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GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: PIONEERS, IDEAS, DOUBTS

INTRODUCTION

For more than four decades, strong claims have been made in the field of International Relations (hereafter IR)[2] about the discipline's shortcomings, due to the hegemony of US researchers, its 'insularity' (the self-referentiality of US IR), and its lack of theoretical and methodological diversity. These claims are generally based on the assumption (or anecdotal evidence) that US research ideas and practices differ considerably from those in other regions, and that US researchers and institutions dominate the discipline and guard its gates. In fact, the authors of these claims argue that IR is not a global discipline (Maliniak et al., 2018: 2). Others argue that intense theoretical debates in US academia demonstrate that geographical boundaries, and nationality in particular, do not determine the intellectual development of ideas, theories and approaches to the study of international politics in any significant way. Whatever their motives are, a growing number of scholars in the discipline are convinced that "a diverse theoretical ecosystem is preferable to an intellectual monoculture" (Mearsheimer, Walt, 2013: 430).

The **Global International Relations** (hereafter GIR) project aims to provide the conditions for various modes of knowledge production, referencing experience and the creation of theoretical concepts that have their origins outside the modern West. Project advocates reject the notion that only the West can provide legitimate foundations and empirical material for theorizing world politics, and they seek to integrate or incorporate 'local' sites of knowledge production into disciplinary debates (Acharya, 2014: 649). Advocates of GIR reject the claim that Western history is the sole provider of the empirical bases of IR upon which theories of international relations (hereafter ir) can be developed and tested (Acharya, 2014; Acharya, Buzan, 2007, 2010, 2019; Buzan, Acharya, 2021; Buzan, 2016). Numerous authors and project advocates argue that the West is not synonymous with either the international or the global (Bell, 2020; Kang, 2020; Blaut, 2000; Bilgin, 2008; Frank, 1998; Gałganek, 2013; Goody, 1996, 2006, 2009; Hobson, 2004; Pomeranz, 2000).

[2] In relation to the decision of the Minister of Education and Science of 27 October 2022 to create the academic discipline 'international relations', I follow the Anglo-Saxon convention applying the term 'International Relations' in the text to refer to the discipline and the term 'international relations' to refer to the field or activity under study.

Scholars that are skeptical of the worldview that prevails in IR, and ask who or what IR is for, gather in the 'most remote corners of the world' under a banner reading 'a different world is possible'. They explain the emergence of IR as an academic discipline from this perspective and put forward, and justify the thesis that its main goal was to continue the racism of the 19th and early 20th centuries, thereby perpetuating unequal economic relations between the global periphery and the imperial metropole. The triumphant march of the 'Westphalian idea' was not a 'natural development'. One of the elements facilitating the establishment of the Westphalian system, associated with the accumulation of capital, involved the institutionalization of IR and other social sciences. Capital served the purpose of, and emerged from the extraction of resources from the Global South. Therefore, the discipline must be prepared to think about itself anew. If this fails, GIR will fail as a new agenda (Vale, 2016: 1).

Barry Buzan points out that how one thinks about the challenges to, and prospects for GIR depends on how one defines ir. It is not solely about world politics, which is the 'macro end' of political science. Buzan relies on literature on the subject to argue that IR is multidisciplinary, encompassing and intertwining the 'macro ends' of most of the social sciences as well as world history (Buzan, 2016: 1). Leaving aside the problem of how various social sciences have, or have not theorized their 'macro ends' (for example classical social theory does not typically theorize the international, addressing it as one of factors that are external to society), world history turns out to be central. This is precisely what Buzan does when he asks whether ir theory would be different if it were derived from Chinese history after 221 BC, when China was the center of the so-called tribute system, or from the Islamic world, or from the history of the first peoples of North America? Japanese and Chinese ir scholars are making such attempts. Researchers of other cultures can also make similar attempts. Other histories and other philosophies can therefore be expected to undermine, or not undermine the basic assumptions in the current mainstream, theorizing ir that has derived from European/Western history. They may also create new concepts and new ways of thinking about the ethics and structures of global international relations (Buzan, 2016: 2).

The emergence of so-called 'national IR schools' may raise concerns about how the discipline is evolving. Such calls are being made especially in China, but also in Japan, Korea, India and Brazil. The development of national IR schools may divide the discipline in terms of language, history and culture. This may result in thinking 'inwards' and the Balkanization of the discipline, which is entirely opposite to the attempts to globalize IR. In the worst case scenario, national IR schools may become instruments of power in the service of the 'national interest'.

This article aims to present the GIR project by discussing its origins, identifying its pioneers, and showing its content, potential directions of development and the uncertainties and risks involved.

PIONEERS OF GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In 2007, in an article titled *Why Is There No Non-Western IR Theory?* published in the special issue of "International Relations of the Asia-Pacific," followed by a book

(Acharya, Buzan, 2010), Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan called on international relations scholars from Asia to join global debates on IR to ensure the sustainable development of the discipline. The aim of both texts was to reflect on the reasons for the lack of 'Non-Western IR' or GIR. Acharya and Buzan identified the following essential reasons for this lack: the predominance of Western scholars due to the fact that the discipline was first institutionalized in the West; Asian (and more broadly non-Western) ir scholars being educated in the United States; the dominating status of Western IR scholars, publications and institutions; the widespread belief that Western IR has discovered the right way to understand ir; the severe shortage of institutional and material resources outside the Western world; and the English language prevailing in IR. Other reasons include the uncritical acceptance of Western theories and the work of scientists employed by prestigious Western institutions; and the overly political involvement of ir scholars from the academia of the developing world.

In 2010, Robbie Shilliam edited a publication titled *International Relations and Non-Western Thought. Imperialism, Colonialism and Investigations of Global Modernity* that sought to examine a *global* (rather than European or Western) context of the development of the science on modernity. The fundamental tenet of this work was that, since the beginning of imperialism and colonialism, these two processes co-established the understanding of what paths led to modernity, namely the development of the global capitalist market and the system of states. Globalization does not mean that this historical approach is rejected but rather reorganized and intensified. Applying a global context understood in this manner in order to understand how IR produces knowledge of modernity can help us get an insight into a questioned nature of global modernity that has essentially been formed by colonialism and Western expansionism. Taking this perspective was deemed to be necessary for a discipline that is strictly connected with how Western foreign policy is shaped, but takes a short-term research perspective. The goal here is to better understand a global context of modernity. Shilliam takes interest in approaches that make it possible to avoid essentialization and/or exoticization of non-Western thought of modernity, such as 'travelling theory' and 'translating modernity'. Making such a 'return' to non-West makes it possible to critically examine the ideal of Western modernity so as to provide a more adequate appreciation of a global context of modernity; of modernity globalized through – and as – colonial and imperial projects (Shilliam, 2010: 4, 16). In this context, Shilliam cites numerous studies of Islamic, Chinese and Japanese 'schools' of thought on international relations and indicates different meanings they give to essential IR categories. He also points to more profound philosophical differences that pertain to the concepts of order, justice, and change compared to their dominant understanding in the traditional Western canon. Especially such intellectuals as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Hommi Bhabha and Ashis Nandy, who operate both inside and outside the Western academia, have exerted considerable impact on IR research on the essentialization of cultural identities (Blaney, Inayatullah, 1994; Persaud, 1997; Jarvis, 2001; Agathangelou, Ling, 2004; Biswas, 2007; Bilgin, 2008). Numerous publications have shown the non-Western experience of modernity, particularly in its colonial and imperial dimensions (Darby, 1997; Neumann, 1998; Chan et al., 2001; Chowdhry, Nair, 2004; Acharya, Buzan, 2007).

