

Dr. Ingo Peters und Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar

Arbeitsstelle Transnationale Beziehungen, Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik

Fachbereich Politik- und Sozialwissenschaften
Otto-Suhr-Institut für Politikwissenschaft

E-Mail: ingo.peters@fu-berlin.de
[wemheuer-
vogelaar@transnationalstudies.eu](mailto:wemheuer-vogelaar@transnationalstudies.eu)
Internet: www.atasp.de

HS 15 342: Locating the “I” in IR Theory: Non-Western Contributions to International Relations Scholarship

Monday 10.00 – 12.00, room 21/F

Overview

It has often been criticized that International Relations Theories (IRT) is indeed a “not so international discipline”. For instance, it can be argued that instead of explaining how the world in a global sense works, theories of international cooperation often look on how powerful, mostly Western states, behave amongst each other or as dominant forces vis-à-vis smaller, mostly non-Western states. But not only its theories lack truly international characteristics, the discipline of IR, understood as a social group, does as well. Non-western contributions to IR scholarship are just starting to find their way into the minds and everyday work of Western scholars. This new development, and the contributions to IR that could result from it, will be at the centre of this seminar. The seminar follows a threefold aim: 1) To introduce students to the sociology of IR as a discipline; 2) to direct their attention to structural core-characteristics of IR theories and how these lead to imbalances between scholarship produced in and by the discipline’s transatlantic core and its perceived “non-Western” periphery; and 3) to analyze recent intellectual contributions from today’s periphery.

This seminar introduces an if no longer actually novel , however, undoubtedly highly relevant area in the field of IR studies. Therefore, this syllabus should be considered as a proposal to be discussed; the definite structure of the course will be decided upon in the first two sessions. Thus, students are not just welcomed but urged to actively participate in shaping this seminar’s form and content.

The guiding questions for this seminar are:

- What are the major strands of Western IR theories (WIRT), its evolution and driving forces?
- What makes WIRT ‘ideological’, what are its mechanisms of re-production and why has WIRT become dominant?
- How can we properly describe and compare ‘Western’ and ‘non-western’ IR theories (NWIRT)? Do these categories hold at all, and what are suitable categories and criteria for comparison and assessment?
- How different are WIRT and NWIRT, and what is the added value of taking NWIRT into account for analysing “IR”?

Seminar procedure:

- The required readings are listed below for each seminar session. We will start out with a discussion of the usual practices to conceive the evolution of IR theories in terms of debates. Furthermore, the first session will establish some common ground for what will come up in future sessions and provide for a general overview of the subject.
- Most seminar sessions will be chaired by students (or small groups of students). They will introduce the required readings, and will relate arguments and interpretations to the topic of the respective session. This should be a concise 10-minute presentation based on a 'summary chart' ("Steckbrief") or simple excerpt, which summarizes the characteristics of the respective text/theory/approach in view of our guiding research interest and questions. Presentations should be conducive to a thorough discussion of main issues among all seminar participants. From part III on, this summary chart will be applied by everybody doing a presentation in order to allow for a comparison of approaches and theories along the lines of some pre-defined categories. The questions guiding these systematic excerpts will be generated as part of the discussion during the opening sessions.

NOTE: Comparison and the application of the summary chart, of course applies only to texts representing "theories"; overview texts will be covered by standard excerpts!

- Following the introductory session, the seminar topics of part I are specifically suitable for students aiming at a participation certificate, while topics of part II and III are more suitable for students going for a seminar paper and a graded 'Schein'.
- Students chairing a session of part I will circulate their excerpts or summary-charts at least three days in advance. Those chairing a session in part II or III will be asked to select literature for required reading at least 10 days in advance and suggest it to the instructors. Students will sign up for individual topics and sessions in a list, which will be circulated during the introductory phase of the seminar. Students taking on respective sessions are obliged to consult the course instructors as agreed beforehand. Please send your excerpt or summary-chart to **both** instructors by e-mail, no later than Friday noon.

