# AT IR Kritiks – Analytic Eclecticism

## Aff - Perm – Analytic Eclecticism

### 2AC

#### Perm: Do Both

#### The permutation is a form of analytic eclecticism – this is the best method for understanding and advancing IR

Jeremie Cornut, 2015, “An analytic electicism in practice: a method for combining international relations theories,” International Studies Perspectives, 16, 50-66, https://academic.oup.com/isp/article/16/1/50/1817996?login=true, mm

So far, the focus has been put on the epistemological and methodological challenges faced by post-foundational scholarship, rather than on the relations between substantive research traditions (Jackson 2011:238). It remains difficult to precisely know what post-foundationalism implies in terms of research practices. The time is ripe then to reflect on the links between different theories in a post-foundational perspective. As I show below, this means that the potential contributions of different theories and the criteria for their selection must be clarified. Given the pluralist inclinations of this perspective, these questions are particularly difficult to answer (Hellmann 2003; Smith 2003; Kurki 2008:208). Analytic eclecticism partially provides some indications on how to practice a post-foundational science of IR. Advocated for by Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein over the past decade, it is the most established and respected kind of problem-driven pragmatism (Sil 2000a,b, 2004, 2009; Sil and Katzenstein 2010a,b, 2011). Basically, an eclectic study uses different theories to analyze substantive problems. They explain: What we refer to as analytic eclecticism is distinguished by the fact that features of analyses in theories initially embedded in separate research traditions can be separated from their respective foundations, translated meaningfully, and recombined as part of an original permutation of concepts, methods, analytics, and empirics (Katzenstein and Sil 2008:110–111). In applying this logic to IR, Sil and Katzenstein consider realist, liberal, and constructivist approaches as potentially complementary in understanding specific phenomena. The utility of this research program derives from its giving a place to researchers using a plurality of theories. It shows that problem-driven pragmatism is interesting, coherent, and most importantly, possible. This legitimizes research that transgresses and transcends paradigmatic lines, allowing for eclectic analyses using theoretical frameworks from different parts of the epistemological spectrum.4 The extensive analysis of substantive works provided shows that analytic eclecticism and problem-driven pragmatism have already made great achievements, particularly in the study of war and peace, order and governance, and global political economy (Sil and Katzenstein 2010b). In Jeffrey Checkel’s words, “bridge builders have largely done their job well” (2012:220).

#### The permutation has a net benefit – it avoids paradigms wars and fueling epistemic uncertainty

Christopher Whyte, June 2019, “Can we change the topic, please? Assessing the theoretical construction of international relations scholarship,” International Studies Quarterly, 63(2), 432-447, https://academic.oup.com/isq/article/63/2/432/5381953?login=true, mm

Many international relations scholars view their fundamental task as producing better and more accurate knowledge about the world around us. But individuals and groups of researchers in the field often self-organize along factional lines, which may produce practices that harm the accumulation of knowledge. Scholars routinely argue that the interparadigm debate undermined the theoretical development of new research programs. They contend that self-described “realist,” “critical,” or other typeset scholars ultimately focus more on conceptual self-affirmation than on producing nuanced understandings of aspects of world politics (see, inter alia, Cohen 2007, 2008; Blyth 2009; Maliniak and Tierney 2009; Lake 2011). However, academic “sects” that form in response to strong support for a particular perspective on world politics do not necessarily harm the pursuit of knowledge. Different perspectives may, for example, bring greater understandings of the role of particular causal mechanisms. Contestation means forums within which scholarly consensus might be achieved and from which new efforts can be shaped. Moreover, different perspectives provide institutional and philosophical ways to organize and take stock of knowledge. That said, Sil and Katzenstein (2010) argue that the intellectual benefits of factionalism come at a high price if not obtained within an environment supportive of methodological “eclecticism.” Paradigms become the object of socialization in that they are taken as given or, conversely, judged as inappropriate for inclusion in studies in certain subfields. Likewise, scholars socialized in a particular context may view certain methods as inappropriate for use in social science research on specific topics or held up as the gold standard, despite clear shortcomings or demonstrable benefits. The economic turn in the international political economy (IPE) field, for example, has diminished the prominence of qualitative analysis within top journal outlets (Lake 2006; Maliniak and Tierney 2009). This bias leads researchers to develop self-affirming research designs and to link the viability of particular methods to their personal or professional reputation (Lake 2011). When researchers exhibit these biases, they cloud the production of knowledge about world politics. Naturally, these tendencies and subsequent effects introduce some uncertainty to the field's effort to produce better knowledge about world politics.

### Perm Solves Best - General

#### The permutation solves best – even if somewhat inconsistent, combining methodological approaches leads to better scholarship which is ideal for addressing normative problems in actual policy debates

P. Katzenstein and Rudra Sil, 2008, Oxford Handbook of International Relations, “Eclectic Theorizing in the Study and Practice of International Relations,” https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287914880\_Eclectic\_Theorizing\_in\_the\_Study\_and\_Practice\_of\_International\_Relations, mm

For most of the past three decades, international relations scholarship has typically been embedded in discrete research traditions, each proclaimed by its adherents to be either inherently superior or flexible enough to be able to subsume the others. Competition among discrete research traditions is certainly one motor for intellectual vitality within a given tradition of international relations (e.g. David Dessler, this volume). However, vitality within particular traditions does not necessarily constitute a basis for progress for the field of international relations as a whole (Elman and Elman 2003). As Gunther Hellmann (2002, 3) notes: “although the sort of professionalization which Waltzian ‘realists’ and Wendtian ‘constructivists’ have helped to bring about in international relations has rightly and widely been hailed as a blessing, it must not be mistaken for intellectual progress.” The editor of Perspectives in Politics, one of the two leading journals of the American Political Science Association, writes about the field from a highly informed perspective: the standard IR article consists of pushing a huge rock of theory up a steep hill, in order to roll it down to smash a few pebbles of fact at the bottom. That is, the modal manuscript starts by outlining the three standard theories: realism, liberalism, constructivism (sometimes subdivided into neo-realism, neo-liberalism, and so on). Articles then diverge slightly—some seek to show that these apparently different theories can really be combined to show X; others seek to show that one of the theories is right and the other two are wrong, as evidenced by an explanation of X; a few argue that none of the three quite suffices to explain X, so we need a new theory (or more frequently, a variant of one of the old ones). (Hochschild 2005, 11) The sound editorial advice proffered was to eliminate paradigms, to focus attention on a central question, and to engage that question fruitfully—that is, to follow the road of problem-driven rather than paradigm-driven research. Indeed, a growing number of scholars, albeit still a minority, have been self-consciously forgoing metatheoretical and methodological battles in favor of approaches that explicitly seek to explore the interfaces between, and build bridges across, problematics and analyses originally constructed within seemingly incommensurable research traditions (Bernstein et al. 2000; Makinda 2000; Sil and Doherty 2000; Dow 2004; Suh, Katzenstein, and Carlson 2004; Zürn and Checkel 2005). Because research traditions are typically founded on metatheoretical principles that are distinct from those distinguishing competing traditions, each intrinsically favors some types of scholarly endeavors over others, as evident in the selection and framing of research puzzles, the representation and interpretation of relevant empirical observations, the specification of evidentiary standards, and the attention to certain causal mechanisms at the expense of others. Given the lack of a definitive consensus on such fundamental issues, this chapter calls for the accommodation of eclectic modes of scholarship that trespass deliberately and liberally across competing research traditions with the intention of defining and exploring substantive problems in original, creative ways, selectively drawing upon a variety of existing and emerging research traditions in order to contribute to theoretical progress for international relations as a whole. What we refer to as analytic eclecticism is distinguished by the fact that features of analyses in theories initially embedded in separate research traditions can be separated from their respective foundations, translated meaningfully, and recombined as part of an original permutation of concepts, methods, analytics, and empirics. Our conception of analytic eclecticism is premised on a pragmatist foundation that eschews metatheoretical debates and encourages scholarly practices aimed at generating creative forms of knowledge that engage adherents of different traditions in meaningful conversations about substantive problems in international life. Analytic eclecticism also suggests a reflexive process aimed at generating fresh theoretical perspectives that have practical value beyond the academe, speaking to both the normative and policy debates in which actors in international relations are enmeshed. This does not suggest that anything goes or that established research traditions need to be dismantled. Rather, following Albert Hirschman (1981), we note that self-conscious “trespassing” across research traditions can enable us to make better use of the innovative and creative scholarship produced within these traditions in the process of recognizing socially important problems and building interpretations and hypotheses that, even if not especially parsimonious, can be analytically coherent, intellectually interesting, and responsive to normative concerns and policy debates surrounding these problems.

