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Article

How and How Not to Develop IR Theory: Lessons from Core and Periphery

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Abstract

This article starts from the fact that there is a substantial gap in terms of International Relations (IR) theory production between the West and the rest. Its aim is to investigate how that gap might be closed, and for this purpose, the article takes a broad view of what counts as theory. Its method is comparative history: to observe how IR theory has developed not just in the West, which is well-studied, but also in the periphery, which is not. The idea is to identify what material conditions and motivations in both locations were associated with the emergence of theoretical thinking about IR, and how and why theoretical differentiations emerged, particularly within the West. It also looks at conditions and circumstances that seem to work against the successful production of IR theory. The article concludes with a brief consideration of IR theory development in China on the basis of the lessons drawn from the history of IR theory development.

Introduction

As Tickner and Wæver observe, there is a division of labor in International Relations (IR) in which the USA, the rest of the Anglosphere, and a few places in Europe do theory, and the rest mostly do not.[1] The key question motivating this article is how to close this IR theory gap between the West and the rest.[2] I approach

1 Arlene B. Tickner and Ole Wæver, 'Conclusion: Worlding Where the West Once Was' in Arlene B. Tickner and Ole Wæver, eds. *International Relations Scholarship around the World* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), p. 335.

2 A considerable amount of the supporting research for this paper is drawn from Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations: Origins and Evolution of IR at Its Centenary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

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this question by asking what kind of motives, sources, and conditions have supported the emergence of IR theory in those places where it has arisen successfully. I will, up to a point, challenge the Tickner/Wæver observation by showing that IR theory has arisen in the periphery and the core, although I do not challenge the general point that Western IR theory remains heavily dominant in the discipline of IR as a whole. I will also look at the conditions that seem to work against the generation of IR theory. The utility of this approach rests on the assumption that the things that have shaped (or not) a certain kind of behavior in one place and time will be relevant to the production (or not) of that behavior in other places and times.

The article starts by looking briefly at what counts as IR theory. It then looks at the case of IR theory in the West, investigating what factors underpin the particular success of the West in generating IR theory. The next section repeats this exercise for the periphery, and the one after that 'Obstacles to IR Theory Development' looks at some ideas about what blocks the development of IR theory. The conclusions look at China in the light of these insights.

What Counts as IR Theory?

For the purposes of this exercise, I will take a rather broad view of what counts as IR theory following Acharya and Buzan's argument that:

> Theory is therefore about simplifying reality. It starts from the supposition that in some quite fundamental sense, each event is *not* unique, but can be clustered together with others that share some important similarities.[3]

This view starts from taxonomy as the foundation for theory and opens up space not only for theory in an academic sense but also for big framing ideas generated by practitioners, public intellectuals, and others outside of academia. What I am trying to capture in this nonacademic sphere is the practice of thinking about IR in big and general ways. One example is Mao's 'Three Worlds Theory'.[4] Another is Nehru's idea of nonalignment. A third is the ideas about nonintervention that came out of Latin American diplomatic practice during the 19th and 20th centuries. A fourth is the advocacy for free trade by 19th-century activists such as Cobden and Bright.

Academics, of course, argue endlessly among themselves about what counts as 'theory,' even within the academic domain. On this narrower question, I will also follow Acharya and Buzan who pointed to the:

3 Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and beyond Asia* (London: Routledge, 2010) p. 4.

4 John W. Garver, *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) pp. 327–28. Mao's typology of three worlds was different from the standard one, which had the Western developed countries as the first world, the socialist bloc as the second world, and the underdeveloped states as the third world. Mao's scheme agreed with this for the third world but had the second world as being the developed states other than the two superpowers.

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> dichotomy between the hard positivist understanding of theory which dominates in the US, and the softer reflectivist understandings of theory found more widely in Europe.[5] Many Europeans use the term theory for anything that organizes a field systematically, structures questions, and establishes a coherent and rigorous set of interrelated concepts and categories. The dominant American tradition, however, more usually demands that theory be defined in positivist terms: that it defines terms in operational form, and then sets out and explains the relations between causes and effects. This type of theory should contain—or be able to generate—testable hypotheses of a causal nature. These differences are captured in Hollis and Smith's widely used distinction between *understanding* and *explanation*.[6] They have epistemological and ontological roots that transcend the crude Europe–US divide, and it is, of course the case that advocates of the "European" position can be found in the US, and of the "American" position in Europe. In both of these forms, theory is about abstracting away from the facts of day-to-day events in an attempt to find patterns and group events together into sets and classes of things.[7]

Like Acharya and Buzan, I count both the harder and softer approaches as theory. I also include normative theory, by which I mean philosophical advocacy for certain structures or practices on the grounds that they are good in themselves, as for example, those who argue in favor of human rights, democracy, theocracy, or communism.[8] Taking a narrow view of what counts as theory would largely defeat the purpose of the enterprise. As Acharya and Buzan show, political leaders and public intellectuals played a very substantial role in the emergence of modern thinking about IR during the 19th and 20th centuries.[9] Even in the West, IR did not become a predominantly academic, formally theoretical discipline until after 1945. In the periphery, political leaders and public intellectuals remained prominent for longer, because universities there were too poorly resourced to support theoretical work. Those who take narrower views of what counts as theory can edit the discussion that follows to suit themselves.

This broader approach bridges across the realms of academics and practitioners as producers of IR 'theory', a view that is not uncommon in thinking about IR theory. Stanley Hoffmann, invoking Raymond Aron, likens IR theories to those of 'undetermined behavior' that 'can do little more than define basic concepts, analyze basic configurations, sketch out permanent features of a constant logic of behavior, in other words make the field intelligible'. He also notes that: '... a concern for America's conduct in the world blended with a study of international relations... To study United States foreign policy was to study the international system.

5 Ole Wæver, 'The Sociology of A Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations', *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (1998), pp. 687–727.

6 Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

7 Acharya and Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory*, pp. 3–4.

8 I am aware that all supposedly objective theory is in some important sense normatively grounded. During the Cold War, Peace Researchers used to respond to accusations from Strategists that they were normatively biased, by pointing out that deterrence theory also rested on a set of preferred values.

9 Acharya and Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations*.

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To study the international system could not fail to bring one back to the role of United States'.[10] E. H. Carr noted that: 'The realist regards political theory as a sort of codification of political practice.'[11] For Morgenthau, in the study of international politics, one cannot 'divorce knowledge from action and … pursue knowledge for its own sake'.[12] Every policymaker, whether they admit to it or not, has a mental template within which they think and operate in the realm of policy. As Walt argues, 'there is an inescapable link between the abstract world of theory and the real world of policy'… . 'Even policymakers who are contemptuous of "theory" must rely on their own (often unstated) ideas about how the world works', to 'make sense of the blizzard of information that bombards us daily'.[13] Theory often follows practice, that is, real-world developments. Hence, ideas or worldviews of political leaders, whether in the West or the rest, ought to count as thinking about IR, or even as IR theory if they are powerful, impactful, systematic, and/or sufficiently generalized or amenable to generalization.

