Daniel Maliniak, Susan Peterson, Ryan Powers, and Michael J. Tierney. "Is International Relations a Global Discipline? Hegemony, Insularity, and Diversity in the Field." *Security Studies* (2018): 1-37. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2017.1416824.

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Does the academic discipline of International Relations (IR) still reflect the dominance of U.S. approaches, universities, and scholars that have characterized it since the mid-twentieth century? Is IR becoming more global and diverse, or is it increasingly dividing into national approaches that may find it more difficult to talk to one another? This article by four principle investigators of the Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project, provides answers to these and other questions about IR. The authors draw upon the 2014 TRIP surveys of 5,139 IR faculty in thirty-two countries, together with four previous iterations of the survey that have been conducted since its initiation in 2004. They also draw on a TRIP database of all 7,792 peer-reviewed journal articles published in twelve leading IR journals from 1980 to 2014.

The article's key findings

The article finds that there are still strong signs of U.S. hegemony in IR, especially with regard to perceptions that the top scholars, journals, and Ph.D.-granting institutions are "overwhelmingly (and disproportionately)" in the U.S. (30). For instance, fifteen of the twenty universities perceived as having the top Ph.D. programs are in the U.S., with the London School of Economics, Oxford University, and University of Cambridge as the only non-U.S. universities making it into the top ten (13). Nine of the top ten scholars and eighteen of the top twenty scholars listed as producing "the most interesting scholarship in the past five years" have been based at U.S. universities (14). Nevertheless, the authors note that "hegemony is more limited than some observers suggest, or that hegemony is declining" (12). For instance, "just under 12 percent of respondents employed at institutions outside the United States earned their highest degree from US institutions" (12).

Some scholars have argued that this dominance is not a problem. For instance, John Mearsheimer attributes U.S. dominance to the rich variety of theories that U.S.-based scholars have already created, leaving "not a lot of room for new theories or even major twists on existing theories."[1] However the TRIP data confirm a widespread feeling outside the U.S. that U.S. dominance should be challenged, as well as a lively, diverse, and productive research community outside the U.S. In a further analysis of TRIP data Stephen Saideman has found a "dramatic decline in atheoretical work and an increase in nonparadigmatic work since 2000,"[2] and that both "grand" theory and more focused theory have continued to grow, suggesting continuing potential for theoretical innovation beyond the U.S.-based work of IR's first decades.

The article also provides evidence that more IR scholars identify with a global IR community than with a national or regional one (18), although in most countries they work in their country of origin (19). A wide variety of issues that are studied, going far beyond a focus on interstate war and the use of force. The data challenges the conventional view that U.S.-based IR is dominated by state-centric realism: "in 2014 fewer than 18 percent of US respondents said their work fell within the realist paradigm" (26). More U.S. scholars (20 percent) describe their research as constructivist (26), and constructivism has become more prevalent than realism outside the U.S. as well.

U.S. scholars continues to be more positivist than most other countries, with 61 percent describing their work this way, while majorities in 22 other countries identify themselves as non-positivist or post-positivist, although a majority of respondents in nine countries also identified as positivist. The article also notes that "In 2014, 90 percent of articles published in the twelve leading IR journals were positivist" (27). The surveys reveal that a variety of qualitative approaches are dominant in the discipline as a whole rather than quantitative approaches, including in the U.S., although quantitative approaches have become increasingly prevalent over time (30).

In their analysis of the significance of these findings, the authors note that some scholars favour greater diversity for ethical reasons, and some for the positive effects that diversity will have on the quality of research. Some positivists see positivist approaches as providing the best path towards cumulative discipline-wide progress, while other scholars value epistemological diversity. The authors acknowledge other studies which have documented the persistence of bias with regard to gender and race and note that "a truly pluralist and merit-based" IR requires "that structural barriers be knocked down" (35). Overall, while acknowledging their own particular location in the U.S. and the signs of some persistence of U.S. hegemony and insularity, they judge the field to be displaying the type of diversity, communication across approaches, and openness that they favor.

Commentary on the significance of the article and the TRIP project

As principle investigators of the TRIP project, the authors of this article should be applauded for the continual expansion in the sophistication and reach of the TRIP surveys since their initiation in 2004. The

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[1] John J. Mearsheimer, "Benign Hegemony," *International Studies Review* 18:1 (March 2016): 148, https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viv021.

[2] Stephen M. Saideman, "The Apparent Decline of the IR Paradigms: Examining Patterns of Publications, Perceptions, and Citations," *International Studies Review* viy011 (March 2018), https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viy011.

first survey focused only on the U.S., with responses from 1,084 scholars constituting roughly 47 percent of all American IR scholars at the time, and the increase to 5,139 respondents in 32 countries in multiple languages therefore provides a much more comprehensive picture of the global discipline.[3] Over time a growing number of scholars beyond the initiators of the TRIP survey have made use of its findings to enrich our understanding of IR as a discipline, and thus its influence extends well beyond this article and the findings it reports. Most notably, the TRIP survey was prominently referenced by Amitav Acharya in his introduction to a 2016 Presidential Issue of *International Studies Review*, which was inspired by his Presidential Address to the 2014 International Studies Association (ISA) Convention with its call for a Global IR, as well as the 2015 ISA Convention Theme on this topic.[4] The TRIP article database was used for the first systematic documentation of gender bias in citation practices in IR.[5] Scholars other than the authors of this article have drawn upon TRIP Survey data to do more detailed studies of particular countries.[6] The TRIP Surveys have therefore made a very important contribution to IR's capacity to critically evaluate and re-shape itself as a discipline, and this article contributes to this.

