Three Pluralisms: Theories, Methodologies, and Levels of Analysis in the Study of World Politics

Lucas M. Dolan
Hamline University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/dhp

Part of the International Relations Commons, Philosophy of Science Commons, and the Political Theory Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/dhp/27

This Honors Project is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Liberal Arts at DigitalCommons@Hamline. It has been accepted for inclusion in Departmental Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Hamline. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@hamline.edu.
Three Pluralisms: Theories, Methodologies, and Levels of Analysis in the Study of World Politics

Lucas M. Dolan

An Honors Thesis
Submitted for partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with honors in Political Science from Hamline University

12/01/2014
Abstract

For much of its history, the discourse of International Relations (IR) has been characterized by clashes between paradigms, exclusion of non-positivist research methodologies, and the marginalization of various subfields. Since the fourth debate “pluralism” is rapidly becoming a buzzword within the literature, but without serious conceptual analysis “pluralism” risks becoming another intellectual fad given lip-service but not engaged with in a way that could produce positive change within the discipline. This paper examines three varieties of pluralism: theoretical, methodological, and pluralism of level of analysis. A brief intellectual history of pluralism in international relations is outlined, culminating in the works of Sil and Katzenstein (2010) and Jackson (2011). These works exemplify theoretical and methodological pluralism, respectively. The major novel contribution of this paper is in exploring the prospects of pluralism at the level of analysis. In many respects, a wall of separation still exists between the mainstream, structural approaches to IR and the actor-specific approach of foreign policy analysis (FPA). The paper presents evidence that much of the mutual animosity between FPA and IR is due to diverging understandings of the agent-structure problem. In particular, confused notions of influential IR scholar’s Kenneth Waltz’s views on this issue lead both IR and FPA scholars to misunderstand their relation to one another. This paper offers a way past “the specter of Waltz” and towards a more constructive and engaged relationship between IR and FPA. An attempt is then made at illustrating how the discussions of pluralism within the IR literature can be applied to FPA; indeed, many of these ideas have been floating around the FPA literature for several years. By advocating pluralism and resolving abstract, unnecessary, and unproductive debates, this paper aims to contribute to the task of building a framework for IR that is at once more theoretically rigorous and practically relevant.
Table of Contents

Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 4

Chapter One: IR at the Crossroads ........................................................................................................... 8
  Great Debates ........................................................................................................................................ 8
  Development of Pluralism in IR .............................................................................................................. 13
  Pragmatism in International Relations ................................................................................................. 19
  Pluralism as a Philosophy ...................................................................................................................... 24

Chapter Two: Analytic Eclecticism as Theoretical Pluralism .................................................................. 30
  Hopes Yet Unrealized ............................................................................................................................. 30
  Defining and Identifying Analytic Eclecticism ...................................................................................... 32
  A Bold New Landscape .......................................................................................................................... 34
    Fig 2.1 ................................................................................................................................................ 39
    Fig 2.2 ................................................................................................................................................ 40
  Analytic Eclecticism as an Expression of the “Pluralist Stance” .......................................................... 44
  Room to Expand Beyond Analytic Eclecticism ..................................................................................... 46

Chapter Three: Methodological Pluralism in Jackson ............................................................................ 48
  Jackson’s Vocabulary, Typology, and the Meaning of “Science” .......................................................... 48
    Fig. 3.1 ................................................................................................................................................ 49
  Separating Paradigm and Methodology—A New Typology ................................................................. 52
    Fig. 3.2 ................................................................................................................................................ 53
    Fig. 3.3 ................................................................................................................................................ 62
  How Does This Stand With Eclecticism? Theory Integration and Religious Dialogue ....................... 64

Chapter Four: Level of Analysis Pluralism and the IR-FPA Relationship ................................................. 73
  Valerie Hudson and the “Ground of IR” ............................................................................................... 76
  The Specter of Waltz ............................................................................................................................ 81
  Enter Beasley and Kaarbo: Towards a Sustainable IR-FPA Relationship ............................................ 91
  Prospects for Eclecticism and Methodological Pluralism .................................................................. 96

Chapter Five: Prospectus for Pluralism ................................................................................................... 113
  The Three Pluralisms ............................................................................................................................ 113
  Implications for Teaching and Learning .............................................................................................. 118
  Works Cited ......................................................................................................................................... 123
Introduction

“In this present hour I wish to illustrate the pragmatic method by one more application. I wish to turn its light upon the ancient problem of ‘the one and the many.’ I suspect that in but few of you has this problem occasioned sleepless nights, and I should not be astonished if some of you told me it had never vexed you. I myself have come, by long brooding over it, to consider it the most central of all philosophic problems, central because so pregnant. I mean by this that if you know whether a man is a decided monist or a decided pluralist, you perhaps know more about the rest of his opinions than if you give him any other name ending in IST. To believe in the one or in the many, that is the classification with the maximum number of consequences.”


Like the subject matter it ostensibly studies, the history of the field of International Relations (IR) has been riddled with great power conflicts. While the conflicts under study are fought with tanks, planes, submarines, and drones on the battlefields of land, air, sea, and increasingly cyberspace—the conflicts within the study are fought with words, data, and ideas in the venues of tenure and promotion committees, editorial review boards, and meetings of professional organizations. While the conflicts IR studies occur primarily between sovereign nation-states, the conflicts within IR occur between theoretical paradigms and methodological stances.

The major conflicts of the discipline of IR’s history are often referred to as the “great debates.” Following four (or three, depending on who is counting, Lapid 1989, 2003) of these debates, many within the IR field have grown tired of such clashes and are seeking a new way forward for the discipline. Within the literature searching for change, becoming increasingly prominent are a variety of calls for some form of pluralism within the field of International Relations. This project analyzes some of the proposed ways out of the cycle of conflict,
eventually calling for the advancement of three forms of pluralism: theoretical, methodological, and level of analysis. Such progress requires exploring several areas that remain unexplored by even the strongest advocates of reform within IR. It also requires attempting to forge links between diverse groups of scholars who do not see themselves in dialogue with one another.

This project is divided into four chapters. Chapter one discusses the philosophical and methodological underpinnings of the project. We begin by more closely examining IR’s history of “great debates.” Understanding this history provides essential context for making sense of today’s discourse. Following this discussion we trace the development of pluralism all the way from Stephen Walt’s challenge to the dominant Realist views on alliance formation to Sil and Katzenstein’s development of analytic eclecticism. After this we look to the emergence of Pragmatism in IR and attempt to determine its connection to the apparent pluralist turn that is occurring. The first chapter closes with a clarification of the usage of the term pluralism. This word has been used differently in a variety of intellectual contexts, but understanding the precise usage in this project is necessary for effective communication of these ideas.

Chapter two focuses on the work of Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein, specifically their book Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics (2010). This book presents the clearest, most mature articulation of theoretical pluralism within the literature of IR. This chapter attempts to defend against two challenging objections to the analytic eclecticism stance: that the author’s needlessly consider paradigm-bound scholarship as prerequisite for eclectic scholarship and that the authors hold up eclectic researchers as elites in the field of IR. The second chapter will close with a vision of how analytic eclecticism might transform the field of international relations.
The organization of chapter three is drawn from the same model as chapter two, yet, this time the work under consideration is that of Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, specifically his book *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (2011). Whereas Sil and Katzenstein focused their attention upon what might be described as pluralism of *theoretical tradition*, Jackson’s approach would more accurately be described as focusing on pluralism of *methodology* (not to be confused with *methods*). Similar to chapter two, this section attempts to clearly articulate Jackson’s position and defend it by way of responding to some of the harsh criticisms Jackson’s work received. The chapter defends Jackson from one of the strongest challenges to his position, an objection raised by Fred Chernoff. According to Chernoff, Jackson conceives of disciplinary dialogue in a way that limits us to “the simple ‘let us agree to disagree’” barring the way to an objective sense of progress (Chernoff 2013, 360). Chapter three closes with an attempt at reconstructing the arguments of Sil, Katzenstein, and Jackson in such a way that they can form a promising picture of a pluralistic IR field.

Chapters two and three explore the development of theoretical and methodological pluralisms within IR. Despite the progressive nature of these varieties of pluralism, they are formulated from within a strictly IR context and neglect inclusion of subfields operating at lower levels of analysis. The main scholarly contribution of this project is to introduce a third form of pluralism—pluralism of level of analysis—that attempts to reengage IR and foreign policy analysis (FPA). Rethinking the relationship between IR and FPA also readily reveals that theoretical and methodological pluralism exist within the literature of FPA.

Chapter four focuses on the continued marginalization of the FPA subfield of IR. It contends that reconciling IR and FPA requires rethinking the relationship between the two
approaches to studying world politics. The chapter starts with Valerie Hudson’s assertion that FPA in some way engages the “ground” of IR. Hudson’s conception of the IR-FPA relationship is found wanting as it relies on an antagonistic understanding of the agent-structure problem. In order to move past diametrically opposed camps of agent and structure, scholars of world politics need to transcend “the specter of Waltz.” Careful attention to Kenneth Waltz’s writings will show that even from a neorealistic starting point there is room for both approaches if the goal is to assemble a combination of research programs that most fully captures the phenomena of world politics. Having dealt with the issue of agent-structure, I will examine a model through which FPA can strengthen relations with more abstracted, traditional approaches to IR. While it is difficult to insist on constructing a unified model of domestic and international politics, there is a strong need for more dialogue and greater interdependence between unit and system level approaches.

The project concludes with some considerations regarding the power of the three pluralisms to reshape, reinvigorate, and reconcile the diverse approaches to studying world politics. Changing scholars’ orientation to research and attitudes toward academic dialogue is essential, but it alone cannot effect the transformation necessary. For this reason the implications for teaching and learning are considered.
Chapter One: IR at the Crossroads

“As the twentieth century draws to a close, it seems timely to reflect on “where have we gone wrong?” The question is not new, but it continues to perplex. The answers, unfortunately, are as numerous as our contentious schools, divided by epistemology, methodology, and ideology, along with idiosyncratic elements like personality. Realism and Neo-Realism, traditional and Neo-Institutionalism, Critical Theory, Post-Modernism, Post-Positivism, Rational Choice Theory, Cognitive Psychology, the English school, Neo-Marxism, World System, Feminist IR, and Constructivism would offer different reasons for the malaise of International Studies”


Great Debates

It is common practice to organize the history of the field of International Relations (IR) around four “great debates,” seminal moments at which the discipline decidedly broke off in one direction or another. The first debate is said to have occurred between Realists and Idealists between the inter-war period. During the 1960 scientists or behavioralists clashed with the traditionalists in the second great debate. The 1970s and 1980s gave way to the inter-paradigm or third great debate between Liberals and Realists, eventually converging upon the neo-neo synthesis (Waever 1996). Finally, the fourth great debate broke out following the emergence of constructivism. This most recent debate centered on epistemological disagreements between rationalist theories and reflective theories (Keohane 1988).
It is worth noting that there is an increasing body of scholarship critical of this method of
historiography (Ashworth 2002; Quirk and Vigneswaran 2005). Nonetheless, examining these
debates serves as a useful tool for illustrating the level of philosophical conflict that has occurred
throughout the history of IR. Even if these debates were retroactively embellished with an added
layer of hostility or entirely fabricated, they would still be evidence of the conflictual nature of
IR. In fields that are relatively peaceful and coexistent, scholars do not create histories for the
self-interested purposes of their scholarly faction.

The first “great debate” refers to the confrontation that occurred from roughly 1920 to
1940 between interwar Liberal-Idealists and a rising generation of Realists. The Liberal-Idealists
of the time period were associated with the international ideas of U.S. President Woodrow
Wilson, especially his “14 points” designed to prevent the outbreak of another war in Europe. As
the story is traditionally told, the first debate culminated with classical Realist scholar E.H.
Carr’s devastating critique of the Liberal-Idealists. Carr succeeded in attaching the label
“utopian” to the Liberal-Idealists, accusing them of performing exercises in pure wishful
thinking rather than rigorous social scientific inquiry. Carr’s critique gained enormous credibility
due to the fact that it was finished (although not printed) right as the second world war broke out,
giving Carr—and by extension the entire Realist school—an air of foresight and practical
wisdom.

While the conclusion of the first debate contained both an attitudinal component (one
should not be too optimistic about international politics) and a scientific component (visionary

---

1 In addition to Ashworth (2002) and Quirk and Vigneswaran’s (2005) critiques of the first debate, some have made
broader critiques of the great debate structure itself. Shortly before completion of this thesis I read Brian C.
Schmidt’s The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations (1998). Schmidt
casts a substantial shadow of doubt on the “great debate” narrative as a historically accurate description of the
discipline’s past. Although I agree with Schmidt’s critique, I utilize the great debate narrative here due to its utility
schemes draw us away from the hard facts of systematized study) the second debate of IR focused entirely on a scientific component. The question in this case was: “which methods are appropriate for studying world politics?” Clashing throughout the late 1950s and 1960s, the combatants of the second debate were traditionalists and behaviorists, or traditionalists and “scientists.” Hedley Bull served as the standard bearer for the traditionalists, defending the approach that relied on “interpretive historicist methods” while Morton Kaplan of the behaviorist camp advocated for adopting more of the methods of natural science. In Kaplan’s view, IR should focus on measurable phenomena and apply highly quantitative statistical methods. The second debate, which is highly relevant for the purposes of the current project, clearly marks the beginning of a stark division between British and American approaches to the study of world politics. This Atlantic split coincided with the beginning of positivist dominance in American IR. With a few exceptions, this dominance remained unchallenged until the rise of constructivism and the emergence of the fourth debate in the late 1980s and 1990s. Although even after the fourth debate, we find that positivism enjoys a privileged position both in American IR and in American society at large. For some, the second debate was also the source of the much discussed gap between theory and practice in IR. (Lepgold and Nincic 2001).

The third debate, the inter-paradigm debate, differed in kind from the two previous debates in that it “increasingly was seen as a debate not to be won, but a pluralism to live with.” Furthermore, scholars participating in the third debate “increasingly (mostly implicitly) got the self-conception that the discipline [IR] was the debate” (Waever 1996, 155). This sentiment presents the earliest inkling of a coherent pluralist attitude within the discipline of IR.

Heavily influenced by the idea of incommensurability, Waever writes that during this debate it was first thought that “the discipline was thus in some sense richer for having all three
voices [Realism, Liberalism, Marxism]” (Waever 1996, 155). Theoretical traditions stopped trying to translate one another into their own language or striving for grand syntheses. It was this attitude that distinguished the inter-paradigm debate from the previous two great debates.

Rather than politics, methodology or epistemology, the third debate was “basically about the nature of IR (ontology), an issue that has always lurked in the background of all the debates” [emphasis in original] (Waever 1996, 157). The fact that IR scholars from each of the three major paradigms acknowledged themselves to be living in different worlds helps to explain why pluralism saw some limited acceptance for the first time. Research became so fundamentally different across paradigms that no one perspective could hope to intelligibly capture all the work being done in the field. If one scholar cannot rationally criticize the work of another without stepping out of one’s paradigm, tolerance, however begrudging, is the logical outcome.

Tolerance alone does not qualify as the type of engaged positive pluralism this project attempts to capture, but it is a solid first step in the right direction.

Waever’s famous neo-neo synthesis functions as the conclusion of the third (inter-paradigm) debate and the starting point of the fourth (Waever 1996, 163-164). According to the neo-neo synthesis, the transitions from Realism and Liberalism to Neorealism and Neoliberalism were decisive factors in moving the field from an environment of incommensurable pluralism toward conversation (Waever 1996). The two new isms “shared a ‘rationalist’ research programme, a conception of science, a shared willingness to operate on the premise of anarchy (Waltz) and investigate the evolution of co-operation and whether institutions matter (Keohane)” (Waever 1996, 163).

Finally, the fourth debate began in the late 1980s and 1990s, on the heels of the inter-paradigm debate. At stake in this debate were the very means by which knowledge of IR is at all
possible. The “rationalists” formed by the veterans of the neo-neo synthesis took the field against
the “reflectivists,” an umbrella that captured scholars influenced by French post-structuralism,
German hermeneutics and Frankfurt school critical theory and eventually Constructivist
approaches (Waever 1996, 164).

Despite the fact that the fourth debate began as an extremely polarized shouting match
between the two opposing camps, it moderated through the “deradicalisation of reflectivism and
the rephilosophisation of the rationalists” (Waever 1996, 166-170). The result has been for the
extreme approaches on both side of the debate to fade from relevance and to move toward a
“rapprochement” between moderate rationalists and the Constructivist faction of the reflectivists
(Waever 1996, 168). Thus while many “radical” approaches were again marginalized in the
process, Constructivism’s emergence and achievement of broad legitimacy has been an event of
great consequence for the discipline of IR.

While some forms of Constructivism “aimed largely to fill explanatory gaps with
ideational causes—a kind of IR positivism 2.0,” (Cochran 2012, 140) the resistance toward
positivism evident in many strands of Constructivism has gone a long way toward opening up
the field of IR and broadening the discourse of the current era. Patrick Thaddeus Jackson has
credited Constructivism with making possible his enquiry into the implications of philosophy of
science for IR (Jackson 2011, 201-202). Molly Cochran has identified Constructivism as having
“played an important role in providing a point of entry for pragmatism” (Cochran 2012, 150). In
my own analysis I have traced the move towards greater dialogue and eclecticism between IR
paradigms as having started with the emergence of Constructivism. All of this suggests
Constructivism has played a vital role in the changes IR has undergone over the past 20 years.
These last two points—the influence of Constructivism on pragmatist IR and eclectic pluralism—will be explored at greater length later in this chapter.

This capsule history of IR tells us a great deal about the past, but it has much less to offer in terms of helping us to draw conclusions about what the emergence of Constructivism or any of the other contemporary trends of the field portend for the future.

Development of Pluralism in IR

Tracking the movement towards pluralism in IR can be done in two ways. The first is to document the loosening of the dominance of Realism and neopositivism, the generation of alternative approaches, and finally the call for tolerance and even eclecticism between these approaches. The other would be to trace the introduction of pragmatism to IR and point to calls from pragmatist IR scholars for an attitude of pluralism. Both of these approaches are useful, but so far the former has shown clearer promise than the latter.

Waltz, Mearsheimer, and Walt are usually considered the hardcore of the neorealist paradigm. Whatever our beliefs concerning Waltz’s intentions or propensity to be misinterpreted, undoubtedly his *Theory of International Politics* (Waltz 1979) marked a turning point in the academic study of world politics by originating the neorealist research program. Although undergraduates are often taught that neorealism and neoliberalism are competing “isms”, in reality, the two schools of thought were mainly squabbling over slightly varied applications of rationalism and neopositivism, with neither questioning the fundamental principles of the other. Keohane’s points of departure from Waltz and other neorealists were over the variables and phenomena he chose to emphasize (cooperation and international institutions rather than conflict and the nation-state) as opposed to the fundamental logic of anarchy, self-help, or power-balancing. Moreover, Keohane adopted, perpetuated, and even refined the neopositivist research
methodology used by most of the neorealist school (notably not including Waltz himself) (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994). The discourse of Neorealism and its Critics (Keohane ed. 1986) and especially the exchange between Keohane and Waltz contained therein, dramatically illustrates the overwhelming agreement between the two theorists on the vast majority of important issues. Sil and Katzenstein point out that “what distinguishes neoliberals from realists is not ontology or epistemology so much as the designation of the central problems to be investigated” (2010, 29).

With the followers of Waltz and Keohane having established the “neo-neo synthesis” (Waever 1996) as the closest thing to “normal science” in the discipline, theories became rather strictly interpreted. It seemed that structure could explain all there was to know regarding world politics. Waltz had been particularly keen that within his theory, the characteristics of individual states carried no importance, only their position within the system was of significance. In article and then book length treatment of alliance formation (1985, 1987) Stephen Walt, one of the rising stars of neo-realism attacked an instantiation of this idea, arguing that states select their allies not solely on consideration of capabilities (balance of power) but on considerations of intentions (balance of threat). While remaining firmly within the Realist camp, Walt had spoken loud and clear that ideas, ideology, and the domestic orientation of a state can have a bearing on the outcomes of the international system.

Although likely not drawing direct inspiration from Walt’s work, the reintroduction of unit level ideas and domestic intentions to the IR literature paved the way for the emergence of the new school of IR which would provide the first serious challenge to the status quo—Constructivism. Nicholas Onuf’s 1989 book World of Our Making and Alexander Wendt’s 1992 article “Anarchy is What States Make of It” are two of the founding works of Constructivism. Combining a study of the causal power of ideas, norms, and ideology with a variety of non-
positivist methodologies, Constructivism challenged both neorealism and neoliberalism and the rationalist methodologies associated with those schools. Unlike neoliberalism before it, Constructivism presented a fundamental challenge to the status quo of the discipline.

Constructivism has multiple variants and which components are essential to the label is a matter of significant debate. A central question has been whether to treat Constructivism as a theoretical tradition about world politics in the manner of Realism or Liberalism, or to treat it as a methodology in the manner of rationalism. Whatever specific conception one took when referring to Constructivism, it soon became clear that Constructivism allied itself with the subject matter and ethos of the broader Liberal-Idealist tradition, while rejecting the specific neopositivist methodological approach associated with the neoliberal school represented foremost by thinkers like Keohane.

For example, in a significant study, J. Samuel Barkin (2003, 2010) set out to dissociate Constructivism from the Liberal-Idealist tradition by carving out space for the articulation of a “realist constructivism,” thus bringing together two paradigms “commonly taught as mutually exclusive ways of understanding the subject” (2010).

Over time, due to a lack of clarity of language, the term Realism, as used in IR, had become associated with a research methodology that employs both rationalism and materialism. Pointing to the diversity of the Realist tradition and especially its founding fathers Hans Morgenthau and E.H. Carr, Barkin argues that the more recent association of Realism with rationalism and materialism is entirely historical and contingent. Realists subscribe to a variety of methodologies, a fact that is completely logically independent from their status as Realists. Instead, Barkin observes, “the common feature of realism—that is, the concept which is to realism as intersubjectivity is to constructivism—is power” (2003, 327).

---

2 See Barkin (2003) and Jackson (2011) for differing views on this issue.
Conceiving of Realism in this broad sense, recognizing its historical diversity and refusing to reduce it to the caricature of its most structural, materialist, and positivist rendition, Barkin is able to demonstrate how Realism and Constructivism are potentially compatible. It is important not to mistake Barkin for arguing that all forms of Realism are compatible with all forms of Constructivism or that it is a mistake to use Constructivism in a liberal-idealist research program. His point is that there is an overlap between Realism and Constructivism previously ignored that deserves recognition. Barkin’s 2010 book makes it even clearer that there is value in Realism that is not Constructivist and in Constructivism that is not Realist, but that their overlap merits exploration.