### Perm Solves Best – Security K

#### Security studies lack an empirical foundation – reject this flawed methodology in favor of pluralism

Stephanie Baele and Diana Jalea, 2022, Political Studies Review, “twenty-five years of securitization theory: a corpus-based review,” https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/14789299211069499, mm

Our first axis of investigation follows the line of argument claiming that a rich and fastpaced theoretical evolution of ST [securitization theory] may have been done at the expense of a similarly strong development when it comes to methods. On the one hand, theoretical developments in ST [securitization theory] have certainly been rapid and diverse. The ‘new framework for analysis’ offered by the Copenhagen School in the mid-1990s has been persistently and significantly reinforced, expanded and broadened away from its focus on securitizing speech acts to encompass a range of different processes and factors surrounding or directly at play in securitization dynamics (Baele and Thomson, 2022); this broadening shed light on important social and political issues, enabling a fuller capture of a phenomenon as multifaceted as securitization. However, it also effectively fragmented ST [securitization theory] into different theories of securitization12 ‘committed to distinctive ontologies and epistemologies’ as well as methodologies (Balzacq, 2015: 103), a situation that prompted efforts to reconcile differing views into unified frameworks (e.g. Bourbeau, 2014). On the other hand, comparably little attention has been devoted to methods and best methodological practices when it comes to empirical work. ST’s [securitization theory’s] methods have several times been criticized as limited, if not outright weak. Calls have been voiced to move beyond theoretical debates and conduct methodologically rich empirical work (e.g. Balzacq, 2011), and the lack of methodological transparency in applied research has been pinpointed (e.g. Baele and Sterck [2015: 1122] argued that methods are ‘the Achilles’ heel of securitisation studies, casting doubt on their conclusions’). In their recent evaluation of ST [securitization theory], Balzacq et al. (2016: 519) still wondered if ‘there [is] a “better” method for studying securitization processes?’ Overall, this imbalanced development is confirmed by the data in several ways. First, ST [securitization theory] scholarship is indeed heavily geared towards theoretical development rather than empirical knowledge: more than half of the 171 papers (89) were ‘primarily theoretical’, compared with only 10 ‘primarily empirical’ articles – the remaining being ‘balanced theoretically and empirically’. As Figure 2 shows, only a minority of papers do ‘focus on a key issue’, that is, have a clearly identifiable and sustained engagement with one (or two) empirical case.13 Put differently, the majority of ST [securitization theory] scholarship remains abstract, with only thin empirical engagement. As noted above, this imbalance in favour of abstract theorizing as opposed to case(s)-based investigations can partially be explained by the nature of the journals we included in the sample; a quick glance at some area studies publications brings back articles using ST [securitization theory] in a more instrumental way to explain particular issues or events. Generalist journals, however, do not necessarily neglect empirical work when favouring theorization – they usually require both. We thus believe that what has more fundamentally driven this imbalance is the value traditionally given to ‘high’ theory, and suspicion towards ‘methods’ at times conflated with positivism, within the critical IR community.14 Theorization is not, of course, inherently problematic; what raises questions is a theoretical framework which is usually not used as such – as a tool used to better understand specific issues and solve empirical puzzles that incidentally allow for further conceptual work.

### Net Benefit – Balkanization

#### The permutation provides the best fusion of inquiry and knowledge – the alternative alone fails to persuade real world actors and leads to the balkanization of knowledge and epistemic communities

P. Katzenstein and Rudra Sil, 2008, Oxford Handbook of International Relations, “Eclectic Theorizing in the Study and Practice of International Relations,” https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287914880\_Eclectic\_Theorizing\_in\_the\_Study\_and\_Practice\_of\_International\_Relations, mm

We concur with Robert Dahl (2004) that, because politics encompasses an extraordinarily complex set of phenomena involving multiple types of units connected through a wide range of relations, understanding this complexity initially requires a more specialized examination of particular elements, institutions, and actors. The analytic accentuation and empirical focus facilitated by the boundaries of research traditions can be intellectually fruitful, enabling scholars with similar assumptions, vocabularies, standards, and skill sets to examine more thoroughly selected aspects of a problem. Moreover, debates among adherents of multiple research traditions can generate progress within each tradition as scholars respond to critiques and alternative knowledge claims generated in competing traditions. However, viewing social inquiry solely through the lens of competing research traditions risks excessive compartmentalization of knowledge unless some effort is made to illuminate connections and complementarities between the various problems, interpretations, and mechanisms posited by different research traditions. As Shapiro (2005, 184) notes, because scholarship embedded in a single approach reflects the theoretical priors privileged by that approach, social inquiry is inherently restricted to those aspects of the social world that can be readily problematized relying on the preferred conceptual apparatus and methodological toolkit of that approach. Thus, while the debates among research traditions may generate refinements within each tradition, they also serve to block off the sort of communication and intellectual versatility needed to recognize potentially relevant conceptual and empirical connections across analyses developed in separate traditions. In security studies, for example, articles in each of two leading journals—Journal of Conflict Resolution and International Security—rarely acknowledge scholarship produced in the other, even when considering the same topic (Bennett, Barth, and Rutherford 2003). Moreover, there are very large intellectual, financial, professional, and psychological investments that go into producing and sustaining a research tradition, and these investments militate against addressing important aspects of problems that are not easily represented in the conceptual apparatus and analytic frameworks privileged in that tradition. As Friedrich Kratochwil (2003, 125) puts it: “The desire to win, to stand one’s ground, perhaps not surprisingly, is most of the time stronger than the genuine search for an acceptable solution to a problem.” To overcome these barriers to intellectual engagement, to gain depth in insight and improve the accuracy of observations and, especially, to make research more relevant to the practical and normative concerns of real-world actors, it is intellectually productive to reconsider a problem from the vantage point of a “multiperspectival mode of social inquiry” (Bohman 2002, 502). This is where the very advantages that enable adherents of a research tradition to proclaim progress become disadvantages in terms of exploring real-world puzzles that force scholars to confront the question of the empirical accuracy and the practical and normative relevance of their work rather than justify their work primarily on methodological or epistemological grounds (Grofman 2001). The benefits of embedding scholarship within research traditions—the cultivation of a recognizable professional identity, efficient communication based on shared stocks of knowledge and skills, a common set of evaluative standards linked to explicit methodological assumptions, and the psychological and institutional support provided by fellow members— need to be sacrificed for the purpose of recognizing and framing problems in ways that more closely approximate the complexity of the social world and that can be explored through different permutations of concepts, data, methods, and interpretative logics taken from separate research traditions. As distinct scholarly communities seek to make their intellectual products relevant to policy-makers and other actors, eclectic scholarship enables these communities to recognize related aspects of a problem and to move toward richer interpretative frameworks that selectively integrate artificially segmented schemes and logics initially devised in separate research traditions. The emergent theoretical framework, whatever its limitations with regard to such scientific ideals as parsimony and replicability, comes to constitute “a tool for problem-solving rather than an instrument for truthproduction” (Hellmann 2002, 7).

#### The alt’s scholarship alone leads to academic fragmentation and fails to promote material change

David Lake, June 2011, “Why ‘isms’ are evil: theory, epistemology, and academic sects as impediments to understanding and progress,” International Studies Quarterly, 55(2), 465-480, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23019696?seq=1, mm