When pointing to Acharya and Buzan as pioneers of GIR, one has to mention two books published as the outcome of their efforts. In *The Making of Global International Relations*, published in 2019, the authors express their satisfaction with other scholars' response to their call and attempt to renew and re-focus their plea in the hope that GIR will benefit from it. Both authors believe that progress towards GIR has already begun and will intensify. Nevertheless, it is obstructed, first and foremost, by the Western dominance in IR and the persistently difficult conditions in the Global South, which are hampering the rapid implementation of the GIR project (2019: 285, 296). In 2021, Buzan and Acharya published another book, titled *Re-imagining International Relations. World Orders in the Thought and Practice of Indian, Chinese, and Islamic Civilizations*, which aims to present marginalized narratives of thinking about, and practice of, international relations from the Chinese, Hindu and Islamic perspectives (2021: 1).

GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Over the last two centuries, modern thinking about ir has been primarily contextual, following international practice (Gałganek, 2009). Eurocentrism has been a significant outcome of this contextualism. Various ways of thinking about others have emerged alongside the dominance of Western civilization and the capitalistic manner of organizing economic activity as its core. One civilization has become hegemonic and global. Starting in the mid-19th century, the history of the West and its political economy became world history and global political economy. Many revolutionaries from various parts of the world saw the modernization of their societies as the most important goal in order to defend themselves against Western pressures. "Modern IR was founded, and evolved, during this entirely singular moment in world history, and it is thus neither surprising nor a matter for retrospective moral condemnation that as a consequence the discipline was cast in a Eurocentric form. Under the circumstances of the time, it is difficult to imagine how things could have evolved otherwise" (Acharya, Buzan, 2021: 5). There is no risk of embracing presentism by stating that mainstream theories of international relations (and international politics) are still little more than attempts to abstract Western history combined with Western classical and modern political theory. In this context, Justin Rosenberg's attempt to liberate IR from the bondage of political science and to build ir thinking on the implications of the 'antediluvian' multiplicity of human societies and the abstraction of their uneven and interconnected development is significant (Rosenberg, 2016, 2020).

Today, this singular moment of Western civilization dominating world history seems to be passing. In an ever pluralistic world, the cultures modernized under Western pressure are playing an increasingly important material and ideological role, so the discipline must address this world, a world in which every human activity has always been undertaken in the wider context of multiple societies. This new understanding of internationality has forced the discipline to move beyond the fields of politics and economics that have traditionally been studied by IR focusing on anarchy. Internationality as the social structure of the human world transcends all these activities. Literature, art, music, medicine, religion, philosophy, even language itself – they all appear in the

context of multiple societies. Members of these societies are aware of paths of development other than their own. They understand that ideas, technologies and resources are constantly derived from one social milieu and then combined with others, resulting in new and original, sometimes dramatic, outcomes. Therefore, GIR should be about 'almost' everything: multiplicity and identity; the interactive life of languages; the structure of world literature; the uneven and interconnected development of political systems; international relations of food and cooking; societies' strategies for coping with difference; multiplicity and sexuality; the dialectical form of world history; and so on (Rosenberg, 2018: 251). One indicator of the multilinearity of social development is the variety of ideologies that have emerged and are continually emerging, including in relation to ir, and which seek to explain, but also mystify, the various assemblages of economics, politics and culture in the contemporary world: liberalism, socialism, conservatism, social democracy, communism, fascism, *Tianxia*, and many others. All these substantive configurations of social development transform not only ir practices, but also its theorization. For example, exploring how the *world order* has been understood by different civilizations, sometimes over millennia, can indeed broaden the object of IR studies and confront the Eurocentrism of the discipline. Acharya and Buzan argue that learning about these ideas and practices can facilitate an understanding of the behavior of rising powers such as China, India, Iran and Turkey. Their respective political leaders often refer to the past when explaining and legitimizing their strategic behavior and the current foreign policies of their respective countries (Acharya, Buzan, 2021: 9). Most 'world orders' have been created by civilizations that turned their underlying particularisms into universalisms. However, as scholars, we should remember that every universalism was once a particularism.

ORIGINS OF GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Despite intensive efforts to introduce more diversity into IR, the dominant ir theories (theories of international politics), with the exception of postcolonial theory, are West-centric. Acharya and Buzan indicate several persistent and overlapping dimensions of Western dominance in ir theory. The first is *West-centrism* that has its historical roots in Eurocentrism. West-centrism reinforces Western domination in terms of the representation of 'things' in order to normalize existing hierarchies. The second dimension is *false universalism* understood as the tendency to present Western ideas and practices as a universal standard. The third dimension is rooted in *racism*, whose role in establishing colonial racial hierarchies and their legacies is persistently repressed. The fourth dimension is named *disconnection* by Acharya and Buzan, by which they mean the mismatch of ir theories and the experience of the non-Western world. Western scholars rarely see this mismatch as an obstacle to theory-building, although there are serious problems in applying the theories prevailing in the West to the non-Western world. Finally, a fifth dimension of Western dominance is about *denying the agency* of non-Western states, regional institutions and civil society actors in contributing to the world order according to the rules established by the West. Non-Westerners are viewed as consumers and passive recipients of theoretical knowledge (Acharya, Buzan, 2019:

286). These practices establish Western dominance in ir theory and supersede the importance of cultural differences, making culture the main arena for both defense and counter-attack against Western hegemony in both the discipline (IR) and ir.

The theoretical diversity of the discipline, as perceived by Western scholars of international relations, usually refers to its Western core of three mainstream theories (realism, liberalism and constructivism). Competing images of the social world constructed by theories derived from Marxism, postcolonial studies, critical theory, or feminist theories are found on the margins of the discipline. Although the theoretical aspects of ir are no longer primarily an 'American endeavor', theoretically relevant work continues to be produced in the United States, Western Europe, Australia and Canada. Twenty-five years ago, Ole Waever anticipated that an independent disciplinary tradition might develop in China (1998: 696). Even the developing communities of ir scholars that have also emerged in Japan, South Korea, Brazil, Taiwan, Turkey and India, have not made IR truly pluralistic and globally sustainable. The majority dealing with ir in the non-Western world are acculturated theoretically and methodologically to one of the hegemonic centers of global power/knowledge. As a result, the non-Western world is placed on the peripheries of the discipline. A bibliometric study by Peter M. Kirstensten showed that, between 1966 and 2010, the number of texts by scholars from the Global South in leading IR journals increased by only about three per cent (2013: 21). The main topic (Global International Relations and Regional Worlds) of the 2015 International Studies Association (ISA) convention in New Orleans, in addition to pointing out Western and US dominance in IR, simultaneously served the idea, expressed by then ISA President Amitav Acharya, of 'GIR' rather than 'non-Western IR' to address numerous concerns raised about the latter term by scholars working on Global South issues. Published prior to the 2014 convention, the Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) report indicated that the vast majority of respondents (75%) were convinced that IR was dominated by Western academics. Seeking deeper diversity that IR lacked, and addressing this lack that was considered to be a weakness of the discipline, was therefore considered a key objective of GIR.