In similar fashion to Barkin’s willingness to examine and acknowledge the diversity within the Realist tradition and to demonstrate its compatibility with Constructivism, over the years important steps have been made towards pluralism and eclecticism. These steps serve to call into question the siege mentality of the IR “isms,” stressing the point that common ground might be found in unexpected places. Barkin’s (2003) article spurred vigorous debate within the literature on IR theory, eventually leading a major journal of the International Studies Association to publish a “forum” (June 2004) dedicated to the topic with the title *Bridging the Gap: Towards a Realist-Constructivist Dialogue*.3

In one contribution to the forum, Patrick Jackson and Daniel Nexon accept Barkin’s arguments for the importance of developing a “realist-constructivism,” but remain critical of his specific formulation. Jackson and Nexon argue that Constructivism is a theory of how politics works, rather than a research methodology. They then go on to suggest that a true realist-Constructivism must recognize the inability to transcend power by accepting a postmodern

---

interpretation of that concept. This leads them to an ideal-type mapping four theoretical approaches to the field (Jackson and Nexon 2004).

Reformulated here as a Venn diagram, Jackson and Nexon’s view of Constructivism allows a space of overlap with both Realism and Liberalism. In return, this accounts for the formulation of both Realist-Constructivism and Liberal-Constructivism. The issue with Jackson and Nexon’s formulation is that it ignores important areas of overlap between Realism and Liberalism by treating these as conversant, yet entirely discrete entities. Simply put, there seems to be no reason for the absence of a Realist-Liberalism or Liberal-Realism from Jackson and Nexon’s typology, especially when one thinks of Constructivism as a theory, rather than a research methodology.

The Realist-Constructivist dialogue, initiated by Barkin and continued in the forum, provided fertile ground for a further investigation of the relationships between IR’s so-called “paradigms.” Seeking to further explore the blurred lines between paradigms, to avoid seemingly unresolvable debates, and to reconnect increasingly arcane IR scholarship with its practical
subject matter, Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein have pushed the discussion of theoretical pluralism one step further with their development of the concept of “analytic eclecticism” (2010, 2011).

As analytic eclecticism is the object of intensive study in chapter two, it is not given in depth analysis here other than to emphasize the point that analytic eclecticism stands as the logical conclusion of the strain of dialogue first started by Barkin. Once the divisions between paradigms began to be questioned, it was only a matter of time before all of the artificial divisions between these approaches were broken down and the assumption that a single work of scholarship be located within a particular paradigm was rejected in favor of open-ended problem definitions, complex causal stories drawing on mechanisms from multiple theoretical traditions, and engagement with practical problems of policy makers. Although approach of Sil and Katzenstein is revolutionary, it treats the theoretical traditions of IR as the only relevant sources of division within the discipline. This assumes that the obstacles presented by ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies associated with different theories can be reduced to paradigmatic division. Sil and Katzenstein make a compelling case for commensurability between paradigms but do not speak fully as to how scholars operating from within different ontologies, epistemologies, or methodologies might be able to communicate with one another.

Moving from a pluralism of theoretical tradition to a pluralism of ontology, epistemology, and methodology is the task undertaken by Patrick Thaddeus Jackson in his *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and its Implications for the Study of World Politics*. Jackson recognizes and attempts to address that the ultimate greatest obstacle to dialogue in IR comes not from affiliation with a certain theoretical tradition or paradigm, but with regard to philosophical ontology, what Jackson refers to as our “hook-up”
with the world. Jackson delineates four distinct “hook-ups” implicit in the works of various strands of IR scholarship, acknowledging that his categories are not an entirely exhaustive descriptively accurate account of all IR scholarship but useful ideal types for framing the discussion. Jackson’s explicit focus on underlying philosophical ontology, rather than theoretical tradition raises new problems for commensurability and eclectic scholarship and much of the task of chapter three will be to examine how analytic eclecticism can be in conversation with Jackson’s view of methodological pluralism in order to broaden our overall understanding of pluralism in IR.

**Pragmatism in International Relations**

Earlier I mentioned that there were two ways to go about tracing the development of pluralism within IR. In the previous discussion we saw that Constructivism’s emergence following the fourth great debate was instrumental in broadening the range of acceptable discourse within IR. This led to a series of theoretical developments by Barkin, Jackson and Nexon, and Sil and Katzenstein that have led to the current situation. This was the first method of tracing the development of pluralism. Recognizing that, whatever the complexities of the relationship, pluralism has historically occurred in conjunction with pragmatism, the other way of gaining insight into the recent trend toward pluralism would be to track the historic influence of pragmatism on IR. The basic logic would be the following: if pragmatism and pluralism are strongly correlated, then if we see pluralism we might expect to see pragmatism also.

Fortunately for our purposes, Molly Cochran has delivered a definitive account of the history of pragmatism’s relationship with international relations in her 2012 article, “Pragmatism and International Relations: A Story of Closure and Opening.” Cochran’s subtitle is instructive,
the closure it refers to is the absence of pragmatism from the early history of IR, while the opening refers to the newfound acceptance pragmatism is finding within the field.

The modern academic study of IR is now generally considered to have begun with the founding of the “international politics” department at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth in 1919. According to Cochran:

The zenith of American Pragmatism thus overlapped with the development of IR as a social science. But a survey of histories of the discipline reveals no reference to the philosophy of Pragmatism, despite an early connection in the field with political theory and classical thought about international politics stretching back to Thucydides (2012, 139).

Given the influence of pragmatism within America at this critical juncture, one might have expected that emerging discussions of international relations would have made reference to the ideas of William James and John Dewey. Dewey wrote prolifically on international relations, and so the absence of recognition for his work is especially intriguing to Cochran (2012, 138).

For Cochran, Dewey’s absence might be explained by the argument that his wide-ranging interests may have clashed with the move toward specialization that was occurring across academic disciplines; thus, perhaps only authors who took the study of IR as their primary intellectual vocation were taken seriously. This explanation has some explanatory power; however, Cochran notes, at this time dedicated IR departments were few and far between and influential contributors to the discourse often came from scholars in fields such as law and history, or from those completely outside the academy such as journalist Walter Lippmann.

Richard Little, in a preface to a recent collection of essays on pragmatism and international relations, broke with Cochran’s assessment of the situation. Rather than seeing
pragmatism as having been at its “zenith” at the time of the rise of international relations, Little sees pragmatism as “going out of favour at the very time, after the end of the second World War, when International Relations was being consolidated as an independent field of study in the United States” (Bauer and Brighi 2009, xiii). Clearly this disparity between Cochran and Little’s accounts could stem from their differing views on the formative years of international relations. Pragmatism was popular in the years surrounding the First World War and certainly not so in the years surrounding the Second World War, so the position one takes on this timeline would be highly influential. The other issue is location. Cochran speaks of IR in a truly international sense, but frames her narrative around the starting point at Aberystwyth in 1919. Although this starting point is the most generally accepted for IR, we cannot forget that it occurred in Wales, an ocean away from the only place where pragmatism carried weight as a philosophical school. Classical pragmatism never caught hold in Europe. Little’s specific reference to the consolidation of IR in the United States is significant, because despite Stanley Hoffman’s famous position, it may be that IR took a bit longer to get started in the U.S. than in Britain. Whatever the position one takes on these historical issues, the fact remains that pragmatism remained distinctly absent from the field of IR, despite the fact that it seemed to have contributions to offer.

The relationship between IR and pragmatism is fundamentally different today than it was in either 1919 or following the Second World War. Cochran’s subtitle alludes to an “opening” and her abstract avows a “pragmatist turn” (2012). The term “pragmatist turn” is also used by Sil and Katzenstein in setting the context for their manifesto of analytic eclecticism (2010). Harry Bauer and Elisabetta Brighi cautiously acknowledged a “turn to practices” in the discipline, but

---

4 Little points to two interesting ironies regarding the history of pragmatism and IR. Despite being an “American social science” as Hoffman suggested, IR summarily ignored the one authentically American philosophical school—pragmatism. Furthermore, the more recent push for a return to pragmatism has been largely by European thinkers. The first irony is also acknowledged by Gunther Hellmann in the introduction to the International Studies Review Forum on “Pragmatism and International Relations.”
they still viewed pragmatism as “a relatively unexplored school of thought within IR” (2009, 2). Such a pragmatist turn, if indeed it is happening, would seem to be a fairly recent phenomenon.

Indeed Cochran points to special issues on the topic of pragmatism and IR in 2002, 2007, and 2009 published respectively in the journals: *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, *The Journal of International Relations and Development*, and *International Studies Review* (Cochran 2012, 140). Given that Bauer and Brighi’s edited volume *Pragmatism in International Relations* also appears in 2009, that year might tentatively qualify as a tipping point. It may be the year pragmatism went from being an idea floating around to a full on intellectual “turn.”

Starting from the period of strict closure between pragmatism and IR, what could explain such a sudden turn? We have already examined the history of IR in some detail; this should give us some clues. Like all non-rationalist, non-positivist research operating outside of the neorealist-neoliberal debate (or synthesis), pragmatic approaches owe a great debt to Constructivism. Earlier, I traced the lineage of the works of both Sil and Katzenstein (2010) and Jackson (2011) through Constructivism and eventually the revisionary ideas of J. Samuel Barkin. Likewise, in explaining the pragmatist turn, authors on the subject often point to Constructivism as a necessary ancestor (Cochran 2012; Kratochwil 2011; Widmaier 2004). Significantly, Cochran credits Constructivism not only for breaking the neorealist-neoliberal gridlock that excluded alternative approaches, but for advancing arguments that specifically linked to pragmatism. Cochran notes that Alexander Wendt viewed his own form of Constructivism “as a synthesis of structuration theory and symbolic interactionism, modeled in large part upon the work of George Herbert Mead” (Wendt 1999, 143 referenced in Cochran 2012, 149).
While Wendt can be credited for having been influenced by Mead, an important thinker of classical pragmatism, he should not be thought of as a pragmatist himself. Some Constructivists however, have forged direct links to pragmatism. Constructivist scholar John Gerard Ruggie has delineated three varieties of Constructivism: neo-classical, postmodern, and naturalist (1998, 881-882). Ruggie places himself, along with Ernst and Peter Haas, Friedrich Kratochwil, Nicholas Onuf, Emanuel Adler, Martha Finnemore, Peter Katzenstein, as well as feminist scholar Jean Elshtain in the “neo-classical constructivist” category. Ruggie contends that although diversity exists within this strand of Constructivism, “work in this genre…typically includes an epistemological affinity with pragmatism” (1998, 881). Ruggie acknowledges another characteristic feature of this group: “a commitment to the idea of social science-albeit one more plural and more social than that espoused in the mainstream theories” (1998, 881). In the years since Ruggie’s writing, the scholars he identified have made substantial scholarly contributions to IR pragmatism. Kratochwil, Onuf, and both Haas brothers contributed chapters to the 2009 volume “Pragmatism in International Relations.” Writing with Harry D. Gould, Onuf observed that “some constructivists are beginning to realize they have been pragmatists all along” (Gould and Onuf 2009, 27). Katzenstein and Sil developed the concept of analytic eclecticism, an approach to research steeped in the philosophical grounding of pragmatism. Martha Finnemore is one of the scholars Sil and Katzenstein point to as an exemplar of analytic eclecticism. Thus all of the authors on Ruggie’s list (with the exception of Elshtain, who is not primarily a Constructivist) have made major contributions to pragmatism’s incursion to IR in the

---

5 While his writings are less directly philosophical, George Herbert Mead is often placed next to John Dewey as part of the second generation of the classical pragmatists (following the first generation of Peirce and James). His sociological work at the Chicago School and his development of symbolic interactionism are often seen as an example of social science applications of pragmatism’s insights.

6 The credibility of this statement is bolstered by the fact that Nicholas Onuf was the first to coin the term Constructivism within the IR literature.
years since his writing. Ruggie’s analysis of these thinkers has strongly withstood the experience of years since his writing.

This second method of charting pluralism’s inception within IR seems less satisfactory. As of yet, pragmatism seems to be a byproduct rather than the initiator of the important changes that have occurred in IR since the 1980s. The lineage traced through Constructivism provided more important points of contact with influential scholarly developments. That pragmatism would have emerged out of Constructivism is not altogether surprising. It is important to remember the Constructivism was able to justify its own emergence due to the abject failure of both neorealism and neoliberalism to predict the end of the Cold War. Thus, scholars who could get behind the Constructivist challenge would have likely had sympathies with the pragmatist notion that social research should be engaged with real world problems. Once Constructivism had broken through the gridlock it may have taken these scholars some time to explore their identities and carve out a place with a more pragmatist backing. Following Constructivism’s emergence the field was once again faced with issues of plurality and incommensurability and pragmatism would have provided a ready language for scholars to address these problems.

**Pluralism as a Philosophy**

The subject of this project is pluralism and particularly the role of emergent pluralism within the field of International Relations. It would be a shame to undergo an in-depth examination in which the core concept was vaguely understood or continually equivocated upon. For this reason, it is worth considerable attention clarifying the meaning of pluralism. This section is devoted to identifying the many ways the word pluralism has been used and pinpointing what the pluralism I am invoking here is and is not. We will start with what it is not.
Historically speaking, pluralism as a philosophical stance arising in the late 20th century can be thought of as a continuation of the problem of “the one and the many” which traces its roots as far back as pre-Socratic Ancient Greek Philosophy (Bernstein 1987, 520). The first known rendition of the one and the many debate was over a question of ontology; essentially what was disputed was, “how many substances make up the world?” The most famous proponent of “the one” side of the debate was the Ancient Greek philosopher Parmenides. The philosophical project of Parmenides was to argue that reality consists of one complete whole and that all appearances of change and motion are merely sensory illusions. Opposed to Parmenides were thinkers like Heraclitus who held that all was constantly in flux and Democritus and Leucippus who proposed the first versions of atomic theory, believing that all observable phenomena could be explained in reference to the arrangement and motion of these unobservable particles. In more modern treatment, William James took up the problem of the one and the many in the fourth lecture of his landmark Pragmatism. Many other forms of “pluralism” have emerged in recent decades. It is important to enumerate the most significant of these forms of pluralism here so that readers do not mistakenly associate the pluralism of this work with another form with which they may be familiar. I will start by addressing some popular forms of pluralism outside of the IR field and then examine other ways the word pluralism has been used in IR that are not related to the usage that interests us in this project.

Perhaps the most popular usage of the term pluralism refers to the idea of value pluralism. The label of value pluralism is something of an umbrella term, housing both moral pluralism and political pluralism. Philosophers have held the position of political pluralism in varying degrees. The weakest form of political pluralism asserts only that more than one system of values should be tolerated, while others should not. The moderate form of political pluralism
asserts that all systems of value should be tolerated, whether or not they are accepted or considered equal. The strongest form of political pluralism asserts that all systems of value are equally valid (Mason 2006).

Moral pluralism addresses a fundamentally different question than political pluralism. Instead of being a position regarding multiple *systems* of value, moral pluralism looks at moral values, making the argument that ethics cannot be reduced to a single value such as happiness, duty, or fulfillment. For varying articulations of value pluralism one can consult Rawls (1971, 2001), James (1977), and Berlin (1958, 1969). Although this discussion of value pluralism has made reference to its usage in philosophical literature, the idea touches the masses through the concept of multiculturalism. Workshops, trainings, and other outlets used to promote multiculturalism and diversity often hinge on the theoretical tools of value pluralism.

In the past, political science has employed the term pluralism in a way unrelated to the usage emerging in IR. In the post-World War II era, the terms “pluralism,” “interest-group pluralism,” and “polyarchy” all came to denote a view of American democracy in which the people had for most intents and purposes lost direct representation. According to this form of pluralism, the demands of everyday life lead to most individuals within American society being unable to be meaningfully informed about the political events of the day. Under this model, interest groups emerge as responsive and representative advocates for the various subsets of the American population. The pluralist model eventually fell out of favor under critique from scholars who advanced arguments demonstrating how a pluralist model of government allowed certain interests—particularly business—to become more powerful and influential than other groups within society.
The most fertile ground for confusion, at least for readers specializing in IR, lies with ideas that have been previously associated with that label within the study of world politics. Two significant examples deserve attention: the group of scholars within the liberal-idealistic tradition who adopted the label pluralism to distance themselves from the strictly state-centric approach adhered to by their Realist contemporaries and the pluralist faction of the English school. Neorealists following in the tradition of Kenneth Waltz were known and often critiqued for treating the state as a unitary actor during the cold war era. Many who would today be classified as liberals, following in the tradition of Keohane and Nye, emphasized actors and processes both smaller and larger than the sovereign nation-state. Some examples include international institutions, bureaucratic organizations, political parties, nongovernmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations categories that can be summarized as “sub-state and trans-state actors” (Waever 1996, 150). Seeing the Realist state-centered approach as narrow and restrictive and wanting to emphasize their own recognition of the diversity of international actors, this group of thinkers began to identify themselves as pluralists. This label was much more popular within Europe than within the United States. English School pluralists argue that self-determination and non-intervention best serve the vast diversity of mankind. This view of the English school is constituted in opposition to the “Solidarist” faction which emphasizes human rights and emancipation taking a positive stance in favor of humanitarian intervention (Weinert 2011).

As opposed to the different usages of pluralism described above, this project understands pluralism in the sense drawn primarily from Stephen H. Kellert, Helen Longino, and C. Kenneth  

---

7 Whether this was ever intended as an accurate descriptive statement will be addressed at length in the discussion of Waltz’s theory in chapter four.
8 For an example of this usage see Richard Little “The Growing Relevance of Pluralism?” in Smith, Booth, and Zalewski (1996).
Waters (2006). As Kellert et al argue, it is useful to begin by distinguishing between “plurality” and “pluralism” (2006 ix-x). Whereas plurality is a state characteristic of a science, the mere fact that a variety of scientific approaches, incapable of being integrated into a single account exist, pluralism is an attitude towards or interpretation of such a state. Such an interpretation entails:

that plurality in science possibly represents an ineliminable character of scientific inquiry and knowledge (about at least some phenomena), that it represents a deficiency in knowledge only from a certain point of view, and that analysis of metascientific concepts (like theory, explanation, evidence) should reflect the possibility that the explanatory and investigative aims of science can be best achieved by sciences that are pluralistic, even in the long run (Kellert, Longino and Waters 2006, ix-x).

A nuance that should not be overlooked is that this pluralistic stance neither outright denies the ability of a single scientific theory or explanation to be best, nor does it positively affirm the necessity of plurality.

As a concept, therefore, pluralism is grasped far more easily when one is familiar with scientific monism, the view it opposes. In short, monism argues that “the ultimate aim of a science is to establish a single, complete, and comprehensive account of the natural world (or the part of the world investigated by the science) based on a single set of fundamental principles” (Kellert, Longino, and Waters 2006, x).

By contrast, pluralism suggests that “some natural phenomena cannot be fully explained by a single theory or fully investigated using a single approach” (Kellert, Longino, Waters 2006, vii). Strictly speaking, pluralists do not outright deny that the natural world can be explained in an account like the monists desire, rather they “believe that whether it can be so explained is an
open empirical question” (Kellert, Longino, and Waters 2006, x). Another idea central to a
strong pluralist stance is openness to the idea that multiple accounts, in some cases “cannot be
integrated with one another without loss of content” (Kellert, Longino, and Waters 2006, xiv).
Thus, the strongest form of pluralism views the task of theory integration with great skepticism.

Kellert, Longino, and Waters lay out a more tentative variety of pluralism which they
style as “modest pluralism” (2006, xii). Modest pluralists seek to tolerate temporary plurality out
of a perceived utility that this is the best path toward a single true account. Most simply put, this
is just the view that we should just avoid putting all of our eggs in one basket. While the authors
are critical of modest pluralism, keeping in mind the history of IR, I am not too concerned about
this distinction. Moving toward an IR field characterized by pluralism is a difficult task and one
that requires all the allies that can be assembled. If in the future our coalition confronts
disagreements, they can be dealt with and more deeply examined at such an appropriate time.

Using the terminology provided by Kellert et al, IR is seeing both an increase in plurality
and pluralism, but it is the second that is new and important. The phenomenon of pluralism that
Kellert, Longino, and Waters have identified in a variety of fields is a sweeping intellectual
trend, it is the “next big thing,” and it is occurring in IR. Now is the time to grasp its scope and
import. As we move forward into the works of Sil, Katzenstein, and Jackson, I will occasionally
refer back to Kellert, Longino, and Waters in order to provide some type of touchstone for the
arguments we encounter.
Chapter Two: Analytic Eclecticism as Theoretical Pluralism

“Therefore these [theories] do not compete for explaining ‘the same’. They each do different jobs. The theories can only be linked externally, when one theory reaches out on its own terms for another theory to exploit, which it can then only do by grasping the inner logic of this other theory and its material. This self-referentiality of the theories in no way prevents researchers from entering several of these—the limitations are not in our heads but in the logic of the theories and their ensuing ‘realities’” (Waever 1996, 174).

Hopes Yet Unrealized

Since its legitimation following the end of the fourth debate, Constructivism has seen tremendous growth. In little more than 20 years following its inception, Constructivism has emerged as the most popular paradigm for IR scholars (Maliniak, Peterson, and Tierney 2012). The point here is not to praise Constructivism or to predict its ultimate triumph as an approach to IR, but to demonstrate that within the last decade we have returned to a distribution within the IR field that once again features three major competing schools of thought. Although Constructivism is now the most popular approach, Liberals and Realists are close behind. According to the 2011 TRIP survey, 22 percent of scholars identify as Constructivist worldwide, 16 percent as Realists, and 15 percent as Liberals. The national data on the United States is comparable, with the exception that Liberalism is virtually tied with Constructivism. With many of today’s textbooks organized around Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism as discrete paradigms, the conditions seem apt for a second inter-paradigm debate. This is not the direction many writing in the 1990s would have desired. Nearly two decades ago, Waever had high hopes

9 The numbers for the U.S. list Constructivism at 20 percent, Liberalism at 20 percent and Realism at 16 percent. However, the authors of the study note that prior to rounding Constructivism had a value of 20.39 percent with Liberalism at 19.9 percent. This constitutes a narrow plurality for Constructivism, but a plurality nonetheless.
for the future of IR. While the 1990s and early 2000s failed to live up to it, Waever’s vision seems prophetic today:

Therefore these [theories] do not compete for explaining ‘the same’. They each do different jobs. The theories can only be linked externally, when one theory reaches out on its own terms for another theory to exploit, which it can then only do by grasping the inner logic of this other theory and its material. This self-referentiality of the theories in no way prevents researchers from entering several of these—the limitations are not in our heads but in the logic of the theories and their ensuing ‘realities’ (Waever 1996, 174).

