

Beyond Borders: Perceptions of Dominance in International Relations

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Abstract: Research on the Western and/or American dominance of the International Relations discipline has heretofore neglected scholars' perceptions as an important object of analysis. We use data from a cross-national survey of 32 national academies to address this gap. We find that that scholars' location of employment (West/non-West), age, gender, and ideology in social and economic issues partially explain perceptions of dominance. We also analyze a survey experiment to uncover scholars' views about the source (American or Western) of dominance. While scholars are more likely to agree that the discipline is dominated by the West than by the United States, this relationship is moderated by the scholar's geographic region and age. This study suggests that measuring dominance as merely the objective preponderance of Western/American people and ideas is insufficient for a complete sociology of the IR discipline.

The past three decades have seen increasing interest in the sociology of the International Relations (IR) discipline. The concept of dominance has played a vital role in the development of this self-reflexive literature. For example, it has been instrumental in the characterization of the United States as IRs center of productivity and innovation. Since Stanley Hoffmann notoriously characterized IR as an “American social science” in 1977, a multitude of studies has taken on the questions of whether, where, and under what conditions the U.S. dominates the rest of the discipline (e.g. D’Aoust 2015; Guilhot 2011).

Dominance has two main overlapping and even slightly confusing meanings in this context: as a purely quantitative preponderance of U.S.-based scholars and their scholarship (e.g. Crawford and Jarvis 2001) and as an academic reflection of American political, economic, and cultural hegemony (e.g. Smith 2002). In the latter sense, dominance is understood qualitatively, seeing IR theories and methodologies as heavily tinted by American philosophy, history, and foreign policy strategies as well as its behavioral science approach (Hoffmann 1977). Both conceptions of dominance have been employed to describe the influence of scholars located in the West (North America plus Western Europe) on the disciplines academic architecture and the role of Western thought in the development of IR theories and epistemology (e.g. Acharya and Buzan 2007).

We contribute to this self-reflexive IR literature by adding a third layer to the definition of dominance that bridges the normative-qualitative and the empirical-quantitative variations: IR scholars perceptions. Particularly, we explore what scholars believe about the discipline to gain an understanding of potential root-causes for the continuous reproduction of (narratives about) dominance in IR. We do so by evaluating a survey question about dominance in IR that was part of the 2014 Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project faculty survey (Maliniak, et al. 2014). The TRIP survey was conducted among IR scholars located in 32 countries on four continents and in eleven different languages. It therefore serves as the ideal platform for getting feedback from a broad range of scholars.

This paper will proceed as follows. First, we will review three gaps in the literature on dominance in IR that we attempt to address in this paper. Then, we describe our data and describe some of the relationships between scholars' characteristics and their perceptions of the discipline. Third, we turn to our embedded survey experiment to identify a causal effect of priming scholars to think about dominance in different geographic terms on their views of the discipline. We also consider some moderators of this treatment effect before offering some concluding remarks.

Background

Our study addresses three gaps in the current literature. First, it examines perception of dominance for the first time; second, it counters a tendency of past studies to conflate Western with American dominance; and third, it introduces several geographical and non-geographical individual-level factors which may be driving IR scholars perception of dominance.

First Gap: Perception

Existing studies on American dominance in IR show two main trends. First, the dominance of U.S. scholars and their work is empirically real but limited. For example, in his 1998 study on IR as a “not so international discipline,” Wæver found evidence for a vivid diversity of IR scholarship in Europe but demonstrated at the same time that U.S.-based scholars publish all over the world while European scholars are much less present in U.S. journals and non-Western scholars almost absent (cf. Friedrichs 2004a). Turton (2015) confirmed this finding about U.S. scholars quantitative preponderance but contradicted Wæver by concluding that IR scholarship is less “American” than has traditionally been argued in the more normative literature. Her analysis of journal publications and IR conferences shows that theories and epistemologies are not as American as expected (i.e. neo-realist, neo-liberal, positivist, quantitative) nor do her data reflect a dominance of particularly American policy concerns. Kristensen (2015) added to these findings that IR is not more, and in

some respects *less*, dominated by U.S.-based scholars than other social science disciplines.

While the normative literature on dominance is almost unanimous in claiming that most intellectual cornerstones of IR (its theories, methodologies, epistemology) are coined by Western history, policy preferences, and epistemic standards (Acharya 2014, 2016; Tickner 2013), there are considerably fewer empirical studies about Western dominance than about American dominance. One exception is Aydinli and Mathews (2000), who conclude that scholars from the “true periphery that lies outside of Europe and North America” almost never publish in theory-heavy journals (p. 291). If at all, they participated in IR formal communication/publishing by serving as area specialists about their respective home region.