The problem is not that we have too many research traditions, but how we respond to this plethora. Nor is the problem our professional structures and incentives, as many other disciplines operate within the same environment and have responded in more productive ways.' Rather, we have adopted over time a set of professional practices that produce five linked pathologies." These patholo-gies, in turn, transform research traditions into insular "sects" that eschew expla-nation in favor of theology. Fortunately, if these pathologies follow from professional practices, they can be remedied by changing those norms. Recogniz-ing these practices and highlighting their effects is a necessary first step toward change. First, we reify research traditions. We are all familiar with the mandatory literature review in articles and books wherein complex literatures are grouped into one or more schools for the primary purpose of demonstrating what is new and unique about the author's own contribution. These are necessary for positioning our work in the field. We likewise organize courses—and especially introductory courses and graduate field seminars—in terms of the "great debates" or "great books" where we assign exemplary works that help students identify the core traits of each tradition. We also organize our handbooks of international studies by research tradition (see Reus-Smit and Snidal 2008). This is how we introduce novices into the shared understanding of the field and its practices. In classifying research into such categories, we collectively construct the research traditions in which we live. But in classifying research in these ways, we also necessarily lose subtlety, emphasize lowest common denominators, and simplify scholarly inquiry into easily recognizable schools. In short, through often well-intentioned prac-tice, we force research into artificial traditions that we mistakenly believe have real standing and meaning. Sometimes, categories are also self-imposed as scholars search for a shared identity with like-minded others. We are active participants in creating our own professional fragmentation. More insidiously, however, even while perhaps pro-claiming our own broadmindedness and denying that "our work" fits cleanly into any particular research tradition, we nonetheless classify others into these neat, simplified categories.' We may believe ourselves to defy academic stereo-types, but we are usually all too ready to label our intellectual opponents as a this or a that. Just like ethnic identities in times of conflict, it matters less how we may think of ourselves and more how others think of us. We may congratu-late ourselves on our intellectual cosmopolitanism and flexibility, but we are in the end branded by others as adherents to one or another tradition and cred-ited—or more likely damned—with all of the failings of the approach. One's research tradition is not entirely of one's own making. Second, having reified research traditions, we then reward extremism. We all cite the same canonical sources in our own and other research traditions.' We assign these same works in our courses. These canonical works are typically read to embody the assumptions of a research tradition in pure form. Their purpose is to communicate meaning and information to other scholars—citing "Waltz 1979," "Keohane 1984," or "Wendt 1999," for instance, carries a world of meaning to sophisticates who have learned the research traditions. These canoni-cal works serve a useful purpose by orienting debates within the field. Although they are typically bold, clear statements of a new approach, like the research traditions they come to embody these iconic works are themselves reified, with meanings attributed to them that the author may not have intended. In interpretation, they lose subtlety, sophistication, and—most important—qualification. Wendt, for instance, has written that, properly understood, many of the issues between rationalism and constructivism dissolve (Fearon and Wendt 2002, 67). Keohane (1984, esp. 9 and 245), in his own writings, has always posi-tioned himself between traditions as beginning from realist foundations and then developing the role of institutions on that footing. Nonetheless, these canonical works are commonly interpreted by the international studies community as staking out intellectual positions that are notable precisely for their "purity" or, more accurately, their extremism. These canonical works—in their stylized and reified forms—shape the disci-pline. Sitting at the top of the profession, in turn, their authors receive dispro-portionate professional rewards, not least because our universities and profession value visibility, whether defined in terms of citations or valuable space on gradu-ate syllabi. These rewards are appropriate in recognizing the unusual contribu-tions of scholars whose research sets the agenda in the field. But these rewards also create incentives for younger scholars to compete for recognition by adher-ing to a sectarian position and, more important, taking even more extreme posi-tions. Indeed, although everyone writing on international studies no doubt hopes to make an impact on the discipline and our understanding of world affairs, authors of canonical works—aware that they are breaking new ground —are often quite sensitive to how they fit into and are dependent on existing streams of political thought. In the quest for recognition, however, their followers often become more shrill and single-minded, further reifying the approaches with which they identify. For reasons of self-identification and increased professional visibility, we also create incentives for adherents of nascent approaches to create new "isms," often embodied in new organized sections that they can control within profes-sional associations. Creating a new section provides a measure of legitimacy, standing, and status for adherents and certifies the approach as one that should be taken seriously by others. It also provides opportunities for entrepreneurs to earn visibility in general and become intellectual leaders of a new research tradi-tion. If there is a tendency in academia towards intellectual fragmentation, the disproportionate rewards for intellectual extremism create a further centripetal force. Ironically, professional associations, often originally formed as a common ground for scholars, become a force for further fractionalization in the disci-pline. At both the individual and collective levels, extremism breeds further extremism. Together, these first two pathologies lead to a proliferation of research tradi-tions within international studies. The existence of these multiple traditions is not in itself a bad thing. To the extent that they organize research and produce new ideas they can be progressive. But when combined with three further patho-logies, they begin to inhibit rather than aid scholarly inquiry. Third, we mistake research traditions for actual theories. As noted, traditions are defined by shared sets of core assumptions. In principle, these core assumptions may be sufficient to generate deductively valid hypotheses or other forms of explanation. In practice, however, these shared assumptions are more often incomplete and must be supplemented by additional assumptions to yield spe-cific hypotheses and explanations. That is, the core assumptions orient scholars working within a research tradition, but they are seldom complete enough to explain specific outcomes of interest. Waltz (1979:118, 121), for instance, was emphatic that two and only two assumptions—anarchy and the desire to sur-vive—were sufficient to predict that states will tend to balance against stronger powers. But these assumptions are, in fact, consistent with a much larger range of behaviors, including cooperation and collective security organizations, on the one hand, and bandwagoning, on the other. In other words, these same assump-tions are consistent with both balancing and not balancing, and thus, the research tradition is theoretically indeterminate (Lake and Powell 1999:23-24). To deduce the proposition that states tend to balance, additional assumptions must be added to the core assumptions of neorealism. Similarly, Powell (1991) and Snidal (1991a,b) showed that both neorealism and neoliberalism did not generate unique predictions about relative and absolute gains maximization, as commonly thought (Grieco 1993), but were actually indeterminate as well; with additional assumptions, each tradition could generate predictions of relative and absolute gains behavior as a special case. That most research traditions are insuf-ficient to generate hypotheses about actual interstate behavior is further sug-gested by the proliferation of theories within each that all claim allegiance to the same core assumptions. Thus, we have offensive realism, defensive realism, neoclassical realism, and more, all sharing a common set of assumptions under-stood as realist but differing in the auxiliary assumptions they employ.' This explains how numerous theories can co-exist and be unified within a single research tradition.'° In turn, since their assumptions are typically incomplete, research traditions cannot be assessed directly. As they are often underspecified and do not gener-ate deductively valid hypotheses themselves, they cannot be "tested" on their own terms. Sometimes, since with different auxiliary assumptions they may pre-dict both a behavior and its opposite, they cannot be tested at all. One can probe the explanatory power of a theory, but usually not of a tradition. Nonethe-less, scholars often pit traditions against one another in head-to-head competi-tions." In these battles, since each tradition is incomplete and yields few logically deductive predictions, no empirical evidence can shed any meaningful light on the explanatory power of the approach or, inversely, broad ranges of behavior may be equally consistent with its assumptions. Without determinate predictions, scholars play a game of "heads I win, tails you lose" in which their preferred approach is almost always supported. Fourth, we narrow the permitted subject matter of our studies to those topics, periods, and observations that tend to confirm the particular strengths of our tradition. Realists, for instance, tend to focus mainly on security policies of great powers where their assumptions appear to fit slightly better, and then find evidence for the power of realism. Liberals tend to focus on economic policy where their assump-tions appear to fit slightly better, and then find evidence for the power of liberal-ism. Neoliberal institutionalists study institutions, which not coincidentally tends to affirm the important role of institutions. Constructivists study changes in norms, and find their approach persuasive. English school scholars often focus on the socialization of polities within the international system, and find evidence of the power of their approach and so on. This narrowing of empirical focus need not be a conscious strategy but can be a natural by-product of the search for confirming evidence. Having spent years developing a theory, it is not unrea-sonable to apply it where it is most likely to fit—at least as a first, initial test of plausibility. Journals and book publishers are also notoriously loath to publish null findings, a belief that need not be true to have a major effect on the choice of research topics by scholars of different traditions. By narrowing its empirical focus, however, each tradition affirms itself by study-ing that which it does best and ignoring subjects that do not conform to expecta-tions. This produces self-affirming sects that come to believe in the power of their tradition based on a selective reading of the possible empirical evidence. It is here that research traditions move from the realm of objective social science to theology. Having adopted a tradition, we then look only for evidence that affirms our prior belief in the rightness of that tradition. Practice becomes not an attempt to falsify theories through ever more demanding tests, but to support theories that were adopted prior to their confrontation with evidence. In essence, we eschew social science theories that can, in principle, be falsified for beliefs that are largely impervious to evidence. Fifth, scholars within each research tradition aspire for their approach to be the scientific paradigm. Rather than accept that our favored tradition is inevitably partial and limited in scope and domain, we seek intellectual hegemony. We claim that our particular tradition with its unique set of assumptions is a general approach that can and should be treated as a universal or near universal paradigm. I have always found the phrases "I am realist" or "As a neoliberal institutionalist, I think..." to be peculiar statements. The only logical construction is that the speaker is asserting that his or her particular tradition is superior to all other known traditions, a claim that all questions can be answered by theories based on the assumptions of that tradition. Thus, by the third and fourth pathologies, we validate our often incomplete theories through favorable and selective evidence but, by the fifth, we then assert they are universal and superior to—or at least worthy of respect by adherents of—other equally self-validated traditions. There are, perhaps, strong reasons of self-identification to seek intellectual hegemony. As scholars, much of our self-worth is entwined with our ideas. To vanquish the alternatives, if even in our own minds, validates our contributions and ourselves. There are also strong professional incentives to win the contest for intellectual hegemony. To establish one's tradition as the tradition promises to put the original adherents at the top of the field. Even if individual scholars are not so narrowly instrumental, intellectual combat is like an arms race. Each tradition perceives the failure to compete for hegemony as ceding ground to opponents, and thus, each tradition believes it must compete in expectation that others will compete for dominance. To admit the partial nature of one's theory is to risk being subsumed as a special case within someone else's tradition—a lower status. Thus, everyone aspires to hegemony if only to prevent others from conquering the field. But like arms races, this intellectual competition leaves everyone worse off than if they could simply cooperate, which in this case means admitting the partial nature and limited empirical evidence for every theory now known in the field. These five pathologies combine to divert professional debate from the sub-stance of world politics to first principles. Having created academic sects based on incommensurate assumptions and supported by selective evidence, we do not seek to assess which approach helps us understand world politics best (or helps us understand which range of phenomena best). We focus instead on the inher-ent superiority of this or that set of assumptions. Rather than seeking to under-stand the world—our highest obligation as scholars—we debate assumptions seemingly without end. What are the fundamental units of world politics? Are individuals, groups or social collectivities, or organizations "rational"? Do actors seek power, welfare, justice, or something else? Which matters more, system or unit, structure or agency? Without comparable propositions derived from these competing research traditions and assessed against the same patterns of behav-ior, there is no possible answer to such existential questions. This makes for a continuing and lively debate of course, but it adds little to our understanding of world politics and nothing at all to practical policymakers. Rather than seeking to understand the complex and often frightening world around us, we spend far too much of our intellectual time and energy debating assumptions as if they mattered in absolute terms. It is here that research traditions tip over from being useful organizing devices to theologies. Assumptions stop being treated as more or less useful simplifications of a complex reality and become beliefs that are accepted or not as truths. We have left the realm of scholarly inquiry and entered the world of academic religions. By whatever definition, we have stopped doing "science."

### Net Benefit – Cooption

#### Reliance on critical IR theory fails and gets coopted – these intellectual tools are just as likely to be mobilized by populists to oppress other marginalized groups

Nicholas Michelsen, 2021, “What is minor international theory? On the limits of Critical International Relations,” Journal of International Political Theory, 17(3), https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1755088220956680, mm