Waever’s vision carries an air of foresight because he effectively captures the ethos of the current trend toward pluralism within the literature of IR. Waever goes on to suggest that both “Grand ‘synthesis’ and (literal) co-operation (simultaneous running) of several theories” are possibilities when we adjust our understanding of the nature of IR theory (Waever 1996, 174). The work reviewed in the current project cautions against synthesis, but the notion of “simultaneous running” seems to anticipate the work of Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein (2010). Their concept of analytic eclecticism presents a possible fulfillment of Waever’s vision. They aim to avoid combative great debates, to foster tolerance and dialogue between paradigms, and to facilitate the eclectic use of multiple theories.

The atmosphere that Sil and Katzenstein engage with is one in which the three major paradigms have turned inward again, producing a formula where *intra*-paradigm progress and *inter*-paradigm debate results in “widening the chasm between academia and the world of policy and practice” (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 35). The fact that this has occurred during the same period in which a pragmatist discourse emerged in the IR literature testifies to the entrenchment
of the paradigmatic establishment as well as to the continued relative weakness of pragmatism and other critical approaches.

For Sil and Katzenstein, the need to close this chasm between theory and practice is clear. The scholars open their book with a reference to Joseph Nye’s controversial 2009 op-ed “Scholars on the Sidelines” which laments the general disappearance of influential political scientists specializing in international relations from high-ranking foreign policy posts within the government. In line with Sil and Katzenstein’s analysis, Nye identified the gulf between theory and practice as the culprit. According to Nye, scholars are to blame for their own marginalization and need to get back to producing work that establishes them as voices relevant to the world of policy. Sil and Katzenstein’s systematic articulation of analytic eclecticism attempts to address the underlying causes of the consignment of scholars to the sidelines decried by Nye and to provide a means of achieving Waever’s optimistic hope of a discipline characterized by both a “division of labour” and dialogue (Waever 1996, 170-174). Having established the setting entered by Sil and Katzenstein, the rest of this chapter will be devoted to explicating their concept of analytic eclecticism, defending the transformative vision it presents, and speculating on what can be done to encourage its realization.

**Defining and Identifying Analytic Eclecticism**

The aim of analytic eclecticism is not synthesis but “an effort at blending, a means for scholars to guard against the risks of excessive reliance on a single analytic perspective.” (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 12). This effort at blending calls on the discipline of IR to be more accepting and encouraging toward scholars who develop “complex arguments that incorporate elements of theories or narratives originally drawn up in separate research traditions” (2010, 9).
Sil and Katzenstein point to three specific, yet still broad and open-ended, markers used to identify analytic eclecticism. Although this may seem like an unpluralistic pluralism, their criteria are broad and open-ended. The three markers are:

1. “open-ended problem formulation encompassing complexity of phenomena, not intended to advance or fill gaps in paradigm-bound scholarship.”
2. “middle-range causal account incorporating complex interactions among multiple mechanisms and logics drawn from more than one paradigm.”
3. “findings and arguments that pragmatically engage both academic debates and the practical dilemmas of policymakers/practitioners.” (2010, 19).

The first criterion is meant to avoid situations where adherents to different research paradigms strategically select research questions that fit neatly within the assumptions of their paradigms. Under such conditions, each paradigm feels verified, as it has only viewed the evidence that reflects positively on its own particular orientation. Research that deals with problems in the way they are understood by policymakers forces scholars to contend with real world complexity rather than convenient theoretical parsimony.

The second criterion stresses two components: that the research be middle-range and that it draw from more than one paradigm. Drawing from more than one paradigm is in many ways the most basic definitional element of analytic eclecticism. That the research be middle-range follows from the realities of being eclectic. The difficulties of mixing paradigms, avoiding conceptual muddiness, yet providing practically relevant information precludes both grand theory and idiographic narrative. This is not an a priori judgment of worth regarding these means of research just a recognition that they do not qualify as being eclectic.
The third criterion attempts to counteract the flight from reality that has occurred in IR and across the social sciences. The call for policy-relevant scholarship recognizes that the field of IR did not emerge with the primary intention of satisfying intellectual curiosity or arriving at timeless truth but of an attempt to make sense of a turbulent state of world affairs.

Rather than theorizing in a vacuum about how scholars should approach research, Sil and Katzenstein use observations of the practices of actual scholars in formulating their concept of analytic eclecticism. Simply put, analytic eclecticism is not a novel concept that needs implementation, it is an implicit ethos already present in work by a handful of scholars that needs explicit articulation, more attention, and respect. Indeed most of the book (chapters 3-5 of six) is spent illustrating examples of how IR scholars have conducted eclectic research in the areas of security studies, international political economy, and regional and global governance.

Sil and Katzenstein are upfront about the fact that their contribution to the field is to systematically bring together preexistent discrete strands of thought, such as critiques of paradigmatic boundaries, promotion of middle range theorizing, and narrowing the gap between research and policy (2010, 22-23). However, I believe that characterizing the significance of their work in this way is far too modest, for buried within their defense of analytic eclecticism lies a radical rethinking of how to structure knowledge production within the field of IR if not in social science more broadly.

A Bold New Landscape

Predictably, those most offended by, defensive towards, or critical of Sil and Katzenstein’s work are the scholars most disposed toward a particular paradigm and most confident in the ability of that paradigm to answer all of the questions of relevance to the field of IR. Similarly, those respectful towards all paradigms, but wishing to keep them all separate,
likely due to a strong view of incommensurability are also predisposed against the concept of analytic eclecticism.

Conscious of this inevitable backlash and wanting to produce a piece of well-argued scholarship, Sil and Katzenstein seek to preempt many of the objections such critics may have to their argument. Such an argumentative technique stems from the inoculation theory of persuasion. The inoculation theory of persuasion uses an analogy from medical vaccination. It is thought that if a debater takes the opportunity to address an opponent’s objections before they are raised, the strength and persuasiveness of the objections will be drastically diminished. I bring this up not to engage in a pedantic and tangential lesson in communications theory, but because it is hidden within the inoculation portion of their argument in which the pregnant and transformative vision of Sil and Katzenstein lies.

A vitally important factor for the work of Sil and Katzenstein, for the ultimate success or failure of analytic eclecticism, and for the scholars producing work in line with its precepts, is negotiating their relationship with the existing paradigm structure of the field of International Relations. At no point in their book do Sil and Katzenstein suggest the overthrow of the traditional paradigm structure, or argue that the majority of IR scholarship must be eclectic. All they ask is for an acceptance and openness to some eclectic research as a complement to paradigm-bound scholarship.

Sil and Katzenstein make clear that they are not opposed to paradigms on principle. According to them, paradigms have had an important historical role in moving IR forward and that they continue to have a place in the field of IR. Sil and Katzenstein even extol the benefits provided by paradigms:
For any given problem, before a more expansive dialogue can take place among a more heterogeneous community of scholars, it is useful to first have a more disciplined dialogue on the basis of a clearly specified set of concepts, a common theoretical language, and a common set of methods and evaluative standards predicated on a common metatheoretical perspective. Such a set of initial shared understandings allows for focused empirical research that can be more easily coded, compared, and cumulated within distinct research traditions (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 7-8).

Despite these specific benefits, Sil and Katzenstein view it as misguided to expect paradigms alone to lead to unhindered continual theoretical and empirical progress. Too often the result is that problems are parsed in ways that reaffirm the theoretical lens being utilized. In like manner, a growing share of research serves only “to defend the core metatheoretical postulates of a paradigm or research tradition (2010, 9). This leads to the “flight from reality,” mentioned at the outset of this chapter, as less scholarship addresses practical problems and scholars are sidelined from key international posts—having pushed their body of work to a place where it is too arcane to be of help to policy-makers/practitioners.

Seeking to correct for the “enduring blind spots” (2010, 9) created by strict paradigmatic research without sacrificing the benefits provided by the paradigms themselves, Sil and Katzenstein pitch analytic eclecticism as a complementary body of work, not a replacement for paradigms. In such a role, the authors argue that two of the chief benefits of analytic eclecticism are its ability to “recomplexify” problems that have been operationally simplified in such a way as to fit neatly within a paradigm (2010, 8) and to be sensitive toward theoretical and empirical insights which “can elude adherents of paradigms who view their problems through distinct
lenses that are specifically designed to filter out certain ‘inconvenient’ facts to enable a more focused analysis” (2010, 11).

Sil and Katzenstein are clear in their acknowledgment of paradigm-bound research as a necessary precursor of eclectic approaches: “Both logically and temporally, analytic eclecticism follows paradigmatically organized efforts to develop insights and arguments about segments of social phenomena” (2010, 17). The authors’ concern is not that discrete paradigms exist, but that scholars situated within each seek to battle over unresolvable foundational principles and that the potential areas of overlap between paradigms are too often overlooked.

Through their innocuous, limited defense of the part to be played by paradigms and the scholars working within them, Sil and Katzenstein provide a roadmap for social science knowledge production; here the focus is on IR, but it is a framework that can at least in principle be applied to other fields. In the early stages of a science, a paradigm takes hold to provide ‘discipline’ for the discipline. This involves trading off complexity, diversity, creativity and dialogue for the sake of parsimony and internal progress. Sometimes multiple paradigms will develop in isolation from one another. When this happens each of the paradigms will develop interesting and useful concepts, models, theories, and narratives that can be applied to the study of world politics. Because each paradigm is necessarily based on abstractions and fundamental assumptions, none will be able to fully account for the full range of phenomena.

Furthermore, following Kuhn (1962) and Feyerabend (1975), there will be no third neutral language to objectively compare the findings of each paradigm. As such, some scholars and most outsiders will see the merit in each of the paradigms. If incommensurability is not taken too seriously and the paradigms are able to overcome the isolation between them, dialogue may occur. At this point each of the paradigms may refine their positions as a result of being
exposed to one another. If relations warm even further, some scholars may attempt to employ multiple paradigms at once. Such a proposition seems liable to lead to self-contradictions, but it is motivated by a pragmatist conception of truth. It sees each theory as an attempt to produce the highest empirical cash-value rather than to accurately represent reality as it actually exists.

The important question is: how is analytic eclecticism to be achieved and implemented. In chapter one, I introduced my reconstruction of Patrick Jackson and Daniel Nexon’s mapping of the field in response to J. Samuel Barkin’s development of “realist constructivism” (Fig. 2.1). In this model, scholars can identify themselves as Realists, Liberals, realist-constructivists, or liberal-constructivists. While Jackson and Nexon’s work is thoughtful and progressive, Sil and Katzenstein rightly point out that the model ignores important areas of overlap between Realists and Liberals. This oversight is especially noteworthy when one accepts Waever’s idea of the “neo-neo synthesis,” in which neorealism and neoliberalism converged.

Sil and Katzenstein hope to map the field in a way that takes account of all areas of overlap between the major paradigms. Indeed, their concept of analytic eclecticism is not tenable if such overlap is not taken seriously and fully addressed.

An important theoretical step in being able to conceptualize this overlap is to realize that none of the “paradigms” or theoretical traditions consists of a monolith. Internally, there are areas of both agreement and departure within Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism. Barkin (2003) first made this point clear with his account of the rich diversity within the Realist tradition and how certain positions (materialism, rationalism) that have become inextricably linked with Realism are actually only historically and contingently related. In his 2011 book, Jackson points to the diversity of research methodologies within the Constructivist school. Chernoff (2009) acknowledges that sometimes scholars operating in different paradigms can agree on substantive
policy, while those associating with the same paradigmatic tradition often disagree. In the final tally it may be that the paradigmatic traditions are held together by little more than Wittgenstein’s “family resemblance.”

This strange state of affairs illustrates the socially constructed nature of the “paradigms.” Observing such internal diversity and the ability for engagement with other paradigms leads to the desire to more fully flesh out the points of overlap, which are generally ignored in the literature. To illustrate how their concept of analytic eclecticism stands with regard to the three mainstream paradigms of international relations, Sil and Katzenstein invoke the triangle, a symbol which bears great historical importance representing the paradigm debates within IR, and used by Waever in his discussion of the “inter-paradigm debate” (1996). For Waever, the triangle captures this system of relationships.

Fig 2.1
In the (slightly modified) diagram shown above (Fig 2.1) we can see how analytic eclecticism is conditioned by or defined in relation to the major paradigms of IR. This fits with the earlier discussion of the logical and temporal priority of paradigm-bound scholarship to eclectic scholarship. Recognizing that we miss out on some of the historical significance associated with the triangle, an alternate way to graphically represent Sil and Katzenstein’s “analytic eclecticism” is through a three circle Venn diagram (below, Fig. 2.2). In certain circumstances this Venn diagram may be more useful for illustrating the approach of Sil and Katzenstein than the triangle graphic they use. One particular advantage of the Venn diagram I want to exploit is its ability to more clearly map paradigmatic boundaries. This allows greater precision in mapping individual scholars and pieces of scholarship.

Fig 2.2

**ANALYTIC ECLECTICISM**

- Realist-Constructivism or Constructivist-Realism (Barkin 2003; Jackson and Nexon 2004)
- Neo-neo synthesis (Waever 1996)
- Eclectic work that draws on all three “paradigms”
- Liberal-idealist Constructivism (most constructivist research)
As this diagram illustrates, there are areas of overlap between all three major theoretical schools. This should be contrasted with the earlier diagram adapted from Jackson and Nexon which lacked overlap between Realism and Liberalism. While arguing for the importance of “realist-constructivism,” J. Samuel Barkin has made the point that there remains value in a Constructivism that is not Realist and a Realism that is not Constructivist. This feature, and its parallels in all areas of overlap between paradigms are clearly reflected in the diagram by the discrete areas of the circles characterized by a lack of any overlap. All three overlapping areas indicated by the arrows would count as eclectic research—given open problem formulation and engagement with both policy and scholarly issues. Despite this, Sil and Katzenstein view the center area marked by the central arrow as the most robust area of eclectic work, as well as the most overlooked. Even within the area that draws from all three major traditions, it is not of necessity to draw equally; this may lead to work that positions itself at various locations within that area. In my view, a robust analytic eclecticism should go beyond the three major paradigms of the American academy to include other theoretical approaches. The three major paradigms are chosen here for the purposes of familiarity and convenience, along with the fact that most eclectic work being done to date has oriented itself in relation to these three traditions.

One objection to Sil and Katzenstein’s vision for IR and the place of analytic eclecticism within it is that it creates a social hierarchy within the field. Here social hierarchy refers to a situation in which certain scholars’ work is unfairly valued more highly than others. Instead of the traditional academic privileging of theory at the expense of empirical and practical work, Sil and Katzenstein have now set eclectic scholarship on a pedestal. From this point of view the majority of IR scholars will continue to produce paradigm-bound research which will be of no greater value then to provide tools and insights to be analyzed and coordinated with the insights
of scholars from other paradigms by a few elite eclectic scholars at the top of the intellectual food chain.

Yet, this view misreads the value and role assigned to analytic eclecticism. Sil and Katzenstein argue that analytic eclecticism is about “de-centering, not discarding, the isms” (2011). Eclectic research is much more likely to be ignored than to dominate the discipline of IR. Their argument is only for an opening; for some openness to eclectic approaches in the discipline.

In addition to serving as a necessary precursor of eclectic research, Sil and Katzenstein’s vision for the field of IR includes roles for both paradigm-bound research and eclectic research. If we view the field of IR through a structural functionalist lens, it becomes clear that Sil and Katzenstein’s vision allows distinct yet equally vital roles to be performed by both paradigm-bound and eclectic scholarship. Though critical and frank in their identification of the shortcomings of paradigms, the authors acknowledge eclecticism’s continued dependence on them: “…Eclecticism that summarily dismisses existing paradigmatic scholarship risks devolving into ad hoc arguments that may be meaningless to other scholars…” (2010, 219). In ecological terms, there exists a mutualist symbiotic relationship between paradigm-bound research and eclectic research. Each has a positive impact on the other. As a discipline, International Relations needs both theory and empirical study. It needs general attempts at understanding, middle-range accounts, and detailed case studies. It needs strict paradigmatic adherence and eclectic flexibility. The analytic eclecticism proposed by Sil and Katzenstein meets only some of these needs. It attempts to fill the holes left open by paradigmatic work, focuses on the middle-range, and explores ignored areas of overlap between paradigms. This alone is not enough to sustain the field, nor does it occupy any privileged status. Paradigmatic
theorists are likely to maintain their status as the most respected and recognized scholars in the field. Reinterpretations of the major paradigmatic theories or development of new paradigms will be what moves the field forward and provides new tools to the eclecticists, but this does not change the fact that eclecticists will still be necessary and will still have much to offer within their niche, as well as more broadly to other scholars, and especially practitioners.

Another possible objection to analytic eclecticism is to acknowledge the inability of a single paradigm to supply all necessary insights; to call for a variety of paradigmatic perspectives, but to deny the need to attempt to develop eclectic approaches that draw mechanisms and logics from a variety of paradigmatic perspectives. Here we have tolerance but not blending, plurality but not pluralism. This objection is right to note that diversity of perspective is important, but diversity of perspective represents mere fragmentation and division, if the camps consistently talk past one another and seek to compete rather than interface. IR could progress solely through constructive engagement of mutually exclusive paradigms. This is at least theoretically possible. Given the relatively long history of IR, such a system of creative confrontation has had ample time to emerge, but has not. Here we do well to follow the advice attributed to Einstein, “We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” If we take seriously critical perspectives on the history of IR, doing more of the same is not an acceptable answer.

Sil and Katzenstein note that “‘creative confrontations’ (Lichbach 2007, 274) between paradigms have often spurred intellectual progress within a paradigm by motivating its adherents to refine their theories and narratives in response to challenges from others” (2010, 8). However, they note that this progress has most often been at the intra-paradigm level and has not been “a guarantee of progress for any discipline writ large” (2010, 8). This intra-paradigm progress is
initiated by and contributes to further inter-paradigm debate—a formula that we already saw leads to the “widening chasm between academia and the world of policy and practice” (2010, 35).

Given that IR has had multiple robust traditions throughout its history and that this has still led to a flight from reality, division of theory and practice, and increasingly compartmentalization, it seems unlikely that further proliferation of paradigms without attempt at interface and dialogue will solve these problems. Especially given the historical failures of IR to offer meaningful analysis of the end of the Cold War (Sil and Katzenstein 2010) and to explain the emergent security community in the absence of an external threat (Jervis 2005), we should look to a new approach, such as analytic eclecticism, rather than hoping against hope that the old one will finally resolve the problems it helped to create.

**Analytic Eclecticism as an Expression of the “Pluralist Stance”**

In elaborating their “pluralist stance,” Kellert, Longino, and Waters, whose work was examined in chapter one, take great care to differentiate their position from what they call a “modest pluralism” (2006, xi-xii). Modest pluralism tolerates some level of plurality but treats it as resolvable in principle. This inclination to resolve plurality reduces to a form of monism, albeit a more nuanced form.

Although they do not use the word, Sil and Katzenstein make several useful distinctions that effectively distance themselves from a modest pluralist mindset. This includes not wanting to be seen as hedging bets and being against the idea that combining all paradigms will reveal an underlying “super paradigm” capable of explaining away all the rest.

Sil and Katzenstein write that “analytic eclecticism is not intended as a means to hedge one’s bets to cope with uncertainty” (2010, 16). This can be read as a renunciation of the view
Kellert, Longino and Waters describe as tolerating plurality not out of a genuine pluralism, “but because it is difficult to predict which research program (or preliminary theory) will lead to a theory that provides a complete account of the phenomenon” (2006, xii). By rejecting a strictly utilitarian justification for eclecticism, Sil and Katzenstein show themselves to share an important part of the “pluralist stance” which Kellert, Longino, and Waters advocate.

Like all academic work that is not absolutist and foundational, both Sil and Katzenstein and Kellert et al must make obligatory rhetorical moves to distances themselves from relativism. Sil and Katzenstein state, “Analytic eclecticism does not imply that ‘anything goes’” (2010, 16). Both with regard to their “pluralism about science” and to pluralism in science studies, Kellert, Longino, and Waters insist they “are not promoting an ‘anything goes’ view” (2006, xxvii). Both sets of authors recognize that their work falls on a spectrum between objectivism and relativism and that work which fails to explicitly carve out a middle ground will be unfairly classed as relativistic.

Sil and Katzenstein and Kellert et al also have in common the restraint from asserting their position in a dogmatic manner. As noted earlier, Sil and Katzenstein repeatedly make gestures of respect towards paradigm bound research and leave open the possibility that in certain situations research conducted from the standpoint of one particular paradigm may provide the best answer to a given problem (2010, 89). Kellert, Longino, and Waters are more explicit about their attitude: “We do not hold that for every phenomenon there will inevitably be multiple irreducible models or explanations. We hold that the task of identifying which situations require multiple approaches requires empirical investigation” (2006, xiv). Both eclecticism and scientific pluralism, by their nature anti-hegemonic projects, seek only a foot in the door, rather than universal application.
Perhaps in connection with the earlier point about hedging of bets and using pluralism only as a means, both Sil and Katzenstein and Kellert et al resist the assumption that theory integration is possible in all cases. For Kellert, Longino, and Waters, “the pluralist stance differs from more modest versions of pluralism because it acknowledges the possibility that there may be no way to integrate the plurality of approaches or accounts in a science” (2006, xiv). Sil and Katzenstein strike a similarly skeptical tone on the topic of theory integration: “We view analytic eclecticism as a flexible approach that needs to be tailored to a given problem and to existing debates over aspects of this problem. As such, it categorically rejects the idea of a unified synthesis that can provide a common theoretical foundation for various sorts of problem [sic]” (2010, 17). This common skepticism reflects the empiricism shared by Sil and Katzenstein and Kellert et al.

**Room to Expand Beyond Analytic Eclecticism**

Given the excessively compartmentalized nature of IR and its history of great debates between competing schools, it is understandable that Sil and Katzenstein’s call for analytic eclecticism is of a limited nature. Out of admiration much more than malign intent, I believe there are several friendly amendments that can be made to expand the changes to the field of IR called for within Sil and Katzenstein’s concept of analytic eclecticism. These include the move toward a global IR and the benefits of eclectic (sometimes interdisciplinary) work being done within the sometimes marginalized, more recently established subfields of IR. Two exemplars of this spirit are foreign policy analysis and ethnic/civil conflict studies.