The second trend is that the U.S. community itself suffers from a severe case of parochialism. Studies like Turtons and Kristenssens suggest that while the effects of American dominance are less severe than is normatively argued, the U.S. community itself is isolated from the rest of the discipline through an inward-looking focus in terms of what and who is published, cited, and taught. For example, Biersteker (cf. Alker and Biersteker 1984, 2009) find that “[d]espite the increasing ease with which scholarly material can be circulated on the worldwide web and the growing tendency of many Europeans to publish their scholarly work in the global lingua franca, English, Americans tend only to read other Americans” (p. 319). Furthermore, with the exception of a brief popularity of the Dependencia tradition from Latin America, no non-European theory has been “actively engaged by US scholars in leading research departments” (p. 320). A recent study on graduate syllabi has confirmed this image of a parochial discipline: Colgan (2016) finds that a large majority of texts assigned to IR students in graduate programs at American universities are written by scholars based in the U.S. (cf. Hagmann and Biersteker 2014). Finally, the citation behavior of U.S. scholars is significantly more inward-directed than that of scholars based in Europe and Asia (Glaser and Aman 2017; Wemheuer-Vogelaar 2013).

Friedrichs (2004b) was the first to suggest that dominance in IR is above all a matter of self-perception in particular that European scholars perceive the discipline to be dominated by the U.S. Tan (2009, p. 128), on the other hand, argues that “[s]tudents of [Southeast Asian IR] increasingly theorize, but they continue to do so based upon the norms and parameters of Western discourse, constantly engaged in *self-orientalism*.” It seems as if through the perception of operating in a dominated discipline, scholars are (unconsciously) reproducing this very dominance (cf. Kristensen 2016; Schneider 2014). Therefore, if scholars perceive the discipline to be dominated then that dominance becomes part of the disciplines identity independent of whether it is “real” in the sense of verifiable trends.

Second Gap: American vs. Western dominance

We address a second gap in the literature with this study: the missing distinction between American and Western dominance. While most studies technically focus on one or the other, the two variations are sometimes (unconsciously) conflated. For example, Turtons measurement about the predominance of American theories focuses on the predominance of neo-realism and neo-liberalism over other approaches in journal publications and conference agendas. However, it is debatable whether these theories are purely American or rather part of an interpretation of world politics rooted in Western/European experiences and philosophical traditions (Holsti 1985; cf. Wæver 1998). Furthermore, Turton concludes that IR theory is not suffering from American dominance because of a measurable rise of non-Western IR theories. However, if non-Western theories were the cure against American dominance, what would the European equivalent be that is not overlapping with American theories?

An explicit distinction between these two phenomena is crucial because the boundaries that each term implies create different in- and out-group constellations (Abrams and Hoggs 1990). European scholars are part of a non-American out-group and should consequentially perceive American

dominance as something that affects them negatively. On the other hand, they are part of a Western in-group and consequentially part of the dominators in the case of Western dominance. Likewise, Americans are part of both in-groups but are likely to feel more singled out as the dominators when asked about American dominance than Western dominance.

Third Gap: Geographical and Non-Geographical Factors

Finally, the existing literature on dominance is characterized by a fixation on large-scale geographical factors and boundaries. For example, the discussion about the inclusion of non-Western contributions to the IR theory canon is regularly translated into a rise of non-Western national schools, most prominently the Chinese school (e.g. Acharya and Buzan 2010; Noesselt 2012). In more general terms, IR is regularly portrayed as a global community with many national sub-communities, while dominance is consequently defined as one sub-community having severe impact on any or all of the other sub-communities or the global community at large (Cox and Nossal 2009; Lipson, et al. 2007; Lucarelli and Menotti 2006). Therefore, despite some attempts to frame things differently (e.g. Porter 2001), studies in this context tend to divide the discipline into geographically defined unitary actors.

Overall, studies opening up these black boxes of national IR communities, by taking non-geographically defined individual-level factors into account, are rare. One exception is Blanchard and Lin's (2016) study about gender roles in Chinese academia. The authors concluded from a series of interviews with mainland scholars that women in general and feminists work are systematically underrepresented in Chinese IR. A related example is Maliniak, et al.'s (2013) study on the gender citation gap which concluded that women are less cited than their male colleagues across all areas of IR (cf. Breuning and Lu 2010; Merriman-Goldring, et al. 2015). But, similar studies about authors with certain ideologies or about generational divides are lacking.

Data

This data is drawn from the 2014 TRIP survey of IR scholars in 32 countries.¹ Scholars were identified by the TRIP Project or local country partners using systematic web searches and email communication with individual academic departments and faculty. The survey was sent to every scholar employed by a college or university in a political science department, IR program, research unit, policy school, or the closest local equivalent and whose research and/or teaching interests cross international borders. Scholars employed in government, the private sector, or think tanks were included at the recommendation of in-country partners. In total, the survey was sent to 12,222 scholars, of which 5,148 responded for a response rate of 42.1%. A more detailed explanation of the methodology can be found in Maliniak et al. (2011).

To mitigate unobserved confounders and recover valid causal estimates of the difference in perceptions of American and Western dominance of the IR discipline, we embedded an experiment in the survey which treated respondents with one of two scenarios. In the first condition, respondents were asked the question: “Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement: The discipline of international relations is an American dominated discipline.” Answer choices were a Likert scale ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree.” Respondents in the second condition received the same question, but with “Western dominated” replacing “American dominated.” Because respondents were randomly assigned to each condition, the change in the distribution of responses is an unbiased estimate (in expectation) of the difference in perceptions of dominance when framed as either American or Western.

Descriptive Results

Before turning to analysis of the experiment, it is useful to get a sense of what individual-level factors other than the experimental condition may be driving IR scholars’ views of dominance.