With this understanding in mind of what counts as IR theory, what can be said about the factors that underpin the relative success of the West in this endeavor?

The Western Model

Europe has a long history of thinking about IR in a broadly theoretical way.[14] Yet, as Ashworth notes: 'While the question of how to deal with strangers from other communities has been a constant throughout human history, it is only in recent centuries that the question of "foreign relations" (and especially imperialism and war) have become a matter of urgency for all sectors of society throughout the world.'[15] The modern international system and society, with its familiar cast of characters [national-states, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and global civil society], and its social institutions (nationalism, the market, positive international law, the balance of power, and great power management) mostly came into being during the 19th century.[16] During the whole run of modern IR, Britain and then the USA were the dominant powers, and the countries of the

10 Stanley Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science: International Relations', *Dædalus,* Vol. 106, No. 3 (1977), pp. 52, 10.

11 E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 12.

12 Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1949), p. 7.

13 Stephen M. Walt, 'International Relations: One World, Many Theories', *Foreign Policy*, No. 110 (1998), p. 29.

14 Lucian M. Ashworth, *A History of International Thought: From the Origins of the Modern State to Academic International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2014); Edward Keene, International Political Thought (Cambridge: Polity, 2005); Torbjørn Knutsen, *A History of International Relations Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016).

15 Ashworth, *A History of International Thought*, loc. 7.

16 Barry Buzan and George Lawson, *The Global Transformation: History, Modernity and the Making of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

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Anglosphere have been particularly prominent in both generating IR theory and promoting IR as an academic discipline.[17] One can pursue two lines of enquiry about this success: first, what was it about this group of countries that made them a fruitful source of IR theorizing; and second, what were the sources on which they drew to create IR theory? A third line of enquiry is about the outcome: was there differentiation within the Anglosphere, and the West more broadly, in the types of IR theory developed, and if so, how and why?

The Nature of the Countries

In terms of the nature of the countries, there are a number of fairly obvious points to be made. Perhaps, the most obvious is that Britain was the dominant world power during the 19th century, and the USA was the dominant world power for most of the 20th century and arguably still. A case could be made that they are the only two examples of full-spectrum superpowers in the sense of being so powerful that the world was their region.[18] They fought as allies in three world wars (First, Second and Cold) and won them all. Indeed, as Katzenstein observes, the Anglosphere won all the major wars since the 18th century.[19] Both countries had economic interests and connections on a global scale and were the hubs of extensive global networks of many kinds. This position and role, it might be assumed, gave them both access to information on a global scale and a powerful interest in thinking about the nature of the global order. The apparent anomaly of the smaller Anglosphere countries (Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand) also having a strong interest in IR theory can be explained away by their cultural and academic closeness to, and interaction with, the two bigger powers. This explanation might also cover the Scandinavian countries, also small, whose fruitful generation of IR theory (especially in Peace Research and Security Studies) might likewise reflect their close links with the USA and Britain.[20] Within the Anglosphere big two, this general picture was not disturbed by factors that might have pointed away from developing an interest in IR. America's

17 Wayne S. Cox and Kim Richard Nossal, 'The "Crimson World": The Anglo Core, the Post-Imperial Non-core, and the Hegemony of American IR', in Arlene B. Tickner and Ole Wæver, eds., *International Relations Scholarship Around the World* (Oxford: Routledge, 2009), pp. 287–307; Ole Wæver and Arlene B. Tickner, 'Introduction: Geocultural Epistemologies', in Tickner and Wæver, eds., *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, pp. 1–31.

18 Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 222, makes the case for the British Empire being a superpower during the 19th century. The Soviet Union was a superpower in military and ideological terms but never measured up economically, even being surpassed by Japan during the 1980s.

19 Peter J. Katzenstein, 'The West as Anglo-America', in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *Anglo-America and its Discontents: Civilizational Identities beyond West and East* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), loc. 258.

20 On the IR success of the Scandinavian countries, see Jörg Friedrichs and Ole Wæver, 'Western Europe: Structure and Strategy at the National and Regional Levels', in Tickner and Wæver, eds., *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, pp. 265–67, 269–71.

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isolationism didn't dampen its interest in thinking about IR, which was strong as far back as the 19th century, and developed robustly during the US isolationism of the 1920s and 1930s. The same might be said for Britain, where academic IR expanded strongly from the 1950s onward despite Britain's retreat from empire.

The second obvious thing to be said about Britain and the USA (and the smaller Anglosphere countries and the Scandinavians) is that they are wealthy liberal democracies, with long traditions of open public debate about social, economic, scientific, and political matters. They all support high-quality universities that are well-resourced and have strong traditions encouraging independent research. In part, because of the spectacular early successes of theoretical developments in the natural sciences, theoretical work has a high standing in academic life. These universities were, thus, part of higher-education systems that provided time, funding, and career incentives for theoretical work. Their governments and societies supported independent academic publishing in the form of both books and specialized journals that encouraged the circulation and interaction of theoretical ideas. They also allowed independent academic organizations such as the US-based International Studies Association (ISA), the British International Studies Association (BISA), the Nordic International Studies Association (NISA), and the European International Studies Association (EISA). In the decades after the Second World War, these academic associations formed and evolved in response to the ever-changing play of ideas and debates and themselves became vehicles for promoting the development of theory. Particularly in the USA, private philanthropic foundations such as those set up by Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Ford played a significant role in funding IR both in the USA and elsewhere.[21] These foundations, and the US government, also encouraged what was anyway the long-standing practical tradition in American social science in which theory should serve the public purpose.[22]

The Sources of IR Theory

If the motivation and research capacity provide a favorable environment for the growth of IR theory, what are the sources from which that theory has been drawn? Perhaps, the most obvious general answer in the case of contemporary, mainstream Western IR theory is that it has been extensively rooted in Western history and Western political theory. It might almost be said that mainstream Western IR theory is not much more than an abstraction of Western history interwoven with Western political theory. Simplifying somewhat, realism is an abstraction from 18th-century European balance of power behavior combined with 16th and 17th

21 Tickner and Wæver, 'Introduction', p. 232; Deniz Kuru, 'Who F(o)unded IR: American Philanthropists and the Discipline of International Relations in Europe', *International Relations*, Vol. 31, No.1 (2017), pp. 42–67.

22 Ekkehart Krippendorff, 'The Dominance of American Approaches in International Relations', in Hugh C. Dyer and Leon Mangasarian, eds., *The Study of International Relations: The State of the Art* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), p. 33; Kuru, 'Who F(o)unded IR', pp. 50–53.

