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Article (Accepted version)
(Refereed)

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International Ideologies: Paradigms of Ideological Analysis and World Politics[1]

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Abstract

Recent years have seen significant interest among scholars of International Relations (IR) in ideological analysis. By treating international theories as international ideologies, this trend entails both a radical reconceptualization of IR's disciplinary foundations as well as the emergence of important new lines of inquiry for scholars of ideology. And yet, as a research programme, ideological analysis in IR has failed to establish a significant foothold in the discipline. This article locates the source of this weakness in the fractious nature of IR as a discipline, which has contributed to the emergence of five distinct paradigms of ideological analysis: Analytical, Historical, Philosophical, Critical, and Reflexive. Reviewing these five distinct bodies of scholarship, this article demonstrates that ideological analysis is 'alive and well' in IR, but argues that greater engagement between divergent paradigms will be required in order to fully understand the complexities of international ideologies.

Introduction: Ideological Analysis in International Relations

Ideological analysis involves the study of diverse traditions of political thought and the way in which they relate to one another and to the social world more broadly. Within International Relations (IR), the sub-field of political science dedicated to the study of world politics, global affairs and relations between states, ideological analysis involves the study of the content, nature and effects of what I term here 'international ideologies'. International ideologies are inter-subjectively held systems of thought consisting of basic claims concerning the nature of the international realm and the actors that populate it. They serve a primarily diagnostic function by helping individuals comprehend the nature of the international domain and to understand the logics underpinning its operation. Many traditions of international thought are as well-known as their domestic counterparts, including realism, liberalism, internationalism, globalism, cosmopolitanism, communitarianism, nationalism, idealism, militarism, and related variants of these basic ideals. Each of these traditions embody divergent conceptions of core concepts associated with international relations, including sovereignty, anarchy, power, community, interest, institutions and the state.

An in-depth analysis of these different interpretations is beyond the scope of this inquiry, which is concerned rather with the prominence of

ideological analysis within the discipline of IR and the different ways in which scholars have sought to understand these traditions. Whilst ideological analysis has flourished in political science and political theory more broadly, IR as a discipline has proven surprisingly resilient to the idea that core traditions of international thought may be regarded as 'ideologies'. This is in spite the efforts of several prominent scholars to promote ideological analysis within IR. Ceadel, for example, in his 1987 book on the British peace movement, argued individuals disagreed about international questions because 'they have different ideological preconceptions', arguing in consequence that 'the war and peace debate needs a general interpretive framework of the sort…long employed by students of domestic politics'.[2] Some years later, in this journal, Bell sought to apply Freeden's morphological approach to ideological analysis to 'internationally oriented thought-structures', coining the term 'horizontal ideologies' to denote patterns of belief that take as their subject-matter the relations between states or the nature of the international realm.[3]

Despite these early efforts to introduce ideological analysis into IR, the field has struggled to achieve recognition, impact, and an independent identity. In 2003, for example, Oren noted that IR scholars seldom applied the concept of ideology to the theoretical concepts utilised in their own

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[2] Martin Ceadel, *Thinking about Peace and War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 1.

[3] Duncan Bell, 'Anarchy, power and death: contemporary political realism as ideology', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 7(2), (2002), pp. 221-239, at p. 225.

discipline.[4] Rathbun, a year later, expressed his surprise at the absence of scholarship on ideology and international politics, even as the 'constructivist turn' heralded a shift towards analysing ideas in an international context.[5] Cantir and Kaarbo, in a recent survey, also noted that 'there is little research on partisanship and political ideology in foreign policy [studies]'.[6] Thérien, most recently, has addressed the absence of ideological analysis in IR, noting his surprise that "the notion of ideology has not been systematically used in the analysis of world politics and global governance".[7] This lacuna, moreover, is reinforced by the corresponding tendency for scholars of 'domestic' politics to shy away from the study of international belief-systems. Consider, for example, that in the past five years, only seven articles dealing with explicitly international belief-structured have been published in the *Journal of Political Ideologies* (JPI).[8]

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[4] Ido Oren, *Our Enemies and Us: America's Enemies and the Making of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 172.

[5] Brian Rathbun, *Partisan Interventions: European Party Politics and Peace Enforcement in the Balkans* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 6.

[6] Christian Cantir & Juliet Kaarbo, 'Contested Roles and Domestic Politics: Reflections on Role Theory in Foreign Policy Analysis and IR Theory', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 8(1), (2012), pp. 5-24, at p. 14.

[7] Jean-Philippe Thérien, 'The United Nations ideology: from ideas to global politics' *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 20(3), (2015), pp. 221-243, at p. 225.

[8] The works in question are: Roberto Farneti, 'Cleavage lines in global politics: left and right, East and West, earth and heaven', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 17(2), (2012), pp. 127-145; Alex Schulman, 'Carl Schmitt and the clash of civilizations: the missing context', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 17(2), (2012), pp. 147-167; Jan Zielonka, 'Europe's new civilizing mission: the EU's normative power discourse', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 18(1), (2013), pp. 35-55; Rafal Soborski, 'Globalization and ideology: a critical review of the debate', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 17(3), (2012), pp. 323-346; Jean-Philippe Thérien, *op. cit.*, Ref. 6; and Laurence Whitehead, 'International democracy promotion as political ideology: upsurge and retreat', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 20(1), (2015), pp. 10-26.

This then raises the interesting question of why ideological analysis has, in spite of repeated efforts, failed to take root in the discipline? Most scholars making the case for ideological analysis have cited the enduring appeal of realism as the main explanation for this underdevelopment.[9] Yet this explanation is insufficient, since realism ceased to be the dominant paradigm of international studies in the 1990s – having since been superseded by constructivism[10] – and since realism has always remained marginal within British and European IR.[11] Both Rathbun and Thérien, for instance, record their surprise that the constructivist turn has not led to a more robust research programme on ideology and international relations.[12] Even the growth of liberal theory – regardless of its association with rationalist assumptions and methodology[13] – should have opened up greater space for ideology in the discipline, given its emphasis on sub-state variation in strategies and the ideational sources of foreign policy.[14] To put it another way, while realism is no-longer dominant, international studies has failed to develop a broader appreciation for ideological analysis beyond a few isolated examples.

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[9] Martin Ceadel, *op. cit.*, Ref. 1, p. 3; Duncan Bell, *op. cit.*, Ref. 2, p. 222; R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 104.

[10] The annual TRIP survey asked IR scholars across the globe which approach best defined their work. Of all the respondents (n=4659), 18% indicated realism, 23% constructivism, and 12% liberalism. Daniel Maliniak, Susan Peterson, Ryan Powers & Michael J. Tierney, *TRIP 2014: Faculty Survey* (Williamsburg, VA: Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations, 2014). Available at https://trip.wm.edu/charts/.

[11] John J. Mearsheimer, 'E.H. Carr vs. Idealism: The Battle Rages On', *International Relations*, 19(2), (2005), pp. 139-152, at p. 140.

[12] Brian Rathbun, *op. cit.*, Ref. 4, p. 6; Jean-Philippe Thérien, *op. cit.*, Ref. 6, p. 226.

[13] Helen Milner, 'Rationalizing Politics: The Emerging Synthesis of International, American, and Comparative Politics' *International Organization*, 52(4), (1998), pp. 759-786, at p. 761.

[14] Andrew Moravcsik, 'Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics', *International Organization*, 51(4), (1997), pp. 513-553, at p. 525.