¹The 2014 TRIP survey countries are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

At present, this analysis is limited to the observed demographics of gender, whether the scholar is primarily employed in the West,² age, and social and economic ideology. Future iterations of this paper will include a range of covariates including behavioral and attitudinal characteristics of scholars, some of which we describe in the conclusion.

We estimate a Bayesian³ ordered logit model using the equation:

$$\text{View on dominance} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Westerner} + \beta_2 \text{Female} + \beta_{3-6} \text{Age} \\ + \beta_{7-10} \text{Economic ideology} + \beta_{11-14} \text{Social ideology} + \varepsilon$$

Table 1: Bayesian Estimation of Ordered Logit Regression on Views of dominance

	Odds Ratio	SD	95% Credible Interval		Bayesian P-value
Westerner	2.38	0.06	0.73	1.00	1.00
Female	1.22	0.06	0.07	0.31	1.00
30-40 years old	1.00	0.14	-0.27	0.27	0.50
40-50 years old	1.02	0.13	-0.25	0.30	0.57
50-60 years old	0.93	0.14	-0.37	0.22	0.69
60+ years old	0.93	0.15	-0.35	0.23	0.67
Economically very left	1.52	0.11	0.20	0.65	1.00
Somewhat left	1.06	0.07	-0.09	0.22	0.79
Somewhat right	0.95	0.10	-0.25	0.14	0.70
Very right	0.80	0.26	-0.73	0.29	0.80
Socially very left	1.10	0.10	-0.12	0.31	0.82
Somewhat left	1.13	0.08	-0.03	0.31	0.94
Somewhat right	0.77	0.12	-0.49	0.01	0.97
Very right	1.64	0.31	-0.10	1.12	0.95

N = 4517; 3 chains running 50,000 iterations (burn-in 40,000) with a thinning interval of 9

As shown in Table 1, only six of the 14 coefficients reach levels of “Bayesian statistical significance,” that is, having more than 90% of the posterior distribution to the left or right of zero.

Among the significant findings, scholars in the West are 2.38 times more likely than those in the

²The Western countries include: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The non-Western countries include: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Mexico, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, and Turkey.

³Coefficients were assigned a multivariate normal prior with mean 0 and variance 0.01. Cut points were assigned normal priors with mean 0 and variance 0.01. Convergence diagnostics suggest sufficient mixing and low autocorrelation between iterations for all estimated coefficients except the age coefficients.

non-West to indicate greater agreement that the discipline is dominated, while women and economically very left scholars are both more likely to identify dominance. However, socially somewhat left and very right are also more likely to identify greater agreement, while socially somewhat right scholars exhibit the opposite pattern.

Ordered logit additionally recovers the probability of a respondent being in each category of the dependent variable for a given set of characteristics — in this case, we can compare the predicted probabilities for two respondents with the modal characteristics: a Western male, 30-40 years old, who is economically and socially somewhat left. For example, we can compare Western and non-Western males who are also modal on all other demographics (Figure 1); we can also informally test for an interaction effect between being Western and gender by comparing Figure 1 to the predicted probabilities for Western and non-Western females who are modal on all *other* demographics as shown in Figure 2.

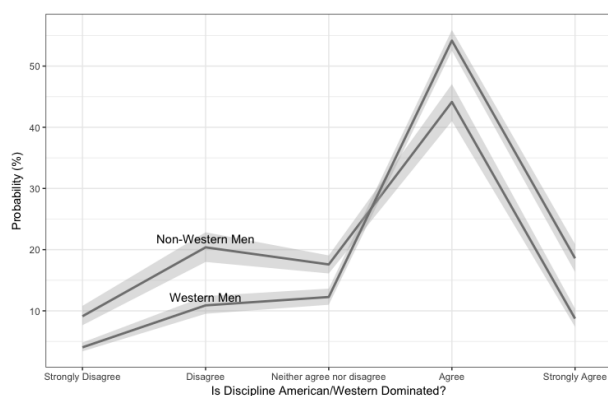


Figure 1: Views on Dominance: Men (95% CIs)

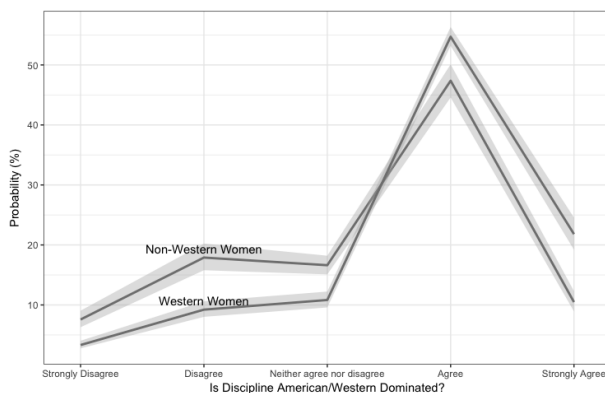


Figure 2: Views on Dominance: Women (95% CIs)

Although women are more slightly more likely to agree or strongly agree that the IR discipline is dominated (reflecting the statistically significant coefficient in the ordered logit model above), whether the scholar is Western or non-Western appears to have same effect regardless of gender. We observe that non-Western respondents express less agreement that the discipline is dominated, but there does not appear to be an interaction effect between West/Non-West and gender.