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centuries and, indeed, ancient Greek, political theory. Liberalism is an abstraction from 19th- and 20th-century Western IGOs and theories of political economy. Marxism is an abstraction from another branch of 19th- and 20th-century European theory of political economy and historical sociology. The English School is an abstraction from 19th-century European diplomatic behavior and a long European tradition of legal theory resting on the assumption that all law, including international law, necessarily presupposes the existence of a society. Constructivism is not so obviously abstracted from Western practice but is drawn from Western philosophy of knowledge. Part of the trick of Western IR theory has been to make and sustain the Eurocentric assumption that Western history and Western political theory are world history and world political theory. So long as the West remained globally dominant, that myth was fairly easy to maintain. But, as the nonWest now comes to terms with modernity, and increasingly has the wealth, power, and cultural confidence to assert itself, this myth is beginning to crack.

Within this generalization, a more specific pathway to theory development has been in responding to the pressures and incentives thrown up by current events. When looked at in more detail, a lot of specific developments in IR theory seem to result from the conjunction of the following factors:

- Rich and powerful countries possessing global interests and global knowledge and awareness and needing knowledge that will help them with their foreign policies;
- Educational and public spheres within those countries that encourage and enable open debate, value 'scientific' approaches, and reward those who contribute to both public and academic understanding of contemporary issues and problems;
- The influence on public and academic thinkers of the general idea sets prevalent at the time; and
- A succession of stimuli, whether in the form of new developments, information, and experiences or of specific crises, which provide either challenges or opportunities to the states and societies.

There are many examples of this conjuncture at work. An early example was the rise to prominence during the 19th century of 'scientific' racism as a general framing for thinking about IR.[23] Simply put, 'scientific' racism came about as the result of a conjuncture between, on one hand, the influential background knowledge of Darwin's thinking about survival of the fittest, and on the other, the many encounters between Europeans and tribal peoples in circumstances that made the Europeans feel distinctly superior. Racism was a politically attractive theory for the core powers, because it both legitimated imperialism and served to strengthen national unity in the face of the divisive class tensions of rising industrialism. As Bell notes: 'for the opening few decades of the [20th] century, race was widely and explicitly considered a fundamental ontological unit of politics, perhaps the most fundamental unit of all'.[24] 'Scientific' racism allowed the

23 Buzan and Lawson, *The Global Transformation*, pp. 118–25.

24 Duncan Bell, 'Race and International Relations: Introduction', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2013), p. 1.

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construction of hierarchical racial typologies with lighter skins on the top and darker ones on the bottom. This theory held sway in the practice of IR until its appalling culmination in the Nazi death camps.[25] After 1945, it became politically and socially unacceptable and was pushed to the margins by theories of human equality and human rights.

A more focused example of theory development triggered by particular events is the surge of interest in IGOs that accompanied the formation of the League of Nations in 1919. There had, of course, been some academic thinking about IGOs during the late 19th century in response to the various technical bodies such as the Universal Postal Union and the International Telecommunications Union that were set up from the 1870s onward. But, this interest expanded rapidly during and after the First World War, when the war-weariness of both governments and peoples in the Anglosphere fed hopes that a general global forum like the League of Nations might be able to prevent the recurrence of arms racing and world war. Again, there was an interesting intellectual puzzle, unfolding new developments and a strong link to public policy. This constituted the so-called 'idealist' or 'utopian' phase in the early development of IR as a discipline. Something similar happened during the 1990s, when liberal theories such as democratic peace, hegemonic stability, and institutionalism enjoyed a decade-long run of popularity in the benign international climate created for the Anglosphere by the ending of the Cold War.

A particularly dramatic contemporary example of current events acting as a source for IR theory is the development of deterrence theory and Peace Research after 1945. Both deterrence theory and Peace Research can be seen as responses to the advent of nuclear weapons as a new factor in IR, a development that very quickly and very obviously overthrew existing orthodoxies about the practice and utility of war. Both deterrence theory and Peace Research generated very substantial literatures.[26] Deterrence theory was essentially about how to use and to manage nuclear weapons within the traditional framing of interstate relations and defence policy in which war was a periodic occurrence that had to be prepared for. The main problem was how to use one's own nuclear deployments to deal with the problem of nuclear weapons in the hands of others. Deterrence theorists quickly recognized that once nuclear weapons had spread beyond the USA, all-out war with nuclear weapons would be pointless, because the risk that both sides would be massively damaged was too high.

What was the point of traditional warfighting if the end result made it impossible to distinguish victory from defeat? Deterrence theory, therefore,

25 Somewhat less so in IR although, see e.g. Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1923); Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).

26 For a survey and overview of the literatures on deterrence and Peace Research, see Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 66–100, 118–35.

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concentrated on thinking through how to deploy nuclear weapons in such a way as to enhance national security while trying to keep to a minimum the chance that nuclear war would occur. Unlike traditional Western strategic thinking, which was mostly by military men (e.g. Jomini, Clausewitz, Mahan, Liddle-Hart, Fuller, and Douhet)[27], and mostly about how to win wars, deterrence strategy was mainly about avoiding all out war.[28] This eventually produced a highly elaborate theoretical literature taking into account everything from technology, through organizational behavior, to individual psychology. An interesting feature of deterrence theory in the West is that it was largely done by civilians, breaking the long-standing grip of the military on strategic thinking. The rationale for this was that nuclear weapons were so new and so transformational that the military could claim no relevant experience or wisdom. That break did not happen in the more rigid intellectual climate of the Soviet Union, where the military dominated strategic thinking, taking a rather operational view of nuclear weapons. Deterrence theory was driven not only just by the intrinsic interest of the puzzle for academics but also by rapid developments in weapons technology that changed the parameters of the puzzle and by intense interaction with government and military policy thinking on the deployment and possible use of nuclear weapons.

Peace Research started from the view that the problem was more nuclear weapons themselves, rather than who possessed them. The main focus was, therefore, on getting rid of nuclear weapons (disarmament), limiting their numbers and deployments in various ways (arms control), and working out alternative forms of defence that did not require nuclear weapons and would not promote security dilemma responses in others (nonoffensive or nonprovocative defence). Although these theoretical strands were mostly on opposite sides of the normative fence, there was some technical and normative overlap between them on arms control and war prevention. The drivers of academically interesting puzzles—continuous changes rendered by new technologies and intense interaction with public policy—were the same for Peace Research as for deterrence theory. Both Peace Research and deterrence theory were highly practical bodies of theory, closely engaged with the policy debates and problems of the day. It is, perhaps, no accident that deterrence theory was strongest in countries possessing nuclear weapons (the USA, UK), and Peace Research was strongest in nonnuclear weapon states on the frontiers of the Cold War (Scandinavia, Germany, and Japan).

There are many other examples of IR theory coming out of the same conjuncture with current events. One is the development of theories of regional integration around the specific case of the European Economic Community/European Union. Another is the development of counterinsurgency theory as a response to

27 There were also some notable civilian strategic thinkers, such as Norman Angell and Ivan Bloch, who argued even before the First World War that war was becoming irrational.

28 There may be interesting parallels here with the strategic thinking of Sun Tze. Deterrence theory was mainly about preventing a potentially world-destroying superpower war, but there was a strand within it that, perhaps, approximated Sun Tze's idea that winning without fighting was more sensible and efficient than winning by fighting.