Schedule and Required Readings

Session 1:

15.10.12 **Introduction and Overview**

- **Jones, C. S.** (2003). Locating the “I” in “IR” - Dislocating Euro-American Theories. *Global Society*, 17(2), 107-110.
- **D’Aoust, A.-M.** (2012). Introduction to the Sociology/ies of International Relations. *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 15, 90-97.

Session 2:

22.10.12 **The evolution of (Western) IR theories: Different schools of thought, meta-theoretical paradigms and the role of debates**

This session aims at providing a first cut on a framework for defining ‘Western IRT’. For this purpose we have to identify basic factors (‘constitutive characteristics’) of what defines WIRT. This concept will be used as a folio/ a blueprint helping us to see, to describe and thus differentiate what supposedly marks ‘non-Western IRT’.

Required readings:

- **Waever, O.** (1996). The rise and fall of the inter-paradigm debate. In *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, edited by S. Smith, K. Booth & M. Zalewski, 149-185. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- **Waever, O.** (1998). The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations. *International Organization*, 52(4), 687-727.
- **Schmidt, B.C.** (2002). On the History and Historiography of International Relations. In *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse & B. Simmons, 3-22. London: Sage.

Additional (selected) readings:

Fearon, J., & Wendt, A. (2002). Rationalism Versus Constructivism: A Skeptical View. In *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse & B. Simmons, pp. 52-72. London Sage.

Hoffmann, S. (1977). An American Social Science: International Relations. *Daedalus* 106(3), 41-60.

Holsti, K. (1985). *The Dividing Discipline: Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory*. Boston: Allen and Urwin.

Jackson, R., & Sørensen, G. (1999). IR as an Academic Subject. In *Introduction to International Relations*, edited by R. Jackson & G. Sørensen, 33-66. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Risse, T. (2002). Constructivism and International Institutions: Toward Conversations across Paradigms. In *Political Science. State of the Discipline*, edited by I. Katznelson & H. V. Miller, 596-623. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Weber, C. (2009). *International Relations Theory: A Critical Introduction*. London: Taylor & Francis.

PART I: Studying Global IR Scholarship

During this part we will set the theoretical context for the rest of the seminar. The aim will be to provide a detailed view on the discussion surrounding the problematique of core/Western and periphery/non-Western IR: Which features and practices characterizing IRT are considered problematic, and why? What can be and has already been done to ameliorate these supposedly problematic aspects?

Sessions of part I are specifically suitable for presentations by students going for an attendance certificate!

Session 3:

29.10.12 **Eurocentrism, Western / non-Western: What are we talking about?**

This session aims at discussing and possibly answering the question of what is actually meant when talking about Western and non-Western. The text by Acharya and Buzan is a general introduction into the seminar's overall theme and introduces some powerful hypotheses on the lack of non-Western (in this case Asian) theorizing in IR. John Hobson constructs a particular model of Eurocentrism that distinguishes between imperialist and anti-imperialist forms of this concept. We will compare the two texts based on their understanding of these central categories and their different approaches towards our course topic.

Required readings:

- **Acharya, A., & Buzan, B.** (2007). Why is there No Non-Western International Relations Theory? An Introduction. *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 7(3), 287-312.
- **Hobson, J. M.** (2012). Introduction: constructing Eurocentrism and international theory as Eurocentric construct. In *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics. Western International Theory, 1760-2010*, 1-30. Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press.

Additional readings:

- **Bilgin, P.** (2008). Thinking Past 'Western IR'? *Third World Quarterly*, 29(1), 5-23.
- **Nayak, M. & Selbin, E.** (2011). Introduction. In *Decentering International Relations*, 1-20. New York and London: Zed Books.
- **Shilliam, R.** (2011). The perilous but unavoidable terrain of the non-West. In *International Relations and Non-Western Thought*, edited by Robbie Shilliam, 12-26. London and New York: Routledge.

Complementary literature on post-colonialism and de-colonialism can be found on a separate reading list provided on blackboard.

