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Abstract

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Keywords: Non-Western International Relations (IR), Decolonization, Eurocentrism in IR, Epistemologies, Postcolonial IR Theory, Asian and African Contributions to IR, Colonial Legacies

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Abstract

The prevalent liberal realist and constructivist viewpoints in international relations theories are all derived from Western customs and experiences. As reflections of a world shaped and ruled by the Western colonial powers, the Treaty of Westphalia, the Congress of Vienna, the two World Wars, and the Cold War are all starting points for discussions in the field of international relations. As a reaction to the predominance of Western viewpoints in international relations non-Western theory of international relations has become more prominent in recent years. This is because it challenges the marginalization of non-Western knowledge and promotes decolonization. This paper highlights Asian and African contributions to IR theory, critiques colonialism's lasting impact on the Global South, and explores strategies to challenge Eurocentrism. It promotes inclusive, decolonized knowledge production by emphasizing non-Western perspectives and alternative epistemologies in a field traditionally dominated by Western thought.

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Introduction

Non-Western viewpoints and contributions have frequently been marginalized in the long-standing Western-centric theories and frameworks that have dominated the field of international relations (IR). Colonial histories and the worldwide dominance of Western knowledge production are the origins of this epistemological disparity (Acharya, 2014; Bilgin, 2016). The field still promotes Euro-American ideas

like liberalism, Marxism, and realism while disparaging other worldviews as narrow-minded or unreliable (Acharya & Buzan, 2009; Tickner, 2009). Systemic obstacles that prevent non-Western academics from gaining access to prestigious universities and publishing houses further this marginalization (Connell, 2016).

Western dominance is further cemented by institutional biases, methodological gatekeeping,



and language limitations (Nayak & Selbin, 2010). Because of this, IR continues to be a self-reinforcing field in which Western paradigms—despite their cultural and historical specificity—are regarded as universally valid (Acharya, 2014; Ling, 2002). As a result, postcolonial and decolonial academics have questioned the assumed universality of Western theories and advocated for a more pluralistic and inclusive IR (Sabaratnam, 2011; Ling, 2013). Advocates for alternative narratives rooted in various historical, social, and geopolitical contexts expose racialized and cultural biases and criticize the hierarchical production of knowledge (Spivak, 1999; Mohanty, 2019). A post-Western IR that engages multiple epistemologies and questions long-held beliefs about statehood, sovereignty, and global order is possible—as evidenced by the expanding corpus of research from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East (Acharya, 2014; Adebajo, 2010; Bishara, 2012).

In addition to highlighting new decolonial approaches that seek to transform the field, this paper aims to investigate the structural and epistemological underpinnings of non-Western exclusion in IR by looking at the institutional, historical, and theoretical forces that maintain this imbalance.

Key Literature and its Limitations

Eurocentrism continues to influence the fundamental presumptions, frameworks, and narratives of the field of international relations (IR), which has long been dominated by Western epistemologies (Buzan & Little, 2000; Carlsnaes et al., 2002). There has been a persistent and expanding critique that aims to decenter and decolonize the field in spite of this intellectual hegemony (Acharya, 2014; Sabaratnam, 2011). Non-Western IR, post-Western IR, global IR, and decolonial IR are some of the conceptual alternatives that scholars have put forth. Collectively, these frameworks aim to elevate pluralistic, situated bits of knowledge from the Global South and contest the epistemic domination of Western thought (Acharya & Buzan, 2009; Santos, 2015; Grosfoguel, 2019).

The linear depiction of the growth of international society a story that suggests a one-way process by which non-Western societies are integrated into a system created by Europe is a major component of this critique (Acharya, 2004; Acharya,

2023). The main focus of this historiography is Europe as the main actor in the development of the international system, while important anti-colonial movements and the intricate procedures of political and legal independence are ignored (Zhang & Chang, 2018; Connell, 2016). Acharya and others contend that these narratives perpetuate a mythologized view of international modernity in which ideas such as sovereignty, security, and international law are viewed as purely Western inventions—and they obscure the contributions of non-European actors (Acharya, 2004; Buzan & Little, 2000).

Even though the Haitian Revolution was a turning point in the history of democracy and human rights worldwide, it is hardly ever mentioned in canonical IR texts (Sabaratnam, 2011; Jones, 2006). This exclusion serves as an example of how disciplinary discourses operate as epistemic erasure mechanisms (Spivak, 1999). The reason for the omission is not a lack of historical knowledge but rather deeply ingrained paradigms that give precedence to Western viewpoints and experiences (Tickner, 2009).

