

IDE Discussion Papers are preliminary materials circulated
to stimulate discussions and critical comments

IDE DISCUSSION PAPER No. 629

Middle Eastern Contributions to International Relations Theory: Turkey as a Case Study

Kohei IMAI*

January 2017

Abstract

This study aims to explore Middle Eastern contributions to a homegrown theory of international relations. The key issue in non-Western international relations theory (NWIRT) concerns “whose perspective.” Perspective from West or core states, non-West or periphery is only object of case studies in international relations. First, this paper defines what NWIRT is. Second, it outlines the relationship between international relations theory and the Middle East. The third part uses the case of Turkey to accept and develop Western international relations theory (WIRT) as an example of a second type of homegrown NWIRT. Finally, the concluding part examines the importance and limitations of NWIRT.

Keywords: non-Western international relations theory (NWIRT), Western international relations theory (WIRT), Middle East, Turkey

* Research Fellow, Middle Eastern Studies Group, Area Studies Center, Institute of Developing Economies (kohei_imai@ide.go.jp)

The Institute of Developing Economies (IDE) is a semigovernmental, nonpartisan, nonprofit research institute, founded in 1958. The Institute merged with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) on July 1, 1998. The Institute conducts basic and comprehensive studies on economic and related affairs in all developing countries and regions, including Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, and Eastern Europe.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s). Publication does not imply endorsement by the Institute of Developing Economies of any of the views expressed within.

INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPING ECONOMIES (IDE), JETRO
3-2-2, WAKABA, MIHAMA-KU, CHIBA-SHI
CHIBA 261-8545, JAPAN

©2017 by Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior permission of the
IDE-JETRO

Middle Eastern Contributions to International Relations Theory: Turkey as a Case Study

Kohei IMAI*

Abstract

This study aims to explore Middle Eastern contributions to a homegrown theory of international relations. The key issue in non-Western international relations theory (NWIRT) concerns “whose perspective.” Perspective from West or core states, non-West or periphery is only object of case studies in international relations. First, this paper defines what NWIRT is. Second, it outlines the relationship between international relations theory and the Middle East. The third part uses the case of Turkey to accept and develop Western international relations theory (WIRT) as an example of a second type of homegrown NWIRT. Finally, the concluding part examines the importance and limitations of NWIRT.

Introduction

Over the past decade, non-Western international relations theory (NWIRT) has been a hot topic in the overall theory of international relations (IR). Discussions of NWIRT have been triggered by works such as *Non-Western International Relations Theory*, edited by Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan (Acharya and Buzan, 2010),¹ as well as a series of books based on the “geocultural epistemologies and IR” project launched in 2004 by Arlene Tickner and Ole Wæver (Tickner and Wæver, 2009; Tickner and Blaney, 2012 and 2013). Following Robert Cox’s famous statement that “theory is always for someone, for some purpose” (Cox, 1986), perspectives from the non-Western world are necessary for the development and enrichment of international relations theory. The key issue in NWIRT concerns whose viewpoint (Western or non-Western) should be adopted. This study regards NWIRT as a “homegrown” theory from non-Western regions or states, based on local knowledge that emerged from, or was created by, various regions, religions, or ethnic cultures. In addition, a uniquely

* This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI/Grant-in-Aid for Young Scientists (B) Grant Number 15K17007.

¹ Originally, Buzan and Acharya featured “Why is there no non-Western IR theory: Reflections on and from Asia” in *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* in 2007 (Vol. 7, No. 3).

developed Western international relations theory (WIRT) in the process of being accepted in non-Western states is considered here as another type of homegrown NWIRT. In particular, Latin America, East Asia, Southeast Asia, India, and Russia have accumulated many studies on—or at least have been passionate about—homegrown contributions to NWIRT. However, relatively few works on NWIRT have been generated in the Middle East and Africa.

This paper mainly reviews NWIRTs that have emerged in the Middle East. According to an edited volume by Tickner and Wæver, *International Relations Scholarship around the World*, Iran, Israel, and Turkey are among the Middle Eastern countries that have accepted WIRT (Tickner and Wæver, 2009). In the case of Turkey, some scholars—in particular, Mustafa Aydın, Pınar Bilgin, and Ersel Aydınli—have sought to identify Turkish contributions and their unique features with regard to international relations theory.

The aim of this study is to explore Middle Eastern contributions to the “homegrown” theory of international relations. After first defining NWIRT, the second part will outline the relationship between international relations theory and the Middle East. Here, the gap between WIRT and real Middle Eastern cases will be highlighted. Then, the third part will focus on Turkey as a case study for accepting and developing WIRT as an example of “homegrown” NWIRT, as described above. Finally, the conclusion will note the importance, limitations, and agendas of NWIRT.

