Vüllers 2014) and is often called the exercise of “Mapping IR” (Holden 2014). The use of the national as the main unit of reference, sometimes referred to as “methodological nationalism” (Chernilo 2011; Hellmann 2014: 25) is common (Friedrichs and Wæver 2009; Gareau 1981; Holsti 1985; Jørgensen and Knudsen 2006a). This is, for example, the case for the TRIP survey for which results are distinguished according to the country of origin of the scholars surveyed.<sup>3</sup> However, national cases are not the only unit used for the analysis, and more encompassing categories are used by the analysts to compare the variations of IR productions at the global scale. To mention but a few “regions”, we can highlight “Southeast Asia” (Chong and Hamilton-Hart 2008), the “Global South” (Chimni and Mallavarapu 2012), “Nordic countries” (Friedrichs 2006), “Western Europe” (Friedrichs and Wæver 2009), “Latin America” (Herz n.d.; Tickner 2008, 2009), “Middle East” (Korany 2009), the “Arab Region” (Makdisi 2009) and “Central and Eastern Europe” (Drulák 2009).

This geographical framework is sometimes backed up by a reference to the “cultural” characteristics of the local context of production (Boyu et al. 2009; Jackson 2008; Rafael 1994). The expression “Geocultural epistemologies” coined by Wæver and Tickner illustrates this tendency (Wæver and Tickner 2009). Other authors accompany this cultural variable with institutional elements, resulting in the creation of “cultural-institutional approaches” (Jørgensen and Knudsen 2006b: 3). The idea

of a national heritage to recover or to claim adds a historical dimension to the geographical one and calls for an analysis of IR diversity in terms of “traditions” (Brown 2011; Knutsen 2014).

Scholars have not only assessed and looked for diversity. They have also promoted it in the form of academic pluralism (Jackson 2011; Jarvis 2001: 372; Paipais 2016). Pluralism can be understood as the position meant to promote diversity against the rampant parochialism traditionally denounced by the literature (Gareau 1981: 180; Holsti 1985: 103; Ward 1974: 195). Parochialism represents the tendency of academic entities to organize in an endogenous way. By contrast, pluralism can be considered as the professional position acknowledging the interest and legitimacy of the difference between practices and perspectives coexisting in the academic field. It is the professional attitude that promotes and institutionalizes diversity. In recent years, the interest of a pluralist attitude has been increasingly promoted. For instance, different edited book series seem dedicated to enhancing the diversity of the discipline such as *Worlding beyond the West* currently edited by Arlene B. Tickner, David Blaney, Inanna Hamati-Ataya, and Ole Wæver, *Global Political Thinkers* edited by Harmut Behr and Felix Rösch, or *Global Dialogues* edited by John Hobson and L.H.M. Ling. This position leads scholars to make explicit the need for new types of professional organization. In his article “Me and the Other in International Relations: An Alternative Pluralist International Relations 101 for example”, Amir Lupovici (2013) pushes for new types of interactions dealing with the way we relate to “others” in the discipline and in our teachings.<sup>4</sup>

Scientific and social stakes have been highlighted for the defence of pluralism. On the one hand, the absence of pluralism prevents challenging ideas from circulating. In the absence of pluralism, innovation becomes limited as the “lack of communication and interaction often breeds distrust and the formation of stereotypes concerning the research of those who do not share our perspective” (Hermann 1998: 70). The consequences of a lack of diversity are very concrete. They can be observed in our daily academic activities as shown by Kim Nossal in a study about US American IR textbooks (Nossal 2001). On the contrary, the multiplication of perspectives is expected to enhance the “objectivity” of the field by better grasping the complexity of the world we study.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, post-colonialism, post-structuralism, neo-Gramscianism, neo-Marxism, feminism, etc., have long stressed the potential for IR to reproduce the unequal character of the world order. Focusing on the

interaction between science and power gives rise to new perspectives in the study of the implications and motivations of scientific discourse.<sup>6</sup> The lack of diversity enables the prejudices existing in the dominant academic communities to be normalized and diffused. This is what John Hobson calls the “dark face” of the discipline (Hobson 2014: 557). Underlying prejudices are denounced such as “Western-centrism” (Bilgin 2010), “Orientalism” (Bilgin 2004), “imperialism” (Doty 1996; Shilliam 2011; Tickner 2013) or “racism” (Vitalis 2000).

### EUROPEANS CATCHING THE TRAIN OF IR GLOBAL SELF-REAPPRAISAL MOVEMENT

Alongside these developments, scholars around the globe show their involvement for pluralism by producing works about the state of the discipline in different countries and their specific contribution to the global field in the making. This is, for example, the case for Singapore (Chong and Tan 2009), Thailand (Prasirtsuk 2009), Indonesia (Sebastian and Lanti 2010), Pakistan (Khan 2012), Japan (Inoguchi and Bacon 2001), Iran (Mesbahi 2009) or Brazil (de Almeida 1993, 2006; Dos Santos 2005; Fonseca 1987; Herz 2002; Lessa 2005; Miyamoto 1999). In some countries, IR scholars have opened a collective debate about the direction that they could or should be taking as a community. Different questions seem to be raised and answered about who they are, what they do and what they have to offer.

