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Decentring Western Narratives of International Relations in Research and Teaching: Problems, Progress and Prospects

Thursday, 18 June 2020 17:00 (1h 30m)

Can International Relations (IR) be considered properly global if it remains dominated by Western-centric narratives and epistemologies? The Global IR agenda has sought to address this question in recent years by suggesting that a foregrounding of local, 'non-Western' perspectives and knowledges can diversify and decolonise the discipline. However, while this is an important and overdue endeavour in principle, practical challenges remain in its implementation in both research and teaching. The four papers in this panel interrogate some of these challenges and suggest new ways for taking Global IR forward both in and beyond the West. The papers variously present a framework for researching social context in the production of knowledge, track the divergence of conceptual meanings across different sites of IR knowledge production, explore the challenges involved in pursuing a Global IR agenda beyond the West, and consider the question of how to account for non-Western agency. Together, the papers provide an empirical and epistemological interrogation of some of the central problems involved in decentring the West in International Relations and, we hope, provide new perspectives and ways forward.

Track Classification: International Relations as a Social Science Working Group