1. The Emergence of NWIRT: Three Waves of NWIRT

1.1. The First Wave of NWIRT: Dependence Theory

As mentioned earlier, there has been a focus on NWIRT for roughly the last ten years. However, this is not the first time NWIRT has been a controversial scholarly issue in the field of international relations. It appears there have been at least three waves of NWIRT involving contemporary disputes.

The first wave of NWIRT coincided with the rise of dependence theory, which focused on core and periphery structures in the global economy. Dependence theory was led by the Economic Commission on Latin America (ECLA) school, as represented by Raul Prebisch (Holsti, 1998, p.104; Tickner, 2003 and 2008).² Other Latin American scholars—including Fernando H. Cardoso, Theotonio Dos Santos, Celso Furtado, Osvaldo Sunkel, and Andre Gunder Frank—provided constructive criticisms of

² Needless to say, the core-and-periphery structure based on imperialism was mentioned by Western Marxists such as Lenin and J. A. Hobson in the early 1900s.

Prebisch's ideas.³ Thus, Prebisch's ideas are central to dependence theory approaches. Key concepts in the first wave of NWIRT include class conflicts at the global level (the North–South structure), fixed underdevelopment, and Latin America. However, because its theoretical bases were founded in Marxism, dependence theory seems to have contributed less to the development of NWIRT. Hence, dependence theory, along with world-system theory and structural violence, has been called “neo-Marxism.” Moreover, for better or worse, dependence theory is strongly associated with the North–South structure. Hence, dependence theorists do not deal with the South–South problem or conflicts between peripheral states at all (Holsti, 1998, p.107). In addition, dependence theory cannot offer effective answers to the emergence of Newly Industrialized Economies (NIES) and Newly Industrialized Countries (NICS) in the 1970s and 1980s.⁴

1.2. The Second Wave of NWIRT: Mainstream IR and the Third World

The second wave of NWIRT was triggered by the end of the Cold War. Some IR scholars supposed that the importance of so-called Third World states had been inflated in the post-Cold War period. This was because the end of the Cold War opened up the need for research on the Third World to be incorporated into IR. One example of this is Stephanie Neuman's edited volume *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, which includes work by Acharya, Mohammed Ayoob, Buzan, Steven David, Donald Puchala, Carlos Escude, and Karl. J. Holsti (Neuman, 1998). According to Neuman, this book focuses in particular on the “gap” between mainstream (Western) IR—like classical realism, neorealism (structural realism), and neoliberalism—and the realities of the Third World in terms of anarchy, the international system, rational choice, the state, sovereignty, and alliances (Neuman, 1998, pp.2-12). The issue of “internal war” raised by David and Holsti is a typical example of the gap between Western IR and Third World reality (David, 1991 and 1998; Holsti, 1998). David argued that Stephen Walt's balance-of-threat theory is not applicable to Third World states. Balance of threat is a theory of alliances that postulates that “states ally to balance against external threats rather than against power alone” (Walt, 1987, p.5). According to David, however, Third World states have to consider alignment or alliance responses to not only external threats but also internal ones (David, 1991, p.233). David described this Third World balancing pattern as “omni-balancing.”

The examination of how IR theory was ill suited to the Third World was a courageous critical endeavor. However, there were several problems with the critiques

³ Samir Amin, from Egypt, is an exception.

⁴ For details about dependence theory, see Tickner (2003) and Kay (2013).

in Neuman's work. The first and most significant problem was the use of the term "Third World." The concept of the Third World is traditionally confined to the period of the Cold War. Therefore, it is doubtful that its use has remained valid and effective since the end of the Cold War. In short, the concept of the Third World became seriously outdated. The second problem with Neuman's book is that it only focused on incompatibility between mainstream and Third World realities. In other words, the book did not provide an "alternative" vision or direction for the Third World in IR.

1.3. The Third Wave of NWIRT: An Alternative Vision against Western IR

The third wave of NWIRT began with the 2004 annual convention of the International Studies Association (ISA). At this conference, a working group on the "geocultural epistemologies and IR" project was established and led by Tickner and Wæver. Until the 1990s, the Third World, or non-Western world, tended to be regarded as a homogeneous community (Puchala, 1998, p.138). However, the non-Western world is not a monolithic group; rather, it is diverse in its social, economic, and political aspects, depending on the geographical (or geopolitical, geoeconomical, or geocultural) situation of the area being discussed. The project was launched in 2004, and its consequences—specifically, the book series *Worlding Beyond the West*—helped to highlight NWIRT once again and explore it in detail. This time, the term "non-Western" was used to refer to the main topic.

