



Call for Papers Workshop EWIS 2020
Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium, 1-4 July 2020

Non-Western Agency in World Politics: Decentering Practices, Actions and Perceptions

Convenors:

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Workshop summary

The visibility of non-Western theories, concepts, and ideas has increased in the field of International Relations (IR) in the last decade due to the postcolonial critiques of the Eurocentrism of IR and the ongoing calls for diversity. As a result, IR has been enriched with new concepts and theories from across the world (e.g. Rai 2016, Chih-yu Shih et al. 2019, Mohomed 2016, Ling 2014). This workshop builds upon this rich academic output, but shifts the focus from a further expansion of non-Western approaches to a focus on non-Western agency in world politics.

While the silent assumption of the non-West's lack of agency embedded in IR theories has been criticized (Hobson 2012) together with the reification of non-Western agency through critical theories' critique of Eurocentrism, the exploration of non-Western agency in world politics has continued to remain scarce (Hobson and Alinejad 2017; Alejandro 2018). This workshop seeks to redress this imbalance by focusing on non-Western agency in history and contemporary times through the empirical study of the practices of non-Western actors, such as states, communities, empires, NGO's, and individuals, and the effects their agency had or continues to have in world politics. Agency is in this regard understood as the actions an actor undertakes and the practices in which it engages in a particular place and time and within certain hierarchical structures of power in world politics that are prevalent at that moment.

The aim of the workshop is to bring together scholars whose work develops decentered approaches to world politics, and begin collaboration towards the publication of an edited volume on non-Western agency (contributions will be selected based on the workshop). Apart from shining empirical light on the agency of so-called 'non-Western' actors, the workshop also questions the assumption of the difference of the actors designated as 'non-Western', and by extension the difference of their agency, vis-à-vis so-called 'Western' actors. We welcome papers that focus on empirical material, case studies and comparative analysis. Possible topics include:

- Non-Western agency in the realm of international political economy. (e.g. New International Economic Order, WTO negotiations, formation of cartels, etc.);
- Non-Western agency in the fight against climate change, the preservation of nature, environment and land;
- Non-Western agency in the realm of human rights and international law (e.g. the expansion of the notion of human rights; expansion and/or change of international law);
- Non-Western agency in relation to questions and practices of imperialism, colonialism, slavery and racism;
- Non-Western agency in relation to transnational movements (e.g. resistance, solidarity), the transformation of world politics and hierarchies of power.

Submission deadline: 13 January 2020

<https://eisa-net.org/ewis-2020/>

