Perpetuating Eurocentrism: How histories in textbooks parochialize IR

Abstract

Calls for a more 'global' International Relations (IR) based on theories grounded in world rather than Western histories have highlighted the Eurocentrism of history within the discipline. Global IR literature, however, neglects the role of tempocentrism in fostering that Eurocentrism. Tempocentric IR portrays the past as an extrapolation of the (Eurocentric) present, suggesting an inevitability and normality to Western dominance of international, and obscuring non-Western significance. It also deprives IR theory-building of a broader pool of examples to inform existing theories. This article locates those centrisms in the textbooks of the discipline, whilst drawing on interdisciplinary research to reveal the disproportionate influence of the first years of higher education over students' future worldviews. It is here that students are exposed to a historical grand narrative that establishes the boundaries of their enquiries and outlines what is, and what is not, significant. For a more 'global' IR, therefore, it is suggested that textbook historical narratives require reconstructing in two ways. First, textbook history should be presented through connections and relations rather than substances. Second, historical chapters should reveal the multiple layers of time, including the deeper past, that have been instrumental in constituting the international relations of today.

Introduction

Concern over Eurocentrism in International Relations (IR) extends to all aspects of its enquiry, including the discipline's grasp on history (see Bell 2007; Shilliam 2011; Hobson 2012; Tickner and Blaney 2012). When Amitav Acharya used his 2014 International Studies Association presidential address to call for a new global IR, the Eurocentrism of the discipline's grasp on history featured heavily. Acharya seeks a global IR that constitutes 'not a theory, but an aspiration for greater inclusiveness and diversity in our discipline' (Acharya 2014, 649). At present, he argues, 'IR's dominant narratives, theories, and methods fail to correspond to the increasingly global distribution of its subjects'. Challenging the Eurocentricity of the discipline's understanding of history is central to this aspiration. IR should be, according to Acharya, 'grounded in *world* history, not just Greco-Roman, European, or US history'.

Moreover, there needs to be more extensive consideration of 'the ideas, institutions, intellectual perspectives, and practices of Western and non-Western societies alike' (Acharya 2014, 650), stemming from world rather than selective histories. Many have responded to these concerns in some way or other (for instance: Acharya 2016; Bilgin 2016a; Buzan and Lawson 2016; Petito 2016; Phillips 2016; Qin 2016), and it is widely recognized that a 'global' IR needs to broaden its historical awareness.

This article is, in part, an echo of those concerns. Yet it also broadens the debate by linking Eurocentrism to two other centrisms: actor-centrism and, in particular, tempocentrism. Also known as 'presentism' (Buzan and Little 2000; Cello 2018) or 'chronocentrism' (Powelson 1994), tempocentrism is a form of ahistoricism prevalent in IR and the broader social sciences, involving the extrapolation of the present into the past in an 'inverted form of path dependency' (Hobson 2002, 9). Thus, the Western ascendency of the last two or so centuries is often taken as the natural state of affairs and a predestined reality that resulted from the exceptional historical processes experienced only by Europe and, later, the broader West. Discussion of tempocentrism is, to date, absent from the global IR debate, but I argue that Eurocentrism cannot be tackled without also addressing the matter of tempocentrism. As Acharya demonstrated in his address, the discipline's theory-building efforts are destined to be flawed without a broadening of the pool of empirical historical cases upon which its theories are built. The first part of this article contends that such a broadening must be temporal as well as geographic.

However, diversifying case studies is not sufficient to reform a discipline unless this is accompanied by a re-examination of how current disciplinary narratives have come to exclude such histories in the first place (Bhambra 2014, 149-150). Indeed, history is more than simply being a repository of cases for the social sciences, with some contributors to the global IR debate hinting at history's ontological role in IR (Bilgin 2016a; Phillips 2016; Hurrell 2016). Other disciplines recognize that history is central to disciplinary grand narratives that are, in turn, pivotal in shaping research and learning (Bhambra 2014; Hunt 2014). Thus, it is not enough to simply know of the history of other spaces; we must also recognize that the history within our discipline exercises a powerful influence over what is or is not possible within the discipline. Encouraging existing scholars to draw on non-Western cases in their theory-building might achieve results, as Acharya's address suggests. A more comprehensive

decentering, however, requires a deeper reconstruction of the discipline's historical grand narrative, on the scale that Bhambra (2014) advocates for Sociology. It is only by reconstructing the discipline from the bottom up that one might hope to embed the ethea of reflexivity and contrapuntality that some see necessary for the more complete decentering of the discipline (Owens 2016; Bilgin 2016a; 2016c).

Drawing on studies of higher education, I argue in the second part of the article that the optimal moment to embed a decentered worldview in IR is during the first years of a university-level program in the discipline, and thereby the earliest stage of scholars' and practitioners' formal disciplinary training. Indeed, unlike many disciplines that are taught at school, an individual's first comprehensive exposure to IR usual does not occur until university. Some IR studies have already challenged the Eurocentrism of history in IR's classrooms and textbooks (Hobden and Hobson 2002; de Carvalho, Leira, and Hobson 2011; Hagman and Biersteker 2014; Buzan and Lawson, 2014), but the global IR debate has been largely silent on the matter. For instance, Behera (2016, 155) is the only contributor to a recent forum on advancing Global IR to suggest reforming the discipline's teaching.[1] Nevertheless, Mignolo (2014) has argued that a critique of Eurocentrism also requires a critique of knowledge production in the academy. For Bhambra (2014, 149), this involves 'a commitment to the production of knowledge that is decolonial in intent and practice'. My second section therefore surveys a selection of popular English-language IR textbooks, many written or edited by leading names in the discipline, and challenges the Eurocentric and tempocentric representations of history found within them.

The third and fourth parts of the article build on findings in history and sociology to offer two proposals for the reform of the discipline's textbooks, both aimed at embedding a decentered ontology in the discipline. The first proposal is for textbook history to reflect the discipline's title and be focused relations rather than substances. Instilling a relational ontology in students from the beginning will provide them with the instincts necessary to always search for the full range of connections that make any process or substance possible. The second proposal tackles tempocentrism head-on by making the case for the history in IR textbooks

[1] Wemheuer-Vogelaar, Bell, Morales, and Tierney (2016) offer a Global IR perspective on the implications of the Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) survey of IR faculty members. They make many fleeting references to teaching, textbooks, and classrooms, yet provide little detailed discussion on the matter.

to delve back further in time and emphasize the multiple layers of time that may be at work in present processes of international relations. Thus, future scholars and practitioners can be exposed to global forms of doing international relations from their very first steps in the discipline.

History and theory-building in IR

History has long been a mainstay of IR research. Disciplinary pioneers such as E.H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau, and Martin Wight used history to inform their scholarship, and the tradition has persisted as the discipline has evolved. So many aspects of IR simply 'cannot be done outside history', including sovereignty, balance of power, democracy, non-intervention, and hegemony and resistance (Elman and Elman 2008, 360). History is the only 'data' IR has, and theory is accordingly dependent on history. Furthermore, as 'all theoretical claims rely on assumptions about history, all theorists are also, up to a point, historians' (Buzan and Lawson 2016, 511. Also: Hobson and Lawson 2008). This explains the significance awarded to history in Acharya's call for a 'Global IR': history is seen as one of six 'main dimensions' of Global IR, second only to a commitment to 'pluralistic universalism' that involves 'recognizing and respecting' diversity (Acharya 2014, 649). He suggests that Global IR requires 'discarding the Westphalian mindset when it comes to analyzing the past, present, and future of IR and world order' (Acharya 2014, 652). Acharya thus joins many others who have challenged the Eurocentricity of history and the 'silencing' of the non-West in IR (for example: Buzan and Little 2000; Hobson 2004; 2012; Matin 2007) and the broader social sciences (Trouillot 1995; Bhambra 2011). These highlight persistent 'parochial structures of power, interest, and identity' in the discipline (Grovogui 2004, 33), much to its detriment.

Acharya appreciates that effective theorizing cannot be done without history and 'it is not unreasonable to suppose that more historical and indigenous patterns and practices of IR might induce consequential changes to world order' (Acharya 2014, 652). Herein lies a significant problem for IR theorizing: being able to draw on non-Western cases for analysis and theory-building requires such cases to already be on the analytical horizon of the researcher. Acharya assumes that a 'new research agenda' involving the search for 'new patterns, theories and methods' from world – rather than Euro-Western – histories is sufficient to broaden this horizon. He asks IR to move away from the European and Western

case studies traditionally employed when theory-building, to pursue un- and under-explored histories, systems, institutions, and ideas from across the world (Acharya 2014, 649-50). What if, however, the researcher is so deeply embedded in a Eurocentric and tempocentric ontology that being aware of non-Western cases is not so straightforward?