According to the framework of modernity/coloniality, provided by critical theorists like Aníbal Quijano, Walter D. Mignolo, Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and María Lugones, modernity cannot be comprehended without reference to its colonial roots (Mignolo, 2000; Grosfoguel, 2019). These academics contend that colonialism was rearticulated through coloniality—a matrix of power that still functions in racial, sexual, political, epistemic, economic, spiritual, and linguistic dimensions—rather than ending with decolonization (Mignolo, 2000; Santos, 2017).

Grosfoguel (2019) refers to this as the "mythology of decolonization," cautioning that the persistence of colonial structures is concealed by juridic-political independence. This perspective reinterprets Eurocentrism not merely as a geographic bias but as a hegemonic mode of knowledge production that universalizes Western experiences (Grosfoguel, 2019; Ling, 2013). This type of epistemic dominance continues to shape IR's knowledge regime, dictating who is permitted to be a knower and whose experiences are made comprehensible in disciplinary discourse (Sabaratnam, 2011; Tickner, 2009).

Research indicates that in major Western IR departments, rational choice continues to be the predominant theoretical approach, while critical and reflexive paradigms like constructivism, feminism, and postcolonialism remain on the periphery (Acharya, 2014; Nayak & Selbin, 2010). This institutionalization of Eurocentrism is evident in the way that IR is taught (Connell, 2016).

These viewpoints aim to undermine binary thinking rather than to reverse it making room for alternative interpretations of global politics. Pedagogical and institutional practices are also addressed in this critique. The questions of whose knowledge is validated who creates curricula and how course materials present global narratives are becoming more and more prevalent. The necessity for Afrocentric alternatives that take into account local experiences and ontologies has been brought to light by events like the Nairobi Literature Debate and conferences on African literature which have exposed the politics ingrained in curriculum design.

However, the decolonial and critical IR literature still has a number of shortcomings in spite of these insightful criticisms. First off a large portion of critical scholarship is still largely diagnostic in nature it is full of critique but unclear about practical transformation tactics for already-existing institutions. Secondly, although the literature challenges the location of knowledge production it occasionally undervalues the diversity found in the West and the potential for unity across epistemic divides. Last but not least despite the strong call for epistemic pluralism there is still a problem with combining various ontologies into a disciplinary framework.

In summary, even though the field has started to recognize the colonial roots of its foundations ongoing interaction with subaltern viewpoints curriculum deconstruction and receptivity to drastically different ways of knowing are necessary to truly transform international relations into a global discipline. Creating new narratives ideas and pedagogies that represent the lived realities of a truly global international society is another requirement as is a shift from reactive critique to proactive reconstruction.

Decolonizing International Relations: Beyond Westphalian Epistemologies

First, we should remember that decolonization

develops differently in different situations. Enhancing one approach to decolonization does not have to ignore others, and the way independence is described needs to be examined closely. It is important to explain decolonization clearly in every situation so that it is not mistaken for meaningless changes. It doesn't have to mean completely rejecting Western theory or knowledge but instead requires shifting focus and using local knowledge and ideas to look at old theories and concepts differently (Fanon, as cited in Ringmar, 2022).

The study of International Relations (IR) has long relied on Western epistemologies, but recent developments indicate it's now changing direction. For years, people have complained that IR did not consider non-Western ideas, but it is now making more of an effort to overcome its geo-epistemic shortcomings (Acharya, 2011). More than ten years ago, researchers began to question why non-Western IR theory remained marginal by studying how IR is understood and used outside the West. Because earlier terms carried Orientalist values, people now prefer using "non-West" and "post-West" (Acharya & Buzan, 2017). Despite still valuing Western frameworks, *Global IR* tries to overcome the idea of central/peripheral countries or the binary division between West and non-West (Acharya, 2011).

Asian Studies has spent a lot of time exploring alternatives to Western IR. The Chinese School, for example, takes its inspiration from Pre-Qin ideas, cosmology, and relational thought (Qin, 2007). It also explores new approaches from India that challenge fixed notions of culture and return to ancient Indian texts, academics, and thinkers (Behera, 2007). Different Asian academic groups are also developing theories that distinguish the East from the West using religion, culture, and civilization as epistemological frameworks. Significant contributions to this epistemic reconfiguration have come from the Global South, and Africa in particular. Scholars like Odoom, Smith, and Niang emphasize different socio-political and economic realities, frequently referencing collectivist worldviews like *Ubuntu* (Niang, 2016; Odoom & Andrews, 2020).