The problem of synthesis stalks all self-defining Critical approaches to IR. Defining the terms of reference for intellectual dissidence in relation to IR’s ‘disciplinary crisis’, as the poststructuralists did in viewing critique as a function of disciplinary marginality, created conditions ripe for viewing any competitor theory as problematic to the degree that they can be deemed insufficiently minor (Whitehall, 2016). The idea that critique necessitates moving ‘beyond IR’ as an inherently majoritarian project has become a widely expressed trope. The result is that Critical IR theorists now engage in increasingly virulent disagreements over the political and ethical implications of disciplinarity itself. In perpetual abeyance, claimants to Critical IR become hostages to a continuous risk of being exposed as insufficiently pure of the (modernist, racist, colonial, patriarchal, heteronormative, positivist, capitalist) traces of ‘the major literature/discipline’. At the same time, Critical IR scholars who advocate for a disciplinary exit in search of ‘more Critical’ inter-disciplines have found themselves wrestling with the charge of pre-judgement: Since they appear to know what ‘Being Critical’ will look like after de-disciplinarisation, critique takes the form of testing whether other scholars meet these pre-given criteria (Holden, 2006; Howell and Richter-Montpetit, 2020). This stream in contemporary IR scholarship ignores the manners in which minor theories, far from tending towards alliances, are often set to contradictory political and ethical purposes. And that the visions of world politics created by scholars ‘moving beyond’ disciplinary IR can be just as problematic as visions already settled within the discipline. Contemporary political and social movements borrow intellectual resources from various (once or still) minor theoretical traditions in IR to think against a ‘Globalist’ world order, incorporating the Gramscian position that ‘politics is downstream from culture’, the ideal of a transgressive emancipatory identity, and the critique of neo-colonialism (Love, 2017; Nagle 2017). The philosopher Alain De Benoist wrote his manifesto for the New Right in the year 2000 with the aim of challenging the oppressive implications of major international theories, especially Liberalism, borrowing widely from resources of minor intellectual critique (de Benoist and Champetier, 1999). This theory is marginal in disciplinary IR, but influential amongst populist politicians like Putin, Trump, Orban, Salvini and Le Pen, as well as online communities of Race Realists, western chauvinists, and white nationalists. It proposes that Liberalism destroys the autonomy of ethnicities and cultures, and that the history of the west has been one of ongoing cultural as well as political colonialism. De Benoist’s argument is that the project of decolonisation is incomplete, and continues through international aid and UN-led Liberal paternalism. The answer proposed by the New Right is to restore a truly independent status to diverse cultures and indigenous world-views in International Relations, and suggest that people belonging to these ‘birth-cultures’ must actively work towards their national and cognitive emancipation from all the baggage of Liberal modernity, if necessary, through violently closing borders. The New Right claims its intellectual marginality vis-à-vis Liberalism or Globalism (understood as the ideological representative of modernism in international thought) is a marker of its virtue. The New Right is not, however, widely viewed as a ‘Critical ally’ of Decolonial IR theory. A claim to minor theoretical status is also visible amongst reactionary theorists of gender, including online groups of men’s rights activists, western chauvinist militias like the Proud Boys, or traditionalist ‘family values’ movements (Nagle, 2017). These groups develop an operative concept of the radical intellectual margins as central to their understandings of critique, and of the emancipatory relationship which their critique has to hegemonic theoretical frameworks that they perceive as oppressing them: Liberalism or ‘Cultural Marxism’ (Nagle, 2017). These actors see their critiques of what they term ‘gender ideology’ as part of a necessary escape from the straightjacket of modernist categories, currently hegemonic in contemporary academia. In other words, the belief that transgressive or marginal theory is emancipatory has diverse advocates, whose antimodernism or anti-hegemonism comes with divergent attitudes to gender, race, culture, economics, social, political and international organisation. The sociological implications of this point were anticipated, but not fully developed, by Katz (1996: 488), who noted that: ‘talk of exclusion can lead to an unsavory hierarchy of marginalization – a kind of competitive victimology – and even to the cul-de-sac of an essentialist identity politics. Notions of exclusion are all about, one might even say tautologically about, position, and if we are not careful they can lead to relativist accounts that offer little of practical value. And they can be disingenuous – proclamations of exclusion by scholars who are quite included’. The historical moment facing critique calls us to recognise that minor theories infer no allied ethics or politics. There is no cohesive and abiding sovereign ‘logic of modernity’ that forms the superstructure of disciplinary IR, and gives assurance that the postdisciplinary avant-guard will share an understanding of virtue. The romanticism characteristic of self-describing Critical intellectual cultures that arose in IR in the immediate Post-Cold War context must now be reconsidered. Many of the same intellectual tools are now being effectively mobilised by reactionaries, racists and gender absolutists. Contemporary reactionaries have read their Deleuze, their Gramsci, their Derrida and Foucault (see Land, 2012), and they are cognisant of the discursive logic and rhetorical power of, for example, concepts of exclusion, identity, precarity, marginality, hegemony, the avant-guard, victimhood and indigeneity (see Michelsen and De Orellana, 2019). The challenge facing scholars in IR who seek to write in the service of vulnerable groups, like migrants lacking a safe home state, those who do not fit with heteronormative gender roles, or the victims of racism, is that their reactionary theoretical interlocutors have recognised the power in claiming to be uniquely reflexive critics, intellectually marginal vis-à-vis dominant theoretical assumptions about IR. The category ‘Critical IR’ provides no tools by which to counter these relativistic arguments. In this context, the belief that ‘Being Critical’ requires a minoritarian exit from disciplinary IR may be a distraction from developing methodologically and epistemologically rigorous critiques, that can be communicated as such. Faith in the emancipatory intellectual margins brings to mind Latour’s (2004: 225) worry that self-describing ‘Critical’ scholars today are like ‘those mechanical toys that endlessly make the same gesture when everything else has changed around them’.

### Net Benefit – Epistemic Tradeoffs

#### The alternative alone guarantees epistemic tradeoffs that undermine its solvency – the permutation avoids this

Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein, 2010, Perspectives on Politics, “Analytic eclecticism in the study of world politics: reconfiguring problems and mechanisms across research traditions,” 8(2), 411-431, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/analytic-eclecticism-in-the-study-of-world-politics-reconfiguring-problems-and-mechanisms-across-research-traditions/B078D54DEFB199ADA653B7B35004EACF, mm

Research traditions have crucial advantages in generating and organizing initial stocks of knowledge. Given the infinite complexity of social reality and the limited resources available to scholars, it is helpful to establish some common assumptions, parameters, vocabularies, and conventions to facilitate a focused examination of selected aspects of that reality. These common understandings also enable adherents of research traditions to establish a consensus on what criteria might be appropriate for assessing the quality of research and for evaluating progress in a given field. Moreover, “creative confrontations”Footnote13 among rival scholarly traditions serve as models or foils that prod adherents of research traditions to apply concepts and theories to new arenas of research, demonstrating their relevance to substantive issues on which other traditions claim to have more insights to offer. For example, in international relations, realism initially provided a common conceptual apparatus for framing and investigating problems related to the outbreak of war, the formation of alliances, and the distribution of capabilities among states. Similarly, modernization theory in comparative politics provided a common framework for formulating questions and generating comparable data on the relationships between economic, social, and political change across vast expanses of time and space. In both instances, shared boundary conditions and theoretical vocabularies employed by adherents of a research tradition facilitated the production and assessment of new knowledge claims concerning new phenomena. Later, these arguments invited challenges and became foils for newer research traditions, as in the case of neoliberalism and constructivism in international relations or of rational-choice theory and historical institutionalism in comparative politics. Each of these newer traditions distinguished itself by distinct sets of foundational assumptions that facilitated the creation of new problematiques and new analytic frameworks that helped to expand the range of substantive arguments and the stocks of empirical knowledge in its respective field. To the extent that this stylized process is a reasonable representation of the changes that have occurred in the two subfields, it reveals why the emergence of, and competition between, research traditions can expand the fund of ideas, concepts, observations, and theories for a field. These intellectual benefits are valuable and should not be forfeited. However, they come at a high price in the absence of a counterweight in the form of eclectic modes of inquiry. Research traditions establish their identities and boundaries by insisting on a strong consensus on enduring and irreconcilable foundational issues. This, in turn, effectively privileges some concepts over others, rewards certain methodological norms and practices but not others, and places great weight on certain aspects of social reality while ignoring others. In fact, the battles among research traditions recur not because of hardened differences over substantive issues but over preexisting epistemic convictions about what kinds of social phenomena are amenable to social analysis, what kinds of questions are important to ask, and what kinds of processes and mechanisms are most likely to be relevant. Research traditions give themselves permission to bypass aspects of a complex reality that do not neatly fit within the metatheoretical parameters they have established by fiat. These aspects are either “blackboxed,” relegated to “context,” or treated as “exogenous.” Such simplifying moves, while helpful for the purpose of generating elegant knowledge claims about particular aspects of reality, are not independently capable of generating a more comprehensive understanding of complex, multi-faceted problems that interest scholars and policymakers alike. For this purpose, scholarly analysis needs to be more open-ended, proceeding from ontologies that, as Peter Hall notes, embrace “more extensive endogeneity and the ubiquity of complex interaction effects.”Footnote14 This is where analytic eclecticism has a distinctive role to play alongside, and in engagement with, different strands of scholarship embedded in multiple research traditions. Our defense of analytic eclecticism takes its cue from Albert Hirschman's famous observation: “ordinarily, social scientists are happy enough when they have gotten hold of one paradigm or line of causation. As a result, their guesses are often farther off the mark than those of the experienced politician whose intuition is more likely to take a variety of forces into account.” That is not to say that paradigms are not “useful for the apprehending of many elements” in the unfolding of large-scale social transformations; but, for Hirschman, the paradigm-focused social scientist tends to focus on only some forces and ignore others, thereby running the risk of “a particularly high degree of error.”Footnote15 Hirschman's position is not without empirical backing. In a study of judgmental accuracy under different modes of decision-making, Philip Tetlock has suggested that grossly inaccurate forecasts are more likely to result when experts behave like “intellectually aggressive hedgehogs,” relying on a single parsimonious approach to explain many things and depending excessively upon “powerful abstractions to organize messy facts and to distinguish the possible from the impossible.”Footnote16 Better forecasts are more likely when experts behave more like “eclectic foxes” who are able “to blend hedgehog arguments” and improvise ad hoc solutions in a rapidly changing world rather than becoming “anchored down by theory-laden abstractions.”Footnote17 More recently, Scott Page has argued that long-term progress and innovation are more likely when a society or group depends less on singular solutions offered by brilliant individuals or like-minded experts and instead pools together a broader range of ideas generated by diverse groups of people. Based on his studies of a wide range of social and institutional settings, Page contends: “collections of people with diverse perspectives and heuristics outperform collections of people who rely on homogeneous perspectives and heuristics.”Footnote18 In the context of Ancient Greece, Josiah Ober makes a similar observation in the process of analyzing how Athens emerged as the “preeminent Greek polis by a very substantial margin.” The key, Ober argues, was “the distinctive Athenian approach to the aggregation, alignment, and codification of useful knowledge … dispersed across a large and diverse population….”Footnote19 What all of these authors are suggesting in quite different ways is that, whatever the immediate intellectual payoffs of employing a particular approach, reliance on any one perspective involves tradeoffs that become increasingly costly in the absence of complementary and countervailing efforts to draw upon multiple and diverse approaches. Analytic eclecticism is such an effort, a means for social scientists to guard against the risks of excessive reliance on a single analytic framework and the simplifying assumptions that come with it.