Let us look in a little more detail at the concept of non-Western. Inoguchi defines non-Western as "the regions that were not affected by modernity (the combination of secularism, rationalism, individualism, and industrialism) during the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century" (Inoguchi, 2007, p.158). According to Puchala, non-Western means "those states and societies culturally outside Europe and its cultural enclaves (immigrants) in North America, Australia, New Zealand and Israel" (Puchala, 1997, p.129). As Mayall points out, it is difficult to judge the contributions of many authors who came from Africa, Asia, or the Middle East (or Latin America) but were trained in IR research in the West (Mayall, 2011, pp.331-332). This study adopts a loose definition of NWIRT that includes not only "pure" ideas and thinking originating in non-Western states but also "hybrid" ideas and thinking developed in response to imported Western IR outside Europe and the United States.

Another important question about NWIRT concerns its purpose. Most scholars who are interested in NWIRT probably view NWIRT not as an alternative to WIRT but as complementary to it. In other words, WIRT and NWIRT can complement each other through the discovery and recognition of NWIRT, or through dialogue (Buzan and

Acharya, 2007; Tickner and Wæver, 2009; Bilgin, 2008; Acharya, 2011; Hutchings, 2011; Tickner and Blaney, 2012). This paper refers to this purpose as the “beyond the West” project.

Taking the discussion a step further, several scholars have searched for an “alternative paradigm” by exploring NWIRT (Behera, 2008; Chen, 2011; Vasilaki, 2012; Tickner and Blaney, 2013; Ikeda, 2013). This paper refers to the project of pursuing an alternative paradigm as “post-Western.” Yet, ironically, IR originated in Europe after World War I and is based on European experiences and knowledge. Hence, the thought frames of IR are inseparable from the West and Western thinking. In this sense, the “post-Western” IR project seems to be the next step “beyond the West.” As mentioned above, the “beyond the West” project is still a work in progress. The aim of this study, therefore, is to position itself as a “beyond the West” endeavor.

2. The Middle East and International Relations Theory

2.1. Classification of Middle Eastern IR

As mentioned in the preceding section, the leading NWIRT scholars have mainly come from Asia, Latin America, or Western nations. Within the non-Western category of IR. The Middle East and Africa are backward regions. Among the Middle Eastern countries, however, Turkey and Israel are exceptions. This is because the Ottoman Empire (the predecessor of Turkey) accepted IR in the late nineteenth century. Meanwhile, Israel is a case of a European cultural enclave.

As several scholars have pointed out, there are deep divisions between IR and Middle Eastern studies (Valbjorn, 2003; Teti, 2007; Sasley, 2011). Not only have very few studies produced homegrown Middle Eastern IR theory but few have applied IR theory to Middle Eastern events (Sasley, 2011, pp.11-13). Sasley classifies Middle Eastern IR into four categories: systemic-materialist approaches, colonialism and postcolonialism, domestic politics, and identity discourse (Sasley 2011, pp.17-24). However, his categories contain several problems. First, he ignores non-Western perspectives. In other words, his approach does not contain a critical perspective that exposes certain kinds of orientalism. Second, the category “colonialism and postcolonialism” seems ill fitted to the Middle Eastern case, with the exception of Palestine. Compared to Southeast Asia, South Asia, Latin America, and Africa, Middle Eastern states have relatively little experience of Western colonialism. Rather, as Carl Brown has pointed out, the penetration system, or “the Eastern Question,” is interlocked politically with the West or the Western power system (Brown 1984, p.5).

Here, the present article proposes another classification for IR and the Middle East based on “the third debate” in IR. This third debate in IR and the rise of postpositivist theories—like critical theory, postmodern theory, constructivism, feminist theory, and historical sociology—have promoted the emergence of NWIRT (Lapid, 1989; Smith, 1996). The methodological classification between positivism and postpositivism is the first division. From a positivist or an explaining viewpoint, generalizations are a logical part of theory. Hence, the characteristics of positivist theory are objective, timeless, and value-neutral (Hollis and Smith, 1990, p.46). On the other hand, postpositivist views or understanding views value the exposure of oppression and prejudice as well as a subjective perspective through experiences, languages, and actions (Hollis and Smith, 1990, pp.68-71). Postpositivists question the notion of value-neutral theorizing (Rues-Smit 2005, p.193). Hence, postpositivist theories are tolerant of diverse understandings of world affairs and have been adapted to NWIRT.

The second division is based on a theoretical stance. Cox provided a classification for two types of theoretical views in IR: problem-solving theory and critical theory. According to Cox, problem-solving theory “takes the world as it finds it, with the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organized, as the given frameworks for action” (Cox, 1981, p.128). Moreover, problem-solving theory contributes to legitimizing and reifying the current order. Meanwhile, critical theory is a theory that reveals the social, cultural, and ideological influences in the world, including those of the prevailing order, and places importance on historical process (Cox, 1981, pp.129-130). Cox’s two worldviews, especially critical theory, opened up the need to explore NWIRT along with postpositivist theories. In addition, Cox clarified the knowledge-power relations in IR. Thus, the predominance of WIRT has been reflected in existing international politics by several scholars and policy makers.