Yet many IR scholars still argue that *Global South/North* terminology should take the place of West/non-West. Rather than weaken or essentialize the West, these approaches seek to recover

repressed traditions of knowledge (Acharya, 2014). Because of colonial history, unequal distribution of resources, and a desire for autonomy, the Global South is defined more comprehensively than as a mere geographical term. Relying on *epistemic disobedience* (Mignolo, 2009), we move from universal ideas to a geopolitics of knowledge. Concepts of *worlding* compel us to look beyond globalization and recognize how multiple worlds co-construct global realities (Shilliam, 2011). In *Global IR*, the views of those on the peripheries are considered complete epistemological worlds rather than minor extensions of dominant narratives (Acharya & Buzan, 2017).

North/South approaches are more inclusive than traditional East/West dichotomies. Recovering early civilizational histories has, however, sometimes led to the essentialization of cultures, particularly in Asian IR (Shilliam, 2011). On the other hand, Brazil exemplifies “Southernization,” which narrates histories of exploitation and minority marginalization while experimenting with alternative development models (Tickner & Blaney, 2012). It operates within a discourse formed by colonialism, dependency, and resistance. A vital strand of Global IR that links Western and non-Western thinking is Latin American IR, where Brazil plays a key role. While China and India receive greater attention, Brazil is often viewed as “the West in the South” (Tickner, 2008).

Since the 1990s, Brazilian scholars have challenged the view that IR is a solely American social science by advocating for the development of Southern theories rooted in regional realities (Tickner, 2003). Yet despite this momentum, indigenous theoretical frameworks are still largely absent. This has led to calls for new *loci of enunciation* from the Global South (Mignolo, 2009). Frantz Fanon’s writings emphasize the psychological and cultural damage of colonialism, arguing that decolonization requires a reclaiming of identity, memory, and dignity—not just material redress (Fanon, 1963). Because colonial legacies are embedded in social and epistemological structures, the struggle is complex and ongoing. Thus, rather than returning wholesale to a precolonial past, *postcoloniality* often entails a selective retrieval of both indigenous and colonial traditions (Shilliam, 2011).

An attempt to develop IR from an Asian perspective can be seen in the edited volume *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and Beyond Asia* (Acharya & Buzan, 2010). While it discusses cultural constructs like *Tianxia* or Indian civilizational thought, it overlooks the philosophical depth of traditions such as Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and Vedanta. It also downplays the political and social factors that shape IR theory in these regions (Zhang & Chang, 2016). Focusing more on texts than lived experiences in the Global South reduces the transformative potential of non-Western theories. Moreover, it does not fully consider how nationalism or geopolitical agendas can drive the assertion of cultural distinctiveness.

Zhang and Chang (2016) argue that IR theories must go beyond culture to include political and economic structures. National schools of IR too often prioritize cultural identity over-analyzing how power and marginalization operate globally. Emphasizing Indian or Chinese IR in isolation risks reproducing essentialist logic. Erik Ringmar (2022) has further illuminated the colonial underpinnings of core IR concepts like free trade, developmentalism, and the civilizing mission. By connecting these ideas to thinkers like Adam Smith and their 19th-century imperial context, he reveals the centrality of empire in IR theory.

However, Ringmar’s overreliance on European sources in critiquing Western IR perpetuates the very Eurocentrism he critiques, as he rarely includes Global South perspectives in his analysis. This undermines his effort to provincialize Europe. Nonetheless, Ringmar’s work remains important for highlighting the colonial legacy embedded in foundational IR ideas like sovereignty and the Westphalian system.

My own research, which seeks to unpack these legacies and foreground subaltern voices from the Global South, draws on these critical insights. But instead of using Western critique alone to challenge Western dominance, it is vital to engage with diverse lived realities and indigenous epistemologies to truly move beyond critique (Mignolo, 2009; Niang, 2016).

In conclusion, even though recent research has made significant progress in decolonizing IR there are still a lot of gaps. Western theory still dominates much of the current discourse which also frequently falls back on cultural essentialism or ignores issues

of marginality and power. A truly decolonial IR must pursue critical engagement with indigenous pieces of knowledge epistemic plurality and a persistent examination of the global structures that influence theory and practice. A sincere dedication to worlding IR is necessary for this not as a way to incorporate it into an already-existing framework but rather as a fundamental rethinking of the field.