### AT Perm Fails – “Coopts the Alternative”

#### The perm enables an eclectic understanding of resistance – this is possible even if the core theories of the aff and alt are inconsistent

Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein, 2010, Perspectives on Politics, “Analytic eclecticism in the study of world politics: reconfiguring problems and mechanisms across research traditions,” 8(2), 411-431, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/analytic-eclecticism-in-the-study-of-world-politics-reconfiguring-problems-and-mechanisms-across-research-traditions/B078D54DEFB199ADA653B7B35004EACF, mm

One area where we see efforts to broaden the scope of problems is the study of social movements. In the past, relative deprivation theory (e.g., Ted Gurr), macro-structuralist accounts (e.g., Theda Skocpol), resource mobilization theory (e.g., Charles Tilly), rational choice theory (e.g., Dennis Chong), opportunity-structure arguments (e.g., Sidney Tarrow), and “framing” approaches (e.g., Robert Benford and David Snow) have been presented as discrete traditions in the analysis of social movements.Footnote61 Although usually presented as competing perspectives, these approaches are organized around related but different questions, each focused on a different segment of the process whereby grievances ultimately lead to a transformation of the status quo. Relative deprivation and rational choice theories are primarily concerned with the process through which individual grievances are aggregated into collective protest. They focus, respectively, on the psychological dynamics and cost-benefit calculations that spur individuals to commit to risky forms of collective action. What antecedent conditions created the choice situations facing these actors and what factors are necessary for a movement to succeed are not problematized. Structuralist approaches focus on the question of the preconditions that make existing institutional and social structures vulnerable to contentious politics. In Skocpol's approach, for example, international competitive pressures and pressures applied by a restive peasantry combine to weaken the state and facilitate social revolution. The issue of why grievances arose among peasants is not pertinent to the problem as she formulates it. Approaches focused on resource mobilization and political opportunity center on the processes through which a social movement is capable of sustaining effective collective action within a given set of institutional constraints. These efforts do not offer an answer to the question of what structural conditions or individual motivations permit the emergence of collective action. In other words, none of these approaches is intended or able to address the broader problem of identifying where, whether, when, and how grievances produce transformations of the status quo. More recently, a number of scholars have sought to build more integrated frameworks intended to bridge different types of perspectives in order to generate a more comprehensive understanding of social movements.Footnote62 This move is not being driven by a desire for a synthetic grand theory. It is being driven by a recognition of the multiplicity of processes, at the structural and individual levels, that need to come together in order for grievances to be converted into protest behavior, and for protest actions to be aggregated into a social movement that can carry out its transformative agenda. Karl-Dieter Opp's “structural-cognitive” approach, for example, reformulates various macro approaches (e.g. stressing environmental conditions or political opportunity structures) and micro approaches (e.g. stressing incentives or cognitive framing) related to the process through which individual protest actions emerge, coalesce into collective protest, and transform the macro-structural conditions, including shifting opportunity structures.Footnote63 In effect, the scope of the problem has been widened to encompass more of the segments of the extended process through which initial conditions conducive to protest give rise to a transformation of the status quo. This does not suggest that the earlier studies of social movements are inconsequential or incorrect. Far from it. Precisely because these earlier studies yielded powerful insights into particular aspects and processes related to social movements, it makes sense to explore whether these insights can be integrated which, in turn, requires broader problems that subsume the specific aspects or processes targeted by existing traditions. Of course, a research tradition may make assumptions and impose boundary conditions that make sense for some types of questions but not for others. Indeed, the competition among traditions is often as much about which questions are more important as about the relative utility of particular concepts, mechanisms, or methods. For example, neorealism trained its sights on questions related to how the balance of power in a given setting affects the likelihood of conflict or stability. It did not initially concern itself with the main questions on which liberalism concentrated its attention: the extent of economic interdependence and its effect on the prospects for greater institutionalized cooperation among self-interested state actors. At the same time, realist principles can be reformulated in creative ways to shed light on how the distribution of power affects states' economic policies and the conduct of international economic relations.Footnote64 Similarly, the trade and conflict literature suggests that concepts and measures initially developed within neoliberal institutionalism to capture interdependence can be refined, reconstructed, and deployed to analyze the prospects of conflict in the international arena.Footnote65 Thus, there need not be a one-to-one correspondence between research traditions and the analytic problems that initially inspired them. In fact, these problems can be reformulated and combined insofar as they are connected to a common substantive dilemma in the world of policy and practice.

### AT Perm Fails – “Exclusionary/Reinforces Dominant IR”

#### The perm won’t reinforce dominant paradigms – eclecticism opens up space for marginalized views

Rudra Sil, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Analytic eclecticism - continuing the conversation,” 75(3):, mm

One thread running through all of the essays concerns the extent to which the framing of analytic eclecticism in Beyond Paradigms ends up referencing the three dominant paradigms in IR—the “triad” of realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Chernoff wonders whether we adopt too much of a Kuhnian view of paradigms in our treatment of empirical research in IR. Blanchard builds on a number of previously published critiques to argue that the benefit of eclecticism may be undercut by the emphasis on this “triad” at the expense of attention to other, less wellrepresented “isms” in the field. Similarly, Peet is troubled by the “exclusivity” implied in showcasing combinatorial frameworks that draw from some—but not other—research traditions. All three of these scholars in different ways wonder if the specification of analytic eclecticism in relation to the three dominant paradigms effectively diminishes the space for legitimate criticism. While the concerns raised by Chernoff, Blanchard, and Peet are reasonable and deserve to be taken seriously, they are hardly “damaging to the essence of the project,” as Chernoff, Cornut, and James suggest in their introduction, once the fundamental logic of analytic eclecticism is distinguished from the tactical choices about how to efficiently represent that logic in a book targeting the IR field. The more complex and generalized form of our argument appeared in our 2010 article in Perspectives on Politics, where the main case for analytic eclecticism neither depends on fully formed paradigms, nor is limited to the field of International Relations.2 Here, the problem is framed in terms of the limitations on analyses imposed by any framework founded on a fixed ontology and a fixed set of epistemological priors related to how best to analyze the complexity of social life. Such commitments, whether or not they evolve into defining features of two or three or however many paradigms, presumably enable researchers to train their sights on particular domains of social reality, particular levels of analysis, and particular kinds of mechanisms or variables—but with the risk that complex interactions and processes are overlooked.3 Thus, our underlying objective was always to create more space for scholars who may reverse this trade-off by eschewing the confining boundaries of any research tradition and more freely exploring connections between different kinds of social phenomena. In highlighting the intellectual payoffs of eclecticism, the exemplary works we referenced were drawn not only from IR, but also such fields as political economy, institutional theory, and social movement theory.4 More generally, we were inspired by—and drew liberally from—similar or complementary positions staked out in different fields by such diverse scholars as Albert Hirschman, Scott Page, and Philip Tetlock.5 In short, the core logic of analytic eclecticism was never meant to be tethered to any one discipline, let alone any specific set of paradigms. So, why, then, did we put so much stock in the “triad” in the book? First, the book was intended to be useful in advanced IR seminars still being organized around paradigms and interparadigm debates featuring (neo)realism, (neo)liberalism, and constructivism. Having laid out the more complex and generalized version of the argument in the article, in Beyond Paradigms we opted to foreground this familiar “triad” of dominant research traditions as an efficient and streamlined way to convey the logic and payoffs of eclecticism. In retrospect, perhaps we should have anticipated—and guarded against—the risk that this move might be (mis)interpreted as marginalizing alternative “isms.” Yet, our intention was precisely the opposite: to diminish the influence of the three big “isms” that we saw as disproportionately shaping research, teaching, hiring, and promotion in IR—as reflected in the 2009 version of the TRIP surveys.6 By de-centering the theoretical priors of the dominant paradigms, we hoped to create more space for not only eclectic scholarship but any research that was not “protected” (in Lakatosian terms) by one of these paradigms. This is why we specifically noted in the book that analytic eclecticism need not be limited to combinatorial approaches drawing from the “triad”: [A]nalytic eclecticism is conceptualized in this book in relation to realism, liberalism, and constructivism ... . In other countries, however, a number of other paradigms enjoy equal or greater visibility in international relations debates... [T]he English school, feminism, post-modernism, and Marxism all have a much broader following in Britain, Canada, and Australia than in the United States. On the European continent, hermeneutic and interpretive approaches are much more a part of the ‘mainstream’ than in the United States...In such settings, although the general logic of eclecticism still applies, what constitutes eclectic research practice would have to be redefined.7 If we were to rewrite the book now, we might adopt a different strategy for capturing the logic and role of analytic eclecticism. The most recent TRIP surveys suggest that fewer scholars design their research to conform to a single IR paradigm than was the case a decade ago. And as Chernoff notes, even those who work within a given research tradition, do so less because of rigid adherence to foundational principles than because their empirical questions focus attention on the kinds of variables analyzed in that tradition. At the same time, whether or not a scholar conforms to an established paradigm, the process of formulating a research problem and designing a study can still involve (often unstated) metatheoretical commitments that tend to a priori place disproportionate significance on certain kinds of variables or mechanisms. Perhaps this broader point became somewhat blurred when we opted to foreground the triad as much as we did in the book, even if we did this for illustrative purposes. What we hoped would stand the test of time is not our case for eclecticism vis-a`-vis any specific set of IR paradigms, but our broader rationale for a more open-ended and inclusive field that does not a priori stipulate what questions are most significant, what approaches are most valuable, and what factors need to be prioritized in our analyses. Such a stance is hardly inconsistent with the postures struck by Peet and Blanchard, despite their discomfort with the attention we pay to the “triad.” Looking ahead, we would gladly integrate elements drawn from less mainstream approaches. As Blanchard notes, such an approach would indeed extend the promise of a “theoretical multilingualism” we had set out to promote. In this context, we would not only be amenable to but welcome a more expansive articulation of analytic eclecticism, including one incorporating an intersectional perspective, as Peet forcefully proposes. Importantly, we do not see such a move as necessitating a fundamental reconceptualization of the core logic of analytic eclecticism. It may, however, require a more self-conscious effort to resist the temptation to either dismiss the findings in paradigm-bound research or throw everything but the kitchen sink at every imaginable puzzle.

