

THE SPLENDID SCHOOL ASSEMBLED: STUDYING AND PRACTICING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN INDEPENDENT UKRAINE

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Abstract. *Despite having a considerable community of international relations (IR) scholars, Ukrainian IR sociology remains an underdeveloped field. In particular, the degree of Ukrainian scholars' integration in the global IR community, favorite theories and methods, and application of scholars' expertise to policymaking remain uncertain. Based on the TRIP-2017 survey data analysis we discovered that, due to Soviet tradition and partial Westernization, Ukrainian IR scholars tend to espouse realism and constructivism as their preferred IR paradigms; use descriptive methods; conduct area studies researches, and focus on the CEE region and Western Europe. As an academic community, they have little impact on policymaking as they are sidelined by NGOs offering foreign-policy analysis. The divide between the Ukrainian IR field and the global community, plus its loss of prestige domestically, constitute the "double peripheralization" of Ukrainian IR.*

Key words: *international relations studies, area studies, Ukraine, TRIP*

Introduction¹⁰⁴

International relations (hereafter: IR) sociology and, in particular, the development of IR studies around the globe, has passed through consecutive phases and has covered different countries and regions for decades (Kristensen 2019). Ukraine, however, remains a vast blank spot on the map in the middle of Europe of such studies. The looming gap is evident even if one focuses solely on the post-Communist region. There are a plethora of studies on the organizational, theoretical, and ideological aspects of the development of IR studies in Russia (Lebedeva 2004; Lebedeva 2018; Tsygankov & Tsygankov 2010; Tsygankov & Tsygankov 2014; Morozov 2009; Sergounin 2009), Poland (Czaputowicz 2012; Czaputowicz & Wojciuk 2016; Czaputowicz & Ławniczak 2015), Czechia (Drulák &

¹⁰⁴ The authors are grateful to Prof. Michael Tierney, the Director of the Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations at the College of William and Mary (VA, USA) for his invitation to include Ukraine within the 2017 round of the TRIP research which made this study possible; to Denys Tereshchenko for his invaluable assistance with aggregating and structuring the raw data for this research.

Drulákova 2000; Drulák & Drulákova 2006), Slovakia (Bátora & Hynek 2009), and Slovenia (Roter 2009). In addition, CEE-wide analyses (Drulák, Königová, & Karlas 2004) and discussions¹⁰⁵ are rather common. In stark contrast, of the former Soviet republics, only the most westernized Baltics can boast some attention in this regard (Berg & Chillaud 2009). A few selective mentions of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus in a Russian reference book on IR development in Russia and CIS (Mezhdunarodnye issledovaniya v Rossii i SNG 1999) did not initiate a meaningful discussion or research in the subsequent 20 years

More important though is that the Ukrainian IR scholars have hitherto not presented their own story and approaches to the international community. Even internally, the development of the discipline in its teaching, research, and practical policy dimensions has not been systematically investigated. Self-assessments that do exist are short, generalistic, and descriptive in nature. Predominantly, they address developments of IR teaching and research at certain departments¹⁰⁶, provide some general non-academic information (Lysak 2014; Malsky & Moroz 2012) or celebrate another decade of IR studies in Ukraine (Instytut mizhnarodnykh vidnosyn 2004; Instytut mizhnarodnykh vidnosyn 2006; Instytut mizhnarodnykh vidnosyn 2014). While there was a heated discussion over the current state and (under)development of Ukrainian political science in general (Kudelia 2012; Matsiyevsky 2012; Starish 2012; Shevel 2015), the semi-autonomous IR community has never undertaken such a soul-searching exercise.

Still in the absence of comprehensive analysis, the development of the Ukrainian IR community cannot be explained by the dynamics in the IR of the former metropolis, Russia (because of a different attitude to the Western experience and power-knowledge relationships), the scarcely studied dynamics in other post-Soviet republics or by the developments in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which have experienced intense and consistent Westernization of their IR studies and research. This is not to say that Ukraine beyond comparison, but that the mixture of different legacies, experiences, and policy choices make the case worth separate consideration.

