

EWIS 2022 Call for Workshop Proposals

Decentering IR: on Power and Knowledge Production

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Criticisms of International Relations (IR) as a Western- or Euro-centric, hegemonizing discipline abound along with calls for decolonizing, globalizing, and pluralizing it. IR appears to step away from fixed ontologies and methodologies that have so far marginalized the complexity of identities and plural experiences involved in the international realm (Thakur, 2021). However, IR critical discussion also left us at the mercy of ideational factional ‘turns’ where scholars seem to ‘engineer’ an alternative discipline according to their own different sensibilities and preferences, missing an empirical investigation into the ‘ontological status of knowledge as a social phenomenon’ as Hamati-Ataya (2018, 4) argues. Despite the proliferation of academic debates on scholarly pluralism and diversity, we seem to know less about how knowledge of world politics is co-constituted, in practice, by material/ideational power and social determinants. Often, this variety of research programmes does not allow us to investigate epistemic practices and communities that shape how particular configurations of power constitute the knowledge of world politics. To decenter IR and ‘recraft’ (Onuf 2018) the study of global dynamics we need to reflect on the social contingency of current epistemic influences, positioning the study of what stands on the margins as co-constitutive of the international, as debates in political anthropology (Tsing 2005), political theory (Getachew 2021), and IR (Bilgin 2021, Tickner and Smith 2021) have pointed out. How is a certain knowledge of world politics constituted within specific power configurations? Endeavouring to further investigate the decentering of IR, the workshop welcomes proposals that explore how power and knowledge formation associate in the processes of studying and constituting the realm of the international. We are interested in a wide range of knowledge production practices that include, but are not limited to pedagogical practices, data and information governance, the role of epistemic communities and hierarchies in knowledge creation. We welcome reflections on a variety of theoretical, methodological, and intellectual foundations, conventions and practices contributing to the understanding of the international. Submitted papers for the workshop may address:

- How does an ontology of mutual co-constitution shape the way in which we look at world politics and real-world changes and continuities? How manifestations and epitomes of the international can be studied and imagined as mutually constituted?
- How do national, regional-indigenous-developed theoretical frameworks locate themselves within broader global debates?
- How does knowledge production participate in ‘politics of exclusion’ or ‘politics of marginalization’ in IR?
- How does the practice of teaching IR reflect specific policies of exclusion/marginalization? And with what socio-political implications? Can teaching IR in politically powerful higher education institutions create epistemic communities of IR practitioners who bear hegemonizing world views?