### AT Perm Fails – “Focus on Policy Relevance Bad”

#### Focusing on policy relevance does not trade off with critical analysis

Rudra Sil, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Analytic eclecticism - continuing the conversation,” 75(3):, mm

In gesturing toward pragmatism’s emphasis on the consequences of knowledge claims for action, we were also highlighting the potential role of analytic eclecticism in bringing scholarly research closer to the messiness of the real world as encountered by policy-makers and other actors. We felt that if scholars were less invested in recurrent interparadigm debates and less likely to speak past one another as a result of their uncritical acceptance of certain theoretical priors, then they might be more open to puzzles that bore some resemblance to the messy choice situations and practical dilemmas confronting real-world actors. Importantly, we did not think of these actors as limited to national or international policy-makers, but also ordinary individuals and communities contending with everyday choice situations in the midst of the multitude of forces that constituted their respective “lifeworlds.” In retrospect, I wonder whether this important nuance was not articulated clearly or fully in our limited discussion of “policy relevance.” In revisiting this issue, I would wish to be more explicit about the link between analytic eclecticism and three distinct notions of “real-world” relevance: research that is policy serving in the sense that it offers prescriptions for governmental decision-makers pursuing set agendas; research that seeks to intervene in policy debates and re-examine assumptions underlying a given policy position; and research that bears on the everyday encounters and choices of ordinary actors as experienced in their respective environments. My preference would be for eclectic scholars to liberally pursue the latter two forms of policy relevance while being more cautious with respect to the first. Expanding the scope for dialogue between academics and policy-makers is potentially a good thing, as is the need to create more space for puzzles and arguments that reflect more of the messy and complex challenges faced by actors in the real world. But, in the process, scholars need not uncritically accept given policy elites’—or any actors’—agendas and assumptions; nor should they hesitate to leverage the distinctive skill sets and intellectual commitments that feed into their choice of profession and areas of expertise. With further elaboration of the above qualifications, I believe it is possible to narrow the gap that Blanchard perceives between the deployment of analytic eclecticism to address real-world problems and policy debates and the position of those who, like Anne Norton (cf. Blanchard), are fearful of scholarly endeavours developed in the service of agendas being pursued by those in power. But, does ethics have a place in all this? It certainly should, according to Blanchard’s discussion of the role of critical scholars (whom he sees us as having undervalued) and Peet’s discussion of the centrality of “moral responsibility” in the work of Jane Addams and feminist pragmatists. Others, too, have questioned whether analytic eclecticism is sufficiently attentive to normative forms of reasoning that are part of international life.20 Looking back, I see that the term “ethics” appears nowhere in either Beyond Paradigms or our article in Perspectives on Politics. The term “normative” fares slightly better, making a fleeting appearance in the introductory and concluding chapters. In the conclusion, for example, we note that analytic eclecticism is, in part, designed “to grapple with problems that are not only theoretically interesting but also have normative and practical significance for decision-makers and the wider public.”21

### AT Perm Fails – “Footnoting/Incompatible Methods”

#### The permutation doesn’t footnote the alternative – eclecticism can find common ground among seemingly incompatible ideas

Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein, 2010, Perspectives on Politics, “Analytic eclecticism in the study of world politics: reconfiguring problems and mechanisms across research traditions,” 8(2), 411-431, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/analytic-eclecticism-in-the-study-of-world-politics-reconfiguring-problems-and-mechanisms-across-research-traditions/B078D54DEFB199ADA653B7B35004EACF, mm

Importantly, the accommodation of analytic eclecticism does not imply the marginalization of scholarship embedded in research traditions. The value added by analytic eclecticism depends after all upon demonstrating how different sorts of findings and mechanisms emerging from existing research practices can be reconceptualized and integrated as elements of more complex explananda. Analytic eclecticism's distinctive utility stems from its awareness of the strengths and tradeoffs of the approaches employed by existing traditions, and from its recognition of the particular intellectual gains generated by these traditions in relation to substantive problems. In fact, what keeps analytic eclecticism from devolving into a perspective in which “everything matters” is the presumption that the analyses produced within research traditions are valuable for the purpose of identifying many of the factors that are likely to matter most. The objective of analytic eclecticism is to uncover how these factors matter in relation to specific research questions, not to generate an ever-expanding list of all imaginable causal factors that can influence world politics. Eclectic scholarship that is inattentive to theories embedded in research traditions runs the risk of missing important insights, reinventing the wheel, or producing analyses that appear idiosyncratic or unintelligible to other scholars. The distinctiveness of analytic eclecticism arises from its effort to specify how elements of different causal stories might coexist as part of a more complex argument that bears on problems of interest to both scholars and practitioners. This requires engaging and utilizing, not displacing, the well-organized research efforts undertaken by committed adherents of various traditions. Of course, when drawing upon theories or narratives developed in competing research traditions, there is the danger of theoretical incoherence linked to the problem of incommensurability across traditions. The incommensurability thesis, as articulated by Paul Feyerabend among others, argues that the concepts, terms, and standards used in one theoretical approach, because they are formulated on the basis of distinct assumptions about knowledge in the context of distinct theoretical vocabularies, are not interchangeable with those used in another theoretical approach.Footnote20 Thus, an eclectic theory drawing upon research traditions founded on competing ontological and epistemological principles can produce an artificial homogenization of incompatible perspectives along with a host of unrecognized conceptual problems that subvert the aims of the theory.Footnote21 We recognize that much care needs to be taken to ensure that the relevant concepts, terms, and indicators employed in different research traditions are properly understood and translated before they are brought into an integrated analytic framework. The problem of incommensurability represents a challenge, but there are two reasons we see this challenge as less serious than assumed. First, as Donald Davidson, Hilary Putnam and others have argued, there do exist possibilities for translation and redefinition. Putnam employs the parallel to languages to argue: “if the thesis were really true, then we could not translate other languages—or even past stages of our own language—at all.”Footnote22 In fact, Feyerabend himself was primarily concerned with the idea of neutral testing protocols that could be invoked to compare different types of theories; he neither viewed incommensurability as implying untranslatability nor assumed that translatability was a precondition for theory comparison. Second, when social science theories embedded in paradigms take on substantive research questions, they ultimately rely on empirical referents to operationalize various concepts, variables, and mechanisms. This provides one avenue through which specific elements of a causal story within one research tradition can be juxtaposed, reconceptualized, and possibly combined with elements of a causal story in a different tradition. It is also possible to break down competing explanatory logics into elemental segments in such a way that they become “abstractly compatible, such that we could imagine a world in which all were operating while we debate how much variants of each contributed to any given action.”Footnote23 This implies that it may be possible to temporarily separate metatheoretical postulates from specific substantive claims or interpretations so as to enable direct comparison between, and greater integration across, the entire range of causal stories that aim to address similar or related empirical phenomena.Footnote24 In any case, the challenge of establishing equivalence among concepts and mechanisms across research traditions is only somewhat greater than that of doing so across diverse strands of research traditions, once we consider that many of the key metaphysical divides in the social sciences—for example, between objectivism/subjectivism; nominalism/realism; materialism/idealism; or agency/structure—have proven to be “fractal distinctions,”Footnote25 structuring narrower debates within competing traditions. The challenge may be greater when traveling across traditions, but it is not insurmountable if proper care is taken to consider the premises upon which specific analytic components are operationalized in relation to the empirical world.

### AT Perm Fails – “Incompatible Methods”

#### Prefer pluralism – incorporating multiple theories of IR is complementary rather than conflictual

David Lake, June 2011, “Why ‘isms’ are evil: theory, epistemology, and academic sects as impediments to understanding and progress,” International Studies Quarterly, 55(2), 465-480, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23019696?seq=1, mm

Our duty as scholars is to enhance understanding of the world and, if possible, to identify levers that when manipulated can facilitate progress toward more humane and normatively desirable ends. Society privileges us as academics with a relatively prosperous and certainly desirable lifestyle so that we can add to the stock of human knowledge and, hopefully, provide some insight into how to improve social life. Most important, society—or at least, Western society entrusts us with the power to organize our professional lives and our academic inquiries in any way that we, as scholars, think appropriate. We are a genuinely self-regulating profession both in what constitutes knowledge and in how we define and create incentives for professional success. In this essay, I probe some tensions between our professional practices in the field of international studies and the quality of our professional output. We are not giving society what it deserves, not only in terms of policy-relevant research where the "the gap" is of long-standing (George 1993). We are not giving society what it deserves even in terms of basic theoretical and empirical knowledge about world politics, a domain that we as scholars claim as our own. My critique of our profession is a common one, but one worth repeating. Most generally, we organize ourselves into academic "sects" that engage in self-affirm-ing research and then wage theological debates between academic religions. This occurs at both the level of theory and epistemology. In turn, we reward those who stake out extreme positions within each sect. Unfortunately, this academic sectarianism, a product of our own internal political struggles, produces less understanding rather than more. Some reasonably fear intellectual "monocul-tures," as McNamara (2009) has called the possible hegemony of rationalism. But the current cacophony is not a sign of productive intellectual ferment in the pursuit of meaningful knowledge.2 Rather, we have produced a clash of compet-ing theologies each claiming its own explanatory "miracles" and asserting its universal truth and virtue. Instead, a large measure of intellectual humility is in order. Theoretically, we are far from the holy grail of a universal theory of international politics—if indeed such a grail even exists. We should focus instead on developing contin-gent, mid-level theories of specific phenomena. This analytical eclecticism is likely to be more productive (Sil and Katzenstein 2010). But we also need a lexi-con for translating otherwise incommensurable theories and making them mutu-ally intelligible. In the following section, I outline the problems with theoretical sects and affirm the case for analytic eclecticism. I then end with one possible "Rosetta stone" that aims to facilitate conversation across research traditions by suggesting that all theories of international studies can be disaggregated into the basic and common concepts of interests, interactions, and institutions. Epistemologically, there is perhaps an even deeper divide that is, unfortu-nately, not so easily bridged. The nomothetic vs narrative divide cuts through all of the social sciences and possibly beyond. This divide endures because scholars—either innately or through socialization—find one form of explanation more intellectually satisfying than the other. Yet, in international studies, we have reified this divide and, as with our theories, have formed mutually exclusive churches. Rather than claiming one or the other epistemology is always and everywhere superior, we should recognize that both are valid and perhaps even complementary paths to understanding. The question is not which approach is inherently superior, but which yields greater insights under what circumstances. The second major section below takes up epistemology and its consequences for professional practice and knowledge.