In 2019, Acharya and Buzan could not decide whether the discipline was at a watershed. However, they emphasized that besides the divide between the West and the Rest, there was a growing awareness that when theorizing ir, the Global South needs to be taken into account to a larger extent, and directed towards GIR. They further pointed to a growing global challenge facing the epistemologically narrow and self-referential American thinking in IR. They also indicated the significant danger of researchers from emerging powers reinforcing some of the universalist claims of Western IR. For example, there is no doubt that political realism is an attractive theory for emerging powers because it emphasizes the privileged position of the existing great powers in ir (Acharya, Buzan, 2019: 295).

Consequently, one of the goals of GIR is to find out and bring in other stories and ways of thinking about ir that have been forsaken as a result of Western domination. A second aim of GIR, rooted in the belief that "the period of Western dominance is now coming to an end, and the fabric of the winners' story of IR is wearing thin not only around the edges but in the middle" (Buzan, Acharya, 2021: 1) is to bring out the stories told by those who are re-emerging, creating contemporary centers of

wealth, power and culture. These marginalized stories and ways of understanding are thus being reinserted into the contemporary world order by China, India, and the Islamic world. This aim can be understood in two ways. First, it is a reflection on what ir theory and IR might look like had it been developed within civilizations other than the West. The implications of this reflection are considered to be profound for both the contemporary practice of ir and the academic discipline that studies it. In many places, new wealth, power and cultural and political authority, combined with postcolonial resentment, have become significant enough to pose a military, economic, legal, social and political challenge to the West. Second, the accomplishment of these goals opens the door to rethinking the history, concepts and theories of modern West-centric IR. For example, it can be argued, based on the practice of the last four decades, that it was capitalism that won the Cold War, rather than liberal democracy. As a consequence, all the great powers have organized their economic activity on capitalist principles. This gives meaning to the notion of a (capitalist) mode of international relations (van der Pijl, 2014). The aim, therefore, is not merely to uncover the content of pre-modern classical civilizations, but to build awareness that, just as traditional Western and Japanese cultures have been transformed by modernization processes, other classical cultures have also undergone such transformation (Koyama, Buzan, 2019; Buzan, Lawson, 2020). Justin Rosenberg provides a useful theoretical abstraction of uneven and interconnected development, which helps to understand these processes, as well as a heuristic framework for understanding internationalism (Rosenberg, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020; see also Gałganek, 2013, 2018).

A Chinese international relations scholar, Chen Yudan, identifies truly 'global' sources of international thinking beyond the dichotomy of the West and non-West (Yudan, 2023). He understands the 'global' ones as ancient ideas from different places and times that should be incorporated into the history of international thought and integrated with Western thinking to create a 'form of integrated global history'. On the other hand, he argues for more attention to be given to historical speculations on relations between states from the perspective of the world as a whole, rather than solely from the perspective of modern Western IR, with their dominant theoretical assumptions about anarchy and independence of elements (sovereignty of states). Yudan stresses that Western international thinking has not developed in isolation, but has constantly communicated with the ideas and contexts of other civilizations. Exploring the global origins of international thinking gives a broader view of the contexts for the development of Western thinking and refines historical contextualism in IR. Creating a 'global' perspective can develop an understanding of international relations and international history.[3] The concept of *Tianxia* often serves as an example of creating such a 'global' perspective. In the 1960s and 1970s, *Tianxia* and other Confucian concepts were considered an 'old' ideology in China. China's economic development and the change of its international positioning resulted in Confucian ideas being recognized

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[3] Chen Yudan points out that, since the early 20th century, a number of important studies on international relations have cited their various sources (Chan, 2001; Brown, 2002; Acharya, Buzan, 2010; Yan, 2013; Ling, 2013; Nakano, 2013; Lebow, 2016; Shahi, 2019; Buzan, Acharya 2021). Yuda also observes that numerous authors in this group have non-Western national or cultural origins.

as a significant source of cultural identity construction. Although initially Confucian *Tianxia* was contrasted with 'narrow nationalism' in Chinese discourse of the 1990s, in the 21st century the interest in the concept rose [Zhao, 2022 (2005)] because of China's increased material capabilities and the associated idea of 'Chinese exceptionalism' (Ge, 2015; Chu, 2022). It is worth bearing in mind, however, that the search for non-Western sources of international thinking typically involves the publication of extracts from the works of great philosophers, whose reflection on international relations is usually negligible and was never their main focus. Another approach used to study the non-Western sources of international thinking is to identify concepts rather than thinkers. These concepts are found in classical sources and transformed into modern theoretical concepts (for example, the Islamic concept of the *umma* or the Chinese term *gongsheng* – symbiosis). However, these efforts attempt to create a canon out of general principles formulated in relation to a universal entity, society and life itself rather than to reflect on international relations. Thus, the history of non-Western international thinking still needs to be established. In this context, the lack of a sufficiently developed dialogue within non-Western thinking is also pointed out. There are numerous studies devoted to Chinese and Islamic sources of international thinking, but there are almost no comparative studies or dialogue between these research fields. Yudan further points out that a truly 'global' perspective should go beyond the dualism of West and non-West (Yudan, 2023: 160, 166). Chih-Yu Shih (National Taiwan University) understands this problem in similar terms when he argues that creating GIR is not just about linking the West and non-West, but about exploring how the two have constituted each other practically, intellectually and historically, and how they are still constituting one another today (Shih, 2022: 278).

DIMENSIONS OF GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The research agenda of GIR presented below results from combining Acharya's proposal formulated in 2014 (2014: 652) and a proposal he then put forward together with Buzan in 2019 (Acharya, Buzan, 2019: 300). It encompasses seven main dimensions and is intended as a kind of call and encouragement for researchers to do the following:

1. To explore new patterns, theories and methods in the perspective of world history in order to overcome current stereotypes and to base the discipline on a pluralistic universalism not 'applying to all', but recognizing and respecting the diversity of humankind.
2. To analyze changes in the distribution of power and ideas after more than two hundred years of Western dominance and to root the discipline in world history, not just the Greco-Roman, European or US history. GIR therefore acknowledges and respects historical time and context.
3. To study regional worlds in their full diversity and interconnectedness and to integrate regional studies, regionalisms and regional studies into IR.
4. To engage in topics and apply methods that require in-depth knowledge and substantive integration of disciplinary and regional knowledge. To combine rather than

supplant existing theories and methods and to pay attention to both material and ideational/normative causes and effects.

