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PLURALISM AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE DISCIPLINE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Yong-Soo Eun

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ISBN 978-981-10-1120-7 ISBN 978-981-10-1121-4 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-981-10-1121-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016947457

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer Science+Business Media Singapore Pte Ltd.

This book is dedicated to the loving memory of my mother,
Ok-Hee Kang
(1955–1991)

Acknowledgments

No book can be written without the help of many people. This is particularly the case with this book. As it is an ambitious attempt, I have a long list of people to whom I owe thanks for their help and support.

First, my sincere thanks must go to Alexander Wendt for his continuous support for and constructive feedback on my work on theoretical pluralism in IR. It was in April 2015 that he first gave me his very useful comments on my short paper on which this book is based. Since then, he has provided me with a series of thoughtful suggestions and feedback until recently. Furthermore, when I considered giving up on this project, he encouraged me to continue, placing confidence in my ideas and offering intellectual stimulation. *Equally*, I recognize the enthusiastic support of Timothy M. Shaw throughout the process. His trust in my intellectual potential goes well beyond what I deserve. In addition, I owe special thanks to Shaun Breslin, who has been supportive of my work since I first met him at Warwick in 2011. Without their support, help, and trust, this book would not have been possible.

I am also very grateful to many other scholars for their insights, suggestions, support, and criticisms. The long list begins with J. Samuel Barkin and Laura Sjoberg, who gave thoughtful comments on my work, particularly on my discussion about the positivist–post-positivist divide. T.V. Paul encouraged and helped me to deepen my discussion on the developments in IR theory from the perspective of the "non-West." My deep appreciation also goes to Hasok Chang, Hans Rausing Professor of History and Philosophy of Science at Cambridge University, for his kindness and expertise. During my short stay at Cambridge, I learned an

enormous amount from our discussions about pluralism and "complementary science."

I also must give my hearty thanks to my teachers and colleagues in Korea who have helped vastly increase my knowledge of IR. I cannot mention them all, but they include: KWAN Min Jung, CHON Song-U, AHN Byung Chul, KIM Myoung Soo, KOO Ja-Soon, LEW Seok-Jin, PARK Kun Young, SHIN Wookhee, KIM Hak-Noh, MIN Byoung Won, SOHN Yul, CHUN Chaesung, SHIN Ki Young, KIM Heung-Kyu, LEE Heejin, LEE Yong Wook, CHOI Jong Kun, LEE Wang-Hwi, DOH Jong-Yoon, JUNG Jaehwan, KIM Ji Young, CHO Eunjeong, CHO Young Chul, YOON Seock-Jun, Park Jungwon, Kosuke Shimizu, L.H.M. Ling, Ching-Chang Chen, Emilian Kavalski, Pinar Bilgin, Cheng-Chwee Kuik, Ja Ian Chong, and Yong Chae Young.

Thanks, too, go to the excellent team at Palgrave Macmillan and Springer, particularly to Christina M. Brian, Marcus Ballenger, and Jacob Dreyer not only for their faith in my work but also for their support and patience. Finally, I gratefully acknowledge the following institutions for providing financial support and the necessary resources at various stages of this book project: Hanyang University, Incheon National University, The Korea Foundation, Jeju Peace Institute, Seoul National University's EAIRT project (NRF-2015S1A3A2046903), and BIBOBS.

Despite the aforementioned extensive support, help, and guidance, this book may not live up to expectations. Furthermore, it may not offer clear answers to the questions it has itself raised. Rather, it seems to have resulted in more puzzles than answers. Although this can "disturb" you, I hope that you will not put the book away. Pierre Boulez once said: "Music is not there to 'please' people, but to 'disturb' them." Richard Feynman also told us that: "I don't have to know an answer. I don't feel frightened by not knowing things, by being lost in the mysterious universe without having any purpose … It doesn't frighten me … Physics is just fun to imagine."

I believe the same holds true for IR. Putting aside any shortcomings that may still remain, which are, of course, my own, I hope you have "fun" and are constantly "disturbed" while reading this book.

Hanyang University
Seoul, Republic of Korea
February 2016

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CHAPTER 1

A "Pluralist Turn" in International Relations?

Abstract Pluralism—which maintains that there are many legitimate "ways of knowing" and thus endorses a wide range of epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and empirical perspectives—has recently become one of the major topics discussed and debated in the field of International Relations (IR). Furthermore, there is a voluminous literature arguing for pluralism. In fact, Tim Dunne, Lene Hansen, and Colin Wight observe that "everyone" in IR agrees that pluralism is a "desirable position" (Dunne et al. 2013: 415). Taken far enough, one could even claim that IR is currently experiencing a pluralist turn. However, several critical questions still remain underexplored. This chapter identifies what is missing or unclear in the ongoing debate over pluralism in IR. In doing so, the chapter shows where the principal concerns of the book are placed and what contributions the book makes in terms of deepening and broadening the debate.

Keywords International relations (IR) • Pluralism • A pluralist turn • Pleas for pluralism in IR

Y.-S. Eun *Pluralism and Engagement in the Discipline of International Relations*, DOI 10.1007/978-981-10-1121-4_1

Pluralism—which maintains that there are many legitimate "ways of knowing" and thus endorses a wide range of epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and empirical/spatial perspectives—has recently become one of the major topics discussed and debated in the field of International Relations (IR).[1] As there are manifold issues and implications associated with pluralism, the ongoing discussion, too, appraises pluralism from diverse angles in different forms with varying emphases. For example, whether IR ought to be a pluralistic discipline is one of the several questions that concern many scholars (for recent works, see, e.g., Lebow 2011; van der Ree 2013; Rengger 2015; Ferguson 2015). The extent to which IR needs to become pluralistic (see, e.g., Jackson 2011, 2015; Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 2011; Lake 2011; Reus-Smit 2013) is another question; and "what kinds" of pluralism the discipline should pursue is also another important dimension of the pluralism question (see, e.g., Tickner 2011; Dunne et al. 2013; Wight 2013; Acharya 2014, 2016). Given such a remarkable interest in pluralism, one might describe the ongoing discussion as a pluralist turn in IR, although (as will be discussed in detail in the next chapter) it is unclear whether the field has archived what an academic "turn" is expected to achieve. Let me further clarify the terrain of the developing discussion about pluralism.

Persistent Pleas for a Pluralistic IR

Obviously there is a place for both the pros and cons of pluralism in the study of world politics, and there is also disagreement about the extent to which pluralism is useful in solving theoretical and empirical puzzles connected to world political processes and phenomena (see, e.g., Smith 2003: 141–142; Mearsheimer and Walt 2013: 427–457; van der Ree 2014: 219–230; Rengger 2015: 1–8). It is, however, clear that in recent years there has been a growing number of pleas for pluralism in IR. Going a step further, Thierry Balzacq and Stéphane J. Baele (2010: 2–4) have described the "third debate" in IR, which began "in the mid-1980s," as a discussion that follows "a composite claim for a more diverse … and more critical IR." Relatedly, they observe that "diversity" has consistently remained the "strongest statement" of post-positivists. Further, pluralism

[1] This book follows the convention of using "IR" to denote the academic discipline of International Relations and "international relations" to refer to its substantive domain of study (i.e., the practice of world politics).

and diversity are endorsed not only by post-positivists, who consider the vision of IR as a critical enterprise (George 1989; Ashley and Walker 1990; Campbell 2013), but also by scholars, who often invoke a strict rationalist ontology and follow a deductive-nomological modeling based on positivist epistemology. For example, John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt readily "acknowledge" the utility of pluralism in the study of world politics, saying that IR will be "much better off a diverse array of competing ideas rather than single theoretical orthodoxy" (Walt 1998: 30), and that "a diverse theoretical ecosystem is preferable to an intellectual monoculture … We therefore favor a diverse intellectual community where different theories and research traditions co-exist" (Mearsheimer and Walt 2013: 430).[2]

Such a plea for endorsement of pluralism comes from different perspectives across varying realms of inquiry. For example, in his 2011 book, *The Conduct of Inquiry*—which provides an introduction to the philosophy of science issues and their implications for IR—Patrick Jackson argues for "a pluralist science of IR." According to Jackson, IR should realize that there is a variety of claims about our "hook-up" to the world, and thus "a variety of philosophical ontologies" (Jackson 2011: 32, 193). Since IR ought to embrace a wide range of ontology, how we should go about producing factual knowledge about world politics, namely methodology, should accordingly accept greater pluralism. Although his observation and suggestions are not without controversy—in effect, they have generated many acclaimed comments and critical reviews—both critics and advocates agree on the utility of pluralism in the study of international relations. Hidemi Suganami, for instance, takes issue with Jackson's treatment of philosophical foundations as "a matter of faith," yet attempts to reinforce and complement "a pluralist science of IR" by pointing to a need to add "the political underpinnings of the various scientific methodologies" to Jackson's pluralist consideration of IR inquiry (Suganami 2013: 248, 267–269). Likewise, although Colin Wight is overall critical regarding Jackson's accounts of science and methodology, he nevertheless foregrounds "a deep commitment to pluralism" in IR, suggesting that pluralism should "generate debate across and between approaches" (Wight 2013: 329, 342–343).

[2] It is, however, unclear if such acknowledgment—be it from positivists or (critical) post-positivists—is well translated into disciplinary *practice*. I will come back to this important point shortly.

Besides the acceptance of pluralism from the aforementioned metatheoretical and philosophical perspectives, pluralism is also highlighted and appreciated—with a different rationale and angle, of course—with regard to theory application and empirical analysis in IR. "Analytical eclecticism" might be a good case in point. Although, strictly speaking, the "analytical eclecticism" discussed and practiced in the field is not a genuine form of pluralism, especially in terms of its relationship with epistemology,[3] it advocates a more nuanced and pluralistic analytical position while denouncing monocausal explanations. More specifically, Rudra Sil and Peter J. Katzenstein, who have long argued for "analytical eclecticism" note that it is possible and necessary to explore empirical issues and problems of world politics through eclectic recombinant modes of inquiry (see Sil 2000; Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 2011). "Analytical eclecticism," they explain, requires "expansive, open-ended formulations of problems" that do not privilege a priori mechanisms or processes normally favored by any one paradigm; in this regard, the complementarity or intersection across contending paradigms is emphasized (Sil and Katzenstein 2011: 3–4). Put simply, it is against univariate explanations—explanations on which there is a single clear and dominating theory of and reason for the problem in question—and instead prefers a "combinatorial logic" that draws insights from multiple theoretical perspectives. In this sense, "analytical eclecticism" can be characterized as a pluralistic approach of some kind; and this *analytically* pluralistic and eclectic position "has quite rapidly become part of mainstream debates about the kind of knowledge the field [of IR] ought to pursue and how such knowledge is best attained" (Reus-Smit 2013: 591, 599). For example, such established IR scholars as David Lake welcome "the rise of eclecticism." In his keynote address delivered at the 2010 International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Conference, as well as in his more recent articles, Lake suggests that we focus on the development of "mid-level" theories tailored to the specific problems of world politics with "analytic eclecticism" (Lake 2011: 1–14, Lake 2013: 567).

In addition to the philosophical and analytical perspectives discussed above, a demand for pluralism has also been made in a more concrete study and subfield of IR, such as Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA). In their study of the patterns and processes of American foreign policy Eugene

[3] I will come to this point later in the next chapter where I discuss the philosophical underpinnings of "analytical eclecticism" and draw out the epistemological and theoretical consequences of its actual practices for pluralism. 19 and 20.

Wittkopf, Christopher Jones, and Charles Kegley foreground the importance of a multivariate model, noting that "we are well advised to think in *multicausal* terms if our goal is to move beyond rhetoric toward an understanding of the complex reality underlying the nation's foreign policy" (Wittkopf et al. 2008: 19, original emphasis); and a large number of FPA scholars echo this point. Valarie Hudson (2007: 184), one of the leading FPA scholars, writes that "as the field of FPA was first being formed, the goal of theoretical integration was put forward as an essential task." Similarly, Yong-Soo Eun (2012) notes that although FPA research is actor-specific and agent-centered in its orientation, variables from all levels of analysis, from the most micro to the most macro, may be of interest to FPA analysts to the extent that they affect the leader's definition (perception) of the situation at hand. In this respect, IR researchers concerned with why-questions about the state's external behavior have attempted to develop multifactorial explanations of foreign policy, with the desideratum of examining diverse variables from more than one level of analysis (see, e.g., Jensen 1982; Hill 2003; Mintz 2004; Neack 2008; Oppermann 2014).

Furthermore, in discussions of visions of a better *future* for IR scholarship, pluralism is also regarded as what we must pursue and achieve. Friedrich Kratochwil (2003: 126), for example, holds that pluralism is "not as the second best alternative but actually the most promising strategy for furthering research and the production of knowledge" in the Forum that the ISA put together in the hope of identifying "new directions for the field" at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Going a step further, in the same Forum, Yosef Lapid calls attention to an "engaged" form of pluralism, pointing to the importance of "dialogue," as well as to the diversity of approaches, in the study of international relations. In his words: if "engaged pluralism … is the most feasible and deserving destination for the international relations theory enterprise in the foreseeable future, then dialogue must figure prominently on our agenda at the dawn of the twenty-first century" (Lapid 2003: 129). In effect, the underlying assumption of the Forum, as the Editor has made clear, was that IR is badly in need of "dialogue, pluralism, and synthesis" if it is to have a better future (Hellmann 2003: 123, 147–150). And this view continues to resonate in today's IR. Yale Ferguson, for example, writes that IR analysts "need to be conversant with a wide range of theories … [because] viewing some subjects simultaneously from more than one theoretical perspective often enhances understanding of global politics" (Ferguson 2015: 3).

Additionally, Richard Ned Lebow claims that "[p]luralism must be valued as an end in its own right but also as an effective means of encouraging dialogue across approaches, something from which we all have something to learn" (Lebow 2011: 1225–1226).

The discussion of pluralism in IR involves not only conceptual (i.e., theoretical or epistemological) issues, but geopolitical concerns as well. "Global IR" is a good case in point. It is a plea or "aspiration" (Acharya 2014) for a more diverse and inclusive IR from the perspective of beyond the disciplinary dominance of the West. In his presidential address delivered at the annual convention of the ISA in 2014, Amitav Acharya envisages the concept of "Global IR" that is founded upon "a pluralistic universalism" as an important agenda for international relations studies. More specifically, he first laments as follows: IR does "not reflect the voices, experiences, knowledge claims, and contributions of the vast majority of the societies and states in the world, and often marginalizes those outside the core countries of the West … [T]he main theories of IR are too deeply rooted in, and beholden to, the history, intellectual traditions, and agency claims of the West. They accord little more than a marginal place to those of the non-Western world" (Acharya 2014: 647). In order to address this problem of the current Western-centric IR, Acharya (2014: 649) proposes "Global IR" that transcends "the divide between the West and the Rest" and embraces "greater inclusiveness and diversity" in the discipline. Obviously, Acharya is not alone in this scholarly endeavor for the "globalization" of IR.

According to Balzacq and Baele's study on contemporary developments in IR theory, one of the key features of IR's "third debate" is to problematize the "parochialism of American international political discourse" (Balzacq and Baele 2010: 5; see also Ashley 1984: 229; Patomäki 2007). The proponents of pluralism in IR point out that the field has developed in the United States "in isolation" from contributions made in other parts of the world. In this respect, Steve Smith has noted that the opening up of the discipline should involve both theoretical and geographical diversity. In his words, IR needs to "become more applicable to the concerns of scholars working in *other* countries [outside the West] … In this way, International Relations may become a non-hegemonic discipline" (Smith 1987: 204). More recently, Andrew Hurrell (2016: 2) has also concurred on this point, saying that "uncovering the culturally specific character of particular ways of understanding the world undoubtedly encourages greater pluralism"—as long as one exercises caution over ethnocentrism.

On the other hand, drawing upon postcolonial and feminist literature, J. Ann Tickner (2011: 611) put forward a similar idea that IR should move toward "a more international and pluralist discipline that is built on less West-centric foundations and is more respectful of multiple ways of understanding our complex world." In addition, "Global IR" has emerged as one of the key issues to be addressed in the newly established book series of Routledge, *IR Theory and Practice in Asia*; the editorial board includes T.V. Paul and Takashi Inoguchi.[4]

Considering the positive and long-lasting plea for a pluralistic and inclusive mode of inquiry of international relations from various perspectives, in varying contexts, a group of scholars also discusses the nature of pluralism. "What kind" of pluralism should IR scholars embrace? This is the key question addressed by Tim Dunne, Lene Hansen, and Colin Wight in their recent article (Dunne et al. 2013: 405–420); "integrative pluralism" is their answer. "Integrative pluralism" is an epistemological position that embraces "theoretical diversity as a means of providing more comprehensive and multi-dimensional accounts of complex phenomena." To put it simply, this type of pluralism aims to bring about "more diversity" and "more interaction" through dialogue and engagement with alternative views and accounts where "research interests overlap" (Dunne et al. 2013: 407, 416–417). In the context of promoting "Global IR," Acharya (2014: 620) also maintains that, "through dialogue and discovery," it is possible to design an IR that is more "inclusive of non-Western worlds." He further claims that it is "timely and essential" to have "dialogue" over questions about "what to study, how to study and even where to study IR" so as to ameliorate "the current [Western-centric] parochialism and ethnocentrism of 'International Relations.'" In a related vein, Kimberly Hutchings (2011) ponders the concept of "dialogue" in the context of the West/non-West distinction. Taking issue with ethnocentrism in IR and levying a critique against Socratic and Habermasian notions of dialogue, Hutchings (2011: 639, 647) suggests that "conversations between multiple, fractured self-identities which acknowledge the imperfect … nature of the insights that they generate" can lead to expansion of "the parameters of our disciplinary imaginations." Other critical IR scholars also recognize the importance of dialogue and engagement. For instance, they claim that "postcolonial thought", which problematizes the "coloniality" of power and knowledge (Mignolo 1992) and embraces diverse cultural

[4] See https://www.routledge.com/series/IRTPA (Accessed November 26, 2015).

mappings and sensitivities, is the key to activating "global dialogue" in the discipline (Shilliam 2011; Pasha 2011).

Remaining Questions

Taken as a whole, it seems that nobody in contemporary IR is arguing against pluralism (and engagement/dialogue) per se. In fact, Dunne et al. (2013: 415) observe that "everyone" in IR agrees that pluralism is a "desirable position." Taken far enough, one could even claim that IR is currently experiencing (or at least approaching) a pluralist turn. In addition, scholars have traditionally called, albeit sporadically, for a more expansive IR that straddles boundaries of competing epistemologies and methodologies. The English School, for instance, has long suggested a combination of positivist, hermeneutic, and critical modes of analysis; Hedley Bull, whose work provided a foundational proposition for the English School, advocated a classical approach to international relations that includes the study of politics, law, and philosophy (Bull 1977).

Notwithstanding all this, however, several critical questions still remain unclear and underexplored. First, has IR really achieved pluralism? Has IR successfully translated persistent pleas for pluralism into disciplinary practice? Is the present state of IR satisfactory to those who have been calling for pluralism? Put simply, where does IR stand in terms of diversity? This "where" question might initially appear straightforward; yet it is not, for the extent of pluralism in IR can be discussed from at least four dimensions: epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and empirical-praxical. Answering this complex question poses the further question of what-if: *if* there is a lack of diversity and calls for a pluralistic IR have failed to lead to a clear research program accompanied by a substantial set of practices, then a puzzling, but important, question will be, why has it failed despite all the welcoming statements on and persistent pleas for pluralism across almost every realm of inquiry in IR? This "why" question invites us to ask an often underrecognized yet crucial question, what is at stake with the *implementation* of the unyielding pleas for pluralism? This "what" question related to implementation, as Tim Dunne and his colleagues have shown, also involves the vexed question of "what kinds" of pluralism (e.g., an engaged or disengaged form of pluralism) we ought to pursue.

In short, my principle concerns are on the "where, why, and what" questions raised above. This set of questions, of course, leads to several subsequent questions. As already mentioned, the first question of where

IR stands in terms of diversity requires analysis of the multiple dimensions of pluralism. For example, the case of theoretical pluralism concerns not only theoretical but also epistemological, methodological, and empirical diversity in number, influence, and practice, for all of these are closely associated with theory building and testing, and therefore the theoretical boundary of the discipline. Likewise, the normative question on whether IR should pursue the promotion of dialogue and engagement across theoretical divides leads to additional questions, such as that of 'how-to.' That is, if an engaged and dialogical form of pluralism is desirable for IR, then how can we generate active dialogue and engagement in a pluralistic yet fragmented and divided IR? This is a question that remains largely neglected or underexplored even in the studies of concerned scholars, including Dunne et al. I will elaborate on this point in more detail in the following chapters.