With the changes in the international system since the end of the Cold War and especially following the 9/11 attacks, mainstream IR scholars need to find ways of effectively engaging the issues that today’s foreign policy operatives will be grappling with. This issue and the broader
need for rapprochement between IR and FPA and how this can lead to practically relevant scholarship is the topic of chapter four. This subject represents the primary scholarly contribution of the current project.

At the most abstract level, the current project seeks to champion three forms of pluralism in the context of IR. These are theoretical, methodological, and level of analysis pluralism. The above discussion of Sil and Katzenstein surveys the status of theoretical pluralism; however we saw that these scholars downplay the importance of methodology. By contrast, Jackson foregrounds methodology and delves into the various philosophical issues accompanying methodological pluralism. This is explored in the next chapter. Level of analysis pluralism has supporters within the literature of both IR and FPA, but is under-theorized and often implicit. Carving out room for level of analysis pluralism relies on the precedents of analytic eclecticism and methodological pluralism both theoretically and rhetorically. For this reason we need to examine the recent work by Patrick Thaddeus Jackson on methodological pluralism in IR before endeavoring to defend pluralism in terms of level of analysis.

Viewed from a certain perspective, Jackson’s work constitutes either a threat to analytic eclecticism’s possibility or a drastic reduction of its relevance, importance, and significance. Figuring out how analytic eclecticism (as presented here) can mesh with Jackson’s ideas is thus essential before moving forward.
Chapter Three: Methodological Pluralism in Jackson

“Is this new preoccupation with dialogue yet another metatheoretical diversion...whereby international relations scholars divert precious and scarce scholarly resources from productive "first order" (for example, empirical) investigations to sterile "second order" navel gazing—or are we witnessing here a potentially important development that may eventually help us leave the isolated intellectual realms into which we have drifted over time?” – Yosef Lapid (2003, 128).

Jackson’s Vocabulary, Typology, and the Meaning of “Science”

As we saw in chapter two, the arguments of Sil and Katzenstein were partially motivated by frustration with the oft-mentioned “paradigm-wars” of IR. Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, also frustrated with the state of discourse in IR, is more concerned with the conversation over the status of IR as a “science” than with how theoretical paradigm traditions interact with one another. Due to the fact that this issue is rarely given the type of serious attention desired by Jackson, the vocabulary with which to carry on a discussion is largely lacking. This leads Jackson to invent categories and to create a typology to organize the lines of debate within the field. Jackson’s typology serves to guide a discussion of philosophical issues related to the production of knowledge in IR rather than as an exhaustive atlas of scholarly camps and which scholars should be placed in each.

Jackson uses positions on two philosophical issues as his criteria for classifying scholars. The first is their position on the mind-world distinction. Dualists conceive of mind and world as completely different entities, and in some form or another, view knowledge as a proper correspondence between the ideas in the mind and what actually exists in the world. On the contrary, monists view the mind and world as inseparable from each other. For monists it is
impossible to speak of an objective observation of what exists outside of the mind. The other variable Jackson uses, whether one is phenomenalist or transfactualist, depends on one’s idea about how far our knowledge extends. Phenomenalists believe our knowledge is limited to empirical experience while transfactualists believe our knowledge can transcend experience. The typology is mapped as follows:

**Fig. 3.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mind-world Dualism</th>
<th>Phenomenalism</th>
<th>Transfactualism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mind-world Monism</td>
<td>Analyticism</td>
<td>Reflexivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the “behavioralist turn”, the dominant methodology in IR has been neopositivism. It is a testament to the strength and hegemony of the neopositivist methodology that any and all methodologies that oppose or differ from it are often classed together as “post-positivist”, “reflexive”, “interpretive”, or “critical theory”, when most of these terms have more appropriate specific meanings. Jackson’s work challenges the dominance of neopositivism. He freely states this as at the heart of his project, noting: “If my typology helps place such [non-positivist] scholarship on more of an equal footing with neopositivism, it will have accomplished perhaps its most pressing task” (Jackson 2011, 40).

Very simply, Jackson critically analyses the “disciplinary” use of the word “science” to put varying schools of scholarship onto an equal footing with neopositivism. In Jackson’s view, neopositivism has unfairly usurped a monopoly on the claim to “science,” “clearly drawing,” as all who invoke the word in IR discourse do, “on the cultural prestige associated with the notion of ‘science’” (2011, 2). A typical path taken by scholars looking to firmly establish IR as a
science (or at least to enshrine their particular way of doing science) has been to look to a science of unquestionable status (such as physics or chemistry) and attempt to extricate some method that could be applied by IR. Another is to draw from the work of a prominent philosopher of science and attempt to establish a programmatic recipe on the authority of that philosopher. In opposition to both of these strategies of “making IR a science” Jackson notes that references to “scientific method” and “philosophy of science” imply a homogeneity or consensus that simply does not exist.\(^\text{10}\)

Importantly for Jackson (likely influenced by his post-structural/postmodern view of power), “simply rejecting ‘science,’ or elaborating an alternate such as ‘understanding,’ leaves the whole discursive arrangement intact, and does not really offer a reasonable or effective rejoinder to the charge that the non-‘scientific’ work that one is doing is not somehow of lesser value” (Jackson 2011, 10). This view of the problem leads Jackson to elaborate a definition of science to which all who might possibly aspire to within IR scholarship might aspire, but clearly sets itself apart from art and politics/rhetoric. Jackson establishes this broad definition of science by appealing to Max Weber’s: “thoughtful ordering of empirical actuality” (Jackson 2011, 20) and lays out three criteria for meeting this definition:

- a scientific knowledge-claim…must be \textit{systematically} related to its presuppositions; it must be capable of \textit{public criticism} within the scientific community—and in particular, public criticism designed to improve the knowledge being claimed; and it must be intended to produce \textit{worldly knowledge}, whatever one takes ‘the world’ to include. (Jackson 2011, 193).

\(^\text{10}\) The relevance of consensus as a criterion is raised by Chernoff (2013) in his critique of Jackson (2011). In my view, Jackson satisfactorily meets this objection in his response in the same issue (2013). Jackson notes that the point is not that we should be seeking consensus, just that there is no agreed upon standard of demarcation that justifies using the term “science” in a disciplinary or normalizing manner in the service of neopositivism.
These criteria might seem to present a fairly lax definition of science, especially to someone judging them from the vantage point of the natural sciences. On the other hand, some such as Sylvester (2013) view them as too exclusionary, with the potential to downplay the knowledge generated by an intellectual pursuit such as art. However, these criticisms are misplaced because Jackson is neither attempting to firmly establish IR as a science by some objective normative standard, nor is he attempting to use these criteria as the demarcation of all knowledge, or even all knowledge produced within the field of IR. Rather, he has a specific target with his criteria—what it means to produce scientific knowledge-claims within IR that can be evaluated as valid or invalid.

Similar to Sil and Katzenstein, as well as others like Nye (2009) in the IR community, Jackson is concerned with the “flight from reality” (Shapiro 2005) within the social sciences broadly as well as the growing divide between theory and practice in the field of IR. In a thinly veiled jab, Jackson expresses his frustration with the arguments about the status of IR as a science or which types of IR scholarship count as scientific:

Since we cannot resolve the question of what science is by appealing to a consensus in philosophy, one option is to become philosophers of science ourselves, and to spend our time and our scholarly efforts trying to resolve thorny and abstract issues about the status of theory and evidence and the limits of epistemic certainty. But this is an unappealing option for a scholarly field defined, if loosely, by its empirical focus… (Jackson 2011, 17).

It is worth noting that Jackson is certainly not advocating an atheoretical or theoretically unreflective field of IR. After all, his own research could justifiably be classified as a work of “philosophy of IR.” Furthermore, throughout the text Jackson expresses his frustration with the
lack of enriching philosophical debate within the field and even refers to IR as exhibiting “conceptual and philosophical poverty” (Jackson 2011, 34). The juxtaposition of Jackson’s admonition against engaging in philosophy of IR along with his call for more philosophical discussion within IR may be initially confusing, but it is not contradictory. What Jackson is hoping for is an IR field where scholars are able to identify their own “philosophical wagers” and can elaborate the epistemological basis on which they are making claims about the world. Such clarity and the ability to situate one’s research will alleviate much of the confusion of philosophical vocabulary that Jackson attempts to cut through and will allow us to evaluate works on their own terms. While such a desire demands that works provide a foundation, it does not require them to submit the foundation. This is the key point; Jackson wants to move away from the search for a firm, secure, atemporal, and acultural basis for all IR knowledge claims. Claims still need to be founded in some way—and we need to be aware of that foundation—but we should dispense with futile debates about the more absolute sense of foundation. By taking such a position Jackson clearly situates himself within the camp that his regular collaborator Daniel H. Nexon describes as, “those interested in moving beyond the ‘paradigm wars’ without sacrificing theoretically informed analysis of international relations” (Nexon 2010).

**Separating Paradigm and Methodology—A New Typology**

One of the consequences of Jackson’s argument is that theoretical traditions, or paradigms, can be treated as logically separable from the methodology within which one conducts research. This move toward complete logical separation can be read as the full realization of the work began by J. Samuel Barkin when he set out to disassociate the Realist paradigm from the methodological commitments to materialism and rationalism present in some, but not all of self-identified Realist research.
While Jackson tends to discount the notion of IR paradigms, these are organizational schemes with broad familiarity taught to most undergraduate students. Overlaying paradigm and methodology—mapping them both in one figure—serves as an incredibly useful tool for sketching the lines of division between IR scholars. Earlier we saw that Jackson lists four categories of methodology: neopositivism, critical realism, analyticism, and reflexivity. Again, treating these as separable from paradigms, we can thus construct a table where the four methodologies are set against the three primary paradigms of IR. This matrix allows us 12 potential categories for classifying research. In turn, this provides more ability to do justice to the full range of scholars’ intellectual commitments and makes it more difficult to confuse the positions implied by a certain paradigmatic affiliation. The 12 part table of ideal-typical paradigm-methodology combinations looks as follows:

**Fig. 3.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Neopositivism</th>
<th>Critical Realism</th>
<th>Analyticism</th>
<th>Reflexivist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Realism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liberalism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constructivism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since part of my justification for deploying this matrix is in the elegance and utility which it lends to attempts to categorize scholars and scholarship in the field of IR, I am obligated to offer a few examples. The Realism-neopositivism cell can be filled by almost all neorealists other than Kenneth Waltz himself. Here we should be careful. There is nothing inherent in the “neo” labels that brings together neopositivism and neorealism; it is only a coincidence that the two “neo” isms match up in this situation. Waever (1996) views the neorealists as representing the final
complete culmination of the behavioralist turn in International Relations. The behavioral bent of these scholars and in particular their strict focus on observable, quantifiable phenomenon casts them as neopositivists. Equally important is the emphasis often placed upon the need for falsifiable theories about IR. They are identified as Realists due to their views about the centrality of power in world politics. Scholars that could be considered of a Realist-neopositivist variety include John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt.

It should come as no surprise then that as neorealism was identified as usually partaking in a neopositivist methodology, so too neoliberalism is generally characterized by a neopositivist methodology. Influential IR scholar Robert Keohane serves as an easy example of Liberal-neopositivism. In our discussion of Waever’s history of the inter-paradigm debate we saw that Keohane was a key player in reaching the neo-neo synthesis which effectively ended the debate and brought about a convergence of neorealism and neoliberalism. Taking the collected works of *Neorealism and its Critics* as a characteristic example, it is clear that Keohane and his intellectual allies accept much of what the neorealists have to say regarding the structure of the international system. The limited points of disagreement between the two groups revolve mainly upon the role and influence of international institutions and to what extent cooperation is possible between states under conditions of anarchy. Although the two groups disagree about the relative importance of these factors, they lack a fundamental disagreement on what it means to go about “doing IR” and have a shared understanding of what counts as evidence in mediating their dispute over the importance of states, institutions, power, and cooperation.

Although the word Constructivism has often been associated with approaches to IR that reject positivism, Molly Cochran disparagingly refers to “a form of ‘constructivism’ that aimed largely to fill explanatory gaps with ideational causes—a kind of IR positivism 2.0” (Cochran
Here I agree with Cochran in the controversial commitment to the fact that some Constructivists actually do adhere to a neopositivist methodology in their research, although I do not fully share her disapproval. When ideas are treated as causal variables that are best examined through naturalistic, quantitative, empirical analysis, we are dealing with a Constructivist-neopositivism. This classification may appear odd to those accustomed to using the term Constructivism primarily as a signifier for non-positivist methodologies emerging in the 4th debate. Here I have joined with the view best articulated by Jackson and Nexon (2004) that Constructivism as a methodology is an empty, misleading concept. The 3x4 typology I have constructed treats Constructivism as a paradigm of IR which takes as its subject matter ideas, norms, values, and identities. Consistent with this conception, a Constructivist-neopositivism uses advanced statistical or other positivist methods to draw out the causal influence of these factors by testing them against material conditions.

One of the richest areas of study within the Constructivist-neopositivist framework is the democratic peace theory. Much ink has been spilled in assessment of the democratic peace. Chernoff (2009) points to this area of discourse as a clear example of progress—a success that should be emulated in order for IR to secure its supposedly rightful status as a science on the same grounds as physics or chemistry. Lepgold and Nincic (2001) point to democratic peace research as a noteworthy exception to a field of scholarship too often characterized by its distance from the concerns of policy-makers in the international arena. Many have sought to dispute, discredit, and otherwise critique the findings of democratic peace theory. The goal here is not to stake out a position in any of these debates, but to point to the significance of democratic peace scholarship and recognize that much of it is conducted from within the framework of Constructivist-neopositivism. While democratic peace scholarship illustrates
Constructivist work from within a neopositivist methodology, we should acknowledge that much of Constructivist scholarship is conducted from within a non-positivist methodology.

Having looked at how neopositivism has been adopted by all three major paradigms of IR, we should now turn our attention to non-positivist methodologies, starting with their occurrence in Constructivism and eventually dealing with the challenging example of Kenneth Waltz, a Realist. There are two noteworthy varieties of non-positivist Constructivism: critical realist Constructivism and analyticist Constructivism. In the interest of avoiding confusion over the often overlooked diversity within the label “Constructivism” I will examine both of these varieties while only looking at one example of non-positivist scholarship for Realism.

The standard of critical realist Constructivism is borne by two distinguished Constructivist scholars. I am referring here to Alexander Wendt and Colin Wight. Both of these scholars have been forthcoming about their allegiance to the ideas of philosopher of science Roy Bhaskar, the founder of critical realism. In a 1992 article, Wendt argues that we can only transcend binary partisan approaches to the agent-structure problem through adoption of a critical realist perspective. Wight has written a series of articles advancing critical realist Constructivism, in fact he seems to have devoted more of his publications to defending this view than producing empirical research (Patomaki and Wight 2000; Wight 2007; Kurki and Wight 2007; Joseph and Wight 2010). Wendt would likely identify as a Constructivist first and a critical realist second, whereas for Wight it seems the critical realist label bears his primary allegiance. Nonetheless, I do not hesitate in classifying either of these scholars in the critical realist Constructivism category.

Analyticism, the second non-positivist methodology, was not originally a category in Jackson’s vocabulary. Indeed, in an earlier formulation of his typology, Jackson labelled the box
that now corresponds to analyticism as “pragmatism” (Jackson 2007, 17). In chapter one, we saw that John Gerard Ruggie identifies a strand of Constructivism, “neo-classical constructivism,” as having “an epistemological affinity with pragmatism” (Ruggie 1998, 881). Although Jackson certainly has valid philosophical reasons for backing away from the label of pragmatism (most likely a desire to be inclusive of research not explicitly pragmatist in origin), I feel that I am justified in classifying Ruggie’s neo-classical Constructivism as an example of analyticist Constructivism due to its pragmatist ties. Jackson may believe that all pragmatist work is analyticist, but not necessarily that all analyticist work must be pragmatist. Following Ruggie’s neo-classical Constructivists as my example (here Ruggie places himself, Kratochwil, Onuf, Finnemore, and Katzenstein among others) it is clear that at least one version of analyticist Constructivism is possible. Nonetheless, it is important to develop rules for what all thinkers associated with this label must think.

Some readers may have been confused by my deliberate exclusion of neorealism’s founder, Kenneth Waltz, from the neopositivist Realism cell discussed earlier. In line with Patrick Jackson I argue that many IR scholars, from a variety of backgrounds have misunderstood Waltz. These include not only Vasquez (1997), as Jackson points out, but also Alker and Biersteker (1984) and Waever (1996). For example, according to Alker and Biersteker:

Waltz’s approach is clearly neo-realistic behavioralism…His conception of theory building and hypothesis testing is largely logical empiricist. A search for ‘value free’ timeless laws is proposed with Olympian detachment (1984, 133).

In this context, the authors use the labels behavioralism and logical empiricism in a way that relates to one another but is not identical. Behavioralism here means the focus on measurable
behaviors, to the exclusion of state intentions, identities, and other intangible qualities. The logical empiricist labeling appears to be intended to connect Waltz to the verificationist/falsificationist view of scientific demarcation and theory testing. Similarly, in his influential chapter on the inter-paradigm debate Waever identifies the rise of neorealism and specifically Waltz with “a delayed and displaced victory for the ‘scientific’ side of the second debate” (1996, 162). While Waltz might have strived for greater precision and systematicity of theory than the classical realists, this continual linkage to behavioralism, naturalism, scientism, and logical positivism greatly mistakes his views about theory.

We saw earlier that analyticism is tied to the epistemology of pragmatism and involves an instrumental view of social science theory. With the repeated association of Waltz with behavioralism and the hyper-scientific approach to the study of IR, the descriptions offered by many thinkers would lead us to believe Waltz is a neopositivist. To support his interpretation of the methodology underlying Waltz’s work, Jackson points us to a passage early in the Waltz’s landmark *Theory of International Politics* (1979):

If a theory is not an edifice of truth and not a reproduction of reality, then what is it? A theory is a picture, mentally formed, of a bounded realm or domain of activity. A theory is a depiction of the organization of a domain and of the connections among its parts…The infinite materials of any realm can be organized in endlessly different ways. A theory indicates that some factors are more important than others and specifies relations among them…Theory isolates one realm from all others in order to deal with it intellectually (Waltz 1979,8 qtd in Jackson 2011, 113).
Waltz’s own statement on his position regarding theory appears to be much different than the version of Waltz we were given by Vasquez, Alker, Biersteker, and Waever. Here Waltz’s language is not behavioralist or logical positivist. He has nothing to say regarding the need for the conjecture of falsifiable hypotheses. In the first sentence, where Waltz establishes his view that a theory is “not a reproduction of reality,” those familiar with the epistemological debates of the 20th century should see a red flag. In shying away from the attempt to accurately depict reality, which had been the definition of knowledge used throughout the modern period of philosophy, Waltz is joining in the radical move articulated and made famous by Richard Rorty in his book *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. In this revolutionary book Rorty criticized conceptions of knowledge as an attempt to formulate ideas that correspond to an externally existing reality and revived a pragmatist view of knowledge that is measured by its cash value in experiential terms. That Waltz rejects the idea of the “mirror” is interesting not only because Rorty’s book was published in the same year as *Theory of International Politics*, but because Jackson points to Rorty as a thinker whose ideas are emblematic of the analyticist methodology. Agreeing with Rorty on this important issue would provide strong evidence for characterizing Waltz as an analyticist; after all, we saw in chapter one that Rorty was known as one of the strongest critics of positivism. If Waltz agrees with Rorty, we see at last how misguided it is to consider Waltz a card-carrying positivist.

Objections remain to be considered. Above we saw only the passage from Waltz that Jackson cites at length in his book. Some might be concerned that this passage is idiosyncratic and out of line with the rest of Waltz stated views about theory, still others might be concerned that I have simply regurgitated Jackson and not added anything to the conversation. Here I will
explore other excerpts from Waltz’s work and show how they cohere with an analyticist methodology rather than neopositivism.

Waltz frequently makes analogies to economic theory, a strong influence on his IR theory. One particular passage reveals Waltz’s views about the purpose of theory:

Unrealistically, economic theorists conceive of an economy operating in isolation from its society and polity. Unrealistically, economists assume that the economic world is the whole of the world. Unrealistically, economists think of the acting unit, the famous ‘economic man,’ as a single-minded profit maximizer. They single out one aspect of man leave aside the wondrous variety of human life. As any moderately sensible economist knows, ‘economic man’ does not exist. Anyone who asks businessmen how they make their decisions will find that the assumption that men are economic maximizers grossly distorts their characters. The assumption that men behave as economic men, which is known to be false as a descriptive statement, turns out to be useful in the construction of theory (Keohane 1986, 83).

In Waltz’s view then, despite all these descriptively inaccurate assumptions, economists are able to construct a useful theory that provides important insights about the structure of markets. In Waltz’s own theory, the “economic man” is replaced with “the rational state” which pursues its interests. The domestic political conditions and bureaucratic politics that many point to in explaining foreign policy are here parallels to the actual decision making of firms and businessmen, which are sidelined in economic theory. Again we see an emphasis on the fact that complete descriptive accuracy is not the goal of a theory. Waltz continues to reiterate this view throughout his *Theory of International Politics*:
“I assume that states seek to ensure their survival. The assumption is a radical simplification made for the sake of constructing a theory. The question to ask of the assumption, as ever, is not whether it is true but whether it is the most sensible and useful one that can be made” (Keohane 1986, 85).

“A theory contains at least one theoretical assumption. Such assumptions are not factual. One therefore cannot legitimately ask if they are true, but only if they are useful” (Keohane 1986, 116).

In fact, in all of Waltz’s discussions of theory we never find emphasis on verification or falsification, and thus the markings of neopositivist methodology. Theory is based on assumptions which in some cases are descriptively false, and the theory itself is not a reproduction of reality. This view is analyticist. Confusion about this point has led to much unnecessary conflict in the field of IR. How this reinterpretation can resolve longstanding disputes, particularly with regard to the structure-agent debate, will be a subject of chapter four.