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Guerrilla war during the 1970s. Yet, another is the rediscovery of international political economy during the 1970s in response to the oil crisis.[29] It might even be argued that the rise of constructivism to high fashion in IR theory during the 1990s had something to do with the emergence post-Cold War of fierce identity politics in the Balkans and elsewhere that could not be explained by materialist theories, either realist or liberal.

It is tempting to propose that, sometimes, the sources of IR theory and, more certainly, what determines how fashionable and popular they are rest on their fit with current events. It is easy to make the case that realism gathered strength both in the 1930s, and again from the later 1940s, because it fitted with an international environment defined in terms of friends and enemies, with a high risk of war. One has, however, to proceed with caution before making such generalizations. Decolonization, for example, was a major event in global international society stretching from the mid-1940s to the late-1970s[30] and arguably more important than the Cold War. Yet, it made hardly any impact on IR thinking in the core. Similarly, one should not discount the role of creative individuals. It is not clear that the invention of securitization theory by Ole Wæver during the mid-1990s related to events.[31] In principle, the theoretical idea for understanding threats in that way might have been invented at any time. The general influence of constructivism in IR at that particular time was no doubt supportive of this theory development as was the institutionally conducive environment of Danish academia.

A third source of IR theory has been 'borrowing' theories and methods from other disciplines that seem to offer insights into analytical problems or issues arising within IR. As a discipline, IR might well be more prone to this than other academic specialisms. IR academics are no less prone than in other disciplines to wall themselves off into specialist enclaves, each with its own jargon, concepts, conference panels, and often journals. But, IR is different from other disciplines in that it is not (except for those who think of IR strictly as 'international politics' and, therefore, a subfield of Political Science) a functionally defined subject area such as economics, law, sociology, or political science. Rather, it cuts across a lot of these disciplines, plus world history, defining itself more by the scale of what it looks at than by some specific form of social behavior. In this, IR is comparable to History, which does the same cutting across but in terms of time rather than scale.[32]

29 IPE was a natural part of IR during the interwar years but got dropped, especially in the USA, with the turn to realism and military/political security concerns during the Cold War. See Ashworth, *A History of International Thought*, pp. 253–54.

30 Jan C. Jansen and Jürgen Osterhammel, *Decolonization: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

31 Ole Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in Ronnie Lipschutz, ed., *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 46–86.

32 Mathias Albert and Barry Buzan, 'On the Subject Matter of International Relations', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 5 (2017), pp. 898–917.

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To the extent that IR is multidisciplinary, it is bound to be more of an importer from other disciplines.[33] It does not, like most other social sciences, have an identifiable core theory or method of its own to help define it, and its subject matter necessarily falls substantially within other disciplines. The general mechanism for importing seems to be entrepreneurial individuals whose own knowledge, interests, and research take them into other disciplines, from which they bring back and 'sell' ideas into the IR community. There are many possible examples of this mechanism, but the following randomly selected bunch will suffice to illustrate the point:

- Karl W. Deutsch: systems analysis and cybernetics;[34]
- Graham Allison: organization theory;[35]
- Robert Jervis: psychology;[36]
- Kenneth Waltz: sociology;[37]
- Robert Gilpin—and Susan Strange—economics;[38]
- Ole Wæver: language theory;[39]
- Mathias Albert: Luhmannian Sociology.[40]

IR has similarly imported methodology, whether it be quantitative (mathematics) or poststructuralist (philosophy), and the discipline is permanently open to waves of fashion from philosophy of knowledge.[41]

Theoretical Differentiations

Looking at Western IR theory in terms of outcome, it is clear that not only there is some homogeneity but also a lot of differentiation. There are certainly commonalities that work broadly across nearly all of Western IR. These include the widespread and ongoing forgetting of racism and colonialism and the three-decades forgetting of earlier IR thinking about geopolitics, international political

33 But, IR has a trade deficit, having failed to export much to other disciplines. See Barry Buzan and Richard Little, 'Why International Relations Has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to do about It', *Millennium*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2001), pp. 19–39.

34 Karl W. Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government: Models of Political Communication and Control* (New York: Free Press, 1966).

35 Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuba Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971).

36 Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

37 Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

38 Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Susan Strange, *States and Markets* (London: Pinter, 1988).

39 Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization'.

40 Mathias Albert and Lena Hilkermeier, eds., *Observing International Relations: Niklas Luhmann and World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2004).

41 Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

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economy and feminism, after 1945.[42] There is some unity around the 'great debates' between Europe and America and quite a bit of commonality around the main 'paradigms' of realism and liberalism and, more recently, around constructivism. That said Japan took little interest in the 'great debates' and largely ploughed its own self-referential furrow in thinking about IR as did France.[43] Moreover, while constructivism is now found everywhere, realism is more prominent in the USA than in Europe and poststructuralism the other way around. This fits with the rather limited role of force in European foreign policy and its much greater one in US foreign policy. Likewise, there was generally more room for Marxist lines of thinking about IR in Europe and Japan than there was in the USA, especially during the depths of the Cold War.

Throughout the history of IR as a discipline, the USA has loomed large because of its size and wealth. Its foundations played significant roles in funding IR developments abroad, including, ironically, the English School. And after the Second World War, the US-based International Studies Association (ISA) became the biggest and most influential academic IR association. Friedrichs and Wæver go so far as to claim that the situation of IR thinking in the core since the Second World War was that: 'all Western European IR communities stand in a center–periphery relationship to the American mainstream'.[44] But this might go too far. While the USA was certainly dominant in many ways, including finance, institutionalization, journals, theory development, methodology, and training, it has never been intellectually dominant in IR. Europe and Japan have remained intellectually distinctive within Western IR throughout its history. There is something of a paradox here. American primacy substantially imposed its standards onto the rest of the discipline after 1945, yet, as Tickner and Wæver put it: 'The U.S. form of IR is simultaneously a single local instance of the field and an integral component of everyone else's universe.'[45] While the USA set the standard for IR globally both by its relative size and command of resources, it was also true that the rational choice and quantitative methods that increasingly dominated US IR were 'almost totally absent in the rest of the world': 'it is striking how the currently dominant forms of U.S. IR do *not* travel'.[46]

42 Robert Vitalis, 'Birth of a Discipline', in David Long and Brian Schmidt, eds., *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), pp. 159–81; Ashworth, *A History of International Thought*, pp. 253–54.

43 Friedrichs and Wæver, 'Western Europe', pp. 267–68; Takashi Inoguchi, 'Japan, Korea, and Taiwan: Are One Hundred Flowers about to Blossom?', in Tickner and Wæver, eds., *International Relations Scholarship around the World*, p. 90.