Indeed, the endemic Eurocentric 'mindset' identified by Acharya suggests that an ontological shift will not be easy. This resonates with Bilgin's critique of 'puzzle-solving' approaches to IR. Bilgin (2016c, 16-17) notes that whereas Rosenau and Durfee (1995, 36) expect IR research to respond to 'puzzles' that emerge when unexpected empirical outcomes challenge existing theoretical frameworks, such thinking fails to anticipate cases where the researcher is unaware that there is a puzzle; there may be instances where one is unable to see a problem because IR's worldviews are too narrow to register the existence of the puzzle in the first place. Eurocentric IR assumes 'that "we already understand" "their" behavior by analyzing "their" capabilities based on "our" assumptions regarding "their" intentions' (Bilgin 2016c, 17). What is therefore needed is recognition that 'their' assumptions about IR, stemming from 'their' worldview may be very different to 'ours', with correspondingly dissimilar theory-building results. IR suffers from what Alexander (2006) calls the 'historical absence' of non-Western histories, experiences, and worldviews that have been constitutive of the discipline and of the subjects and objects of international relations (see Bilgin 2010, 616). It is therefore necessary to open-up the theory-building process by, as Bilgin (2016b) suggests elsewhere, fostering a deeper grasp of Eurocentrism alongside an appreciation of non-Western understandings of the international in the theory-makers themselves. There is a need, in other words, to understand and address the processes that produce Eurocentrism within the discipline and decenter the researcher's historical awareness in a manner that consistently allows for an incorporation of non-Western experiences of the international in theory-building.

This demands more attention on the theory-building process than is proposed by Acharya (2014), going beyond simply integrating non-Western cases to adopting a more reflexive appreciation of how we arrive at our cases studies and, as Owens (2016) argues, our concepts. Reus-Smit (2016, 429) believes that theorists develop 'concepts in response to empirical findings' only *after* 'a process of conceptualization has already determined how the empirical world is observed'. Observation is, he adds, 'concept-dependent' in the sense that theory-

building begins before the selection of the empirical case studies from which theories are developed. I shall call this process 'pre-conceptualization'. Working backwards, therefore, we have: theory, informed by empirics, that are themselves determined by pre-conceptualization. It is at this stage that Bilgin (2016a) and Said's (1993) 'contrapuntal ethos' might be embedded to facilitate more global worldviews. Being 'contrapuntally aware' involves defying disciplinary affiliation and restraints to become conscious of multiple perspectives and means of evaluating a problem (Bilgin 2016a, 139). Such an ethos requires IR scholars to appreciate that their current way of doing things may not be the only way, and that other approaches may have derived from others' distinctive experiences of the international that are not captured by Eurocentric or tempocentric worldviews. Building decentered theories of IR hence requires not only a decentering of the empirical cases that inform theory-building, but also an imbuing of contrapuntal awareness during pre-conceptualization to ensure decentered empirics from the embryonic phase of theory-building.

Doing so, however, will be challenging. For too long, Acharya argues, the Westphalian anarchical international system has been the norm in IR, despite it being but one of many forms of evident international system when a broader *global* view is taken. Thus it, rather than a decentered, contrapuntal ontology informs pre-conceptual case selection. For example, the Roman Mediterranean international system, with a central hegemon conquering and ordering trade routes to its advantage, speaks to mainstream Western IR theories. Yet the contemporaneous Indian Ocean system is neglected by the same theories. Here, local agency via localized ideas and institutions rather than a powerful hegemon were the key determinants of relations. Its exclusion from IR theorizing encourages a corpus of theory that is ignorant of alternative means of doing international relations (Acharya 2014, 653).

This is not to say that some important challenges have been made to IR's historical Eurocentrism. For example, there is growing contestation of Eurocentric narratives of the 'Second World War' that informs such landmark works as Carr's *Twenty Years Crisis* (2016) and much of Mearsheimer's *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (2001). Carr and Mearsheimer's narratives of the conflict are reluctant to acknowledge the contributions of non-Europeans that are highlighted by others. For instance, Grovogui (2006, 68, 93-98) finds

the origins of French resistance to Nazi occupation in the efforts of Adolphe Sylvestre Eboué, the black colonial administrator of Chad, in 1940, whilst Barkawi (2017) demonstrates how enrollment in imperial armies led to profound sociological changes in the colonizer and colonized alike. The common Anglophone IR narrative of the Second World War also writes out the histories of non-state facilitators of great power strategies such as the Albanian partisans, as Grynaviski (2018, 259-264) reveals in his study of the 'middlemen' in US foreign policy. This suggests that Eurocentrism is often accompanied with actor-centrism, especially state-centrism. Through the type of archival research often lacking in IR (Grovogui 2004), Grynaviski also uncovers the crucial role of non-state actors in other significant episodes of international relations, from the US Civil War, the growth of American empire in the Philippines, the Second World War, through to Afghanistan in the twenty-first century. When accompanied by Eurocentrism, such state-centric (and, within that, elite-focused) analyses of international relations miss the dependence of great power politics on non-Western, non-state intermediaries

Yet even the notion of a 'world war' is subjective and the consequence of a particular, perhaps British- or French-imperial, or American neo-imperial worldview. In a study of East Asian textbooks, Duus (2011, 102) found various terms employed for the conflict between China, Japan, Korea, and others in the 1930s and 1940s, including: the Manchurian Incident; the China Incident; the Sino-Japanese War; the Great East Asia War; the Fifteen Years War; the Anti-Japanese War; the Chinese People's Anti-Japanese War; the China War; World War II; the Pacific War; the Asia-Pacific War; the Anti-Fascist War; and more. Each term evokes a somewhat different perspective on the conflict, from the 'world war' terminology of Anglophone sources who were also fighting in other theatres and continents, to more parochial terms typically found in Chinese accounts such as 'Anti-Japanese Patriotic War', and narratives that obscure Western support of the Chinese. Such examples expose the dangers of a *re*-centering rather than a de-centering of history, privileging another part of the world instead of Europe/the West. Re-centering entails similar limitations for theory and practice as Eurocentrism, and the manner in which the past is centered in East Asian textbooks, for example, has carried real implications for regional international relations in recent decades (see Gi-Wook 2011; Sneider 2011; Hiro 2015; Szczepanska 2017).

Alongside actor-centrism, the association between history and Eurocentrism is shaped by a third centrism: tempocentrism. Tempocentrism leads theorists to look for signs of the present in the past, and to read the past as having been the same as the present, with awkward aspects such as the Chadian contribution to anti-Nazi resistance ironed out. The discipline's obsession with the present is fueled by a preoccupation with 'the fast-moving nature of the subject, and the pressing demand for expertise on current events, [encouraging] a forward- rather than a backward-looking perspective' (Buzan and Little 2000, 18). As Bevir (2011, 111) argues, scholars need to be understood as being 'situated agents' in the present, and research is always motivated in some form by this 'situatedness'. Indeed, IR is not alone among the social sciences in struggling with tempocentrism, with Inglis (2010) claiming that it is 'the hegemonic *modus operandi*' in contemporary Sociology. In this mindset, the past exists purely as a location of the origins of the present or as a source of like-for-like comparable case studies.

A tempocentric approach simultaneously distorts history in a Euro-spatial manner and obscures periods and processes that are somehow incongruous with the Eurocentric present. Consequently, the past loses its historicity and contingency, and the *status quo* is eternalized and, via Eurocentrism, universalized. Scholars such as Waltz (1979, 66) are thereby able to problematically claim that the 'texture' of international relations have not changed over time as 'patterns recur, and events repeat themselves endlessly'. Yet things do change over time, and even Eurocentrism is not necessarily an eternal aspect of reality. Said (1978) identified Eurocentrism's nurturing by European intellectuals in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, just as the European overseas empires were expanding. They conjured images of the inevitability of the rise of the West based on progressive attributes supposedly exclusive to the West, and such assumptions continue to influence arguments for an inexorable Western domination of the globe (for example: Parker 1996; Hoffman 2015). The 'East' is therefore rendered irrelevant to European success and written out of history (see. Buzan and Little 2000; Hobson 2004). 'Thus', as John Hobson (2007, 417) writes, 'Eurocentrism presents a tempocentric narrative of world history – one of Western supremacy written backwards'.