Session 4:
05.11.12

In search of Non-Western IR-Theories: Introducing the Worlding Beyond the West Project

Although there have been publications on IR scholarship around the world before – some more influential than others – it was the Worlding Beyond the West series that opened up the topic to a broader audience. This session is therefore solely dedicated to this project. Together, we will have a look on how Tickner and Waever approached the course topic in 2009 and how Tickner and Blaney continued with it (or not?) in 2012.

Required readings:

- **Waever, O., & Tickner, A.B.** (2009). Introduction: geoculture and epistemologies. In *International Relations Scholarship Around the World. Worlding Beyond the West Series*, book 1, edited by A. Tickner and O. Waever, 1-31. New York: Routledge.
- **Tickner, A.B., and D.L. Blaney** (2012). Introduction: thinking IR differently. In *Thinking International Relations Differently, Worlding Beyond the West Series*, book 2, edited by A.B. Tickner and D.L. Blaney, 1-24. New York: Routledge.

Additional readings:

Tickner, A., & Waever, O. (2009). Conclusion: Worlding where the West once was. In A. Tickner, & O. Waever, *International Relations Scholarship Around the World. Worlding Beyond the West Series*, book 1, 328-34. New York: Routledge.

Bünger, C. and F. Gadinger (2007). Reassembling and Dissecting: International Relations Practice from a Science Studies Perspective. *International Studies Perspectives* (8), 90-110.

Session 5:
12.11.12

Meta-theoretical Gate-keepers: Epistemology, Ontology and ‘Concepts That Do Not Fit’

One of the core problems in the academic discourse between Western and non-Western scholars in IR is that many concepts central to the discipline, e.g. nation state, anarchy and sovereignty, are rooted in Western history and/or philosophy, and are therefore not or only poorly applicable to cases beyond the “Westphalian realm”. Furthermore, dominant preferences in ontology and epistemology can make it hard to communicate across regions and research cultures. In this session we will discuss these academic pillars and their consequences as gatekeepers for global IR scholarship. How do the authors of this week’s literature discuss the role of meta-theoretical gatekeepers?

Required Readings:

- **Tickner, A. B.** (2003). Seeing IR Differently: Notes from the Third World.

Millennium - Journal for International Studies, 32(2), 295-324.

- **Mgonja**, B. E., & I.A.M. **Makombe** (2009). Debating International Relations and its Relevance for the Third World. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 3(1), 27-37.

Additional Readings:

Neumann, S. (1998). International Relations Theory and the Third World: An Oxymoron? In S. Neumann (Ed.), *International Relations Theory and the Third World* (pp. 1-29). London: Macmillan Press LTD.

Smith, S. (2002). The United States and the Discipline of International Relations: "Hegemonic Country, Hegemonic Discipline". *International Studies Review*, 4(2), 67-85.

Session 6:
19.11.12

'Structural' gate-keepers: For example, Publishing and Language Policy and Politics in IR

Scientific knowledge has for a long time been communicated in the form of publications in academic journals. This is also true for IR. However, due to (too) high theoretical standards, methodological preferences and specific epistemological attitudes presented by most of the mainstream journals, the way into them is a hard one; especially for scholars from outside the core. Therefore, in this session we will have a look at publishing statistics of the major journals, discuss the main gatekeepers in publishing and consider ways around them (e.g. Open Access journals). Furthermore, we will discuss the influence of English as the lingua franca in IR research.

Required readings:

- **Aydinli**, E., & J. **Mathews** (2000). Are the Core and the Periphery Irreconcilable? The Curious World of Publishing in Contemporary International Relations. *International Studies Perspectives*, 1, 289-303.
- **D'Aoust**, A.-M. and D. **Grondin** (2012). *Language as Politics and the Sociology of the Discipline of IR: The State of Francophone International Relations Scholarship in Canada*. Unpublished draft, discussed at the BISA 2012, Edinburgh.

Additional readings:

Gleditsch, N.P. (2012) . Open Access in International Relations: A Symposium. *International Studies Perspectives* 13, 211-215.