Hypothesis

The marginalization of non-Western perspectives rooted in the historical superiority of the West perpetuates the dominance of Eurocentric paradigms in the discipline of International Relations.

Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study is qualitative with a focus on analyzing specific cases in-depth to comprehend the intricate social and political dynamics of international relations (IR). It uses micro-historical analysis and case selection to track decision-making procedures and identify hierarchies of power. By embracing interdisciplinary perspectives and non-Western viewpoints the approach challenges Eurocentric paradigms and advances a more diverse and inclusive understanding of international relations.

Scope of the Study

Decolonization of the field non-Western contributions to IR theory and colonial legacies are the main topics of the study. Geographically, it places a strong emphasis on the Global South, especially Asia and Africa. It aims to investigate power knowledge and representation within these parameters without claiming comprehensive coverage spanning time from the colonial era to current discussions.

Organization of the Paper

- Chapter 1 explores colonialism's impact on the Global South and introduces postcolonial thought, especially the work of Frantz Fanon.
- Chapter 2 examines non-Western perspectives in IR theory, highlighting contributions from Africa and Asia.

- Chapter 3 addresses the decolonization of IR, discussing strategies and theoretical shifts toward inclusive epistemologies.
- Chapter 4 proposes a framework for developing non-Western IR theory, identifying sources, and addressing conceptual challenges.
- Conclusion synthesizes key findings, discusses implications for IR, and outlines future research directions.

Chapter One:

Colonial Legacies and the Perspectives of the Global South

Formerly colonized nations—primarily in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and parts of the Pacific—are symbolically referred to as the *Global South*. This term reflects their common postcolonial struggles and aspirations for justice, equality, and independence (Statecraft, 2023). Although these regions share a legacy of colonial exploitation and underdevelopment, they do not constitute a single, unified bloc. Events such as the Bandung Conference (1955), the Non-Aligned Movement (1961), and Tricontinentalism contributed significantly to shaping the identity of the Global South, emphasizing unity, resistance to colonial legacies, and the pursuit of a more equitable international order (Statecraft, 2023).

The Global South remains decentralized and evolves in response to shifts in global power dynamics. It critiques the dominance of Western institutions such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank, which are often perceived as carrying colonial-era biases (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect [GCR2P], 2023; Statecraft, 2023). The legacy of colonialism has affected not only political boundaries but also global power structures, cultural hierarchies, and economic systems.

Historically, European colonization—particularly by Britain—was driven by a desire to control resources, labor, and land. Colonies were exploited for profit through systems of forced labor, slavery, and violence (Statecraft, 2023). Two primary forms of colonialism emerged: settler colonialism, which displaced indigenous populations (e.g., in Australia and the United States), and extractive colonialism, which exploited native labor and

resources (e.g., in India). Both forms were violent and deeply altered local social structures. Tools of domination included the transatlantic slave trade, indentured labor schemes, and the systemic exclusion of native populations (Acharya, 2021; Statecraft, 2023). Inequalities in race and economic status persisted long after formal decolonization.

In response, the Global South continues to advocate for the decolonization of knowledge, ethics, and global policy, as well as for greater cultural recognition and international equity (Statecraft, 2023; GCR2P, 2023).

Impacts of Colonialism on the Global South

Colonialism disrupted indigenous political structures by replacing or co-opting local elites through either direct French governance or indirect British rule. Direct rule imposed centralized control, whereas indirect rule often preserved traditional hierarchies, fostering rent-seeking behaviors and weakening state capacity beyond urban centers (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Colonial powers also used ethnic, religious, and linguistic divisions as tools of control, often privileging certain groups in governance or the economy, thus exacerbating social inequalities (Statecraft, 2023).

Colonial legacies persist in the institutional frameworks that shape modern economic development. While some former colonies, such as those in North America, developed inclusive institutions under British rule, others—particularly in Africa and Latin America—were left with extractive systems that contributed to ongoing poverty and inequality (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). In metropolises like Britain and Spain, colonialism occasionally spurred economic development, but it simultaneously disrupted native societies and hindered long-term growth in the colonies.