Even scholarship that does employ historical examples or methods is disproportionately concerned with the near past at the expense of other eras. This is significant if that recent

past is viewed only through a Eurocentric lens of Western supremacy and Western-originated practices, ideas, institutions, and world order(s). As Phillips and Sharman (2015, 207) demonstrate, 'much if not most of the bedrock of International Relations theory is derived from European, especially Western European, historical experience in the modern era'. For better IR theory, therefore, it is necessary to 'denaturalize the present' through a greater historicization of IR (Hobden and Hobson 2002, 268) which would, in turn return IR to its interdisciplinary origins after its Waltzian-behaviouralist shift (Hobden and Hobson 2002, 275). Indeed, grand, theoretically-informed, macro-historical analyses have been recognized for their theory-generating qualities in the social sciences for some time (Mann 1994), often providing substantial new insights on the present. For instance, the *longue durée* historical sociology of Eisenstadt (2003) is able to demonstrate how 2,500-year-old Axial Age global processes continue to shape social orders today. Nevertheless, IR remains oddly reluctant to engage with the panoply of global historical 'data' available via the efforts of other disciplines.

Rare examples of studies of international relations in the deeper human past include Watson (1992) and Buzan and Little's (2001) studies of international society. Edited volumes such as Kaufman, Little, and Wohlforth's study of balance of power in world history (2007) and Cohen and Westbrook's multidisciplinary analysis of the so-called Amarna diplomatic letters from the fourteenth century BCE (2000) display a corresponding willingness to delve deep. Buzan and Little proceed from the study of hunter-gatherer bands to offer an ambitious challenge to tempocentric ahistoricism, Eurocentrism, 'anarchophilia' (the ability to see only anarchical world orders), and state-centrism alongside chronofetishism. They are able not only to demonstrate that IR scholarship *can* draw on sources from other disciplines to build compelling analyses of international relations before the 'rise of the West' and outside the West, but also that IR *should* do so as a means of challenging the Eurocentrism and tempocentrism that so skews the discipline's theory-making in such a parochial manner.

Therefore, any process to globalize and spatially decenter IR needs also to decenter its temporal outlook away from its current obsession with the near past. Moreover, valuable as Reus-Smit and Owens observations are, their focus is largely retrospective in the sense that it asks *existing* IR scholars to be conceptually reflexive. IR can also, however, be proactive by ensuring that *future* scholarship is sufficiently decentered as well as being reflexive. Being proactive involves identifying the earliest stage at which IR conceptualization begins, and then

embedding the principle of decentered analysis in the scholar's mind at this stage. Indeed, Bilgin (2016a, 139) recognizes that some 'may need training in appreciating contrapuntality'. This should not replace the need for the reflexivity Owens calls for, but rather support it by complementing the need for retrospection. It would also fundamentally disrupt the 'situatedness' that Bevir cautions against. In this sense, awareness of a deeper global history of international relations becomes not just a source of data but, if embedded at the right point in a scholar's development, a means of reflexive and globally-orientated theory-building fit for the global audience to which IR should have been speaking for so long.

Stories, disciplines, and higher education teaching

Lessons from other disciplines also struggling with Eurocentrism suggest that merely broadening the pool of case studies used in theory-building will not be sufficient. In Sociology, Bhambra (2014, 148) advocates the de- and re-construction of disciplinary narratives that are 'based upon the universalization of parochial European histories' on a global level. Indeed, she (2011, 653) equates the term 'historiographical frame' with 'grand narrative'. Sociology's historical narratives are 'central to sociological understandings of modernity' (Bhambra 2014, 145), and are thereby fundamental to shaping knowledge and practice within the discipline. Said (1978, 331; also Bhambra 2014, 122) also recognized that reforming history provides the means of reforming Eurocentrism or, in his case, orientalism. He noted that 'human history is made by human beings. Since the struggle over territory is part of that history, so too is struggle over historical and social meaning'. History, therefore, is more than simply data for scholars, both in Sociology and IR: it is a site of contestation that is fundamental to the dismantling of imperial knowledge structures that have produced the academic disciplines of today and that, as Acharya realizes, desperately need to be globalized in order to effectively speak to the global, post-colonial present.

Reconstructing IR's historical narrative is thus a project that reconfigures the parameters within which the discipline, as a community of scholars, exists and functions. To this end, Tilly's work on the socially constitutive effects of narratives on 'social sites' is instructive. A social site is a 'loci in which organized human action occurs [involving] individuals, aspects of individuals, organizations, networks, and places' (Tilly 2002, xi). Social sites are delineated by 'social boundaries' that include 'any contiguous zone of contrasting density, rapid transition,

or separation between internally connected clusters of population and/or activity' (Tilly 2004, 214). Social boundaries

> interrupt, divide, circumscribe, or segregate distributions of population or activity within social fields. Such fields certainly include spatial distributions of population or activity, but they also include temporal distributions and webs of interpersonal connections.

This is consistent with academic disciplines, with their distributions of population and activity, their webs of personal connections, organizations, networks, and places. Tilly recognizes the association of particular conceptual and ideational perspectives with a social site (Tilly 2002, 2004), to which one might add 'specific knowledge(s)' and 'knowledge production practices' as features that define academic disciplines as social sites.

Fundamental to establishing a social site are social mechanisms that define and reinforce its identity, often underlining its distinctiveness from other sites. Sites can be brought into being through collective cognitive 'mechanisms' that construct boundaries between self and other (Tilly 2004, 217). Tilly identifies 'stories' about the origins and past of a site as fundamental to the creation of 'valid' social identities. Stories connect 'people's commitments to a common project, helping people make sense of what's going on, channeling collective decisions and judgment' (Tilly 2002, 27). Thus, stories delineate social boundaries, establishing and maintaining a social site's identity in relation to other sites (Tilly 2002, 11). Stories often involve a 'subtle teleology' in showing how selected parts of the past lead to the present condition (Tilly 2002, ix). Such stories are typically 'sequential, explanatory' narratives involving a limited number of characters (including collective actors such as organizations, governments et cetera) and defined spatial and temporal boundaries (Tilly 2002, 26). In narrating the past, stories also shape the future by suggesting what will or should happen (Tilly 2002, 27). Indeed, they shape 'the path-dependency of conversation and of social interaction as a whole' (Tilly 2002, 9).

An academic discipline is very much a common project attempting to make sense of its world through judgement, and IR is not short of such path-dependent stories (or historical narratives). Yet, just as Bhambra observes about Sociology, IR's stories also involve the universalization of parochial European histories. De Carvalho, Leira, and Hobson (2011) find that IR's historical narrative involves an excessive and detrimental focus the 'Big Bang' dates of 1648 and 1919. 1648 is where the ontology of IR begins, producing a 'distorted view' of the

origins of the modern sovereign state system and a 'rigid statist ontology that is ill-equipped to handle the challenges' of contemporary IR (de Carvalho *et al.* 2011, 737). 1919, the supposed start date of the discipline, causes four disruptions to our understanding of international relations, including: presenting the discipline as 'an ahistorical extrapolation backwards of current developments and concerns'; privileging certain theoretical perspectives; ignoring the 'Eurocentric and racist foundations of the discipline' through an 'empiricist epistemology' unsuited for today; and claiming 'a miraculous virgin birth' for the discipline 'following a grueling 48-month gestation period on the blood-drenched battlefields of Europe' (de Carvalho *et al.* 2011, 737). Elsewhere, Buzan and Lawson (2014, 438) identify five 'benchmark dates' that uphold the grand narrative of IR by dominating research and teaching: 1500, 1648, 1919, 1945, and 1989. As with de Carvalho *et al.*, the Eurocentricity of these dates maintains a corrosive influence on the breadth of research and theory-building in IR by obscuring so much history with so much theory-informing potential from its scholars (Buzan and Lawson 2014, 438-40). They serve, in other words, as signposts along IR's path-dependent disciplinary narrative, steering the discipline to what it imagines the present to be.