44 Friedrichs and Wæver, 'Western Europe', p. 262

45 Tickner and Wæver, 'Conclusion', p. 329.

46 Tickner and Wæver, 'Conclusion', pp. 5, 329; Daniel Maliniak, Susan Peterson, Ryand Powers and Michael J. Tierney, 'Is International Relations a Global Discipline? Hegemony, Insularity and Diversity in the Field', *Security Studies*, online first, 2018, https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2017.1416824.

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Some of this differentiation of IR theory within the core has to do with cultural and institutional issues. In the USA, for example, the mainstream development of IR theory has always been closely tied to Political Science, which has given American IR a strong orientation toward positivist epistemology and formal and quantitative methods.[47] The general absorption of IR by Political Science in the USA was both expressed and reinforced by Morgenthau's early and influential separation out of the political sphere as the discrete focus for the study of IR.[48] This was not the case in Britain, where IR grew more out of International Law, History, and Political Theory or in Europe, where there were stronger ties to Sociology. In Japan, there were no Political Science departments, but neither did IR develop with independent departments.[49] There was little interest in Europe or Japan in the 'scientific' approaches of the USA, with Cox and Nossal arguing that the other Anglosphere countries, including Canada, were the major source of challenge to the positivist, rationalist epistemologies favored by American IR.[50] The dispute over the distinctively American quest for a 'science' of IR and its pursuit of a 'behavioral' revolution in the discipline took on aspects of a divide across the Atlantic. The key debate was between the Anglo-Australian Hedley Bull and the American Morten Kaplan.[51]

In addition, the particular foreign policy issues faced by countries also affect what kind of IR thinking prospered there. I have, for example, already noted the correlation between the locations of deterrence theory and Peace Research and the Cold War positioning of the countries concerned as nuclear weapon states or frontline potential war zone. Just as some American IR fashions did not resonate elsewhere, so too some European IR theory developments such as the English School's concept of international society, and the Copenhagen School's one of securitization, found the US intellectual market parochial and difficult to penetrate. While Europeans read more American IR than the other way around,[52] France and Japan were certainly no less parochial than the USA, partly on language grounds (linguistic insulation from the dominant English language discourses of IR) and partly on cultural ones.

47 Neil R. Richardson, 'The Study of International Relations in the United States', in Hugh C. Dyer and Leon Mangasarian, eds., *The Study of International Relations: The State of the Art* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1989), pp. 287–88; Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 55; Ashworth, *A History of International Thought*, p. 13; Kuru, 'Who F(o)unded IR', p. 46.

48 Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*.

49 Inoguchi, 'Japan, Korea, and Taiwan', p. 94.

50 Cox and Nossal, 'The "Crimson World"', p. 303.

51 Hedley Bull, 'International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach', *World Politics*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (1966), pp. 361–77; Morton A. Kaplan, 'The New Great Debate: Traditionalism vs. Science in International Relations', *World Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1966), pp. 1–20.

52 Wæver, 'The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline'.

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In coping with their marginal position in the center-periphery relationship, continental European IR communities developed three different coping strategies—academic self-reliance (France), resigned marginality (Italy and Spain), and multilevel research cooperation (Nordic countries and Dutch- and German-speaking areas).[53] Curiously, Japan's academic style of thick description fits more within the approaches found in the periphery in terms of the division of labor noted by Tickner and Wæver in which the core does theory and the periphery doesn't.[54] Europe and the rest of the Anglosphere did theory but not always the same theory that the Americans were following.

Lessons from the Western Case

The lessons to be drawn from the Western case of successful production of IR theory can be summarized as follows:

- Great powers, and especially superpowers, are more likely to have the resources and motivation to cultivate thinking about IR, and a necessary condition for this to happen is university systems that are well-resourced, relatively free to pursue ideas, and have incentive structures that facilitate and reward 'blue-sky' research.
- The West has, at least up until recently, been very successful in drawing IR theory from its own history and political theory and projecting those as universally valid.
- The nature of IR as a field makes it open both to ideas from other disciplines and to the need to respond to current events. Both of these depend strongly on having well-resourced and relatively free and open university systems.
- There is a significant relationship between culture and the nature of the foreign policy agenda on one hand and the type of IR theory that does and does not get developed in a country on the other.

The Periphery Model

The story of IR in the periphery is only beginning to be excavated in any detail. It developed mainly outside the Western core, which until quite recently gave it relatively little attention or respect.[55] The academic professionalization of IR by US standards deepened the exclusion of nonacademic IR from the periphery from the disciplinary debates in the core: 'few contributions from the noncore are recognized as legitimate ways of thinking about international politics'.[56] Not as much of IR thinking in the periphery comes in academic form when compared with the West, but some is, and the practitioner side of thinking about IR falls within a wide view of IR theory as discussed earlier. To facilitate comparison, I will use the same categories to look at the periphery model as for the core one.

53 Friedrichs and Wæver, 'Western Europe', p. 262.
54 Tickner and Wæver, 'Conclusion', p. 335.
55 Acharya and Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations*.
56 Wæver and Tickner, 'Introduction', p. 3.

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The Nature of the Countries

While the IR-producing countries of the core shared several important characteristics, those in the periphery are much more diverse in terms of culture, power, and level of development: Japan, Argentina, India, Cuba, and China.[57] Their principal shared feature is that they are all, in some sense, members of the periphery, seeing themselves in some important ways as not only alienated from, and subordinated by, the core but also resentful of its domination and racism. For these countries, IR was, therefore, often a much more intensely and immediately political subject, often closely linked to anti-colonialism and anti-racism than was the case for the core. Until recently, few of them had open and well-resourced universities, but this mattered less when IR thinking is more on the practitioner than on the academic side. The management and resourcing of higher education remains a significant gap between core and periphery, although, at least in respect of resourcing, it is a gap that is beginning to close as places like China aim to generate world class universities.

The Sources of IR Theory

In the space available, it is impossible to attempt any full coverage of IR theory from the periphery, and I will draw on selected examples to show its sources.[58] There are some examples of periphery IR theory rooted in local history and political theory. As argued earlier, this was the main approach within the West and the basis for its quite successful Eurocentric project. It seems probable that as other cultures acquire the wealth and power of modernity, they will also want to bring their own history and political theory into play. But, with the possible exception of China (on which more below), this approach is not yet the main source for IR theory in the periphery.

One striking early case of this approach was the work of the Indian scholar Bennoy Kumar Sarkar.[59] In 1919, he published 'Hindu Theory of International Relations' in the *American Political Science Review*. He analyzed a number of Indian concepts, including *Mandala* (sphere of influence) and *Sarva-Bhauma* (world sovereign), drawing on the work of classical writers such as Kautilya, Manu, Shookra, and the text of the *Mahabharata*. Sarkar wrote another essay, for *Political Science Quarterly* on the 'Hindu Theory of the State', in which he compared Indian concepts of the 'state of nature' with those of European political philosophers and found that they were similar, in the sense that both called for suppressing strife with the help of a higher authority capable of wielding sanction and punishment. Although there is some interest in mining the Indian classics,

57 I count Japan as a periphery country up until 1945, because although it was a great power, its IR thinking was mainly against the West. The same logic applies to China during the Mao period.