We can do the same informal analysis on the other two demographic characteristics which partially predicted views on dominance: economic and social ideology. Figures 3 and 4 below present the predicted probabilities of each response option (the lines) for each category of economic ideology (on the x-axis). Once again, the results reflect the estimates recovered from the ordered logit model but show very limited evidence of an interaction effect. Western scholars are more likely to agree or strongly agree that the discipline is dominated than non-Western scholars, but note that the rate of change in the predicted probabilities for any given response is essentially the same for both Westerners and non-Westerners. That is, the slopes of the lines are very similar in the figures, even if their relative positions on the y-axis are different. This suggests that there is not an interaction effect between West/Non-West and economic ideology.

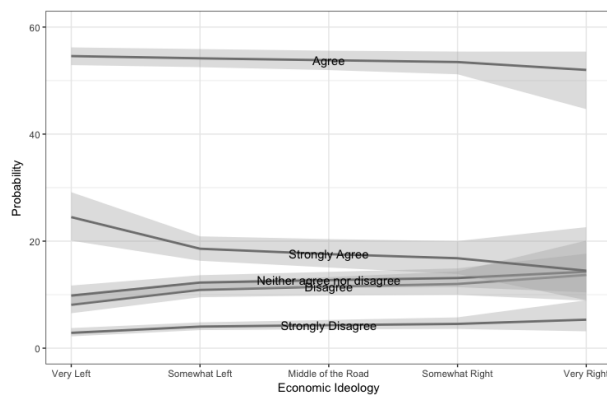


Figure 3: Views on Dominance by Economic Ideology: Westerners (95% CIs)

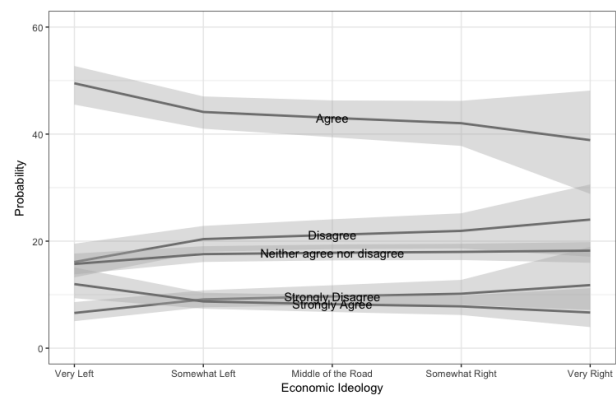


Figure 4: Views on Dominance by Economic Ideology: Non-Westerners (95% CIs)

It is a different story for social ideology. As seen in Figures 5 and 6, the slopes of the lines are clearly not the same. For example, very right scholars in the non-West exhibit a greater increase in the probability of selecting “agree” than their like-minded colleagues in the West. And while the predicted probability of selecting “neither agree nor disagree” is essentially constant across all social ideologies for Non-Western scholars, we see variation by ideology among Western respondents. These figures informally depict an interaction effect between social ideology and West/Non-West in predicting views on dominance.

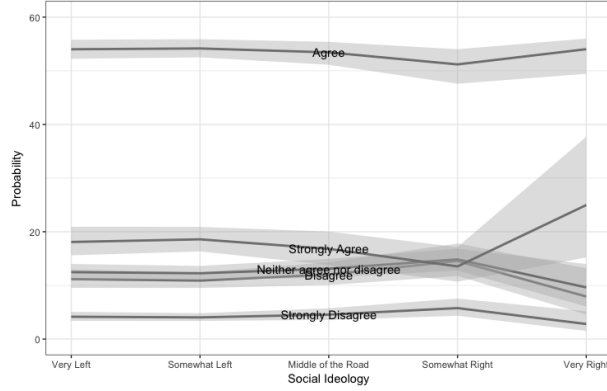


Figure 5: Views on Dominance by Social Ideology: Westerners (95% CIs)

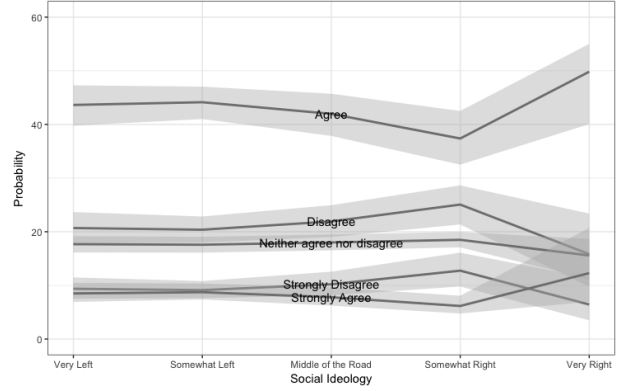


Figure 6: Views on Dominance by Social Ideology: Non-Westerners (95% CIs)

Experimental Results

We turn now to analysis of the embedded survey experiment, which randomizes assignment into the “American” and “Western” conditions to recover a valid causal estimate of the treatment effect. To confirm that the randomization was successful (allowing for the ignorability assumption to be employed), we compared the treatment groups on observed demographic variables. The survey software randomly assigned each scholar to a treatment group when the survey was opened, and due to unexplained variation in response rates, 2,273 respondents in the “Western” condition responded, compared to 2,263 in the “American” condition (for a total of 4,536). As seen in Table 2, none of the difference in means reach the 95% significance level. In addition, chi-square tests fail to reject the null hypothesis of independence for the categorical variables of age, social ideology, and economic ideology. However, scholars with a “Very left” social ideology were about two percentage points more likely to be in the “American” condition, a difference that approaches the 90% significance level.