Through what they do not recount, stories also shape the future by placing limits (often tacitly) on the extent of the story being told. Thus, stories have important social ordering functions by determining what forms of action are 'impossible, impracticable, undesirable, or ineffectual' for and within a social site (Tilly 2002, 8-9). This is the case with IR's spatially- and temporally-limited narratives (re)producing a Eurocentric and tempocentric scholarly canon. Hobden and Hobson (2002, 267, original emphasis) observe that, notwithstanding the 'tacit nods' to 1648 'and all that' in IR, the tempocentrism of IR exerts powerful disciplinary (in both senses of the word) pressure on its students and scholars:

> … our insistence on the need for history and sociology [in IR] is usually answered by the *seemingly* appropriate question, "Why don't you go to a history department, or better still a sociology department, if you want to pursue *your* interests?"

In other words, don't go too far back in time or you won't be IR. This is a similar form of temporal disciplinary boundary-setting process to that in Sociology of outsourcing enquiry of historical injustice to the disciplines of Anthropology, Geography, or Development Studies. In Sociology, this helps maintain the fiction of a cosmopolitan European modernity that did not partake in dispossession and appropriation in the non-Western world (Bhambra 2014, 145).

Yet despite their flaws, disciplinary grand narratives cannot be dismissed out of hand. For Tilly, stories are also tools to galvanize political action to challenge dominant social forces, building in the minds of their audiences the possibilities of an alternative world. Former president of the American Historical Association Lynn Hunt (2014, 121) finds that:

> Overarching stories, whether centered on a group, a nation, or the entire world, are crucial to the exercise of political and cultural power, which is why Western social scientists are so good at providing paradigms. It is an aspect of Western political and cultural hegemony to control the paradigms. For those who want to resist the power of a dominant group or nation, it is not enough to reject such stories altogether; an alternative narrative is essential.

This call for alternative narratives rather than for their wholesale removal is an important point for those seeking to reform IR. 'Narratives,' Hunt (2014, 122) continues, 'whether at the level of ethnic identity, national unity, the history of the West, or the history of the world, are crucial for establishing a sense of place in a wider order and for changing that order itself.' Hunt therefore evokes Tilly by understanding the constitutive power of grand narratives, and is also aware of the potentially positive effects that might be achieved through narrative reform. Likewise, despite Bhambra's criticism of the Eurocentricity of social scientific grand narratives, she too is reluctant to move beyond them, seeking the reconstruction of narratives rather than rejection (Bhambra 2011, 661; 2014). Building a new disciplinary grand narrative is therefore a normative project and a key next step in the Global IR project with significant implications for pre-conceptualization. Doing so, however, involves deciding how it might best be achieved.

One solution emerges in recent studies of higher education that identify the first one-to-two years of university education as being disproportionately influential in shaping both the development of the student within a discipline and their world-view after university. A report by the British Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA, 2015) found that the first year of university education is a 'transitional stage' in a person's development. Community-building is identified as a goal of this stage, with the QAA finding that an 'ideal' first-year curriculum should foster in students a 'sense of belonging' and of connectedness among their peers and to the institution (QAA/Bovill, Morss, and Bulley 2008, 10). The social mechanisms involved in this transitional stage resonate with Tilly's understanding of boundary mechanisms that establish a social site. These include: the segregation of population and

activity by employing one population group (educators) to turn non-students/the public into students/specialists; determining human activity according to disciplines; and establishing new webs of interpersonal connections, both directly – through contact between faculty, students, and (sometimes) practitioners – and indirectly, through accessing scholarship deemed 'within' the discipline.

This stage is also extremely important in terms of subject-specific cognitive development, with between 80 and 95 percent of graduate-level gains in English, science, and social studies occurring during the first two years at university (Pascarella and Terenzini 2005). It can be assumed that this might be particularly acute in a discipline such as IR that is rarely taught below university level. Similarly, up to 90 percent of gains in critical thinking are also achieved during these first two years (Facione 1997; Reason, Terenzini, and Domingo 2006, 150). A QAA report on first year curriculum design found that this stage is decisive in forming future career direction (QAA/Bovill, Morss, and Bulley 2008, 10). Hence teaching needs to be seen not just as a process of imbuing students with particular skill sets but also as the dominant constitutive stage in their understanding of a discipline. Consequently, it represents a significant window for the embedding of disciplinary narratives. Indeed, from a disciplinary perspective rather than the QAA's broader governmental-societal worldview, it is more useful to think of this as the *foundational* rather than the transitional stage in a student's disciplinary development.

There is also evidence that a decentered university curriculum plays an important role in making wider society more receptive to global perspectives. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recognized back in 1995 that a more 'internationalized' curriculum was key to the effective preparation of students for life in national and international multicultural contexts (OECD/CERI 1995). More recently, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada found that an internationalized curriculum is 'a means for … students to develop global perspectives and skills at home' (AUCC 2009, 5); a finding that resonates with the Global IR agenda. Reason, Terenzini, and Domingo (2006, 152) noted a clear link between a first-year education involving 'diverse ideas, world views, and people' and positive participation in pluralistic communities. Camicia and Franklin (2011, 41) arrive at more profound conclusions, arguing that 'choosing a type of education means choosing a type of society'. Similarly, Leask (2009, 209) argues that an internationalized curriculum is crucial in the development of students as global professionals and citizens with

international and intercultural outlooks. Such links between university learning and practice after graduation have also be made in studies of IR graduates. Hagman and Biersteker (2014, 293) found that

> IR teaching plays a central role in pre-structuring foreign policy practices, as students will likely reproduce the syllogisms acquired in their training when taking up professional positions. The selection of theories and concepts taught in seminars and lectures therefore has a political dimension that should not be underestimated.

This is because 'IR courses speak more directly to larger, and eventually also more policy-proximate, audiences'. The imperatives of 'globalizing' IR therefore reaches well beyond the academic community and have very real societal implications. Indeed, research has found that international policymaking is also replete with 'myths' that limit the scope of behavior and thinking 'by claiming the status of self-evident "truths"' (Münch 2016, 51), demonstrating the impact of the flawed disciplinary narrative well beyond the theory-building scholarly community itself.

The more specific concern of this article, however, is the theory-building process. Behera (2016, 155) argues that a more global IR requires that we develop

> the newer generation of scholars in a way that they are intellectually equipped and sufficiently interested and inclined to join the academic endeavors for expanding and deepening the horizons of IR.

However, IR course content is typically so limited in its spatial and temporal horizons that students in the Global South 'find it difficult to relate to most [textbooks] largely due to a poor connect between their textual content and ground realities'. IR is not alone in this regard, and other disciplines have both identified the shift and sought to amend their subject matter accordingly. In Sociology, students also lack the skills to escape the 'common sense' of the present in which they live and work, and therefore remain oblivious of alternatives (Sommers 1995; 1996; Inglis 2010). Meanwhile, Northup (2005, 259) believes that History 'students are increasingly eager to study world history [because] it explains the present – their present'. In the US, at least, History has reformed sufficiently for Hunt (2018, 17) to observe that 'no US history textbook can be published today that neglects the history of slavery or discrimination against women and minorities'.

IR, alas, appears to share Sociology's teaching malaise. Almost twenty years ago, Hobden and Hobson (2002, 275) drew attention to the teaching of the discipline and some of the 'benchmark dates' employed in the process, noting also that most university courses take 1945 as their start date, with some even opting for 1989 (Hobden and Hobson 2002, 266-7). Such courses 'regurgitate the usual suspects' of US hegemony, the Cold War, nuclear deterrence, interdependence, globalization and so on. Crucially, the lack of awareness of certain dates and processes the authors deem important proves that 'there is a problem with the current way in which the discipline is constructed.' Textbooks in particular 'are vitally important in generating … a kind of lowest common denominator that usually passes for the "common sense" of the discipline' (De Carvalho *et al.*, 2011, 738). More recently, Buzan and Lawson (2014, 442) have argued that a historical narrative based around (Eurocentric) benchmarks 'undergirds how the discipline conducts much of its research and teaching', and that the narrative stems in part from textbooks. Textbooks and the historical narrative provided within them thus operate as crucial boundary-setting (in terms of setting start dates) mechanisms for the discipline, and cannot be ignored by any effort to reconstruct IR's disciplinary narrative. Nevertheless, teaching and textbooks and their roles in affirming a disciplinary historical narrative are yet to be discussed at length in the Global IR debate, being absent from Acharya's two major Global IR interventions (2014; 2016).