Moreover, the country boasts a robust number of research and teaching IR institutions: as of 2018, one could study “International relations, social communications and regional studies” at 91 higher education institutions of Ukraine. Besides, IR ranks among the most coveted specializations, attracting the students with the best grades (see:

¹⁰⁵ See for example, the summary of the debate “The IR Scholarship in Central and Eastern European Countries: On Its Way to Cross the Regional Boundaries”, which took place on September 21, 2012 during the 9th Convention of the Central and East European Studies Association in Cracow with contributions by Petr Drulák, Stefano Guzzini, Knud E. Jørgensen, Zlatko Šabič, Thomas J. Volgy, Anna Wojciuk, & Jacek Czaputowicz (*Przegląd Europejski*, 2003, 27(1): 9–36) or an earlier Introduction to the International Relations (IR) in Central and Eastern Europe Forum, with the contributions by Petr Drulák, Pinar Bilgin & Oktay Tanrisever, Petra Roter, Jozef Bátora & Nikola Hynek, Eiki Berg & Matthieu Chillaud, Viacheslav Morozov, & Vendulka Kubálková (*Journal of International Relations and Development* 12: 168–173).

¹⁰⁶ See for example contributions of Valerii Kopiika on the “Kyiv School of IR” (Kopiika 2013), Oleksandr Krapivin & Ihor Todorov on the “Donetsk School of IR” (Krapivin & Todorov 2013), Ihor Byk on the development of IR studies in Lviv University (Byk 2013) and Anatolii Kruglashov on the development of European Studies in Chernivtsi University (Kruglashov 2013), published in *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series International Relations* 33: 10–39.

Kavtseniuk 2017); and over 200 candidate and doctoral theses have been defended since 1991.

In addition, there are two non-academic developments which make this study even more timely and relevant since 2014. The first one is the increased international visibility of Ukraine and different aspects of its foreign policy and regional dynamics due to Russian aggression. The second one is a set of Westernizing reforms in education and research that impose new accreditation regulations, encourage publishing in renowned international journals, and impose the requirements for the mastery of foreign languages (KAS 2017; Rumyantseva & Logvynenko 2018). Both developments impact the development of the IR discipline in Ukraine, pushing it towards more openness to the global research community. Therefore, it is high time to fill the gap and to study the Ukrainian IR community in detail.

This article is based on the results of the TRIP 2017 survey. It reflects primarily the self-assessment of the Ukrainian IR faculty, and offers insights on essential features of scholarly IR community as well as its interaction with the social environment. Namely, we study the IR community's perceptions of (1) the place of IR among other social sciences in the Ukrainian context; (2) the level of integration into global IR scholarship; (3) the field's preferred paradigmatic framework(s) and research methods; (4) the particularities of Ukrainian IR caused by the global division of labor; (5) scholarly intentions to provide policy advice. We hope that this study will be followed by others so that the nascent field of IR sociology in Ukraine yields results that further the development of the discipline.

Data and methods

To tackle the research questions outlined above, we decided to conduct an inductive study built upon the principles of the grounded theory commonly understood as “discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research” (Glaser & Strauss 2006: 2) with the utmost attention to “patterns of action and interaction between and among various types of social units” (Strauss & Corbin 1994: 278). In particular, we followed the fundamental procedures required for a grounded theory study (Charmaz 2006: 17–49): (1) we had no preconceived theories regarding our subject; (2) we used sensitizing concepts and disciplinary perspectives; (3) we followed leads defined in the data; (4) we applied primary coding to the obtained data; (5) discerning some regularities, we enlarged our data through other sources and applied textual analysis to extant texts; (6) after we reached the point of theoretical saturation we proceeded to interpretation and finally advanced a set of theoretical assumptions.

However, it is important to stress that, in some respects, we deviated from the grounded theory standard procedure. For example, we did not use open-ended questions and participant observation. Instead, we opted for a structured online questionnaire as our primary data-collection method.

The key data for this research was obtained in the 2017 edition of the TRIP (“Teaching, Research and International Policy”) Project, run by the Institute for the Theory

and Practice of International Relations at the College of William & Mary, US. It was first launched in 2003 in order to study the role of expert opinion in the run-up to the Iraq War (Speed 2018). During the following decade, the project morphed into a multiple-round study on IR academic community. In early years TRIP encompassed mostly English-speaking and North American countries, but the last round to date, the 2014 TRIP survey, included “IR scholars in 32 countries and 9 languages to examine teaching and research trends and foreign policy view in the IR discipline” (TRIP 2015). TRIP 2017 pushes the geographical boundaries of the research even further. Both authors of the present article were the TRIP country partners in Ukraine responsible for translation, cultural fitting, and establishing contact with the relevant respondents.