In this sense, to test the usefulness of pluralism in IR is not a major issue of concern here. In effect, such a basic question as whether pluralism is useful in the study of international relations and thus ought to be implemented in the field has already been discussed elsewhere; here, I count my previous work (Eun 2012) also in the debate over the question of 'whether.' More importantly, my main intention and concern in this book are to use pluralism as a way of reflecting the present state and configuration of IR and of producing knowledge about the workings of the discipline. In doing so, I intend to identify and address subtle but important issues and problems associated with IR pluralism. Of course, the discussions in the following chapters are by no means exhaustive and do not pretend to be comprehensive in scope. Yet I trust that they will aid us in moving *one* step closer toward resolving the puzzles concerning IR pluralism or (at least) in identifying challenges worth addressing in the development of a pluralistic IR. I hope that the theoretical discussion and the empirical evidence developed in this monograph are conducive to enriching the ongoing debate over theoretical pluralism and engagement in the discipline.

With this in mind, the next chapter first looks into 'the rise of pluralism' in IR literature while questioning whether it has any substance in terms of range and especially practice. Here, I examine and analyze the extent of epistemological, theoretical, and methodological diversity through a close reading of the relevant literature in the field. This literature review is followed by a detailed empirical investigation of publishing and teaching *practices* in IR communities, with a focus on American IR and the newly emerging Asian (e.g., Chinese) IR communities. The rationale for choosing

these particular IR communities for examination are provided in detail in Chap. 2.

Based on such a critical survey of the status of IR in terms of diversity through empirical analysis and literature review, Chap. 3 addresses the question of what is at stake with moving IR toward a pluralistic discipline. A major issue of concern in this chapter includes a puzzling question of why IR has failed to move "beyond" positivism. It has been more than three decades since various post-positivist theories were introduced into the discipline by scholars launching "massive attacks" on positivism (Smith et al., 1996: xii). Furthermore, there is a voluminous literature arguing for pluralism and forcibly rejecting the dominance of positivism. Even when promoting post-positivist theory as an alternative to positivism, post-positivists do not display any monolithic character. Rather, their main concern, as Richard Ashely and R. B. J. Walker (1990: 264) have made clear, is to offer a "celebration of heterogeneity" in IR. Nevertheless, the empirical investigation of Chap. 2 shows that the dominant influence of positivism still remains largely intact in the discipline. This leads to the crucial question of why that is the case.

To determine why IR has failed to move "beyond" positivism, I first review the pertinent literature with the aim of finding out shared answers to the question. Then I offer some complementary thoughts useful in addressing the why-question from a socio-epistemic perspective. Closely related to this socio-epistemic issue is another dimension of pluralism, namely theoretical fragmentation and engagement. Chapter 4 thus draws attention to the issue of "dialogue" in a pluralist yet fragmented and divided IR. In particular, this chapter focuses on methodological issues, namely how to generate active dialogues and interactions across 'the enduring positivist–post-positivist divide' in the field. Also, in order to further illustrate the points advocated in this chapter, I offer methodological guidelines for applying Critical Realism to empirical analysis in the study of the state's external behavior. Although the methodological suggestions would not be uncontroversial, I believe that they deserve our attention simply because they directly engage in "dialogue" encouraged in IR—a discipline often deemed to be parochialistic (Tickner and Wæver 2009). Chapter 5 summarizes the main points of the (meta)theoretical discussions and the findings of the empirical investigations carried out in the earlier chapters. Following from this, the chapter also draws some critical implications for the ongoing discussion about pluralism, pointing to the importance of self-reflexivity and the roles of individual scholars as

"organic intellectuals." It is noted here that self-reflexivity, combined (or commenced) with critical recognition of socio-epistemic issues at stake in knowledge production, serves to provide a necessary motivation to bring about change and diversity in the present state of IR.

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CHAPTER 2

Where Does IR Stand in Terms of Diversity?

Abstract This chapter first looks into "the rise of pluralism" in IR literature while questioning whether it has any substance in terms of range and especially practice. Here, I examine and analyze the extent of epistemological, theoretical, and methodological diversity through a close reading of the key texts in the field. This literature review is followed by a detailed empirical investigation of publishing and teaching *practices* in IR communities, with a focus on American IR and the newly emerging Asian (e.g., Chinese) IR communities. The results show that the dominant influence of positivism remains largely intact in IR, and that post-positivist research is neither fully "practiced" as a serious alternative to positivism nor is it actively accepted as a key axis of the study of world politics not only in American IR but also in the rapidly emerging Chinese IR community, which is commonly expected to take a different path of development with a critical edge.

Keywords Diversity in IR theory and methodology • Publishing and teaching practices in IR communities • American IR • Chinese IR

There are different accounts of the extent of diversity in IR. For example, a large group of IR scholars continue to express deep concerns about the "marginalization" of post-positivist scholarship within the field (see, e.g., Joseph 2007; Jackson 2011; Hamati-Ataya 2013, 2014; Reus-Smit 2013; van der Ree 2013) *while* others discuss the specific characteristics

Y.-S. Eun, *Pluralism and Engagement in the Discipline of International Relations*, DOI 10.1007/978-981-10-1121-4_2

of pluralism (e.g., "disengaged," "engaged," or "integrative" forms of pluralism), with a conviction that IR is "a plural, and pluralist, field … [w]hether one likes it or not … that is simply the reality" (Rengger 2015: 32; see also Lebow 2011: 1220). Furthermore, in this debate, the extent of *praxical* commitments to pluralism remains unclear; the geographical composition of IR is not a main issue of concern. Before proceeding further, then, it is crucial that we first clarify the extent to which contemporary IR has become pluralistic by looking at multiple dimensions of pluralism. In this context, our analysis needs to begin with a discussion of the current status of epistemological, theoretical, and methodological diversities in contemporary IR. This study will involve an empirical investigation of publishing and teaching practices in IR communities.

What is the Current Status of Diversity in IR?

Epistemology and Theory

Perhaps, it would be reasonable to start with the 1996 book, *International Theory: positivism and beyond*, which comprehensively examines and maps out 40 years' terrain of the epistemological and theoretical debate in IR. This is especially so in that the aim of this book, authored by 18 leading scholars, is a particularly intriguing one. Three editors of the book—Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski, state:

> The main intellectual concern of the book, reflected in its subtitle [*positivism and beyond*], is to examine the state of international theory in the wake of a set of major attacks on its positivist traditions. Note that this subtitle does not claim that positivism is dead in international theory, only that there is now a much clearer notion of its alternatives. (Smith et al. 1996: xi)

Yet, what seems more intriguing—at least to me—is the conclusion of this volume. It concludes that positivism is what has continued to dominate IR, and that pluralism has not yet been established in the field. More specifically, the book's Introduction notes that "for the last forty years the discipline has been dominated by positivism," and that "the inter-paradigm debate" of the 1980s is not much different since all three paradigms—realism, liberalism and Marxism/structuralism—were "working under positivist assumptions." Then, its concluding remarks point out that "the current 'debate' between neo-realism and neo-liberalism becomes much clearer when it is realized that both approaches are firmly

positivist" (Smith 1996: 11). In effect, all of the contributors to the book are in agreement that despite "the massive attacks on positivism in the social sciences in recent years" (Smith et al. 1996: xii), the various "neo" or "critical" or "social" approaches which have entered into the discipline, despite having bristled at positivism since the early 1980s, failed to constitute a powerful and coherent alternative to positivism. In particular, the work of Richard Little, who traces theoretical plurality and the developments in liberalist theory, concludes that the rise of pluralism in recent years has not been accompanied by the demise of realism whose theoretical underpinnings are firmly based on positivist conceptions of science (Little 1996: 83–84). In short, although the book begins on a critical note that many were dissatisfied with the dominance of positivism, it ends with a cautionary note that the four decades of IR history indicate that our study was not as diverse as intended.

The question, then, is whether such a verdict *still* stands. Almost two decades have passed since the 1996 book clearly indicated the dominance of positivism. Unfortunately, however, 20-year-old questions, such as 'to what extent do positivist assumptions and approaches continue to dominate the discipline?' still seem to have great relevance for current study. As is demonstrated in detail below, despite the fact that the horizon of IR, in particular that of the theoretical terrain, has become wider due to the emergence of post-positivism in the late 1980s, positivism remains the dominant influence in the contemporary study of international relations in terms of determining valid/scientific knowledge claims and how to obtain them. Before demonstrating this observation, however, there is one terminological issue that should be addressed: what does positivism in IR actually mean?

Positivism, as a particular philosophy of science, is a contentious term; thus, the extent of the influence of positivism within contemporary IR remains a matter of debate. Nonetheless, positivism can generally be understood in social science along the following lines: it is committed to a single scientific method which centers on "empirical observations," it believes in the necessity of distinction between "facts" and values, and it aims to identify "general" patterns of observed phenomena (i.e., "facts") in order to develop empirically verifiable explanations and predictions (see Giddens 1974; Bryant 1985, Laudan 1996, for a wider discussion). In the context of IR, positivist international relations studies attempt to seek out observable general (or regular) patterns of states' external behaviors and to develop empirically verifiable "covering-law" explanations of international relations based on hypothesis testing with techniques of cross-case

comparison (see, as a representative and influential work, King et al. 1994). Viewed in this light, it can be said that it is within the positivist epistemological and, in particular, methodological commitments that the vast bulk of international relations studies is embedded at the moment (see, for a similar observation, Jackson 2015: 1–2). A large majority of scholarly works in IR tend to present an "explanatory" (as opposed to normative or constitutive) theory, derive "testable" hypotheses from that theory, and evaluate these hypotheses (mainly) using "quantitative" data. In short, although various *post*-positivist and "reflectivist" approaches have come to permeate the discipline in the last two decades or so, IR has *not* yet moved "beyond" positivism. Let me clarify this point further by reviewing the pertinent literature on the positivist–post-positivist divide in more detail and examining research/publishing and teaching practices in IR communities.

First, among many observations, those of Inanna Hamati-Ataya are worthy of note. In a number of her articles addressing and promoting "reflexivism" in IR, Hamati-Ataya comments:

> The notion of 'reflexivity' has been so intimately tied to the critique of positivism and empiricism in International Relations (IR) that the emergence of post-positivism has naturally produced the anticipation of a 'reflexive turn' in IR theory. (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 669)

Yet, she then admits:

> Three decades after the launch of the post-positivist critique, however, reflexive IR has failed to impose itself as either a clear or serious contender to mainstream [positivist] scholarship … While a review of the literature points to the significance the notion of reflexivity has acquired in contemporary (*non-mainstream*) IR scholarship, it also reveals that the 'reflexive turn' has failed to translate into a clear, appealing alternative to positivism, and therefore remains located at *the margins of the margins* of the discipline. (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 670, emphasis added)

Such a conclusion is also shared by many scholars who have accepted post-positivism and related reflexive theorization as valid forms of knowledge and knowledge claims, and thus, have called for a more pluralistic, expansive form of IR in both the theoretical and philosophical senses. For instance, when Jonathan Joseph talks about philosophy in IR with a focus on a scientific realistic approach, he complains that "the ontological

implications of positivist assumptions can be seen in most aspects of realist, neorealist and other 'rationalist' theories of IR" (Joseph 2007: 349). He goes on to say that, since Waltz's 1979 work, "we can see more clearly how *mainstream* IR is underpinned by *positivist* assumptions" on state behavior: namely assumptions about "rational behavior, taking states as the (atomistic) units of analysis, employing a billiardball model of state interaction, focusing on regularities and predictable outcomes, and generally presenting a reified social ontology that excludes underling structures, causal mechanisms or constitutive processes" (Joseph 2007: 348–350). Similarly, in a discussion of the state of theoretical diversity in IR, Christian Reus-Smit observes that "[t]raditionally, mainstream International Relations scholars (and political scientists) confined the field to empirical-theoretic inquiry on [positivist] epistemological principle … The tenuous nature of this position is now widely acknowledged, increasingly by mainstream scholars" (Reus-Smit 2013: 604). David Lake goes further, saying that diverse approaches under the heading of reflexivism are likely to make the present debate in IR "less salient, as the assault on the positivists was less unified than in the past cases … No approach won this debate, *although* the positivists remained ensconced at the center of the field." Then he delivers his verdict that: "Positivists either subsumed the critiques offered by the reflectivists … or just simply ignored and marginalized them" (Lake 2013: 570–571, emphasis added). In short, IR is seen as a field of study in which the dominance of positivism remains largely intact.

The "Analytical Eclecticism"—that lies within positivism

Some might take issue with this judgment, reminding us of the "analytical eclecticism" adumbrated earlier. They could argue that "pluralities of explanations" are both possible and being produced thanks to the "eclectic or problem-driven" aspect of eclecticism that advocates a "complexity-sensitive research agenda" (Cornut 2015: 50). If, as a number of researchers have observed, IR now "inhabit a theoretical terrain where … 'analytical eclecticism' is the order of the day" (Wight 2013: 327) and "the majority of work in our field since its founding has likely fallen into the eclectic study" (Lake 2013: 572), then could we claim that IR is more than just positivist understandings and representations?

This is, however, not the case. Surely, analytical eclectic research in IR prefers an inclusive, multicausal mode of inquiry to an exclusive, monocausal approach; yet its conceptual baggage and thus immediate substantive

analysis are narrowly confined to the three (American) mainstream theoretical perspectives of realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Additionally, based on the "factors" that eclecticist research selects and combines within the three theoretical propositions, the epistemological underpinning of "analytical eclecticism" is firmly grounded in empiricism/positivism. For example, as Reus-Smit (2013: 599) has rightly observed, constructivist analysis incorporated in the present form of eclectic research practice in IR focuses on "social norms" in lieu of "society" as the former are believed to be "more readily characterized and analyzed as measurable dependent and independent variables." In other words, its choice and combination are carried out with a specific focus on material capabilities (realism), economic interests and institutions (liberalism), and state identities or social norms (constructivism) all of which are relatively easily observable, quantifiable, and generalizable in an empirical sense.

Such observability, operationalizability, and generalizability of factors, events, and processes are deemed to be the most important criteria of positivism for producing and ensuring "scientific" knowledge claims (see Van Fraassen 1980; Bryant 1985, for a more detailed exposition). It is thus important to remember that, although the ever-growing analytical eclecticist discussion in the discipline draws upon the insights of diverse theoretical paradigms, the epistemological foundation of the 'mixing and matching' lies *within* positivism. Consider Sil and Katzenstein's following statements. While they note that analytic eclecticism intentionally, or to use their term, "pragmatically" (Sil and Katzenstein 2010: 415–417), "bypasses" epistemological or ontological issues in social science research, they also acknowledge that it is an "empirical" research program. In their words, an eclectic approach enables researchers "to recognize and evaluate what is going on in different research traditions concerned with different aspects of problems that may be, in empirical terms, very much intertwined" (Katzenstein and Sil 2008: 126). Put simply, analytical eclecticism is "an empirical-theoretic project" intended to address empirical problems and puzzles, and the theoretical insights of eclectic research are thus "*explanatory* however diverse they might be" (Reus-Smit 2013: 591, emphasis added). Analytical eclecticism's (implicit or explicit) attention to and emphasis on "empirical terms" is the core reason why Reus-Smit complains about the analytical eclecticist position advocated by Sil and Katzenstein, calling instead for "a more ambitious form of analytical eclecticism" that "breaks established epistemological boundaries to bridge empirical and normative inquiry" (Reus-Smit 2013: 597–604). Another criticism is also voiced from a different, yet related

angle; for example, in his recent work that examines the state of theoretical pluralism in IR, Jeffrey Checkel (2013) takes issue with the fact that analytical eclecticism disregards metatheory, epistemology, and macro-level critical ideas while giving exclusive attention to problem-solving theorizes based on middle-range theorization.

Methodology

In IR, methodology is a particular realm of inquiry in which positivist principles and tendencies are more clearly and easily discernible. In effect, specific methodological injunctions of positivism—such as operationalization, quantification, empirical observation, and generalization—prevail over the entire discipline of political science including IR.[1] For instance, many IR researchers, relying on the Humean conception of causation when it comes to defining the role and nature of causal analysis, tend to believe that the study of international relations ought to seek out observable general patterns of states' external behaviors; in this sense, Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba's (KKV) *Designing Social Inquiry*—which "has strongly influenced the methods of study of many contemporary liberal, realist and even constructivist theorists in IR" (Kurki 2007: 361)—makes clear that generality is the single most important measure of progress in IR, stressing that "the question is less whether … a theory is false or not … than *how much of the world the theory can help us explain*" (King et al. 1994: 101, original emphasis). As such, causal analysis in IR is often considered to be dependent on "quantitative regularity analysis" for identifying "general patterns" of observed events and processes, and it has also been suggested that causal-explanatory inferences follow from general cross-case demonstrations of a correlation. In short, whether using deductive-nomological analysis or inductive-statistical methods, many pursue a positivist method for explanation, namely, the covering-law model of explanation.

Perhaps it was this that lead David Lake to posit that "although seemingly two distinct cultures, in larger perspective, quantitative and qualitative

[1] For a general review of methodological pluralism in contemporary political science research and curricula, see Yanow and Schwartz-Shea's (2010) article on "Perestroika Ten Years After: Reflections on Methodological Diversity" and Mead's 2010 study of "Scholasticism in Political Science" both of which draw a similar conclusion that the discipline has not gone far enough in terms of diversity. Their studies show that qualitative methods and interpretive research are currently marginalized in the discipline, at best suggesting that the "Perestroika" movement for promoting a more pluralist methodology is *still* needed.

research are two variants of the same positivist approach. There is now substantial agreement on the basic methodology of and standards for positivist social-scientific research" (Lake 2013: 578–579). All of this suggests, as Colin Wight has aptly pointed out, "the dominance of … positivism within the discipline; particularly in influential methods texts, such as the KKV's volume" (Wight 2013: 328). Clearly, in the last three decades, there has been significant progress in elaborating humanistic and interpretive methods, which avoid committing to an outright positivism (see, e.g., Brady and Collier 2004; George and Bennett 2005). Yet, there is little doubt that *mainstream* IR methodology grounds itself in positivist epistemology of what the "scientific" study of world politics should entail while relegating an interpretive approach to an "unscientific" enterprise. What is more, positivist methodology which centers on hypothesis testing with the ultimate aim of generating "nomothetic" generalizations has become "virtually synonymous with 'good research' per se" in contemporary IR scholarship (Jackson 2015: 1–2, see also, Mearsheimer and Walt 2013: 427–457).

"The Title of Science"—Usurped by Positivism

In this regard, several concerned scholars—including Monteiro and Ruby (2009); Kurki and Wight (2013), and Jackson (2011)—have brought up an important aspect of the so-called "science question" in IR, interrogating such questions as how science is defined in IR and what it implies for the study of international relations. Despite their different foci, a common finding running through each of the works is this: the powerful and unyielding influence of positivism. For instance, Nuno Monteiro and Keven Ruby's careful review of the long history of the "science" debate in IR clearly reveals the continued influence of (various forms of) positivism in IR's persistent attempts to legitimize itself as a scientific field of study. They end their article with a suggestion that we embrace an attitude of "foundational prudence" that is open-minded about philosophical foundations and thus "encourages theoretical and methodological pluralism" (Monteiro and Ruby 2009: 32). Their suggestion is, of course, based on a premise that positivism still dominates IR when it comes to determining valid/scientific knowledge claims; otherwise, their call for "foundational prudence" makes no sense.

A similar observation and viewpoint are found in Milja Kurki and Colin Wight's paper in which they write that "[t]he influence of positivism as a philosophy of science has shaped not only how we theorize about the subject, and what counts as a valid question, but also what can count as valid

forms of evidence and knowledge" (Kurki and Wight 2013: 15). More importantly, they rightly observe that "[s]uch is the influence of positivism on the disciplinary imagination that even those concerned to reject a scientific approach to IR tend to do so *on the basis of a general acceptance of the positivist model of science*" (Ibid.: 16, emphasis added). In a similar vein, Jackson comments: "In many ways, the field has not gotten beyond the situation that Wendt lamented in 1992, in which 'Science [positivism] disciplines Dissent [post-positivism] for not defining a conventional research program, and Dissent celebrates its liberation from Science'" (Jackson 2011: 182). To paraphrase Roy Bhaskar's words of more than 30 years ago, it is still positivism that usurps "the title of science" (Bhaskar 1978: 8).

Viewed in this light, "debate" seems an unfitting term although it is often said that IR is currently organized around the cleavages that can be characterized as the fourth (or third) "debate"—a debate between positivism and post-positivism or between rationalism and reflexivism (Wæver 1996; Keohane 1988; Lapid 1989). Post-positivism neither fully engages in the "debate" nor plays the role of a clear counterpart. The bottom line is that, for a large part of the intellectual history of international relations, positivism has dominated and continues to dominate our conduct of inquiry in almost every realm whether philosophical, methodological, or analytical while post-positivism "has failed to translate into a clear, appealing alternative to positivism" (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 670–671).

The foregoing discussion implies that the present world is a positivist one, and that *if* there is such thing as a pluralist 'turn,' then it is a turn that remains a 'plea' without a substantial set of practices. The latter is particularly important in that the existence of diverse theoretical approaches is one thing, but praxis is quite another. While the former might be a necessary condition for a pluralistic field of study, it cannot be a sufficient condition—if such existence is not matched well by corresponding practice in research and teaching, let alone in the real world. It is in this respect that the following section examines in detail the publishing and teaching practices in IR communities.