Through classification of scholars in the past several paragraphs, I have attempted to illustrate both the diversity within methodologies and theoretical traditions as well as the logical independence of theoretical tradition and methodology from one another. More argument and subtlety could certainly be demanded of the way the field is organized here. Some of the boxes have been left entirely blank due either to nonexistence of scholars that fit the criteria or to lack of knowledge of the author about every work by every IR scholar. I have offered some guidance here and leave it to more eminent or ambitious scholars to finish the work. With this in mind, here is what our 3x4 chart looks like tentatively filled in:
It is important not to confuse the presence of question marks with the impossibility of holding such a position. All of the cells are possible positions to hold in principle; that is, none of them contain logical contradictions. Some cells, for example neopositivist Realism and analyticist Constructivism, have tended to be fairly common instances in my reading of the literature and were thus easy to fill. On the other hand IR Realists who could be classified as practicing a critical realist methodology may not yet exist.

This table is not the first attempt to visually map the field of IR using such a table. In 1984 Alker and Biersteker mapped the field using a 3 times 3 matrix opposing the political labels conservative, liberal-internationalist, and radical/Marxist with the epistemological labels traditionalist, behaviorist and dialectical. Even in 1996, Ole Waever referred to Alker and Biersteker’s matrix as “probably the most comprehensive overview” (Waever 1996, 154). Despite noting important exceptions, and conceding that “the relationships between political orientation and scientific epistemology…are not supposed to be timeless, unchanging truths” (Alker and Biersteker 1984, 137) the authors still make more of a connection between these two categories than I am comfortable doing in the map of today’s field. The above 3 by 4 matrix, constructed in this project, but also implicit in Jackson’s Conduct of Inquiry should be seen as an up to date revival of Alker and Biersteker’s matrix. It is not all inclusive, nor does it present

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neopositivism</th>
<th>Critical realism</th>
<th>Analyticism</th>
<th>Reflexivist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mearsheimer and Walt</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>E.H. Carr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberalism</td>
<td>Keohane</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>Democratic Peace Research</td>
<td>Wendt and Wight</td>
<td>Ruggie, Kratochwil, Onuf, Katzenstein</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
entirely distinct or mutually exclusive categories, but it provides a useful touchstone for locating the vast majority of scholars publishing in the field.

Why put such an inordinate amount of effort into enumerating various scientific methodologies and attempting to correctly classify scholars with these labels? Scholars throughout academia often scoff at this type of philosophical reflection. Jackson notes that a common response to his type of work includes “calls to dispense with ‘meta-theory’ in favor of a focus on substantive claims (for example, Friedman and Starr 1997)” (Jackson 2011, 30). From the perspective of these critics, the current project and the work of Jackson represent just two more projects that move IR further away from its primary charge—empirical study of world politics. Such a view is problematic.

Remaining silent on these issues is not a matter of removing obstacles to the neutral pursuit of empirical study. Since no one, let alone self-described scientists, can operate in the absence of a “hook-up” or philosophical ontology, the failure to articulate one’s ontology indicates a deferral towards the status quo, namely neopositivist methodology. In a situation of unequal power distribution, neutrality reinforces and empowers the dominant faction. Specifically, Jackson notes that a notion of mind-world dualism underlies any attempt to apply standards of empirical evidence to determining which philosophical ontology is “correct.” Empiricism cannot be the judge of highest appeal when empiricism itself is in dispute. Scholars who bemoan “meta-theory” often stand to benefit from a lack of reflection on how certain approaches are legitimized and delegitimized. This emphasis on the need for discussion supports the notion that we can move towards a pluralistic IR field without sacrificing “theoretically informed analysis of international relations” (Nexon 2010). The spirit Nexon describes lies at the
heart of the work of Sil, Katzenstein, Jackson, and the current attempt at moving the IR field in a new direction.

**How Does This Stand With Eclecticism? Theory Integration and Religious Dialogue**

Taking Jackson’s arguments on methodology seriously, we are called to revisit the question of theoretical integration and its place with regard to eclecticism. Following Kellert, Longino, and Waters (2006), pluralists should be skeptical about assuming the possibility of theoretical integration or synthesis, knowing that it can be indistinguishable from a dogmatic monist position. In chapter two we saw that Sil and Katzenstein share a similar hesitance, noting the propensity of attempts at theory integration to end up as “intellectually hegemonic projects that end up marginalizing the contributions by existing paradigms” (2010, 17).

Here it is important to remember that Sil and Katzenstein are responding to a discourse that is sloppy with its philosophical vocabulary. Eclecticism instructs us to draw from traditions with varying ontologies. Implicitly, Sil and Katzenstein were dealing with scientific ontologies—ideas about which entities are relevant units in the analysis of world politics. They were unable to articulate a concept of philosophical ontology, the deeper level upon which approaches to the science of IR differ from one another. Jackson’s distinction between philosophical and scientific ontology makes the incommensurability dealt with by Sil and Katzenstein seem almost superficial; in light of the divides among neopositivism, critical realism, analyticism, and reflexivity, it seems like a minor point that we can communicate across paradigms such as Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism.

One reaction to Jackson’s typology is that we can easily construct an eclectic approach that combines elements of disparate theoretical or paradigmatic traditions, as long as we stay within a single philosophical ontology or methodology. For example, combining neopositivist
Realism with neopositivist Liberalism and the often misunderstood neopositivist Constructivism. Operating within a single *philosophical ontology* an eclectic approach to research comes readily. Using neopositivism as an example, we would be using the same standards of evidence and view of knowledge throughout. The eclectic status of the research would come from considering power, cooperation, and ideas, all of which are associated with different research traditions or paradigms. In this case the continuity of the neopositivist methodology would outweigh the differences between paradigms, which are largely socially constructed and historically contingent. None of this is inconsistent with what Sil and Katzenstein have written—they want scholars to stop exaggerating the differences between paradigms. The real question posed by this example is whether a common philosophical ontology (such as neopositivism) can unite the elements of an eclectic approach (the varying paradigms) in such a way that theoretical integration can be achieved in these select cases.

Understandably, our first reaction to this is that there seems to be no reason why IR paradigms all situated within the same methodological approach would not be candidates for synthesis. When the methodology remains constant, so do the standards of evidence. This makes it seem reasonable that we can empirically determine how each of the aspects of an explanation fit together into one neat account. However, we should be careful in running away with this conclusion. Looking back to the subject matter addressed by Kellert, Longino, and Waters, may provide some clues in this case. While much of the discussion of pluralism within IR is spurred by the great proliferation of theories, research traditions, and methodologies, it is important to remember that Kellert and his colleagues deal mainly with examples from the natural sciences. As opposed to IR, most of these sciences possess an indisputable body of empirical accomplishments and can point to clear measures of progress. These sciences also differ from IR
in that they have actually experienced the presence of a paradigm, whereas IR has always exhibited a strong division of some kind—even at the height of neorealism. Given this, we can conclude that some of the theories Kellert and his colleagues were dealing with developed under the same philosophical ontology. Even then, Kellert and his colleagues argued for the possibility of not reaching theory synthesis or integration. Thus, we should not assume that a common philosophical ontology will lead to this type of development in IR. Thus Jackson may have too hastily dismissed the significance of arguments in favor of eclecticism.

While the possibility of eclecticism is made simpler when working within a single methodology, Jackson’s emphasis of the incommensurability between methodologies makes us question the possibility of inter-paradigm dialogue—let alone eclecticism. Much of Fred Chernoff’s critique of Jackson centers on the idea that Jackson’s conception of science leads to a relativism that makes dialogue between methodologies impossible (2013, 360). According to Chernoff, Jackson’s position on the “science question” downplays the role to be played by philosophy of science which in turn impedes the possibility of progress within the discipline of International Relations (2013, 359). On Chernoff’s reading, this leads to a relativism which insulates scholars practicing within each philosophical ontology (neopositivism, critical realism, analyticism, reflexivity) from one another, meaning that progress can only be judged from within the context of a specific philosophical ontology (2013, 360). Chernoff harshly criticizes the analogy Jackson draws to religion, expressing his belief that the history of interfaith dialogue does not pose a promising model for IR scholarship to follow (2013, 358-359). Meeting Chernoff’s objection, and saving the analogy of religious dialogue might be the best hope for sustaining eclecticism across methodologies. I believe that Chernoff’s criticism of Jackson on
this front errs in two ways: first, it only acknowledges the negative side of interfaith dialogue and second, it ignores Jackson’s analogy to culture.

Chernoff’s dismissal of interfaith dialogue as a model is understandable given the violent history associated with religion and the encounters between differing belief systems throughout human history. However, Chernoff’s view is cynical in that it calls to mind images of crusades, jihads, the 30 Years War, and the current terroristic rampage of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria across the Middle East. More moderately, Chernoff’s view stems from domestic non-violent conflicts between people of differing religious beliefs, the culture wars of abortion and gay marriage being perhaps a prime example. Most simply, Chernoff draws upon the image of the “shouting match” which many people hold of conversations between differing religions, which Jackson himself acknowledges. Though this proves that religious encounter can be violent at worst, it does not prove that confusion and agreement to disagree is the absolute ceiling of what it can achieve.

Interfaith dialogue—both on the macro-level and on the micro-level of the individual has achieved great successes that should not so easily be overlooked. From the macro perspective, a focus on violent clashes of religion is misleading because it suggests that religions are more or less static entities that go to battle from time to time. This glosses over the fact that religions are fluid entities constantly undergoing change. There is no such thing as a pure religion; everywhere religion has been developed and practiced within a historical and cultural context. In many cases the culture the religion enters varies greatly from that within which it was formed and yet we see varying degrees of synthesis and adaptations resulting from these encounters. Of course, not only does the spread of a particular religion encounter differing cultures, it encounters other existing religions. This type of encounter between religions has often led to
change and development at the macro level. An interesting example of this is the entrance of Buddhism into China, where it not only encountered a Chinese culture vastly different from the Indian culture of the same time period, but preexisting Hindu, Daoist, and Confucian traditions. Tansen Sen recently published an article reexamining the entry of Buddhism into China. Sen emphasizes the ingenuity of Buddhist monks who adapted the religion to Sino culture and points to the significant impact Chinese Daoism had on shaping the development of Chinese Buddhism (2012).

Other examples of successful inter-faith exchange can be found in the medieval Islamic world. During the 8th and 9th centuries, Baghdad emerged as an important center of learning. During this time period, the Abbasid Caliphate saw the translation of pagan Greek philosophy first into Syriac and then into Arabic (D’Ancona 2005, 18). This process was characterized by inclusivity in that “Christians carried on a tradition of logical learning in close relationship with the Arab falasifa” (D’Ancona 2005, 20). Of particular intellectual importance was the activity of the translation circle of Al-Kindi. A collaborative effort by Syrian Christians and Arab Muslims, this group translated the works of neoplatonists Plotinus and Proclus along with Aristotle’s Metaphysics and De Caelo (D’Ancona 2005, 21). These events provide an example of inter-faith exchange between not two, but three religious groups. Christians and Muslims worked together to translate pagan texts that all saw as relevant to their religious beliefs. The fact that the Islamic authorities saw Greek philosophy as independent from, yet of value to understanding the Quran, is particularly striking (D’Ancona 2005, 21). Due to the convergence and cooperation of both religious groups and individuals Al-Kindi’s circle and the broader translation movement spans both the macro and micro level of religious exchange.
Specifically on the micro-level of individuals, inter-faith dialogue boasts more readily available, personal evidence of success. Harvard protestant theologian Gordon Kaufman has documented how his understanding of his own faith has been refined through his encounter, study, and practice of Buddhism. In a similar vein, Catholic theologian Paul Knitter has published a book titled *Without Buddha I Could not be a Christian* (2009). A similar attempt at bridging has been made on the other side of the Christianity-Buddhism divide. The famous Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh has written multiple books emphasizing the points of overlap between the teachings of Buddha and Jesus (1995, 1999). While the scope of these examples may be limited due to their reliance on the relationship between Christianity and Buddhism, they cast doubt on the assertion that differing religions cannot achieve dialogue in principle. With religions and with scientific methodologies, some might be more complementary and others adversarial. The point is that in neither context can we outright dismiss the possibility of constructive dialogue. The examples presented here present a *prima facie* case against such dismissal and encourage us to search for opportunities for positive encounter and points of overlap.

While IR’s history surely carries the baggage of “Great Debates” and inter-paradigm wars, we are not even worthy of a place in the university if we give up on our power of dialogue, doing so would put us in line with holy warriors rather than those great pioneers of interfaith dialogue. If such success can occur between followers of such different belief systems, it shows great promise for such dialogue in IR if we marshal the best of our intellectual heritage and its value of Socratic conversation and Miltonian free encounters.

---

11 I am in debt to Professor Mark Berkson of Hamline University for his suggestion of these examples.
12 Richard Rorty emphasizes these two themes of Western intellectual inquiry in his *Pragmatism, Relativism, and Irrationalism* (1980).
Even if we were to put aside the argument above and grant validity to Chernoff’s dismissal of the analogy of religious dialogue, this does not discredit Jackson’s other example, inter-cultural dialogue. Though it is not quite explicit and receives much less elaboration than his religious dialogue example. Jackson clearly opens the door to the analogy of intercultural comparison by his reference to Inayatullah and Blaney and their concept of “the contact zone” (2004). Culture, another unit which admits of varying degrees of commensurability, may be a better comparison than religion in any case. One is born into a culture, but one’s experiences lead to the understanding of that culture being constantly changed and refined. In a globalized world, culture is constantly being confronted and permeated by outside influences. Significantly for the comparison to philosophical ontology, culture is often implicit and unreflective. Although interfaith dialogue provided several strong examples, it seems to be an almost indisputable fact that world cultures proceeding from irreconcilable presuppositions have learned from one another, developed, and changed through foreign encounters. At the most aggregate level we could look to the example of the flow of ideas across civilizations, the influence on the Islamic world by classical antiquity and the following preservation of classical texts by Islamic peoples seems to be a key example. On a smaller scale and perhaps in more satisfying fashion due to its allure of scientific rigor, the field of socio-cultural anthropology owes its existence to the possibility of learning from other cultures.

In many ways, the possibility of achieving eclecticism across differing methodologies presents greater difficulties than eclecticism within a single methodology. Where the latter requires in-depth understanding of multiple paradigmatic literatures, analytical clarity that avoids conceptual muddiness, and an ability to defend one’s research against critics from diverse perspectives, the former requires almost a form of transcendence. From a strictly logical
standpoint, the prospects for cross-methodological eclecticism seem grim. On the other hand, examples of multi-faith and intercultural dialogue and productive encounter provide us with hope. If people can come together despite the most fundamental personal divisions human society can construct, then an exercise in praxis may be enough to bridge methodologies and allow for mutual enrichment and eclectic research.

While the work of Sil and Katzenstein examines theoretical or paradigmatic pluralism, Jackson’s work forces us to reflect on the second variety of IR pluralism—methodological pluralism. In some ways methodology presents a more powerful source of unity or division among scholars, yet this should not cause us to rush to hasty conclusions about the extremes of theoretical integration or radical incommensurability. Even in cases where scholars share a methodology, irreconcilable division may exist. Even in cases of the greatest methodological distance, there are opportunities for dialogue and exchange. Despite being characterized by a large degree of intersectionality, paradigm and methodology are logically separable. This means that theoretical and methodological pluralism present sets of related, but ultimately distinct problems.

Jackson’s *Conduct of Inquiry* has precipitated a robust discussion on methodological issues within the literature of International Relations. The book could very well go down as a modern classic. Despite these successes, much can be done to maximize the impact of Jackson’s ideas. Barring outside intervention, an influential groups of scholars will likely remain uninfluenced by this push for methodological pluralism. These are the scholars within the subfield of Foreign Policy Analysis. A significant divide exists between scholars of IR and scholars of FPA. While FPA is gripped even more tightly by neopositivism than IR, Jackson

---

does not make an effort to bridge the gap between these discourse communities or conjecture how his ideas might apply within the context of FPA.

The next chapter includes an attempt to grapple with Jackson’s ideas from an FPA perspective. An argument is made for fostering greater methodological pluralism within FPA and examples of FPA scholarship from a non-positivist methodology are examined. This chapter also includes an effort to discern the prospects of analytic eclecticism from within an FPA context, as well as a broader attempt to move toward rapprochement between IR and FPA scholars. Combining each of these endeavors, the whole of chapter four consists in advancing a third form of IR pluralism—pluralism of level of analysis.
Chapter Four: Level of Analysis Pluralism and the IR-FPA Relationship

“After all, there is no 'truth' out there waiting for discovery by one all-embracing theory. We are, therefore, in the business of dealing with competing theories and explanations, and in this light FPA has aided, and can continue to aid, the study of international relations” –Steve Smith (1986, 25).

We have seen several forms of pluralism in chapters two and three: analytic eclecticism, espoused by Sil and Katzenstein, advances pluralism at the level of theory, while Jackson’s ideas pursue pluralism of methodology. One subject that seems yet to be explored is how plurality of levels of analysis adds to our understanding of world politics.

The field of IR continues to be dominated by systems or structural level approaches, either state-centric or institution-centric. This means that when one refers to “IR,” the subfields that scholars usually count are security studies, international political economy, and increasingly, global governance. These three subfields are the mainstream while other important areas of study such as foreign policy analysis (FPA) and ethnic and civil conflict studies are marginalized. Among Sil and Katzenstein’s numerous examples of eclectic scholarship, not a single FPA or ethnic conflict studies scholar is mentioned. Despite briefly addressing Granato and Scioli’s (2004) call for “collaborations across subfields and disciplinary boundaries” and Caporaso’s (1997) call for integration of comparative politics and IR, Sil and Katzenstein fail to address how their vision of analytic eclecticism can lead to greater engagement between mainstream scholars of IR and foreign policy scholars (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 221).

Throughout Conduct of Inquiry Jackson gives examples from IR scholars to illustrate the various research methodologies discussed. These examples invariably stem from the work of systemic level scholars, again with no representation from foreign policy scholars. This is
surprising considering most of his book is motivated by the desire to broaden what is viewed as respectable research in the field of IR.

My purpose is not to indict these scholars over the lack of representation they give to foreign policy analysis. Sil, Katzenstein, and Jackson all have brought progressive ideas to the study of IR and have moved the discourse forward; had they included foreign policy scholars as examples it could have diluted their main points or brought about unwarranted criticism, needlessly delaying the acceptance of their ideas. Nevertheless, the task remains to show how other subfields such as foreign policy analysis fit into this picture. For example, it is important for eclecticism to be introduced to the foreign policy analysis subfield, it is important for foreign policy scholars to be mindful of their methodologies, and it is especially important for IR to continue to reconsider what it accepts as relevant and significant scholarship. Illustrating an example of eclecticism at work in foreign policy analysis will demonstrate the missed opportunities due to a lack of true engagement between IR theoreticians and the scholars of FPA.

Many foreign policy scholars feel they have been treated unfairly by mainstream IR scholars. Given the longstanding underrepresentation and marginalization of the subfield, the establishment of the journal *Foreign Policy Analysis* stands as an important step toward to inclusion of voices denied a certain gravitas long reserved for structural scholars within the academy.

From one point of view, the creation of *Foreign Policy Analysis* deserves praise because it allows a distinct, alternative, and serious outlet for discussion of issues that are important, but that are outside the realm of what “IR” is taken to study. Those holding this position agree with the title of Kenneth Waltz’s brief 1996 article “International Politics is not Foreign Policy.” From this perspective, the clean separation brought about by distinct IR and FPA journals
maintains clarity regarding our units of analysis. In turn, this prevents muddying of our concepts and undue appropriation and misapplication between diverse studies.

Others will devote a great deal of worry to the separation. They will wonder if this is evidence of further unneeded specialization and compartmentalization in academia. In a field that is itself only a subdivision of political science, increasing specialization may lead to a point where the number of faculty who can teach introductory courses covering all topics is scarce. Some on this side of the issue believe a unified model of politics should be our goal. To these folks, we should be striving for the point at which our theory can explain the outputs of IR through the domestic activity of national governments, political parties, bureaucracies and leaders, all of this is part of a unified system that in principle can be explained if we only had the data. Such a view harkens back to the formative period of political science. In the late 19th and early 20th century, the discipline was defined by a focus on sovereignty—without a clear distinction between its internal and external aspects (Schmidt 1998).

In short, we need to ask ourselves if the creation of separate journals, associations, and conferences for FPA poses a risk for the long term study of the international. Does the abandonment of the search for a unified model of politics and the drive toward specialization preclude discourse between subfields, ending in disastrous intellectual entropy? Can separation be done in a way that acknowledges and legitimates approaches to world politics operating on varying levels of analysis while still preserving constructive dialogical encounters? For examining these issues, there is no more natural starting point than Valerie Hudson’s inaugural article of the Foreign Policy Analysis journal.
Valerie Hudson and the “Ground of IR”

In her article “Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations,” Valerie Hudson asserts that “every theoretical discipline has a ground” and that the ground of international relations is “human decision makers acting singly or in groups” (Hudson 2005, 1). At face value, Hudson’s pronouncement seems commonsensical; nevertheless a great deal of this chapter will be spent vociferously rejecting her view. Upon closer examination, we will find that this view is reductionist, relies on an essentialist view of the social science enterprise, and ultimately does not provide a sustainable recipe for mutually beneficial constructive engagement between scholars operating at the IR and FPA levels of analysis.

Being that Kenneth Waltz and Valerie Hudson both make analogies to economics in addressing this topic, the language of economics might be an appropriate way of evaluating Hudson’s concept of the “ground of IR.” To illustrate her concept of a ground that underlies every theoretical discipline, Hudson points the ground of physics as “matter and antimatter particles” (Hudson 2005, 1). For economics she notes that it is often the “ground of the firms or households” (Hudson 2005, 1). This reveals an important bias on the part of Hudson. In fact, economics does not consistently use the firm as its fundamental ground. There are both theories of the firm and theories of the market. Theories of the firm attempt to understand the complex decision-making behavior of business people individually and in groups. These would resemble case studies much more than covering laws. A theory of the firm may be able to influence predictions of behavior by evaluating the internal factors of an economic actor, but its applicability would be more context driven and less generalizable than that of a prediction based on the external factors of the market. Just as foreign policy is the unit-level approach to IR,
theories of the firm represent the unit-level or, to use Hudson’s terminology, “actor-specific”
approach to economics.

By contrast, market theories black box the complexity of the firm and the motivations of
individuals in favor of an abstract parsimonious model. Theories of the market treat actors as
rational, fundamentally similar profit maximizers in order to generalize about as many cases as
possible. The theory of the market in no way depends upon the theory of the firm because it does
not incorporate the findings of the latter. As we saw when discussing Waltz in chapter three, the
assumption of “economic man” is made with utterly informed consent that the concept is
completely lacking in descriptive accuracy. This is done for the sake of having a useful theory.
Market approaches to economics represent the structural or “actor-general” approach to IR.