5. To explore how ideas and norms circulate between global and local levels. To eschew concepts and theories based solely on national or cultural exceptionalism.

6. To explore civilizations' learning from each other that prevails over 'clashes of civilizations'. To recognize multiple forms of agency beyond the state and material power, including resistance, normative action and locally formulated proposals for a global order.

7. To respond to the increasing globalization of the world not only in terms of the diffusion of wealth, power and cultural authority, but also in terms of rising interdependence and shared fates.

According to Acharya, the idea of GIR should be like a large umbrella and open to criticism, interpretation, elaboration and expansion. The topics identified above are a starting point for the discussions and debates that are necessary to broaden IR (Acharya, 2014: 652).

So, first, GIR calls for a new understanding of universalism. It rejects its Enlightenment framework of being true for all time and space. Understood in this way, universalism justified the eradication of diversity and Western imperialism based on the universalization of the European 'standard of civilization'. Western IR established a theoretical and methodological standard used to marginalize alternative ideas, narratives and methodologies. The hegemonic position of the Westphalian model led to ignoring other types of international systems with fundamentally different ideas and power dynamics, such as the Amarna system from the 14th century BC; the Chinese tributary system; or the Mandala system of Southeast Asia (Acharya, 2014: 652). This homogenizing universalism should be opposed by pluralism. Advocates of GIR argue that pluralistic universalism allows IR to be viewed as a global discipline with multiple foundations. And while IR had the ambition to deal with all times and places, it has in fact become a rather parochial interpretation of a brief period in the history of a West-dominated world. Acharya and Buzan argue that the discipline might have looked different had it been invented in China, India or the Islamic world. It should therefore break with a parochial perspective by incorporating perspectives from other histories and political theories. The sources of globalization in the Western perspective are usually associated with the expansion of Europe and the promotion of free trade by Britain and then by the United States. Meanwhile, they should rather be sought in the multicultural trade systems binding Eurasia and Africa more than two millennia ago (2019: 301).

Second, GIR calls for the discipline to be more embedded in world history rather than just Western history and in the ideas, institutions and practices of both Western and non-Western societies. Amitav Acharya believes it is crucial to answer the question of whether the emerging world order will be a reconstruction of the American hegemony or a replay of the European hegemony from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Instead of following this path, he proposes to describe the emerging world as a 'multiplex' playing a variety of features (ideas, worldviews); by various actors/producers/directors mutually related by complex forms of interdependence. A multiplex world is not a multipolar world. Its primary actors are not only great powers,

but also regional powers, international institutions, non-state actors and corporations (Acharya, 2014: 653).

Third, the establishment of GIR does not mean that the importance of regions and regionalisms as well as regional studies will be diminished. The world is not divided into regions, nor is it moving inexorably towards a seamless globality. Regions are not viewed as physically, cartographically or culturally fixed units, but as dynamic, purposeful and socially constructed spaces. Acharya and Buzan emphasize that the understanding of regionalism has shifted, diminishing its territorial and state-centric dimensions in favor of encompassing an increasing range of actors and issues. Regional studies are not just about how regions self-organize their economic, political and cultural spaces, but also about how they interact and shape the global order (Acharya, Buzan, 2019: 6). Acharya reminds us that studies describing themselves as the 'new regionalism' and applying constructivism to examine the diffusion of norms and community building at the regional level have expanded the understanding of regionalism. GIR should therefore study various forms of regionalism and not evaluate them merely in terms of their relation to a European style of integration treated as a kind of an ideal (Acharya, 2014: 654).

Fourth, following the GIR research agenda proposed by Acharya and Buzan, scholars should seek to absorb rather than reject existing knowledge in IR, which consists of academic theories, methods and judgements. The only thing GIR should aim to reject is the hegemony of this knowledge by placing it into a broader global context. Adopting a pluralistic approach towards theories and methods means that GIR will embrace, on the one hand, mainstream theories, pointing out their parochialism, and calling on their advocates to accept the ideas and experiences of the non-Western world, and critical theories on the other, adopting an agnostic stance towards the preferences of scholars. Acharya and Buzan argue that the researcher needs multiple lenses, each of which reveals a part of the truth. They also point out that certain theories (postcolonialism, feminism) are in the vanguard of GIR because they have facilitated the discipline expanding beyond the West (Acharya, Buzan, 2019: 305). GIR does not present itself as an alternative to every theory, but expects all theories to shed their Eurocentrism.

Fifth, although the idea of pluralistic universalism inevitably introduces a degree of cultural differentiation and relativism, GIR cannot be based on cultural exceptionalism and relativism. Cultural exceptionalism presents social groups as homogeneous, unique wholes, that are often superior to others. Claims to exceptionalism often underpin false claims to universalism. Referring to constructed universalisms is often used to conceal the selfish interests of ruling elites (standard of civilization, American exceptionalism, Asian values, and Chinese characteristics). GIR should encourage scholars to uncover various kinds of biases, parochialism and ethnocentrism in existing IR theories and in the traditions these theories invoke. Part of the problem is also the lack of fit between existing theories, derived predominantly from the theories of the Western world, and the realities of the non-Western world. Local actors, although often materially weak, are the depositories of ideas and norms that have not disappeared under the 'civilizing' influence of foreign norms and values, but have become part of a wider hybrid normative matrix (Acharya, 2014: 655).

Sixth, GIR should explore the many different ways in which civilizations have encountered each other and present the results of such encounters and exchanges. In order to do so, first of all, the ahistorical, narrow and strategic view of civilizations proposed by Samuel Huntington (1996) has to be disputed. The question that needs to be answered is whether civilizations have always 'clashed' with each other or, perhaps more often, they have interacted peacefully and learned from one another. The history of civilizations can thus be told not in terms of conflicts, but in terms of a convergence of ideas, identities and mutual benefits. GIR adopts a broad conception of agency in ir, in particular denying the claims that non-Western societies lack agency understood by the West as the ability to wage wars, defend one's sovereignty, negotiate treaties, manage the balance of power, and construct empires over peoples deemed 'uncivilized', and thus viewing agency in terms of a 'standard of civilization'. Agency, however, comprises an ideational dimension in addition to the material one. It is not the prerogative only of the strong, but can also manifest as a result of the actions of the weak. Agency can express itself both as acts of resistance to, and creation of global norms and institutions. The South has a voice to use, even if it is ignored by IR theories. Acharya calls for an expanded understanding of agency and recommends how GIR should present the agency of actors (state and non-state) by highlighting their material, ideational and interactional capacities, and by constructing, rejecting, reconstituting and transforming global and regional orders (Acharya, 2014: 651). The agency of non-Western actors can be exemplified by challenges to the dominance of great powers in the creation and governance of global and regional orders; the reinterpretation of global norms of sovereignty such as non-intervention and their application to local and regional contexts; the construction of new sovereignty rules in support of global rules and institutions; and the conceptualization and implementation of new security and development mechanisms.