Postcolonial Perspectives in International Relations (IR)

Postcolonialism critically examines the enduring political, cultural, and economic impacts of colonialism. Emerging in the 1970s, it challenges Eurocentric paradigms and exposes the inequities embedded in international power structures (Acharya, 2021). Rather than presenting a unified theory, postcolonialism interrogates mainstream international relations (IR) narratives. Thinkers

such as Kwame Nkrumah, Frantz Fanon, and Edward Said emphasized the psychological trauma, cultural subjugation, and economic dependency left in the wake of colonization (Grovoqui, 2011; Statecraft, 2023).

The Bandung Conference in 1955 marked a political turning point for the postcolonial world. However, despite formal independence, many states in the Global South continue to face structural forms of “imperialism without colonies” (Acharya, 2021). Although postcolonial thought has influenced numerous academic disciplines, its post-positivist orientation limits its adoption within mainstream IR scholarship.

Frantz Fanon’s Contribution to Postcolonial Thought

Frantz Fanon, a pioneering figure in postcolonial studies, critically explored the psychological and sociopolitical effects of colonialism. Born in 1925 in the French Antilles, Fanon’s experiences of racial discrimination in France and his involvement in the Algerian liberation movement shaped his revolutionary thought. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, and *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon examined how colonialism dehumanized the colonized and shattered their sense of identity (Fanon, 1952; 1961).

Fanon employed his background in psychiatry to argue that colonialism caused Black individuals to internalize inferiority, leading to deep psychological alienation. He critiqued the use of language and culture as colonial instruments of domination, as well as the racial hierarchies that underpin imperial ideologies. Fanon famously argued that Europe’s wealth was built on the exploitation of colonized populations. His concept of a “photogenic identity” captures the intergenerational trauma experienced by colonized peoples (Grovoqui, 2011).

The Global South in International Relations (IR)

Because traditional IR theories are largely Western-centric, recent scholarship has emphasized the need to include non-Western perspectives. Amitav Acharya’s Global IR (GIR) framework advocates for diversity, inclusivity, and sensitivity to regional particularities in shaping global dynamics (Acharya, 2021). Regionalism, within this framework, is not merely a product of global markets but is also rooted

in distinct historical, political, and cultural experiences.

According to scholars such as Diana Tussie, states use regional platforms to assert their diplomatic, economic, and strategic capacities (Tussie, 2003). These regional processes—especially in the Global South—generate alternative theoretical contributions, challenging binary categorizations in traditional IR. Recognizing regional agencies fosters a more nuanced and contextually grounded understanding of global politics (Acharya, 2021).

Chapter Two:

Non-Western IR Theory

It is well known that Martin Wight raised the question of why we do not have an international theory. Nearly forty years ago, he was a pioneer in this area. According to Wight, the field of international theory was poorly structured, not organized, and rarely meaningful to most people. The assertion was made that because the balance of power concept was so strong, the development of a single IR theory was suppressed by it. But this perspective greatly narrows how complicated and in-depth IR can be.

Discussing IR only in terms of the balance of power gives too limited a picture of this discipline. Several theoretical views, for example, realism, liberalism, constructivism, feminism, and post-colonialism, provide fresh insights into conflict, cooperation, standards, identity, and international organizations. Also, IR naturally draws from ideas in economics, sociology, anthropology, political science, history, and philosophy. The existence of multiple perspectives gives these fields greater theoretical value. Wight overlooks the fact that IR theory keeps changing as new global problems arise such as terrorism, climate change, globalization, and new technologies.

Because these debates in the field do not go away, it is difficult to claim that IR lacks theory. Even so, considering the range of theoretical ideas in IR, his observation appears simplistic, despite the key role of the balance of power. Even though a global state might bring about various benefits, some philosophical differences are visible in the opposition to it. Advocates believe that having an international government would support justice, teamwork, and well-being for every country.

Even so, issues over nationhood, the legitimacy of democratic systems, cultural diversity, and making the idea work raise doubts about it. Whereas international politics involves cycles and is unpredictable, centered on staying alive and increasing power, legal and political philosophy appears from the experiences of smaller communities and regular practices. In Wight's view, what appeared to be special cases in domestic politics were viewed as regular events in global political behavior. Sadly, the framework does not provide a good explanation for the absence of non-Western IR theories. Others believe global ideas should work towards benefits for humanity, rather than just national benefits.

The problem is not travel, it is rather the exclusion based on beliefs and ways of thinking that is responsible for a lack of non-Western IR theory. Because Western power has dominated understanding and research, alternative ideas have mostly disappeared. Unlike those of the West, the histories and political developments in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa are not the same. Despite being significant in IR, there is relatively little information about how Asia contributes to the field. The mainstream international relations debate often misses out on the Middle East and Africa, despite their long and interesting political traditions.