Popular English-language textbooks with explicit historical chapters or sections, often involving some of the discipline's leading names, have shown little appetite for substantive change.[2] This is despite regular content reviews for multiple new editions over recent decades. As Table 1 demonstrates, textbooks often outwardly suggest that neither the deeper past nor non-Western ancient polities are out of bounds for IR investigation. Nevertheless, coverage of the deeper past is typically very brief, state-centered (including imperial states), and quickly abandoned in favor of more comprehensive coverage of Western-related processes. Moreover, several take a particular Western process, such as the Peace of Westphalia or the emergence of mercantilism, as the point of departure for international relations without any recognition of the ontological implications of such narratives.

[2] Textbooks with no dedicated 'historical' chapter or section are excluded, such as Brown and Ainley (2009) and Edkins and Zehfuss (2019). Nevertheless, both these examples demonstrate that, despite explicitly engaging with the process of theory-building, their historical coverage suffers from similar Eurocentric and tempocentric maladies as the books listed in the table.

Table 1		
Textbook title (edition/date)	**Authors**	**Historical start date/location and/or issue**
International Relations and World Politics: Security, Economy, Identity (fifth edition, 2013)	Paul R. Viotti Mark V. Kauppi	c. 600 BCE/Achaemenid Empire
International Relations since 1945: A Global History (second edition, 2013)	John W. Young John Kent	1945 CE/Cold War
World Politics since 1945 (ninth edition)	Peter Calvocoressi	1945 CE/Cold War
Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History (tenth edition, 2016)	Joseph S. Nye David A. Welch	1648 CE/Westphalia
International Relations: Perspectives, Controversies & Readings (fifth edition, 2016)	Keith L. Shimko	c. 1400 CE/European mercantilism
World Politics: Trend and Transformation (sixteenth edition, 2017)	Charles W. Kegley Eugene R. Wittkopf	c. 1500 CE/'First Wave of European Imperialism'
The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations (seventh edition, 2017)	John Baylis Steve Smith Patricia Owens	c. 2,000 BCE/Sumerian city states
Essentials of International Relations (eighth edition, 2019)	Karen Mingst Heather Elko Mckibben Ivan M Arreguin-Toft	1648 CE/Westphalia
Introduction to International Relations: Perspectives, Connections, and Enduring Questions (second edition, 2019)	Joseph Grieco G. John Ikenberry Michael Mastanduno	1500 CE/Western European state system

Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches (seventh edition, 2019)	Robert Jackson Jørgen Møller Georg Sørensen	c. 500 BCE/Ancient Greece
World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions (fourth edition, 2019)	Jeffrey A. Frieden David A. Lake Kenneth A. Schultz	c. 1650 CE/Mercantilism and the thirteen American colonies

For instance, despite opening its first chapter with the assertion that international relations 'can be traced back 2,500 years' to Athens, Grieco, Ikenberry, and Mastanduno (2019, 32-75) begin their historical discussion in 1500 Western Europe. Interestingly, an earlier edition of Mingst *et al.* (2019) spent six pages on the 'pre-Westphalian world', specifically ancient Greece, Rome, and the European Middle and Late-Middle Ages (Mingst 2004, 18-14). Later editions clearly deemed such coverage superfluous. Even textbooks explicitly covering international relations history avoid engagement with the deeper past, even if, as Young and Kent (2013) do, they espouse a 'global' approach. Indeed, international history textbooks tend to be even more wedded to the twentieth century than the broader-focused international relations-focused textbooks (e.g. Calvocoressi 2009; Keylor 2012). More promising is Lawson's chapter in Baylis, Smith, and Owens (2017, 37-51) which provides a three-page, globally-aware outline of significant pre-Westphalian processes since the Sumerian city polities, before an extensive overview of the 'global transformation' of the nineteenth century (see Buzan and Lawson 2015). Similarly, the out-of-print Viotti and Kauppi (2013, 48-56) offers a rare snapshot of non-European ancient history, with eight pages covering the Achaemenid Persian Empire and ancient India, alongside the usual Greco-Roman suspects. Overall, however, the message in these textbooks can be crudely paraphrased as one of 'there is all this very old, non-Western stuff out there, but the important bits are mostly Western and post-Westphalian'.

Unsurprisingly, course syllabi reflect this textbook preoccupation with the West and the recent past. For instance, *Foreign Policy* (2018) magazine's top-ranked provider of undergraduate courses in IR, Harvard University, incorporates IR as a 'secondary field' of its 'Government' program. The 'Gov 40 (International Conflict and Cooperation)' course provides

students with 'historical and analytical overviews of the study of international politics' (Harvard University, 2018). Only after its completion can students 'think about a more specialized focus'. Its promise to cover 'scholars since Thucydides' (Harvard University, 2014, 1) superficially suggests a much broader temporal (if not geographical) canvas, but Thucydides and Thomas Hobbes are the only two pre-1959 scholars on its reading list. This is perhaps unsurprising given that Harvard's designated textbook, Frieden, Lake, and Schultz (2016, 2-41), begins its 'historical introduction' with 'the emergence of international relations' through mercantilism and the thirteen colonies (Harvard University, 2014). This is but one example of the association between textbooks at the teaching of the discipline, albeit in an acclaimed and, according to *Foreign Policy*, world-leading department. Yet it provides a snapshot of the boundary-setting and path-dependent narratives that the discipline imparts on its students and, ultimately, its future scholars and practitioners.

We can then identify the first year or so of IR education as the stage at which the disciplinary historical narrative so crucial to pre-conceptualization is first impressed upon new members of the discipline. It is evident that textbooks and foundational courses provide empirical, theoretical, and methodological content to IR students, and history's prevalence during this stage suggests that it is just as much a part of students' 'hook-up' to the world of IR as is methodology (Jackson 2010; Go and Lawson 2017, 25-26). Yet, Eurocentrism and tempocentrism are fundamental to the narratives of some of the discipline's most popular textbooks. The need therefore to decenter this textbook history is paramount. With their disproportionate impact on scholarly and disciplinary development, textbooks and the foundational stage are crucial to any efforts to decenter the discipline. The final two parts of the article propose two reforms to future textbooks and teaching that should embed the global, contrapuntal, and reflexive ethea called for by others in IR's students and future theory-makers.

Relational thinking and the impermanence of substance(s)

Efforts to 'globalize' and deepen the history in IR courses and textbooks must navigate a significant practical constraint: it is not possible to teach the entire history of all international relations everywhere in the globe. History on a global scale presents one with such a vast canvas that precautions must be taken against 'going bonkers', as Gaddis (2002, 29) warns,

and it is impossible to ever provide a complete account of any single thing, let alone the globe (also Kumar 1991, 8). Selectivity and the attribution of significance to specific points in the past are consequently an inescapable aspect of devising any historical narrative. Selectivity, however, is a normative enterprise as it involves 'funneling attention towards particular events and processes, while downplaying others' (Buzan and Lawson 2014, 438). This applies to any representation of history, and therefore teaching and learning the past must be aware of the implications of selectivity. A more 'global' historical narrative IR therefore should simultaneously be selective without silencing non-Western histories.

Many of the textbooks listed above safeguard against 'going bonkers' by approaching history in a thematic manner, exploring the historical processes, events, and ideas deemed most important for a narrative of the emergence of particular 'things' in international relations. This means, for example, that the state is narrated via Westphalia and the unification of Germany and international systems through Ancient Greece. This is a *substantialist* approach to understanding international relations and the broader social world, prioritizing the study of substances and entities – states, nations, societies, organisations and so on – over the interactions between them. Emirbayer (1997, 281) argues that the fundamental choice facing analysts of the social world is 'whether to conceive of the social world as consisting primarily in substances or in processes, in static "things" or in dynamic, unfolding relations'. In substantialist approaches, entities are understood to exist before relations, rather than as emerging because of and through relations, whilst also possessing fixed interests, goals, norms, and identities (Emirbayer 1997, 284-286).

Dominant approaches to IR and the social sciences since 1945, such as rational-actor or norm-based models, quantitative statistical variable analyses, and various structuralisms, are all limited by a 'substantialist' understanding of the social world that ignores the dynamism of relations. In IR, Jackson and Nexon (1999, 293) argue that entities are often assumed to be fixed and that perceived changes in behaviour or power relations are understood only superficially because:

> entities themselves … do not change in their constitutive properties; they remain states with the requisite attributes which define them as states. Rather, what changes are some of their variable attributes – how much power they have, the scope of their corporate identities, etc.