Seventh, and finally, GIR responds to the increasing globalization of the world in a comprehensive manner. Globalization, understood as a process of rising interconnectedness and interdependence, is a long-term trend. However, this trend has been changing. The first change involves the departure from a core-periphery structure which is replaced by an organization on a 'deep pluralism' basis. This means that the forces driving globalization and the responsibility for its consequences have become much more planetary in scale. Second, the increasing density and intensity of interconnectedness and interdependence is increasingly giving rise to the idea of shared fates of all humanity and a collective responsibility for this fate. How the idea of shared fates in the process of globalization affects the more diffuse political structure of deep pluralism is one of the main questions GIR should seek answers to (Acharya, Buzan, 2019: 309).

WHAT TO DO? RESEARCH IN GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Studies of non-Western ir and studies into non-Western IR have made it possible to identify numerous biases in works representing the mainstream and have provided important arguments in favor of GIR. From this insight, certain dispositions emerge for the discipline. First, much more attention should be devoted to ir as it is understood

and experienced 'from below'. Second, the agency of apparently 'powerless' ir participants should be better understood. Third, we should understand that many common concepts, such as 'security', have different meanings and content when viewed 'from below'. Fourth, we should acknowledge that 'international' itself is a malleable and non-obvious category. In fragile states and penetrated systems, the division between the 'international' and the 'domestic' is very different compared to those living in a world whose dominant intellectual framing is that of the Weberian state and its accompanying ideas and ideologies (Hurrell, 2016: 1).

Important GIR research perspectives can be provided by studies conducted within the framework of global history, particularly those that have had an impact on how the history of globalization is understood by demonstrating the non-Western agency; the abundance and diversity of connections in the Global South; the depth and breadth of non-Western thinking on ir; demonstrating the need to move beyond the traditional/modern dichotomy and focus on the many modern structural transformations and the complex processes by which Western ideas of international order and capitalist modernity have been transferred to different national and regional contexts.

However important these developments are, they are inadequate. This is because, first, they have an often over-emphasized Foucauldian concern with the knowledge produced and the politics of representation and discourse. This kind of approach correctly highlights the extent to which non-mainstream and alternative understandings of identity, subjectivity and difference have been removed from Western IR. It indicates how the very concepts used by scholars reflect and reinforce structures of productive and discursive power. Hurrell stresses, however, that this has translated into an internal interest in theory rather than what might constitute a 'non-Western theory'. This obfuscates numerous ideas and practices that need to be confronted when considering what constitutes 'IR' in different historical and regional contexts. As a result, despite the Western dominance of knowledge production in IR, the changing power relations, hierarchies and inequalities present in the world cannot be overlooked.

Second, revealing the specific culture-related ways of understanding the world promotes pluralism and reflection. However, as has already been said, this can also lead to cultural and regional particularities that can reproduce the ethnocentricity GIR contests. Developing 'national IR schools' can create intellectual pitfalls for the discipline. Seeking to understand the particular also involves departure from the global. Given the sheer power of the global, there are no national, regional or cultural perspectives that could be seamlessly combined (Hurrell, 2016: 2).

So what should we do to understand a world featuring complex patterns of power diffusion and social, economic and political changes, in which the categories of analysis we have been using are eroding, and new hierarchies and inequalities are becoming established? Hurrell recommends further pluralizing, relativizing and historicizing. We should agree with historian Dipesh Chakrabarty who argues that analytical and theoretical categories of the West remain necessary, but are insufficient. An essential first step to be taken in this direction is to acknowledge that dominant concepts and ideas never travel unproblematically. We should also seek to decentralize other regional or cultural perspectives and problematize unreflective 'non-Western' theories. Above all, we should encourage scholars from various backgrounds

to theorize about their own experiences (empirically and normatively) regardless of whether this means connecting with Western social sciences or challenging them (Hurrell, 2016: 2).

How are we to study global international relations, then? First, the power of the global has to be acknowledged, while recognizing that neither capitalist globalization (for the liberal and Marxist) nor global power competition (for the neo-realist) produces homogenization. At the same time, it is not sufficient to confront what is happening at the global level because of suspicion of grand narratives and grand historiographies. The global is powerful and significant enough to constitute the core of our analyses. Second, we need to develop terms and concepts that emerge from various regions and contexts and are intended to have a more general relevance and application. How we understand difference remains crucial in this approach. Even if global policymakers speak the language of the balance of power, the meaning of this concept may differ significantly from its Western ideal type. Rather than concentrate on the 'radically different', adopting an 'almost the same' perspective is often of greater importance in the study of non-Western IR. A third important issue concerns the study of the normative and the global study of political ideas. This challenge is partly political in nature and involves listening to and analyzing the views and values expressed in different parts of the non-Western world. Another thing to bear in mind is that the study of global political theory is in its infancy. Most critical engagement with non-Western political theory is aimed at interpretation, provincializing the categories of Western theory, promoting dialogue and seeking greater reflexivity. But an equally important aim should be to avoid ghettoizing contributions from the 'non-West'; to escape unhelpful macro units of analysis ('Islamic' ideas, 'Chinese' values); to focus on the history of diverse and contested traditions and patterns of thinking and practice; and to explore how ideas that emerge in different historical contexts can have more general and even global relevance and application. Fourth, we should seek to understand how the global is understood in different parts of the world, the impact of Western globalization, and narratives about how different regions, states and societies 'fit' into the global. We ought to initiate a discussion that will unveil how differently situated understandings, narratives and histories about the global and related ideas and concepts emerge. In the course of this discussion answers should be sought to the question of how the current understanding of the global order has been shaped by the foundations of the social sciences that were formulated when European nation states emerged. In order to develop GIR we must go beyond 'IR' and perhaps also organize research in the social sciences anew and find new ways of producing knowledge (Hurrell, 2016: 2–3).

It is an important element of GIR to implement the demand for universalist pluralism in research, which requires us to view IR as a global discipline with multiple foundations. However, it will only become global if it takes a different approach to three issues: if it finds a new answer to the question of the fundamental purpose of the knowledge produced; if it determines whose knowledge matters; and if it resolves the thorny issue of language (Vale, 2016: 2). As concerns the first issue, changing the approach means that the purpose of IR, namely to serve Western authorities by seeking to homogenize social relations in the world, ought to be rejected. Scholars' focusing exclusively on politics and the exercise of power eliminates the emancipatory impulses

that are present in all social sciences. As a result, IR too often keeps silent with regard to the profound purpose of knowledge, unaware that we live in a largely unexplored world. This links to the second problem: whose knowledge matters? IR is largely unaware of the social thinking that has originated in the Global South. This lack of interest in how the Global South thinks raises serious questions about the analytical claim that IR knows the world of 'internationalism', as well as the normative belief that the discipline knows 'what is best for the world'. If the Global South gives a 'privileged' insight into how the world works, this presents an opportunity for the mainstream discipline to understand it better. Without the voice of the Global South, any attempt to establish GIR will fail. Finally, the third issue is about language. Peter Vale argues that the march of modernity from colonial conquest to globalization has been carried on the increasing power of the English language. This language has not been a force for emancipation; rather it is a powerful instrument of social control, especially in fields like economics and IR. In this sense, English hinders our understanding of a complex world by excluding the voices of non-English speakers (Vale, 2016: 3). It is therefore not enough to simply adjust the margins of the discipline to establish GIR. IR must begin by recognizing that it is ill-fitted to its task. "Without the Global South counting as much as the Global North, a black life in the world made by IR will continue to matter far less than a white one!" (Vale, 2016: 3).