Here, “explaining theory” and “understanding theory” (positivism/postpositivism) are combined with problem-solving theory and critical theory. Thus, there are four parts: (i) explaining plus problem-solving theory, (ii) understanding plus problem-solving theory, (iii) explaining plus critical theory, and (iv) understanding plus critical theory.

2.2. Explaining plus Problem-Solving Theory

Based on Cox’s definition, classical realism, structural realism, and neoliberalism are appropriate explaining theories. Regarding the Middle East, structural realism had a central position in the field of IR theory.⁵ The most famous work applying structural

⁵ Gause and Sasley refer to the structural realism approach as a systemic approach (Gause, 1999 and

realism theory to the Middle East is Stephen Walt's *The Origin of Alliances* (1987). The alliances of Middle Eastern countries are examples of the balance of threat. Walt also applied balance of threat to Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and India (Walt, 1988). Walt's studies were groundbreaking for two reasons. First, *The Origin of Alliances* was actually the first work to apply IR theory to the Middle East. According to Breuning, Bredehoft, and Walton's investigation of geographic coverage in major IR journals (*International Organization*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and *World Politics*), articles about the Middle East were only found in 1.9% of the major journals during the period 1999–2003 (Breuning, Bredehoft, and Walton, 2005, p.455).⁶ Second, balance-of-threat theory obtained legitimacy in the field of structural realism through Walt's work. Hansen's *Unipolarity and the Middle East* explained the behaviors of Middle Eastern states in relation to US power. Hansen's work, based on Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*, focused on polarity changes and their effects on subsystems.

Structural realism contributes to the application of IR theory to the Middle East. However, structural realism frameworks cannot analyze ideas or ideologies such as the teachings of Islam and Arab nationalism. In addition, works of structural realism follow the order of US primacy.

2.3. Understanding plus Problem-Solving Theory

In the late 1990s, understanding theory was occasionally applied to Middle Eastern cases. A leading work in this approach is Michael Barnett's *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (1998). Barnett's work sheds light on Arab nationalism and Islam, which had been ignored in structural realism analyses. According to Barnett, Arab nationalism and interpretations of Islam are not givens but are created through political debate and social interaction (Barnett, 1998, p.6). The creation of norms or interpretations reflected each country's identity. In addition, *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East* (2002), edited by Barnett and Telhami, focused on the influence of identity on the foreign policies of different countries. One conclusion of this book is that decision makers in the Middle East consider not only state identity but also transnational identity within the Middle East (Telhami and Barnett, 2002, p.12). Another conclusion of the book is that Arab states possess multilayered identities (sovereign state identity, Arab nationalism, and Islam).

Another way to clarify how Middle Eastern states work is to adopt the method of

2009; Sasley, 2011).

⁶ The breakdown among these journals was 2.0% in *International Organization*, 1.8% in *International Studies Quarterly*, and 2.0% in *World Politics*.

historical sociology. According to Skocpol, the characteristics of historical sociology are as follows (Skocpol, 1984, p.1). First, historical sociology deals with social structures and processes understood to be concretely situated in time and space. Second, historical sociology address processes over time and takes temporal sequences seriously as outcomes. Third, most historical analyses examine the interplay of meaningful actions and structural contexts to make sense of the unfolding of unintended outcomes, as well as intended ones, in individual lives and social transformations. Finally, historical sociological studies highlight the particular and varying features of specific kinds of social structures and patterns of change. A historical sociological approach deeply analyzes the state's workings, which constantly change depending on time and space. Works by Halliday and Hinnebusch are representative examples (Halliday, 2002; Hinnebusch, 2010). These authors in particular have focused on the processes of state formation or modernization in the Middle East.

On the one hand, structural realism (i.e., an explaining approach) deals with the Middle East as a case for establishing theory. On the other hand, the understanding approach is a method that deeply privileges the processes or content of Middle Eastern affairs. Yet, neither approach is enthusiastic about exposing the contradictions of the Middle East.

2.4. Explaining plus Critical Theory

Critical perspectives in Middle Eastern IR were advanced by Buzan and Pelaez's edited volume *International Society and the Middle East: English School Theory at the Regional Level* (2009). The concept of "international society," mainly developed by Wight and Bull, assumes a West-centric character in its main theoretical perspective. The key questions of the English School concern how the Western form of international society expanded to other regions and what the standard for being a "Western" country is (Bull and Watson, 1984; Gong, 1984). In contrast to the West-centric approach, Buzan and others have focused on how Middle Eastern countries, including the Ottoman Empire, have accepted, or been transformed by, the expansion of international society. In fact, Middle Eastern countries became the subject of their studies. Buzan classified international society into interstate society, transnational society, and human society, and examined the concepts of power politics, coexistence, cooperation, and coalition (Buzan, 2009, pp.24-44). According to Buzan, the logic of behavior in interstate society in the Middle East is based on power politics or coexistence. Arab nationalism has been cited as common factor between interstate society and human society. Further, Islam has affected all societies. Islam is regarded as a destabilizing element that threatens the

interstate system in the Middle East. Meanwhile, Islam is also an important factor for enhancing the solidarity of transnational society and human society.