A further reason for ideological analysis not taking off in the mainstream is the challenge it poses to the assumption of analytical neutrality at the core of these diverse theoretical paradigms. Adherents of individual paradigms treat the structures of thought that could inform ideological analysis as ontological 'truths', a status they are understandably reluctant to give up. Indeed, as noted in a standard textbook on the concept: [15]

> [T]he word ideology comes trailing clouds of pejorative connotation…That our thought might be ideological is a suggestion that we almost instinctively reject lest the foundations of our most cherished concepts turn out to be composed of more shifting sand than we would like.

There is no doubt some truth in the idea some scholars prefer the labels of 'theory' to 'ideology', the preference for pursuing non-ideological study. Yet here again the explanation is incomplete; since the 'constructivist turn' in the 1990s, a significant number of scholars have sought to jettison the analytical assumptions behind positivist research and have embraced the interdependence of theory and practice. [16] Here again, even after the advent of a more reflexive approach to social inquiry in the field, the ideological analysis of international traditions has not occurred to the degree that might have been expected.

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[15] David McLellan, *op. cit.*, Ref. 14, p. 1.
[16] Yosef Lapid, 'The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era', *International Studies Quarterly*, 33(3), (1989), pp. 235-254, at p. 237.

If neither the dominance of realism nor positivism within the discipline of IR can explain the trials of ideological analysis in IR, then an explanation must be sought elsewhere. This article makes two principal claims, which it illustrates through a survey of the existing literature on international ideologies. The first is that, in spite of repeated claims to the contrary, there already exists a substantial body of scholarship that applies the assumptions of ideological analysis to the principal traditions of international thought. What has appeared to many scholars as a dearth of work on ideological analysis and world politics is actually a *perceived* gap in the literature, since a diverse array of authors have already made significant inroads into the study of international ideologies. The second is that this literature is highly fractious, divided as it is into several largely distinct paradigms (or 'scholarly communities') [17] within which relatively separate conversations about ideology are taking place, mostly without reference to the work of competing paradigms. Herein lies one reason for the frequency with which the absence of ideological analysis in IR is proclaimed. The real problem, therefore, is not that IR is a stranger to ideological analysis, but that inter-paradigmatic disagreements (be they ontological, epistemological, methodological or linguistic) and the minimal intra-paradigmatic contacts afforded by the discipline have prevented the

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[17] For a discussion on the paradigmatic fault-lines in IR see Patrick Jackson & Daniel Nexon, 'Paradigmatic Faults in International-Relations Theory', *International Studies Quarterly*, 53, (2009), pp. 907-930, at p. 907.

establishment of a self-aware research programme around international ideologies.

My intention in this article is to survey the existing work which treats traditions of international thought as 'ideologies', irrespective of whether these works self-identify with the label of 'ideological analysis'. The aim is twofold: First, to contribute to the development of a self-reflexive research programme on the study of international ideologies and in so doing promote engagement between diverse research programmes working on similar questions and puzzles. Second, to establish the primary fault-lines of disagreement within existing scholarship and to establish what is at stake in the various substantive, theoretical and methodological debates in the field. The argument proceeds as follows. I begin by summarising the state of the discipline by distinguishing five paradigms of ideological analysis in studies of international politics: (a) *analytical*, (b) *historical*, (c) *philosophical*, (d) *critical*, and (e) *reflexive*. I then discuss four key areas of disagreement that emerge from the discussion, asking: (a) *What is the status of these beliefs?* (b) *How should we study them?* (c) *What are the relevant ideologies?* and (d) *Who are their holders?*

International Ideologies: Five Paradigms

In this section I discuss the key assumptions of five largely distinct traditions of ideological analysis that have developed within the broader discipline of IR. I offer examples of scholars whose work is associated with each sub-field and elaborate upon the principal epistemological and methodological assumptions underlying each tradition. It is worth noting at the outset that these traditions do not represent mutually exclusive epistemological or ontological categories but rather groupings of like-minded scholarship which displays similarities in a number of respects. These paradigms represent distinct 'conversations' in the discipline within which ideological concepts and categories are subjected to theoretical inquiry.

Analytical

One research programme where inroads into ideological analysis have been made is *analytical*. The hallmark of the analytical approach is its commitment to the assumptions of positivist social science in order to understand the causal effects of subjectivity. First, analytical scholarship on international ideology retains the assumptions of 'mind-world dualism'; that is, that there exists a separation between the subject (world) and the

observer (scholar) such that objective analysis is possible.[18] This implies a relatively deterministic concept of causation, with the task of the researcher being to uncover the 'causal mechanisms' linking international ideologies to a variety of foreign policy outcomes. Second, significant emphasis is placed on the operationalization of ideology as a variable and on questions of measurement. Martini, for example, in his study of citizen preferences over conflict in Libya and Afghanistan, argues for 'a multidimensional conceptualisation… that covers the most basic beliefs within foreign policy'.[19] Third, these works proceed most often through formal hypothesis testing, by elaborating theoretical claims and specifying the conditions under which they may be falsified.[20] This entails a preference for the use of methods associated with 'positivist' social science research, including case studies,[21] the comparative method,[22] regression analysis,[23] cross-tabulations and descriptive statistics,[24] large-scale surveys,[25] and factor analysis.[26]

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[18] Patrick Jackson, 'Foregrounding ontology: dualism, monism, and IR theory', *Review of International Studies*, 34(1), (2008), pp. 129-153, at p. 132.

[19] Nicholas F. Martini, 'Foreign Policy Ideology and Conflict Preferences: A Look at Afghanistan and Libya', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 11, (2015), pp. 417-434, at p. 420.

[20] Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London: Routledge, 1959), p. 10.

[21] Ole R. Holsti, 'The belief system and national images: a case study', *Conflict Resolution*, 6(3), 1979, pp. 244-252, at p. 246.

[22] Nicholas F. Martini, *op. cit.*, Ref. 18, p. 424.

[23] Helen V. Milner & Benjamin Judkins, 'Partisanship, Trade Policy, and Globalization: Is There a Left-Right Divide on Trade Policy?', *International Studies Quarterly*, 48(1), (2004), pp. 95-120, at pp. 108-112.

[24] Peter H. Gries, *The Politics of American Foreign Policy: How Ideology Divides Liberals and Conservatives* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014).

[25] Eugene Wittkopf, 'On the Foreign Policy Beliefs of the American People: A Critique and Some Evidence', *International Studies Quarterly*, 30, (1986), pp. 425-445, at pp. 438-439; Richard K. Herrmann & Jonathan W. Keller, 'Beliefs, Values, and Strategic Choice: US Leaders' Decisions to Engage, Contain, and Use Force in an Era of Globalization', *Journal of Politics*, 66(2), (2004), pp. 557-580, at pp. 564-565.

Much of the initial analytical work on international ideologies was developed by scholars of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), the sub-field of IR dedicated to the multi-level, interdisciplinary and integrative explanation of the processes underlying foreign policy decision-making.[27] Initial work generally referred not to ideologies but to 'belief systems', defined as the 'set of lenses through which information concerning the…social environment is received…defining it…and identifying…its salient characteristics'.[28] Belief systems, it was held, could help explain the attitudes (and actions) of both policymakers[29] and the general public towards international issues.[30] Work on belief systems has gradually morphed into explicit studies of ideology and foreign policy, with various strands of FPA research analysing the link between domestic political ideologies of liberalism and conservatism and foreign policy positions,[31] the effects of elite 'foreign policy ideologies' on intervention and conflict

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[26] William O. Chittick, Keith R. Billingsley & Rick Travis, 'A Three-Dimensional Model of American Foreign Policy Beliefs', *International Studies Quarterly*, 39, (1995), pp. 313-331.