The GIR project opens up a space for theorizing outside the experience of the modern West. While it calls for theoretical pluralism, it also demands an increased interest in historical framework of reference. This framework can be expanded in at least two ways. The first way is to draw on world history and global history. World history as an object of study and a sub-discipline of history experienced a revival in the American and European academia some forty years ago. This revival was in many cases influenced by Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems theory (Pomeranz, 2007: 69). At the level of 'actual research', world history addresses new areas and methodological issues that are indispensable in detailed study. In this sense, the study of the 'white and black Atlantic', economic links, trade, the industrial revolution, silk and Kashmiri shawls can illustrate cultural flows between different parts of the world. From the point of view of GIR, this kind of research, which goes beyond the conventional unit of analysis that is the nation-state, makes it possible to present global transformations, links, adaptations and other diverse and complex processes. 'Atlantic History' focuses on the ocean, and analyzes units such as trade routes, markets and transportation networks that bind Africa, Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean into a system. The work of representatives of the *Annales* school in particular, including that of Fernand Braudel on the Mediterranean and that of Pierre Chan showing the place of Seville and Latin America in Atlantic history, have provided a model for this kind of research. Similarly, the historiography of the Indian Ocean focuses on the complex interactions of empires, merchants and communities ranging from East Africa to Southeast Asia and China. In particular, scholars point to the historical significance of trading systems operating in the Indian Ocean long before the arrival of Europeans at the end of the fifteenth century. The Indian Ocean is particularly demanding on scholars as a unit of analysis, due to the wide variety of actors present there since the sixteenth century: Portuguese, Dutch, French, English, Danes, merchants from East Africa, the Islamic world, the

Gujarat, Malabar and Coromandel coasts of India, Bengal, and Southeast and East Asia. Since research of this kind requires a focus on a variety of problems in different times and spaces, world history as a discipline inevitably demonstrates methodological diversity. Among the many approaches, however, one can discern a dominant trend of applying transculturality in research. This is evidenced by the attempts to create a multitude of names and neologisms to describe the essence of this procedure: from world history, global history, universal history, and big history to ecumenical history, connected histories, entangled histories or crossed histories (*l'histoire croisée*). The pluralization of this research field is further augmented by the 'new type of historians' setting about research of this type. These are economic historians, representatives of historical sociology, researchers of specific regions, researchers of maritime activity or historians of nomadism. Taking GIR into account, we can hope that an increasing number of scholars and historians of international relations among them will no longer be content with the methodological nationalism that has so far dominated in IR, focusing on the nation state whether in the form of diplomatic history or political history (Gałganek, 2013: 47–74).

The second way is to encourage ir researchers to take an interest in findings of historical sociology and international historical sociology. The former is usually associated with analytical, conceptual and methodological debates that treat IR as an ahistorical and asocial discipline, somewhat counterbalanced by historical sociology. However, historical sociologists have argued that IR is not so much an ahistorical discipline as an ahistoricist one. The main task of historical sociology, therefore, is to bring a historicist approach to IR. In this sense, it is located at the intersection of history, sociology and IR. From history, it takes the belief in the significance of events, randomness and social particularism; from sociology, an understanding of how relatively fixed configurations of social relations (structures) affect these micro-processes; from IR, the conviction that 'the international' plays a central role in these dynamics (Gałganek, 2012). Given the above, the core value of international historical sociology indicated by sociologists is its ability to define the essence of a transdisciplinary agenda in IR.

Linking GIR to global history and international historical sociology can help better understand the interactive connections and asymmetrical entanglements between the people, places, ideas and institutions that make up historical development. Since all theoretical judgements are based on assumptions that enable the construction of history, all theorists are historians to some extent. IR, and especially GIR researchers should recognize that how they understand history is just as important as how they theorize. Thus, cross-border connections and structural entanglements should be the core interest of the GIR project. If advocates of GIR fail to effectively counter accounts of eternal historical continuity and essential understanding of cultural difference, they run the risk of legitimating them in the discipline. International historical sociology and global history demonstrate that 'our' story cannot be separated from 'their' story. West and non-West, metropole and colony, and core and periphery are deeply intertwined (Barnett, Lawson, 2023: 512). Neither interdependence nor dependence grows out of consensus. In particular, the latter emerges from hierarchical relations of exploitation, dispossession and domination.

GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: DOUBTS AND RISKS POST-POST-WESTPHALIAN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Modern international relations are not defined in terms of the accumulation of territories by violent means, but as the multilateral political management of the potential crises of global capitalism and the regulation of the world economy by the leading capitalist states. International economic accumulation and direct political domination are disjoined. A universalized capitalist world market must and can coexist with a historically prior and territorially fragmented system of states. But this configuration now appears to be being transformed by globalization that will usher in the implementation of a post-Westphalian, post-modern global order that will be less international and more global. However, if the Westphalian system as a historical phenomenon was rooted in pre-capitalist property relations and dynastic sovereignty, as convincingly argued by Benno Teschke, the IR theorizations identifying a shift towards a post-Westphalian international system should be referred to as a post-post-Westphalian order, following such an understanding of historical chronology. Indeed, if the period from 1688 (the Glorious Revolution in England) to 1989 is viewed as a three-hundred-year-long transformation involving the modernization of international relations and the modernization of the Westphalian legacy viewed as the quintessential absolutist international relations, then the current processes (globalization, declined importance of borders, loss of state power) should be explained not as the creation of a postmodern world, but rather as the erosion of pre-modern territoriality. Simply put: we live in modern international relations that have had to reach a global scale (Teschke, 2003: 267–268).

However, many scholars barely notice the changes taking place in international relations and events that are considered as significant. They interpret them as a mere continuation of structural and political dynamics in which American and European interests are pursued under the centuries-old disguise of exercising 'world politics', 'global politics' and 'global international relations'. Treating events as a deviation from an ordered international system merely means that the reality, history and experience of much of the world are ignored and reflects the need to continue the domination of the United States and Europe as a standard approach. "From this vantage point, it is – and always has been – shocking that an academic discipline claiming to explain world politics would base their claims largely on the past, present, and future of Europe and the United States" (McIntosh, 2024: 4). There are opinions that cyber-operations, artificial intelligence, autonomous weapons and hybrid warfare challenge the ideas about war that currently dominate IR, the same way the bow and arrow did centuries ago. It is therefore merely a new manifestation of old problems. The dominant form of IR is grounded in folklore to an extent allowing scholars (erroneously) to refer to Athens and Sparta in debates about the future of the United States, and China two and a half millennia later. 'The Thucydides Trap' is an example of such ahistorical ritualistic thinking producing an inadequate and primitive representation of reality.