The reason for this is West-centric bias and the added effort it requires to cover their viewpoints, not because of any lack of political thought about where they come from. The fairness and applicability of IR theory are never far from people's discussion (Acharya, 2014; Tickner, 2003). Although geography claims to be impartial, most contributions still show Western interests (Cox, 1981). Coxians argue that theory is developed to meet the needs of someone for a specific purpose (Cox, 1981). While liberalism supports economic freedom based on capitalist beliefs, realism and the English School urge valuing state independence and order which have always been important in Western countries (Dunne, Kurki, & Smith, 2016). The ways these structures are described as the same for all, actually justify Western power. Asian countries have started to build IR theories that fit their own unique circumstances (Acharya, 2014).

In order to be seen differently from the Western theory of IR, China is promoting a Chinese school that is based on Tianxia Marxism, Confucian ideals,

and traditions from tributary systems (Zhao, 2015). Just like China, Japan goes against classical realist beliefs by seeking respect as a peaceful civilian nation, not as an old-style military leader (Yoshihara & Holmes, 2010). It also does not agree with theories from the West and is not confident that regional leaders can preserve order (Kim, 2017). Despite similarities with realist ideas, South Korea and India are not sure exactly where they belong in the world (Acharya, 2014). These Asian countries change Western theories in part to make them work better for what they experience. Using theories from the West is necessary for these points of view, as it leads to inclusion and greater relevance through discussion, not conflict (Acharya, 2014).

Beyond the West

There are ongoing arguments about whether or not a non-Western IR theory is practical or needed. Because they disagree with the way constructivism, liberalism, and realism look at the world by only considering Western ideas, some people in IR decide to support non-Western positions instead. They are built on ideas that result from Europe's past, causing them to often misunderstand non-Western regions (Acharya, 2014). David Kang points out that Western IR theories are not a good fit for explaining Asian political and cultural processes (Kang, 2010). As Jeffrey Herbst points out, IR theory which is built using European cases usually misses the complexities of African and Asian political systems (Herbst, 2000).

Maintaining enthusiasm or "Chinese characteristics," continues to be a challenge. Among the suggestions are Confucian ethics, Marxist ideology, and old ideas like Tianxia (Zhao, 2015). Still, people from China and the West question if they are based enough on actual evidence and science. Xinning Song says that these approaches are ineffective and not grounded in science, as he learned during his education in the West (Song, 2018). Those in the Korean research community have questioned the importance of developing a theory only for Korean IR. It is alleged by some that stressing distinct cultures can inadvertently create a new type of intellectual monopoly (Kim, 2017).

For William Callahan, using Tianxia causes one to become uncertain about the difference between what is true and what someone wants to be true (Callahan, 2013). In his 2014 ISA presidential speech,

Amitav Acharya introduced Global IR as a way to overcome the West vs. Rest distinction. Acharya believes that IR needs to represent a wider range of people and perspectives. To add new perspectives, Global IR intends to strengthen Western IR with discussions and respect. Still, some argue that Acharya overlooks the systemic obstacles and conceptual problems faced by post-Western IR writings (Acharya, 2014).

African Contribution

Roland Bleiker contends that the dominance of American and British narratives in IR has reified certain interpretations of global politics, embedding them in our collective "common sense" (Bleiker, 2016). This naturalization of Western narratives, according to scholars like Niemann, discourages critical reflection and perpetuates epistemic injustice (Niemann, 2017). IR theory's marginalization of African thought is a case in point. African political traditions, diplomatic practices, and indigenous institutions have long engaged with principles relevant to IR such as collective security, diplomacy, and sovereignty.

Even so, these studies are frequently ignored since they do not align with the common practices in Western academic research. We can see in mainstream IR that African writers have not always been included and today their views are often overlooked as well. This absence is not a sign of a deficiency in African political thinking, but an outcome of bias in studying and recording ideas. Bringing African and other non-Western beliefs to IR could challenge the commonly accepted ideas of Western theories and help make the field more open to different contributors (Acharya, 2014).