58 For more detailed accounts, see Acharya and Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations.*

59 Martin J. Bayly, 'Imagining New Worlds: Forging "Non-western" International Relations in Late Colonial India', *British Academy Review*, No. 30 (2017), pp. 50–53.

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most notably the *Arthasastra*, this promising early start has not yet been followed up in any systematic or vigorous way.[60]

The major current project attempting to build IR theory on historical and philosophical foundations other than Western ones is the so-called Chinese School of IR.[61] Partly, this is about mining Chinese history and political theory to generate new concepts and insights for contemporary IR theory.[62] Partly, it is about differentiating Confucian cultural practices from Western assumptions and examining the implications of this for thinking about IR.[63] There is also IR theorizing in China that positions itself within the mainstream (Western) theory discourses and having little specific Chinese differentiation.[64]

These developments, especially those in China, are already important. They might well become major sources for a more multicultural and world-historically based IR theory in the coming decades. They might be joined by similar attempts to mine the historical and intellectual resources of the Islamic world.[65] Yet, looking at the history of IR thinking in the periphery over the past two centuries, it remains the case that the principle motivation for most of it has been responding to the pressures and incentives thrown up by current events, and in particular, challenging the dominant Western orthodoxies and practices in the name of those dispossessed, exploited, and/or denied status by them. Much of this work is

60 Amitav Acharya, 'Imagining Global IR Out of India', Keynote Speech to Annual International Studies Conference, 10–12 December 2013 (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2013).

61 The term Chinese School is of course contested. While it is a handy collective term for outsiders, there are many strands of thought within China that do not accept it as a label. For an overview of the Chinese School, see Xiao Ren, 'Toward a Chinese School of International Relations', in Wang Gungwu and Zheng Yongnian, eds., *China and the New International Order* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 293–309; Jiangli Wang and Barry Buzan, 'The English and Chinese Schools of International Relations: Comparisons and Lessons', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2014), pp. 1–46; Yongjin Zhang and Teng-chi Chang, eds., *Constructing a Chinese School of International Relations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

62 For example, Yan Xuetong, *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). Professor Yan does not accept the label 'Chinese School' for his work, preferring that it, and the related work of his colleagues, be referred to as the Tsinghua approach. Zhang Feng, 'The Tsinghua Approach and the Inception of Chinese Theories of International Relations', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (2012), pp. 73–102.

63 Qin, 'Relationality and Processual Construction'; Qin Yaqing, 'Rule, Rules, and Relations: Towards a Synthetic Approach to Governance', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2011), pp. 117–45; Qin Yaqing, *A Relational Theory of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

64 Tang Shiping, *The Social Evolution of International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

65 Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, 'International Relations Theory and the Islamic Worldview', in Acharya and Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory*, pp. 174–96.

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motivated in one way or another by anticolonialism. This reactive form of periphery IR theory goes back a long way. Dadabhai Naoroji's 'drain theory', published in his 1901 book *Poverty and un-British Rule in India*, used statistical analysis to argue that most of India's wealth was being 'drained' by Britain, both by inhibiting the development of industry in India and by making the colony pay for the massive civil and administrative costs involved in maintaining the empire.[66] Another early response, during the interwar years, was Japan's reaction to the racist 'yellow peril' attitudes toward it in the West, with the Kyoto School's philosophy of 'post-white power'.[67]

The first bit of responsive IR theorizing to make an impact on Western IR thinking was dependency theory (*Dependencia*), which grew out of the inequality between the developed Western economies and the underdeveloped or developing Third World economies. Dependency theory argues that the division of the international economic structure into the 'core' and the 'periphery' made the latter dependent on the former and suffer a chronic disadvantage in the terms of trade. A leading exponent of this theory was the Argentine economist and diplomat Raúl Prebisch, who brought the ideas into play first as the head of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) at the time of its formation in 1948, then as the first Director-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), where he spearheaded the call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Dependency theory anticipated the reemergence of International Political Economy (IPE) in mainstream Western IR during the 1970s and 80s as noted earlier. As Helleiner notes, Prebisch believed that the countries of the periphery 'needed to insulate themselves from the powerful shocks emanating from the industrialized countries and to carve out policy options to promote state-supported industrialization and economic development'.[68] Dependency theory lost ground when the East Asian economies started rising from the 1970s onward and experienced rapid economic growth in the 1980s and early 1990s, not on the basis of import substitution but through export promotion.

Another responsive line of reactive IR thinking from the periphery, related to dependency theory but much less specifically economic in its concerns, is Postcolonial theory. Postcolonialism's heritage is embedded in the anti-colonial struggles of the 19th and early 20th centuries, and like dependency theory, it is located in the interplay between the practitioner and academic.[69] Postcolonialism

66 Birendranath Ganguli, *Dadabhai Naoroji and the Drain Theory* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965).

67 David Williams, *Defending Japan's Pacific War: The Kyoto School Philosophers and Post-White Power* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004); Kosuke Shimizu, 'Materializing the "Non-Western": Two Stories of Japanese Philosophers on Culture and Politics in the Inter-war Period', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2015), pp. 3–20.

68 Eric Helleiner, 'The Latin American Origins of Bretton Woods', in Matias E. Margulis, ed., *The Global Political Economy of Raúl Prebisch* (New York: Routledge, 2017) p. 89.

69 For an overview, see Robert J. Young, *Postcolonialism—An Historical Introduction* (Malden: John Wiley & Sons, 2016).

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has embraced the 1955 Bandung Conference as one of its foundational moments. The Secretary-General of the Bandung Conference, Roeslan Abdulghani, saw the purpose of the Conference as not only being 'to continue the struggle toward a full materialization of national independence' but also 'the formulation and establishment of certain norms for the conduct of present-day IR and the instruments for the practical application of these norms'.[70] Postcolonialism in academic IR, perhaps, begins with Said's book on orientalism,[71] with the literature taking off in the 1980s.[72]

Some other lines of IR theorizing in the periphery might be seen as associated with postcolonialism. One is the theory and practice of Guerrilla warfare as a strategy for the militarily weak to use against the militarily strong. These ideas were developed, and practiced, by Mao Zedong, Che Guevara, and Régis Debray, and might be seen as a kind of periphery military parallel to the core's strategic theories about deterrence. Another line of periphery theorizing, this one with links to Bandung, is Nehru's idea of nonalignment. This idea was institutionalized in the Nonaligned Movement (NAM), and provided a general strategy for Third World countries to cope with Cold War bipolarity. Both of these again were responses to the unequal structures of global international society that persisted after decolonization.