The contribution of *International Society and the Middle East* is that it attempts to analyze Middle Eastern affairs from Middle Eastern perspectives. In short, the authors partly deny West-centric perspectives. On the other hand, they regard the Middle East as a case for analyzing the prevailing international society.

2.5. Understanding plus Critical Theory

Compared to the previous categories, understanding and critical theory is the most strongly non-Western or “de-Western” category. Currently, the third wave of NWIRT focuses on this category. Buzan and Acharya have provided clues for examining NWIRT. These include (i) considering the key figures in thought about classical religion, politics, and the military; (ii) considering the thinking and foreign policy approaches of leaders; (iii) applying Western theory to local contexts; and (iv) creating a pure or total theory from non-Western experience (Acharya and Buzan, 2010, pp.10-14). This article groups these clues together under the umbrella of “homegrown” theory.⁷ In the context of the Middle East, for example, the ideas of Ibn Khaldun are applicable to the first type. Further, the ideas or interpretations of Islam can be included in the fourth type. Meanwhile, “homegrown” theory in the Middle East is still developing.

This study focuses in particular on the third type. This is because the third type is the first step for NWIRT. In other words, unique perspectives or implications through the acceptance process can be defined as “thin” homegrown theory in contrast with “thick” homegrown theory. The process of being accepted is strongly connected with geopolitical knowledge or experience. More specifically, the area of dispute concerns how each country accepts WIRT and develops it or adds uniqueness to it. Therefore, to study this process, one has to choose states that have accepted and attempted to develop WIRT. As mentioned above, Turkey and Israel are the leading Middle Eastern countries that positively accepted WIRT after the Cold War period. In particular, Turkey was the first country in the Middle East to accept WIR. The next section will examine Turkey’s process of accepting WIRT.

3. Turkey’s Acceptance Process for WIRT

⁷ According to Aydınli and Mathews, “homegrown” theory involves “entirely new patterns, understandings, and frameworks of analysis which are sought through the construction of theories stemming from ‘local’ experiences” (Aydınli and Mathews, 2009, p.214). Yet, this paper defines “homegrown” theory more loosely.

3.1. The Pre-Acceptance WIRT Period

Mülkiye Mektebi, the predecessor of Ankara University's Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi (SBF), or Faculty of Political Science, was founded in 1859 as a training school for public servants, including many diplomats. Mulkiye and SBF served as a driving force for developing international studies in Turkey. The first IR course was established in Mulkiye in 1926 (Aydın, 2005, p.141). Yet, as Uzgel points out, there was no academic discussion about foreign policy (or IR) during the interwar period in Turkey (Uzgel, 2007, p.114).

However, some intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire—Namık Kemal, for example—offered suggestions for conducting IR studies. Kemal and the so-called New Ottomans sought to instill nationalism in the Ottoman Empire. They criticized the dialectical thinking of civilizational decline advanced by Ibn Khaldun (Arai, 2009, p.121). Conversely, dialectical thinking prevailed among the Ottoman Empire's intellectuals. Khaldun's dialectical thinking about the state was appreciated by Hegel, Spencer, and Gierke. Hence, it was also easy for Ottoman scholars to accept Marx's dialectical thinking about economics. In addition, nationalism and self-determination were serious issues that were discussed a great deal during the late Ottoman Empire. Following Buzan and Acharya's definition of NWIRT, these scholars seem to fall under the first type (the key figures in thought about classical religion, politics, and the military).

3.2. The First Generation of Turkish IR⁸

The study of IR began in earnest in Turkey after World War II (Uzgel, 2007, p.114). In 1960, the Institute of International Relations (Dış Münasebetler Enstitüsü) was founded at the SBF with the purpose of developing the study of IR. Following the SBF's lead, Middle East Technical University (METU), Robert College (since 1971, Boğaziçi University), and Istanbul University started to teach IR during the 1960s.⁹ SBF scholars such as Suat Bilge, Mehmet Gönlübol, and Türkkaya Ataöv took leading roles in developing IR in Turkey. According to Ataöv, during the 1960s, the main courses in IR were international politics, international law (public and private law), and diplomatic history (Ataöv, 1967, p.375). Since 1960, the Institute of International Relations has published an annual IR journal in English, *The Turkish Yearbook of*

⁸ Ali Karaosmanoğlu identified four generations of Turkish IR scholars. This study partly referred to his work. For details, see Aydın, Kat, Karaosmanoğlu, and Eralp, 2005, pp.131-147.

⁹ For more details about the first generation of developing IR in Turkey, see Ataöv, 1967.