Table 2: Balance on Covariates Between Treatment Groups

	Mean American	Mean Western	P-value	Chi-Sq
Female	0.3119	0.3262	0.3073	
Westerner	0.6991	0.7061	0.604	
Under 30 years old	0.0247	0.0299	0.2856	
30-40 years old	0.319	0.3286	0.49	$\chi^2 = 2.4411$, df = 4, p < 0.6552
40-50 years old	0.2921	0.2912	0.9501	
50-60 years old	0.2077	0.2068	0.9395	
Over 60 years old	0.1343	0.1236	0.282	
Economically very left	0.1352	0.15	0.154	
Somewhat left	0.4039	0.3863	0.2251	$\chi^2 = 3.6897$, df = 4, p < 0.4496
Middle of the road	0.3058	0.2939	0.3817	
Somewhat right	0.1246	0.1315	0.485	
Very right	0.0119	0.0132	0.7017	
Socially very left	0.2815	0.26	0.1037	
Somewhat left	0.4167	0.4294	0.3874	$\chi^2 = 2.4907$, df = 4, p < 0.6462
Middle of the road	0.1993	0.2024	0.7956	
Somewhat right	0.0773	0.0757	0.8335	
Very right	0.0093	0.0101	0.7732	

Ordered logit models suggest that the imbalance in condition assignment for socially very left scholars has no meaningful impact on the treatment effect. As shows in Table 3, the treatment effect is stable across specifications, including a model which controls for both socially and economically very left ideologies (the two demographic variables in which assignment most closely violate the ignorability assumption).

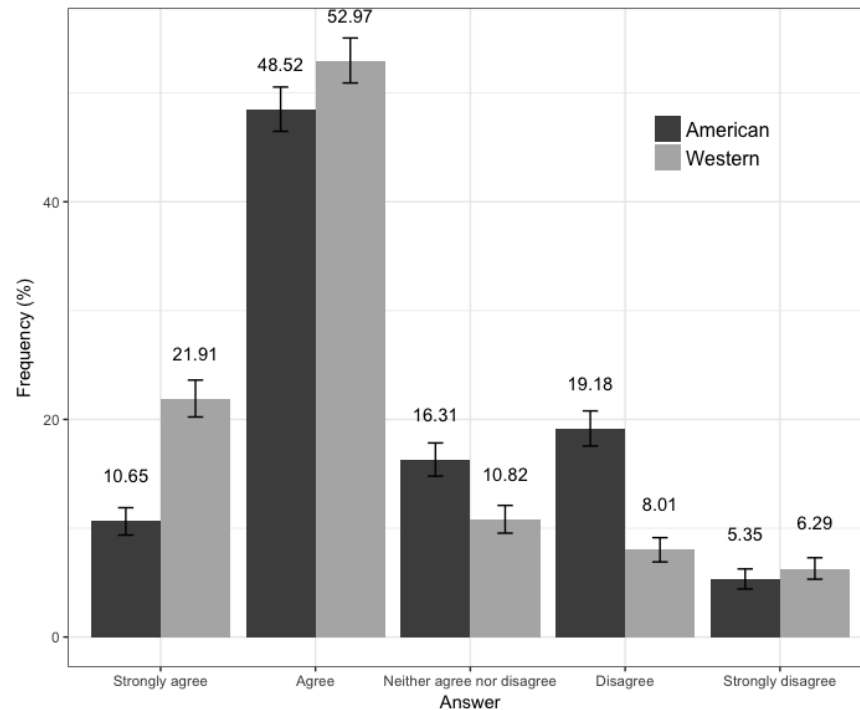
Table 3: Ordered Logit of Response on Treatment

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
“American” Treatment	0.4852* (-12.70)	0.4765* (-12.99)	0.4795* (-12.88)
Socially very left		1.6907* (8.30)	1.4281* (4.66)
Economically very left			1.4666* (3.90)
N	4,536	4,536	4,536

Odds ratio with t-value in parentheses; *p<0.05

Because logit coefficients are difficult to interpret, odds ratios are reported in Table 3 along with t-values. Model 1 recovers an odds ratio of 0.4852, which means that those in the “American” treatment group have approximately 51% lower odds of indicating greater agreement with the statement than a respondent in the “Western” treatment group. This is what we observe in Figure 1. Scholars in the “American” condition are significantly less likely to strongly agree or agree and significantly more likely to disagree that the discipline is dominated.

Figure 7: Distribution of Responses in Experimental Conditions (95% CIs)



Treatment Effect Moderators

This section considers whether any of the observed demographic variables, which are pre-treatment covariates, moderate the effect of the treatment, in this case assignment to the “American” condition. The effect of moderators on the treatment is estimated using interaction terms in an ordered logit model. Because age and ideology are measured as categorical variables, interaction terms are included for each level of the variables and an F-test is used to identify the joint significance of the individual interaction terms. The odds ratios and T-values for the binary indicators (gender and West/Non-West) and the F-values of the categorical terms are presented in Table 4. Whether the scholar is employed in the West and the respondent’s age interact significantly with the treatment at the 95% confidence level. Both of these interactions will be explored in turn.