[27] Valerie Hudson, 'Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 1(1), (2005), pp. 1-30, p. 2.

[28] Ole R. Holsti, *op. cit.*, Ref. 20, p. 245.

[29] Richard K. Herrmann & Jonathan W. Keller, *op. cit.*, Ref. 24, p. 558; Ole R. Holsti, *op. cit.*, Ref. 20, p. 245.

[30] Ole R. Holsti, 'Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus', *International Studies Quarterly*, 36, (1992), pp. 439-466; William O. Chittick, Keith R. Billingsley & Rick Travis, *op. cit.*, Ref. 25; Eugene Wittkopf, *op. cit.*, Ref. 24, p. 428.

[31] Peter H. Gries, *op. cit.*, Ref. 23, pp. 44-48; Brian Rathbun, 'Does One Right Make a Realist? Conservatism, Neoconservatism, and Isolationism in the Foreign Policy Ideology of American Elites', *Political Science Quarterly*, 123(2), (2008), pp. 271-299; Brian Rathbun, 'Politics and Paradigm Preferences: The Implicit Ideology of International Relations Scholars', *International Studies Quarterly*, 56, (2012), pp. 607-622; Henry Nau, 'Conservative Internationalism', *Policy Review*, 153, (2008), pp. 3-44.

initiation, [32] and the 'folk-realism' and other foreign policy ideologies within the general public. [33]

Incursions into ideological analysis have been made by 'mainstream' IR theorists too. Works of liberal IR scholarship, associated with rationalist theory and quantitative methodology, have often included measures of ideology or partisanship alongside their other variables, notably in liberal accounts of trade and foreign economic policy.[34] Liberal scholars have also offered conceptual accounts of liberal internationalism as it has come to characterise the international system from 1945 onwards, as manifest in globalisation, the international political economy, democratization and the institutionalisation of world politics. [35] Neoclassical realists, whose analyses combine domestic variables with the core realist assumptions of

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[32] Nicholas F. Martini, *op. cit.*, Ref. 18, p. 417; Timothy Hildebrandt, Courtney Hillebrecht, Peter M. Holm & Jon Pevehouse, 'The Domestic Politics of Humanitarian Intervention: Public Opinion, Partisanship, and Ideology', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 9, (2013), pp. 243-266; Joshua Kertzer & Kathleen McGraw, 'Folk Realism: Testing the Microfoundations of Realism in Ordinary Citizens', *International Studies Quarterly*, 56, (2012), pp. 245-258, at p. 246.

[33] Daniel Drezner, 'The Realist Tradition in American Public Opinion', *Perspectives on Politics*, 6, (2008), pp. 51-70; Brian Rathbun, 'It takes all types: social psychology, trust, and the international relations paradigm in our minds', *International Theory*, 1(3), (2009), pp. 345-380.

[34] Benjamin O. Fordham, 'Economic Interests, Party, and Ideology in Early Cold War Era US Foreign Policy', *International Organization*, 52(2), (1998), pp. 359-396; Helen V. Milner & Benjamin Judkins, *op. cit.*, Ref. 22.

[35] John Ikenberry is one self-identified liberal who has taken seriously this claim. See: G. John Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internationalism 3.0: America and the Dilemmas of Liberal World Order', *Perspectives on Politics*, 7(1), (2009), pp. 71-87; and 'A world economy restored: expert consensus and the Anglo-American postwar settlement', *International Organization*, 46(1), (1992), pp. 289-321. Many other liberal IR theorists have strongly resisted labelling their analyses 'ideological'. See, for example: Beate Jahn, 'Liberal internationalism: from ideology to empirical theory – and back again', *International Theory*, 1(3), (2009), pp. 409-438, and Andrew Moravcsik, "*Wahn, Wahn, Überall Wahn'* A reply to Jahn's critique of liberal internationalism', *International Theory*, 2(1), (2010), pp. 113-139.

anarchy, self-help and the importance of power,[36] have also incorporated ideology into their scholarship. These authors tend to address 'power political' questions of strategy and alliance choices and focus more on the 'distance' between states' ideological beliefs, rather than the content of these *per se*. Neoclassical analyses have emphasised the importance of ideological similarities and differences in animating the origins of the Second World War, [37] conflict between Western liberalism and Soviet communism during the Cold War,[38] the shifting pattern of alliances in the Middle East, [39] and the geostrategic construction of post-Cold War Europe.[40]

Historical

International historians have generally been open to the idea of treating traditions of thought as ideologies rather than theories, since they have less at stake in these theoretical debates themselves, and since they generally proffer methodologically eclectic explanations of social reality. Thus, with some notable exceptions – including 'realist' historians like

[36] Gideon Rose, 'Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy', *World Politics,* 51(1), (1998), pp. 144-172.

[37] For examples of neoclassical realist works on ideology see: Mark L. Haas, 'Ideology and Alliances: British and French External Balancing Decisions in the 1930s', *Security Studies*, 12(4), (2003), pp. 34-79; Mark L. Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789-1989* (London: Cornell University Press, 2005), Ch. 4.

[38] Mark L. Haas, 'The United States and the End of the Cold War: Reactions to Shifts in Soviet Power, Policies, or Domestic Politics?', *International Organization*, 61(1), (2007), pp. 145-179; Mark L. Haas, *op. cit.*, Ref. 36, Ch. 5.

[39] Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (London: Cornell University Press, 1987).

[40] Jarrod Hayes & Patrick James, 'Theory as Thought: Britain and German Unification', *Security Studies,* 23(2), (2014), pp. 399-429, at p. 427.

A.J.P. Taylor [41] and more Marxist-oriented historians of the *Annales School* and the 'new economic history' [42] – international historians have afforded ideas and ideologies a prominent place in their analyses.

Historical scholarship on international ideologies may be differentiated from the other research programmes under discussion by the epistemological and ontological assumptions underlying the historical method. First, historical works are generally inductive rather than deductive; they seek to infer more generalizable claims from their narratives rather than create (or interpret) the empirical record through a deductively established theoretical lens. [43] As a result, the arguments proffered by historians regarding ideology are generally more specific than their alternatives, having been 'fitted' to the case under study.[44] Second, historical works regard ideology as only one factor among many relevant to a full explanation of foreign policy and international relations. In this regard, they are generally proponents of multi-causal, non-reductionist explanations. In contrast to other research programmes, alternative explanations are regarded as complementary rather than as confounding or competing factors. Third, historians have been sceptical about treating their empirical discussions as distinct cases to which the assumptions of

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[41] A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe: 1848-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954).

[42] See Jack S. Levy, 'Too Important to Leave to the Other: History and Political Science in the Study of International Relations', *International Security*, 22(1), (1997), pp. 22-33, at p. 28, for a discussion.

[43] John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[44] Positivist scholars, in contrast, strive hard to avoid 'over-fitting' models, lest this reduce their general applicability.

comparative analysis can be applied. They also utilise a greater number of

primary sources than alternative case-based researchers.

Some historical works examine narrow time-periods, tracing the role of

distinct ideologies at pivotal times and emphasising the specificities of the

case under study. Pugh's examination of liberal internationalism in the

interwar peace movement in Britain[45] and Ceadel's conceptual study of

the international ideologies associated with the peace movement during

the Cold War both offer examples of specific and tightly delineated

histories of ideology. [46] So, too, do Gat's study of liberal and fascist

conceptions of war in the early twentieth century,[47] Steffek's account of

'fascist internationalism' in the interwar period,[48] and Chapnick's study of

conservative thought and its effect on Canadian foreign policy in the post-

war period.[49]

Other works are broader in scope, seeking to examine the role played by

ideology in foreign policy decisions of international politics over a broad

period of time and often drawing insights from more specific historical

works as they go. Gaddis' history of Cold War containment strategy, with

its emphasis on domestic political changes and the socio-economic

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[45] Michael Pugh, *Liberal Internationalism: The Interwar Movement for Peace in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 2-4.