This entails the perpetuation of all the centrisms previously discussed: the Eurocentrism of substances being understood to have been conceived of in European processes; the actor-centrism of believing that it is the substance that is paramount in international relations; and the tempocentrism of the permanence of the present form of the substance. Unsurprisingly, this produces theoretical models that struggle to appreciate substantive change in the social world, including in the international, as they rely so heavily on substances possessing invariant characteristics for their identification as substances in the first place (see Jackson and Nexon 1999, 297).

Putting substances before relations in such a way risks missing not only the relations between substances, but also many of the crucial processes that constitute, maintain, and enable substances to emerge and interact with others; to take part in international relations, in other words. Work by Grynaviski (2018) and Grynaviski and Hsieh (2015) on 'middlemen' and arbitration are good examples of what is missed through substantialist approaches, with the latter of note for its undermining of traditional IR narratives of classical Greek international relations. They reveal that the discipline's traditional preoccupation with the 'big man' history of great power leaders and elites fails to capture the full panoply of activity that makes international relations happen. Similarly, Phillips and Sharman (2015, 205) find that the critical agents for exchange between West and East in the early modern Indian Ocean were the agents of the Portuguese monarchy and Dutch and English corporate entities. This was an era wherein Asian polities such as the Mughal Empire were far more powerful than their European counterparts. Such conclusions indirectly recontextualize the Westphalia of the textbooks as part of a much more complex and diverse early modern world of international relations, wherein the state and debates over sovereignty in Europe coincided with a multiplicity of other actors and connections that constituted the international.

To take Westphalia as the only story worth telling of the period is therefore a peculiarly myopic narrative for a discipline with claims on the 'international'. It is also a reminder of the dangers of a 'substantialist' reading of historical international relations: whereas a narrative of Westphalia may indeed tell us something of how one, albeit significant, actor came to acquire the properties it enjoys (in some contexts) today, it tells us very little of international *relations*. It even tells us little of how European polities engaged with the world beyond Europe, navigating global international orders and integrating with millennia-old networks of

economic, demographic, and cultural exchange. Somewhat paradoxically, concentrating on Westphalia alone also fails to fully capture how European states themselves were constituted. It is such an oversight of European polities' relations with the non-Western world, and their constitutive influence on European state development that, for example, blights Tilly's historical sociology of European state formation (1992). Without the intermediaries, the imperial administrators, the dispossessed non-Westerners, the slaves, the corporations, the mercenaries, plantation owners, and the rest, the wealth upon which so many Western states secured their grasp on the international of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries could not have been acquired. IR theory-building is all the poorer for neglecting these wider, yet essential, understandings of how relations occur.

In Sociology, Go's argument for a postcolonial social theory (2016) builds on Bhabha's recognition of hybridity, along with Said and Fanon's understandings that colonial and metropolitan societies exist in relation to each other. This co-constitution of the present through the interaction of east and west, north and south is perhaps also the most fundamental 'silenced' aspect of IR, one that is captured comprehensively by some studies but is largely absent from the textbooks. It is also one that is easily neglected when relations and connections, along with the means of facilitating them, play analytical second-fiddle to substances. A relational perspective opens our eyes to the full panoply of actors and processes that make relations possible and how those relations are constitutive not just of the international of the past, but also of the present and future. It also helps foster an appreciation of the multi-scalar nature of international relations, both in the past and the present (Powel, forthcoming). This means a methodological opening to new forms of historical data, as called for in different ways by Grovogui (2004) and Grynaviski (2018), an essential step in revealing those relations. It is precisely this need to appreciate the interplay across and between the 'domestic' and 'international' scales that Nexon (2009, 290-291) calls for in his analysis of early modern international relations. Similarly, a substantialist state-centric reading of history obscures the myriad alternatives to the state that have existed even in Europe itself; the disappearance of which was far from inevitable (see Spruyt 1996).

Relational approaches have the potential to deconstruct IR's multiple centrisms all at once, and other disciplines already offer glimpses of what may be. Despite Tilly's exclusion of the non-Western in his study of European state formation, he is disparaging of social scientific

arguments based on variation between social actors' (particularly states) attributes or essences 'rather than relations among them' (Tilly 1992, 11). He blames this misinterpretation of variations between states on researchers' problematic assumptions that European states were deliberately constructed differently during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For him, the fundamental causes of variation were the relations between polities, including the fluctuating pressures each polity experienced over time. Abbott (2016, ix-x) is also sensitive to the pressures of time on relations, recognizing that:

> Individuals and entities are not the elements of social life, but are the patterns and regularities defined in lineages of successive events. They are moments in a lineage, moments that will themselves shape the next iteration of events even as they recede into the past.

The substance is thus always understood as temporary, subject to change, merger, and hybridization. No substance is therefore permanent, and just as some may be dominant in the present, others may have been so in the past and may indeed be in the future. There is no reason why IR, with enquiry into the international so central to its mission, cannot foster the same self-consciousness in its future scholars, pushing them away from its current multi-centric myopia.

In Sociology, Bhambra (2007, 2014) recognizes the 'connected sociologies' of the world. Correspondingly, global historian Conrad (2016, 65) observes that development is 'inherently relational', and that 'a historical unit – a civilization, a nation, a family – can only be understood through its interactions with others'. Furthermore, 'many groups only jelled into seemingly fixed units as a response to exchange and circulation'. Also in History, Subrahmanyan (1997) reveals the 'connected histories' of global modernity. Bayly (2004) and Armitage and Subrahmanyam's contributors (2010) stress connectivity in their analyses of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including notable political revolutions of the period. Further back in time, Pitts and Versluys (2015) and their contributors identify the connected history of the Roman world, rejecting traditional binary interpretations of Roman or native within and across the boundaries of the Empire. Jennings (2011), meanwhile, identifies the connected and network-embedded lineages of the earliest human communities. Global connectivity is also evident in political theory research such as Buck-Morss' (2009) study of the Haitian revolution and Matin-Asgari's (2018) exploration of Iranian intellectual history.

Such approaches are already finding traction in IR, with Buzan and Lawson (2015) and Bilgin (2016b) advocating 'composite' approaches to history in the discipline. Meanwhile, Rosenberg (2016) argues that IR is definable as a discipline by its unique focus on exploring relations between a multiplicity of societies. Likewise, Global Historical Sociology – a sub-field spanning IR, Sociology, History, and Politics – is driven by 'relational' sociology (see Go and Lawson 2017). Relational works also address several of Acharya's ambitions for a more global IR. Not least, connected histories point the way to the more effective integration of area studies scholarship and knowledges within the discipline. Preempting historical chapters in textbooks with a discussion on relations and the international should, given the wealth of material on relationality and connections, be straightforward. Yet the decentering benefits of incorporating such a primer before substantive historical discussion could be significant. A stress on relations and connections pushes IR closer to recognizing the 'diversity in us' (Acharya 2014, 649) by underlining that historical development is global in itself, with polities developing in relation to, alongside, and/or connected to others (also Rosenberg 2016). By understanding that polities and substances rarely develop in isolation, and that relations continue to shape and sculpt substances and communities through time, we also recognize that the non-West always has and will continue to have a constitutive influence on international relations, no matter how much the discipline has tried to silence it.

Multi-layered and deeper history

The second proposal aims to directly challenge the Eurocentrism and tempocentrism of the discipline by fostering in students a sensitivity towards multiple layers of time. As Drayton and Motadel's words (above) suggest, relationality exists across time as well as across space and social scale. In history, no one unit of time (events, periods and so on) is dominant. As Buzan and Lawson (2014) and de Carvalho et al. (2011) make clear, so much of IR has been built around historical benchmarks: singular events that somehow cause dramatic shifts in and to international relations. Problems with benchmarks, however, are well-documented in historical scholarship. Braudel, of the *Annales* School, spoke of social science as having a 'horror of the event' and criticized the capriciousness and delusionary qualities of the short term in historical analysis (Braudel 1980, 28). Braudel noted that political history was particularly prone to such eventism, with the history of the most recent century typically being of 'great events'. In political history, Braudel warns, 'the past seems to consist in [a]

mass of diverse facts', yet 'this mass does not make up all of reality, all the depth of history on which scientific thought is free to work'. Green (1992, 39), a pioneer of global history, notes the imperative of avoiding histories that cite specific dates as denoting the end of one era and the start of another. 'Major discontinuities involving multiple aspects of civil life do not happen suddenly', he argues. Instead, we must appreciate the significance of longer passages of time that involve multiple events that help ending old continuities and encourage new ones.