Table 4: Ordered Logit of Response on Interactive Terms

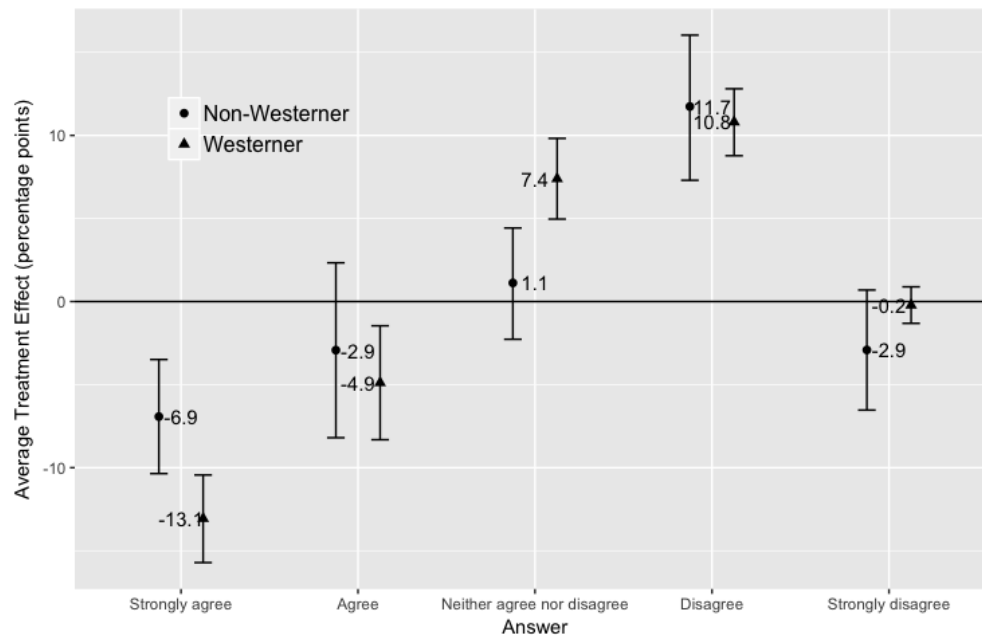
	Odds Ratio	T-value	F-value
Treatment*Female	1.0756	0.58	
Treatment*Westerner	0.7090*	-2.56	
Treatment*Age			3.3082
Treatment*Social Ideology			1.0817
Treatment*Economic Ideology			0.1971
Statistically significant interactions at the $p < 0.05$ level in bold			

West/Non-West

The logit model recovers an odds ratio of 0.7090 for the indicator variable for whether the scholar is located in the West or the Non-West. This means that respondents in the West have approximately 30% lower odds of more strongly agreeing with the statement when in the “American” treatment group than scholars in the Non-West. In other words, Western scholars perceive a greater difference between Western and American dominance than Non-Western scholars, and in particular they are more likely to perceive Western dominance than American dominance. Figure 8 compares the average treatment effect of being in “American” condition relative to the “Western” condition for Western and Non-Western scholars. The difference in average treatment effect is statistically

significant for strongly agree and neither agree nor disagree responses, where Western respondents experienced a larger decrease in agreement when in the “American” treatment than Non-Western scholars.

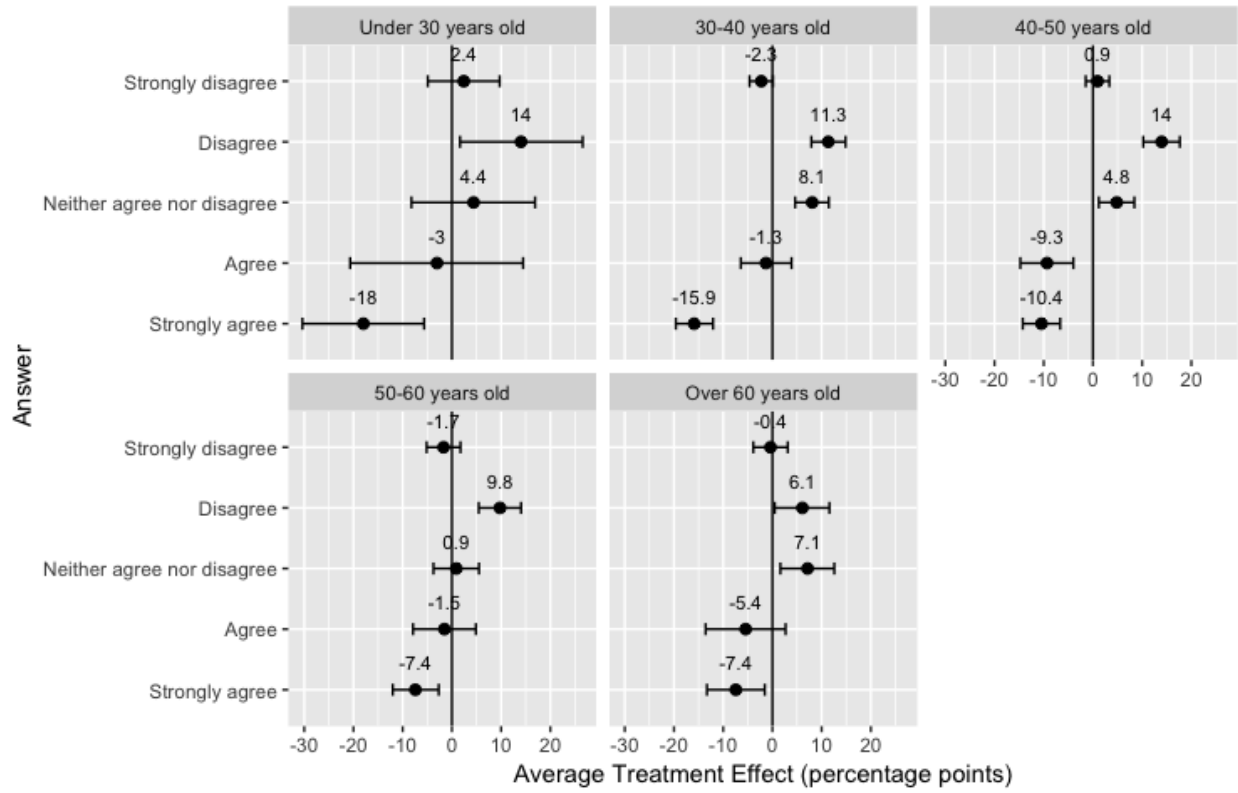
Figure 8: Average Treatment Effect for “American” Condition by Geography (95% CIs)