Throughout his corpus, Waltz associates theories of the firm with the study of foreign
policy and theories of the market with the structural approach to international politics. By
pointing to firms or households as the fundamental ground of economics, Hudson has ignored
entirely theories of the market, illustrating her own unit-level or actor-specific bias. If we
acquiesce in Hudson’s dismissal of market level economics we are forced to exclude most of the
landmark work in the field, notably Adam Smith and Karl Marx. If we accept Waltz’s parallel
between theories of the market and structural theories of international politics, then we can take
Hudson to be rejecting both approaches as groundless.

In asserting the necessity of a fixed ground for all theoretical activity and rejecting
theories of the market and by extension systems approaches to international politics, Hudson
makes clear her preference for unit-reductionist approaches, the type of approaches that
dominated the study of IR prior to Waltz’s work. This type of mindset is as flawed as it was in
1979 and seems to be in line with the type of thinking that produced the unity of science
movement. If we accept that a theory of international politics is entirely grounded upon a theory of foreign policy, than we could likewise admit that a theory of foreign policy is dependent upon theories of sociology and in turn psychology. However, if these are all grounded in psychology we will be tempted to ground our psychology in biology and chemistry and soon enough we will be unable to construct a theory of international politics until we have sorted out fundamental disputes in the area of particle physics. Kellert, Longino, and Waters point out that pluralism as a movement in philosophy of science first arose in response to the insistence upon a reductionist version of unity of science. Pluralism has since developed and is on the verge of having a major impact on the discipline we call international relations. We must not halt its progress by returning to reductionist, unity of science thinking.

The sad part is that there was a major opportunity missed with the establishment of Foreign Policy Analysis to spell out a desirable and mutually beneficial relationship between the study of foreign policy and the study of international politics. In the wake of Waltz, the study of the international has erred disproportionately towards structure over the last 35 years. This is a problem that requires addressing, but we must avoid overcorrecting. Despite the vehemence of my disagreement with Hudson over the above issue, much greater is my agreement with her concluding insight, “The possibility and the progress of FPA, then, is of great worth to all who study international relations” (Hudson 2005, 21). Attention to the study of foreign policy is needed now more than ever. Graduate programs of IR need to ensure that students come out with an understanding of foreign policy matters and a healthy exposure to the appropriate theories. Going about this through the unified science, unit reductionist approach only gives more reason for structural scholars to ignore work being done on foreign policy. Fortunately, this is not our only option. We can take measures to ensure that students develop an understanding of both
foreign policy and international politics, we can facilitate dialogue between scholars around substantive issues coming from different approaches, we can even provide our government officials with intelligence coming from both perspectives ensuring that our studies of the international maintain connected to the sphere of interests they were endowed to address. We will look at how this is possible later in this chapter, but first we must address head-on an issue that has been looming large for much of the last two chapters: moving IR past the specter of Waltz.

Being can be subdivided in various ways. Humans parse apart a complex manifold into simpler components, constructing abstract edifices that isolate and divide in order to produce coherent empirical accounts. For the natural sciences, I would have a hard time defending the social constructedness of the various subdivisions, although I am hesitant to accept an essentialist account of a timeless “physics” which studies certain phenomena and a totally discrete, yet equally timeless “chemistry” which studies a clear and distinct set of different phenomena. On the other hand, the argument for the social constructedness of the human or social sciences seems undeniable. Anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, political science—these all have different histories, but none is entirely cut off or windowless to the others. In each of these we eventually discover some aspect of interdisciplinary character when pressed hard enough. In many cases these fields have often undergone radical changes in their methods and the particular objects they purport to study, yet have kept the same name since their establishment.

Given its relatively recent coming of age as an academic pursuit, what we call international relations has a well-known genesis story. During the interwar period a consensus began to develop that more inquiry into the workings of the relations among nations was needed to explain and arguably prevent another great war. In 1919 the first international politics
department was established at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth (now Aberystwyth University), presumably with this goal in mind. Much of the literature I have reviewed over the course of this inquiry, but particularly Lepgold and Nincic (2001), Sil and Katzenstein (2010), and Jackson (2011) are still deeply influenced by the need for IR to produce scholarly work of interest and of assistance to the public policy sector of international affairs. In terms of a fixed ontological anchor necessitating its existence—IR has no ground, IR needs no ground. Hudson’s assumption of/insistence on a grounded IR assumes we are operating in a foundationalist framework. If we view theory as an instrumental method of sorting empirical phenomenon, like Waltz and other analyticist scholars do, there is no need for IR to have a definite “ground.” This should remind us of the discussion in both Chernoff and Jackson of the fundamental distinction between foundation and foundationalism.

The field of International Relations is not defined by a fixed ontological ground of social reality. Rather, it is a scholarly pursuit devised by social human beings in pursuit of their historical social interests. IR is defined by practical grounds. As Brian C. Schmidt (1998) points out, the early academic study of world politics was fragmented between a variety of discourses including moral philosophy and international law. After the formal establishment of political science in the early 20th century, a popular branch of scholarship focused on sovereignty in all its aspects—lacking our contemporary sharp distinction between foreign and domestic. Thus we must never forget that our contemporary professionalization and specialization may simply be profound presentist arrogance. This creates a danger of universalizing and essentializing our current categories of thought.
The Specter of Waltz

It was famously asserted by Alfred North Whitehead that “the safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato.” Within the context of contemporary International Relations, the same could be said about the founder of neorealism—Kenneth Waltz. Everyone seems to be modifying, appropriating, or rebelling against the arguments developed in *Theory of International Politics*. Despite the far-reaching influence of this landmark work, it is disappointing that, as Jackson notes, “no book has been as profoundly misunderstood in essential respects” (Jackson 2011, 112). In chapter three we explored how many theorists of IR have misinterpreted Waltz including Vasquez (1997), Alker and Biersteker (1984), and Waever (1996). Electing to accept Jackson’s classification of Waltz as an analyticist, it was promised that such a move could later be shown to have important consequences for resolving unproductive verbal disputes of contemporary IR discourse. This section will be dedicated to the fulfillment of that promise.

Hudson’s articulation of her views on the relationship between what she calls actor-general and actor-specific theories, paralleling what Waltz called theories of international politics and foreign policy (respectively) clearly rests upon a misunderstanding of Waltz’s stated views on this issue:

Others have argued that IR theory and FPA theory may not even be commensurable (Waltz, 1986). But these assertions are not true, and cannot be true if FPA theoretically engages the ground of IR. Rather, FPA’s possibility is of positive value to IR (Hudson 2005, 3).

---

14 My treatment of Waltz in this section is not necessarily grounded in an acceptance of his views on the relationship between international politics and foreign policy. While I do accept Waltz’s position for the most part, his position is valuable to this discussion primarily for two other reasons: (1) because misunderstanding of it have so often been the result of foreign policy scholars distancing themselves between IR and (2) because if we can find a way to interface IR and FPA using Waltz position, we will have found a relationship that should be able to withstand the variety of weaker positions on the topic.
Hopefully by now some doubt has been cast upon the idea that FPA “theoretically engages the
ground of IR.” Taken for granted in Hudson’s statement is the assumption that theories that are
incommensurable to one another cannot possibly be of value to one another. This is by no means
a truism. Many things which cannot be neatly subsumed into a single scientific truth are of
positive value to one another, not the least of which we can once again return to our friends the
theory of the firm and the theory of the market.

The polarized debate over agent and structure stands in the way of productive discussion
over the relationship between foreign policy and systematic/structural based IR. The divisive
nature of this debate comes in large part as a result of misinterpretations of Kenneth Waltz’s
critique of unit reductionism and the views of structure he propounds in Theory of International
Politics (1979). Until the IR field moves past the specter of Waltz, no meaningful engagement is
possible between scholars of foreign policy and international structure.

The power of language is vast and even the slightest variations can result in prodigious
differences. We should note that referring to Waltz, Hudson writes, “Others have argued that IR
theory and FPA theory may not even be commensurable” (Hudson 2005, 3). Intuitively, we
understand that Hudson’s intention is to comment on the separation between structure and unit
level theories of the international, respectively. In doing so she uses the terminology which has
become customary in the field to refer to structural theories of the international, “IR theory.”
There is an equivocation here, and it is not entirely Hudson’s fault. International Relations (IR)
has come to have two meanings within the discourse of scholars who presume to study it.
International Relations is often used as a designator of a subfield of Political Science
departments, or at a few institutions, an independent academic department. In this sense it is an
organizational word—a word that designates a broad field of study focusing on the international.
In a more specialized manner, the term IR has come to be used to differentiate systems level approaches from the unit level approaches of foreign policy. In this more specialized use, IR designates the systems level approaches.

This double meaning obscures the point that Hudson attempts to make in the passage. By citing Waltz as having asserted the incommensurability of “IR” and FPA, she means that Waltz thought systems or structural approaches and unit approaches were incommensurable, Waltz did indeed think this. I do not take Hudson to mean that Waltz considered FPA unfit for the academic organizational unit called International Relations, nor do I believe there is any evidence Waltz thought this. In fact, Waltz never refers to his own theory as a theory of International Relations, but one of “international politics.” In keeping with our discussion, this subtle difference could be an idiosyncrasy or a conscious effort to use language in a way that kept clear the distinction between structural approaches and the academic field as a whole. Whatever his attention to linguistic nuance, Waltz’s stance on the incommensurability between structural approaches and unit approaches was reiterated many times in his corpus—he positively asserts such incommensurability. Let us now consider this position, its general implications, and how we might conceive of FPA and (structural) IR having beneficial relations while adamantly rejecting Hudson’s thesis of an IR grounded on FPA.

While Kenneth Waltz spends an entire chapter of his *Theory of International Politics* attacking what he calls “reductionist theories” (1979, 18-37), of equal concern is whether Waltz’s approach and the intellectual hegemony it engendered was merely a new reductionism of a different stripe. By switching the focus from agent to structure, Waltz simply reverses the polarity of a diametric opposition that is problematic no matter which way you spin it. In place of a bottom up reductionism, he gives us one that is top down. If this is indeed Waltz’s aim, his
views on the topic should be rejected, however this criticism is only as strong as Waltz’s own commitment to the proposition that structural factors exhaustively explain all aspects of the field of study we call international relations. This commitment, sometimes taken for granted, will be met with a severe rethinking below.

Waltz does not advocate anything that resembles a structural reductionism. In his writing we will find that he believes the analysis of foreign policy has an important role to play both in the academy and in guiding practical decision-making. His vicious critique of “reductionist theories” is given its hostile flavor not out of disdain for domestic politics or internal processes, but because he resents the attempt to use these to construct a comprehensive grand theory of internal, external, domestic and international. Waltz himself concedes that if his theory were intended to be capable of deducing the specific manner in which diverse states respond to structural constraints it would be guilty of “the opposite of the reductionist error” (Waltz 1979, 72). By circumscribing the limits of his theory and respecting the place of foreign policy, Waltz avoids the criticism that he himself wants to use structure to give an exhaustive account of all things international.

Waltz’s definition of a system is clear:

A system is composed of a structure and of interacting units…The problem, unsolved by the systems theorists…is to contrive a definition of structure free of the attributes and interactions of units (Waltz 1979, 79).

Structure, “the system-wide component that makes it possible to think of the system as a whole,” (Waltz 1979, 79) is described by Waltz to consist of three features: “first by the principle according to which they are organized or ordered, second by the differentiation of units and the specification of their functions, and third by the distribution of capabilities across units” (1979,
Waltz goes on to explain how this conception of structure applies to international politics. Not surprisingly, anarchy is the ordering principle of the international political sphere. This strikes us as ironic, since anarchy usually signifies a complete lack of structure, but for Waltz anarchy has a specialized meaning which is simply the absence of hierarchical, centralized structure and implies neither chaos nor utter disorder. To illustrate how anarchy can serve as an organizing principle, Waltz implicitly draws an analogy to the “invisible hand” of economic markets noting that in both markets and international political structure certain behaviors are rewarded while others are punished. Actors are constrained by this structure. The influence of structure can play out both by consciously leading actors to choose behavior rewarded by the structure or by simply eliminating those who choose not to conform.

Anarchy, the ordering principle of international politics, is just the first component of its structure. The second part of Waltz’s definition of structure, “the differentiation of units and the specification of their functions” does not actually apply in the case of international politics. The ordering principle of anarchy is such that it leads to a fundamental sameness of the units, in this case, states. This does not mean that all states are equally powerful, that culture is not important, or that states all make decisions the same way. All that is meant by equality here is that states are structurally similar in being governed by the principles of survival and self-help. Waltz’s discussion of the differentiation of units at the domestic level (1979, 81-88) helps illustrate this difference. While Congress and the President play vastly different and clearly defined roles within a system, two countries, let us say Germany and Japan, fulfill essentially the same functions from the standpoint of anarchy. Each provides for its own defense, each conducts diplomacy with other nations, each maintains membership in international organizations. In a
simplified anarchical system, the only significant difference between states, as they relate to the structure, is in the power they can marshal.

This leads us to the third part of the definition of structure, which is the distribution of capabilities among the units. Simply put this refers to the famous Realist suggestion that the number of great powers defines the nature of a particular political structure. A unipolar or hegemonic order implies one set of consequences, a bipolar order another, and a multipolar orders still others. Since the functions of states are essentially similar, it is only through changes in the capabilities of states and thus the distribution of power that a structural change can be made to international politics.

So far, Waltz description of international political structure seems to fit the common caricatures of the Realist: blind to the important differences between states, dismissive of non-state actors, and focused on power as the only relevant factor in the international arena. Jackson’s reinterpretation of Waltz as an analyticist is instructive here (2011, 112-114). If, as we saw in chapter three, IR scholars have consistently misunderstood Waltz’s fundamental orientation to social scientific theory building, we might expect to find that there is more to his understanding of the relationship between units and structure than can be gleaned from a few sparse passages quoted out of context.

Even the staunchest neorealist would be forced to admit that Waltz abstracts away important domestic features of states. Although Waltz notes these factors are “obviously important” they are treated as exogenous to the theory precisely because the theory relies on a need to “distinguish between variables at the level of the units and variables at the level of the system” (Waltz 1979, 79). Read as an analyticist, Waltz’s view of theory is intended to be instrumental, rather than as an attempt at exhaustively explaining the reality underlying
international phenomena. We find support for this in Waltz’s 1986 response to his critics in which he writes: “Structures never tell us all that we want to know. Instead they tell us a small number of big and important things” (Waltz 1986, 329). Given that Waltz admits his theory is not intended to tell us everything about all things international, we cannot justifiably cite his deliberate omission of domestic particularities as evidence of his disdain for foreign policy specifically or of unit-level processes in general. Neither is the goal to deduce all unit level factors from the international structure. As Waltz tells us: “Thinking in terms of systems dynamics does not replace unit-level analysis nor end the search for cause and effect” (Waltz 1986, 344). Here we see an inkling of the Waltzian move towards separation, viewing the system and unit as distinct domains to be pursued through separate non-integrated theories. This is the germ of the incommensurability that Hudson wants us to reject.

Rather than citing Waltz’s exclusion of domestic attributes from his theory, a much more sophisticated criticism is to question the extent to which unit-level forces can influence the structure at all. The supposed lack of such possibility was raised by John Gerard Ruggie in his contribution to *Neorealism and its Critics* (ed. Keohane 1986). According to Ruggie: “The problem with Waltz’s posture is that in any social system, structural change itself ultimately has no source other than unit-level processes” (Ruggie 1986, 152). This objection is directly addressed by Waltz in his response to his critics at the close of the volume. In his view, Ruggie has simply misread the theory:

“Far from thinking of unit-level processes as “all product…and…not at all productive” (p. 151), I, like Durkheim, think of unit-level processes as a source both of changes in systems and of possible changes of systems, hard though it is
to imagine the latter. Neither structure nor units determine outcomes. Each affects the other” (Waltz 1986, 328).

In its assertion of the connectedness between IR and FPA, this passage calls us to reconsider to what extent Waltz believes they are incommensurable. If each can act as an agent upon the other, they cannot be strictly incommensurable in the usual usage. However, this should not lead us too far in the other direction toward asserting that each is translatable into the other. What Waltz asserts is a limited interchange: “A theory of international politics bears on the foreign policies of nations while claiming to explain only certain aspects of them” (Waltz 1979, 72). Likewise, Waltz makes clear that insights gleaned from the study of domestic government must be taken into consideration even by neorealists once they attempt to make normative recommendations (Waltz 1979, find this passage). The need for complementarity of IR and FPA stems not only from their differing level of analysis, but from another important aspect in which they differ—IR is fundamentally concerned with outputs of similarity whereas foreign policy is concerned with outputs of difference. This point is made by Waltz both in the original 1979 treatise and in his brief 1996 essay on unit and structure. In 1979 he wrote:

 Systems theories explain why different units behave similarly and, despite their variations, produce outcomes that fall within expected ranges. Conversely, theories at the unit level tell us why different units behave differently despite their similar placement in a system (Waltz 1979, 72).

Waltz’s theory undertakes to explain how domestically diverse states act in similar manners due to structural similarities. To fully understand a state, we would thus need to make use of both theories of international politics (IR) and theories of FPA. Waltz repeats these sentiments intact in his 1996 piece:
The [neorealist] theory explains why states similarly placed behave similarly despite their internal differences. The explanation of states' behavior is found at the international, and not at the national, level. That is why the theory is called a theory of international politics. In contrast, a theory of foreign policy would explain why states similarly placed in a system behave in different ways.

Differences in behavior arise from differences of internal composition. Foreign policies are governmental products (Waltz 1996, 54-55).

Accepting these roles of IR and FPA theories leads us to conclusions that will undoubtedly offend the provincial narrow-minded spirit on both sides of the debate between agent and structure. If we take the association of structure with sameness and agent with difference seriously, then any general discrimination towards work of a certain unit of analysis can only be viewed as a disciplinary power play and should be understood as assenting to the idea that the scholarly study of IR need only concern itself with either similarities or disparities, but not both. Any such statement can be justifiably considered an attempt to restrain the bounds of our knowledge about world politics—behavior which should not be tolerated within a scholarly community.

While we may now feel assured in these sentiments, one final nuance must be elucidated, lest we encourage further misunderstandings of Waltz’s work. This is the difference between complementarity of theoretical outputs and inputs of theory. The point expressed above is that the outputs of IR and FPA can be useful to one another in forming a holistic picture of a state’s positioning, role, and behavior in the international system. Through gaining an understanding both of what structural constraints are facing the state and how its domestic characteristics shape its response to constraints, we are best equipped to hazard a guess as to what course it might
follow in a given situation. It is in this sense that both IR and FPA have a rightful place in the academy. Scholars practicing each approach can learn from one another, and foreign policy-makers can be equipped with an understanding of both IR and FPA theory. In this sense, practically speaking, incommensurability between the two approaches vanishes. In employing them together, their sources of origin become less important.

Where incommensurability exists, and where scholars most often wrongly expect to see exchange between the unit and structure, is in the construction of the theory. A theory of IR and a theory of FPA can be developed in complete absence from one another and need not follow one from the other. Waltz makes this point especially clear: “An international-political theory does not imply or require a theory of foreign policy any more than a market theory implies or requires a theory of the firm” (Waltz 1979, 72). Waltz uses almost identical language in addressing this topic in 1986 in 1996, although the later piece is slightly more developed. Noting that his theory works best only under rare conditions where structural constraints dominant the behavior of states, Waltz admits his approach to world politics needs help.

Help can be given in two ways. The most satisfying way would be to provide a single theory capable of explaining the behavior of states, their interactions, and international outcomes. Unfortunately, no one has even suggested how such a grand theory can be constructed, let alone developed one. Someone may one day fashion a unified theory of internal and external politics. Until that day comes, the theoretical separation of domestic and international politics need not bother us unduly (Waltz 1996, 4).

We do well to pause and contemplate this point. Perhaps the most common criticism of Waltz is that his theory does not accurately depict states due to its treatment of the state as a
unitary actor and its assertion of sameness from country to country. Critics then point to a single example of differing domestic political processes and think they have falsified the theory. Jackson’s account of the analyticist roots of Waltz’s theory in chapter three, the relationship we have explored between IR and FPA as producing complementary outputs in this chapter, and a basic understanding of the pragmatic understanding of truth, all of these combine to reveal such simplistic attacks on Waltz as non sequiturs. This is not to say we should return to old fashioned neorealism. Much has changed since 1979. Many of those who followed in the footsteps of Waltz did not share his nuanced view of theory. The pushback against the more neopositivist variants of neorealism has been good for the field. Nonetheless, let us not caricature the legacy of one of the discipline’s giants by using him as a heuristic device or a straw-man to attack.

**Enter Beasley and Kaarbo: Towards a Sustainable IR-FPA Relationship**

Having delivered a lengthy censure against Hudson’s conception of FPA’s relationship to IR, it remains to offer something positive in its place, so that the process of developing this relationship can begin. Hudson’s attempt to use FPA as a “ground” of IR, which was critiqued at the outset of this chapter, should not strike us as alien or bizarre—it is an intellectual move well established within the history of foreign policy studies. Consciously or not, Hudson is channeling an ethos associated with the comparative foreign policy (CFP) approach that rose to prominence in the 1960s. Scholars in the CFP tradition were confident that comparative analysis of foreign policy could eventually generate a general theory from the ground up. James Rosenau’s 1966 “pre-theory” article was emblematic of this approach. This vision for the study of foreign policy was steeped in positivism and a desire to mimic the procedures of the natural sciences.

An overwhelming consensus now exists that the project of CFP was unable to fulfill its lofty goals. While CFP held dominant status at the time, an alternative approach was
simultaneously being developed, an approach that focused on middle-range theories. This
tradition includes classic works by Allison (1971), Janis (1972), and Jervis (1976), which are
now routinely considered to be early classics in the field of FPA. The contrast between CFP and
the alternative middle-range approach bears important consequences for the relationship between
IR and FPA. While we are not justified in disparaging Hudson by treating her as a CFP scholar,
she shares certain epistemological commitments with these scholars that in each case prevent
dialogue between agent and structure. Focusing on the intellectual descendants of these once
overlooked middle-range theorizers gives us the best chance of finding FPA scholarship that is
compatible with structural IR.

Juliet Kaarbo and her associates are intellectual heirs of the early middle-range
theorizers. Examination of the advanced level undergraduate and graduate level textbook on
comparative foreign policy analysis they wrote first in 2002 will provide us with valuable
insights into how a workable, mutually beneficial relationship between IR and FPA is possible.