[46] Martin Ceadel, *op. cit.*, Ref. 1.

[47] Azar Gat, *Fascist and Liberal Visions of War: Fuller, Liddell Hart, Douhet, and Other Modernists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

[48] Jens Steffek, 'Fascist internationalism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 44(1), (2015), pp. 3-22, p. 9.

[49] Adam Chapnick, 'Peace, order, and good government: The "conservative" tradition in Canadian foreign policy', *International Journal*, 60, (2004), pp. 635-650.

philosophies of the Democrat and Republican parties is an early example,[50] as is Hunt's survey of ideology and American history in which he establishes the dominance of ideas concerning individualism and racial hierarchy in the conduct of American foreign policy.[51] Other works in this vein include Casells' study of ideology and international relations from the enlightenment to the post-Cold War world,[52] Thérien and Noël's history of the politics of globalisation from 1945 to the present day[53] and Ikenberry's study of liberalism and post-war American foreign relations.[54]

Philosophical

The philosophical tradition associated with ideological analysis and world politics has largely emerged within the sub-field of normative international theory (or, as it is sometimes named, 'international political theory'). Philosophical works have emphasised the contingency of international theory/thought and the need to situate the roots of analytical theories within broader debates in the history of political philosophy. Such theories as realism and liberalism, from the perspective of the

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[50] John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

[51] Michael Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

[52] Alan Cassels, *Ideology and International Relations in the Modern World* (London: Routledge, 1996).

[53] Jean-Philippe Thérien & Alain Noël, *Left and Right in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[54] G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). Although Ikenberry is regarded as a liberal theorist within the discipline of International Relations, much of his work is historical in its assumptions and presentation.

philosophical tradition, are understood rather as distinct constellations of political assumptions. By outlining the key traditions of international thought, these works have helped draw attention to the existence of diverse constituencies of thought interpreting the nature of 'the international'.

The philosophical literature may be distinguished, in the first place, by the extent to which it is embedded in the 'Western' philosophical tradition and the canon of theorists often associated with this, from the Ancient Greeks, through Christian philosophy, to the liberal theorists of the Enlightenment and post-Rawlsian debates on modern liberalism. The second hallmark of the philosophical approach is its commitment to the analytical tradition and to the notion of an underlying, and discernible, social and political 'reality', and to the rejection of relativism, anti-foundationalism and philosophical pragmatism. Third, and related, philosophical works embrace the distinction between positive and normative theory – that is, between social science and moral theory, and between the categories of 'is' and 'ought'. This separation between the normative and positive domains of social reality is a product of the analytical commitments associated with the philosophical approach and is not found within the critical or reflexive paradigms (discussed below).

Several diverse literatures have taken seriously the relationship between ideology and international politics. Many of these contributions lie at the

nexus of political philosophy and IR, which have interrogated the international corollaries of traditional concepts of political authority. For some this has entailed study of socialism, liberalism and conservatism, and how each understands 'the international' differently.[55] For others it has involved a more direct comparison between the distinct 'Western' traditions of Kantianism, Hobbesianism, Grotianism, and various other traditions.[56] Members of the English School of international relations – a tradition of inquiry dedicated to the study of 'international society' which draws heavily on political philosophy[57] – have also sought to examine the effects of these traditions of international thought on state behaviour.[58] Finally, debates concerning the relative strength, and merits, of cosmopolitanism and communitarianism – and the extent to which norms of global community are supplanting individuals' commitments to 'their' nation – have been the subject of a significant literature within global

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[55] Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), pp. 18-20.

[56] Kant, Hobbes, Machiavelli and Rousseau typically figure in most accounts. For a discussion of international theory in the 'Western' canon see Chris Brown, Terry Nardin and Nicholas Rengger, *International Relations in Political Thought: Texts from the Ancient Greeks to the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); David Boucher, *Political Theories of International Relations: From Thucydides to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Beate Jahn, *Classical Theory in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954).

[57] Andrew Hurrell, 'Keeping history, law and political philosophy firmly within the English School', *Review of International Studies*, 27(3), (2001), pp. 489-494, at p. 490.

[58] See, for example, the distinction between 'realism, rationalism and revolutionism' in Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (London: Leicester University Press, 1991), and the discussion of 'Grotianism, Kantianism and Hobbesianism' and 'internationalism, universalism and realism' in Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1977), p. 23.

politics, one that shares many of the assumptions of the philosophical approach to the study of international ideologies.[59]

Critical

Critical theorists have also interrogated the theory/ideology nexus. Critical accounts, as befits their Marxist ontology, exhibit several distinguishing features. First – and in common with the postmodern perspective – they regard ideologies as temporally contingent phenomena that arise out of certain (contingent) historical circumstances and events. Thus, Cox has argued that ideologies may be regarded as 'practically useful…guides to action under specific historical conditions'.[60] Second, critical scholars regard international ideologies as reductionist and inaccurate representations of an underlying reality – as a *camera obscura,* in Marxist terminology.[61] The corollary of the critical scholars' view of

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[59] For a discussion of cosmopolitanism and communitarianism see: Michael Zürn and Pieter de Wilde, 'Debating globalization: cosmopolitanism and communitarianism as political ideologies', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 21(3), pp. 280-301, at pp. 284-287; Chris Brown, *International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Garrett Wallace Brown, 'State Sovereignty, Federation and Kantian Cosmopolitanism' *European Journal of International Relations*, 11(4), (2005), pp. 495-522; Toni Erskine, *Embedded Cosmopolitanism: Duties to Strangers and Enemies in a World of 'Dislocated Communities'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 16; Mervyn Frost, *Ethics in International Relations: A Constitutive Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and David Held, 'Restructuring Global Governance: Cosmopolitanism, Democracy and the Global Order', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 37(3), (2009), pp. 535-547, at p. 537.

[60] Robert W. Cox, 'Ideologies and the new international economic order: reflections on some recent literature', *International Organization*, 33(2), (1979), pp. 257-302, at p. 300.

[61] Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society: A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations* (London: Verso, 1994), p. 30; Hartmut Behr & Amelia Heath,

ideology as 'false consciousness' is the retention by critical scholars of an underlying belief in a foundational ontology; that is, in the belief of an accessible and interpretable reality beneath these 'false' ideological structures. Third, critical scholars posit that these 'distortions' of reality emerge because they serve discernible interests. In his early work Cox was explicit about this link, stating: 'Ideological analysis is… a critic's weapon and one most effectively used against the prevailing orthodoxies which, when stripped of their putative universality, become seen as special pleading for historically transient but presently entrenched interests'. [62]

The most famous example of this form of theorising is to be found in Cox's path-breaking *Millennium* article in which he argued 'all theory is for some one and some purpose'. [63] This more general claim builds on his earlier work on the new economic ideology (neo-liberalism). [64] Since Cox's intervention, critical scholars have achieved significant analytical leverage examining IR theories as ideologies. Rosenberg, for example, has examined the role of realist ideology in legitimating nineteenth-century European foreign policy, arguing that commercial interests ultimately lay beneath the imperialist practices of the period. [65] His critique of realism regards the theory as 'the conservative ideology of the exercise of modern

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'Misreading in IR theory and ideology critique: Morgenthau, Waltz and neo-realism', *Review of International Studies*, 35, (2009), pp. 327-349, at p. 330.