To What Extent Is Post-Positivist Research 'Practiced' in IR?

It has been more than three decades since post-positivism made its entry into the field. Since the third (or fourth) "great debate" in the 1980s—a debate between "rationalism" and "reflectivism" (Keohane 1988; Lapid

1989; Wæver 1996)—IR scholarship began to accept diverse post-positivist (or "reflectivist" to use Robert Keohane's term) approaches, namely critical theory, feminist theory, constructivism, post-structuralism, and scientific realism. The overall theoretical terrain of contemporary IR has now become wider thanks to the emergence and development of post-positivism. An important question associated with this change is 'To what extent is post-positivist research *practiced* in IR?' The investigation of this question can serve as a useful point of reference to gain a better understanding of the extent of pluralism in IR. As mentioned earlier, a large group of IR scholars continue to express deep concerns about the "marginalization" of post-positivist scholarship within the field (see, e.g., Joseph 2007; Jackson 2011; Hamati-Ataya 2013, 2014; Reus-Smit 2013; van der Ree 2013) whereas others discuss the specific characters of pluralism (e.g., "disengaged," "engaged," or "integrative" forms of pluralism), with a conviction that IR is "a plural, and pluralist, field … [w]hether one likes it or not … that is simply the reality" (Rengger 2015: 32; see also Lebow 2011: 1220; Dunne et al. 2013). Neither group, however, offers the empirical evidence needed to sustain its arguments, which necessitates the investigation this chapter intends to undertake.

Here, I focus on the existing mainstream of IR (i.e., American IR) and on the newly emerging Asian (i.e., Chinese) IR community. The rationale for choosing these two particular IR communities as the cases to be examined is two-fold. First, it is American IR scholarship that commands a dominant presence in the "institutional structure" of the discipline (Hoffmann 1977; Walt 2011; Kristensen 2015). Furthermore, American IR continues to act as "the epicenter for a worldwide IR community engaged in a set of research programs and theoretical debates" (Ikenberry 2009: 203) while, as J. Ann Tickner aptly notes, Europe "did grant American IR a 'scientific' legitimacy." As such, it is necessary to understand the status of post-positivist scholarship in the American IR community by examining its research and teaching practices in order to identify the influence of post-positivism in the field.

At the same time, however, several scholars have expected that "US parochialism" and "growing interest in IR outside the core [i.e., the United States], in particular, in 'rising' countries such as China" would lead to the rapid waning of the extant American disciplinary power while opening up new spaces for the study of international relations (Wæver 2007; Tickner and Wæver 2009; Acharya and Buzan 2010; Tickner 2013: 629). Going a step further, Peter Kristensen and Ras Nielsen comment that "the innovation of a Chinese IR theory is a *natural* product of

China's geopolitical rise, its growing political ambitions, and discontent with Western hegemony" (Kristensen and Nielsen 2013: 19, emphasis added). As such, an examination of the study of IR in China would generate important and interesting evidence which could serve to discern the extent of theoretical theory in IR.

In addition, it is well known that Chinese scholars have been making considerable attempts to develop an IR theory with "Chinese characteristics." Yaqing Qin of China Foreign Affairs University asserts that a Chinese IR theory "is likely and even *inevitable* to emerge along with the great economic and social transformation that China has been experiencing" (Qin 2007: 313). In this regard, Marxism, Confucianism, "Tianxia" (天下, "all-under-heaven"), the Chinese tributary system (朝贡体制), and the philosophy of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping are all brought in as theoretical resources of "Chinese IR" (see, e.g., Song 2001; Qin 2007, 2011; Kang 2010; Wang 2011, 2013; Xuetong 2011; Wan 2012; Horesh 2013). Although consensus on what the "Chinese characteristics" actually are is yet to be achieved, Marxism always comes forward as one of the main "characteristics" of China. As Song Xinning of Renmin University of China has commented, it is frequently argued and acknowledged that "Chinese characteristics should consist of fundamental tenets of Marxism" (Song 2001: 68).

For these reasons—first, the outside anticipation that the existing American disciplinary influence in IR will decrease due to China's rise; and second, the persistent undertakings inside China to develop an alternative IR theory with "Chinese characteristics" marked (amongst others) by Marxism, which is the philosophical underpinning of critical theory (Devetak 2014: 420–421)—Chinese IR scholarship has been carefully selected as a case to be examined in an effort to see whether and to what extent post-positivist research, including that of critical theory, has come to permeate this newly emerging scholarly community.

In addition, there is no single study, let alone a comparative analysis, that examines the present status of post-positivist IR scholarship in China, with a focus on both publishing and teaching practices of the Chinese IR community. Assuredly, there exist quite a number of studies on "Chinese IR" (see, e.g., Song 2001; Callahan 2001, 2008; Qin 2007, 2011; Shambaugh 2011; Wan 2012). However, (the extent of) the practice of post-positivist research is not the primary concern of these studies; instead, they focus on and present either a general overview of how IR as a discipline has evolved in China or an analysis of whether an indigenous IR theory should be developed in China. Furthermore, even in the recent studies on the extent to which Chinese IR theory has advanced (Qin 2007, 2011; Wan 2012),

the focus is limited to the examination of the publications of Chinese IR scholars without looking into IR teaching in China. Empirical originality in my research and its contributions are, in this regard, warranted, for I investigate not only the research/publishing trends in the Chinese IR community, but also the teaching of IR through examination of the curricula and the syllabi of political science and IR departments of major Chinese universities.

Research and Teaching Practices in American IR

Since there are a number of excellent studies that explore how IR is researched/published and taught in the USA, the following investigation builds on the extant studies. Among them, let us first consider the comprehensive research of Daniel Maliniak and his colleagues, which analyzes the current state and recent trends of IR scholarship and pedagogy in the USA, using two sets of data—every article published in the field's 12 leading journals (of which 8 are published in the USA) from 1980 to 2007[2] and the results of three recent surveys of IR faculties at four-year colleges and universities in the USA.[3] Their findings show that there is a strong and increasing commitment to positivist research among American IR scholars. More specifically, the research has found that about 58 % of all articles published in the major 12 journals in 1980 were "positivist," and that number had increased to almost 90 % by 2006.[4] The findings also indicate that around 70 % of all American IR scholars surveyed describe their work as positivist. More importantly, they show that younger IR scholars are more likely to call themselves positivists—"sixty-five percent of scholars who received their Ph.D.s before 1980 described themselves as positivists, while 71 % of those who received their degrees in 2000 or later were positivists" (see, for details, Maliniak et al. 2011: 453–456). In this context, Maliniak et al. note that there exists "a remarkable and growing consensus

[2] They include: *International Organization, International Security, International Studies Quarterly, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Security Studies, World Politics, Journal of Peace Research, Journal of Politics, American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, British Journal of Political Science,* and *European Journal of International Relations.*

[3] Maliniak et al. identified 4126 individuals who research and/or teach IR; 1719 scholars responded to their surveys.

[4] Maliniak et al. (2011: 455) code "positivist" works as those "that implicitly or explicitly assume that theoretical or empirical propositions are testable, make causal claims, seek to explain and predict phenomena."

within the US academy that a positivist epistemology should guide IR research." It should therefore come as no surprise that "since 2002 more articles published in the major journals employ quantitative methods than any other approach" (Maliniak et al. 2011: 454).

On the other hand, the American IR community appears to enjoy 'theoretical' diversity in the sense that no single theoretical paradigm dominates the community. It is, however, 'limited' diversity based on a clear commitment to positivism. According to the data provided by Maliniak et al.'s study, more than 70 % of the contemporary IR literature produced in the USA is perceived to fit within the three major theoretical paradigms—namely realism, liberalism, and conventional constructivism—all of which lie *within* the epistemological ambit of positivism. Of course, constructivists are less likely to adopt positivism's traditional epistemology and methodology as compared with scholars advancing the other two theoretical paradigms; yet, "most of the leading constructivists in the United States, unlike their European counterparts, identify themselves as positivist" (Maliniak et al. 2011: 454, footnote 42).

The fact that IR is organized largely by the three major theoretical paradigms is also identified in the classrooms of American colleges and universities. A series of surveys, conducted by the Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project,[5] shows that IR faculty in the USA devote a great deal of time on IR courses introductory to the study or application of the major theoretical paradigms, particularly realism, the theoretical underpinnings of which are based on positivism. While its share of class time may have declined, realism still dominates IR teaching within the USA. For example, 24 % of class time in 2004, 25 % in 2006, and 23 % in 2008 were devoted to this paradigm; these percentages are larger than for any other theoretical paradigm. On the other hand, the data shows that the IR faculty members surveyed in the USA spent none of their class time on one of the representative post-positivist perspectives, namely feminism, in 2004; the amount of class time devoted to it increased in 2008, yet still remained low at 5 %. Much the same can be said about non-traditional and more critical IR approaches, including critical theory, critical war studies, post-colonialism, and post-structuralism (see TRIP

[5] Since 2004, TRIP has surveyed faculty members at colleges and universities who teach or conduct research on international relations in more than 20 countries, including the USA, Canada, and the UK. The surveyed countries do not, however, include China. For further details, see http://www.wm.edu/offices/itpir/_documents/trip/trip_around_the_world_2011.pdf

report 2012: 12–15). Obviously this is not to suggest that IR teaching in America is solely dedicated to the three mainstream paradigms with a sole commitment to positivism, only that class time does not properly reflect the wide range of IR theories and diverse post-positivist perspectives.

Not surprisingly, this trend is matched well with the contents of American IR textbooks. Elizabeth Matthews and Rhonda Callaway's content analysis of 18 undergraduate IR textbooks currently used in the USA demonstrates that most of the theoretical coverage is devoted to realism, followed by liberalism, with constructivism as a distant third (Matthews and Callaway 2015: 190–207). For example, realism appears on more than 28 % of the pages, and liberalism appears on more than 21 % of the pages in one of the major IR textbooks—that is, Henry R. Nau's (2012) *Perspectives on International Relations: Power, Institutions, and Ideas.* In addition, on average, realism and liberalism appear on 15 % of the pages in the all textbooks analyzed, which is a higher percentage than that reached by any other theoretical paradigm. Likewise, realism and liberalism have the highest number of tables and figures, while other theories, such as feminism, lag far behind in the textbooks (see, for more details, Matthews and Callaway 2015: 197–199).

These findings indicate that the bulk of IR studies and teaching practices in the USA focus on positivist epistemological and methodological commitments. Many pertinent studies concur with this observation (see Lipson et al. 2007; Mead 2010; Hagmann and Biersteker 2014; Kristensen 2015). This worries those who support post-positivist research and a pluralist IR—given the enduring and powerful influence of the American scholarly community on the configuration of the field of IR.

Research and Teaching Practices in Chinese IR

One aspect that could be more worrying from the perspective of post-positivist or pluralist IR scholars is the lack of difference between trends in mainstream IR and those within the newly emerging Chinese IR scholarship. As mentioned, several IR scholars have expected that "growing interest in IR outside the core [i.e., the United States], in particular, in 'rising' countries such as China" would lead to opening up new spaces for the study of international relations (Tickner 2013: 629; see also Wæver 2007; Tickner and Wæver 2009); further, Kristensen and Nielsen (2013: 19) write that "the innovation of a Chinese IR theory is a natural product of China's geopolitical rise, its growing political ambitions, and discontent with Western

hegemony." However, the results of the survey show that Chinese IR scholarship lacks attention to alternative or critical approaches as opposed to positivism. I will clarify this further by presenting empirical evidence.

An investigation of all articles published by China's four leading political science and IR journals—现代国际关系 (JCIR), 世界经济与政治 (JWEP), 国际政治研究 (JIS), and 外交评论 (JFAR)—over the last 20 years (1994–2014) shows that there are virtually no studies using post-positivist theory. More specifically, my research team first searched the databases of China's National Social Science Database (CNSSD, http://www.nssd.org/) and China's National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI, http://epub.cnki.net/KNS/) both of which provide full-text Chinese scholarly articles published in more than 9900 journals across the social sciences in order to identify major journals in which Chinese articles on international relations, international political economy, international security, and foreign policy are published. With these findings, we undertook a further investigation of the publication databases of all academic organizations of political science and IR based in China, including the China National Association for International Studies.

In addition to this, in an effort to ensure the representative nature of the journals to be examined for identifying recent research trends within the Chinese IR community, we also analyzed where (i.e., in which journals) studies of political science and IR faculty members of the top 15 Chinese universities, including Beijing University, Fudan University, Renmin University of China, and Tsinghua University,[6] appear most frequently by analyzing their research CVs as well as the journal publication data gathered from the CNSSD and the CNKI. This was once again crosschecked with the results of our earlier investigation of the publications and publication outlets of Chinese political science and IR organizations. As a result, we found that 现代国际关系 (Journal of Contemporary International Relations, JCIR), 世界经济与政治 (Journal of World Economics and Politics, JWEP), 国际政治研究 (Journal of International Studies, JIS), and 外交评论 (Journal of

[6] The rest are Nanjing University; Zhejiang University; Shanghai Jiao Tong University; University of Science and Technology of China; Wuhan University of Technology; Sun. Yat-Sen University; Tianjin University; Wuhan University; East China Normal University; Harbin Institute of Technology; and Dalian University of Technology. These universities were selected according to the "Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2014," which analyzes 13 performance indicators to provide comprehensive and balanced comparisons. See http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2013-14/regional-ranking/region/asia/ (Accessed June 11, 2015).

Foreign Affairs Review, JFAR) are representative/leading academic journals in the field of IR in China, and that there have been 11,607 articles published in Chinese over the past 20 years (1994–2014) in those journals.

Then, an in-depth keyword-based search—in both Chinese and English,[7] using *both* online materials (i.e., HTML or PDF versions) and printed issues—of all of the 11,607 articles was carried out in order to see how many of them use post-positivist approaches: the keywords used here included six broad sets of categories: post-positivism, critical theory, feminist theory, scientific realism, post-structuralism, and constructivism. In each category, more specific terms and scholars' names, relevant to the representative categories, were coded. For example, the keyword category of "critical theory" included eight specific, related terms in both Chinese and English, namely critical international relations, critical security studies, critical sociology, Frankfurt School, Jürgen Habermas, Robert Cox, Richard Ashley, and emancipation.

In the category of constructivism, we also included the name "Alexander Wendt," as well as those of "Friedrich Kratochwil" and "Nicholas Onuf," for Wendt's constructivism walks a fine line between positivism and post-positivism, lying well outside positivism's traditional ambit from an ontological perspective, while largely subscribing to the tenets of positivism in epistemological terms (Wendt 1995, 1999; for a similar observation, see Rivas 2010).[8] A different research strategy was taken in the case of feminism in Chinese IR. The centerpiece of my investigation is *post*-positivism, and feminist IR theory can be *both* positivist and post-positivist. Given these, I chose (among other keywords) J. Ann Tickner and Christine Sylvester as search terms, for they are representative scholars working on *post-positivist* feminist theory.

In total, six sets of keywords and 38 related terms were used in our survey. The results show that Chinese IR has little interest in post-positivist research; of the 11,607 articles analyzed, only 569 studies (4.9 %) relate to post-positivism. This figure includes articles merely mentioning any of the 38 related terms (see Table 1). Furthermore, recall that the figure includes articles which discuss Alexander Wendt and his constructivism bordering

[7] In addition, when our keyword-based search was carried out in Chinese, both Mandarin and Cantonese were used for a more accurate representation.

[8] See, for example, the following statement by Wendt: "the epistemological issue is whether we can have objective knowledge of these [socially constructed] structures" (Wendt 1995: 75).

Table 1 Major China-based journal articles related to post-positivist research

Keywords and related terms
(searched in Chinese and English, using both online materials and printed issues)

Sets of keywords	后实证主义 *(Post-positivism)*	女性主义/女权主义 *(Feminism)*	批判理论 *(Critical theory)*	科学的实在論/科学实在论 *(Scientific realism)*	建成主义 *(Constructivism)*	后结构主义 *(Post-structuralism)*
Related terms	后实证学派 *(Post-positivists)* 反思主义 *(Reflectivism)* 反思性 *(Reflexivity)* 解释学 *(Hermeneutics)* 解释主义 *(Interpretivism)*	女性主义者 *(Feminist)* 社会性别 *(Gender)* 女权主义立场论 *(Feminist Standpoint)* 女性主义国际关系 *(Feminist international relations)* 克瑞斯汀 丝维斯特 *(Christine Sylvester)* 安 蒂克纳 *(J. Ann Tickner)*	批判的 国际关系 *(Critical international relations)* 批判的 安保学 *(Critical security studies)* 批判社会学 *(Critical Sociology)* 法兰克福学派 *(Frankfurt School)* 罗伯特·考克斯 *(Robert Cox)* 艾逊礼 *(Richard Ashley)* 西蒙弗洛伊德 *(Jürgen Habermas)* 解放/解开 *(Emancipation)*	实在论[a] *(Realism)* 实在主义者 *(Realist)* 超越/超迈的 实在论 *(Transcendental Realism)* 批判实在论 *(Critical Realism)* 罗伊·巴斯卡 *(Roy Bhaskar)* 罗姆·哈瑞 *(Rom Harré)*	社会的建构 *(Social Construction)* 社会理论 *(Social theory)* 国际政治社会理论 *(Social theory of international politics)* 国际规范 *(International norm)* 亚历山大·温特 *(Alexander Wendt)* 尼古拉斯·奥努夫 *(Nicholas Onuf)* 约翰 鲁杰 *(John Ruggie)* 克拉托克维尔 *(Friedrich Kratochwil)*	后现代主义/後現代主義 *(Post-modernism)*后现代性 *(Post- modernity)* 康培尔 *(David Campbell)* 雅克 德里达 *(Jacques Derrida)* 米歇尔 福柯 *(Michel Foucault)*

(*continued*)

Table 1 (continued)

Number of the keywords and related terms and names found in major Chinese journals

	JCIR	16	37	8	0	37	24
	JWEP	95	33	11	6	120	23
	JIS	24	3	14	3	27	6
	JFAR	36	2	10	2	20	12
Total		171/11,607[b] (1.4%)	75/11,607 (0.6%)	43/11,607 (0.3%)	11/11,607 (0.07%)	204/11,607 (1.7%)	65/11,607 (0.5%)

Sources: 中国国际关系学会 http://www.cnais.org; 外交评论 http://wjxy.chinajournal.net.cn; 中国现代国际关系研究院 http://www.cicir.ac.cn/chinese; 现代国际关系 http://www.cicir.ac.cn/chinese/bookView.aspx?cid=136, 台灣政治學會, 台灣政治學刊 http://www.tpsahome.org.tw, China's National Social Science Database (http://www.nssd.org/), China's National Knowledge Infrastructure (http://epub.cnki.net/KNS/) (Accessed August 19, 2013—April 12, 2015).

[a]The terms "实在论" (Realism) and "实在主义者" (Realist) coded above do not refer to political realism in the field of IR, which should be translated into "现实主义."

[b]Total number of articles published in the four major Chinese journals from 1994 to December 2014.

on positivism. Given all this, the number of articles "directly" committed to post-positivist research is likely to be *much smaller* than 4.9 %. For example, if the name "Alexander Wendt" was not included, the number dropped to 4.2 %.

In effect, our survey indicates that most of the theoretical IR studies in China uses two major theoretical paradigms—neorealism and neoliberalism—both of which lie *within* the methodological and epistemological ambit of positivism. More specifically, we first carried out a series of keyword-based searches with the following 11 general terms: realism, neorealism, balance of power, power transition, hegemony stability, liberalism, neoliberalism, institutionalism, transaction cost, democratic peace, and economic interdependence. Then, the findings were crosschecked with close readings of all abstracts of the articles surveyed. The results show that 78 % of the theoretical articles surveyed fit within the two major theoretical paradigms, namely neorealism and neoliberalism; interestingly, most of the articles focused on neoliberalism.

Recent studies on developments in IR theory in China reach similar conclusions (Qin 2011; Chen 2011; Wang and Blyth 2013). For instance, David Shambaugh's work which has undertaken keyword searches of article titles and abstracts published during the period of 2005–2009 in IR-related Chinese journals, concludes that realism, liberalism, and constructivism dominate Chinese articles—with realist articles being the most numerous (Shambaugh 2011: 347). Similarly, Yaqing Qin (2011: 249) acknowledges that "most of the research works in China in the last 30 years have been using the three mainstream American IR theories [realism, liberalism, and constructivism]"—with liberalism having an edge—although Chinese scholars have made considerable attempts to establish a new IR theory that reflects "Chinese characteristics." Again, recall the fact that Marxism is widely considered to be one of the key "Chinese characteristics." Menghao Hu even writes: "There are many different kinds of IR theories in the world. But in the final analysis there are only two. One is Marxist IR theory and the other is the bourgeois IR theory [*sic*]" (Hu 1991, quoted in Song 2001: 64). Further, Marxism, in various forms, underlies critical theory's normative analysis and understanding of what theory should do (Devetak 2014: 420–421). Nevertheless, as the survey has confirmed, critical theory, one of the representative theoretical approaches of post-positivism, remains at the margins of the margins of the Chinese IR community, being addressed in only 0.3 % of the studies surveyed. It is, in Shambaugh's word, a "negligible" theory in China.