The Asian Contribution

Asian countries' different interests and styles of foreign policy mean that an Asian school of IR is unlikely for now. Still, there are organizations like the Asian Political and International Studies Association and a few regional International Studies Association seminars. This Chinese approach has developed well by adding its own beliefs and thoughts such as Confucianism and Tianxia, as well as relationality, described by Yaqing Qin, who believes it helps Western IR theories better understand areas disregarded in Western ways of thinking (Zhao, 2015). However, to be globally

recognized, Chinese IR should examine more than events restricted to China and the region. Although Japan and India contribute to international relations scholarship, they do not have as many institutional efforts as China. Classical texts like the *Arthashastra* and *Mahabharata* are being used more and more in Indian IR to give the field a fresh understanding of cooperation, morality, and power. All things considered, Asian IR theories take a place between the traditional European and rising new theoretical approaches. The various approaches support the claim Buzan makes that each IR theory is only valid in specific contexts (Buzan, 2014).

Chapter Three:

Decolonizing International Relations

Provides a critical rethinking of mainstream international relations theory by questioning its prevalent Western-centric binary logic which largely uses oppositional terms to frame international relations such as tradition versus modernity inside versus outside and self-versus other. This dichotomous framing ignores the relational interdependence that underlies many of today's problems such as pandemics climate change and threats to global security and instead reduces complex interconnected global dynamics to adversarial and isolated interactions between states.

Through the marginalization of non-Western knowledge and the reinforcement of a Eurocentric ahistorical worldview that elevates Western epistemologies as universal and progressive while reducing Indigenous and Global South perspectives to study objects rather than active knowledge producers, the chapter demonstrates how these binary oppositions have created a theoretical crisis within IR. Because colonial knowledge systems were imposed over indigenous ones an enduring societal void known as the colonial wound is maintained by this epistemic marginalization.

The chapter builds on this criticism by examining the coloniality of power and tracing the origins of the contemporary international system back to the Peace of Westphalia which established the nation-state and hierarchical racial and civilizational orders as well as European colonial expansion. Drawing on important decolonial scholars like Walter D. Mignolo who advocates for epistemic disobedience by rejecting universalizing Western ways of knowing Aníbal Quijano reveals

how modernity is inextricably linked to the ongoing legacies of colonialism including racial hierarchy and epistemic exclusion and Inayatullah and Blaney who show how fundamental IR concepts like sovereignty are historically contingent and profoundly shaped by colonial encounters the chapter promotes a pluralistic epistemic approach.

This method which incorporates ideas like worldism and trans-subjective interactions promotes accepting different points of view and acknowledging that world politics is a place where many overlapping worlds exist. Challenges to the disciplinary House of IR that restricts intellectual diversity and promotes greater inclusivity to reconsider underlying presumptions are also necessary for decolonizing IR. Lastly as highlighted by academics such as Tetreault, Lipschutz Nayak, and Selbin the chapter makes the case for eschewing state-centric and binary frameworks by emphasizing the human experience of cultural transformation and grassroots political communities. Their work aims to relativize and provincialize IR by highlighting its Eurocentric biases and facilitating alternative political imaginaries that are based on indigenous and marginalized viewpoints.

As a result, decolonial IR aspires to be a vibrant pluralistic inclusive field that recognizes the contributions of Afro-descendant and indigenous communities as equal collaborators in the creation of knowledge worldwide. A relational inclusive IR that can more effectively address the intertwined realities of the Global North and South is advocated in the chapter's conclusion which also offers practical implications of this epistemic shift for policy scholarship and international cooperation.

The Future of IR Studies: Ecology of Knowledge

International Relations (IR) epistemic norms and dominant power structures are challenged by the ecology of knowledge which highlights the importance of taking colonial legacies into account when producing knowledge (De Sousa Santos, 2014). It challenges the dominant scientific monoculture and promotes non-relativistic discourse between various knowledge systems, particularly those that have been disenfranchised by modernity and neoliberalism (De Sousa Santos, 2014; Tickner, 2014). This method, which acknowledges that knowledge is situated and context-dependent, advocates for

epistemic justice that encompasses alternative epistemologies in addition to equal access to scientific knowledge (Jackson, 2019). The coexistence of several legitimate knowledge forms is highlighted by De Sousa Santos's concept of knowledge ecosystems, which promotes inclusive discourse and challenges the universalist presumptions of contemporary science (De Sousa Santos, 2014). In addition, this framework challenges neoliberal ideas of time and value by highlighting the importance of alternative productive modes and indigenous knowledge systems in a pluralistic knowledge environment (De Sousa Santos, 2014).