[62] Robert W. Cox, *op. cit.*, Ref. 59, p. 257.

[63] Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 10(2), (1981), pp. 126-155.

[64] Robert W. Cox, *op. cit.*, Ref. 59.

[65] Justin Rosenberg, *op. cit.*, Ref. 60; Justin Rosenberg, 'What's the Matter with Realism?', *Review of International Studies*, 16(4), (1990), pp. 291-292

state power', a ruling ideology that serves the interests of state-based elites.[66] Behr and Heath's analysis of neo-realism – and their depiction of the tradition as an ideology which serves elite interests – also has its roots in the critical tradition.[67] Behr and Heath regard the development of IR as a discipline, an ideological act which, they argue, acted to legitimate state power and imperialism in the 19th century.[68]

There is also a significant critical literature influenced by the writings of Antonio Gramsci which has focused much of its attention on the efficacy of the global, elite-driven nature of neoliberal ideology and its implications for international relations.[69]Gill, for example, has examined the power-structures, in the form of domestic and transnational 'complexes', underpinning the globalisation of free-market liberalism since the 1980s,[70] while Birchfield has similarly utilised Gramsci's thought to expose the agency required to maintain the ideological hegemony of globalization as 'common sense'.[71] These works place significant emphasis on the efficacy of ideology as an independent driving force in world politics and its role in constituting 'subjectivity', in contrast to more traditional

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[66] Justin Rosenberg, *op. cit.*, Ref. 60, p. 30.
[67] Hartmut Behr & Amelia Heath, *op. cit.*, Ref. 60.
[68] Hartmut Behr & Amelia Heath, *op. cit.*, Ref. 60, p. 349.
[69] See, for example, R.D. Germain & M. Kenny, 'Engaging Gramsci: international relations theory and the new Gramscians', *Review of International Studies*, 24(1), (1998), pp. 3-21 and S. Gill & D. Law, 'Global Hegemony and the Structural Power of Capital', in S. Gill (Ed.), *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Stephen Gill, 'Globalization, Market Civilization and Disciplinary Neoliberalism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 24(3), (1995), pp. 399-423; Vicki Birchfield, 'Contesting the hegemony of market ideology: Gramsci's 'good sense' and Polanyi's 'double movement'", *Review of International Political Economy*, 6(1), (1999), pp. 27-54.
[70] Stephen Gill, *op. cit.*, Ref 68, p. 400.
[71] Vicki Birchfield, *op. cit.*, Ref. 68, pp. 44-45.

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('unreconstructed') Marxist accounts which regard international ideologies as the product of economic and historical conditions.

Reflexive

A further source of research on IR theory as ideology has emerged within reflexive scholarship on international politics that has grown out of the 'interpretivist turn' in the discipline. Reflexivist works have three distinguishing features that set them apart from other works on ideology and world politics. The first is their subscription to an antifoundational ontology which eschews the notion of an independent perspective – an *Archimedian standpoint* – from which knowledge of the social world can be accumulated. This entails a rejection of certainty in both positive and normative theorising; since there exists no neutral means of social and political analysis. Second, and in consequence of their antifoundational ontology, reflexivist scholars eschew the positivist endeavour of 'theory building', opting rather to deconstruct and destabilise pre-existing theoretical assumptions. Their intention is not to reconstruct social scientific analysis but to deconstruct social scientific claims and assumptions by highlighting their contingent, ideological nature. Third, reflexive scholarship employs interpretive methods to interrogate the relationship between ideology and world politics. The narratives offered by

reflexivist scholars aim at producing 'thick description[72] of a circumscribed period of time over thinner accounts of lengthier historical period, and make no claims to representativity or other criteria of 'case selection'.

The starting point for most reflexivist analysis has been to challenge the assumed objectivism of mainstream theory and much of positivist social science. These works have sought to combine insights from pragmatist and postmodern philosophy with interpretive readings of empirical phenomena. Intellectual historians working from a critical philosophical perspective have demonstrated the underlying ideological basis of mainstream theoretical traditions in IR. Jahn's studies of such core IR concepts as 'the state of nature', liberal internationalism and critical theory – and her insistence that these 'theories' are unable to shed their ideological credentials – are examples.[73] Bell's analyses of 'analytical' theories (realism and liberalism) in the context of nineteenth-century British foreign policy are also representative of the reflexive tradition. He argues that the positivist assumption that realism is a neutral analytical tool is 'untenable' and presents an account of realist ideology in Victorian

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[72] Clifford Geertz, 'Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture', in Michael Martin & Lee C. McIntyre (Eds.) *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science* (London: MIT Press, 1994), pp. 213-232.

[73] Beate Jahn, 'IR and the state of nature: the cultural origins of a ruling ideology', *Review of International Studies*, 25, (1999), pp. 411-434; Beate Jahn, 'One stop forward, two steps back: critical theory as the latest edition of liberal idealism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 27(3), (1998), pp. 613-641; Beate Jahn, *Liberal Internationalism: Theory, History, Practice* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Britain which emphasises the power of the discourse to legitimate imperialist foreign policies.[74]

Other reflexivist scholarship is associated with, and influenced by, postmodern constructivism in IR.[75] One of the earliest examples is to be found in Walker's *Inside/Outside* in which he claims theories of international relations are best understood as 'political theory' in light of their implicit normative claims and the role these play in constructing the social reality of the international.[76] Later works have had more of an empirical focus. In his study of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, for example, Schindler argues that political positions are structured by dichotomies of human vs. state rational choice vs. social construction, affording these commonplace theoretical categories a politico-ideological status.[77] Ish-Shalom's studies of the hermeneutics of modernization theory and the democratic peace thesis are also written in this vein; in both cases Ish-Shalom examines the effects of theories outside the 'ivory tower' on the foreign policies of the Kennedy and Clinton

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[74] Duncan Bell, *op. cit.*, Ref. 2, pp. 229, 234; Duncan Bell, 'Empire and International Relations in Victorian Political Thought', *The Historical Journal*, 49(1), (2006), pp. 281-298, at p. 285.

[75] On 'postmodern' constructivism specifically, see: Steve Smith, 'Singing Our World into Existence: International Relations Theory and September 11', *International Studies Quarterly*, 48(3), (2004), pp. 499-515; Patrick Jackson, *op. cit.*, Ref. 17, pp. 150-151; Stefano Guzzini, 'A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 6(2), (2000), pp. 147-182.

[76] R.B.J. Walker, *op. cit.*, Ref. 8.

[77] Sebastian Schindler, 'Man versus State: Contested Agency in the United Nations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 43(1), (2014), pp. 3-23, at pp. 9-14.

presidencies respectively, arguing in consequence that the act of theorising is always a normative endeavour.[78]

Key Questions and Debates

Each of the five paradigms discussed above represents a (largely) distinct field of study within which the examination of ideology and world politics is undertaken and conversations about 'international ideologies' are commonplace. Yet there is significant diversity of thought across these traditions as to the nature of international ideologies and their role in world politics. In this final section I discuss four key areas of divergence, both within and between these paradigms. These disagreements have helped to maintain the fractious nature of the field of ideological analysis and world politics, but in their diversity they also hint at promising lines of future inquiry.

What is the status of these beliefs?