It also needs to be recognized that the same historical process may be experienced by different parts of the globe at different times. Staying with Green (1992, 52), he realizes that world integration did not suddenly occur in 1500, but rather gradually and at different points for different spaces: the Americas joined the world system in the sixteenth century; Indonesia the seventeenth; India the eighteenth; and China and Africa during the nineteenth. Green's observations are important if one aims to build Global IR around concepts and frameworks that are of 'general relevance' (Hurrell 2016, 151), as 'relevance' might not become apparent at the same point across the globe. Crucially, however, what is missed in a history limited to the near past, or even one beginning in 1500, as many textbooks do, is a history before European imperialism. As Mignolo (2007, 484) points out, histories that begin at the time of European expansion do not expose their audiences to alternative, non-Western ways of doing things, and only include the non-Western (if at all) after the moment of contact with the West. He proposes a 'rewriting of global history from the perspective and critical consciousness of coloniality', thereby making colonialism and decolonization two of the central points of 'general relevance' around which decentered social sciences may be built.

Multiple layers of time, however, is not just a matter of when a process happened in different spaces. Diverse parts of the social world have their own tempos, with the present being contingent upon multiple factors of differing durations, some recent and some rooted in older, longer-term processes. Evans (2012, loc. 2792) finds that 'there are different kinds of periodization for different kinds of history', with economic and political histories moving at different speeds to each other, and military technology and the arts each with their own unique tempos. In this context, a history of international relations would require that one first determined the significant features of international relations so that their perspective tempos can also be identified. Braudel (1995) was equally aware of the presence and alternating

significance of multiple temporalities and that time moves at different speeds in different contexts. His three-layered understanding of time views political events, including battles, treaties, and political changes, as the most fast-moving layer. Next come the slower changes associated with social and economic trends, including technological shifts (and their utilitarian maturity), social structures, and (notably for IR) state systems. Finally, the most slow-moving of all layers of time are the cycles of historical repetition of the *longue durée*, frequently linked to natural conditions. It is on this level that belief systems change, where centuries-old mentalities decompose and new ones evolve slowly. What is most important to note is that layers of time overlap, with any given society (including the international) subject to each layer's various influences. Consequently, only focusing on one layer risks blinding the analyst to significance of the others.

Braudel's layered schema illustrates the complexities and different pace of time across the various parts of the social world. In a similar vein, Corfield (2007) identifies three 'dimensions' of history in the social world: continuity, gradual change, and rapid or revolutionary change. Corfield believes that 'every short-term moment contributes to a much longer term', and every event occurs *diachronically*, that is, during or through time over a protracted span of time (Corfield 2007, xv). Similarly, 'long-term frameworks always inform the passing moment as well'. Awareness of multiple time units is therefore necessary in our understanding of the global past (see Drayton and Motadel 2018, 13), and IR teaching needs to make this apparent. The synchronic influence of each layer is key, especially as students and scholars come to consider causal chains leading to any given event or process. Indeed, Conrad (2016, 156) recognizes that 'every issue requires its own temporal and spatial order', whilst accepting that 'the choice of scale always has normative implications'. Such recognition would do much to decenter individual aspects of IR, from sovereignty to modernity, by preventing such aspects from being shoe-horned into a single, Eurocentric benchmark.

These multiple layers cannot be ignored as they form the lived experiences of students, scholars, and practitioners alike: the present is not simply the result of the recent past nor of a handful of benchmark days and periods, but a mélange of overlapping layers of change and continuity touching on every aspect of the social. As Drayton and Motadel's (2018, 13) defence of global history recognizes:

> [Global history is] an invitation to the historian to be self-conscious of the *jeux d'échelles*, of the interdependence of the scales of space – village, province, nation, region, and world – and time – days, decades, centuries – through which we explore and explain the past.

Adopting a multi-layered approach would help foster a more nuanced historical awareness, less preoccupied with a Eurocentric, episodic, evental understanding of the past. This cannot be achieved, however, without making the historical narrative sensitive to the deeper past. Exactly how far is a matter of future debate, but the deeper past allows consideration of more examples of non-Western pre-eminence that would benefit the Global IR project, denaturalizing the Eurocentric present by pointing at the deeper and connected roots of contemporary international relations. Phillips (2016) nudges the discipline in this direction in his contention that processes identified as being part of a nineteenth century 'global transformation' were already evident a century earlier. Indeed, employing multiple layers of history *necessitates* going much further back than 1989, 1945, 1919, or even 1648 or 1500. However, given the dearth of current IR scholarship on the pre-twentieth century world, the discipline will need to draw on other disciplines to do so.

Thankfully, there is plenty of potential interdisciplinary material. For instance, Global History supports Phillips' case for an eighteenth century 'global transformation': Bayly (2004, 86-120) argues that between approximately 1780 and 1830, 'converging revolutions', imperial consolidations, and new state formations across the globe ushered in a new era. A more recent collection (involving Bayly) expands this period to approximately ninety years of contemporaneous socio-political developments wherein lie many roots of recent international relations (Armitage and Subrahmanyam, 2010). These include: the American, French, Haitian, and Latin American revolutions; the birth of the Wahhabi movement in the Arabian Peninsula; state formation in Vietnam, Burma/Myanmar, and Thailand; the consolidation of British India; and the two Russo-Persian wars (1804-13 and 1826-28) which brought the Caucuses under Russian control whilst more or less fixing the boundaries of modern Iran.[3] It is perhaps no coincidence that Subrahmanyam arrived at his notion of 'connected histories' whilst exploring this period, whilst Bayly's title describes this period as the 'birth of the modern world'. Several of these processes may be of more personal significance to IR students than the events and processes captured by historical narrative of

[3] Herat in present-day Afghanistan would be ceded to the British in 1857.

many current textbooks, often crucial to understanding how the present came into being. For example, the Wahhabi movement has ever since been linked to the Saudi state, and has long pursued a vigorous international mission. Over the next two centuries, teachers influenced by its radical monotheism emerge in places as geographically spread as central India, China, and West Africa (Bayly 2004, 106); areas that are today very familiar with struggles against violent Islamist groups.

But why stop at the eighteenth century? By citing the Amarna system as an example of international relations practice outside the '*short durée*' of European or Western dominance, Acharya (2014) implies that older periods of history need consideration. Buzan and Lawson (2014) propose 1500 as their earliest benchmark date due to the emergence of the supposed first 'global' international system that was brought about by the incorporation of the Americas in global sea lanes (Buzan and Lawson 2014, 439, also 438, 442; Buzan and Little, 2000, 401-402). Many global historians, however, are skeptical of 1500's 'global' credentials, with the suggestion of world integration as beginning at this time being somewhat Eurocentric in its assumption that non-Western regions were brought into a world system created by Europeans. For Abu-Lughod (1989), there was already a global system (minus the Americas) in existence by the fourteenth century, centered on an 'archipelago of cities' including Bruges, Venice, Cairo, Baghdad, Samarkand, Calicut, and Canton. Thus conceived, it was not so much a case of non-Europeans joining a European-made global system at various points after 1500, as Green (1992) argues, but rather of different spaces *reconnecting* with a global system after having dropped off for a period. Whereas this 'global' system did not include the Americas at that time, for those within it it was their 'globe'.

Another 'global' perspective is evident in J.C. van Leur's pioneering work from the 1930s (see Darwin 2008, 11-12). Van Leur dismisses the idea that the sixteenth century arrival of Europeans in Asia's maritime routes was transformative for Asia. Rather, it was Europe who were latecomers in an extensive network bringing together most societies from southern East Africa, through the Indian Ocean and the Indonesian archipelago, up to the northern Siberian seaboard. As Darwin (2008, 12) argues, 'far from awaiting the Promethean touch of merchants from Europe, a "global" economy already existed' (see Blusée and Gaastra 1998). Similarly, Burbank and Cooper (2013 153) argue of the period that European were not interested in obtaining new commodities because 'eastern' goods had long been accessible

for Europeans. Rather, the issue was one of control of trade, including the usurpation of the dominant land-based networks centered on or around the so-called silk route. Europe's achievement, if it can be so conceived, was the addition of the Americas to a well-established global network which Europe itself had only recently re-joined. Even the Europeanness of this 'achievement' is not clear-cut, as travel to the Americas was only possible thanks to the adoption by Europeans of 'Eastern' ship-building technologies and navigational techniques (Hobson 2004, 123-126). By rethinking 1500 as a broader period when Europe joins rather than establishes a global network, one recognizes the significant global network of relations in place well before 1500 wherein non-Europeans were leading agents of relations across the globe.