Goldmann, K. (1995). Im Westen Nichts Neues: International Relations Journals in 1972 and 1992. *European Journal of International Relations*, 7(2), 121-132.

Salager-Meyer, F. (2008). Scientific Publishing in Developing Countries: Challenges for the Future. *English for Research Publication Purposes*, 7(2), 121-132.

Session 7:

26.11.12

Interim Reflection: Taking Stock of Insights gained and Questions Left Open

As the title for this session indicates, it is meant to provide us with a break for intellectually digesting what we have discussed and learned so far. Moreover, remaining issues and questions should be brought to the seminar plenary. This should also help us to focus – or re-focus? – our common and individual research interest for the coming parts and sessions of this seminar.

PART II: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SCHOLARSHIP AROUND THE WORLD: THE SOCIOLOGICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DIMENSIONS OF DOING IR

In this part we will have a look at processes of how and under what circumstances IRT is produced and understood in different countries/regions of the world. It is therefore characterized by the guiding questions from the sociology of social sciences (see Waever and Tickner 2009). Which region or country will be covered and thus which readings will be made required is to be decided by the seminar plenary.

Example readings, for more input, please consult the reading list “Potential Readings_Part II” on blackboard. A good starting point is Tickner, Arlene and Ole Waever, eds. 2009. International Relations Scholarship Around the World. New York: Routledge.

Chairing a session in part II is especially useful in preparation for a seminar paper on IR(T) in or from a specific country or region.

Session 8:

03.12.12

How to study national IR empirically? Introducing the “Teaching, Research, and International Policy” (TRIP) Project

Required readings:

- **Maliniak, D.** et al. (2012). TRIP Around the World: Teaching, Research, and Policy Views of International Relations Faculty in 20 countries. *The Teaching and, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project*, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia.
- **Long, J.** et al. (2005). Teaching and Research in International Politics: Surveying Trends in Faculty Opinion and Publishing. Paper prepared for the 46th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, March 1-5, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Additional:

The TRIP project website:

<http://irtheoryandpractice.wm.edu/projects/trip/index.php>

This syllabus already presents the choices made by the students, in its original form, the respective slots for literature were blank!

Session 9:

10.12.12 **IR in China**

Required readings:

- **Qin, Y.** (2007). Why is there no Chinese international relations theory? *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 7, 313-340.
- **Shambaugh, D.** (2002). China's International Relations Think Tanks: Evolving Structure and Process, *The China Quarterly*, No. 171, 575-596.

Additional readings:

MacGann, J.G. (2012). *The Global Go To Think Tank Report 2011*. Philadelphia: Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, University of Pennsylvania.

Session 10:

17.12.12 **IR in Latin America**

Required readings:

- **Cruz, J.A. da** (2005). Brazil's International Relations at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century, *Latin American Politics and Society*, 47(1), 115-122.
- **Taylor, L.** (2012). Decolonizing International Relations: Perspectives from Latin America. *International Studies Review*, 14, 386-400.

Additional readings:

Tickner, A.B. (2008). Latin American IR and the Primacy of *lo práctico*, *International Studies Review*, 10, 735-748.

Tickner, A.B. (2009). Latin America: Still policy-dependent after all these years? In: Arlene Tickner and Ole Waever, *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, London: Routledge.

Academic Holidays: Christmas & New Year!

Session 11:

07.01.13 **IR in South Africa**

Required readings:

- **Smith, K.** (2012). Contrived Boundaries, Kinship and Ubuntu: A (South) African View of the 'International', In: Arlene Tickner and David Blaney (eds) *Thinking the International Differently*. London and New York: Routledge.
- **Schoeman, M.** (2009). South Africa: Between History and a Hard Place. In: Arlene Tickner and Ole Waever. *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*. London and New York: Routledge.

PART III: NON-WESTERN CONTRIBUTIONS TO IR-THEORY: 'ALMOST THE SAME BUT NOT QUITE?'