One area of significant disagreement – indeed, one that divides the field of study more than anything else – is that over the ontological status of international 'ideologies'. Whilst many scholars agree that beliefs about

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[78] Piki Ish-Shalom, 'Theory as a Hermeneutical Mechanism: The Democratic-Peace Thesis and the Politics of Democratization', *European Journal of International Relations*, 12(4), (2006), pp. 565-598; Piki Ish-Shalom, 'Theory Gets Real, and the Case for a Normative Ethic: Rostow, Modernization Theory, and the Alliance for Progress', *International Studies Quarterly*, 50, (2006), pp. 287-311.

the nature and operation of 'the international' are important, there is significant disagreement about how the content of these beliefs should be understood. This is reflected in the language used to describe these ideas, which varies from scholar to scholar. In a majority of the works considered the term 'ideology' is explicitly used. In many others, synonyms are used, including the terms 'worldview'[79] and 'vision'.[80] Other terms deployed are not necessarily synonymous, and examples of alternative phraseology include the following terms: 'theories',[81] 'paradigms',[82] 'belief systems',[83] 'political theories',[84] 'partisan lenses',[85] 'traditions of thought'[86] and 'folk theories'.[87]

Analytical works often utilise a scientistic register, emphasising the systematic nature of the different worldviews (e.g. 'belief system'). Philosophical works are least likely to utilise the term ideology, opting generally for 'tradition of thought' or 'political theory', perhaps an unsurprising observation from a discipline that is traditionally highly self-aware of its roots, and less concerned with the *conduct* of social analysis itself. Conversely, in historical and critical scholarship the term 'ideology' has been used almost exclusively, the term being both a frequent lens of

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[79] Amitav Acharya, 'Dialogue and Discovery: In Search of Inernational Relations Theories Beyond the West', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 39(3), (2011), pp. 619-637.
[80] Azar Gat, *op. cit.*, Ref. 46.
[81] Robert W. Cox, *op. cit.*, Ref. 62; Sebastian Schindler, *op. cit.*, Ref. 76; Piki Ish-Shalom, *op. cit.*, Ref. 77.
[82] Brian Rathbun, *op. cit.*, Ref. 30.
[83] Ole R. Holsti, *op. cit.*, Ref. 20, p. 245.
[84] R.B.J. Walker, *op. cit.*, Ref. 8.
[85] Brian Rathbun, *op. cit.*, Ref. 4, pp.18-19.
[86] Michael Doyle, *op. cit.*, Ref. 54.
[87] Joshua Kertzer & Kathleen McGraw, *op. cit.*, Ref. 31, p. 247.

historical analysis and a core Marxist concept. Reflexive scholarship, finally, has utilised a broader register, its identifying feature being the frequency with which terms associated with social analysis are utilised synonymously with ideology (e.g. 'theory', 'paradigm', 'folk theory').

The diversity in the language used to describe these beliefs matters for several reasons. Whilst the works considered here discuss the same phenomenon, the diversity of language hints at an underlying disagreement as to how it is best described. Most works discussed, for example, examine 'realism' in one way or another, but few of them agree on the best label for the tradition/ideology/theory/paradigm. At a deeper level, this linguistic diversity is indicative of a deeper ontological disagreement about what the concept itself consists of, rather than which term best describes the same underlying phenomenon. The choice of language also has implications for a host of related debates about the nature and sources of international ideologies. Which traditions we identify as most important, for example, depends on the label we apply to the concept: the use of 'theory' points to realism and liberalism, 'tradition' to Hobbesianism and Kantianism, and 'ideology' to socialism, liberalism and conservatism.

The diversity of language has contributed to the separateness of conversations about ideology and world politics. In many cases research on understudied ideologies has already taken place using different

terminology, but with the same basic assumptions. But, although terminological debates matter, there are limits to the importance that deserves to be ascribed to linguistic differences. To begin with, in the manner they are actually *utilised*, most of these terms may be treated as synonymous with ideology, since they analyse collective beliefs consisting of inter-linked propositions concerning the international realm. Hence, although the diversity of language usage speaks to the existence of disagreement over the ontological status of ideology, there is a strong case to be made that the scholars discussed above are investigating essentially the same phenomenon. Where deeper questions about the nature of ideology are at stake, it must be remembered that few scholars of ideology agree on the ontological status of what is, by its very nature, an essentially contested concept. [88] Rather than allowing terminological differences to stymie discussion of ideology, we should consider these debates a core part of ideological analysis in world politics, debating the differences implied by the various labels and how substituting terms changes our understanding of the concept.

How should these beliefs be studied?

A second area of disagreement is methodological. To gain leverage over the nature and role of international ideology, a wide array of diverse

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[88] William E. Connolly, *The Terms of Political Discourse* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

methodological tools has been deployed. Some have utilised single-n case studies.[89] These seek to examine in detail the effects of ideology on the policy process at specific periods of theoretical or empirical interest. Alternatively, some works have utilised the comparative method, selecting multiple cases based on various configurations of key 'variables' and apply to these deductive logics of inference.[90] Other works have utilised the historical method, distinguishable from case studies by the absence of an explicit methodological vocabulary and the increased emphasis on primary source material.[91] Finally, some works have utilised statistical methods to analyse ideology across a large number of cases. Various techniques have been used to process time-series and interview data.[92]

The relationship between these different methods and the paradigms discussed above is not a simple one, although some broad generalisations can be made. Statistical analysis is, for example, conducted only within the analytical traditions – specifically, by liberal IR and FPA scholars – and has (unsurprisingly) not been utilised by historical, analytical, critical or philosophical scholars. The use of case studies, whilst seemingly ubiquitous across all five paradigms, should be differentiated by the emphasis placed on the criteria of representativity and boundedness. Whilst analytical scholars have regarded their cases as discrete examples

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[89] Ole R. Holsti, *op. cit.*, Ref. 29; Jens Steffek, *op. cit.*, Ref. 47.

[90] Brian Rathbun, *op. cit.*, Ref. 4, p. 38; Mark Haas, *op. cit.*, Ref. 36, pp. 31-35; Nicholas F. Martini, *op. cit.*, Ref. 18, p. 424.

[91] Pugh, *op. cit.*, Ref. 47.

[92] Peter H. Gries, *op. cit.*, Ref. 23, p. 21; Joshua Kertzer & Kathleen McGraw, *op. cit.*, Ref. 31, p. 248; Eugene Wittkopf, *op. cit.*, Ref. 24, p. 427; Helen V. Milner & Benjamin Judkins, *op. cit.*, Ref. 22.

of distinct, and generalizable, phenomena, historical, critical and reflexive scholarship has rather emphasised the importance of holistic and contextualised analysis, and down-played the value of utilising historical snap-shots to 'measure' variables. Put simply, paradigms associated with a more idiographic ontology have been more sceptical of the extent to which generalisations can be inferred from individual 'cases'.[93]

What's at stake in the methodological debate is the most appropriate means of understanding the complex relationship between ideology and world politics. Each method has advantages and disadvantages in this respect. Single case studies highlight in the clearest detail the mechanisms linking ideology to outcomes in world politics, illustrating the complexities of individual and collective worldviews and their impact on the policy process at key moments. But this detail comes at a price, since the generalizability of these cases may be legitimately called into question. Comparative studies offer greater leverage over the general effects of ideology, since they show the effects of varying levels (or kinds) of ideology, although in doing so they rely overly on a deterministic model of causation less amenable to nuance than narrative or single-case methods.[94] Historical analysis offers the promise of accurate and valid 'evidence', contextualisation of important concepts, and understanding of

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[93] John Gerring, 'What is a Case Study and What is It Good For?', *American Political Science Review*, 98(2), (2004), pp. 341-354, at p. 351.