This is an interesting but disappointing finding, particularly to those engaged in moving IR beyond the long-standing American disciplinary dominance toward a pluralistic field which embraces "post"-positivism and "Global IR" (Acharya 2014: 647) more fully than has hitherto been the case in IR. Assuredly, there are also a few "China-based" journals that publish articles *in English* rather than Chinese; these include *Journal of Chinese Political Science* and *Chinese Journal of International Politics* (CJIP). In particular, CJIP is worthy of further inspection here, for this journal, which was recently listed in the Social Science Citation Index, is currently managed by the Institute of Modern International Relations, Tsinghua University and publishes articles in English with the aim of advancing not only "the systematic and rigorous study of international relations" but also "Chinese IR" based on the so-called Tsinghua Approach (Zhang 2012: 73).[9]

Yet, the findings of a search of all articles published in CJIP from 2006, when the journal's first issue came out, until December 2014 confirm the earlier observation that post-positivist research is on the margins of the Chinese IR community. A total of 131 articles were published in CJIP during that period; among them there are only 12 articles that mention or discuss post-positivism.[10] What is more interesting is the fact that the seven most cited sources in CJIP are *not* Chinese journals, but major "American" journals: *International Security*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *International Organization*, *World Politics*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and *American Political Science Review*.[11] As demonstrated earlier, there is little epistemological or theoretical diversity in those US-based journals. As an example, recall the findings of Maliniak et al.'s comprehensive study that show "almost 90 %" of all articles published in these journals since 2006 are positivist (Maliniak et al. 2011: 455). In short, there is little difference between research trends in American IR and those within the newly emerging Chinese IR scholarship in terms of the prevailing influence of positivism.

[9] See http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/cjip/about.html (Accessed March 11, 2015).

[10] The investigation is based on the data gathered from the website of CJIP (http://cjip.oxfordjournals.org/ Accessed May 7, 2015). The texts and abstracts are accessible on the website. As before, a keyword-based search was undertaken, using the 38 post-positivism related terms.

[11] This is consistent with what Peter M. Kristensen found in his study of the geography of IR which concludes that US-based journals and institutions continue to dominate IR (see Kristensen 2015: 249–257).

The proclivity of the Chinese IR community found through the analysis of journal publication patterns is also discernible in *teaching practices*. An examination of the curricula of all political science and IR departments of the top 15 universities in China, including Beijing University, Renmin University, Fudan University, and Tsinghua University[12] shows that there is no single graduate seminar, let alone undergraduate IR course, designed to teach post-positivism related theories, including feminist theory and critical theory. In addition, I looked into IR teaching in China by analyzing the syllabi of the major Chinese universities' introductory IR theory courses for the academic year 2013–2014. This investigation of Chinese IR courses and teaching practices is based on 23 syllabi gathered from 21 faculty members who teach and/or conduct research in international politics at these major Chinese universities. The findings of the investigation indicate that realism, liberalism—particularly neoliberal institutionalism—and "conventional" constructivism account for the vast majority of class time whereas almost none of the major theories or concepts under the heading of post-positivism appear in the syllabi.

Of course, Chinese universities offer (a limited number of) IR classes that teach (alongside others) post-positivist theories. Yet, as the survey has shown, these are more exceptional examples rather than representative cases in a generally accepted teaching practice in the Chinese IR community. Furthermore, when post-positivism is discussed in the IR classroom in China, almost all of the core readings are devoted to constructivism, particularly to constructivism-related books and articles written by leading *American* constructivists who often identify themselves as "positivist." In sum, the investigation of the teachings of Chinese IR further elucidates the earlier finding that post-positivist research remains at the margin of IR, especially in terms of practice.

European IR—A Scholarship that "Did Grant American IR a 'Scientific' Legitimacy"

Compared with the American and Chinese IR communities, European IR is often regarded as embracing a more pluralistic approach to the study of international relations, and thus it seems there exists a more

[12] The institutions surveyed include: University of Science and Technology of China; Nanjing University; Zhejiang University; Shanghai Jiao Tong University; Wuhan University of Technology; Sun. Yat-Sen University; Tianjin University; Wuhan University; East China Normal University; Harbin Institute of Technology; and Dalian University of Technology.

colorful IR scholarship in Europe. The English School of IR theory with its historical analysis is a representative example. Ole Wæver (1998: 711) has noted that the British IR community is "uniquely diverse." Interpretivism, along with (or as opposed to) positivism, is also preferred in other parts of Europe, including France, Germany, and Netherlands, when it comes to 'doing IR' (see Hellmann 2014). Consider, for example, the Copenhagen School of security studies and its preference for interpretivist approaches. Despite such a diverse composition of IR theory and methodology in Europe, however, one should recall that it is indeed 'American IR' that commands a dominant presence in the institutional structure of the discipline. As G. John Ikenberry (2009: 203) comments, American IR "as a modernist social science" is still "the epicenter for a worldwide IR community engaged in a set of research programs and theoretical debates." More importantly, when pointing to the current American institutional preponderance in IR, one needs to be reminded that it is not merely referring to the preponderance of a certain geographical location or nationality of scholars. Assuredly, educational, national, and ethnical backgrounds of scholars working in the USA are diverse, probably more diverse than in any other country. Rather, it is the specific and unyielding commitments to positivist epistemology and methodology by scholars working in the USA that have a significant impact on the configurations of IR, especially in terms of defining *how to* undertake the study of international relations.

As demonstrated earlier, there is not much difference between research and teaching trends in American IR academia and those within the newly emerging Chinese IR community. This is not because Chinese scholars seek to resemble their American counterparts. It is rather because they believe that a positivist approach to 'doing IR'—an approach that remains mainstream in the USA when it comes to the study of international relations—is "normal" and "scientific." This is, irrespective of Chinese IR's intentions, to consolidate the hegemonic status of positivist international studies and the institutional preponderance of American IR. For example, even Yan Xuetong, one of the representative Chinese scholars advocating the development of Chinese IR theory as an alternative to the present Western (American)-centric IR, emphasizes the importance of "scientific methods" defined in empiricist terms. He further notes in an interview with Creutzfeldt that the use of "the scientific method" makes it "easy to communicate with each other" (Creutzfeldt 2012): this point will be addressed in detail in the next chapter.

Put simply, although the present geographical composition of IR might indicate that we are increasingly moving toward "internationalization" (Turton 2016: 114, 116), the predominance of a US-centered discipline and US-led commitments to positivist methodologies remains unabated. As a result, diversity, particularly epistemological and methodological diversity, is still lacking in the global structure of IR. Rather, the above empirical examination and literature review confirm the dominance of positivism in the field while showing that post-positivist research has failed to become a powerful contender for positivism. Furthermore, as will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, a strong commitment to positivism is also a visible trend not only in the existing mainstream of IR (i.e., American IR) and the rapidly emerging Chinese IR community, but also in other Asian IR communities. For example, Japan and South Korea demonstrate a clear tendency to embrace positivist understandings of and approaches to science and to use Western-centric methods and concepts as the sole reference point in IR theorization.

Once again, one might say that the ways in which international relations are researched and taught in Europe are more diverse than those in the USA or Asia. European IR thus seems to better practice theoretical pluralism than do the USA and Asia; therefore, a wider range of post-positivist IR theory appears to have relatively fuller recognition in Europe. However, *if* Europe has fully achieved a pluralistic IR, there is still a need to consider why there are 'common' commitments to positivism by the American and Asian IR communities in order to make sense of the current *and* prospective status of pluralism in the discipline. More importantly, as J. Ann Tickner (2011: 609) points out, Europe "did grant American IR a 'scientific' legitimacy." As briefly discussed earlier (and will be discussed in detail later), this so-called science question in IR has great ramifications for constituting, shaping, changing, or maintaining the theoretical and methodological terrain of IR. And the long history of the "science" debate in IR clearly indicates the continued influence of (various forms of) positivism in the persistent attempts to legitimize IR as a scientific field of study (Monteiro and Ruby 2009: 32). Kurki and Wight (2013: 15) further comment that the influence of positivism on the conduct of inquiry in IR is so great that even those inclined to reject a scientific approach to the study of international relations tend to do so on the basis of a general acceptance of the positivist model of science.

In short, we seem to continue to live in an intellectual "monoculture" (McNamara 2009) marked by the hegemony of positivism not only in the

conceptual and methodological senses but also in empirical-praxical terms. This ultimately raises the crucial question of why that is the case. In other words, why has post-positivism failed to serve as a powerful alternative to positivism? Closely associated with this question is a more delicate question, namely 'what is at stake with moving IR toward a pluralistic field?'

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CHAPTER 3

What Is at Stake With Moving IR Toward a Pluralistic Discipline?

Abstract Based on such a critical survey of the status of IR in terms of diversity through empirical analysis and literature review, this chapter addresses the question of what is at stake with moving IR toward a pluralistic discipline. A major issue of concern for this chapter includes a puzzling question of why IR has failed to move beyond positivism. To this end, this chapter first reviews the pertinent literature with the aim of finding out shared answers to the question. Then the chapter offers some complementary thoughts useful in addressing the why-question from a socio-epistemic perspective. In this regard, this chapter discusses how (i.e., through what mechanisms and processes) the standard/mainstream approach in IR is reproduced and addresses the dynamics of academic disciplinary socialization and politics, which entails selection and exclusion.

Keywords Beyond positivism • Socio-epistemic issues • Disciplinary socialization and politics

In order to answer the above question, we need to first address the question of why IR has failed to move "beyond" positivism. This is an interesting question given the fact that it has been more than three decades since various post-positivist theories entered into IR as "massive attacks" on positivism (Smith et al. 1996: xi). Further confusion over this question arises from the fact that there have long been welcoming statements on pluralism in the discipline. That is, despite our persistent calls for a

Y.-S. Eun *Pluralism and Engagement in the Discipline of International Relations*, DOI 10.1007/978-981-10-1121-4_3

pluralistic IR and "a considerable, in fact quite an overwhelming, literature" on post-positivist scholarship (Kurki 2015: 780), why does the dominant influence of positivism remains largely intact in the discipline? In what follows, I will address this question. To this end, I first review the pertinent literature with the aim of identifying shared answers to the question. Then I offer, from a socio-epistemic perspective, some complementary thoughts.

Literature Review: Searching for "Shared Answers"

Let me begin to address the above question by considering a common-sense response. Positivism, as a way of producing truth claims, is fully satisfying, so there is no need to go "beyond" it. Of course, we know—at a common-sense level—that the answer is no. Persistent pleas for pluralism and the birth of *post-positivism* began with rejection of and dissatisfaction with the positivist epistemological and methodological assumptions and their dominance in IR: otherwise, there is no point in calling for pluralism, and the entire raison d'être behind post-positivism is lost. Furthermore, in the philosophy of science—from which IR scholarship has imported multifarious theories and conceptions in order to ground the discipline on "an unshakable 'scientific' foundation"—the positivist orthodoxy "began to crumble" in the 1970s; its hegemonic position has now been overthrown (Hollis and Smith 1990: 67; Laudan 1996; Wight 2002: 40; Monteiro and Ruby 2009: 15). This makes the questions raised at the outset of this chapter more puzzling. Although positivism is no longer a "secure" foundation of an epistemology or methodology from which to draw on the philosophy of science, why is positivism still *the* prevailing stance within IR, which frequently turns its attention to the philosophy of science in search of "scientific" credentials?

Limitations of Post-Positivism

In relation to this question, a more plausible answer—than the common-sense response considered earlier—could be made along the following lines: there is a clear need for an alternative to positivism; however, as demonstrated earlier, post-positivism has failed to assert itself as a clear alternative to the mainstream positivist approach in IR. This line of reasoning further questions the reasons for this failure. A review of the pertinent literature shows that certain common reasons run through each contribution to the literature—although there are some differences in

emphasis: first, terminological and conceptual ambiguity within post-positivist scholarship; second, the absence of a shared epistemological platform on which "distinctly different" post-positivist theories can stand together; and third post-positivists' utter rejection of a positivist account of science without a corresponding development of their version of science (see, e.g., Smith 1996: 32; Brecher and Harvey 2002; Guzzini 2006, 2013; Jackson 2011; Kurki and Wight 2013; Lake 2013; Hamati-Ataya 2014). Let me discuss these points each in turn in more detail.

Terminological and conceptual ambiguity is often pointed out as one of the serious problems that hinder the growth of post-positivist IR scholarship. For example, consider the reflexive observation of Hamati-Ataya, who has been calling for "strong reflexivity" in IR with a view that post-positivist research is "superior" to positivism (Hamati-Ataya 2014: 155, 171–172). She explains that although "'reflexivity' has indeed gained a substantive visibility in IR debates and literature," a quick review of the literature is likely to "stumble upon a substantially large range of variations on the terms '(self-)reflection' and '(self-)reflexion.'" Then she adds: "An obscure combination of these may even be found in one single text … [which] refer[s] to 'reflexivity,' 'self-reflexivity,' and 'self-reflection' all at once, without explaining the differences among these terms" (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 669–670, 672). Put simply, "reflexivity," despite the frequent use of the term within post-positivist scholarship, is an elusive term used without conceptual clarity; this in turn causes confusion with respect to what a post-positivist *ontology* is supposed to look like or what distinguishes the epistemological concerns of "reflexive" scholarship from those of other academic traditions in IR.

On the other hand, in the course of appraising the inter-paradigm debate and the disputed achievements of the various "post" approaches that challenge the dominance of positivism in IR, Steve Smith offers a sharp critique: "[T]he vast majority of international relations research over the last 30 years has rested implicitly on positivist assumptions … All too often positivism-as-epistemology continues to play the same role as before … [Meanwhile] post-positivist accounts are working with distinctively different epistemologies; it is this which explains why there is no prospect of them constituting an alternative" (Smith 1996: 32–35). Other concerned scholars also tend to think along the same lines as Smith. Exhibiting a deep concern about the lack of progress and knowledge accumulation in IR, Michael Brecher and Frank Harvey, for example, write that alternative and critical perspectives "encompass an array of research programs and findings that are not easily grouped into a common set of beliefs, theories or

conclusions." Then they ask: "If those who share common interests and perspectives have difficulty agreeing on what they have accomplished to date, … how can they establish clear targets to facilitate creative dialogue across these diverse perspectives and subfields?" (Brecher and Harvey 2002: 2). In other words, very distinct epistemological stances and philosophical concepts are deployed within post-positivism; criticisms in this regard posit that, although alternatives to positivism are commonly grouped together under the heading of post-positivism, in many respects, all they have in common is a rejection of positivism (Kurki and Wight 2013: 23).

Related to this point is the third reason: post-positivists' passive hesitation or active resistance to participating in discussions, let alone arriving at a consensus, regarding what constitutes good "science" and what scientific research of international relations should entail. As noted, although IR now has an emerging set of alternative or new positions keen to repudiate a positivist account of science, "even those concerned to reject a scientific approach to IR tend to do so on the basis of a general acceptance of the positivist model of science" (Kurki and Wight 2013: 16). This implies that post-positivism either rejects application of "scientific" methods to social phenomena (i.e., anti-naturalism) or renounces the notion and project of "science" altogether (i.e., anti-scientism) "on the basis of a general acceptance of the positivist model of science" *despite* the fact that the philosophy of science embraces the wide set of legitimate understandings of science (Archer et al. 1998; Hollis 2002; Patomäki 2002). Viewed in this sense, as Guzzini and Leander have put it, an important question that needs to be considered is "what exactly this non-positivist social 'science' is all about" (Guzzini and Leander 2006: 80).

Though not uncontroversial, all of the three major reasons reviewed here seem relevant, with varying degrees of significance, to the question of why IR has failed to move "beyond" positivism, and thus need to be addressed to move IR toward a more pluralistic and balanced field of study. In this regard, several researchers have already begun to address these issues. For example, there have been recent attempts to cast new light on the functions and ends of science in IR and to refine (or broaden) conventional conceptions of science or causation (Kurki 2007, 2008; Jackson 2011; Suganami 2013). Stefano Guzzini, for example, has recently proposed four modes of theorizing—"normative, meta-theoretical, ontological/constitutive, and empirical"—each of which has different yet "connected" ends of science (Guzzini 2013: 533–535). Attempts have also been made to clarify the meaning of the concept of "reflexivity"

and to redress post-positivists' "mistaken conflation" of science (in general) with a particular version of science, namely a positivist representation (Joseph 2007; Joseph and Wight 2010; Rivas 2010), while stretching the traditional ambit of post-positivist epistemology to engage in the realm of empirical knowledge (Guzzini 2005; Lynch 2008; Hamati-Ataya 2013, 2014). Thus, it can be said that our move to go "beyond" a positivism-centered IR world toward pluralism is ongoing.

Disconnection Between Words and Deeds?

It is, I believe, at this point that we need to take a step back and consider a more fundamental question, a question that deserves to have attentional priority over the three issues discussed above: are researchers and, in particular, students of international relations so familiar with the existence of alternatives to positivism—namely post-positivism and "reflexivity"—that we can confidently move on to deal with their major shortcomings, in the hope of creating a more pluralistic field of study? If the aforementioned issues that have in-worldly orientations (i.e., the limitations of post-positivism) are adequately addressed, then will post-positivist scholarship, serving as a powerful alternative to positivism, become a part of contemporary IR? This is an important and fundamental question because, prior to dedicating the intellectual resources of IR to resolving the limitations of alternatives, one needs to be fully aware of alternatives *as such* (i.e., what alternatives exist, and how useful or plausible these alternative accounts are). We ought to ask ourselves whether our research and teaching "practices" have been rich enough to embrace the diverse approaches of post-positivism and to encourage pluralism in the field. Raising and answering this question must be the first step in the movement toward pluralism in IR. Unfortunately, however, none of us, it seems, can claim with confidence that we have done enough in terms of research and teaching. The present horizon of IR theory, epistemology, and methodology in published and taught disciplines is neither as wide as calls for pluralism can realize nor as deep as to render common attention to post-positivism. Even when we talk about and enter a plea for pluralism, we rarely act on it, *especially* in the classrooms.

A Strong Commitment to Positivism by Asian IR Communities

As demonstrated by empirical analysis, a narrow avenue in theoretical, epistemological, and methodological approaches to the study of international

relations continues in the new and rapidly emerging IR community, namely Chinese IR, *although* Chinese scholars have made considerable attempts to develop an alternative IR theory and (by extension) "non-Western" IR "with Chinese characteristics." For instance, an examination of 11,607 IR-related journal articles published in China over the past 20 years (1994–2014) clearly showed the shortage of studies on post-positivism in the Chinese IR community. Rather, the results indicated that the most of the theoretical IR studies in China are devoted to the two major theoretical paradigms of realism and liberalism, both of which lie within the epistemological and methodological ambit of positivism. Furthermore, the seven most cited sources in *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, a journal advocating "Chinese IR" theory building, are not Chinese journals, but major 'American' positivist journals (Maliniak et al. 2011: 455). In addition, an examination of the curricula of all political science and IR departments of the top 15 universities in China indicated no single graduate seminar or undergraduate IR course, designed to teach post-positivism-related theories. When post-positivism is discussed in the IR classroom in China, almost all of the core readings are devoted to constructivism, particularly to the books and articles on constructivism written by leading 'American' constructivists who often identify themselves as 'positivist.' In short, the majority of IR studies and teaching practices in China is committed to positivism, while post-positivist research remains at the margin of the field.

Interestingly (or unfortunately from a pluralist perspective), a strong commitment to positivism is also a visible trend in other Asian IR communities. For example, similar to the case of IR study in China, there have been numerous calls for an "indigenous" IR theory that can better explain local (i.e., Korean and Asian) international politics in the South Korean IR community. However, the long-standing "American-dependency" and "Western-centrism" in Korean political science continue to dominate the "Korean-style" IR theory building enterprise (Kang 2004; Kim 2008: 7; Cho 2015: 682). Levying a critique against South Korea's serious "academic dependence on the U.S.", Kim Haknoh (2008: 34) comments as follows: "it is a pity" that Korean scholars "do not pay due attention to those Korean works striving to establish our own perspectives and theories." In other words, although it is often argued that Korea should develop a distinctively Korean IR theory (i.e., "Korean School" of IR) on the basis of Korea's unique history or traditions, most Korean scholars ask such important questions as how to develop a Korean IR theory and how to judge its

success largely *from* a positivist perspective, considering American IR as the global or central reference point. Consider, for example Jongkun Choi's comment: "although Korean IR should strive to explain the country's unique historical experience, it will be judged by strict measurements of scientific universalism." And, as many concerned scholars point out, this is a line of thinking commonly found in the Korean IR community (Kim 2003; Min 2007, 2016; Choi and Moon 2010). In this respect, Young Chul Cho (2015: 689) observes that Korean scholars' constant calls for building an indigenous IR theory is "operating under a colonial mentality, sustained by the hegemony of US IR's positivist metatheory, [which] might turn South Korea into a mere test bed of US IR's so-called 'scientific' models."