According to the TRIP data-collection procedure, country partners are expected to pinpoint all the country’s universities where IR is taught and where, consequently, a scholarly community is present. TRIP aims to “identify and survey all faculty member at colleges and universities... who do research in the IR sub-field of political science and/or who teach international relation courses” (Maliniak et al. 2012: 2). These scholars/professors receive an invitation to fill-in a standardized online questionnaire via personalized email with a link. Although the translation of the questionnaire is tailored to cultural sensitivities and institutional logic of the country, the questions are virtually universal for all participant countries. Moreover, the invitations are generated by the centralized software system hosted by the College of William & Mary and are distributed to all participant cross-nationally at the same time. As a result, a typical snowball data-collection method, when some respondents refer the scholar to other possible respondents thus accumulating the dataset, was inaccessible. We had to identify all respondents in advance, contact them, explain the goals of the project, receive their consent to participate, upload their emails (alongside with affiliations) to the central software, and wait for the system to proceed in a due course.

Initially, TRIP set the very ambitious goal of including all Ukrainian universities in the list of respondents. However, in 2017 IR was taught at 88 universities in Ukraine. Despite our best efforts, we did not manage to establish email contact with scholarly communities at all universities: respondents sometimes ignored our emails outright; sometimes they did not wish to participate in a project of which they had no previous knowledge; finally, in the worst cases email contacts (or even university Web pages) were nowhere to be found. Eventually, we decided to focus on the most prominent universities with the most renowned IR programs. We deem them be sufficiently representative for the first participation of Ukraine in the TRIP project.

Our contact list included 188 IR scholars from 25 top Ukrainian universities with IR programs or granting affiliations to prominent individual specialists. The geography of the study is relatively broad: we invited scholars from **Western Ukraine** universities (Lesya Ukrainka East European National University, Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Ukrainian Catholic University, Uzhgorod National University, Lviv National University, Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, National University of Ostroh Academy), **Eastern and Southern Ukraine** universities (Honchar Dnipro National University, Zaporizhzhya National University, Sukhomlynsky Mykolaiv

National University, Mechnikov Odesa National University, Karazin Kharkiv National University, Stus Donetsk National University, Mariupol State University), and **Kyiv region** educational and research institutions (Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi State Pedagogical University, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv National University of Trade and Economics, Grinchenko Kyiv University, NASU Institute of History of Ukraine, National Institute for Strategic Studies, Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy, Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine, National Aviation University).

97 scholars eventually filled in the 69-question long survey (with both open-ended and closed types of the question), the response rate thus being 51.5%. With the average response rate for TRIP–2012 of 49.5% (Maliniak et al. 2012: Table 1), the figure is well within the acceptable range. We are grateful to all respondents who contributed to the entrance of the Ukrainian IR community into the TRIP project. Our research, therefore, follows the grounded theory in its methodological rejection of qualitative/quantitative methods division: we used the quantitatively obtained data to formulate a qualitative interpretation of the subject.

Because of fidelity to the grounded theory principles, we do not offer a separate theoretical section at the beginning of the article; instead, we start each research section with a concise presentation of important theoretical and contextual underpinnings. The article is, thus, structured as follows: First, we describe the particularities of the developmental trajectory of IR in Ukraine in historical and regional contexts; next we present our findings regarding the five outlined research questions (each in a separate section) and discuss the results; finally, we offer general conclusions. Lastly, we acknowledge that according to the agreement with the TRIP project managers, we were granted access solely to surveys by Ukrainian participants; consequently, no cross-national comparison is possible at present. However, the aggregated data provide a unique view of Ukrainian scholars' self-positioning and their visions on IR.

History and context

Soviet Legacies, Western Innovations, and East-European Struggles: The Context of Developing the IR Field in Ukraine

Ukrainian IR developed on the crossroads of two trends. The first and probably the defining one is the legacy of the Soviet period, which established initial structures and laid the foundation to the key and lasting perceptions of what is IR and how it should be practiced. The second tendency was the need to accommodate the US (Western)-centric IR approaches and theories, which arrived belatedly and inconsistently during the independence period. This initiated the struggle between "catching-up" Westernization and the Soviet-tainted tendency to nativism, common for post-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (hereafter: UkrSSR) occupied a peculiar position in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, as it (together with Belarus SSR) joined the UN as a separate entity after World War II (for negotiation details, see Plokyh 2011).