[94] James Mahoney & Gary Goertz, 'A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research', *Political Analysis*, 14(3), (2006), pp. 227-249, at p. 232

continuities and discontinuities across time,[95] at the expense of either abandoning the pretence at causal inference or accepting a lower level of generalizability from one's findings. Whilst statistical techniques run the risk of concept stretching, and struggle to identity causal mechanisms,[96] they are better able to establish the external validity – and magnitude – of ideology's causal effect, and to control for alternative explanations.[97]

Insofar as competing methodological traditions represent distinct 'cultures of research', they also contribute to the fragmentation of research on ideology and world politics. Historians and philosophers, for example, seldom cite quantitative work on international ideologies, and *vice versa*. Whilst there are important issues at stake in the debate over methodology, there are also many reasons to downplay these differences and to embrace a methodological pluralism. To begin with, it is acknowledged with increasing frequency that causation can be established only through a combination of insights, each of which is best achieved by means of different research methods.[98] Demonstrating the causal efficacy of ideology therefore requires not only attention to the mechanisms linking ideology with action but also the generalizability of these mechanisms and their causal weight relative to other explanatory factors.

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[95] Marcus Kreuzer, 'Historical Knowledge and Quantitative Analysis: The Case of the Origins of Proportional Representation', *American Political Science Review*, 104(2), (2010), pp. 369-392, at p. 370.

[96] Sidney Tarrow, 'Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide in Political Science', *American Political Science Review*, 89(2), (1995), pp. 471-474.

[97] Gary King, Robert Keohane, & Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[98] James Mahoney, 'Toward a Unified Theory of Causality', *Comparative Political Studies*, 41(4), (2008), pp. 412-436; John Gerring, 'Causation: A Unified Framework for the Social Sciences', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 17(2), (2005), pp. 163-198.

Moreover, reaching the standard of the 'unified' concept of causality is a shared endeavour best achieved through a division of scholarly labour, and the findings from diverse methods should all contribute to a shared conversation on the effects of international ideologies.

Which ideological traditions are most relevant?

Following on from the language used to describe the concept of ideology, stark differences can also be observed in the ideologies under study themselves. A majority of works considered analyse realism in one form or another, though what is meant by realism differs significantly (Behr and Heath, for example, examine 'neo-realist ideology' specifically,[99] whilst Rosenberg equates realism with nationalism.[100] The greatest disagreements occur over realism's alternate. For some scholars this is 'idealism',[101] for others 'liberalism' or 'socialism',[102] 'neo-liberalism',[103] and 'liberal internationalism'.[104] For Wight realism is contrasted with 'rationalism' and 'revolutionism'[105] whilst for Hayes and James it is to be distinguished from 'neoliberal institutionalism' and 'constructivism'.[106] Boucher distinguished 'empirical realism' from 'universal moral order' and

[99] Hartmut Behr & Amelia Heath, *op. cit.*, Ref. 60.
[100] Justin Rosenberg, *op. cit.*, Ref. 60.
[101] Joshua Kertzer & Kathleen McGraw, *op. cit.*, Ref. 31, p. 248.
[102] Michael Doyle, *op. cit.*, Ref. 54.
[103] Robert W. Cox, *op. cit.*, Ref. 59.
[104] G. John Ikenberry, *op. cit.*, Ref. 34.
[105] Martin Wight, *op. cit.*, Ref. 57.
[106] Jarrod Hayes & Patrick James, *op. cit.*, Ref. 39.

'historical reason',[107] whilst Bull uses realism only indirectly through the Hobbesian label, which he distinguishes from Kantianism (read: liberalism) and Grotianism.[108] A similar indirectness may be found in those works drawing on a register linked to militarism, including Wittkopf's distinction between 'militant' and 'cooperative' internationalism,[109] Ceadel's categories of 'militarism', 'crusading', 'defencism', 'pacifism' and 'pacific-ism',[110] and Martini's two-dimensional schema based on 'militarism' and 'cooperation'.[111] Finally, a significant minority of works analyse distinct traditions notionally distinct from the realist-'other' divide, including 'left and right',[112] 'communitarianism and cosmopolitanism',[113] and even such bespoke ideologies as 'democracy promotion',[114] the 'United Nations ideology',[115] and the 'new international economic order ideology'.[116]

The greatest diversity in ideologies identified and studied is to be found in the analytical paradigm. This is partly because the link between mainstream IR/FPA and Comparative Politics has engendered an interest in domestic political categories (for example, 'left' and 'right') among

[107] David Boucher, *op. cit.*, Ref. 55.
[108] Hedley Bull, *op. cit.*, Ref. 57, pp. 38-39.
[109] Eugene Wittkopf, *op. cit.*, Ref. 24, p. 426.
[110] Martin Ceadel, *op. cit.*, Ref. 1.
[111] Nicholas F. Martini, *op. cit.*, Ref. 18, p. 421.
[112] Brian Rathbun, *op. cit.*, Ref. 4, p. 18; Helen V. Milner & Benjamin Judkins, *op. cit.*, Ref. 22.
[113] Chris Brown, *op. cit.*, Ref. 58.
[114] Laurence Whitehead, *op. cit.*, Ref. 7.
[115] Jean-Philippe Thérien, *op. cit.*, Ref. 6, pp. 229-230.
[116] Craig N. Murphy, 'What the Third World Wants: An Interpretation of the Development and Meaning of the New International Economic Order Ideology', *International Studies Quarterly*, 27, (1983), pp. 55-76.

analytical scholars, but it is also a consequence of the vocabulary of 'belief systems', which lends itself to a broader range of phenomena than does the term 'ideologies'. The historical and philosophical paradigms also feature significant diversity, though the former tend to focus on traditional constructs of realism/liberalism and socialism/conservatism, whilst the latter adds an array of paradigm-specific ideologies to this list (e.g. cosmopolitanism, communitarianism). Reflexive scholarship has identified relevant ideologies by examining traditional categories of IR theory, leading to a shared focus on realism, liberalism, and critical theories, with an emphasis on the disciplinary, rather than societal, terminology (e.g. 'neo-realism'). Critical scholarship has perhaps been the most unified paradigm, since the majority of works have identified variants of liberal ideology (incorporating neo-liberalism, neo-mercantilism, and the 'new economic order ideology') as the most relevant ideology of international relations.

At stake over the choice of ideologies is the location of the principal fault-lines of debate in international politics. Clearly policymakers, publics and theorists harbour beliefs about international politics that range along a great many different dimensions and issues. And yet each dyad – or typology – discussed above paints these debates in a distinct light. Cosmopolitanism and communitarianism, for example, get to the heart of the moral value of the state, but say little about purported state behaviour, a question for which positions are better articulated by realism

and liberalism. The choice of which ideologies to study depends on answers to prior questions concerning the nature of these beliefs and the relationship between these dimensions, including: Which dimensions animate the most consequential disagreement? How do positions on different dimensions relate to one another? And to what extent to these disagreements vary by region, country, or level of expertise?

It is evident from the discussion above that a consensus does not exist on the most relevant ideologies in international relations, although there is some area of overlap between scholars. A level of consensus has emerged around 'realism' as a dominant – or at least, most easily identifiable – international ideology, and though many labels exist for the 'opposite' to realism, many of these refer to similar collections of beliefs (e.g. liberalism, cosmopolitanism, idealism). Yet there remains disagreement over the principal ideologies of world politics such that an international equivalent of the 'left-right' distinction is unfeasible. This diversity, however, should be regarded as one of the strengths of ideological analysis rather than evidence of its failure. The work cited above has contributed to the systematic analysis of a bewildering array of different ideologies, each of which imagines the international in very different ways, and each of which aids our understanding of the primary fault-lines of disagreement in international affairs. As with the broadening of domestic ideological debate from the 1960s and 1970s onwards – a period associated with the rise of ecologism, feminism, and neo-liberalism – the increasing

heterogeneity of international ideologies opens up new avenues of research without undermining the core claim that world politics is structured by competing ideological traditions.