#### Ontological and epistemological differences to not preclude the permutation – the alternative can still be combined with the plan without coopting their scholarship

P. Katzenstein and Rudra Sil, 2008, Oxford Handbook of International Relations, “Eclectic Theorizing in the Study and Practice of International Relations,” https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287914880\_Eclectic\_Theorizing\_in\_the\_Study\_and\_Practice\_of\_International\_Relations, mm

It is true that moving between research traditions founded on competing ontological and epistemological principles runs some risk of introducing conceptual fuzziness (Johnson 2002). However, as Ted Hopf (forthcoming) notes, the analytic foundations of a given tradition may not be as far apart as is often assumed, and these foundations can be adjusted or bracketed so as to enable the translation, comparison, and integration of substantive theories and narratives developed in different research traditions. So long as there is clarity with regard to concepts and definitions, differences in metatheoretical postulates do not inherently preclude recognition of complementarities and linkages in substantive processes in international life, even if these are normally represented in distinct theoretical vocabularies and cast at different levels of analysis (Sil 2000a; 2004; Katzenstein and Sil 2004; Parsons 2007). Eclectic approaches cannot ignore or substitute for the intellectual products generated within separate traditions. However, by expanding the repertoire of assumptions, analytic tools, theoretical concepts, methodological devices, and empirical data, analytic eclecticism allows for the development of complex explanations that reveal how different kinds of causal mechanisms and processes might relate to each other.

### AT Perm Fails – “Pragmatism Bad”

#### The perm’s deployment of pragmatism is neither rigid nor fixed – it is simply a starting point for analyzing competing theories

Rudra Sil, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Analytic eclecticism - continuing the conversation,” 75(3):, mm

Yet, what some see as a dismissive posture with respect to metatheory is actually a metatheoretical proposition: that rigid adherence to foundational positions can become—in Hirschman’s words—“a hindrance to understanding.”13 What we reject is not metatheory but the tight coupling of theoretical arguments with a fixed set of foundational principles that might preclude a more expansive, openended exploration of the interconnectedness of different social forces, essentially turning the incommensurability thesis into a self-fulfilling prophesy. This is why we propose only the temporary bracketing of select metatheoretical postulates as a way to illuminate new analytic possibilities that might be otherwise dismissed out of hand on the basis of fixed epistemological commitments.14 We see a fruitful eclectic scholarship as not ignoring metatheory but engaging with it in a creative and flexible manner. In fact, a search for the term “metatheory” in Beyond Paradigms yields no fewer than thirty references. Moreover, many of these appear in passages explicitly noting that useful eclectic theorizing requires careful consideration of metatheory! We argue in our introduction to the book: increased receptiveness to non-paradigmatic scholarship makes it all the more necessary to think carefully and systematically about what kinds of metatheoretical reformulations and research strategies are most likely to produce useful, coherent eclectic alternatives to theories put forward by the established paradigms.15 Having said that, we do understand and even share Chernoff’s worry that a discipline overrun by eclecticists might eventually come to totally ignore metatheory. This is precisely why, in the conclusion of the book, we remind readers that “eclecticism offers a pragmatic way of getting on with the work of understanding the world, but also requires us to reflect back on existing theoretical perspectives and metatheoretical foundations.”16 Our concern for metatheory is also evident in the pains we take to establish a connection between analytic eclecticism and pragmatism—another move that some have raised concerns about. Let me first note that we are neither interested in offering an authoritative reformulation of pragmatism, nor suggesting that eclectic scholarship is the only or best way to translate pragmatist principles into a comprehensive research strategy in IR. We embrace pragmatism precisely because it offers a set of philosophical positions that allows for a flexible yet recognizable common platform for launching different kinds of eclectic analyses on a wide range of questions. Pragmatism represents a comfortable stance that engages a number of important metatheoretical issues but without rigid adherence to the kinds of foundational postulates upon which established research traditions have been constructed.17 Of course, pragmatist philosophy encompasses a great many principles, not all of which sit comfortably with analytic eclecticism. Peet worries that the pragmatist ideal of a “universal common category” tends to encourage a push for consensus that undercuts the pluralistic impulse of eclectic scholarship. It is worth noting that we make no mention of a “universal common category” among the pragmatist ideals we link to analytic eclecticism. Indeed, even if this ideal holds some significance in the abstract for pragmatism writ large, it is often assigned less weight relative to other features of pragmatism. Our conceptualization of analytic eclecticism, which we emphatically distinguish from the construction of a universal synthetic approach, puts more stock in what pragmatism has to say about fallibilism, dialogue, and the experimental redeployment of pieces of knowledge in light of new experiences and changing situations.18 To the extent that any program of action requires some prior consensus, we stress the need for an inclusive process of negotiating this consensus. Moreover, drawing upon fallibilism, we see any consensus as little more than a tentative, fleeting agreement to permit resolution of a specific problem at a particular time and place. This move hardly necessitates what Peet calls a “static view of categories,” and it certainly does not preclude critical discussion and reassessment in light of evolving conditions and alternative knowledge claims.

## Neg – AT Analytic Eclecticism

### Perm Fails – Reinforces Dominant Theories of IR

#### The perm fails – it is not an authentic attempt at analytic eclecticism. The attempt to tack our alternative onto the plan reinforces dominant discourses in IR

Eric Blanchard, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Combing the same beach: analytic eclecticism and the challenge of theoretical multilingualism ,” 75(3): 404-419, mm

If analytic eclecticism is to successfully engage post-positivist research, it must continue to engage in debates over “reflexivity,” debates which have been mostly confined to the field’s dissident periphery. But to do so, it will have to more fully engage the “double hermeneutic,” which denotes the “slippage”—between the meaningful frames of lay actors on the one hand and the metalanguages of social scientists on the other—that a researcher will encounter while practising social science.47 Meaning is imposed doubly, by the objects of research upon the relevant events situated in their own context and by the researchers. This is challenging to forms of triad scholarship modelled on natural sciences, which, being concerned with unreflective physical objects and a world that “does not answer back,” need neither take into account the self-interpretations of the people being studied nor weigh the researchers’ self-interpretations, as do the social sciences. Eclecticism will also have to navigate myriad conceptions of “reflexivity” and, as Michael Lynch suggests, there is “a confusing array of reflexivities” but “no single way to be, or not to be, reflexive.”48 In IR, reflexivity has been deployed to signal the self-conscious situating of a researcher in their research, attending to the premises of one’s process of theorizing and researching (including one’s cultural-political prejudices), the submission of favoured theories to contextualization and historical reflection, and recognition of how analytic and data-gathering choices condition the data produced, among other definitions.49 Though variously conceived, reflexivity is a key value commitment of non-triad research traditions in IR. Constructivists Audie Klotz and Cecelia Lynch urge that scholars recognize the inevitability of “bias,” yet “strive to be self-aware, in order to understand the moral and methodological implications of our choices.”50 Patrick Thaddeus Jackson argues that the recognition that methodology is “complicit in the production and reproduction of the world” commits the scholar who wants to research this world to reflexivity, “an awareness of how the habits and experiences that one is bringing to bear on a situation shape and construct that situation.”51 Feminist IR theory offers perhaps the most sustained reflection on reflexivity and IR research. For example, Ackerly, Stern, and True place reflexivity, which they define as the continual re-interrogation of one’s own scholarship, at the core of the feminist approach to methodology.52 Following the work of Sandra Harding and others, Ann Tickner describes feminist reflexivity as a posture that recasts the relationship between researcher and subject, attends to related power disparities, and resists the assumption of scholarly detachment.53 Thus, eclecticists must be willing not only to countenance a broad rejection of the belief in any transcendent, universally valid knowledge,54 but also to open their own scholarly practices up to scrutiny and consider their own normative influences. As Cai Wilkinson observes, since reflexivity cannot “be retrospectively bolted on to our research” analytic eclectics can start from an “explicit articulation of how the research was actually done, why and with what effects for the resulting interpretation that is presented.”55 Reflexivity may prompt a variety of reappraisals regarding the ways scholars are bound up in the production of knowledge about climate change. Directed at institutions, reflexive attitudes may inspire us to inquire into the funding sources of the modern university system, colonized as it is by corporate sponsorship of academic institutions and foundations funded by energy extractive industries with a pronounced “interest in staving off any government action on climate change and weakening environmental safeguards.”56 Individual-level approaches to scholarly reflexivity are diverse and defy summary, but Heather A. Smith’s work is illustrative. Writing in a post-positivist feminist vein, Smith presents Indigenous voices and ways of knowing, which, she argues, disrupt the “global” discourse of climate change in a way so as not to colonize or exoticize their discourse while at the same time flagging the contested and political nature of the term “Indigenous.” Smith further emphasizes how un-reflexive scholarly practices can reinforce dominant discourses, seen for example in discussions of climate inequality that ignore Indigenous peoples from the global North.57

### Perm Fails – Pragmatism Bad

#### The pragmatic nature of the permutation renders power relations invisible which reinforces the dominant norms of IR

Jessica Peet, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Eclecticism or exclusivity? The (critical) pragmatist ethos of (intersectional) analytic eclecticism,” 75(3): 420-432, mm

Analytic eclecticism holds significant promise for IR. However, as it is currently conceptualized, analytic eclecticism falls short of resulting in eclectic research. Instead, it has the opposite effect, reinforcing the hold of mainstream paradigms on the field. Why does analytic eclecticism fall short of its emancipatory promise? In this article, I trace this contradictory effect to the pragmatist ethos underlying analytic eclecticism. The internal contradiction begins with the pragmatist tenets Sil and Katzenstein lay out. These tenets rely on a popular—but uncritical—understanding of pragmatism, one that fails to account for power.15 This foundation is especially problematic as it makes invisible the disciplinary power dynamics which reify and are reified in the privileging of the dominant theoretical triad in IR.16 Given this contradictory outcome, can analytic eclecticism’s promise of liberating scholarship from paradigmatic boundaries still be achieved? Perhaps, but not without a critical ethos.