Age

The F-Test on the interactions between the treatment and age indicators in the logit model rejects the null hypothesis that the terms are not jointly significant. This suggests that the effect of the treatment on responses is conditional on age. Figure 9 depicts differences in average treatment effect at each response category within each age group. Informally, these graphs exhibit an interaction effect wherein the treatment effect is greater among younger scholars than older scholars. In other words, younger scholars are more likely to view the concepts of Western and American dominance differently - and indeed, more likely to agree that the discipline is dominated by the West.

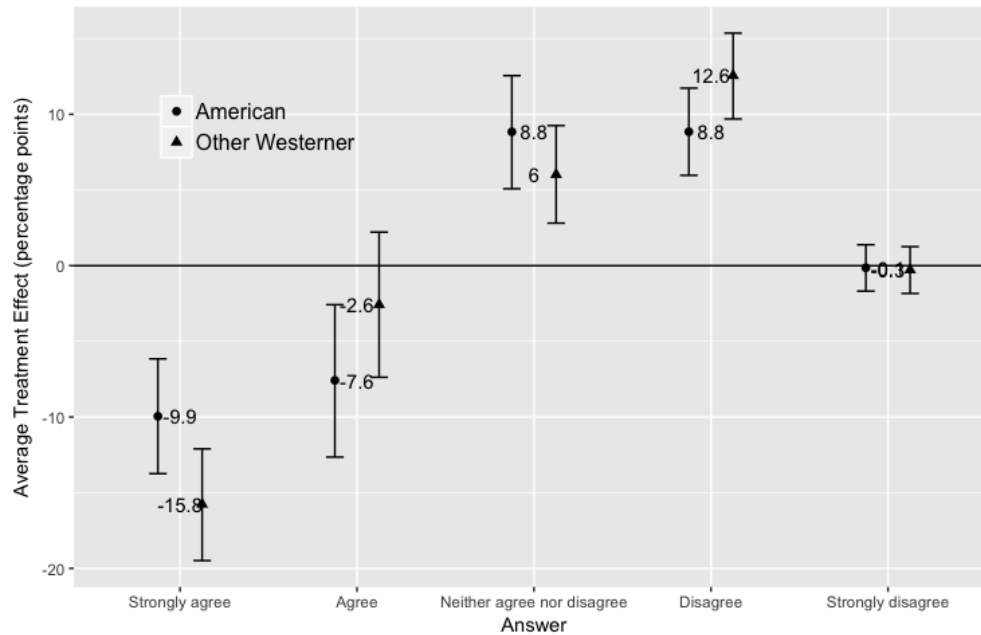
Figure 9: Average Treatment Effect for “American” Condition by Age (95% CIs)



Americans vs. Other Westerners

Thus far, we have considered Western scholars as a geographically homogeneous group and compared them to Non-Western scholars. However, since the experimental conditions refer to “American” and “Western” dominance, it may be useful to see whether American and other non-American, Western scholars exhibit different treatment effects. We might expect, for example, that American scholars are more likely to identify Western dominance while other Western scholars are more likely to perceive American dominance as a way to shift blame for hegemony away from oneself. Moreover, since American scholars make up more than 45% of all Western scholars in the sample, it is a good idea to check that idiosyncratic behavior by American scholars is not driving the treatment effect among the larger group. As seen in Figure 10, however, there is no statistically significant difference in the treatment effect between Americans and other Westerners since the confidence intervals overlap substantially.