Who are their holders?

A final area of significant disagreement within existing scholarship concerns the question of who – or what – is to be considered the 'holders' of ideologies. That is, at which 'level' of politics should ideological analysis proceed. The works considered above have each emphasised the role of different actors, from the sub-national level – including individuals,[117] political parties,[118] scholars,[119] classes[120] and social movements,[121] to broader collectivities of states,[122] publics,[123] and international organizations.[124] Some works have also adopted a broader frame of reference by analysing ideologies from a global perspective,[125] a move which brings them close to the Foucaultian concept of 'governmentality'

[117] Ole R. Holsti, *op. cit.*, Ref. 20, p. 246.
[118] Brian Rathbun, *op. cit.*, Ref. 4, p. 7.
[119] Brian Rathbun, *op. cit.*, Ref. 30.
[120] Robert W. Cox, *op. cit.*, Ref. 65.
[121] Martin Ceadel, *op. cit.*, Ref. 1.
[122] Mark Haas, *op. cit.*, Ref. 36.
[123] Ole R. Holsti, *op. cit.*, Ref. 29.
[124] Jean-Philippe Thérien, *op. cit.*, Ref. 6.
[125] R.B.J. Walker, *op. cit.*, Ref. 8; David Chandler, 'The Global Ideology: Rethinking the Politics of the 'Global Turn' in IR', *International Relations*, 23(4), (2009), pp. 530-547.

(or, governing ideology). [126] There are some discernible relationships between the theoretical paradigm and the actors and level of analysis utilised. Reflexive works, for example, are more likely to emphasise global ideologies, whilst mainstream IR (within the analytical paradigm) most often embraces the state-as-actor assumption, although these are only broad generalisations.

The decision to focus on particular actors throws up fundamental theoretical questions for scholars of ideology. The first concerns the level at which ideologies may be most coherently bounded; it is generally acknowledged that there exists a trade-off between individual and small-group ideological coherence on the one hand and the ability to pursue large-scale collective action on the other. The second issue concerns the extent of access to the policymaking process; whilst the public, social movements, academics and opposition parties may have very little access, policymakers and, more broadly, governments are able to effect meaningful action in foreign policy. A third issue concerns the ideologies under study and the outcome to be explained; since some ideologies are located only at certain levels (neoliberal institutionalism, for example, is seldom evident in the public discourse), and since some topics are suited to specific levels of analysis more than others (studies of alliance politics, for instance, tend to rely on state-centric explanations), the choice of actors is

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[126] For a review of the concept of 'global governmentality' in International Relations see: Scott Hamilton, 'Add Foucault and Stir: The Perils and Promise of Governmentality and the Global', *European Review of International Studies*, 1(2), (2014), pp. 129-141, at p. 139.

intimately connected to the particular research question or puzzle under investigation.

Since ideology operates on multiple levels simultaneously, there is little in the way of ontological disagreement between the different actor focus of these works. It rather depends on which ideologies are under study, what research question is being asked, and where the relevant variation is most significant. But the variation is helpful in moving the discipline forwards by opening up new lines of inquiry. Novel research questions that emerge from debates over which actors should form the basis of study include the following: How do the ideologies encountered differ between the various types – and levels – of actors involved? Do scholars, practitioners and publics view the international through different lenses? Are their respective ideologies more or less fixed, complex or robust? Which methodologies are best suited to the study of each actor or each level of analysis? And how do the kinds of questions we can answer about world politics change when we study different actors?

Conclusion: The State of the Discipline

The preceding discussion has attempted to illustrate both the scale and diversity of scholarship engaged in ideological analysis of traditions of international thought. Perhaps the most important finding is that

ideological analysis is alive and well in world politics and has been for many years, despite frequent protestations to the contrary from scholars of ideology. The real issue, I have argued, is that such analyses are conducted within a fractious and disaggregated field of study that serves to divide scholars with similar research interests in a rather arbitrary manner. This both confirms and disproves several long-held notions about the state of ideological analysis in IR; it confirms the scepticism of many working in the field that this body of scholarship has failed to 'take root'. Yet the diversity of pre-existing works in this vein suggests the problem is less with the theoretical dominance of realism, or positivism, and more to do with internal barriers in the study of international politics.

Several important debates – and key questions – emerge from the diverse scholarship discussed above. First, how should we understand complexes of beliefs in world politics? Do they deserve the term 'ideology', or are they better understood as a related – yet fundamentally distinct – phenomenon? Should we rather analyse them as 'belief systems', 'folk theories', or 'worldviews'? Second, what is the most appropriate means of conducting ideological analysis in world politics? Is understanding best achieved through conceptual analysis and specification, by means of historical inquiry, through comparative case studies, or by using statistical analysis? Third, which traditions of international thought are most worthy of scholarly attention, and how should their relation to one another be understood? Are the domestic traditions of socialism,

liberalism and conservatism – and their internationalist variants – sufficient, or do we require bespoke labels based on the realism/idealism debate or pre-existing IR theories? Fourth, and finally, which individuals or actors should form the locus of our analyses? Is the greatest leverage obtained through examining the beliefs of publics, governments, policy-makers, academics, or a combination of the above?

These are important questions for scholars working at the nexus of ideological analysis and international politics, although easy answers will likely prove elusive (and potentially divisive). The diversity of ideological analysis in world politics, however, whilst nominally undermining the development of a coherent and self-reflexive research programme, should be seen as a blessing rather than a curse. This is for three reasons. First, the diversity of scholarship demonstrates the utility of ideological analysis for a broad array of distinct methodologies and sub-fields, and thus the potential for its application from varying perspectives in a diverse range of settings. Second, this diversity opens up a host of new debates and new issues, arising both from the observed disagreements between each paradigm's understanding of ideology (many of which are highlighted above) and from evidence of gaps in the literature where different combinations of theories, issues, actors, or subjects may be productively combined. Third, diversity can be appreciated from a philosophy of science perspective, with the expanding remit of ideological analysis bolstering

the progressive credentials of the ideological analysis research programme.[127]

Ideological analysis in world politics has now moved beyond the pre-ontological stage during which its validity and theoretical relevance was directly challenged, thanks to ground-breaking analysis by those authors cited above. Yet ideological analysis as a field of study has remained surprisingly marginal and self-unaware over the years, largely due to the persistence of intra-paradigmatic thinking within the broader discipline of international politics. Almost without exception, historians have exclusively cited historians, theorists have cited theorists, and philosophers have cited philosophers. It has been the aim of this article to provoke engagement between scholars from varying theoretical and methodological perspectives working on international ideologies. Only by encouraging debate between these various factions can we fully understand the myriad, complex ways in which different ideological traditions influence world politics. By opening up new avenues of debate and inquiry over the nature of these traditions, the best means to study them, the most relevant ideologies, and the actors they are best associated

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[127] On Lakatosian criteria, progressive research programmes can be distinguished from their degenerative counterparts through their ability to generate additional questions and insights without undermining the programme's theoretical 'hard core'. See Imre Lakatos, 'The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes', in Imre Lakatos & Alan Musgrave, *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), and John Vasquez, 'The Realist Paradigm and Degenerative versus Progressive Research Programs: An Appraisal of Neotraditional Research on Waltz's Balancing Proposition', *American Political Science Review*, 91(4), (1997), pp. 899-912.

with, ideological analysis represents an exciting research programme in world politics, the full potential of which has yet to be exploited.