Japan, too, has a clear tendency to adhere to positivist understandings of science and to utilize positivist methods and Western-centric concepts in IR theorization. Although some argue that Japanese contributions to IR, particularly those of pre-World War II Japanese thinkers, should be considered original and more fully acknowledged (Inoguchi 2007; Ikeda 2008), Japanese IR—as Ching-Chang Chen (2012: 463) shows through an analysis of the recent developments in IR theory in Japan—"reproduces, rather than challenges, a normative hierarchy" embedded in Western-centric IR theories "between the creators of Westphalian norms and those of the receiving end." In this vein, Chen (2012: 478) further comments that IR studies in Japan and South Korea have "much in common at the metaphysical level" because they both pursue "science" with a positivist approach and rely on mainstream Western (American) concepts in theorizing international relations. Kazuya Yamamoto makes a similar observation about Japanese IR scholarship when he explores how international studies have evolved in Japan in the postwar period. While Japan continues to consider the ideas of "pacifism" and a historical approach as the main intellectual resources in the study of international relations and foreign policy, recently there has been a growing interest in and related works on statistical and mathematical modeling in the Japanese IR community as "scientific approaches to the social sciences … [and] research designs that seek generality and causality … have increasingly become popular" in political science fields in Japan (Yamamoto 2011: 274). In short, there is little difference between research trends in American IR academia and those within the newly emerging Asian (Chinese, Korean, and Japanese) IR communities in terms of unyielding commitments to positivist epistemology and methodology. This results in the predominance of a positivism-centered teaching.

Do We Practice What We Preach?

Obviously, IR does involve diverse post-positivist theories. However, as mentioned, *practice* is different from the *existence* of diverse theoretical approaches. While the latter might be a necessary condition for a pluralistic field of study, it cannot be a sufficient condition, if such existence is not well matched by corresponding practice in research and teaching. The empirical investigation of publishing and teaching practices in IR communities discussed earlier showed that we do not practice what we preach. These remain disparate. It seems in this respect that several IR scholars continue to express their deep concerns about the "marginalization" of post-positivist scholarship in the field, *regardless* of geographic location. Recall consider Hamati-Ataya's observation in the discussion of post-positivism and its key conception of "reflexivity":

> Three decades after the launch of the post-positivist critique, however, reflexive IR has failed to impose itself as either a clear or serious contender to mainstream [positivist] scholarship … While a review of the literature points to the significance the notion of reflexivity has acquired in contemporary (non-mainstream) IR scholarship, it also reveals that the 'reflexive turn' has failed to translate into a clear, appealing alternative to positivism, and therefore remains located at the margins of the margins of the discipline. (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 670)

This diagnosis is, in effect, shared by many other scholars who accept post-positivism as a valid approach to knowledge production (see, e.g., Joseph 2007: 348–350; Jackson 2011: 207–212; Reus-Smit 2013: 604; van der Ree 2013: 30). More specifically, when Jonathan Joseph discusses the philosophy of science in IR with a focus on a scientific realist approach, he complains that "the ontological implications of positivist assumptions" are clearly detected "in most aspects of realist, neorealist and other 'rationalist' theories of IR," whereas its alternative (e.g., scientific realism) has not always received the attention it deserves in the study of world politics (Joseph 2007: 348–350). Similarly, in the discussion of the state of theoretical diversity and the role of metatheory in IR, Christian Reus-Smit (2013: 604) writes that "[t]raditionally, mainstream International Relations scholars (and political scientists) confined the field to empirical-theoretic inquiry on [positivist] epistemological principle … The tenuous nature of this position is now widely acknowledged by mainstream scholars." Patrick Jackson also concurs with this point. In his 2011 book,

The Conduct of Inquiry, Jackson offers a 2 × 2 matrix, arguing that different research paradigms, including the "reflexivist" paradigm, should be treated equally as valid (or "scientific") modes of knowledge in IR. Yet, at the same time, he also notes that they represent "unequal" positions in the actual hierarchy of knowledge in IR, with "neopositivist" research on top and "reflexivist" research at the bottom (Jackson 2011: 207–212).

All of the above empirical evidence and the critical literature review suggests that we, as researchers and teachers of IR, have not done enough or not done things well enough to actualize a pluralistic IR. That is to say, our research and teaching in both the existing and emerging mainstreams of IR have fallen far short of including diverse approaches of post-positivism and developing a pluralistic IR while Europe "did grant American IR a 'scientific' legitimacy." Answering the puzzling why-question raised earlier—why IR has failed to move "beyond" positivism—seems, then, not too difficult. *Despite* all the affirmative statements on and a considerable demand for pluralism in almost every realm of metatheory, theory, and methodology in IR, researchers and, in particular, students of IR are not adequately aware of the alternative and critical approaches of IR, the plausibility of these alternative accounts of science, and the usefulness of these approaches to international studies because we do not practice what we preach. We enter a plea for "moving beyond positivism toward pluralism" but rarely act upon it. Currently, the existence of various post-positivist theories in IR has not been translated into disciplinary practice. Instead, a narrow selection using positivist theories, concepts, and methods has long been a social norm in the published discipline, which is replicated in the taught discipline. Because there is no substantial, systemic set of publishing and teaching *practices* for post-positivism or pluralism—as is illustrated by the trends in the IR communities examined—students of IR are ill-informed as to the strengths and limitations of alternatives to positivism. This results in a dearth of praxis for the plea to move "beyond" positivism toward a pluralistic IR. This in turn leads to reproducing (or reinforcing) the present state of the discipline.

Looked at in this way, *not only* the three sets of shortcomings of post-positivism discussed previously—that is, terminological and conceptual ambiguity; absence of a shared epistemological ground; and the mistaken conflation of science (in general) with a particular version of science (positivism)—*but also* the field's lack of a reasonable acquaintance with and practice in post-positivism is pernicious to pluralism, and thus needs to be addressed. The latter, indeed, needs to be improved as a priority.

Certainly, this is not to say that becoming more aware of the existence of various post-positivist perspectives guarantees pluralism in the discipline, but only to say that without recognizing what alternatives exist and how useful or plausible these alternatives are, we simply cannot move on to the next stage of solving the problems inherent in the alternatives. This is a first step in the process of achieving a pluralist IR that needs to be taken before envisaging engaged or integrative forms of pluralism. Has the step been taken? Unfortunately not.

Considering this, the real question would seem to distill down to how one can render IR more fully attentive to the fact that many legitimate (or potentially promising) ways of making knowledge claims exist "out there"—beyond positivism. This question appears simple; yet answering the question is a lot more complicated than it sounds in that it involves answering the further question of *why* alternatives to positivism have not always received the attention they deserved in the study of world political affairs in terms of both publishing and teaching practices. In sum, we need to think further than merely giving the tautological advice of "paying more attention to" alternatives (i.e., post-positivism).

Socio-Epistemic Issues in Pluralism

Once again, let us ask, will an active post-positivist scholarship serving as a powerful alternative to positivism be brought about in contemporary IR *if* the limitations of post-positivism are adequately addressed? Here, it is worth mentioning that positivism, too, has serious limitations. Ontologically, it leads us to settle on a truncated and impoverished view of the rich and complex textures of world reality; epistemologically, it imposes unnecessary restrictions on the range of possible causes of social phenomena; methodologically, it suffers from theory-ladenness of observation. Particularly, within the positivist view of science and scientific explanations, epistemology and ontology become tied together: what is known is what can be experienced and/or observed and what "is" is what can be known—Roy Bhaskar (1978: 28) has called this "the epistemic fallacy." Put simply, many actual events never become empirical. For these reasons, among others, the once-dominant position of positivism has now met its demise in the philosophy of science (Wight 2002: 40). Furthermore, there is a voluminous literature passing scathing criticisms on positivism from diverse perspectives across disciplines, including economics, where positivist principles have a firm grip on the conduct of research

(see, e.g., Samuels' 1980 and 1990 studies and Caldwell's 1994 work, for criticisms made from a methodological perceptive in economics).

Nonetheless, as seen earlier, most of the publications and teaching in American and Asian IR communities are replete with positivist stances and empiricist approaches. The shortcomings of alternatives to positivism, therefore, are not the proper answer to the question of why they remain "located at the margins of the margins" of IR. In other words, *regardless of* their limitations, alternative lines of explanations and critical approaches should have been taught at universities and should have appeared in academic journals far more widely and frequently than has been the case thus far. This is especially so, given the fact that we have been calling for a more pluralistic IR that embraces the validity of a wide range of epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and empirical perspectives as well as the fact that it has been more than three decades since post-positivism was first considered in IR. Viewed in this light, the above why-question needs to be rephrased as follows: why does positivist research remain at the center of IR, despite its serious internal limitations?

Disciplinary Socialization and Politics in IR

It seems worthwhile to take a cue from Thomas Kuhn and revisit the question of why alternatives to the mainstream (positivist) approach in IR have not always received the attention they deserve. In his 1962 book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Kuhn criticized the conventional view that the progress of science proceeds by cumulative accretion, with discovery based on objective empirical observation. Instead, he demonstrated that science has evolved through what he called "normal science," namely the process of hypothesis testing and "puzzle-solving" dictated by the existing major paradigm in a given scientific field. In a related vein, Kuhn's work sifting through the history of the development of planetary astronomy shows how scholarly communities working in the logic invoked by "normal science" respond to anomalies that defy their core theoretical propositions. To summarize it crudely for now, mainstream theorists, wedded to the standard interpretations and methods that allow them to dominate their field, tend first to deny that the anomaly exists; it is deemed to be a trivial or transient phenomenon. Then, as the salience of the anomaly becomes undeniable, scholars—especially younger scholars less professionally invested in the standard and conventional approach—develop new or alternative theoretical lenses through which the anomaly

can be explained. If this new theoretical approach supersedes the old one, it becomes the "new paradigm" for successive inquiry even though the major proponents and practitioners of the *existing* paradigm, Kuhn reports, rarely convert to the new one or usually tend to resist such a paradigm change. This is the case even when confronted with overwhelming evidence that the latter approach can explain more phenomena (or explain existing phenomena better).

The summary above may not do full justice to Kuhn's much more detailed analysis; yet it is sufficient to aid us in understanding his key accounts of the path-dependent structure of scientific evolution. The most significant finding of Kuhn's work, in my view, is that "scientific," and thereby "acceptable" knowledge is in effect the *sociological* (by-)product of communal practices determined (or at least, governed) by the major paradigm within a given scholarly community (Kuhn 1962, see also Kuhn 1970).

Two important implications for IR come from Kuhn's insights into the evolution of science. First, alternative and critical approaches in IR are currently trapped within the stage of being ignored or denied—although they could be a driver of paradigm change. Second, this occurs not because mainstream positivist IR theories or epistemologies are faultless or its alternatives have no utility, but rather because 'doing IR' based on positivism is seen as "normal." Throughout the long history of the great debates in IR, positivist ideas and accounts have been at the center of attention. Further, from the first great debate until the inter-paradigm debate of the 1980s it has been positivists who either dominated or won the debates in the discipline, which allowed their approach to serve as a standard approach. Once established as standard or common-sense, the approach became so powerful that irrespective of whether it had serious weaknesses and was confronted with anomalies, it defined not merely our conceptual possibilities but also our analytical and practical horizons. That is to say, positivism, as the standard way to conduct inquiry in IR, determines what counts as the valid subject matter of IR and what counts as "acceptable" knowledge of international relations in both published and taught disciplines. Most IR scholars thus set the definitions of their research problems by recourse to the standard (namely, positivist) epistemology and assess evidence produced by methodological procedures that correspond to the standard. In other words, the whole practice of the conduct of inquiry—the selection and framing of research puzzles, the representation and interpretation of relevant empirical observations, and the specification of evidentiary

standards—tend increasingly to be undertaken in accordance with the standard approach, which is naturally reflected in teaching.

This also applies to Asian IR communities. As discussed above, Japanese IR has recently seen "the rise of scientific [positivist] approaches to the social sciences"; relatedly, "research designs that seek generality and causality have increasingly become popular in political science fields in Japan" (Yamamoto 2011: 274). Furthermore, much the same can be said about Chinese IR. For example, when the meaning (or purpose) of theory is taught or discussed in an IR classroom in China, what is largely invoked for teaching and discussion is a positivist understanding of the role of theory, namely "generality" or "universality." Even in the discussion on "Building International Relations Theory with Chinese Characteristics," several Chinese IR scholars argue that "as part of social sciences" Chinese IR theory—whatever "characteristics" or purposes it might have—"should seek universality, generality" in order to be recognized as being part of a "scientific" enterprise (Song 2001: 68). Interestingly (or naturally, from a socio-epistemic perspective), such a positivism-oriented understanding of theory and methodology is more easily discernible in the studies by the younger generations of Chinese IR scholars who have attended *American* universities (Shambaugh 2011); those young Chinese scholars, in this respect, tend to remain skeptical about building an indigenous IR theory (Wan 2012). Going a step further, one might expect that, as the number of such foreign-trained Chinese scholars returning to their homeland increases, "the Gramscian hegemonic status of Western [positivist] IR" (Chen 2011: 16) is likely to remain intact in China.

The emphasis on universality or generalizability of theory also resonates with the concern of South Korean IR scholars about "Korean-style" theory building. Although there has been great "passion for indigenous IR theory" in South Korea (Min 2016), its success is often believed to be "judged by strict measurements of scientific universalism" (Choi 2008: 209, 215). That is, "How can we make a distinctively Korean IR theory *while* trying to be as generalizable as possible?" This has been a key question in terms of seeking a "Korean School" of IR (Choi 2008: 209-215; Choi and Moon 2010). The generalizability of theory is also considered as a principle goal even by Korean IR scholars who recognize the limitation of a general IR theory and instead pursue a mid-level theory about East Asia (see, e.g., Kim 2003; Chun 2007; Min 2007, 2016). In this context, many local scholars admit that South Korean social sciences are very much in line with American social sciences in the sense that both

are based largely on rationalist/positivist epistemology (Kang 2004; Kim 2008: 34; Cho 2015: 688). South Korean IR scholarship, they further note, has "appeared to be a staunch disciple of mainstream IR. The whole of academia—particularly, political science and IR—in South Korea still tends to prefer American doctoral degrees to domestic or non-American ones." In this respect, it is widely acknowledged that "PhDs from the US have an advantage in the South Korean academic job market" (Cho 2015: 682; for studies presenting similar observations, see Hong 2008; Park 2005; Yu and Park 2008). This can be seen as an offshoot of disciplinary politics and socialization.

"Socialized" Mechanisms—Through Which the Existing Paradigm is Reproduced

All of the above adds up to the consequence that 'doing IR' based on positivist principles is considered a "normal" undertaking, and thereby establishes itself as a norm. Just as states are socialized into the existing international system that revolves around power politics, IR scholars are socialized into the existing IR disciplinary system embedded in power-knowledge relationships. This academic disciplinary socialization entails selection, which tends toward the elimination of approaches or explanations that do not fit into the socialized, or to put it more clearly, 'standardized' practice. In particular, the selection is reinforced within journal publication systems, and ideas or methods peculiar to the field's standardized approach tend to comprise the first cull by the publication system. Moreover, socialization within an academic discipline applies not only to scholars already working in it but also more directly to those willing to enter it. As Thomas Biersteker comments, "PhD candidates are educated in the canon of the discipline in order to enable them to engage in the core debates, as well as to be *marketable* in the broader discipline of political science" (Biersteker 2009: 310–318, emphasis added). Such a (market) socialization process in classrooms leads graduate students to be oriented to the professional "norms" of their academic disciplines. Trapped between pursuit of knowledge and pursuit of career, their motivations to work on new and/or critical approaches are sidelined. Jonas Hagmann and Thomas Biersteker (Hagmann and Biersteker 2014: 293) note that "IR schools worldwide instruct great numbers of students to adopt particular modes of thinking and approaches concerning world politics." As a result, it leads to sameness that makes for intellectual reproduction in

the field, generating an enduring prevalence of the existing mainstream theory and a perpetuation of the mode of theory application based on the standard (positivist) principles, rather than theory development.

A logical or, more to the point, social corollary of this is the general trends in IR: most of the articles published in major journals are positivist, and statistical analysis, hypothesis testing, and data manipulation have become 'indispensable' requirements of all IR methodological courses at universities, whereas there is a relatively small amount of work and virtually no core courses dedicated to post-positivism in the existing and emerging mainstreams of IR. Given the processes of academic disciplinary socialization and politics, which entail reproduction of the standard understanding and approach through selection and exclusion, the following questions that have remained puzzling thus far seems more clearly explicable: why is there a lack of praxis of alternatives to positivist epistemology and methodology within IR?, and why is there a lack of diversity in the published and taught disciplines of IR *despite* the serious limitations of positivism and the constant calls for pluralism?

Taken as a whole, it seems necessary to discuss one of the most important questions on pluralism (i.e., the *practice* of pluralism in the field) by addressing the issues at stake in academic disciplinary socialization, because what is at stake in developing a pluralistic IR is also what is at stake in the current disciplinary socialization practice. In addition, as expounded earlier, one of the key issues at stake centers on "socialized" mechanisms through which the existing paradigm is reproduced and reinforced; such mechanisms include IR publication systems and pedagogy (i.e., the ways in which IR is researched/published and taught). The stakes in these mechanisms are far higher than they first seem to be, since they play a direct role in the aforementioned selection and elimination practices associated with academic disciplinary socialization and politics. Hence, if we can *change* the mechanisms in ways that more fully endorse the validity of a wide range of epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and empirical/spatial perspectives, then more substantial bearings may become possible in terms of moving IR toward a pluralistic discipline.

Yet, a tricky question remains, namely, how such 'socialized' and thereby well-established mechanisms can be changed. Here, I suggest "reflexive pluralism," as an encounter between pleas for pluralism and self-reflexivity. Before I plunge into this, however, there is one more question of pluralism that needs to be addressed: "what kinds" (e.g., engaged or disengaged forms) of pluralism should be pursued? Regardless of whether we agree

on the extent of the diversity in IR or on the issues at stake in rendering IR theory more diverse, the field is *likely* to become more pluralist in that "everyone," as Dunne, Hansen, and Wight (2013: 415) have commented, agrees pluralism is a "desirable position" for the "better future" of IR (see also Kratochwil 2003; Hellmann 2003). This motivates us to ponder whether IR should pursue the promotion of dialogue and engagement across the existing and proliferating theoretical divides. Further, even if a pluralist IR is likely to be a daunting, perhaps Sisyphean, task, "dialogue" deserves our serious attention, for (as will be discussed in detail in the following chapter) a dialogic vision of knowledge production is frequently called for as one of IR's ambitions. If so, an important—and still unanswered—question is *how* can we promote dialogue and engagement in IR?

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CHAPTER 4

"What Kind" of Pluralism Should We Pursue and How Can It Be Achieved?

Abstract This chapter draws attention to the issue of "dialogue" in a pluralist yet fragmented IR. "More interaction and dialogue" in the field is repeatedly called for; yet IR researchers do not explicitly articulate how to produce deep engagement and dialogue. This chapter thus focuses on methodological issues, namely *how to* generate active dialogues and interactions across 'the enduring positivist–post-positivist divide' in the field. Here, it is argued that if methodology is more seriously considered by post-positivist IR scholarship *not* as a subordinated conjunction of a particular ontology or epistemology, but in its own right, and the methods associated with empirical knowledge production are *practiced* more fully in post-positivist IR research, then the space where "research interests overlap" can be created and widened. In order to illustrate the points advocated in this chapter, I offer methodological guidelines for applying critical realism to empirical analysis in the study of the state's external behavior.

Keywords theoretical fragmentation and divide • positivist–post-positivist divide • dialogue and engagement • critical realism

The question of whether IR should pursue dialogue and engagement across the existing and proliferating theoretical divides is answered in the affirmative without much controversy. In effect, many IR scholars argue that the goal should be to move toward a field of study in which not only

Y.-S. Eun, *Pluralism and Engagement in the Discipline of International Relations*, DOI 10.1007/978-981-10-1121-4_4

diversity but also active engagement and dialogue occur across competing theoretical paradigms—more to the point, between the positivist and the post-positivist paradigms (see Brecher and Harvey 2002; Smith 2003; Hellmann 2003; Lebow 2011; Tickner 2011; Hutchings 2011; Jackson 2011; Dunne et al. 2013; Wight 2013). Different though they are, the common arguments posed by each of these scholars can be summarized as follows: the overall theoretical terrain of contemporary IR has become richer and more broad due to the emergence and development of post-positivism, namely critical theory, feminist theory, (critical) constructivism, post-structuralism, and scientific/critical realism; yet, if dialogue or engagement is lacking in such a pluralistic IR, the arguments posit, the field will become fragmented and divided. This impedes progress in our understanding of the "complexities" of today's world (Little and Smith 2006: 93–96). Furthermore, 'pluralism without engagement' might lead to a nihilist perspective of epistemic relativism in which no one really bothers to adjudicate competing theoretical claims, with "each seeking to produce warranted assertions *in their own way*" (Jackson 2015: 13–15; Dunne et al. 2013: 415–416). This is pernicious to knowledge "accumulation," in particular, to the progressive accumulation of "theoretical knowledge," and thereby to progress in IR (Brecher and Harvey 2002: 2).