Another reactive line of IR thinking that was widespread in the periphery was pan-regionalism. This often had anti-colonial motivations, asserting both the necessity to reassert cultural differentiation from the universalizing West and the advantages of some degree of regional cohesion. Pan-Asianism had roots in several countries, sometimes with the self-interested vision that the country concerned should be the regional leader. That view could be found in Japan and China.[73] Interestingly, in India, Tagore's Pan-Asianism was rooted in a strong rejection of nationalism. He ran an anti-nationalist, Pan-Asianist campaign that had its roots in Buddhism and ironically saw Japan as the lead power for Asia.[74] Pan-Africanism was promoted by W. E. B. DuBois from the early 20th century and Pan-Arabism after the Second World War under the leadership of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser. Pan-Americanism also has deep roots but with some tension between Latin American versions and those including the USA.

70 Roeslan Abdulghani, *The Banding Spirit* (Jakarta: Prapantja,1964), pp. 72, 103

71 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

72 Wæver and Tickner, 'Introduction', pp. 7–10. For examples, see Arif Dirlik, 'Is There History after Eurocentrism?: Globalism, Postcolonialism, and the Disavowal of History', *Cultural Critiques*, Vol. 42 (1999), pp.1–34; Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009 [1983]).

73 Kakuzō Okakura,*The Ideals of the East with Special Reference to the Art of Japan* (London: J. Murray, 1903); Kakuzō Okakura, *The Awakening of Japan* (New York: The Century Co., 1904); Yat-sen Sun, *China and Japan: Natural Friends—Unnatural Enemies; A Guide for China's Foreign Policy* (Shanghai: China United, 1941).

74 Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism* (New Delhi: Rupa and Co., 2002).

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Owing to the sparse development of academic IR in the periphery, until recently, there has not been a wide range of borrowing of theories and methods from other disciplines, although Marxism, with its in-built oppositionalism to capitalism and exploitation, has been a significant influence. But, there has been engagement with Western IR from an early stage. As Bayly argues, some Indian IR scholars engaged with Western IR from as early as 1916.[75] M.N. Chatterjee 'turned the corpus of "western" peace studies, including Norman Angell, Victor Hugo, John Bright, Cobden and Kant, against the supposedly "civilized" warring European powers'.[76] S.V. Puntambekar articulated realistic, idealistic, and utopian lines of IR thought at the same time as E. H. Carr. A recent example of that kind of engagement is the postMao development of IR in China, which started by mastering and critiquing Western theory.[77]

Theoretical Differentiations

Anti-colonialism, anti-racism, and a general resentment of Western dominance provide the main common ground for IR thinking in the periphery. This solidarism, however, has always been differentiated regionally, and that differentiation is getting stronger as what was the Third World fragment into countries and regions with quite different levels of development and quite different relationships with the core. Dependency theory originated from the specifics of Latin America. It had global possibilities as a theory but lost ground as the East Asian Tigers and China disproved its central idea. Even postcolonialism has deeper roots in the African and South Asian experience than in the East Asian one. Should the mobilization of indigenous history, culture and political theory become more prominent in periphery IR theory, as seems likely, then that too would add to theoretical differentiation.

Lessons from the Periphery Case

The lessons to be drawn from the periphery case of successful production of IR theory can be summarized as follows:

- Political leaders and public intellectuals should not be ignored as sources of theoretical ideas about IR just because the subject and its theory have now become more academic in the West.
- Resentment of, and opposition to, a prevailing order, can serve as motivations for IR theory and can be seen in a sense as 'problem-solving' theory in the same way as much Western theorizing about IR has responded to specific events and developments.

75 Martin J. Bayly, 'Global at Birth: The Multiple Beginnings of International Relations', unpublished manuscript, 2017, p. 28.

76 *Ibid*, p. 22.

77 Qin Yaqing, 'Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory?', in Acharya and Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory*, pp. 26–50; Qin Yaqing, 'Development of International Relations Theory in China: Progress through Debate', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2011), pp. 231–57.

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- Indigenous history, culture, and political theory will increasingly challenge Eurocentrism, with China at the moment being well in the lead on this path.

Obstacles to IR Theory Development

Both the core and the periphery offer insight into what might work to support the development of IR theory. There are also some insights into what factors might play against such a development. Perhaps, the most obvious one, especially for academic IR, is a lack of resources and career incentives in universities to encourage and support such research. Behera makes a case along these lines about India, and given that such conditions are quite widespread in the Third World, it might go some way toward explaining the relative strength of practitioner IR thinking in the periphery.[78]

Sometimes, closely related to this is demand from the state that IR research be mainly directed toward policy relevance and staff training. This is a two-edged sword. It is not uncommon for governments to support the setting up of IR studies in universities in order to train diplomats and other staff with international responsibilities. They may also support foreign policy think-tanks. It is not unreasonable that part of the responsibility of an expert discipline should be to give 'advice to the prince'. But, it is also part of academic responsibility to 'speak truth to power', and this might both be less popular with governments and create a conflict of interest not only with 'advice to the prince' but also with government funding. Policy relevance opens the door to government and other resources but if pushed too far, undermines the incentives for, or even the possibility of, blue-sky theoretical research and informed critiques. There is, for example, currently in the UK rising pressure from both government and private funders that academic research be able to demonstrate policy-relevance and 'impact'. This is accompanied by an increased attachment of research funding to agendas defined by the funders rather than arising out of 'blue-sky' thinking. Such an attachment rarely favors the development of abstract theory as a first priority.

As Olson and Groom note, state interference is a particular problem for authoritarian states, where: '... the study of international relations or foreign policy could only exist as an explanation and justification of state policy'.[79] That is, perhaps, a good part of the explanation of why IR studies in authoritarian states such as the Soviet Union, Imperial Japan, and Nazi Germany made so little impact outside their countries. If others saw them as simply parroting and justifying their government's line, then they would have no credibility as independent thinkers. Authoritarian government can have even deeper impacts on the prospects for IR theory development when the state is also structured by certain types of ideology. For example, because of the complete dominance of a Marxist ruling

78 Navnita Chadha Behera, 'Re-imagining IR in India', in Acharya and Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory*, pp. 92–116.

79 William Olson and A. J. R. Groom, *International Relations Then and Now: Origins and Trends in Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 74–75.

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party, the Soviet Union (and China up until the 1980s[80]) is a good example of the constraints that authoritarian government can put on the very possibility of IR theory development. In the Soviet Union and Mao's China, the requirement of total loyalty to Marxist ideology as interpreted by the ruling party meant that Sociology and Political Science other than Marxism had no place in the academic social sciences. Marxist theory could and did generate some useful theoretical thinking about IR. But, it suffered the handicap of its class-based theory not taking the state and nation as seriously as other approaches.[81] Consequently, even Marxist IR theory did not develop much in either the Soviet Union or Mao's China, at least not in ways that could speak to the wider global IR community. Ironically, Marxist IR theory developed more interestingly in the West,[82] the Third World (as an influence on *dependencia* theory), and for a time Japan, where it served as a critical perspective,[83] than it did in the communist bloc, where it was subject to the self-interested interpretive whims of the party/state.