### Perm Fails - Ethics DA / Policing DA

#### Their permutation can’t capture the ethical orientation of the alternative – their method’s insistence on “policy relevance” is an act of disciplinary policing

Eric Blanchard, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Combing the same beach: analytic eclecticism and the challenge of theoretical multilingualism ,” 75(3): 404-419, mm

Christian Reus-Smit has argued that Sil and Katzenstein’s epistemologically “empirical-theoretic project” is not equipped to deal with normative reflection and thus unable to produce the kind of practical knowledge that can “animate social and political action.”71 This lack of “systematic reflection on values,”72 according to Reus-Smit, hobbles analytic eclecticism’s efforts to produce policy-relevant knowledge as it intends, in the spirit of Aristotelian phronesis. Relatedly, an avowed concern with ethics is never far from the top of the intellectual priority list of many non-triad scholars. For instance, feminist IR approaches to research methods place ethics among epistemology, ontology, and choice of method as primary elements of a definition of methodology.73 Constructivists Klotz and Lynch recognize what they see as the unavoidable ethical dimension of constructivist scholarship, though they warn “against translating ethical assumptions into particular tools of analysis” and against granting any particular method the “moral high ground.”74 Ethical motivations are certainly not the monopoly of critical scholars, but this community tends to foreground ethical concerns in its publications more prominently than realist, liberal, and causal-oriented constructivists. Sil and Katzenstein’s discussion of ethics (in their review of the work of Hoffmann and Finnemore) is scattered, lacks focus, and could be enriched through dialogue with non-triad approaches.75 This is not to say it will be easy to surface ethics in the eclectic analytic heuristic. The urgency of climate change clearly raises enormous ethical issues: intergenerational responsibilities, the morality of population growth, the commitment to exuberant consumption and carbon-intensive transportation practices, and obligations to (distant) humans and non-human life, to name a few. Generally, the commitments of the dominant paradigms of IR, with their group-centric power politics and free-trade-centred pursuit of progress, sit uneasily with the range of anthropocentric and ecocentric approaches to environmental ethics. Burke et al. suggest we develop an ethics of climate change, one worthy of the unprecedented challenge, one that goes beyond “visions of the good life” to address “the goodness of life itself.”76 At a more modest scale, ethical approaches to climate change scholarship align with reflexive postures that acknowledge and foreground researcher positionality and entail giving respectful voice to marginalized peoples and impacted positions. Given the demand for ethics in a chaotic present and uncertain future, non-triad approaches are arguably better placed to cultivate the necessary ethical imagination or identify the constitution of nascent planetary identities, but they certainly complicate the picture we have of climate change beyond states and markets, geopolitics, and public goods, making the boundaries of policy relevancy particularly salient. Critical and post-positivist scholars might naturally be suspicious of the eclectic project, directed at climate change or as a general program, if it seems to reify existing power-laden disciplinary structures by policing the borders of legitimate scholarship. This particular emphasis on power relates to a possible post-positivist concern with the eclectic impulse toward policy relevance. Recall Sil and Katzenstein’s argument that the value-added of eclecticism involves relating research to ordinary actors and policy-makers. Sil and Katzenstein suspect the “compartmentalization of knowledge” prohibits the beneficial sharing of insights that address real-world dilemmas. Yet a move toward policy relevance as a criterion for research may strike many who self-identify outside of the mainstream as political and even disciplining. Steve Smith argues that when “one party announces that approaches have to be policy relevant, [it is] usually defined as relevant for activities of the state. Dismissing work as being irrelevant to policy choices is a powerful disciplining device.”77 This issue evokes further discussion of the ethics of useful knowledge, of its “relevance” (to the state? to ordinary or marginal people? to whom?) and intelligibility. From Sil and Katzenstein’s text, it seems eclecticism emphasizes an appeal to policy-makers more than “ordinary actors,” but this need not be the case. Feminist IR scholars, for example, can argue that their theories and scholarship, developed in close consultation and interaction with real-world activists, policy-makers, and ordinary women, does not “sit on the sidelines” and suffers no such relevance deficit (witness titanic efforts to theorize “gender mainstreaming” in global governance, attention to rape in warfare and other forms of sexual violence, and projects to enable women by making them “productive” in the global economy).

### Perm Fails – Exclusion DA

#### Exclusion DA – Consensus is not always possible - forcing the alternative to coexist with the plan fosters inclusionary violence and inevitably excludes the voices of the oppressed

Jessica Peet, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Eclecticism or exclusivity? The (critical) pragmatist ethos of (intersectional) analytic eclecticism,” 75(3): 420-432, mm

At first glance, pragmatism seems to provide an appropriate foundation for analytic eclecticism. Pragmatism’s investment in consensus combined with its recognition that knowledge is discursive and social—and thus open to reformulation—provides an alternative perspective to IR’s tendencies to understand knowledge as either the product of objective rationalism or subjective interpretivism. Where specific theoretical paradigms choose one approach or the other, pragmatism advocates the utility of both derivations. Thus, in theory, a pragmatist ethos allows eclectic research to sidestep metatheoretical debates and the challenges inherent in combining opposing perspectives.18 In practice, by not acknowledging the power dynamics which shape these controversies in disciplinary IR,19 a pragmatist ethos can have the effect of (re)producing the status quo, privileging rationalism, positivism, and the dominant theoretical triad. This inattention to power, generally, and the disciplinary power dynamics of epistemological difference, specifically, can be linked to pragmatism’s investment in universalism. Universalism, or the belief in a common category or position salient across theoretical traditions, enables multiple perspectives to be combined without fear of incommensurability, an issue that Fred Chernoff addresses in more detail in his contribution to this forum.20 Yet, by assuming that a universal category exists, pragmatism actually simplifies complex issues. Moreover, this focus on a universal category privileges that category as most important, marginalizing the relevance of other categories along with their potential explanatory power. This marginalization directly counters analytic eclecticism’s goal of attending to complexity and bringing diverse approaches to the forefront. This investment in universalism also brings about a static view of categories. Universal categories are identified by their similarities, which are fixed and unchanging across time and theoretical tradition. Sil and Katzenstein identify the substantive referent (i.e., the research problem) to be the universal category, arguing that the research problem is not dependent on the theoretical approach(es) being employed. However, to identify a common category among different approaches, it must be determined a priori what similarities are to be contained within that category. Thus, for any determination to be made, artificial boundaries must be imposed upon the referent so that it can be identified. But imposing constructed boundaries upon the referent works to simplify the problem, which again contravenes the goals of analytic eclecticism. Pragmatism also provides a questionable foundation for analytic eclecticism because it tends to privilege consensus over difference.21 Achieving consensus renders dynamic and complex interactions among and within categories invisible. This both undermines the spirit of eclecticism and ignores the wider power dynamics that shape the field. Consensus is not always possible. Sometimes commonality cannot be found because no universal category or position exists, and forcing commonality can breed violences of inclusion.22 Gayatri Spivak famously argues that the subaltern is rendered mute (and therefore can neither speak nor be heard) because of the complexities of finding consensus between the position of the subaltern and that of the oppressor.23 Achille Mbembe argues that the illusion of consensus across wide power differentials is only possible in conditions of extreme violence perpetrated on those at the lower end of those differentials.24 Taken together, these problems show how eclectic theorizing functions to exclude. Investment in consensus and universality inhibits the visibility of (disciplinary) power dynamics, even though they are central to shaping what is considered universal and who is considered part of any consensus produced by analytic eclecticism. When conceptualized with this kind of ethos, analytic eclecticism will always have exclusive effects because it lacks the tools to recognize or correct its own exclusivity. To achieve inclusivity, these foundations must be challenged.

### Perm Fails – Footnoting DA

#### Footnoting DA – the perm fails since it only emphasizes dominant IR, rendering the alt ineffective

Eric Blanchard, 2020, International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis, “Combing the same beach: analytic eclecticism and the challenge of theoretical multilingualism ,” 75(3): 404-419, mm

The promise of eclecticism as a facilitator of scholarly communication, however, is limited by Sil and Katzenstein’s decision to limit its scope to realism, liberalism, and constructivism without giving sustained consideration to the wide range of potentially eclectic approaches to world politics. The authors justify limiting the purview of their pluralist project to the triad by arguing these represent the “most prevalent approaches in the United States and worldwide.”35 However, as Cornut has noted, this choice opens Sil and Katzenstein to charges “of using problem-driven pragmatism to appear more pluralist while creating strict disciplinarian boundaries that render challenges to the mainstream illegitimate.”36 Since a partial pluralism is ultimately self-defeating, it makes sense to promote Sil and Katzenstein’s stated efforts to produce a “greater scope for deliberation among a more inclusive community of inquirers”37 by involving as many outsiders as possible who roughly fit the three main commitments (noted above). Limiting the relevant paradigms to those currently dominant also misses an opportunity to interact with a set of interlocutors ignored in the original formulation of eclecticism. Ten years after the publication of Beyond Paradigms, eclecticism has the opportunity to live up to its communicative promise by engaging the products of a maturing methodological turn in critical approaches to IR and Political Science. There are a number of excellent works addressing research design, argument, and metatheory in IR and Political Science that include consideration of non-triad approaches within the framework of philosophy of social science.38 In addition, there exists a first generation of high-quality methodological primers on what it means to engage in the practice of critical research produced by authors working under the banners of interpretivism, constructivism, feminism, post-structuralism, and political theory.39 This literature is remarkable in that it emanates from traditions that had long resisted the imperatives of systematization, methodologism, and scientism, recognizing the negative effects that adherence to standardized cannons or procedures can have on scholarship.40