In effect, the present state of IR appears to confirm such concern. Although contemporary IR has a wider theoretical lens and more analytical tools than had hitherto been the case, the discipline—as the enduring positivist–post-positivist divide demonstrates—is currently in a state of theoretical fragmentation and divide dominated by monologue (Dunne et al. 2013: 418; Lake 2013: 580). Going a step further, Barry Buzan and Richard Little (2001: 19–31) note that IR has a particularly strong "tradition" of both inward-looking thought and fragmentation between "relatively small research schools." They see this as one of the reasons for "Why International Relations has Failed as an Intellectual Project." Gerard van der Ree (2013: 43) concurs with this point, adding that it is exactly in such a context of fragmentation and interschool rivalry that the status of knowledge is often determined and resolved not by the validity of truth claims, but by how claims are presented through "representational schemes." Others also remain deeply concerned about the interschool rivalry *without* dialogue in IR, in view of the present state of affairs in the discipline, as one of the greatest stumbling blocks to progress in terms of both enhancing our theoretical understandings and addressing complex real-world issues. For example, Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein

(2011, 2010: 411–423) opine that intellectual discourse in IR has become increasingly dominated by "paradigmatic clashes in which champions extol the virtues of a particular analytical perspective to the *exclusion* of others." They then conclude that this attitude "hinders efforts to understand the complexities of the world." Similarly, David Lake (2013: 571, 2011: 11, emphasis added) comments that, in contemporary IR scholarship, "positivist and reflectivist alike, have simply retreated to their own corners of a multi-sided boxing ring, occasionally tossing a punch in one or the other direction but more often talking *amongst* themselves and complaining of not being taken seriously by others" … "Intellectual progress does not come from proclaiming ever more loudly the superiority of one's approach to audiences who *have stopped listening*."

A Gap in the Ongoing Discussion on Engagement and Dialogue

It is in this respect that a considerable number of prominent IR scholars, including Lapid (2003); Sil and Katzenstein (2010); Jackson (2011); Hutchings (2011); Acharya (2016); Tickner (2011); Dunne et al. (2013), have all claimed that IR needs *more* dialogue and engagement. As Hutchings (2011: 640) aptly writes, "predominant strands of thought, both mainstream and critical, in the IR academy have traditionally welcomed dialogic exchange as part of the process of discovery of new truths." However, despite such an agreement and legitimate concerns, the worry remains simply because their discussion or suggestion tends to exist in the form of a plea (for more dialogue and engagement) lacking necessary insight into *how to* achieve the desired goal. That is, although "more interaction and dialogue" in IR is repeatedly called for (see, e.g., Jackson 2011: 188, 207–212; Dunne et al. 2013: 407, 416; Wight 2013: 343–344), researchers do not explicitly articulate how to produce deep engagement and dialogue in the field marked by the positivist–post-positivist divide. For example, Dunne, Hansen, and Wight argue that IR should move toward "integrative pluralism" in which not only diversity but, more importantly, "engagement" across competing theoretical paradigms is encouraged. However, their argument is not followed by a corresponding development in the sophistication of discussion on how to achieve this "engagement" in a divided IR. Without a fuller exposition either of *how* engagement can be generated and promoted among "researchers" working in discrete theoretical paradigms or of *where* research concerns

and interests "overlap" across the theoretical divide in IR, they write as follows: "The ultimate test of integrative pluralism will be researchers from multiple perspectives engaging in the practice of pluralism through engagement with alternative positions where their concerns and research interests overlap" (Dunne et al. 2013: 417).

In short, although those concerned about the theoretical divide and fragmentation in IR persistently call for engagement and dialogue, they do not go "beyond" their call to elaborate on how one might or should achieve this. It is this that is the primary concern of this chapter. If, as many IR scholars argue, IR's goal is to move toward a field of study involving active engagement and dialogue across theoretical paradigms (more to the point, between the positivist and the post-positivist paradigms), then we must think further than the tautological advice of "paying more attention to" or "listening more carefully to" each other. This is of enormous significance to IR, for the field remains (or is likely to remain more) pluralistic *yet* "divided" (Lake 2013: 579) due to the "theoretical proliferation" at the incommensurable metatheoretical level (Dunne et al. 2013: 408; Reus-Smit 2013) and to the increase of interest in IR theory in non-Western (e.g., Asian) countries. Unfortunately, however, appropriate attention has not yet been focused on the question of *how to* generate a deeper or denser engagement and dialogue within the field. In this light, I intend to fill this existing gap by providing some suggestions regarding the how-question.

How to Achieve Active Engagement and Dialogue in a Divided IR?

Some careful thinking is needed at the outset. First, to say 'we need to promote engagement and dialogue in a divided IR' does not simply suggest that we ought to aim to achieve a *unified* field of study. The main purpose in calling for more engagement and dialogue in the discipline is to develop and accumulate knowledge that can help us widen and sharpen our understanding of complex international relations, not to unify knowledge in a particular realm of inquiry by recourse to a certain method. For example, when an engaged form of pluralism is discussed in the IR literature, it largely refers to a position that encourages more interactions and dialogues across the dividing line between theoretical paradigms in contemporary IR *while* accepting the coexistence of competing philosophical grounds and embracing the validity of a wide range of theoretical

and methodological perspectives. This is a position far from epistemic unity. Indeed, quite the opposite is the case. Even when Tim Dunne and his colleagues argue for "integrative" pluralism, they emphasize "more diversity than 'unity through pluralism' and more interaction than 'disengaged pluralism'" (Dunne et al. 2013: 407).[1] Similarly, when Laura Sjoberg and J. Samuel Barkin propose "multiple methods," they make it clear that combining different epistemologies is "not our intent" (Barkin and Sjoberg 2015a; Sjoberg 2015: 1007). A similar line of thinking is also found in Hutchings' discussion about dialogue beyond "the West/non-West distinction." She points to the importance of "dialogue as conversation," which presupposes little about who or how many are speaking, *as opposed to* dialogue as "a kind of negotiation," which inevitably involves subsumption or synthesis in favor of the powerful (Hutchings 2011: 641-643).

Viewed in this context, the calls for more engagement and dialogue across theories in the field should not be read within a horizon of unity of inquiry. Instead, it can be said that dialogue is being called for to more clearly indicate when each approach offers greater understandings and where their research interests (can) "overlap" and thus complementarily generate better insights. Having made this point clear, it seems appropriate now to turn our attention to the "how" question raised above.

I believe that one of the most effective ways to activate engagement and dialogue within the *present* state of IR is first to constitute and expand points of contact and common reference between "divided" theoretical paradigms or "isms"—that is, between (neo)positivism and post-positivism (or between "rationalism" and "reflectivism," to borrow Keohane's term). Here, methodology and methods, particularly in post-positivist contexts, can serve as such useful points of contact. Roughly speaking, there are three interrelated reasons for this suggestion.

"Incommensurability"

A first (and straightforward) reason is that it is not methodology or a method per se, but philosophical stances, which give rise to the so-called

[1] Of course, there are exceptions. Alexander Wendt's latest attempt to unify physical and social ontology based on "quantum consciousness theory" and Andrew Bennett's persistent call for "middle ground" epistemologies are probably two of the most prominent and recent examples. See Wendt (2015) and Bennett (2015).

"incommensurability" between competing "isms," or to what Lake (2011: 465) terms "academic sectarianism" which engages in "self-affirming research and then wage[s] theological debates." In the disciplinary history of IR, the "great debates" and theoretical divide have largely revolved around fundamental differences *in terms of philosophical* (namely, ontological and epistemological) positions. For example, what is the world made of? Is there a "mind-independent" world? (Jackson 2011) What do we mean by "scientific" research? (Neumann 2014). Can we have any "knowledge beyond the realm of experience?" (Suganami 2013: 254). Different answers or stances to such philosophical questions have been major contributors to the impasse in the "debates" in IR; in the ongoing (third or fourth) "debate," in particular, the center of "incommensurability" is ontology and epistemology—for instance, assumptions about objectivity and subjectivity and the roles and functions of science (Wæver 1996: 156–157). In other words, it is a distinctive set of what Jackson (2011: 196–197) calls "philosophical ontological" presuppositions that should take the foremost responsibility for rendering the dividing line between the theoretical paradigms apparent and tenacious in the discipline. Martin Hollis and Steve Smith's influential book, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* explains that there are always (at least) "two stories" to tell about international relations—because of mutually "irreconcilable" *philosophical* underpinnings embedded in our debates about world politics (Hollis and Smith 1990: 211–215). Viewed in this light, the problem of "incommensurability" or the positivist–post-positivist divide is likely to remain unresolved in IR.

However, it is important to recall here that activation of engagement and dialogue in a divided IR does *not* aim for philosophical or theoretical unification, and that underlying sources of "incommensurability" and the theoretical divide in IR are derived from differences not at a methodological level, but at the level of philosophy/metatheory. Rather, methodology and methods *can* more frequently and freely travel across the boundaries set by ontology or epistemology than is generally recognized in the field. Although, for example, IR has a tendency to pair a certain group of methods (e.g., quantitative methods) with a certain position of metatheory (e.g., positivism); this association is not a given outcome. Such a limited pairing is not only unnecessary, but is "counterproductive" to improving our understanding of international relations—as Samuel Barkin and Laura Sjoberg's edited volume (forthcoming) demonstrates.[2] Obviously,

[2] I will come back to this important work shortly.

ontology, epistemology, and methodology are closely related; Marsh and Furlong (2002: 21) assert that the relationships among ontology, epistemology, and methodology are like "a skin, not a sweater that can be put on when we are addressing philosophical issues and taken off when we are doing political research." But this does not suggest that the use of methodologies and methods should be *subordinated to* a certain ontological or epistemological position. Even if the boundaries and gaps between "isms" are rigid and wide, and thus interactive discussions and dialogues seem to be a tall order, this is a difficulty located mainly at the level of metatheory and is associated with incommensurable *philosophical* underpinnings. A constructive and interesting engagement can indeed take place through methodology and methods since the latter is able to provide opportunities for IR researchers, working in bounded "isms," to explore the potential (or previously unrecognized) similarities and "overlaps" between paradigms and thus realize the benefits of further interactions and dialogues.

For example, critical theorists, who do not accept a problem-solving epistemology of positivism, could (and, to a certain extent, need to) employ positivist *methods* as the critical nature of their theory is in effect produced by "reflexive recognition" of social and political worlds, and such recognition must be "based on an *empirical* assessment" of how social and political realities are produced and evolve throughout history (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 681–682).[3] Once they realize that their research can benefit from the employment of methodological tools that have not yet been fully recognized or utilized because of metatheoretical commitments, more interactions and engagements are likely to be motivated. In brief, if anything is likely to be a candidate for promoting dialogue between "divided" theoretical paradigms, it has to be methodology and methods, rather than ontology or epistemology. The former could avoid the issue of the so-called "irresolvability" of basic philosophical issues *while* playing a substantive role in finding, constituting, and expanding points of contact and common reference in a divided IR.

In addition, the logic that methodology, as opposed to metatheory, can serve as an effective platform on which dialogue across competing paradigms can be facilitated seems to be at play in promoting "global dialogue" in IR beyond the West/non-West distinction. Here, a comment of Yan Xuetong, who is well known for offering strong support for "Chinese IR" as an alternative to the current Western (American)-centric IR, is

[3] This point will be discussed in relation to promotion of engagement and dialogue in a divided IR in more detail in a later section.

worth quoting. In a recent interview with a Western IR journal where he discusses "Chinese realism" and the Chinese "Tsinghua School" of IR, he makes the following interesting comments: "I think there are two major thinkers that matter [for Chines IR] here: Qin Yaqing and Zhao Tingyang. Actually I think there is some similarity between Qin Yaqing and myself, and what Qin and me share is that we do not have a connection with Zhao Tingyang, because Zhao is a *philosopher* and his books are about *philosophy*, rather than about the real world … As for Qin, we are very close, but we have different approaches. If you look at the details, you will also find much we have in common. For instance, his method of study is also very scientific; both of us use the scientific *method*. On that basis, it is easy for us to communicate with each other" (Creutzfeldt 2012, emphasis added). In other words, despite the fact that Yan Xuetong's thoughts are different from those of Qin Yaqing (e.g., in terms of the unit of analysis), he believes that the use of a similar research method enables them to have a dialogue. As discussed earlier in detail, there are also strong commitments to (positivist) *methods* in other Asian IR communities, including Japan and South Korea. Although Asian IR has persistently attempted to build indigenous IR theories, such endeavors have been carried out with a belief that Asia has distinctive ontologies, *not* methodologies, made up of unique cultural practices, histories, and traditions. Rather, Asian IR communities commonly highlight the significance of "method" even in the case of establishing an indigenous IR theory. The *ways* in which theory is built, tested, and eventually accepted or rejected are a matter of great concern to both advocates and critics in the discussion of "non-Western" IR theory building in the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean IR communities (Song 2001; Choi 2008; Yamamoto 2011; Chen 2011). Of course, this is not to say that method(ology) is the sole means to promoting dialogue between theoretical (and spatial) divides, but only that dialogue can be generated more actively in the realm of method(ology) as compared with those of ontology or epistemology.

Points of Contact

A second reason is based on a more practical consideration of the existing norm underlying knowledge production in IR. Methodology and methods "have increasingly been placed at the heart" of IR scholarship (or at least of mainstream IR) in terms of both research/publishing and teaching practices (Aradau and Huysmans 2014: 597; see also, for a similar

observation, Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2010). This is mainly because methodology and methods are treated as the most important criteria on which to judge competing knowledge claims and thus ensure legitimate or so-called scientific knowledge in the present state of IR. In fact, according to Lawrence Mead's 2010 study, methodological advice and standards are seen as indispensable components of any actually existing line of "scientific" research over the entire discipline of political science, including IR (Mead 2010: 454). And, as Jackson (2015: 13) notes, the currently "dominant" methodological position in IR is taken up (or "usurped" to use Roy Bhaskar's word) by (neo) positivism which has, *whether we like it or not*, very clear and specific methodological principles and procedures, such as hypothesis testing with statistical techniques. For example, Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba's *Designing Social Inquiry*—which "has strongly influenced the methods of study of many contemporary liberal, realist and even constructivist theorists in IR" (Kurki 2007: 361)—is firmly grounded in a *positivist* understanding of what the "scientific" study of world politics should entail. More specifically, *Designing Social Inquiry* conceives the goal of "scientific" research as "inference," arguing that we should make inferential claims from empirical observations based on the rules and methods developed in the context of statistical analysis. Going a step further, King et al. hold that "the logic of good qualitative and good quantitative research designs do not fundamentally differ" in the sense that a unified (positivist) *method* of inference can and should be applied to both (King et al. 1994: vii–3).

In short, here "good," "scientific" research is defined in positivist *methodological* terms. As David Lake writes, "there is now substantial agreement on the basic methodology of and standards for *positivist* social-scientific research" (Lake 2013: 578–579, emphasis added). Consider, for example, the fact that statistical analysis, hypothesis testing, and data manipulation have become indispensable requirements of all IR methodological courses at universities (Hagmann and Biersteker 2014). Given this *existing* disciplinary norm of IR that foregrounds methodology and methods in the process of knowledge production as well as positivist scholars' serious and persistent concerns with them, it is necessary—if not sufficient—for *post-positivists* to pay greater attention to methodology and especially to methods in order to create more opportunities for dialogue in the present state of IR. Put otherwise, a corresponding development in the post-positivist version of methodology and methods is needed to achieve "engaged" pluralism in the field. Again, this is not to suggest that methodology or

methods should be prioritized in the study of world politics, nor does it suggest that the positivist commitment to methods associated with empirical evaluation is all IR needs in order to locate itself on a "scientific" ground. What it does suggest is that bringing about a deep engagement and dialogue in the discipline requires, at minimum, active post-positivist engagement in methodology and methods in order to constitute useful *points of contact* given the methodology-centered norm underlying the process of knowledge production in IR. Unfortunately, however, there is a relative lack of concern with or discussion of methodological issues encountered in the performance of post-positivist research; methodology and especially methods tend to be spoken of either in a vague or in a negative way within post-positivist scholarship. In Iver B. Neumann's words: "In IR, the discipline's quantitative practitioners are passionate about the problems surrounding data programming, in such a degree that one sometimes wonders if counting is not being substituted for thinking, but at least the quants do engage in a debate about methods. Those of us who mostly do qualitative stuff, however, must be severely faulted for having largely neglected methods" (Neumann 2014: 337–338).

To be sure, there have been several meaningful and important attempts made by post-positivist IR scholars to address methodological questions; these include Jennifer Milliken's widely cited piece on discourse analysis (Milliken 1999); Lene Hansen's work considering "intertextuality" as the methodological core of the critical study of security and foreign policy analysis (Hansen 2006); Brooke Ackerly, Maria Stern, and Jacqui True's edited volume on feminist IR methodologies highlighting "reflexivity" of the self (Ackerly et al. 2006); Vincent Pouliot's "sobjectivism" as a constructivist methodology (Pouliot 2007); and more recently the 2014 article by Claudia Aradau and Jef Huysmans on the roles and political functions of methods in the discipline. These studies, however, seem to be exceptional examples rather than representative cases in generally accepted research *practices* of post-positivist IR scholarship. Furthermore, on closer examination, post-positivist IR studies on methodology, despite their contributions, tend to treat methodological issues as subordinate to the philosophical and normative stances they advocate.[4] Let me clarify these points further.

Generally speaking, post-positivist IR scholarship remains skeptical about actively engaging in methodology. Methodology and especially methods tend to be considered as something that are "at best touched

[4] There are some exceptions; these include Alker (1996); Sjoberg and Horowitz (2013).

upon in the opening pages of monographs" (Neumann 2014: 338). In effect, as Aradau and Huysmans observe, correctly in my view, there is a strong tendency in post-positivist IR scholarship to see methodology and methods as "a disciplining and constraining tool ... *tainted by* the allegation of positivism"; for this reason, "many critical IR theorists have privileged ontology and epistemology … *at the expense of* methodology … Despite other differences, constructivist, post-structuralist, feminist and critical realist scholars would largely agree on this move towards ontology and/or epistemology *contra* … method" (Aradau and Huysmans 2014: 597–601, emphasis added).

In this context, post-positivist discussions about methodology and methods are often subsumed or tapped *within* a boundary of metatheory; the idea that ontology or epistemology comes first is commonly found in post-positivist IR research. Consider, for example, Pouliot's argument for "sobjectivism"; Colin Wight's discussion on the "agent-structure problem" in IR; or Brooke Ackerly, Maria Stern, and Jacqui True's work on "feminist IR." Although they discuss methodology—from different angles—they all do so on the terrain of metatheory *as if* methodology functions or exists only in relation to certain ontological or epistemological positions. More specifically, what Ackerly and her colleagues (Ackerly et al. 2006: 4–10) intend to search for is methodological tools *commensurate with* their epistemological commitments based on feminist understandings of knowledge and politics.[5] Going a step further, Wight (2006: 259) writes as follows: "Methodologies are always, or at least should be, ontologically specific." Put simply, the main concerns of post-positivist IR research lie in philosophical, rather than methodological issues *where* the chances of bringing about dialogue (i.e., creating points of contact) in contemporary IR are slim.[6] The bottom line is that *more exceptions* to these trends discerned in post-positivist IR scholarship—namely, a shortage of work on methodology and especially methods as well as a "metatheoretically bounded" approach to discussion of methodological issues—are required to generate more dialogues in contemporary IR.

[5] A similar line of thinking is also found in J. Ann Tickner's (2005) work, "So What Is Your Research Program? Some Feminist Answers to International Relations Methodological Questions?"

[6] Again, recall the existing disciplinary norm of IR which foregrounds methodology and methods in production of knowledge.

Translating Metatheoretical Insights into Empirical Knowledge

Closely related to this point is my third reason. I suggest that post-positivists need to dedicate more intellectual resources and research concerns to methodology and methods in order to clarify how their *metatheoretical* insights lead to producing different types of *empirical* knowledge. It seems that even in those (few exceptional) post-positivist IR studies which place methodology firmly at the heart of the work, there is a serious lack of elaborate discussions or concrete examples of how their insights and suggestions can be translated into empirical knowledge, and with what kinds of *methods*. For example, Aradau and Huysmans' recent work, despite its special emphasis on "methods," attempts to reconceptualize methods as "political devices which enact worlds and acts which disrupt particular worlds" (Aradau and Huysmans 2014: 598), without an exposition of how their advocated reconceptualization of method is translated into empirical knowledge or connected with the fabric of "empiry." I think that methodologies *tailored for* ontological, epistemological, or normative positions favored by the post-positivist paradigm are not sufficient to induce dialogue and engagement in IR, a divided field in which positivist, empirical approaches remain at the center of the methodology of the field. Rather, there is a need for post-positivist scholarship to offer specific and explicit methodological guidelines on how to traverse the bridge that connects the insights of their favored ontologies or epistemologies to empirical research and knowledge (at least) for the sake of a vigorous dialogue in IR.