Foundational courses (such as Harvard's Government program) often briefly indulge in one pre-1500 period when exploring Thucydides. Indeed, strategic studies and aspects of realist scholarship have been arguably more open to the deeper past than others in IR (see Murray and Sinnreich 2006; Kaufman *et al.* 2007). Whilst their studies of 'deep history' may be flawed by the fact that such 'history is relevant to their research objectives only insofar as it enables them to generate, test or refine theory' (Elman and Elman, 2001: 7), such works nevertheless offer three important reminders to the discipline: first, that there were international relations in the deeper past; second, that these relations can be effectively studied by the discipline; and, third, as Kaufman *et al* demonstrate, studies of non-Western actors provide valuable insights to even some of the more established approaches to the discipline. Similarly, Political Science, and political thought more specifically, also explores aspects of the deeper past, albeit again frequently Eurocentric (see Coleman 2000; Haddock 2008). A more comprehensive decentering of 'Antiquity', however, offers rich pickings to IR and Political Science alike. Aristotle (II, 11 [1995, 77]), no less, championed the politics of Carthage in his recommendations for Athens, going into some detail about the Carthaginian constitution and its lack of any 'factional conflicts worth mentioning, nor any attempt at tyranny'. Polybius, a first century BCE Greek historian in Roman service, watched Carthage burn at the hands of the Romans in 146 BCE (Hoyos 2010, 219). Polybius (VI, 51 [2010, 407-8]; Goody 2006, 53-4) favorably compared the more influential role of the population in Carthaginian democracy to the more exclusive Roman republican system.

Indeed, Carthage and the Phoenicians offer much ammunition to the decentering of 'Antiquity' in academic disciplines. For example, a Phoenician-Egyptian expedition had circumnavigated Africa by 600 BCE (Goody 2006, 64), undermining suggestions of Europeans as maritime discoverers and hinting at a 'world system' even earlier than those suggested by Abu-Lughod and Van Leur. The Phoenicians were also an important influence within first millennium Greek polities, including numerous Phoenician settlements within Greek cities and the probable Phoenician origins of some key Greek dynasties and city-states such as Thebes (Goody 2006, 64). Thus the 'Greek' city state system is revealed as a polyglot multicultural node in a broader 'international' web of relations, being constituted by those relations just as much as it shaped them for itself. Moreover, the Phoenician alphabet pre-dated its Greek equivalent by some 750 years (Goody 2006, 64), and even before the foundation of Carthage, Phoenician cities were being run on cooperative-democratic lines (Markoe 2000, 87-8). Other possibilities might include the Akkadians, about whom a nascent IR literature exists (see Freire 2013), or world systems scholarship that, despite its economic determinism, has long been more interdisciplinary, more open to and more substantive in its coverage of the deeper human past than most in IR (e.g. Algaze 1993; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997; Denemark, Friedman, Gills, and Modelski 2000; Frank and Gills 1993). Indeed, were one open to other disciplines, the Sumerians, Ancient Chinese, Mesoamericans, and even Neolithic pastoralist communities could be considered (see, for example: Yoffee 2005; Porter 2012; Scott 2017).

A striking common element to many of these studies of such polities is the importance of relations in their emergence and existence through time. For instance, Yoffee's work on the 'archaic state' is deeply relational in its outlook, emphasizing the negotiative and fluid dimensions of early states. Meanwhile, Honeychurch (2014) reveals a consensual nomadic model of a state very different to orthodox Westphalian IR understandings that was the product of prolonged interactions between settled and nomadic communities. From his Xiongnu and Mesopotamian pastoralist examples, Honeychurch is able to disrupt 'international systems' narratives of the deeper past and reveal nomadism as a politically highly-complex and versatile means of navigating regional geopolitical and ecological shifts. Of the Achaemenid Iranians, much more is already known about their politics and international relations (see Wiesehöfer 1996; Nieling 2010; Waters 2014). In the case of Iran,

understanding its deeper past sheds new light on contemporary Iranians' understandings of the international and themselves (see Holliday 2011). Simply using the term 'Iranian' instead of 'Persian' for this past has significant reframing effects on the present both by recognizing its vast history of regional significance and global connections and de-exceptionalizing its recent involvements in other Southwest Asian polities. Indeed, recognizing the deeper past more generally in IR reveals policy drivers in actors whose historical consciousnesses are much deeper than IR's own, presentist perspective.

Yet however deep one delves, one is always faced with the problem of selectivity and silencing. Also, historical significance evolves with time and context, in the sense that what may be important for scholars in one decade might not be as significant thirty years later (Gaddis 2002, 23). Finally, different textbook markets may have their own, particular interest areas in IR.[4] Nevertheless, none of the above justifies either ahistoricism or Eurocentrism. Therefore, a pragmatic approach might be to determine textbook content not by traditional canonical and substantialist examples but by the ethea of geographic breadth, historical depth, actor heterogeneity, and, as the previous section suggested, relationalism. With such a combination embedded in the formative learning stage of the discipline, we might arrive at general disciplinary inclusivity whilst simultaneously addressing particular empirical experiences.

Conclusion

'Globalizing' Eurocentric readings of history in IR as proposed by Acharya (2014) cannot be achieved without first recognizing that IR also suffers from tempocentric understandings of the past. Various centrisms are intertwined, with a Eurocentric reading of the present extrapolated as a historical narrative of exceptionalism, thereby missing the cornucopia of different experiences and alternative ways of doing that once were, are, and may be yet. The consequence of such centrisms, for IR and other social sciences alike, has been decades of flawed theory-building on geographically- and temporally-limited empirical cases around universalized 'benchmarks' such as 1919 or 1648. Even rare suggestions of beginning in 1500 remain hamstrung with ignorance of pasts before European imperialism, and this despite

[4] Thanks to one of the anonymous reviewers for pointing this out.

many suggestions that international relations and, according to some, international 'systems' have existed for millennia.

This article has laid part of the blame *and* located the solution for such blinkered readings of the past in the manner in which the discipline's historical grand narrative is taught to its students. The grand narrative exerts a powerful guiding influence on disciplinary enquiry, and is imbued through popular textbooks and introductory classes during the first foundational years of higher education. History is central to the disciplinary boundary-setting processes of this most vital point in an individual's scholarly and societal development, often being the subject of the first chapter in textbooks that later elaborate on various IR theories. Yet the history that currently populates textbook pages suffers from the same centrisms as the discipline as a whole: rarely delving earlier than 1648 and almost always preoccupied with the formation of substances through largely European processes. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the post-Westphalian state is so prevalent a model in IR research when this form alone is explored in any depth by its students during their formative years.

Breaking this self-perpetuating cycle of parochial ignorance and, as Mignolo (2014) would have it, 'opening' thinking in IR to the global does indeed require new, non-Western cases to inform our theory-building processes. Yet it also demands a rethinking of the grand narrative we teach our future scholars and practitioners from their first days in the discipline. The traditional whistle-stop flight through recent Western history cannot be sufficient for the needs of the discipline's global market. And whilst a particular student population may require more locally-relevant cases to be given more attention than might another population, framing a textbook's entire historical narrative within a relational, connected, and mutually-constitutive ontology would bring IR more in step with other disciplines that are themselves undergoing 'global' turns. Teaching history as connected reveals the ongoing formation of substances through relations, and, importantly, exposes the breadth of interactions that are essential to the everyday functioning of international relations. Students also need to be aware of the many alternative ways of doing that have and may yet exist in response to the challenges of the international. Doing so also demands that students are exposed to periods and places when such alternatives were accepted methods of engaging with and within the international, including deeper past(s) that still inform present experiences of the international for many. With such geographic breadth, historical depth,

and relational sensitivities engrained in its students, IR can be confident that the theory-makers of tomorrow should be instinctively open to a global repository of examples and epistemologies more suited to the challenges of the present and future.

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