International Relations. SBF Dergisi (SBF Journal), launched in 1943, occasionally published articles on IR or Turkish foreign policy. In addition, the first IR textbook in Turkish, *Milletlerarası Politika (International Politics)*, written by Bilge, was published in 1966.

Which IR theory was studied or adopted as a framework for analysis? The first generation of IR scholars in Turkey relied on classical realism (Bilge and Gönlübol) and Marxism (Ataöv) to conduct analyses (Uzgel, 2007, p.115). Works based on behaviorism, foreign policy analysis, and structural realism were very few.

3.3. The Second Generation of Turkish IR

After the 1980 coup d'état in Turkey (commonly known as the September 12 coup), the university educational system drastically changed under the Council of Higher Education (YÖK). In addition, several SBF scholars were jailed as political prisoners. These events reduced the SBF's supremacy in the area of IR. Since the 1980s, METU and Bilkent University (established in 1984) have taken the leading roles in developing IR in Turkey. METU founded its department of IR in 1984; Bilkent University established its department in 1987. Traditionally, the strong point of METU's IR department has been area studies. Meanwhile, the IR department at Bilkent has gathered security studies experts, including Duygu Sezer and Ali Karaosmanoğlu. Yet, both departments place a lot of emphasis on IR theory. In particular, Atila Eralp, who was a student of James Rosenau and is a professor at METU, played an essential role. He put a great deal of effort into bringing IR theory into the study of IR in Turkey by organizing the curriculum for METU's IR department (Aydın, 2005, p.142). He also edited the first IR theory book in Turkish, *Devlet, Sistem ve Kimlik: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Yaklaşımlar (State, System, and Identity: Basic Approaches in International Relations)*, with his junior colleagues in 1996. This book introduced IR Thought (Nuri Yurdusev), the first great debate (Atila Eralp), the second great debate (Oktay Tanrısever), structural approaches in IR (Faruk Yalvaç), normative theory (İhsan Dağı), critical theory (Fuat Keyman), and poststructural/postmodern theory (Necati Polat) to its readers. Eralp also edited *Devlet ve Otesi: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Kavramlar (State and Other: Basic Concepts in International Relations)* in 2005. Eralp's main areas of interest in IR theory are foreign policy analysis and transnational approaches. However, he is tolerant of other theories, especially postpositivist approaches. This tolerant atmosphere at METU and Bilkent, in contrast with the SBF, formed the basis for the third generation of IR theory study in Turkey. In addition, most second-generation IR scholars received their PhDs from the United States, the United

Kingdom, or Germany.

3.4. The Third Generation of Turkish IR

Scholars of the third generation of Turkish IR experienced “the third debate” in IR during their studies abroad. Those among the third generation who attained academic positions around the 2000s have actively introduced postpositivist approaches in Turkey (see Table 1). A leading example of this third generation is Pınar Bilgin, current chair of the IR department at Bilkent. She was a student of Ken Booth, who is the pioneer of critical security studies. She uses a critical security approach, critical geopolitics, and discourse analysis as her methodologies. Bahar Rumelili and Lerna K. Yanık also adopt similar methodological approaches. Nuri Yurdusev is a pioneer in analyzing international society from the perspective of the Ottoman Empire/Turkey. His approach is based on the English School, and he shows great sympathy for Buzan’s efforts, as discussed in Section 2.

Table 1. Which theoretical stances on IR do you sympathize with?

Stance	%
Realism/Neorealism	30.9
Constructivism	16.3
Critical Theory	9.8
Liberalism/Neoliberalism	8.9
Marxism	6.5
Postmodern/Poststructural	5.7
No theoretical methodology	4.9
Neo-Gramsci	3.3
English School	3.3
Feminism	0.0
Others	10.6

Source: Aydın and Yazgan, 2010, p.31.

In addition, third-generation scholars positively examine the question, “What is Turkish IR?” Mustafa Aydın and Ersel Aydınli are key figures following this trend. In 2004, Aydın, along with Çağır Erhan, published *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, an IR theory journal written completely in Turkish. This journal reflected the debates happening in Turkish IR. In 2009, Aydınli published *Yöntem, Kuram, Komplo: Türk Uluslararası İlişkiler Disiplininde Vizyon Arayışları (Method, Theory, and Design: The*

Search for a Turkish IR Discipline Vision), a monumental work on Turkish IR, with Erol Kurubaş and Haluk Özdemir. In addition to efforts by Aydın and Aydınli, METU has hosted annual IR conferences since 2002. Turkey's acceptance process is a work in progress. Several young scholars who have acquired new knowledge about IR abroad have been returning to Turkey.

As described above, IR in Turkey remains a work in progress. However, IR has been expanding its horizons in Turkey. There are now many IR departments at Turkish universities.¹⁰ In addition, it is fashionable today to publish translations of IR textbooks or IR research, including works by Ken Booth and Alexander Wendt.