Figure 10: Average Treatment Effect for “American” Condition, American vs. Other Western (95% CIs)



Conclusion

This study started with the observation of three gaps that exist in the self-reflexive literature about IR as discipline. First, although Friedrich (2007) and other scholars (Kristensen 2016; Tan 2009) make convincing arguments about the power of perception as a catalyst for the reproduction of dominance, no other study has operationalized it before now. Furthermore, past studies on dominance in IR either employed a definition of dominance based upon an understanding of quantitative preponderance of U.S./Western scholars and their work or worked with a normative definition of U.S./Western hegemony that is not suited to be operationalized. In short, neither of these definitions allows for structural consideration of perception. Second, past studies did not distinguish empirically between Western and American dominance. An explicit distinction of these two phenomena, however, is crucial for a clear definition of in- and out-group constellations (cf. Abrams and Hoggs 1990). Third, the existing literature tends to divide the discipline into geographically defined unitary actors, like national schools or communities. However, since not all scholars in a country share the same background and interests, it is necessary to look at individual-level factors

to understand scholars perception of dominance.

To address these gaps, we evaluated a survey question about dominance in IR that was part of the 2014 TRIP faculty survey. Respondents in 32 countries were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement that IR is a dominated discipline. We embedded an experiment in the survey which treated respondents with one of two scenarios: in the first condition, respondents were asked about American dominance and in the second about Western dominance. We started by describing our dependent variable — scholars' perceptions of dominance — and found that location of employment (West/non-West), age, gender, and ideology in social and economic issues partially explain scholars' views. We then showed, with valid causal estimate, that the Western condition triggers more agreement in respondents than the term American dominance. Furthermore, scholars places of employment and age interact significantly with the treatment. Western scholars are more likely to perceive Western dominance than American dominance, and younger scholars are more likely to agree that the discipline is dominated by the West.

To sum up: younger and female scholars as well as those with liberal leanings tend to agree more that IR is dominated than others. All in all, this finding is not surprising as these groups tend to be on average more progressive and/or more sensitive to positions of oppression. The two more surprising findings are that scholars employed in the West are more likely to perceive dominance than scholars employed outside of the West, and that non-U.S. Westerners do not perceive American dominance more than Western dominance. These findings infringe upon the logic of in- and out-group constellations which suggest that those scholars who are most likely affected by dominance should also perceive it most strongly. A first interpretation of this finding is that scholars in the West exhibit some form of self-chastisement. The traditionally strong acceptance of post-colonial studies at European and U.S. universities supports this thesis. An alternative perspective is that scholars employed outside of the West do not want to be perceived/perceive themselves as victims of dominance or do not want to blame anyone (especially not the American sponsors of the TRIP

survey), and therefore disagreed with the statement. In any case, further research is needed to make sense of these findings.

As a more general conclusion, we suggest that measuring dominance as a purely quantitative preponderance of American/Western scholars, as has been done in the past, is insufficient if the aim is to understand the status quo of our discipline. Normative accusations are hard to measure and our study did not do so directly. However, we now know that, although earlier studies (Turton 2015; Kristensen 2015; Waever 1998) have concluded that the dominance of U.S. scholars and their work is empirically real but limited, scholars nevertheless perceive dominance. What is more, the fact that U.S.-based respondents agree as much that the discipline is American/Western dominated, indicates that the diagnosed parochialism of the U.S. community (Biersteker 2009) seems to be paired with a least some degree of reflexivity.

Finally, our results show that it is necessary to open the black boxes of geographically defined unitary actors that studies on dominance employ on a regular basis (Buzan and Acharya 2010; Tickner and Weaver 2009). By looking exclusively at scholars location of employment as an explanatory factor (like we did in Wemheuer-Vogelaar, et al. 2016) would mean to miss that women, younger and left-wing scholars across the West and non-West are more likely to perceive dominance than other scholars.

Several opportunities for future research follow from our findings and the limitations of our study: First, we would like to include a broader range of factors as possible covariates and treatment effect moderators. The absence of professorial rank as demographic variable is a function of dataset structure, and will be included in future iterations of this paper. Other individual-level factors to include are scholars education (where they received their PhD) and employment (where they have worked in the past), their research preferences (e.g. the theoretical approaches they apply), and their language skills (as a proxy for international orientation). The analysis can also move beyond

individual-level covariates to consider institution- and national-level explanations, perhaps in a multi-level model. In addition, we would like to include some factors measured outside the scope of the TRIP survey, for example, in which journals scholars have published their work.

Second, we would like to refine our current variable location of employment to capture variation on the country level. In Wemheuer-Vogelaar, et al. (2016), we already found that Chinese, Taiwanese, and Brazilian scholars are the only ones disagreeing more frequently with the statement that IR is a dominated discipline than agreeing. This variation in perception among these relatively large IR communities is not accounted for in the present study. More generally, we would like to distance ourselves even further from the use of unitary actor categorizations like West and non-West.

Third, we would like to expand our analysis to a second survey question that asks respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that the discipline is American/Western dominated whether they think it is important to “counter” that dominance. What distinguishes scholars who only recognize dominance from those who commit (at least on paper) to do something about it? Building upon the idea of in- and out-group constellations, we would like to infer a typology of “allies to the cause” of countering dominance in IR. For example, why would someone located in the West want to counter Western dominance while someone located outside of it would not? Is there an alternative explanation for their attitude except of their location? There is much more to be done and we are ready to expand our study in future iterations of this paper.

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