One other factor that seems, at least temporarily, to supress IR theory development is defeat in a great power war. Both Japan (Kyoto School) and preNazi Germany (realism, Listian development theory, geopolitics) had interesting and significant IR theory developments before the Second World War, as one would expect given their role as great powers in international society. But, their defeat in the Second World War ushered in a long period in which their past records were under a cloud because of association, whether justly or not, with the defeated fascist governments. Given the unlikelihood of further all-out great power wars, this factor is, perhaps mainly of historic interest.

Conclusions

This article offers, I hope, some interesting and useful insights into the factors and practices that have been associated with the successful development of IR theory in both core and periphery. It also offers some ideas about factors and practices that have worked against the development of IR theory. One pretty clear conclusion on the 'how' question is that others need to draw on their own international histories and their own resources of culture and political theory, just as the West, and some in the periphery did, and as the 'Chinese School' is now doing. That conclusion does support, at least partly, the case for national schools of IR. But,

80 Qin, 'Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory?', p. 28; Peng Lu, 'Pre-1949 Chinese IR: An Occluded History', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 2 (2014), pp. 133–1344, 144–49.

81 Andrew Linklater, 'Marxism' in Scott Burchill, Richard Devetak, Andrew Linklater, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit and Jacqui True, eds., *Theories of International Relations-2nd Edition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp.131–39.

82 E.g. Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society* (London: Verso, 1994); Justin Rosenberg, 'Kenneth Waltz and Leon Trotsky: Anarchy in the Mirror of Uneven and Combined Development', *International Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (2013), pp. 183–30.

83 Inoguchi, 'Japan, Korea, and Taiwan', pp. 88–90.

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national schools of IR raise the dangers of letting historical baggage, such as history problems and anti-colonial grudges, muddy the waters. They also raise the danger of others trying to replicate the Western success of universalizing their own history and political theory. I am definitely not wanting to make a case for others taking that path! That Eurocentric part of IR's history is now beginning to recede and can be understood as a one-time opportunity based on two centuries of extreme Western global primacy, cultural, economic, and political. Given that all are now rising, others will not be in that position.[84] If anything, we are heading toward a *deep pluralism* in which wealth, power, and cultural authority will be much more diffuse than they have been since the revolutions of modernity first empowered the West and Japan against the rest.[85] What a more global IR requires is not competing national versions of a global story but a proper world historical synthesis of national stories taking all into account.

Taking the factors and practices outlined earlier and applying them to contemporary China produces an interesting case of mixed conditions. China has become a great power, with all that that implies for motivation and interest in, and resources for, developing IR theory. Yet, at the same time, it is still in some respects a developing country and as shown by the strength of feeling in China about the 'century of humiliation', carries the strong anti-colonial sentiment that motivated IR theory development in the periphery. Within 30 years of Deng's 'reform and opening up' in the late 1970s, the number of Chinese universities and research institutes engaged in IR grew from 3 to over 50, and China's IR establishment absorbed and mastered mainstream Western IR theory.[86] As China gets richer, this institutional structure is increasingly well-resourced by global standards. China already has a number of internationally recognized IR theory scholars (to name only the most prominent, Qin Yaqing, Tang Shiping, and Yan Xuetong). These and other Chinese IR scholars are well-embarked on exploring China's own history, culture, and political theory as sources for IR theory.

Whereas Western history and political theory have drawn its IR thinking more toward sovereignty, territoriality, international anarchy, war, and international society, Chinese history and political theory draw its IR thinking more toward unity, hierarchy, *Tianxia* (all under heaven), and tribute system relations.[87] In the Chinese system, war, diplomacy, and trade all embodied quite different practices and understandings from those in the West, and what is now called soft power played a much larger role. China's claim to be the 'Middle Kingdom' was an assertion of cultural as much as material superiority, and Chinese practice and thinking do not fit all that comfortably with Western concepts such as great power, empire, and suzerainty. The background of ideas against which China's

84 Buzan and Lawson, *The Global Transformation*, pp. 273–304.

85 Acharya and Buzan, *Towards a Global International Relations*.

86 Qin, 'Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory?'.

87 For an excellent review of how and why the Chinese system behaved and thought as it did, see Yuri Pines, *The Everlasting Empire: The Political Culture of Ancient China and its Imperial Legacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

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IR theory is developing is, thus, significantly different from that in the West. In effect, Chinese thinkers can now draw on either or both of two different ideational backgrounds. Tang Shiping, for example, has made independent contributions to global theoretical debates about realism. In addition, China of course shares Marxism with the West, but so far there is little evidence of contact or interplay between Western and Chinese Marxist thinkers about IR.

These developments suggest that Chinese IR theory is following the trajectory of becoming more academic and less practitioner-driven. This has not stopped Chinese leaders from coming up with grandiose visions of IR themselves, but these are now mainly aimed within China rather than as forms of IR theory.

As well as looking to its own historical and cultural resources, the framework used here suggests that China's IR thinking will also develop in response to the stimulus of contemporary and future events and conjunctures. It is already challenged by the rapid rise in China's own wealth and power. Does this mean that it needs to take more great power responsibility for global management? Does it make China a development model for others, as Japan was before it? Does it mean that China has a right to primacy in Asia? Does it mean that a 'power shift' clash with the USA is inevitable? China is also challenged by the rapid weakening of the West as the mainstay of a global order from which China has drawn huge benefits to its own development. Now that China's wish for an end to US/Western hegemony is coming true, what kind of global order does China want to see in its place? How will China respond to an expanding array of intensifying shared-fate problems ranging from pollution, sea-level rise, and disease control, through terrorism and nuclear proliferation, to cybersecurity and the management of global trade and finance? For China, as for both core and periphery IR thinking over the previous two centuries, responding to contemporary events and structures will be a main driver of thinking about IR.

But, while China is already showing significant success at IR theory development, there are some contradictions in play. The most obvious is that China remains firmly committed to authoritarian government, and its ruling party still thinks of itself as communist, with all of the political and ideological questions that raises for the possibility of developing IR theory. Yet, it is extremely clear that since the late 1970s, the CCP has allowed much more scope for the development of IR thinking than was the case under Mao. Marxism is no longer enforced as the sole standard, and there is quite a bit of room for independent thinking and openness to contact with the global IR community. That said, however, the government still seems to fluctuate quite considerably on how much or little it wants to control the academic agenda in China. At the time of writing, the government is encouraging both Marxism and Sinification within the education system. The pressure for 'patriotic education' has been in place for more than three decades and remains worrying.[88] It is notable that Yan Xuetong used arguments from

88 Zheng Wang, 'National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (2008), pp. 783–806; Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical*

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classical Chinese political theory to argue that China still needed to be more open and democratic if it wanted to recapture the wisdom of 'humane authority' in its domestic and IR.[89] In that sense, while the development of IR theory in China is now, perhaps, the most impressive outside the West, the foundations for that development are not yet secure.

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Memory inn Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), Kindle edition.

89 Yan, *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power*, pp. 218–20.