Conclusion

The main aim of this article was to explore Middle Eastern contributions to the “homegrown” theory of IR. This study defined NWIRT loosely to include not only “pure” ideas and thinking in non-Western states but also “hybrid” ideas and thinking developed in response to Western IR imported from Europe and the United States. It partly recognizes that IR thought frames are inseparable from Western thinking. Hence, for the purposes of NWIRT, this paper has positioned itself as a “beyond the West” project. The project of “post-Western” IR seems to be the next step for “beyond the West.” Among non-Western regions, relatively few contributions have come from the Middle East and Africa. Hence, this study attempted to clarify the current state of relations between IR theory and Middle Eastern studies in the second section. Moreover, as a first step toward recognizing the importance of “homegrown” NWIRT in the Middle East, this article investigated the WIRT acceptance process in Turkey, which is the most advanced country for IR development in the Middle East. This study's findings have implications. First, the main scholars pursuing “homegrown” NWIRT in Turkey mostly received their PhDs in the United States or the United Kingdom. Second, “the third debate” in IR (i.e., postpositivist approaches) seems to create opportunities for Turkish scholars to consider original “homegrown” IR. Third, Turkish scholars have been considering the question of what Turkish IR is since at least the 1960s.

Therefore, this study's tentative answer to the question of what contributions the Middle East and, in particular, Turkey have made to IR theory is as follows: (i) NWIRT is, to some extent, bound to WIRT; (ii) “the third debate” harmonizes or encourages emerging NWIRT; and (iii) there is a need to thoroughly consider each state's

¹⁰ However, the problem concerns the gap in the quality of IR education between cities and local areas.

contribution to IR.

As a remaining issue, this study suggests that non-Western states should have dialogue not only with Western states but also with non-Western ones. As Tickner and Wæver have suggested, “geocultural epistemologies” are an essential factor for NWIRT. Yet, this straitjacket is too confining. Comparing IR developments in states in similar situations outside of specific regions could unearth new knowledge. To date, such attempts appear to be very few in number.

References

- Acharya, Amitav, 2011. “Dialogue and Discovery: In Search of International Relations Theories Beyond the West”, *Millennium*, Vol. 39, No. 3: pp.619-637.
- Ataöv, Türkkaya, 1967. “The Teaching of International Relations in Turkey”, *Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol. 22, No. 4: pp.373-383.
- Aydın, Mustafa, Şule Kat, Ali Karaosmanoğlu, and Atila Eralp, 2005. “International Relations Studies and Education in Turkey”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, Vol. 2, No. 16: pp.131-147.
- Aydın, Mustafa and Korhan Yazgan, 2010. “Türkiye’de Uluslararası İlişkiler Akademisyenleri Araştırma, Eğitim ve Disiplin Değerlendirmeleri Anketi-2009”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, Vol. 7, No. 25: pp.3-42.
- Aydınlı, Ersel and Julie Mathews, 2008. “Periphery Theorizing for a Truly Internationalized Discipline: Spinning IR Theory out of Anatolia”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4: pp.693-712.
- , 2009. “Turkey: Toward Homegrown Theorizing and Building a Disciplinary Community” in Arlene Tickner and Ole Wæver eds. *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, London: Routledge: pp.208-222.
- Aydınlı, Ersel, Erol Kurubaş, and Haluk Özdemir, 2009. *Yöntem, Kuram, Komplo: Türk Uluslararası İlişkiler Disiplininde Vizyon Arayışları*, Ankara: Asil Yayın Dağıtım.
- Barnett, Michael, 1998. *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order*, New York: Columbia University.
- Bilgin, Pınar, 2008. “Thinking past ‘Western’ IR?”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 1: pp.5-23.
- , 2010. “Looking for ‘the International’ beyond the West”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 5: pp.817-828.
- Breuning, Marijke, Joseph Bredehoft, and Eugene Walton, 2005. “Promise and Performance: An Evaluation of Journals in International Relations”, *International*

- Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 6, No. 4: pp.447-461.
- Brown, Carl, 1984. *International Politics and the Middle East: Old Rules, Dangerous Game*, London: I. B. Tauris & CL.
- Bull, Hedley and Adam Watson eds. 1984. *The Expansion of International Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burchill, Scott, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donnelly, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, and Jacqui True eds. 2005. *Theories of International Relations: 3rd Edition*, New York: Palgrave.
- Buzan, Barry, 2009. "The Middle East through English School Theory", in Barry Buzan and A. Gonzalez-Pelaez eds. *International Society and the Middle East: English School Theory at the Regional Level*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan: pp.24-44.
- Buzan, Barry and Amitav Acharya, 2007. "Why Is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory? An Introduction", *International Relations of Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 7, No. 3: pp.287-312.
- Buzan, Barry and Amitav Acharya, 2010. *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and Beyond Asia*, New York: Routledge.
- Buzan, Barry and A. Gonzalez-Pelaez eds. 2009. *International Society and the Middle East: English School Theory at the Regional Level*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chen, Ching-Chang, 2011. "The Absence of Non-Western IR Theory in Asia Reconsidered", *International Relations of Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 11, No. 1: pp.1-23.
- Cox, Robert, 1986. "Social Forces, States, and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory" in Robert Keohane ed. *Neorealism and Its Critics*, New York: Columbia University Press: pp.204-254.
- David, Steven, 1991. "Explaining Third World Alignment", *World Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 2: pp. 233-256.
- Eralp, Atila ed. 1996. *Devlet, Sistem ve Kimlik: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Yaklaşımlar*, Ankara: İletişim.
- ed. 2005. *Devlet ve Otesi: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Kavramlar*, Ankara: İletişim.
- Gause, Gregory III, 1999. "Systemic Approaches to Middle East International Relations", *International Studies Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1: pp.11-31.
- Gong, Gerrit W., 1984. *The Standard of Civilization in International Society*, Oxford: Clarendon.
- Halliday, Fred, 2002. *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics, and*

- Ideology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hansen, BIRThe, 2000. *Unipolarity and the Middle East*, Richmond: Curzon.
- Hinnebusch, Raymond, 2003. *The International Politics of the Middle East*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Hollis, Martin and Steve Smith, 1991. *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Holsti, Karl. J., 1998. "International Relations Theory and Domestic War in the Third World: The Limits of Relevance" in Stephanie Neuman ed. *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, New York: St. Martin's Press: pp.103-132.
- Josuke, Ikeda, 2011. "The 'Westfailure' Problem in International Relations Theory", *Kyoto Working Papers on Area Studies*, Vol. 116: pp.12-41.
- Kacowicz, Arie, 2009. "Israel: The Development of a Discipline in a Unique Setting" in Arlene Tickner and Ole Wæver eds. *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, London: Routledge: pp.191-207.
- Kay, Christobal, 2013. *Latin American Theories of Development and Underdevelopment*, London: Routledge.
- Lapid, Yosef, 1989. "The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 3: pp. 235-254.
- Masami, Arai, 2009. *Osuman Teikoku ha Naze Hokai Shitanoka (Why Did the Ottoman Empire Collapse?)*, Tokyo: Sodosha.
- Mayall, James, 2011. "Book Review: Non-Western International Relations Theory", *International Relations of Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 11, No. 2: pp.331-338.
- Neuman, Stephanie G. ed. 1998. *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Puchala, Donald, 1997. "Some Non-Western Perspectives on International Relations", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 34, No. 2: pp.129-134.
- , "Third World Thinking and Contemporary International Relations" in Stephanie Neuman ed. *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, New York: St. Martin's Press: pp.133-156.
- Reus-Smit, Christian, 2005. "Constructivism" in Scott Burchill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donnelly, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, and Jacqui True eds. *Theories of International Relations: 3rd Edition*, New York: Palgrave, pp.188-212.
- Sasley, Brent. E., 2011. "Studying Middle Eastern International Relations through IR

- Theory”, *Ortadoğu Etütleri*, Vol. 2, No. 2: pp.9-32.
- Shiro, Sato, 2011. “The IR Discipline Would Discipline Asian Studies”, *Kyoto Working Papers on Area Studies*, Vol. 116: pp.1-11.
- Skocpol, Theda ed. 1984. *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- , 1984. “Sociology’s Historical Imagination” in Theda Skocpol ed. *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: pp.1-21.
- Smith, Steve, 1996. “Positivism and Beyond” in Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski eds. *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: pp.11-44.
- Smith, Steve, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski eds., 1996. *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Takashi, Inoguchi, 2007. *Kokusai Kankeiron no Keihu (The Genealogy of International Relations)*, Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan.
- Telhami, Sebley and Michael Barnett eds., 2002. *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East*, New York: Ithaca.
- Tickner, Arlene B., 2003. “Hearing Latin American Voices in International Relations Studies”, *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 4: pp.325-350.
- Tickner, Arlene B. and David L. Blaney eds., 2012. *Thinking International Relations Differently*, London: Routledge.
- eds., 2013. *Claiming the International*, London: Routledge.
- Tickner, Arlene B. and Ole Wæver eds., 2009. *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, London: Routledge.
- Uzgel, İlhan, 2007. “Türk Dış Politikası Yazımında Siyaset, Ayrışma ve Dönüşüm”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, Vol. 4, No. 13: pp.113-128.
- Walt, Stephen, 1987. *The Origins of Alliances*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Yurdusev, Nuri, 2009. “The Middle East Encounter with the Expansion of European International Society” in Barry Buzan and Ana Gonzalez-Pelaez eds. *International Society and the Middle East: English School Theory at the Regional Level*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan: pp.70-91.