The path towards GIR has been paved by critical international relations scholars, representatives of global history, and international historical sociologists, who called for the transformation of orthodox (rationalist) theories of international politics – treated as 'previously given', axiomatic and regarded as a picture of objectively existing

reality – into more inclusive and less dangerous ways of thinking about contemporary social life. This critique was consistently concerned with discursive regimes of exclusion, silence, intolerance, and marginalization, which constituted 'IR', reducing a complex and turbulent world to "patterned and rigidly ordered framework of understanding, derived from a particular representation of post-Renaissance European historical experience, articulated in orthodox Anglo-American philosophical terms" (George, 1994: IX).

THE ASSOCIATION OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION
WITH GEOGRAPHY

The association of knowledge production with geography ('without the Global South, we will not know the Global North') may produce doubts and risks. Tarak Barkawi, Christopher Murray and Ayşe Zarakol therefore critique one of the core premises of GIR by calling it 'geo-epistemology'. They argue that both 'American' IR and GIR share a Eurocentric understanding of space that is a product of Western expansion and empire. Through this kind of geo-epistemology, GIR enables a conservative appropriation of the critique of Eurocentrism in IR. Globality becomes a matter of assembling sufficient geographic representation instead of analyzing the political, historical, and spatial assumptions of the discipline. Naturalization of connections between place and thought runs the risk of reification. Anglo-American politicians and intellectuals invented a national/international world to replace the world of empires and races that came apart in the age of world wars. The authors show how culture replaced power and history in the study of the discipline, obfuscating the Eurocentrism of GIR (Barkawi, Murray, Zarakol, 2023: 445).

This kind of geo-epistemology shapes how GIR conceives the global. Giving a 'strategic' meaning to geo-epistemology makes it possible to conveniently link particular histories and perspectives. For example, the terms 'Third World' and 'Global South' are used to describe vantage points on world politics. The real-world referents of these terms, and the theoretical perspectives associated with them, have been historically shaped as a result of transnational relations. Giving a strong meaning to this kind of geo-epistemology essentializes the relations between knowledge and geography by rooting theories in places. This raises the risk that the globality in the discipline becomes a matter of geographic representation. The authors highlight the inability of this kind of geo-epistemology to critique Euro- and US-centrism in IR. So-called 'American IR' (Hoffmann, 1977; Weaver, 1998) has been formed through close relations between power and knowledge shaping and reflecting the world order constructed by the United States. Consequently, this geo-epistemology of GIR fosters the reproduction of this world rather than its critique and going beyond it. In proposing an alternative to this mode of knowledge production, they suggest making recourse to international anti-imperial thought. Anti-imperialist thinkers explicate the imperial and strategic use of culture. We can learn from them how to develop reflexive responses to geo-epistemology and relational approaches to the study of world politics (Barkawi, Murray, Zarakol, 2023: 447).

NATIONAL SCHOOLS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Who is responsible for the West's failure to understand Asia? One answer may indicate Eurocentrism. However, if the advocates of the 'national schools' of international relations can understand the West, Eurocentrism cannot be the primary obstacle. As long as the West has sufficient knowledge of Asia, even Orientalism cannot block understanding. Yet it is possible that the West cannot get such knowledge until Asian scholars provide it. The second answer therefore points to the responsibility of Asian scholars who are 'slow' in providing such knowledge. Why are they delayed? A third possible answer is the culture of academia. The debating style of Western academia may be too uncomfortable for Asian researchers who are 'rooted in relational sensibilities'. Eurocentrism may prevent symmetrical exchanges between the West and Asia, and Asian scholars may consider themselves incapable of uncovering differences (Shih, 2022: 280).

As modern globalization undermines the core placement of its Euro- and US-centric roots, its epistemology also loses its hegemonic position and becomes a particular product of one cultural periphery among many other modernities. Theory as a basic instrument of knowledge production follows the fragmentation of modernity and becomes one of the spaces of culture (Dirlik, 2007: 70). Newcomers to ir theorizing, such as Chinese academics, have taken part in the global discourse on ir provided that their particular perspective is part of this discourse. IR is a relatively new discipline in China, having emerged with the post-1978 period of 'reform and opening-up'. Prior to this, Chinese ir was derived from interpretations of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao Zedong. Chinese academia taught theories of imperialism, colonialism, national liberation movements, war and peace. Chinese scholars were aware that Chinese theorizing in ir was lagging behind and were determined to join global theoretical discussions. This was also fostered by the uncertainty about the future of the discipline in its global environment that opened up opportunities to create alternative approaches, which favored newcomers, including Chinese researchers.

What, then, may be problematic about China joining in the global discourse on the theorizing of ir or the assimilation of ir (IR) theory in China? First, IR in China is a politically dependent discipline with little potential for originality. After the political declaration to pursue 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' (Deng Xiaoping), Chinese politicians and academics have attributed 'Chinese characteristics' to everything, ranging from the most significant to the most trivial issues. Arif Dirlik interprets this phrase as a cover intended to conceal the mimicry of 'advanced' Western societies. A less radical assessment points to an over-one-century-long search for a 'Chinese essence' that will ensure China's unique present and future, even if radically transformed by Western pressures (Dirlik, 2010: 141). Even though the situation of IR has radically changed in China over the last forty years (university IR education, translation of textbooks and major Western works, new journals, numerous publications), the development of ir theorizing has not resonated with the institutional development of research and teaching. As a result, Chinese ir theorizing does not pose a significant challenge to existing (Western) ir theories. The former can also be anticipated to add little to current theories, thereby making IR a more pluralistic

discipline, as in the case of scholars representing other powers. Second, theory in the Chinese sense is not supposed to explain and anticipate, but rather to serve the goals of the socialist revolution. It pursues primarily ideological and practical goals. In a broad sense, Chinese academics divide the theories of international relations into two basic types: bourgeois (Western, 'wrong') and Marxist-Leninist ('correct') ones (Geeraerts, Jing, 2001: 253), and even if different interpretations of Marxism emerge these are usually linked to changes in policy. Third, we can view 'national IR schools' not as anomalies or examples of theoretical failures, but as adding further 'vantage points', 'hermeneutical frameworks' or theorizing 'always for someone and in someone's interest' (Cox, 1981). Such divisions have always existed in IR and new ones have always been added as modernity has been fragmented in the process of globalization. Capitalist globalization has not ultimately universalized European modernity, but produced 'multiple' or 'alternative' modernities. We can view this process as not conducive to the GIR project.