Undoubtedly, in a highly centralized Soviet system, nearly all foreign policy decision-making and foreign policy related research were conducted in Moscow. Nevertheless, due to the need for institutional support, not only was a Republican People's Commissariat (later—Ministry) of foreign affairs created in 1944, but also a small Department of International Relations at the Kyiv State University to train future diplomats. The continuity in current Ukrainian IR could be traced back to the peculiarity of the Soviet approach to IR, modified according to the Ukrainian context.

Zimmerman (1969), Light (1989), Tyulin (1997), and Lebedeva (2004, 2018) outlined the key features of Soviet IR studies:

1. Initially, Soviet IR developed as a study of IR history and foreign languages. Any analytical and comparative research was introduced only later and to a limited degree. Throughout its development, the field had a clearly practical and analytical dimension, providing policy analysis for the MFA of the USSR and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

2. Soviet IR mostly took the form of the area studies conducted by geographically defined research institutes in the structure of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. In the words of Lebedeva, “region and country not only dominated in the fields of study and education but also actually subordinated everything to itself” (2018: 48).

3. Moscow State University of the International Relations (known after its Russian abbreviation – MGIMO), was created as a key educational and research institution within the structure of the MFA, securing direct links between policy training, research, and policymaking. The rotation between political and educational/research posts was not entirely unknown in Moscow, but never reached the extent of that in the US.

4. There was only one valid and all-explaining theoretical framework, Marxism-Leninism, thus Western IR and other social sciences were interpreted as bourgeois pseudo-science, confined to *spetshran* (limited access library collections), and inaccessible to most scholars. As Light observed: “The official position under Stalin, and for a number of years after his death, had been that Marxism-Leninism was Political Science and provided a ready-made theory of International Relations.” (1989: 229)

5. While Marxism-Leninism could provide only the broadest framework, the main theoretical approach was the “intuitive realism” (Lebedeva 2018). In practice, it meant non-theoretical empirical “common sense” driven narrative research, used mostly for analytical work (but also for propaganda aims, according to Zimmerman (1969).

6. Political science did not exist in the USSR; thus, IR was the first field to establish itself as a separate branch of knowledge with separate university departments and scholarly communities well before political science per se entered the curricula.

These key features were also present in Soviet Ukraine, and some vestiges are revealed in the analysis of the TRIP responses (see below). Nevertheless, there were important differences, defined by the clearly peripheral status of both the republic and its foreign affairs system. As Kaminskyi (2001) demonstrates, the local MFA was much more actively engaged in propaganda actions and ideology battles, especially with the Ukrainian diaspora in the West, than in genuine interstate relations. Thus, it had an oversized political department and severely downsized diplomatic structures. All in all,

the Ukrainian ministry was over dependent on the Center's decisions. The department in Kyiv University did not become the key institution in foreign policy research. Whenever the UkrSSR MFA sought academic support, it called on different institutions of the local branch of the Academy of Sciences or individual scholars at central and regional institutions. While in Moscow, the MGIMO was part of the MFA and directly linked to the policymaking, policy analysis, and sometimes even elite rotations, a small university facility had only sporadic non-institutional connections to the local ministry. All in all, the precarious and peripheral state of foreign policy research is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the idea to create a republic-level Institute for International Studies failed because of the lack of trained staff (Kaminskyi 2001: 569).

Upon gaining independence, Ukraine's façade ministry turned into a full-fledged one, representations abroad were created from scratch as Moscow monopolized all Soviet offices, and diplomats were hastily recruited from all the possible backgrounds. Thus, the longest-serving minister of foreign affairs Pavlo Klimkin (2014–2019) is a physicist by training who entered diplomacy when disarmament and denuclearization became pressing international questions for Ukraine. The first Diplomatic Academy was opened in 1996, designed to train non-professional diplomats who entered the ministry *en masse*, as the Kyiv faculty was too small to train enough cadres for the diplomacy of the now independent state (in Moscow, an analogous institution functioned since 1934).