Like all quantitative research, the findings reported in this article also have certain limitations arising from aspects of IR that were not measured, either because of resource constraints or difficulties associated with their complex or intangible character. This especially includes the growing complexity of the practice of IR and its reciprocal relationship to the discipline of IR. Over the past half century, the practice of IR has involved an increasing diversity of state and non-state actors operating in a multiplicity of forums, networks, and other settings. In the discipline of IR this is associated with the relegation of state-centric IR to a secondary approach, as documented by this article, but it also involves the spread of scholarly engagements with international relations far beyond the discipline of IR as traditionally defined.

There are a number of challenges that this creates for the TRIP project. Its focus on twelve leading IR journals is one. An obvious limitation pertains to the field of International Political Economy (IPE), which has become one of the largest subfields of IR, but which does not have key journals such as *Review of International Political Economy* or *Review of International Organizations* included among the 12 journals selected by the TRIP project. As the authors of this article note, it is likely that some of the journals beyond their top 12 are also less positivist (28). Leonard Seabrooke and Kevin Young have produced a rich empirical analysis of IPE

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[3] Susan Peterson, Michael J. Tierney, and Daniel Maliniak. "Inside the Ivory Tower: Professors of International Relations Shape Future Policy Debates and Mold the next Generation of Leaders. So Who Are These Dons of Diplomacy, and What Do They Believe?" *Foreign Policy* 151 (2005): 58.

[4] Amitav Acharya, "Advancing Global IR: Challenges, Contentions, and Contributions." *International Studies Review* 18: (March 2016): 4-15, https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viv016.

[5] Daniel Maliniak, Ryan Powers, and Barbara F. Walter. "The Gender Citation Gap in International Relations." *International Organization* 67:4 (October 2013): 889-922. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818313000209.

[6] See for instance the following, by two country partners of the TRIP Survey: Wemheuer-Vogelaar, Wiebke, and Thomas Risse. "International Relations Scholars in Germany: Young, Internationalised, and Non-Paradigmatic." *German Politics* 27:1 (January 2018): 89-112, https://doi.org/10.1080/09644008.2016.1253683 and the following, which draws on the first incorporation of Poland into the TRIP Survey: Jacek Czaputowicz and Anna Wojciuk, *International Relations in Poland: 25 Years After the Transition to Democracy* (Cham: Springer, 2017).

using different methods than the TRIP project,[7] and hopefully in the future researchers will be able to continue to extend our understanding of the broader field of IR in this way, complementing the work of the TRIP project. Today it is likely that scholars and practitioners increasingly access articles through search engines which bring up individual articles based on their content rather than by routinely browsing leading journals.

More generally, the TRIP project data have limitations in assessing the influence of institutions and actors in the discipline of IR relative to the practice of IR. TRIP findings have been referenced in some discussions of these patterns. For instance, this article cites the criticism by James Goldgeier of the TRIP project's inadequate consideration of the practical influence of scholars from other disciplines working as members of the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs.[8] The article also references debates over the question of whether overly theoretical or overly quantitative research inhibits the uptake of IR research by practitioners. However, it is also important to continue to be wary of implicitly overstating the independent relevance of the discipline of IR by focusing on its measurable self-assessment without considering the changing pathways of influence that extend beyond the discipline. For instance, as the academic job market has become more challenging in some countries, or as the demand from outside universities for the research skills of those with doctoral degrees increases, the TRIP project's exclusion of researchers based outside universities will become more problematic. The reputational factors that the TRIP project measures will likely become less important to the degree to which the gap between theory and practice shrinks through university-trained researchers engaging with practical problems that may be remote from the leading U.S. university programs and scholarly journals, and that may draw on scholarly disciplines other than IR.

No single project can capture the complexity of a discipline such as IR, and these comments on the limitations of the TRIP project should not obscure its valuable contribution to our understanding of IR. They point to the need for ongoing complementary research that links the features of IR that the TRIP project identifies with the changing place of the academic discipline of IR in the world. Connecting the results of TRIP survey questions to other measures of influence would assist in evaluating changing patterns of influence across the world's academic IR programs and journals as well. In the meantime, we can be grateful that we have a much better understanding of the discipline of IR thanks to the TRIP Project and this article and others that have reported on and analyzed the data it has produced.

Tony Porter is Professor of Political Science, McMaster University. His most recent books include two in 2017 co-edited with Paul Huebener, Susie O'Brien, Liam Stockdale, and Yanqui Rachel Zhou (*Time and Globalization: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* and *Time, Globalization and Human Experience: Interdisciplinary Explorations*); *Transnational Financial Associations and the Governance of Global Finance: Assembling Power and Wealth* (2013), coauthored with Heather McKeen-Edwards; and his edited *Financial Regulation after the*

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[7] Seabrooke, Leonard, and Kevin L. Young. "The Networks and Niches of International Political Economy." *Review of International Political Economy* 24:2 (March2017): 288-331. https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290.2016.1276949.

[8] Goldgeier, James. "Undisciplined." *Foreign Policy* (blog), 3 January2012. https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/01/03/undisciplined/.

Global Financial Crisis (2014), all with Routledge. His current research is on the role of numbers in transnational governance, including country rankings, benchmarking, Big Data, algorithms, and risk models.