Impact of Decolonization on Practice

The main topic of discussion in IR is whether to completely destroy the field or reform it by incorporating different bits of knowledge. Decolonizing IR by broadening its intellectual horizons is preferred by academics like Shilliam over its abolition (Shilliam, 2018). Pakistan's and Romania's cross-border contributions demonstrate the field's growing inclusivity and interdisciplinarity in spite of persistent difficulties with conceptual clarity (Jackson, 2019). Jackson's methodological pluralism emphasizes the need for ongoing epistemological translation as well as the moral conundrum of pursuing consensus without erasing diversity (Jackson, 2019). Tickner and other feminist critics highlight the obstacles women encounter in redefining IR epistemologies and warn against jargon that divides the discipline (Tickner, 2014). New approaches, in spite of skepticism, point to a democratization of IR that challenges long-standing hierarchies and structural biases (Jackson, 2019; Tickner, 2014). The ongoing decolonial project in IR is still controversial, raising questions about whether the theory can truly embrace global epistemic diversity or if it unintentionally perpetuates Western dominance (Shilliam, 2018; Jackson, 2019).

Chapter Four:

Dominance of Western-Centric Perspectives in International Relations

It discusses how Western-centric viewpoints continue to dominate international relations theory (IRT) in spite of the diversity of states around the world and the ascent of Asian regions in the global arena (Acharya, 2014; Kang, 2010). The statement

underscores the general discontent among Asian states and scholars who contend that Western IRT frameworks frequently fall short of capturing the distinct political, cultural, and historical realities of Asia and other non-Western regions (Herbst, 2009; Callahan, 2012). Despite China's growing engagement with Western IR concepts in the age of globalization, its influence on reshaping Asian or global IRT is still minimal and more noticeable on a global than regional scale (Qin, 2016; Bleiker, 2018).

The linguistic dominance of English in institutions and infrastructure, as well as the absence of formal theorization despite abundant cultural and intellectual resources ingrained in local traditions, are among the main obstacles identified in the chapter that hinder the development of indigenous or non-Western IR theories (Song, 2014; Shilliam, 2018). It looks at non-Western IR intellectual underpinnings like Taiwan's Confucian Tianxia concept which emphasizes harmony and hierarchical order, Japan's *staatslehre* and the Kyoto School, India's classical and anti-colonial thinkers such as Kautilya and Gandhi, who integrate spiritual nationalism, and Southeast Asia's precolonial and nationalist thought which is still understudied but hopeful (Callahan, 2012; Buzan, 2011; Acharya, 2014).

The paper also highlights the difficulties non-Western IR theory encounters in balancing the conflict between reclaiming indigenous narratives and opposing Western universalism, pointing out that different national schools of IR thought in China, the Islamic world, and Latin America are connected to political identity and objectives (Acharya, 2014; Shilliam, 2018). Due to its emphasis on cultural norms that are in line with non-Western viewpoints, constructivism shows promise as a paradigm (Acharya, 2014). Crucially, the chapter warns against the oversimplified dichotomies of Western versus non-Western IR, promoting pluralistic and context-sensitive methods that critically engage Western theory rather than merely reject it (Acharya, 2014; Kang, 2010). However, the possibility that non-Western IRT will remain marginalized or fragmented persists in the absence of strong institutional support and scholarly discourse (Shilliam, 2018; Jackson, 2019).

Conclusion

To understand world politics better, we should work to decolonize how knowledge is produced in

international relations. Therefore, we need to openly examine the Eurocentric views and previously held power structures that have ruled over the field. Having scholars from marginalized groups, those from outside the West and indigenous peoples analyze philosophy exposes the flaws in traditional Western theory.

Ubuntu is a concept that supports community ahead of personal needs, so we need to reconsider key notions such as the security of the state, national needs, and rationality. Often, these models demonstrate how Western cultures have influenced them. It also persuades us to rethink the way time and power are organized so that marginalized regions are set aside and Western development is presented as the one to follow. Learning about pluriversality makes it possible for there to be

different ways to live and learn, instead of just one linear path.

Eventually, breaking away from colonial thinking in international relations promotes reflection so that new systems are built around tolerance, diversity, and acceptance of all. As a result of this effort, global justice will be greatly affected by changes in international politics and by supporting self-determination and communal authority instead of Western universalism.

A decolonial position encourages open, dialogic politics that values knowledge from those who are not in positions of power and commits to their collective and successful emancipation. The growth of regional theories has been faster thanks to the rise of China. Because China's economy and society have transformed, Chinese scholar Qin Yaqing believes an IR theory with Chinese roots is needed.

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