CONCLUSION, OR NO ALTERNATIVE FOR HEGEMONIC IR THAT IS BENIGN HEGEMONY

Mustapha K. Pasha argues that it is a key precondition for a critical non-Western IR to recognize the ontological primacy of 'global modernity' in any alternative (re) mapping. This is of particular importance because it makes the international the condition of international relations theory and provides the particular context for the instantiation of a distinctive non-Western IR. However, unlike the Eurocentric West-phalian narrative about the origins and development of the discipline, non-Western IR is attentive to context produced by imperial and colonial relationality. Thus, the ontology of non-Western IR is based neither on the nation state nor on the West-phalian system, but on the experience of coloniality and the formation of global modernity. The latter provides the foundation for creative agency. In order to answer the question of why there is no non-Western IR, "[t]he key point, nonetheless, is the intertwinement of non-Western IR with the West, the appreciation of relationality competing for a highly overdue scrutiny with monotonic regurgitations of the myth of Westphalia" (Pasha, 2010: 222). Pasha, however, argues for the structuration of global modernity as a more fruitful way to proceed. The recognition of 'alternative' or 'multiple' modernities in lieu of the Western modernity does not allow Europe and the West to be provincialized. Non-Western discourses use distinctive vernaculars centered on issues of identity and recognition, making them seem discordant with the metanarrative of Western IR. Yet, it is through these vernaculars that the uni-versality of Western Enlightenment, as the source of inspiration and legitimacy for Western IR, is challenged. It is these vernaculars that mark the existential reality of non-Western cultural zones. Non-Western thought is founded on dialogue, whether audible or inaudible, with the universal promise of modernity. In this view, non-Western thought is inherently modern, whether through the idiom of authenticity, difference, hybridity or convergence that characterizes it. All expressions materialize their content in relation to the processes that mark the global modern (Pasha, 2010:

223). In order to maintain its international character, it should not seek to discover its national distinctiveness, though, which could be exported to different geo-cultural locations. After all, there are also multiple 'Wests' occluded in homogenized IR accounts. Numerous silenced histories also create opportunities to grasp the effect of empire and colonialism on the metropolis, especially on subaltern metropolitans. Non-Western IR should therefore avoid producing a mirror image of hegemonic IR, merely changing the vantage point. It seems, therefore, that the primary value of non-Western IR lies in developing a new ontology that can free GIR from the fetters of self-referential West-centrism. Although this aspiration is not new (postcolonial studies), Pasha is doubtful about hegemonic IR ever willing or being able to fully grasp this alternative (Pasha, 2010: 226).

John J. Mearsheimer illustrates this lack of will or ability when discussing GIR. He explicitly rejects Acharya's idea of GIR. Mearsheimer justifies his position by referring to Stanley Hoffmann who called IR an 'American social science' in 1977, and agrees this was appropriate then as well as it is today. His justification for its relevance today continues to be "all important ideas and theories that dominate discourse in our discipline" (Mearsheimer, 2016: 1). Mearsheimer also believes that this situation is unlikely to change significantly in the near future, and for entirely legitimate and defensible reasons. In his opinion, the issue does not boil down to the makeup of the IR scholarly community, as there are many IR scholars outside the United States. The great impact of US IR is not determined by the number of scholars. Nor is it determined by the object of study, because this is the same almost everywhere (for example, nuclear proliferation, democracy promotion, or economic interdependence). So what determines this dominance and the inability to change? Mearsheimer identifies two factors: theory and methods. The three most prominent ir theories (constructivism, liberalism and realism) have their origins in American universities (leading theorists), thereby allowing American scholars to control the most essential element of the discipline. Mearsheimer further argues that the variety of theories does not leave room for new theories or even for major changes to them. Likewise, the analytical frameworks and cause-seeking research procedures which researchers from other countries employ are associated by and large with American academia. Mearsheimer adds that, as a political realist, he feels intellectually 'more at home' in Beijing than Washington, because Chinese scholars and policymakers tend to be more sympathetic to realism than their American counterparts (Mearsheimer, 2016: 2). He also rejects the argument that there is an American hegemonic discourse in IR and points to the lack of alternative ideas about international politics. Additionally, the reference to culture as an explanatory variable (for example, Chinese scholars who refer to Confucian culture) has been around in American academia for decades. This means that cultural arguments do not offer a new way of broadening intellectual perspectives in IR. Mearsheimer eventually appeals to his understanding of academic progress indicating that potentially leading non-American IR theorists will stand on the shoulders of American scholars, much the way the latter stood on the shoulders of European academics after World War II. Mearsheimer argues that it is erroneous to think that "there would be a richer and more diverse menu of IR theories were it not for American gatekeepers policing the discourse" (Mearsheimer, 2016: 2).

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ABSTRACT

The Global International Relations (hereafter GIR) project aims to provide the conditions for various modes of knowledge production, referencing experience and the creation of theoretical concepts that have their origins outside the modern West. Project advocates reject the notion that only the West can provide legitimate foundations and empirical material for theorizing world politics and seek to integrate or incorporate 'local' sites of knowledge production into disciplinary debates. Advocates of GIR reject the claim that Western history is the sole provider of IR empirics upon which theories of international relations are developed and tested. Numerous authors and project advocates argue that the West is not synonymous with either the international or the global.

In November 2024, Krakow was the venue of the 2nd Congress of the Polish Society for International Studies titled "Global International Relations: Challenges and Development", that addressed the origins, contemporary dimension, directions of development, and critique of the GIR concept.

This article aims to analyze the current discourse in the discipline and to present the GIR project by discussing its origins and indicating its pioneers (parts 1 and 2), presenting the research (part 3) and indicating potential development directions and the doubts and risks related to them (part 4).

Keywords: Global International Relations, West-centrism, deep pluralism, geo-epistemology, national schools

GLOBALNE STOSUNKI MIĘDZYNARODOWE: PREKURSORZY, IDEE, WĄTPLIWOŚCI

STRESZCZENIE

Projekt Globalne Stosunki Międzynarodowe (*Global International Relations*, dalej GSM) ma tworzyć warunki dla sposobów wytwarzania wiedzy, przywoływania doświadczeń i tworzenia teoretycznych pojęć, które mają swoje źródła poza nowożytnym Zachodem. Zwolennicy projektu odrzucają przekonanie, że jedynie Zachód dostarcza prawomocnych fundamentów i materiału empirycznego do teoretyzowania polityki światowej i starają się zintegrować lub włączyć „lokalne" miejsca wytwarzania wiedzy do dyscyplinarnych debat. Zwolennicy GSM odrzucają tezę, że historia Zachodu jest jedynym dostarczycielem empirii SM, w oparciu o którą rozwija się i testuje teorie stosunków międzynarodowych. Liczni autorzy i zwolennicy projektu wskazują, że Zachód nie jest synonimem ani międzynarodowości, ani globalności.

W listopadzie 2024 roku odbył się w Krakowie II Kongres Polskiego Towarzystwa Studiów Międzynarodowych pod tytułem „Globalne Stosunki Międzynarodowe: wyzwania i rozwój", którego przedmiotem była geneza, współczesny wymiar, kierunki rozwoju oraz krytyka pojęcia GSM.

W związku z tym, celem artykułu jest analiza obecnego w dyscyplinie dyskursu oraz prezentacja projektu GSM poprzez omówienie jego genezy i wskazanie prekursorów (część 1 i 2), przedstawienie prowadzonych badań (część 3) oraz ukazanie potencjalnych kierunków rozwoju i związanych z nimi wątpliwości i ryzyk (część 3).