In their introduction to Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective: Domestic and
International Influences on State Behavior Kaarbo, Lantis, and Beasley take an approach that I
have found to be uncommon in FPA texts. Their literature review covers not only pioneering
figures of FPA (George and George 1956; Holsti 1967; Allison 1971; Jervis 1976; and Hermann
1980), but it takes the controversial step of citing major IR theorists alongside these early FPA
scholars. Moreover, the most consequential aspect of this is not merely that IR theorists are cited,
but that the likes of Morgenthau, Waltz, Keohane, Wendt and others are presented not as
mistaken adversaries to be avoided or defeated, but as scholars who have contributed important
insights to the study of the international which must be taken seriously even by FPA scholars.
Furthermore, Kaarbo, Lantis, and Beasley provide citations to scholars who have attempted to
construct foreign policy theories by translating the structural theories of Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism into a language that functions at a lower level of analysis (Baumann, Rittberger, and Wagner 2001; Freund and Rittberger 2001; and Cardenas 2004).

More than just paying perfunctory respects to the influence of IR theorists and their influence on FPA, the whole textbook is constructed in a manner that attempts to acknowledge the influence both internal and external (also referred to as domestic and international) have on foreign policy at a variety of levels of analysis. In the introduction, it is stated that “the study of foreign policy serves as a bridge by analyzing the impact of both external and internal politics on states’ relations with each other” (Kaarbo, Lantis, and Beasley 2013, 2). This commitment to both internal and external factors is carried on throughout the main body of the text. Each chapter consists of a different contributor offering a snapshot of a particular nation’s foreign policy. Each contributor elected to grapple with the full complexity of that state’s behavior. Although international or domestic factors are sometimes weighted disproportionately, neither are categorically dismissed or ignored. This dedication to a balanced approach to the explanation is maintained all the way through to the conclusion of the text where it is reaffirmed that “foreign policy is typically the result of many domestic and international factors” (Beasley and Snarr 2013, 333).

While the nominal inclusion of both external and internal factors is rhetorically effective due to its inclusive nature, it may well be asked how sincerely the authors offer this distinction. The answer to this question turns on an analysis of what the authors mean by “external.” Going back to Kenneth Waltz’s definition of reductionist theories as those which view the international as nothing more than the sum of each state’s domestic policies helps clarify this question. Is “external” merely a relative term by which Beasley et al. simply mean “that which is internal to
Structuralist readers may demand more clarification on this point, as it is one Beasley et al. fail to address explicitly.

Despite the direct philosophical answer to this question, there is plenty of textual evidence to suggest that Beasley et al. have a conception of factors that are truly external in the sense of being external to all states. These are the factors which we might call structural. The first indication of at least a limited acceptance of the role of structure is the inclusion of Kenneth Waltz in a way that is not purely dismissive. As was mentioned above, Waltz’s role in FPA texts tends to be merely as a dartboard or strawman. The authors go a step further in admitting the influence of structure by asserting that “all states, regardless of their type of political system, their history, or their culture reside within an international system that limits choices they can make” (Kaarbo, Lantis, and Beasley 2013, 7). In accounting for the sources of these limitations the authors point to “the worldwide distribution of economic wealth and military power and the actions of other powerful states, multinational corporations, and international and transnational organizations” (Kaarbo, Lantis, and Beasley 2013, 7). While the actions of other states, MNCs, and NGOs may be only external in the weaker sense of “internal to someone else,” the distribution of economic and military power appears to be external in the stronger sense of being structural—or not a characteristic of any individual state or non-state actor.

If these pronouncements are insufficient in establishing the authors’ acceptance of structural influence, there is a powerful passage in Beasley and Snarr’s conclusion that solidifies the firm commitment of the volume to pluralism at the level of analysis. Beasley and Snarr use the metaphor of a car accident to illustrate how seemingly competing levels of analysis can all uniquely contribute to the explanation of an event:
Imagine trying to explain why a car accident happened. We might choose to focus our attention on the skills of the drivers of the cars. Alternatively, we might pay particular attention to the visibility problems at the accident scene cause by trees and the position of the sun. Others might explain the accident by referencing the increase in traffic in the area due to recent economic growth and expansion of the city. Each factor operates at a somewhat different level of analysis—from the individuals, to the immediate environment, to the overall system. All three types of factors—actors, immediate circumstances, and systemic conditions—contribute to almost all accidents (Beasley and Snarr 2013, 314).

Hopefully by now it is clear why the work of Beasley et al. has been presented as providing a more fruitful basis for the understanding of the relationship between different levels of analysis and between the fields of IR and FPA. This passage does a wonderful job of capturing the credo of pluralism. Each of the levels of analysis—the driver, the road conditions, and the traffic flow—carry strong explanatory value. We are not in a position to meaningful single out or deny the importance of any one source of influence. The monist and the positivist will want to conjecture testable hypotheses to determine which of the levels was the cause of the accident; this insistence displays a lack of understanding of the epistemological situation. Causation in the social sciences is only ever correlation, time-order, and lack of spurious variables. Until such a time as we reach a more resolute and reliable means of “proving” causation, we might have to admit that multiple factors may be at work in a complex way not easily reducible to simplistic relationships.

More recently Kaarbo has been more attentive to an issue that received less attention in the textbook – how different leaders come to play important roles in bringing the ‘internal’ and
the ‘external’, and how their perception of the structural constraints impact their foreign policymaking process. In their forthcoming article “Examining Leaders’ Orientations to Structural Constraints: Turkey’s 1991 and 2003 Iraqi War Decisions,” Kaarbo and her associates Binnur Ozkececi-Taner, Esra Cuhadar, and Baris Kesgin deeply examine the manner in which Turkish Prime Ministers Ozal and Erdogan grappled with structural constraints in their respective decisions about how to respond to U.S. invasions of a neighboring country. More work like this is needed to produce valuable insights at the intersection of FPA and IR.

Prospects for Eclecticism and Methodological Pluralism

Now possessing a clear view of the possibility for a workable, mutually beneficial relationship between IR and FPA, the time is ripe for considering the status of analytic eclecticism and methodological pluralism in FPA. Much of this project was devoted to demonstrating the important changes that analytic eclecticism and methodological pluralism promise to bring to the discipline of IR. While the major works in this area (Sil and Katzenstein 2010; Jackson 2011) have exerted a great deal of influence in IR, they do not take FPA into consideration nor do they seem to have had much of an impact on the scholarship of FPA. In the rest of this chapter, we will examine the extent to which these concepts are already present in FPA and how they could be effectively introduced or expanded.

As in IR, the acceptance of these ideas in FPA is not without obstacles. One of these, the reductionist move characteristic of CFP and kept alive by Hudson has been addressed. Let us now turn to the remaining obstacles, as well as the features of FPA that could facilitate the implementation of eclecticism and methodological pluralism.

FPA is closer to the concerns of practical policy realities than is IR, but it is gripped more tightly by a neopositivist methodology. Faced with the imperative of speaking more directly to
“real world” policy concerns, we might expect to see scholars of FPA value results over theoretical parsimony and consequently we might expect that the majority of a scholar’s research would be in developing the quality of empirical knowledge rather than seeking to defend or vindicate the dictums of a theoretical tradition. This is a recipe for the pragmatic ethos of analytic eclecticism. On the other hand, the demand for easily applicable empirical results can lead to a lack of metatheoretical reflection, which could allow the presence of status quo epistemological and ontological commitments to stifle out valid questioning of these assumptions.

From a strictly academic-institutional perspective, FPA is organized quite differently than IR. In IR scholars are primarily identified by their theoretical paradigm, usually Realism, Liberalism, or Constructivism. In some cases scholars are also identified with their methodology, the best examples being the strong association of Wendt and Wight with critical realism. By contrast, FPA groups scholars by their substantive/topical research areas. Deborah Gerner has identified five main substantive research programs constituting the field, although certainly these may have points of overlap and there may be others left out of this list. The five areas of study are: “societal sources of foreign policy,” “bureaucratic structures and processes,” “cognitive processes and psychological attributes,” “artificial intelligence,” and “decision making during crises” (Gerner 1995, 21-28). While this substantive organization may be beneficial in terms of producing practically relevant scholarship, it has the potential negative effect of creating an illusion of uniformity on issues of metatheory. Worse yet, it may imply that we can atheoretically study the international.

The great variance between the methods of organizing the fields of IR and FPA creates substantial difficulty for attempting to discern the relationship of IR paradigmatic traditions with
the theories of FPA. The difficulty of this task is multiplied by the confused notions of paradigms to which many scholars of both IR and FPA still subscribe. Acknowledging the important work Barkin (2003, 2010) and Jackson and Nexon (2004) have done in isolating the uniting features of these paradigms, we are in a better position to see through some of the pitfalls into which scholars fall. One characteristic mistake is David Patrick Houghton’s (2007) objection to the interpretation of Graham Allison as broadly within the Realist paradigmatic tradition. Houghton suggests that Realist assumptions “sit ill at ease with the more empirically driven, psychologically derived insights of FPA” (Houghton 2007, 25). Specifically, Houghton points out FPA’s incompatibility with classical Realism due to “Morgenthau’s notion of an unchanging human nature” and with neorealism due to Kenneth Waltz’s “systemic-level focus” (Houghton 2007, 25).

In just this brief passage, Houghton makes two critical errors: interpreting the idiosyncratic features of particular scholars as representative of the paradigm qua paradigm and conflating paradigmatic traditions with methodology. These mistakes demand redress since they have led to so much confusion within the discourses of IR and FPA.

In the first place, defining FPA as empirically driven and influenced by psychology says more about Houghton’s own methodological perspective than it does about any necessary feature of the FPA field. Neither an empiricist basis nor a psychological approach defines FPA. Instead the subfield is defined by its unit of analysis, the actor-specific sources of foreign policy. If they desired, scholars could base the field of FPA on a conception of human nature as static as Morgenthau’s—that they choose not to do this is a historically contingent result of what approaches they have found most useful—a social process.
Nevertheless, this social process has erred strongly on the side of psychology. Many of the pioneering works in the field, including those by Hermann and George, introduced influential psychological approaches to FPA. In spite of this fact, psychology is not alone in its influence on FPA—the interdisciplinary nature of the area of study has been acknowledged repeatedly by scholars (Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin 1954; Light 1994; White 1999; Hudson 2005; Alden and Aran 2012). In particular, Valerie Hudson asserts that FPA is “situated at the intersection of all social science and policy fields as they relate to international affairs” (2005, 21). While we may hesitate at endorsing the boldness of this particular claim, FPA’s general interdisciplinary character stands beyond reasonable dispute. In addition, this character of the field impacts its capacity for eclecticism and methodological diversity.

Being interdisciplinary is neither good nor bad in itself. It can be effectively utilized in a variety of contexts, but it can also be a buzzword that fails to deliver and leads to disorientation of the subject matter. In balance, interdisciplinary work usually is a net positive, but the potential pernicious effects should not be ignored. FPA has benefited greatly from its interdisciplinary character. The works of Hermann on leadership were in large part made possible through her background in psychology, ideas from the scholarship of management and business administration illuminate the study of bureaucratic politics and group decision-making, anthropology and sociology aid in performing case studies on the governments of unfamiliar cultures, and linguistics and literary criticism aid in the task of discourse analysis. Indeed, it might be unthinkable to have a successful FPA without such a robust interdisciplinary character.

FPA’s interdisciplinary character predisposes it toward the ethos of eclecticism as described by Sil and Katzenstein (2010). As we saw in chapter two, Sil and Katzenstein rely on three criteria for identifying eclecticism. The first and third criteria, open-ended problem
formulation and pragmatic engagement with both academic debates and practical problems are so strongly associated with the FPA research program that we may mistake them for inherent features of the study of foreign policy.

Open-ended problem formulation is considered an important characteristic because it is an indication that scholarship is not being produced with the primary purpose of defending the core postulates of a preferred theory at the expense of more useful empirical work. In FPA, the combination of the lack of strong, cohesive, paradigmatic schools of thought and the role of scholars in being connected to the government has ensured that the primary loyalty has been to scholarship that advances empirically rather than becoming stymied in intractable or unproductive great debates.

With regard to engagement with both academic and practical issues, the situation is similar. For many years, FPA has been able to justify its existence and attract research dollars by defining itself in contrast to high IR theory. While IR often engaged in abstract theoretical and methodological debates, FPA was able to sell itself as the subfield that offered results. If IR was closer to political philosophy in its style of argumentation, then FPA was closer to psychology and what the general public might view as more “scientific” approaches to the international. Naturally then, the findings of FPA were in high demand by government officials and scholars of FPA were called to testify before Congress and to do research for the Departments of State and Defense, as well as the various intelligence agencies.

While the first and third markers of eclecticism are so closely bound to FPA as to seem inextricable, the presence of the second marker in FPA remains contingent and variable. To satisfy Sil and Katzenstein’s second marker, research must be middle-range in scope and make use of “multiple mechanisms and logics drawn from more than one paradigm” (Sil and
Katzenstein 2010, 19). An immediate obstacle to meeting this criterion arises within the context of FPA. Above we examined how FPA scholars intentionally distance themselves from the paradigms of IR and how the field of FPA is not organized around paradigms but around various substantive areas of research. If “paradigms,” as the word is used in IR, have little acknowledged influence in FPA it would not seem a fair criterion in this context, let alone an effective way to capture the pragmatic ethos that Sil and Katzenstein have in mind. The anthology collected by Beasley et al (2003) contains several notable attempts to explicitly engage with the major “isms” of IR when explaining a country’s foreign policy, but it is far more common for researchers to employ an entirely different lexicon, one without much reference to IR’s “isms.”

Failure to engage directly with the current three major “isms” of IR does not rule out eclecticism in FPA. Although Sil and Katzenstein articulate their concept of analytic eclecticism from within the context of early 21st century International Relations, fortunately they make concessions which allow it to have broader application. Sil and Katzenstein recognize that the “triad of constructivism, liberalism, and realism” has become the dominant organization within the field only recently and only in America. They acknowledge that different paradigms have been dominant in America in previous years and that currently some paradigms that are marginalized in the United States enjoy prevalence in Europe and other parts of the world. This leads them to the admission that “the specific contours of this strategy depend on the relevant intellectual context” (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 37). In essence, what counts as eclecticism is relative to the intellectual environment in which it occurs. In situations outside of 21st century American International Relations “although the general logic of eclecticism still applies, what constitutes eclectic research practice would have to be redefined” (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 36).
By participating in such redefinition, we can imagine FPA research that is eclectic without drawing on Constructivism, Liberalism, or Realism.

The context-dependency of eclecticism relates to FPA in one further way. When not restricted to the setting of International Relations literature, eclecticism can be defined not by its cross-paradigmatic engagement but by its interdisciplinary engagement. Sil and Katzenstein point to the example of “interdisciplinary research seeking to draw together insights from economics, psychology, sociology, and geography” as an example of this type of eclecticism. They cite the studies of (Sil and Doherty 2000) and (Wallerstein et al. 1996) as partaking in such an interdisciplinary eclectic approach. Since interdisciplinary research is often identified as a characteristic of the FPA scholarly approach, we may now contend that FPA is strongly linked with all three of Sil and Katzenstein’s markers of eclecticism, not just the first and third as was previously thought. Seeing such structural linkages between FPA and the marker of eclecticism suggests that eclectic research in FPA may be the norm rather than a bold new innovation.

An excellent demonstration of the capacity for FPA to be creatively interdisciplinary and eclectic comes with William Flanik’s 2011 article, “Bringing FPA Back Home: Cognition, Constructivism, and Conceptual Metaphor.” Flanik’s project in this article is to appropriate a concept from cognitive linguistics, “metaphorical framing,” and use it in an attempt to bridge cognitive foreign policy analysis (CFPA) with social construction. While scholars within the discourses of CFPA and social construction might be particularly interested in the details of Flanik’s argument and its success or failure in linking two disparate research programs, here we are only concerned with the general approach and ethos of Flanik’s article.

For our purposes, the first significant contribution of Flanik’s article is its borrowing of the concept of “metaphorical framing” from the field of cognitive linguistics. Not only does such
a move demonstrate FPA’s hallmark interdisciplinary identity, it represents an example of a specific type of analytic eclecticism that seeks “to translate or combine concepts and processes originally posited within very different kinds of scholarly projects” (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 36-37).

Employing such a novel approach within FPA would perhaps be deserving of our attention even if it was used to solidify a particular entrenched research community, but Flanik’s adoption of “metaphorical framing” as a technique is even more noteworthy for being utilized for the integration or at least reconciliation of two disengaged theoretical understandings.

Flanik’s attempt at bringing CFPA and social construction toward mutual engagement and enrichment serves as an example of how the tools of eclecticism can be used to break down the barriers between differing levels of analysis. The two areas of scholarship he is dealing with, CFPA and social construction operate from drastically different perspectives. CFPA comes from what some have called a “micro-level of analysis” (Yalva 2014), while the style of social construction associated with Alexander Wendt is often criticized as just another IR structural “ism.” By using “metaphorical framing,” Flanik’s attempt to bring together CFPA and social construction not only brings two theories closer together, it attempts to bring IR and FPA closer together.

Flanik goes on to argue that CFPA avoids reductionism through engagement with social construction, while social construction gains explanatory power at the level of individuals. Here Flanik borders on proposing a unified model of FPA and IR, but we need not subscribe to the possibility of such a model in order to see the potential benefits that can be brought through the creative combination of differing theories and levels of analysis. Flanik leaves us assured in the
conviction that FPA scholars can produce eclectic scholarship without necessarily engaging multiple IR paradigms.

The very factors that drive FPA towards eclecticism also produce inhibitions toward metatheoretical reflection. While interdisciplinary engagement should be generally praised, it has had the negative impact of importing to FPA epistemological views from fields like psychology which have fully succumbed to the behavioralist revolution in social science. It seems that a full embrace of behavioralism by FPA would lead the subfield down the rocky, slippery slope to reductionism that was seen in examined Hudson. In short, scholars may be led into intractable debates within cognitive psychology rather than focusing on the problems that the field is meant to study. A behavioral or cognitivist dominated FPA might also threaten successful dialogue with IR scholars who operate on much more abstracted units of analysis and who increasingly reject behavioralism.

Organization into substantive topics and the interdisciplinary character of FPA have resulted in research more readily applied to the problems of policy makers, but at the cost of being somewhat unreflective about epistemological issues. Here Steve Smith’s 1986 warning to FPA remains applicable: “FPA needs to accept that methodology matters and to be more aware than it has been hitherto that it faces fundamental epistemological and ontological problems” (1986, 27).

While the danger posed by FPA’s policy focus and links to fields like psychology and the resultant propensity away from metatheoretical reflection has been mentioned several times, it would be inaccurate to characterize FPA as a field devoid of epistemological self-awareness or homogenous in terms of methodological approach. Many of the methodologies Jackson (2011) observed in IR are also present in FPA, though they tend to be less prominent and difficult to
find, especially in an American context. Two scholars that have challenged the methodological status quo in FPA are Brian White (1999) and Faruk Yalvaç (2014) from postpositivist and critical realist perspectives, respectively.

In an article defending FPA’s ability to respond to the theoretical challenge posed by European integration, Brian White devotes considerable attention to contemplating how positivist and non-positivist methodologies can coexist within the field. White turns to Henrik Larsen’s “political discourse” approach (1997), surmising that “this work, from an avowedly ‘reflectivist’ perspective, poses a significant challenge to FPA grounded as it has traditionally been via behaviouralism in a positivist epistemology” (White 1999, 55-56). White goes on to offer his view that Larsen (1997) conceives of positivist approaches as better for “explaining specific foreign policy decisions” whereas “post-positivist” or reflexivist approaches are better for understanding “general orientations” (White 1999, 56). In White’s view “This is crucial because it explicitly acknowledges that FPA can contain approaches that are both positivist and ‘post-positivist’” (White 1999, 56). Here we see White taking the first steps toward grappling with the sort of issues addressed by Jackson (2011). Although White put these methodological issues on the table over 15 years ago, it does not seem to have sparked much of a robust conversation in FPA. This state of affairs will likely remain in lieu of a major work on the topic (equivalent to Jackson 2011) specifically speaking to FPA scholars in a way that persuades them that this is not just an IR issue. Having attempted throughout this work to break down some of the perceived barriers between IR and FPA, it stands to reason that FPA scholars should seize upon the ideas of Jackson now, rather than waiting for a FPA-version of Jackson years later.

While White’s call for recognition of both positivist and non-positivist approaches to FPA did not receive a resounding response, it has not gone completely unanswered. As recently
as March 2014, Faruk Yalva has published an article that analyzes various approaches to Turkish foreign policy from a “critical realist” perspective. Critical realism, the movement in philosophy of science associated with Roy Bhaskar, was one of the four main methodologies of IR scholars addressed by Jackson in the typology we discussed in chapter three. Yalva criticizes both positivist and post-positivist approaches to Turkish foreign policy. He also condemns “the agent-centric, micro-level analyses that dominate the mainstream TFP analysis” (Yalva 2014), citing critical realism’s ability to offer appraisals that more adequately represent the ineludible structural influences on foreign policy. Yalva’s work serves the purposes of the present volume in a twofold way by advocating both greater pluralism of methodology and pluralism in terms of level of analysis. Yalva’s work is to be admired even more for its suggestion of a possible link between these different types of pluralism. Such links have not been explored at length in this paper, but present a potent topic for future research.

The examples of White and Yalva present two cases of non-positivist research methodologies in FPA. Such examples are elusive. The point probably goes without saying to many readers, but it is imperative to explicitly acknowledge that White and Yalva are both writing outside of the American academy. White is British and Yalva Turkish. The difficulty of identifying any American scholars practicing FPA outside of a neopositivist methodology demonstrates the monumental influence which the behavioralist revolution continues to have on American social science in general and on FPA in particular. One explanation for this can be drawn from Alexis De Tocqueville’s enduring analysis of the American character. De Tocqueville keenly observed that American culture generally disdains philosophy and reveres practicality. Thus, positivism and the behavioralism it engendered, while European in origin, have enjoyed unrivaled success and longevity in America because they masquerade as not really
philosophy at all, but an objective reporting of the facts. This devotion to the facts alone reaches its pinnacle of absurd and tragic irony when the quest of positivist hegemony expends increasing amounts of energy in assuring homogeneity of methodology within political science rather than tolerating so-called “reflectivist” approaches that might lead to practical breakthroughs.