In the disciplinary history of IR, there has been a long-standing "scepticism about the relevance of post-positivist IR to empirical research" (see Keohane 1988; Hamati-Ataya 2013: 670); as such, reducing or overturning such skepticism is not only useful but also a necessary step to be taken in the process of bringing about dialogue and engagement in a divided IR. As already explained, methodology and methods are at the center of attention and practice in the field (or at least in mainstream IR); and what "scientific" research of international relations should entail is frequently conceived of in a methodological sense intimately tied to *empirical* analysis and evaluation. Christian Reus-Smit (2013: 604) observes: "[t]raditionally, mainstream International Relations scholars (and political scientists) confined the field to empirical-theoretic inquiry on [positivist] epistemological principle … The tenuous nature of this position is now widely acknowledged by mainstream scholars." Even analytical eclecticism, which

draws insights from multiple theoretical perspectives, is intrinsically an "empirical-theoretic" project. Rudra Sil and Peter J. Katzenstein, who have long argued for analytical eclecticism, emphasize the complementarity or intersection of *empirical* puzzles identified by contending paradigms. In their words, an eclectic approach aims "to recognize and evaluate what is going on in different research traditions concerned with different aspects of problems … in *empirical* terms" (Katzenstein and Sil 2008: 126, emphasis added). Put simply, analytical eclecticism—which "has quite rapidly become part of mainstream debates about the kind of knowledge the field ought to pursue" (Reus-Smit 2013: 604; Wight 2013: 327)—is intended to address empirical puzzles and produce empirical knowledge. Viewed in this light, discussing and practicing methodology and methods in post-positivist contexts with the aim of generating different types of empirical knowledge could spark considerable interest and attention among IR scholars, including skeptics of post-positivist thinking; this can in turn motivate positivists to listen more carefully to their counterparts.

An important point that needs emphasis here is that the initiation of dialogue is rarely made by positivists (i.e., the mainstream). As Tickner (2011: 609, 611) puts it, they (as "winners") have "rarely been willing to engage with losers" in a series of "debates" in the disciplinary history of IR. Even if the "losers" show great interest in dialogue, it is "not reciprocated by the mainstream" as long as those interests remain on the level of metatheory. In order to *initiate* much-needed dialogues between positivist and post-positivist paradigms, therefore, methodology, especially empirical modes of methodology, need to be taken more seriously and practiced more fully by post-positivist scholarship. As such, what is advocated here should not be seen as a hierarchical approach to dialogue.

Furthermore, employment of empirical methods in addressing post-positivist questions can be considered a useful way of connecting post-positivist insights at a philosophical level to knowledge at the level of empiry (and thereby promoting dialogue between "isms"). For example, in order to achieve human "emancipation," which is the main concern of critical theory, an "empirically grounded assessment" of the evolution of social systems and how social actors are involved in the evolution (i.e., production and reproduction) of meaning is necessary (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 688; Devetak 2014: 417–422). Statistics can play an important and useful role in providing "the empirical *basis* for theoretical arguments, whether those arguments themselves are positivist or not" (see Barkin 2008, 2015; Barkin and Sjoberg 2015b). Also, the Alker 1996

work of Hayward Alker shows that post-structuralist research can make use of mathematics and modeling in highly innovative ways, challenging commonsensical understandings of their "scientific" functions. In addition, as Barkin and Sjoberg's 2015 book on methodology demonstrates, critical and constructivist IR research can benefit from the use of quantitative, formal, and computational methods. Sjoberg's chapter, in particular, demonstrates that the tools of geometric and computational topology are very productive to and useful in carrying out concept mapping for critical theorizing in IR.[7]

In addition, the prospective benefits to be generated through post-positivists' more active engagement with empirical forms of methodology and methods can involve not only the achievement of interactive forms of debates across the theoretical divide in IR, but also the development of post-positivist IR scholarship. As long as post-positivism remains in the realm of metatheory, it can neither produce the type of alternative theory with which post-positivist scholars hope to replace positivism, nor dynamically inform the socio-historical knowledge of the world. In this regard, Inanna Hamati-Ataya's observation is worthy of note. In a discussion of the core concept of a critical IR, namely "reflexivity," she comments as follows: "Surely, reflexivity itself must result from an empirical assessment of whether/how knowledge is subtended by 'politico-normative' or 'ideological' principles. Reflexivity is therefore necessarily produced by and productive of empirical knowledge. The move from meta-theory … to empiry is therefore logically and praxically necessary for critical IR." She adds: "One way of doing so is to translate reflexivity into a methodology for empirical social science" (Hamati-Ataya 2013: 681–682, emphasis added). Although she does not go into detail about how to "translate" it, the point she makes is clear: there is need for sophisticated development of post-positivist methodology for empirical research in IR. Sharing this concern, several critical IR theorists have highlighted the practical meaning of reflexivity for *empirical* IR (see, e.g., Guzzini 2005; Lynch 2008; Ackerly and True 2008).

In this regard, what Steve Smith wrote more than a decade ago is still relevant: "the acid test for the success of alternative and critical approaches is the extent to which they have led to empirically grounded work that explores the range and variety of world politics" (Smith 2002: 36).

[7] I would like to thank Samuel and Laura for sharing their insights regarding their forthcoming book with me.

Nonetheless, as Gerard van der Ree (2013) writes, methods of knowledge representation and production associated with numbers, modeling, and mathematics are "generally evaded in postmodern, post-structural, and critical scholarship." With respect to this trend, van der Ree (2013: 42) goes on to say: "to unreflexively disregard numbers and mathematics (which are in themselves languages) in an attempt to escape knowledge hierarchies seems to throw out the baby with the bathwater." In other words, while evading numbers and mathematics, post-positivists forfeit a valuable opportunity to develop a more nuanced and reflexive understanding of the "disciplinary" functions and roles of numbers and mathematics within the discipline, such as the relationships between numerical knowledge representation and the so-called science question. This in turn allows positivist scholarship to claim numbers and mathematics as legitimate sources of authority; as a result, debates between positivists and post-positivists remain based on stereotypes and/or misunderstandings.

To reemphasize, this does not suggest that (positivist) methodology or methods should be prioritized in the study of international relations but only that more dialogue in the present state of IR requires, at minimum, active engagement of post-positivists in methodology and methods. Relatedly, what is advocated here should not be interpreted as an absolute endorsement of empirical methods favored by positivist analysts. To say that methodology and (empirical) methods can be very useful points of contact in IR is not to argue for positivism as such. As mentioned at the outset of this section, methodology and methods are a means, not an end, to produce and advance knowledge of international relations. To this end, we must first communicate with each other. Only after having vigorous dialogues, can we realize more clearly when each approach offers greater insights and, more importantly, where the research concerns "overlap." In other words, without dialogue or engagement across approaches, both the expansion and sophistication of knowledge are likely to remain inchoate, for it is neither easy to identify what is missing in our own understandings and approaches nor feasible to make our critiques of other (completing) approaches and accounts in the field heard unless we talk to each other.

If methodology and methods are seen as effective devices for seeing ourselves in others and seeing others in ourselves in a divided IR, *rather than* as "a disciplining and constraining tool" used to judge the "scientificity" of knowledge (Aradau and Huysmans 2014: 597), then the skepticism about the tools harbored by many post-positivist (particularly post-modern) IR researchers could be reduced and motivation to engage

in methodological questions might be increased instead. Hence, methodology and methods, which seem to remain at the margins of post-positivist IR scholarship, deserve renewed attention while being acknowledged as focal points of *contacts and dialogues* between the positivist and post-positivist paradigms. Tim Dunne, Lene Hansen, and Colin Wight (2013: 407, 417) have heighted "overlap" of research interests in realizing "integrative pluralism." I believe that if methodologies, in particular methods associated with empirical knowledge production, are more seriously and fully considered and practiced by post-positivist IR scholarship not as a subordinated conjunction of a particular ontology or epistemology but in its own right, then the space where "research interests overlap" can be created and widened, thereby moving IR one step closer to a dialogic community.

Having articulated what is needed for promoting dialogue and engagement aimed to achieve the progress of knowledge in IR, it seems appropriate (and necessary) to provide an example to further illustrate my point. This is especially so given the tendency that even those who argue for a post-positivist research "program" that foregrounds empirical analysis neither provide specific methodological guidelines nor give concrete illustrations with respect to how to do so; they tend rather to focus on *why* we should pursue this (for a similar critique, see Harvey and Cobb 2003: 145).

For the purpose of illustration, I focus on the example of critical realism (CR) and offer the methodological guidelines for its empirical analysis in the study of the state's external behavior. I particularly choose CR as an example in the hope that this chapter will generate dialogue, going "beyond" a plea toward *actually* engaging in narrowing the serious gap between positivist paradigm and post-positivist paradigm in IR. Consider the fact that in recent years CR has become one of the major metatheoretical issues in our discipline (Patomäki 2002; Wight 2006; Kurki 2008; Joseph and Wight 2010), and that a main criticism of CR is its lack of concern with methodological issues (see, e.g., Hall 2009, 629–630; Lebow 2011, 1226).

The following methodological discussion is by no means exhaustive or comprehensive in scope. In a short chapter such as this, it is neither feasible nor reasonable to aim (or expect) to comprehend CR and then show how to implement it in empirical IR research. Nonetheless, I trust that the discussion in the ensuing pages, despite its necessary brevity, will be useful for further illuminating the key point put forward above, namely

the importance of post-positivist active engagement in methodology and methods, especially in relation to empirical analysis, *for* generating more dialogues and interactions across the positivist–post-positivist divide in IR.

An Illustration: Critical Realism in Methodological Practice

CR is a movement in philosophy, the human sciences, and cognate practices most closely associated with—in the sense of identified with or emanating from—the work of Roy Bhaskar in transcending the overriding dichotomy or split between "a hyper-naturalistic positivism and an anti-naturalistic hermeneutics" (Archer et al. 1998, ix–xiii). A detailed examination of CR is beyond the scope of this short section and can be found elsewhere (for essential readings see the 1998 book, entitled *Critical Realism*, published by the Center for Critical Realism and edited by Roy Bhaskar, Margaret Archer, Andrew Collier, Tony Lawson, and Alan Norrie). For my purposes, it is sufficient to state the core assumptions of CR regarding the causation and nature of social reality which can be summarized in terms of the following points: causes exist as (ontologically) real forces in the world around us ("nothing comes from nothing"); the social world is an open system; causes in the social world are often unobservable; and our society "is not the unconditioned creation of human agents but neither does it exist independently of it … and individual action neither completely determines nor is completely determined by social forms" (Bhaskar 1982: 286).

Based on such (ontological) assumptions, CR claims that both human agents and social structures—that is, both agential and structural (ideational and material) factors and elements—are necessary for any social act to be possible, since they are ontologically real objects (causes for actions) and are interlinked: every social act, event, or phenomenon is only possible insofar as the structural contexts/conditions for action as well as the agents who act exist.

The metatheoretical insights of CR have manifold implications for international relations. For example, the state's foreign policy behaviors can be understood as a result of a dynamic process in which human agents (e.g., policy-makers) and the structural conditions with which those agents are faced causally affect each other. More specifically, while it is indeed conscious human policy-makers who make foreign policies and therefore that foreign policies reflect the core beliefs about political and social life held by the actual policy-makers involved, the parameters of the policy-makers'

capacity to do so are set (constrained and/or facilitated) by the structural conditions surrounding their respective states—such as geography, international norms, or distribution of material power. In this vein, a critical realist study of international relations assumes that the causes of the state's behavior in world politics can be both structural and agential in both material and ideational senses, and thus argues that the concept of causes should be liberated from "the deterministic and mechanistic connotations that it has in much of International Relations scholarship" (Kurki 2008, 11). In short, CR posits that agential and structural (material and ideational) factors of state behavior always come *together* in complex and *non-predetermined* ways. It further criticizes the positivist conceptions of cause and causal analysis their underlying "regularity-determinism" entails the narrowing down of theoretical, conceptual, and methodological horizons in the study of the state's external behavior although states behave in ontologically interrelated, complex relations between the agent and the structure (Bhaskar 1978, 70).

Methodologically, then, it follows that CR adopts a pluralist approach: contrary to the positivist emphasis on quantitative methods and the interpretive emphasis on qualitative methods, CR emphasizes methodological pluralism (Kurki and Wight 2013: 27). According to critical realists, the question of whether material factors or ideational issues are the most important in determining outcomes is an empirical matter that can be decided only on the basis of research that examines *the relationship and interplay of both*. As such, analysts must be open pari passu to both quantitative and qualitative methods and data so that they can examine the causal influence of the material and ideological factors associated with the complex interplay between the structure and the agent. In a methodological sense what this suggests is that IR researchers concerned with why-questions about state behavior employ a multicausal and open-ended approach in which while the causal status of both structural and agential (material and ideational) factors are accepted, the relative causal effects among the chosen factors are *not* predetermined. The methodological position discussed here can simply be referred to as an open-ended multicausal approach to explanation. It follows that to decide whether the factors chosen are actual explanatory variables of an observed phenomenon depends on empirical investigations into the causal influences (explanatory strength) of each of the several/multiple factors chosen with regard to the observed phenomenon. Consequently, IR researchers who seek to obtain a plausible answer to the question of what really happened causally in

the observed phenomenon—in other words, attempt to search for causation beyond correlation—need to perforce examine whether the causal capacities of the chosen factors on which the *potential* causal status is conferred have been *activated* through quantitative *and* qualitative forms of empirical investigations into the explanatory weight of the factors, using *both* hard data and soft data; and then reconstruct the causal processes of the observed phenomenon with the factors that receive empirical support concerning the explanatory power.

This may sound too complicated, but 'a multicausal and open-ended approach' is manageable if a method of isolation and exclusion is invoked. For example, suppose we are puzzled as to why a particular nation (e.g., the USA) embarked on certain external action (e.g., go to war against Iraq), and that on the basis of a rich ontological assumption, we would choose the political beliefs of key policy-makers (e.g., George W. Bush) as *one* of the several causal factors in searching for an answer to this why-question. While isolating, or in Anthony Giddens' words (1979, 80) "bracketing" off,[8] the other potential causal factors for the moment, what we should do is to examine the explanatory/causal strength of the chosen factor—the subject's political beliefs. In order to do so, we need first to infer the subject's (Bush's) political beliefs through a close investigation of his public and/or private statements—for example, speeches, interviews, press conferences—which display his views on the nature of political and social life (for classic illustrations of this method, see Holsti 1962, 1967). Having inferred his political beliefs, we will be able to discern if the causal capacity of Bush's political beliefs was activated—that is to say, we can determine the explanatory power of the subject's political beliefs—by seeing whether the final decision he made was consistent with his beliefs: this is, in Alexander George's terminology, the "congruence procedure" (George 1969; for subsequent research, see, e.g., Young and Schafer 1998; Schafer and Walker 2006; Renshon 2008). And if the test confirms the explanatory power, then the chosen factor (Bush's political beliefs) becomes an indispensable *part* of the multiple causation of the observed phenomenon (i.e., the US decision

[8] Although Giddens has introduced this concept/terminology, he has been taken to task for his lack of concern with methodological issues by a number of commentators (see, e.g., Thrift 1985; Cohen 1989). This is simply because Giddens does not give sufficient examples or guidelines for empirical research associated with his concept of "bracketing." Critics often note that he needs to explicate how his concept of bracketing might be and should be applied in "empirical" analyses (see, e.g., Thrift 1985, 620–622; DeSanctis and Poole 1994; Kort and Gharbi 2013, 98–99).

to go to war against Iraq). But if the investigation indicates that the political belief, as a *potential* explanatory factor, does not yield significant explanatory weight, then it is passed over and other potential factors, for instance, the states' material interests, set aside in conceptual brackets, are considered.

Consequently, this way of reasoning enables the observer to discern the causes of an observed phenomenon and reconstruct its causal processes in a systematic and clear manner, and thereby generate and assess the evidence and data on causation of the observed behavior. In turn, a more accurate and satisfying causal explanation (of why the US decided to go to war against Iraq?) can be developed. I describe the method of reasoning put forward here as a logical process in which one finds multiple causes using a flexible epistemological and methodological approach, standing on a rich ontological platform formulated prior to application of the approach. To put it more simply, it can be referred to as a 'loose-knit deductive reasoning method.'[9]

To be sure, I am *not* saying here that the methodological guidelines for applying CR to empirical analysis of states' actions in international relations discussed above are without controversy. Nor am I suggesting that they will solve all empirical or conceptual puzzles connected to world political processes and phenomena. Rather, I admit that the methodological scheme has shortcomings: for instance, a multicausal and open-ended approach is laborious; it appears to be an 'inelegant' alternative as compared with the more parsimonious models; and it has many loose ends as compared with rigorous deductive approaches that establish a firm linkage among only a few of the operative variables with the aim of making or discovering universal generalizations.

Yet, equally importantly, these limitations (or the methodological scheme laid out as such) should not obscure the fundamental points put forward in this chapter: it is through methodology and methods that we can achieve deeper engagement and more dialogue in a divided IR; and that post-positivists, in particular, need to pay greater attention to discussing and more importantly *practicing* methods from which different types of empirical knowledge can be harvested. Although such efforts may lead to another round of a contentious and exhausting debate, it is a challenge worth taking if our goal is to produce vigorous dialogue and engagement across the enduring positivist–post-positivist divide. When post-positivist

[9] For detailed expositions of this method and the metatheoretical rationales underlying the method, see Eun's (2012) work on foreign policy analysis.

scholarship confronts, develops, and practices—rather than denies, avoids, or marginalizes—methodology and, especially, empirical methods, clearer targets can be established to facilitate dialogue in the discipline.

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CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

Abstract This chapter summarizes the main points of the (meta)theoretical discussions and the findings of the empirical investigations carried out in earlier chapters. Following from this, the chapter also draws some critical implications for the ongoing discussion about IR pluralism, pointing out the importance of self-reflexivity and the roles of individual scholars as "organic intellectuals." In particular, the chapter notes that self-reflexivity, combined with critical recognition of socio-epistemic issues at stake with knowledge production, serves to provide a necessary motivation to bring about change and diversity in the present state of IR. Only when critical self-reflection functions as a leitmotif for pluralism, will "socialized" disciplinary mechanisms, such as positivism-centered IR publication system and pedagogy, be changed in ways that not only accept a flourishing of diverse experiences, theories, and methodologies but also *translate* it to the published text and take it into the classroom.

Keywords reflexivity • reflexive pluralism • "organic intellectuals"

Is IR really "a plural, and pluralist, field"? "Whether one likes it or not …, that is simply the reality"? (Rengger 2015: 32) The literature on pluralism is voluminous. Most of these studies, including that of Rengger, acknowledge that contemporary IR has become pluralistic. Of course, it is true that the overall theoretical terrain of IR has become wider thanks to the emergence and development of post-positivism and to the rapidly

Y.-S. Eun, *Pluralism and Engagement in the Discipline of International Relations*, DOI 10.1007/978-981-10-1121-4_5

growing interest in and related works on "non-Western" IR. However, the issues at stake here are far more complex than our usual acknowledgment of or calls for pluralism, for pluralism concerns not only theoretical but also epistemological and methodological diversity in multiple dimensions, including number, (geographical) origin, spatiality, and practice. This results in the formation of more sophisticated questions.

Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith (2013b: 7) write: "we believe that the field is now much healthier because of the proliferation of theories." In a related vein, Milja Kurki (2015: 780) comments as follows: "A considerable, in fact quite an overwhelming, literature has arisen on post-positivist scholarship, metatheoretical alternatives to positivism, and related notions such as reflexive theorizing. The lessons of post-positivism then have been well learned, it seems, in International Relations scholarship—at least on the European side of the Atlantic." Their observations seem true, especially when considering such a classic boundary condition of "at least on the European side of the Atlantic." Nevertheless, several puzzling questions still remain.

Have "the lessons of post-positivism" been also well learned in IR scholarship in the United States? If that is not the case with American IR—a scholarship that carries great weight with the structure of the discipline—could IR scholars (wherever they work) say with confidence that our discipline has "well learned the lessons of post-positivism" and become "much healthier"? In addition, if the post-positivist "lessons" have been well learned "on the European side of the Atlantic," did the lessons learned reach *the non-West*? Moreover, what do we mean by "the lessons learned"? When we do learn something, we put it into practice. If so, is post-positivism *practiced* as a serious alternative to positivism or as a key axis of the study of world politics in "Global IR"? The questions raised above can, in the end, be rephrased in more general terms as follows: Where does IR stand in terms of diversity? What is at stake in translating our persistent pleas for pluralism into praxis? Relatedly, "what kind" of pluralism should we pursue and how can it be achieved?