In this part, more specific non-western approaches relating to policy fields will be studied. Potential topics are: international cooperation, foreign policy analysis, human rights, regimes, environmental policies, security studies, EU Governance from an outside perspective, IPE as well as indigenous theories/analyses on strategic situations, e.g., in the Middle East. Again, which policy fields will be covered and which texts become required reading in the end will be due to student preferences. Students chairing these sessions will propose respective topics and readings to the course instructors and the seminar plenary.

Chairing a session in part III is especially useful in preparation for a seminar paper on a specific policy field. It is advisable to choose a topic you are already familiar with from other courses.

As a source of inspiration, please take note of some of the possible policy fields addressed in the case studies in *Tickner and Blaney 2012*.

This syllabus already presents the choices made by the students, in its original form, the respective slots for literature were blank!

Session 12:

14.01.13 China's New Concept of Security

Central text:

- **Liu, J.** (2012). Security theorizing in China. In: Arlene Tickner and David Blaney (eds). *Thinking International Relations Differently*. London and New York: Routledge.

Additional readings:

Kumar, A. (2012). New Security Concept of China: An Analysis. *IPCS Special Report*, No. 125. New Dehli: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies.

Kang, S.-H. (2011). *Korea's Foreign Policy Dilemma: Defining State Security and the Goal of National Unification*. Folkestone: Global Oriental.

Session 13:

21.01.13 Human Rights and the African Notion of Ubuntu

Central text:

- **Murithi, T.** (2007). A Local Response to the Global Human Rights Standard: The Ubuntu Perspective of Human Dignity. *Globalisation, Society, and Education*, 5(3), 277-286.

Additional readings:

- O'Sullivan**, D. (1998). The History of Human Rights across the Regions: Universalism vs. Relativism. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 2(3), 22-48.
- Donnelly**, S. (2007). The Relative Universality of Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29, 281-306.
- Cobbah**, J.A.M. (1987). African Values and the Human Rights Debate: An African Perspective. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 9(3), 309-331.

Session 14:

28.01.13

The Tsinghua Approach and the Chinese Rise

Central text:

- **Zhang**, Feng (2012). The Tsinghua Approach and the Inception of Chinese Theories of International Relations. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 5, 73-102.

Additional readings:

- Noesselt**, N. (2012). Is there a "Chinese School" of IR? *GIGA Working Paper*, No. 188, Hamburg: German Institute of Global and Area Studies.
- Cunningham-Cross**, L.; **Callahan**, W.A. (2011). Ancient Chinese Power, Modern Chinese Thought. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 4, 349-374.

Session 15:

04.02.13

Honor in IR: A Russian Approach

Central text:

- **Tsygankov**, A.P. (2012). Conclusion. In: Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia and the West from Alexander to Putin: Honor in International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 259-276.

Additional readings:

- Tsygankov**, A.P. **Tsgankov**, P.A. (2010). Russian Theory of International Relations. In: Robert. A. Denemark (ed.), *International Studies Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, Hoboken (NJ): Wiley-Blackwell Publishers.
- Govella**, K.; **Aggrawal**, V.K. (2012). Introduction: The Fallo f the Soviet Union and the Resurgence of Russia. In: Kristi Govella and Vinod K. Aggrawal(eds), *Responding to a Resurgent Russia: Russian Policy and Responses from the European Union and the United States*, New York et al.: Springer, 1-49.

Session 16:

11.02.13

Concluding Discussion: Where to go from here?

In our last session together we want to draw some conclusions – not only about what we learned during the seminar but although how to proceed with the newly acquired and/deepened knowledge and awareness in our own academic work. Reading and reacting to Stephen Walt's approach toward our topic may be seen as a first acid test.

Required Readings:

- **Lake**, D. (2011). Why "isms" Are Evil: Theory, Epistemology, and Academic Sects as Impediments to Understanding and Progress, *International Studies Quarterly*, 55, 465-480.
- Please also read the following blog entry by **Stephen Walt** and the comments made in response to it:
http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/06/06/is_ir_still_an_american_social_science