It would be fitting to close with an approach that raises issues with regard to each of the three varieties of pluralism that have been discussed in this project—theoretical, methodological, and level of analysis. Mark Schafer’s contribution to the 2003 ISR forum “Foreign Policy Analysis in 20/20: A Symposium” engages with all three types of pluralism.

With regard to theoretical pluralism and eclecticism, Schafer shares many of the attitudes which Sil and Katzenstein associated with the pragmatist ethos of analytic eclecticism. First, he acknowledges the importance of critical dialogue and the role it plays in leading scholars to rethink and refine their positions. This roughly parallels the description Sil and Katzenstein offer of the “creative confrontations” (Lichbach 2007, 274) that occur between paradigms (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 8). However, as Schafer points out, not all criticism is productive or intellectually beneficial for the field. He describes some scholars’ loyalty to a certain school of research as a kind of “territoriality” which leads to “intolerance, provincialism, hostility, and anger as well as reduced communication across schools of thought” (Schafer 2003, 172). This echoes Sil and Katzenstein’s discussion regarding the zealotry that leads some scholars to concern themselves primarily with attempts to “defend the core metatheoretical postulates of a paradigm or research tradition” rather than pursuing research that is empirically interesting or speaks to concrete problems (2010, 9). Most importantly Schafer nears an analytic eclecticist position when he urges against polarizing positions on the debate between psychological and
rational-actor approaches to decision-making. Schafer’s position strongly resembles the ideas explored in chapter two:

There may, indeed, be a middle ground, or perhaps a blending of two schools that brings us closer to reality than either approach does separately...thus an argument can be made that it is probably not the case that one school is right and the other is wrong (Schafer 2003, 172).

Blending is one way Sil and Katzenstein describe the efforts of analytic eclecticism (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 12). Schafer joins Sil and Katzenstein by eschewing partisan loyalty to either approach; making an effort to sacrifice theoretical purity and parsimony for an eclectic approach that bridges two schools of thought and produces the highest empirical cash-value.

The methodological implications of Schafer’s article are less clear. It is at least conceivable that rational-actor and psychological approaches are operating from within different methodologies. In chapter three we saw that Kenneth Waltz, one of the champions, of a rational-actor approach, comes from an analyticist methodology. On the other hand, most mainstream psychological approaches (excluding Freud) would almost certainly be based in a neopositivist or critical realist methodology. In this sense, the conflict between rational-actor theorists and political psychologists could be seen as primarily a methodological dispute.

We will reject this interpretation of the conflict for two reasons; the first is a concern for consistency. Above we treated the rational-actor and psychological approaches as roughly paradigms of foreign policy which could be dealt with using the tools of analytic eclecticism. Having made such a commitment, it makes no sense to turn around and treat these differing schools of thought as methodologies. Second, there exists a more substantive reason to reject that the divide between rational-actor and psychological-actor approaches is primarily
methodological in nature. As we have seen, FPA plays hosts to only the most limited methodological diversity. Due to this brute fact, FPA scholars of both the rational-actor and political psychology schools will almost always be operating from a neopositivist methodology. Waltz, a rare example of a rational-actor theorist who comes from outside of neopositivism, becomes an irrelevant example both because of the unique character of his views and because he did not intend his theory to be directly applicable to explanations of foreign policy.

A more fruitful route for considering the methodological aspects of Schafer’s article comes through paying attention to the manner in which Schafer believes controversies between competing schools of thought can be resolved:

The time spent debating questions theoretically would seem better spent studying the effects empirically. Empirical investigation can tell us the various influences of factors coming from the individual, state, and system levels of analysis. Even though theoretical thinking is critical, the resulting questions essentially demand empirical answers (2003, 172).

Depending on our interpretation of this passage, we can read Schafer as either a committed pluralist or as an unreflective empiricist who fails to acknowledge the validity of other methodologically approaches. If we interpret this passage as mainly about arbitrating between research approaches that differ significantly only in terms of level of analysis, then Schafer is rightly condemning theoretical work that serves only to defend the postulates of a preferred school of thought. If, on the other hand, we interpret Schafer as stating that all fundamental disagreements between differing approaches can be resolved through mere empirical observation, then we can rightly accuse him of defining the terms of debate in a way that marginalizes certain approaches to knowledge production. If Schafer means that objective facts
always provide enough raw material to decide between different approaches, then he is
displaying a staggering ignorance of Kuhn for someone who devotes a whole section of a paper
to “normal science.” Kuhn pointed out that appeals to brute facts ignore the “theory-laden” status
of all observations. Coming from a slightly different perspective, Jackson makes this same basic
point in his *Conduct of Inquiry* (2011) when he points out the absurdity of expecting mind-world
monists to justify their theories based on mind-world dualist standards of evidence (Jackson
2011, 32).

To be charitable to Schafer, we should err towards taking him at his word in that he
desires to promote “tolerance” and openness to “alternative approaches, methods, ideas, and
sources of evidence” (Schafer 2003, 171, 177). Nonetheless, we must be aware that sometimes
even the most basic features of our world can be shaped by the theory or methodology from
which we are based.

Even if we restrict our focus to levels of analysis, Schafer manages to provoke thought on
issues of considerable significance. Near the beginning of the article, Schafer notes the
opposition his brand of political psychology has faced from those scholars who operate on higher
or more abstract levels of analysis, specifically he acknowledges criticism from those who follow
Morgenthau (1948) and Waltz (1979) in using the state and system, respectively, as levels of
analysis. Conflicts between varying levels of analysis have been examined throughout this
chapter. If our investigation has been successful to this point, the reader should have some
doubts as to the utility of any attempt to categorically and definitively prioritize one particular
level of analysis. By now, the reader may also have some idea as to what conceptual tools might
be used to avoid such an intractable debate. However, nothing in particular is unique about
Schafer’s description of the conflict between these divergent levels of analysis, what we are
interested in is the way Schafer goes about attempting to resolve a particular point of contention between groups of scholars who usually emphasize different levels of analysis. Flanik’s work functioned in a similar manner as his “metaphorical framing” served to bridge both theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis. In attempting to gain a thorough understanding of the nuances of a scholar’s position and philosophical perspective we must always conduct a close reading which carefully distinguishes theory, methodology, and level of analysis.

Responding to state-level Realists roughly under the banner of Morgenthau, Schafer proposes the concept of “state-level psychology” (Schafer 2003, 176). Such an approach would build upon computer coding techniques which have been used to analyze the personality traits of leaders and their advisors and apply them to small groups, government institutions, and society as a whole. If practiced, this approach would effectively transplant the psychological method of studying foreign policy from the individual micro-level of analysis to the state-level, allowing it to enter into the mainstream IR discourse. Since Schafer appears to believe that Realists have a particular penchant for criticizing the methods of psychology, an engagement between state-level psychology and the growing “realist-constructivist” camp within IR might provide an interesting and provocative way of resolving this dispute and producing an innovative new way of studying international phenomenon.

On reflection, Schafer’s work suggests two general conclusions. The first of these is that the relationship between theory or paradigm, research methodology, and level of analysis can be complex and difficult to determine. These properly distinct aspects of scholarship are often conflated or scholars speak of them as if they have a fixed relationship to one another. The other is that advancing pluralism in one of these three areas is often but not always associated with
advancing pluralism in the other areas. Schafer sought to cut through conventionally oppositional theories and levels of analysis.

Rejecting Hudson’s (2005) call for theorizing FPA as the “ground of IR” need not lead to Houghton’s despondent characterization of FPA as a “theory without a home” (2007). In this chapter we have made significant progress toward conceiving of a more productive, mutually-beneficial, and theoretically sound relationship between IR and FPA. In the work of Beasley and Kaarbo we discovered this conception already present. More work that follows the pattern of these scholars will lessen the divide between IR and FPA.

Dispelling the menacing “specter of Waltz,” allows us to think of FPA and IR as distinct, yet related and complementary scholarly activities. From this perspective there exists no compelling reason why the recent insights of Sil and Katzenstein (2010) and Jackson (2011) should be restricted to the discourse of structural International Relations when they find ready application and in some cases are more desperately warranted within FPA. Examining the discourse of FPA in the context of these two important works, we found FPA to be strongly inclined towards eclecticism due to its practical and interdisciplinary character. On the other hand, we found that FPA provides powerful inhibitions against the cultivation of a methodologically diverse scholarly community. In addition to Beasley and Kaarbo, the works of Flanik, White, Yalva, and Schafer were all judged to be steps in the direction of a more inclusive FPA field.
Chapter Five: Prospectus for Pluralism

The Three Pluralisms

A survey of the history of IR reveals a sequence of “great debates” over fundamental issues in the discipline. Despite this history of robust contention over abstract matters, IR scholars from Martin Wight (1966, 20) to Patrick Jackson (2011, 34) have bemoaned the field’s intellectual and philosophical poverty. Moreover, rather than sacrificing philosophical depth for practical relevance, IR has lost both. In his recent editorial, Joseph Nye (2009) suggested that IR scholars “say more and more about less and less.” Rather than serving as public intellectuals capable of guiding public opinion on important issues of world politics, they have retreated to the ivory tower.

Operating under the impression that ideas matter, I cling to the belief that cleaning up and improving our philosophical reflection offers a means of reconnecting with practice rather than further alienating ourselves from it. Theory and practice are inextricably linked; until we recognize this, our attempts at improving the discipline will be misguided. Only once it becomes a scholarly duty to engage with both theory and practice will either be able to progress in a meaningful way.

I am not the only one who feels this way. Throughout this work I have appealed to scholars under the broad label of “pluralism,” who engage theory pragmatically with the final goal of better practice, empirical research, and policy. Three pluralisms need to be addressed as a first step in building a 21st century IR. These pluralisms are in regard to theory, methodology and level of analysis.

Sil and Katzenstein’s (2010) concept of analytic eclecticism best represents how we should think about theoretical pluralism. Barkin’s (2003) article on “realist-constructivism”
forced IR scholars to rethink their understanding of paradigms. Since its publication, the development of something like eclecticism became a question of “when” rather than “if.” Barkin struck at the heart of a previously largely unchallenged edifice and forced us to think about what theoretical commitments are necessary for a scholar to fit within a certain paradigm. Disassociating Liberalism from Constructivism was an important scholarly contribution and is recognized as such. An equally important aspect of this article, yet often overlooked, is Barkin’s acknowledgment of the broad diversity within the Realist paradigm. Previously thought to be necessarily connected, Barkin reveals commitments to rationality and materialism to be correlated with Realism in only a historically contingent way. According to Barkin, the only necessary feature of Realism is a commitment to the notion of power as an ineliminable factor of international affairs.

Tired of scholars clinging more dearly to paradigm allegiances than empirically interesting or useful analysis, Sil and Katzenstein propose analytic eclecticism as a pragmatic tool to allow IR to move forward. Sil and Katzenstein explicitly pay tribute to the contributions paradigm-bound research has brought to IR. They propose analytic eclecticism not to replace or compete with paradigms but as a means of complementing them. Analytic eclecticism depends on the continued existence and efforts of paradigmatic scholars and scholarship.

While conducting eclectic research does not come easily and requires a certain type of intellectual courage, it faces no epistemological impossibilities. Sil and Katzenstein point to the vast differences within paradigms and acknowledge that scholars from different paradigms occasionally agree on more substantive issues. Scholars who hope to research eclectically must be exceptionally well versed in each of the paradigmatic literatures they appropriate. This precaution will serve as a safeguard against “conceptual muddiness.” We have little reason to
fear that analytic eclecticism will introduce any faulty or ill-considered research into the scholarly literature; such work is sure to face criticism and push-back on so many fronts that it would need to be nearly flawless to successfully run the gauntlet of peer-review.

Despite its enormous potential, pluralism of theory will not be enough to heal IR’s wounds of division. In many cases, the greater animosity exists between groups who disagree not on the relevant agents and processes of world politics, but on the underlying assumptions that determine on what grounds we can meaningfully create theories about world politics. This is what makes Patrick Thaddeus Jackson’s (2011) book so important. Here Jackson succeeds in wresting the notion of “science” away from the nearly exclusive grasp of the neopositivist camp. Many of the arguments that have legitimated neopositivist dominance sustain validity only from within a neopositivist framework. After realizing this, we have no objective grounds for dismissing alternative methodological frameworks which have developed rich research traditions. The point is not to reject neopositivism but to make room for reasonable pluralism within the discipline of IR.

Despite Sil, Katzenstein, and Jackson’s valiant and largely successful attempts at broadening the range of acceptable discourse within IR, they have ignored one critical area—the need for reengagement with IR’s subfields. I made this a central topic to my investigation not to undermine these scholars, but to ensure that the potential power, influence, and affect of their insights are not lost.

In 1986, Steve Smith considered it an open question whether FPA was a “discredited pseudo-science” (13). As of 2014, the evidence is overwhelming that FPA is here to stay and that it is prospering. The journal Foreign Policy Analysis was established in 2005, the post-9/11 era has put a premium on the expertise of FPA scholars, and the most recent TRIP survey scored
“policy analysis” at a value of 2.5 out of possible 3, trailing only “area studies” (Maliniak, Peterson, and Tierney 2012). Of equal importance, chapter four revealed the presence of parallel ideas being developed separately in IR and FPA. The ability of scholars from each field to engage with one another will break down stubborn artificial boundaries and lead to a more efficient academy.

For too long the ominous specter of Kenneth Waltz’s writings on the IR-FPA relationship has convinced scholars in both fields that they are fundamentally opposed to one another. These convictions have a basis only in gross misunderstandings of Waltz. Although a caricature of the IR giant is easy to produce when pulling popular quotations out of context, even moderately thorough readings of his corpus produce a strikingly different picture. Properly understood, Waltz conceives of IR and FPA as separate, but complementary, mutually dependent enterprises.

The best of the FPA tradition shares in Waltz’s conviction. The early middle-range theorists and their contemporary descendants—Beasley, Kaarbo, Ozkececi-Taner and many others—realize that a rejection of unit-reductionism does not leave FPA a “theory without a home” (Houghton 2007). These scholars understand IR and FPA to be ecologically mutualistic. Such a relationship is epitomized by Beasley and Snarr’s car accident metaphor (2013). Different levels of analysis are necessary for producing empirical descriptions with maximum explanatory power. We must remain vigilant in opposition to all forms of reductionism while simultaneously reinvigorating the level of engagement between IR and FPA.

Reconceptualizing the relationship between IR and FPA, only cursory explorations of the literature of the FPA literature are necessary to conclude that the ethos Sil, Katzenstein, and Jackson are searching for already finds expression here. Due to its inherent interdisciplinary character and close ties to policy, FPA naturally inclines toward eclecticism, the work of William
Flanik providing just one example. Despite even stronger neopositivist dominance in FPA than in IR, diverse methodologies have emerged to some extent. Brian White’s (1999) discussion of Henrik Larsen’s (1997) “political discourse” approach presents an early example of this. More recently, Faruk Yalvaç has made a strong case for using the critical realist approach to Turkish foreign policy. In Yalvaç’s view, drawing on the methodology associated with Roy Bhaskar can raise scholars out of the “micro-level of analysis” and avoid psychologism. Mark Schafer’s (2003) article exemplifies an FPA scholar grappling with multiple pluralisms, striving for tolerance and dialogue in each case. Schafer chastises the “territoriality,” “intolerance,” and “naysaying” between isolated schools of thought and encourages the “blending” of multiple perspectives in order to come closest to the truth (Schafer 2003, 172). In addition, Schafer proposes the novel concept of “state-level psychology” which cuts across paradigms and levels of analysis. Schafer’s innovative ideas demonstrate the level of creativity that can be unlocked when one is willing to step out of the circumscribed divisions of academia.

My argument for embracing the three pluralisms is not one of anti-positivism, antimonism, or anti-science. In certain situations, each of these dispositions have something to contribute to a healthy IR field. What I am against and what I urge all scholars of good faith to reject, are the principles of hegemony, monoculture, conformity, and lack of creativity and imagination. In other words there is nothing wrong with individual scholars adopting neopositivism, relying on monism, or using a single-level of analysis. However, when the discipline as a whole is dominated by these approaches and dialogue is restricted in ways to unfairly ensure their continued preeminence, such a state is unconscionable.

To sustain any semblance of relevancy, IR must adapt to a rapidly changing world. The problems of today cannot be solved using the intellectual tools of the Cold War, the unipolar 90s
or even the early 2000s. A pluralistic world requires a pluralistic philosophy—and a pluralistic field of IR. By adopting the three pluralisms I have defended, IR can become more philosophically sound and recapture its link to practice and policy. Through this process, the leading minds of political science and IR can regain credibility in our public debates; reclaiming the influence temporarily usurped by interested think tank researchers. For IR, the task of producing scholar-leaders the likes of Kissinger and Brzezinski should not be seen as a self-interested ploy for power, but as a duty in a troubled democracy gravely in need of guidance.

**Implications for Teaching and Learning**

Pablo Picasso is attributed with the famous quote, “Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them like an artist.” If adoption of the three pluralisms is accepted, the institutions associated with International Studies will need to adapt. In doing so, they will necessarily take a stance regarding Picasso’s statement. Will eclecticism and nonpositivism be alternative avenues of study for the most advanced students, or will they become engrained within our curricula, perhaps establishing a new paradigm?

This question is most easily answered in the context of level of analysis pluralism. Chapter four illustrated the unnecessary fragmentation brought about by misunderstanding Kenneth Waltz as well as the futility of searching for a fixed ontological ground of IR. In light of these investigations, no real obstacle exists to achieving this pluralism other than the amount of time we are willing to devote to it. Graduate level curriculum can be designed to expose students to multiple levels of analysis rather than reifying divisions along these lines. More scholars can follow the examples of Ryan Beasley and Juliet Kaarbo and discuss subjects in a way that draws on the literatures of both IR and FPA. These small steps will pay dividends toward the
investment in positive interaction between the two approaches to world politics. Here there is no
need to break the rules—level of analysis pluralism can become the norm.

Methodological pluralism presents no great conceptual obstacles, but culturally the odds
are against it. Outside the segment of the population that holds doctorates, Karl Popper’s view of
science is incredibly prevalent and entrenched. In nonacademic discussions between educated
people, those who question falsification are often grouped in with climate change deniers and the
anti-vaccination crowd. One obvious solution to this problem is to start teaching philosophy of
science—at all levels of higher education. Every year in the United States, thousands of students
are awarded bachelors and advanced degrees in natural science. Most of these students have
never heard of Thomas Kuhn. This needs to change.

Within IR, Jackson’s publication of Conduct of Inquiry presents a turning point. It
assures that voices outside the mainstream have an advocate in a highly reputable scholar.
Faculty members should read the book and assign it in graduate and advanced undergraduate
courses. The recent rise of pragmatism and critical realism in IR assures that epistemological
issues will not disappear. The renewed bridge between IR and FPA must serve as a conduit to
ensure that the latter field feels the impact of not allowing neopositivism to proceed
unreflectively.

Finally, with regard to analytic eclecticism, significant questions remain regarding how it
can be approached and taught in universities and how scholars might go about receiving training
and becoming qualified to produce eclectic work. Within the context of IR, Picasso’s idea can be
translated into a question concerning whether one must first learn a particular paradigm fully,
before becoming eclectic. The attitude we take toward this idea has important implications for
how analytic eclecticism is interpreted and implemented. Sil and Katzenstein clearly establish
their view that for the field of International Relations, paradigm-bound research is a necessary precursor of eclectic research. This leaves open the question of “do individual scholars need to first become immersed in a single paradigm before conducting their own eclectic research?”

Further complicating matters, this question has two components: it can be answered in terms of what is needed to produce quality scholarly work and it can be answered in terms of what is needed to conform to the structural-institutional constraints of the American academy.

Being of a strictly empirical nature, the structural-institutional question supplies simpler criteria of evaluation. If we find that IR journals tend not to publish eclectic work by junior scholars, this supports Picasso’s statement. If we find that there is a pattern of paradigm-oriented scholars achieving tenure at a higher rate than eclectic-oriented scholars, this is further evidence.

This question of structure essentially addresses what is the case within IR regardless of the ability of scholars. It suggests that hypothetically gifted eclectic young scholars may not be given fair treatment solely due to the structural constraints of the field (journal editorial boards, tenure review, hiring, and the like). The more theoretical question is if it is even possible to produce quality eclectic research without having first received a narrow, restrictive, and intensive training within a single paradigm.

Sil and Katzenstein’s account of the challenges of analytic eclecticism make clear that eclectic scholarship requires an in-depth and diverse knowledge base. Both the difficulties of avoiding “muddiness of concepts” and of withstanding criticism from potentially defensive and territorial paradigm-oriented scholars call for an extensive familiarity with the literatures of each paradigm being sampled from. I would hesitate to suggest that a scholar must have published work in each of the paradigms they sample from in their eclectic analysis. On the other hand, it would seem an almost necessary requirement that the scholar have familiarity to the point where
they could have published in each of those paradigms. An intimate understanding of the paradigm culture, language-game, and research methods is needed in order to meaningfully incorporate it into an eclectic study. Anything less risks overlooking important points of difference and sameness between the paradigms. Eclecticism will lower scholarly standards if it discourages students and scholars from fully engaging with the complex theoretical arguments and models of the paradigms. It cannot become a cop-out option for those unwilling to dig deeper than the surface of any one paradigm and instead should be reserved for those willing to go above and beyond and becoming devoutly familiar with multiple paradigms.

The question of what education is appropriate for training an eclectic scholar is complicated by the rigorous demands associated with its production. Certainly the entire process of undergraduate and graduate preparation in International Relations cannot be tailored to this very particular style of inquiry. Even if it gains full acceptance, it will occupy only a small percentage of the body of research and the field and therefore should not dictate educational procedure on the rest. An attempt to provide the broadest range of topics in International theory will cause students to miss out on the dedication and long-term attention needed to delve into and deeply understand one paradigm. On the other hand, single-minded focus on one particular approach (what some would call indoctrination) will not inculcate the idea that eclecticism is important and will prevent students from challenging their biases and being exposed to new ideas.

For all three pluralisms, the reality may be that an ability to practice as a pluralist scholar may be something that an individual has to cultivate on his or her own. This will require an insatiable curiosity, a completist attitude, and a willingness to accumulate a mushrooming bibliography. In some rare cases a scholar may be able to break out on the back of pluralist work,
but, at least in the near future, it seems far more likely that a veteran scholar who has been tried and tested would be able to summon the knowledge, acumen, and credibility necessary to produce pluralist work with a chance of being taken seriously.
Works Cited


124