The department of international relations at Kyiv State University became a key state Institute of International Relations in the final years of the Soviet Union. New IR departments (Lviv National University 1992, Lutsk 1998, Ostroh Academy 2008, Dnipro 2011) and chairs (Odesa 1994 (department since 2018), Chernivtsi 2001, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy 2017) were opened in the key universities around Ukraine. They proliferated so extensively that, as of 2019, there are 91 IR-related programs in Ukrainian universities. This is partly due to high demand, as the international relations were traditionally perceived as an elite training. Taking into account this demand and given a notoriously weak accountability within the educational system of Ukraine, many smaller universities ventured opening IR-related programs for rather commercial interests, namely, to entice students to expensive IR studies. One way or another, this contributed to a decline in the quality of IR teaching. Similar processes have been reported in Russia (RIAC 2013) and probably could be found in other post-Soviet countries.

While sharing common Soviet legacy and coping with similar organizational challenges, the roads of Ukrainian and Russian IR studies, in terms of content and approaches, diverged significantly after the USSR collapsed. Structurally, Russia entered the new era with the USSR-inherited institutional and research setup, in a much better position. Politically and ideologically, it concentrated on identity-building, looking for the new place in the world system, defining its separate place in relation to the West, toying with the ideas of geopolitical thinking, great power politics, and multipolarity. In other words, while western approaches did enter Russia, the drive to develop some local, Russian theory of international relations became mainstream (Morozov 2009; Tsygankov & Tsygankov 2010; Tsygankov & Tsygankov 2014). The link between research/analysis

and the needs of the current policy of Russia further strengthened due to the state-centered approach and the lack of a robust civil society.

In Ukraine, the link between the state and IR studies was much weaker and the question to separate the Ukrainian school of foreign policy studies never became a significant trend of public discussion. Following the Russian lead was out of the question due to mutually exclusive foreign policy priorities. Most importantly, Westernization was not perceived as a threat, but rather as a chance to strengthen the independence and a possibility to catch up with the developed world. Thus, in the independence years, the development of the IR in Ukraine followed a path resembling that of other post-communist CEE states.

Indeed, the challenges of the former Warsaw block states in (re)building their diplomatic presence and non-Marxist IR studies, seem very familiar to Ukraine's experience since independence, and some structural similarities can be traced even in the 2010s. Some were due to the unavoidable Marxist legacy: the TRIP 2014 survey, which embraced Poland as a first-ever country from the region, has demonstrated the prevalence of "common sense realism" (Czaputowicz 2012), lack of theoretical reflection in favor of the practical analysis, and a much stronger tendency towards area studies than all the other countries participating in the survey. As responses to the open questions have shown, "the respondents pointed out petrified hierarchical academic department structures, as well as their colleagues' psychological complexes, a general lack of academic originality, and parochialism within Polish universities and research institutes. The surveyed also mentioned the influence of Poland's communist past on some researchers and cited "post-communist thinking" (Czaputowicz & Wojciuk 2016: 97). Empirical and descriptive inclinations and preferences for the historical method of the post-communist CEE IR were also observed by Drulák (2009).

Another similarity of Ukrainian IR development with that of CEE countries was the rapid Westernization throughout the region. Just like most other post-Communist countries, Ukraine missed the key discussions regarding the goals and the scope of the discipline. Since the 1990s it has borrowed from Western academia many theoretical assumptions without grasping the complexity of discussions it has gone through. In particular, a peculiar formation of the IR discipline was practically ignored: Since the first registered spike in IR studies in the US in early 1960s (see Fox & Baker Fox 1961), there was a state of "US dominance of International Relations" (Smith 1987: 190) to the extent that for a considerable period of time "international theory barely exist[ed] outside the anglophone countries" (Holsti 1985: 127). Even if one rejects this claim as rather extreme, the role of the US scholarship in building conceptual frameworks, analytical approaches, and methodological principles for the IR discipline is undeniable. Non-US scholars refined their arguments in discussions with US scholars, such as Barry Buzan, or worked within the US academia only to leave it in order to find more receptive academic environment (e. g. Friedrich Kratochwil). Thus, the discipline bears an undeniable American influence.