This is, for example, the case in India.<sup>7</sup> Since the 2000s, a collective debate about the state of the discipline in this country has emerged among Indian IR scholars, with, for example, the publication of the edited two-volume *International Relations in India: Bringing Theory Back* and *International Relations in India: Theorizing the Region and Nation* (Bajpai and Mallavarapu 2005) and other articles (Behera 2007). The organization of a workshop “Upgrading International Studies in India” held at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore, in March 2009, resulted in the publication of a special issue “International Studies in India” (2009) as well as other measures such as “the funded enrolment of 100 Indian scholars in a 3-years membership of the International Studies Association” (Singh 2010).<sup>8</sup>

The discussion regarding the articulation of national traditions and their specific contribution to global IR diversity seems to have been even more vocalized in China (Chan 1999; Wang 2003; Zhang 2002). For

Yiwei Wang, since 2000, International Relations in China has entered a period of disciplinary construction that announces the emancipation of the Chinese academic community regarding its foreign influence (Wang 2009: 104–107). Song Xinning goes one step further by defending that a part of Chinese academia has always intended to dig into Chinese traditional thought for its practice of IR (Song 2001). This appropriation has followed different paths. Some scholars establish comparisons between “Western” and “Chinese” theories (Ye and Pang 2001: 24–29). Others discuss traditional Chinese political 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 (Tamaki 2007). Finally, an effort seems to be done in order to present Chinese concepts in a way that can be understood by international scholars operating under other mental frameworks (Song 2001: 70). 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” (Cao 2001).

Among the literature defending the interest of creating a global dialogue (Acharya 2011; Hutchings 2011), most works seem to have searched for diversity outside the “Western World”. IR theories are denounced to be “universalistic & rooted in narrow historical experience” (Acharya and Buzan 2007: 287). IR scholars are therefore expected to “stimulate non-Western voices to bring their historical and cultural, as well as their intellectual resources into the theoretical debate of IR” (Acharya and Buzan 2007: 286–287). The title of Wæver and Huysmans’ *International Political Sociology Special Issue* “Beyond European and North American Traditions of Social and Political Thought” (2009) reflects this dynamic of looking for diversity outside of what has been called “Western IR”. The literature aspires to develop “alternatives for thinking about the ‘international’ that are more in tune with local concerns and traditions outside the West”.<sup>9</sup>

As for other parts of the world, works dealing with IR in Europe have been published; we can, for example, mention the study of IR in France (Cornut and Battistella 2013; Smouts 1989), Spain (Garcia 2003), Denmark (Breitenbauch and Wivel 2004), Germany (Bleek 2001; Czempel 1986; Hellmann et al. 2003) and Italy (Bonanate 1990; Lucarelli and Monetti 2006). However, the literature dealing with IR in Europe has remained largely disconnected for the debate about diversity

and pluralism in IR. Until recently, few scholars have openly expressed the value of European IR productions for the global diversification of IR (but see, e.g. Groom 2005; Jørgensen 2000).

More recently, some voices have nonetheless taken position for a better acknowledgement of how IR production in Europe could contribute to the enhancement of diversity. The first volume of the *European Review of International Studies* represents a milestone by focusing specifically on IR in Europe and its contribution to the rest of the discipline. Different articles can, for example, be mentioned such as “European Voices in IR Theory: a Transatlantic perspective” (Lebow 2014), “Among the Very Best: A Brief Selection of European Contributors and Contributions to IR Theory” (Mansbach 2014), “What does Europe have to offer IR? Exogenization and real-life data” (Neumann 2014), “Catching a formative moment: Epistemic unity in the European plurality” (Rytövuori-Apunen 2014), “European Voices in International Studies: What does Europe have to offer?” (Stadtmüller 2014) and “A Cautious but Optimistic View from the Other Side of the Water’s Edge” (Volgy 2014). The question that we therefore need to ask ourselves is the channel through which we aim to achieve what we want to reflexively perform.

*Instead* of describing Europe as the leading edge of what needs to be done in IR worldly and reproducing the teleological narrative of the discipline, this book series takes as a point of departure the need for European scholars to get inspired by what has been done by other IR communities in order to recover IR theoretical traditions that are ours. It is time for European scholars to also ask themselves those questions: Who are we? What do we do? What do we have to offer? The aim of this collection is to further develop the agenda promoting the interest of IR traditions in Europe for the creation of a global dialogue in the discipline.

## NOTES

1. The *Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project* is conducted by the Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. See <http://www.wm.edu/offices/itpir/trip/>.
2. *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Organization*, *European Journal of International Relations* and *Review of International Studies*.

3. To quote only but one example, in the 2012 survey, to the question 21: “Which of the following best describes your approach to the study of IR? If you do not think of your work as falling within one of these paradigms, please select the category in which most other scholars would place your work”, one can read that 16% of scholars say they are mainly using realism in the USA, 36% in Israel, 18% in Hong Kong and New Zealand, 7% in the UK and 0% in Finland (Maliniak et al. 2012: 27).
4. Patrick Jackson’s chapter “A pluralist science of IR” can be considered as a manifest for pluralism; the rest of the volume implements this vision of the field (Jackson 2011).
5. “The fact that subordinate or subaltern subjects are ‘outsiders’ to the established order of knowledge production, and that they bring with them distinct accounts of reality emerging from their everyday experience, maximizes the ‘objectivity’ of scientific inquiry by recognizing the subjective character of all knowledge-building enterprises.” (Sandra Harding, quoted in Tickner and Wæver 2009: 8).
6. “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.” (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, London, Peregrine Books, 1979, 27, quoted by Smith 2002: 70).
7. “Having accepted that there is very little Indian IRT, the next obvious related questions are: Why are we, where we are, and what should be done to mitigate the situation?” (Mahajan 2010: 61).
8. “Given the relative paucity of theoretical writings on IR by Indian scholars, this anthology establishes that there has emerged in the past two decades a small but serious body of literature in the field” (Sridharan 2005: 4819).
9. Cf. the rationale of the book series *Worlding beyond the West*: <https://www.routledge.com/Worlding-Beyond-the-West/book-series/WBW>, accessed on 18 November 2016.

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