These are the key questions that have been focused on throughout this book. My effort to cope with them first led to in-depth analysis of the pertinent IR studies to elucidate the extent of epistemological, theoretical, and methodological diversity in the field. This literature review has shown that IR remains a positivism-centered discipline in theoretical and especially methodological terms despite the fact that it is now more than three decades since various post-positivist theories made their entry

into the discipline. In particular, "the title of science" continues to be "usurped" by positivism. This observation has been further elucidated by a detailed empirical investigation of publishing and teaching practices in IR communities. In other words, when I studied one of the crucial yet underexplored aspects of pluralism, namely our praxical commitments to pluralism, the results did not endorse that "the lessons of post-positivism" have well been "learned."

More specifically, the empirical investigation was carried out with a particular—but not exclusive—focus on the American and Chinese IR communities. Given the pervasive and powerful influence of American IR, I first looked into the extent of the influences of positivism and post-positivism by examining publishing and teaching practices in the American IR community. Then I turned my attention to China, a very interesting IR case. First, several IR scholars have expected that "US parochialism" and "growing interest in IR outside the core [i.e., the United States], in particular, in 'rising' countries such as China" will lead to the rapid waning of the existing American disciplinary power while opening up new spaces for the study of international relations (Wæver 2007; Tickner 2013: 629). Furthermore, there have been considerable attempts in China to develop an alternative IR theory with "Chinese characteristics." As such, if there are ways of "doing IR" uniquely different from that of mainstream (American) IR, they are expected to be found in China. In addition, although Europe has a more colorful IR scholarship, there is still a need to consider the existing and emerging disciplinary and institutional influence of the American and Chinese IR communities in making sense of the current *and* prospective status of pluralism in the discipline. For this very reason, I examined Chinese IR (along with American IR) scholarship in an effort to determine whether IR has really achieved pluralism.

The results of the empirical examination have indicated that there is little difference between research trends in American IR and those within the newly emerging Chinese IR scholarship in terms of the prevailing influence of positivism. The investigation of the taught discipline of American IR and Chinese IR further corroborated the earlier finding that post-positivist research remains at the margin of their scholarships in terms of practice. As methodologists agree, by eliminating the most likely alternative explanation, we increase the credibility of our theory or explanation much more than we do by eliminating alternatives at random (Sartori, 1970; Elman 1995: 172–173; George and Bennett, 2005). Viewed in this context, those findings have significant implications for the debate over

pluralism, especially as to the extent to which IR has become pluralistic. Although the Chinese IR community is often deemed "unique" (i.e., the most likely place for alternative IR theories and methodologies), it turns out not to be so. Rather, their scholarly practices, like those of American IR, are dominated by positivist approaches. Post-positivist research is neither fully practiced as a serious alternative to positivism nor is it actively accepted as a key axis of the study of world politics not only in American IR but also in the rapidly emerging Chinese IR community, which is commonly expected to take a different path of development based on the fundamental tenets of Marxism or Confucianism (Song 2001; Qin 2007; Kang 2010; Wang 2011, 2013; Xuetong 2011; Wan 2012; Horesh 2013). In short, the research and teaching practices in these IR communities have failed to include the diverse approaches of post-positivism and to develop a pluralistic IR. In contrast, Europe "did grant American IR a 'scientific' legitimacy" (Tickner 2011: 609).

This ultimately led me to question why that is the case. To address this, I examined the limitations of post-positivism, including the terminological and conceptual ambiguity within post-positivist scholarship, the absence of a shared epistemological platform on which "distinctly different" post-positivist theories can stand together, and post-positivists' utter rejection of a positivist account of science without a corresponding development of their version of science. On the other hand, I showed that positivism, too, has serious limitations, and that the positivist orthodoxy "began to crumble" in the 1970s and its hegemonic position has now been overthrown in the philosophy of science. Based on the foregoing discussion, I discussed disciplinary politics and socialization in IR and how the existing paradigm is reproduced or reinforced through 'socialized' disciplinary mechanisms.

Before offering a detailed exposition of this issue, I addressed one remaining question on pluralism. "What kind" of pluralism should we pursue and how can it be achieved? Given the fact that many IR scholars argue that IR's goal should be to move toward a field of study involving not only diversity, but also active engagement and dialogue across competing theoretical paradigms (more to the point, between the positivist and the post-positivist paradigms), it seems clear that an "engaged" and "dialogical" form of pluralism is what IR seeks to achieve. Despite such an agreement, a related and important question on how to generate active dialogue and engagement across the existing and proliferating theoretical divides in IR remains largely underexplored in the literature. My main contention here was that methodology and methods, particularly

in post-positivist contexts, can serve as useful points of dialogues and interactions across 'the enduring positivist–post-positivist divide.' Of course, there have been several meaningful and important attempts made by post-positivist IR scholars to address such methodological questions; however, I emphasized that post-positivist IR scholarship remains skeptical about actively engaging in methodology and especially methods. More importantly, I argued that methodology and methods should be viewed as effective devices for generating a dialogue and thus sophisticated knowledge in a divided IR, rather than as "a disciplining and constraining tool" used to judge "scientificity" of knowledge. The use of methodology and methods does not have to be subordinated to a certain ontological or epistemological position. Methodology and methods can travel more frequently and freely across the boundaries set by ontology or epistemology than is recognized in the field. In other words, useful points of contact and much-enlarged spaces for 'interactive' debates in the present state of IR can be found and made through methodology and methods.

Pluralism and Reflexivity

The discussions and arguments thus far lead to one of the most important questions on pluralism in IR, namely the *practice* of pluralism. This again draws my attention to the issues at stake in disciplinary socialization. In Chap. 4, which discusses disciplinary socialization and mechanisms by which a particular way of thinking (i.e. positivism) becomes dominant in IR, I made a passing reference to the importance of 'reflexive pluralism.' Let me clarify this further.

First, there is a need to change socialized disciplinary mechanisms in ways that more fully endorse the validity of a wide range of epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and empirical/spatial perspectives *if* IR's goal is to move toward a pluralistic discipline, especially in praxical terms. As demonstrated, IR publication systems and pedagogy (i.e., the socialized ways in which IR is researched and taught) play a direct role in selection and exclusion practices; through such socialized disciplinary mechanisms, the existing theoretical paradigm is often reproduced and reinforced. It is here, I think, that our pleas for pluralism need to associate with self-reflexivity.

For example, in order to change IR's publication systems and pedagogy in ways that accept and practice diversity in multiple facets, it is necessary to recognize that the existing hierarchical system of knowledge in IR is,

indeed, social construct. In a related vein, Patrick Jackson (2015: 13) has recently noted that positivism "has almost certainly attained its dominance as a result of sociological factors." This recognition is, however, not a sufficient condition for rendering the present state of IR more global, diverse, and inclusive. We need to achieve a self-recognition of the facts that key agents of such disciplinary socialization in IR are, in effect, individual scholars, and that we have more power over both the processes and results of the socialization than is often believed. Stated more succinctly, for the proliferation of the *practice* of pluralism in the field, constant encounters between pleas for pluralism and self-reflexivity are required. I call such interactions 'reflexive pluralism.'

'Reflexive pluralism'—in particular the notion of "reflexive" here—has two interwoven dimensions. First, it asks us to keep *reminding* ourselves that the structure of IR is *of our making*, and thus aids us in seeing through the processes and mechanisms connected to disciplinary socialization in IR and the consequences that follow more clearly. This in turn assists us in recognizing and exploring previously underrecognized (e.g., socio-epistemic or empiric-praxical) sources of dominance of one particular way of thinking in the field. Following from this recognition, IR scholars more readily acknowledge the following points: the present state of the discipline, where the dominant influence of positivism remains largely intact, has emerged out of our own practice—as an individual or as a collective—and our willingness to persist with the mainstream (i.e. positivist) perspective for social and institutional incentives and related disincentives. If not, then from where? "*Ex nihilo?*"[1] At the end of the day, IR is what we make of it. Again, recall that positivist interpretations and approaches confront numerous anomalies and scathing criticisms, and that the positivist hegemonic position has been overthrown in the philosophy of science. A meaningful change in positivism-centered IR—that is, to move the discipline toward a pluralistic field of study especially in terms of practice—requires a robust recognition of this first point. Relatedly, acknowledging that the existing hierarchical system of knowledge in IR is a social construct allows us to *begin* to envisage necessary conditions for the transcendence of the hierarchical system.

This leads to the second dimension of 'reflexive pluralism': *critical self-reflexivity*. More concretely, recognizing that the structure of the disciplinary system of IR is indeed of our making can lead to the important

[1] I borrow this term from Wight's study (2006: 98) on ontology of international relations.

realization that it is the scholars who have the ability to *change* the existing state and structure of IR; this in turn opens up wide avenues in which self-reflection and self-awareness as regards the following questions are critically undertaken: What do we research philosophically, theoretically, methodologically, or empirically? How do we carry out peer review of others' research, and (more importantly) what and how do we teach in classrooms? In other words, we are led to critically ask *ourselves* whether our research and teaching practices have been rich enough to go beyond IR's mainstream (i.e., positivist approaches and Western-focused experiences) and do justice to pluralism in texts and in class. This is again fed back to a self-recognition that, if a pluralist 'turn' in IR remains a 'plea,' without generating a substantial set of practices, it is due to the fact that we do not properly practice what we preach even though we have been persistently calling for pluralism in the field.

Such critical self-reflexivity, combined with recognition of the socio-epistemic issues at stake with disciplinary socialization and politics, provides necessary motivation to bring about greater diversity in IR. In particular, a *critical* reflection of *the self* is required so that the role of IR scholars, which seems to be currently lying dormant, in rendering the currently parochial terrain of the field richer and wider is restored. Recall the fact that the once-dominant position of positivism has now met its demise in the philosophy of science, and that within the philosophy of science it is indeed 'critically reflexive' scholars, such as Kuhn, Lakatos, Feyerabend, and (later) Wittgenstein, who have played crucial roles in creating cracks in and subsequently penetrating the positivist crust.[2] With regard to pointing to a greater or stronger reflexivity in IR (see, e.g., Guzzini 2013; Sylvester 2013; Tickner 2013; Hamati-Ataya 2014), our focus should be not only on IR (meta)theory but also on *individual theorists*. Without critical self-reflexivity, the 'performativity' that our calls for pluralism should accompany is likely to remain static. The practice of pluralism, after all, begins with the self.

In short, we must awaken to our *existing* ability to (re)shape the key issues at stake in the discourse and practice of pluralism in the discipline, and eventually exhibit it through critical reflexivity of *both* the present state of IR, a discipline of our making, *and* the self, as the key agent of the discipline-making process. Without such critical reflexivity, calls for

[2] Here, I benefited from a discussion with Hasok Chang, Hans Rausing Professor of History and Philosophy of Science at Cambridge University.

pluralism, however unyielding they are, are likely to fail to lead to substantial sets of practice. Only when critical self-reflection functions as a leitmotif for pluralism—that is, when 'reflexive pluralism' is fully at play in IR—will socialized disciplinary mechanisms, such as positivism-centered IR publication system and pedagogy, be changed in ways that not only accept a flourishing of diverse experiences, theories, and methodologies but also *translate* it to the published text and take it into the classroom.

Viewed in this light, if calls for a pluralistic IR are met with critical reflexivity in scholarly practice, a diversity-based system of knowledge production—which, for example, provides alterative or non-conventional theories with preference or a certain percentage in selection processes of publications and curricula—could receive favorable consideration. Further, we could develop such forums as 'International Students and Teachers Initiative for Pluralism in IR,' through which the teachings of IR are reconsidered by students and teachers in such a way that a wide range of theories and methods is brought to the *classroom*. Here, what has recently been unfolding with regard to the practice of pluralism in economics, our cognate field, is instructive. In May 2014, an organized initiative "to bring about a more open, diverse and pluralist economics" was launched by teachers and students of economics from 30 countries around the world; that initiative is increasingly gaining recognition in the field of economics. The motivation for their 'act' was this: "we are dissatisfied with the dramatic narrowing of the curriculum that has taken place over the last couple of decades in economics" and thus, believe it should be changed.[3]

Note, however, that the above discussions do not suggest that critical reflexivity of the discipline *and* the self is the sole way of generating progress in pluralism, but only that it is one of the necessary conditions for moving IR beyond positivism toward a more pluralistic discipline. As I have already discussed in detail, the limitations of post-positivism must be addressed if our goal is to bring more diversity to IR from both existential and praxical perspectives. Equally, however, I posit that its shortcomings are not the only (or the most crucial) issues inimical to pluralism in IR. Rather, without constant encounters between pleas for pluralism and self-reflexivity, pluralism in the field is likely to continue to remain limited. Such encounters, I believe, can be achieved and promoted through the two interrelated stages of 'reflexive pluralism' explicated earlier.

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[3] For a more detailed account of how the initiative was created and what it does, go to http://www.isipe.net (Accessed July 15, 2015).

Surely, as Dunne, Hansen, and Wight comment, "structurally, there are strong incentives for the discipline to continue to reproduce itself in ways that support the dominant theories" (Dunne et al. 2013a: 417).[4] Put differently, disincentives arise from a failure to conform to IR's dominant/mainstream practices constructed through disciplinary politics and socialization. Mainstream IR theory or methodology—namely, a standard approach—exerts substantial influences on our behavior in various ways, affecting and impinging upon opportunities for publications, research grants, and academic positions, all of which are critical to our standing both as academics and as individuals.

At the same time, however, IR is also a world where scholars—especially established senior academics—act as the most powerful agents in constitution, stasis, and change of the structure of the field. As peer reviewers, editors, examiners, chairs, supervisors, and teachers, we can bring change and diversity to the present state of IR. Again, our behavior is constrained by structural conditions, such as (socialized) disciplinary norms that are associated with mainstream IR scholarship. Yet, this by no means indicates that we do not have what it takes to activate pluralism. The structure of IR is largely derived from *our* disciplinary socialization practices. Indeed, all *social* structures, to borrow Max Weber's words (1968: 13), are "the resultant and modes of organizations of the specific acts of individual men." To be sure, once established, those structures exhibit a certain uniqueness of characteristics as a whole, which constrains "the acts of individual men." But whatever the structural constraints, what is presented to us—for example, a lack of diversity in IR—is not what has been determined by the structural conditions as such. Ontologically speaking, it is human agents' intentions and actions that give rise to such structural conditions. We do have a capacity to consciously act and, in doing so, to realize our intentions. This is especially so within *academia* where scholars have greater agency, free will, and creativity.

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[4] In their study, two important questions—that this book has examined—remain underexplored. First, how (i.e., through what mechanisms and processes) is the standard understanding/approach in IR reproduced? Arlene Tickner (2013: 628) has recently observed that "many aspects of the inner workings of IR continue to be underexplored." A second (and more important, in my view) question that remains to be answered is, what is required if IR scholars are to preserve their maximum autonomy within the mechanisms and processes or to *change* those mechanisms and processes? This latter question is the one that is closely related to the "reflexive pluralism" advocated here.

In this vein, we (scholars) are what Antonio Gramsci (1971) calls "organic intellectuals." We are not merely consumers and producers of ideas and ideologies, but "organizers" of them and thereby, in Gramscian terms, "organizers of hegemony." We as "organic intellectuals" play a central role in formulating "common sense"—although that "common sense" should be criticized, according to Gramsci, for leading the masses to believe in ahistorical and "extra-human" realities and "naïve metaphysics" (Gramsci 1971: 199, 441). Further, "organic intellectuals" have the capability to politically organize the masses by exercising "intellectual and moral leadership" (Gramsci 1971: 57), and as such, they can provide "cohesion and guidance to hegemony" (Zahran and Ramos 2011: 28). By the same token, however, if we—as "organic intellectuals"—can constitute "common sense" for and offer "cohesion and guidance" to hegemony, we can also produce confusion and weakening in (epistemological) hegemony by exercising "intellectual and moral leadership" that repudiates or transcends one dominant way of governing or knowing.

Whether to welcome and practice diverse epistemologies, theories, and methodologies *not* dependent on the restricted warrant of the dominant paradigm in IR is an issue that can be decided by the key agent of academic disciplinary socialization, namely IR *scholars*. To repeat, we—as powerful and real *agents* in chairing dissertation committees, reviewing research funds, editing and undertaking peer review of journal articles and books, and supervising and teaching students—can wield potent causal influences on the formation of and change in mechanisms that connect to the ways IR is researched/published and taught and (as such) change the current disciplinary norms and configuration of IR or set a new stage for a more pluralistic discipline. The point worth re-emphasizing is this: in order for the *agential* power and potential that IR scholars possess to be more fully harnessed in the *practice* of pluralism, 'reflexive pluralism,' (i.e. our critical self-reflexive attitude vis-a-vis the IR world of "our making") is essential. Our *everyday* actions have important consequences for the constitution and transformation of our scholarly discipline. By bringing in everyday critical, conscious, and reflexive agents, new and diverse angles for 'doing IR' can be presented. In sum, then, the real issue at stake in the question of whether IR can move beyond positivism toward a more pluralistic discipline seems neither 'positivism versus post-positivism' nor "what kinds" of pluralism, but how much and how often we critically reflect on ourselves and translate this into disciplinary practice in our field of study. It is really up to us—namely, our dual reflexivity and the performative nature it holds.

What I advocate here may still sound intractable or even contradictory in the sense that 'individual' IR scholars are constrained by what I have called 'disciplinary socialization' connected to the standard/mainstream approach. Furthermore, it is often pointed out that "structurally, there are strong incentives for the discipline to continue to reproduce itself in ways that support the dominant theories" (Dunne et al. 2013: 417). I think that concerns of this kind could be addressed by rephrasing the oft-cited quote from Karl Marx. "Men [IR scholars] make their own history [of IR], but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past" (The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, Karl Marx 1852).

Certainly, given the vested interests at stake with the enduring mainstream approach and perspective in IR, the role and influence of individual IR scholars have to remain limited with regard to changing the current disciplinary norms and configuration of IR or setting a new stage for a more pluralistic discipline. In effect, it *is* part of my arguments put forth in 'reflexive pluralism.' What is foregrounded in 'reflexive pluralism,' however, is the point that we should not end there. Although our scholarly behavior is constrained by structural conditions, such as a disciplinary norm that reflects the dominant/mainstream discourse, this should not obscure the unavoidable fact that scholars are relatively free agents compared with other types of social agents. We do have what it takes to activate pluralism, going beyond mainstream positivist IR. To reiterate, scholars have greater agency, free will, and creativity where they work and live. It is in this vein that I have laid out a detailed discussion about what is required *if* IR scholars are to preserve their maximum autonomy within the socialized mechanisms and processes, and even to change those mechanisms and processes. An important issue that should be aired is this: it is not individual scholars themselves, but our critical self-reflexivity vis-a-vis the discipline *of* "our making" that provides a necessary condition for inducing diversity in the discipline in both existential and praxical senses.

My "Hope" for Pluralism and Engagement

Let me conclude this chapter by quoting a 'dialogue' from the film entitled *The Shawshank Redemption*. I use this (rather long) quote in the hope of avoiding any misunderstandings that might still be buried in my 'reflexive pluralism.'

Right before his prison break-out (or "*Redemption*"), Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) tells Ellis "Red" Redding (Morgan Freeman) that he cannot stand the prison system any longer. Leaning against the massive ash-colored wall of the prison, Andy says:

"Think you'll ever get out of here?"
Red replies:
"Sure. When I got a long white beard and about three marbles left rolling around upstairs."
Andy says:
"Tell you where I'd go. Zihuatanejo ... Pacific Ocean."
Red replies:

"Believe what you want. These walls are funny. First you hate them, then you get used to them. Enough time passes, get so you depend on them. That's institutionalized … Jesus, Andy. I couldn't hack it on the outside. Been in here too long. I'm an institutional man now. Like old Brooks Hatlen was."

Andy replies:
"You underestimate yourself."
Red says:
"Bullshit. In here I'm the guy who can get it for you. Out there, all you need are Yellow Pages. I wouldn't know where to begin. Pacific Ocean? Hell. Like to scare me to death, something that big."
Andy replies:
"Not me … I don't think it's too much to want. To look at the stars just after sunset. Touch the sand. Wade in the water. Feel free."
Red says:
"… Andy, stop! Don't do that to yourself! Talking shitty pipedreams! Mexico's down there, and you're in here, and that's the way it is!"
Andy replies:
"You're right. It's down there, and I'm in here. I guess it comes down to a simple choice, really. Get busy living or get busy dying"
"… Remember Red, hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies."

I *hope* the above quote will be useful in helping the reader to have a clearer understating of my intentions. Obviously, I do not claim that the arguments thus far are beyond criticism—only that they are worth criticism and further development. I will be satisfied if the discussions offered throughout this

book stimulate other researchers in a modest fashion and if they provide a useful point from which more exciting bearings may be taken in 'doing' IR and thus 'knowing' international relations. I *hope* I will be satisfied.

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Y.-S. Eun, *Pluralism and Engagement in the Discipline of International Relations*, DOI 10.1007/978-981-10-1121-4