It is remarkable that the Marxist approach to the IR and the US approach sometimes ran parallel to one another. For instance, both traditions underline the policy relevance of the IR research. However, most of "Great Debates" on theory in IR (occurred

primarily in the US) and the ripples of the disturbance they provoked passed unnoticed for CEE countries and later Ukraine. On the contrary, after 1991 they borrowed almost unconditionally American IR paradigms, theories, and quality standards. New books and theoretical approaches were gradually introduced, some key translations appeared, new contacts and international cooperation were established, and Westernizing educational reforms happened throughout the region, posing the comparable problems of the coexistence of the old and new. However, the implementation rate and the balance of continuity and change was uneven and created some rifts on the academic communities, observed by Drulák (2009: 169), which could be safely applied to Ukraine as well:

“All the national IR communities in the region are internally divided between two uneven groups of scholars. On the one hand, there is a small minority of those who consider themselves members of the Anglo-American IR and try to orient their academic activities accordingly, publishing with recognized international publishers or participating at international IR conventions. On the other hand, a vast majority of scholars are only active in their national contexts, focusing on teaching, textbook writing, policy advice and public intellectual activities. With a few important exceptions, the institutional power (department heads, deans, professors) usually rests with nationally oriented scholars who set the explicit and implicit criteria of further disciplinary reproduction.”

Still, important differences existed. First, most CEE states of the former Warsaw block were independent during the interwar period and experienced a kind of intellectual renaissance during Khrushchev's thaw, when foundations of foreign policies and IR studies were laid. Ukrainian IR scholars sometimes refer to the institutional experience of Lviv School of international law that functioned in the interwar period under Polish rule (Byk 2013) but to present this episode as a part of Ukrainian heritage would be misleading.

Second, unlike the other countries of the region, Ukraine's European perspectives have been clear cut, and its Westernization of education and research since independence has been inconsequential. These factors caused a significant divergence between Ukraine and its Western neighbors. The tempo of westernization is, thus, incomparable: the new standards for publications, increase in theoretical awareness, scholarly standards adoption (peer review, plagiarism) occurred more rapidly in the CEE, even if we take into account the recent educational reform in Ukraine after 2014. The result is that the IR scholars of the Western neighbors of Ukraine are already at the middle of the discussion whether or not IR in their respective countries has become too westernized, and whether the model of relations with global IR should be modified from emulation to contribution of national (Czaputowicz & Wojciuk 2016) or regional (Drulák 2013) nature. In Ukraine, this discussion has yet to take place.

In this respect, it would be safe to say that Ukrainian IR suffers from double parochialization: its peripheral position under Soviet domination provided an extremely feeble starting position for the development of the IR studies and research. Second, due to irregular Westernization, it is still catching up with the Central and Eastern European IR, simultaneously fighting the temptation to protect the established hybrid structures. What bearing does it have over the essence of Ukrainian IR teaching and research?

Taking into account both the legacy of Soviet IR and incomplete westernization attempts, we analyze the Ukrainian IR community along five axes: (1) how it situates the IR discipline within the broader field of social sciences; (2) how deeply it is integrated into global IR scholarship; (3) what paradigmatic framework(s) and research methods it prefers; (4) what kind of regional studies it conducts; (5) whether it deems important, and tries to bridge the gap between, the scholarly community and policy-makers. These questions are interrelated; when combined, they offer a complex view of the status of IR scholarship in Ukraine and the ways IR scholars cooperate with the broader community both domestically and internationally.

Findings and discussion

1. A Riddle Inside the Mystery: Looking for the Place of IR Within the Broader Field of Social Sciences in Ukraine

For laypeople, the IR discipline with its focus on states, international conflicts, power politics, and the intersection of communal goals and personal ambitions in diplomacy often represents the essence of political science. Furthermore, no less frequently do universities offer study programs in IR as a part of broader political science programs. For instance, *InternationalRelationsEDU.org*, a career counseling platform for those eager to start or advance a career in international relations, describes IR as a field of study in its own right but also as an “offshoot of political science” (2019). Finally, the TRIP project explicitly cites the “IR [as a] sub-field of political science” (Maliniak et al. 2012: 2). According to this point of view, IR belongs to the versatile domain of social sciences thus sharing with this domain basic methodological assumptions and trends such as the “behaviorist revolution”, the “cultural turn”, and the advent of computational methods.

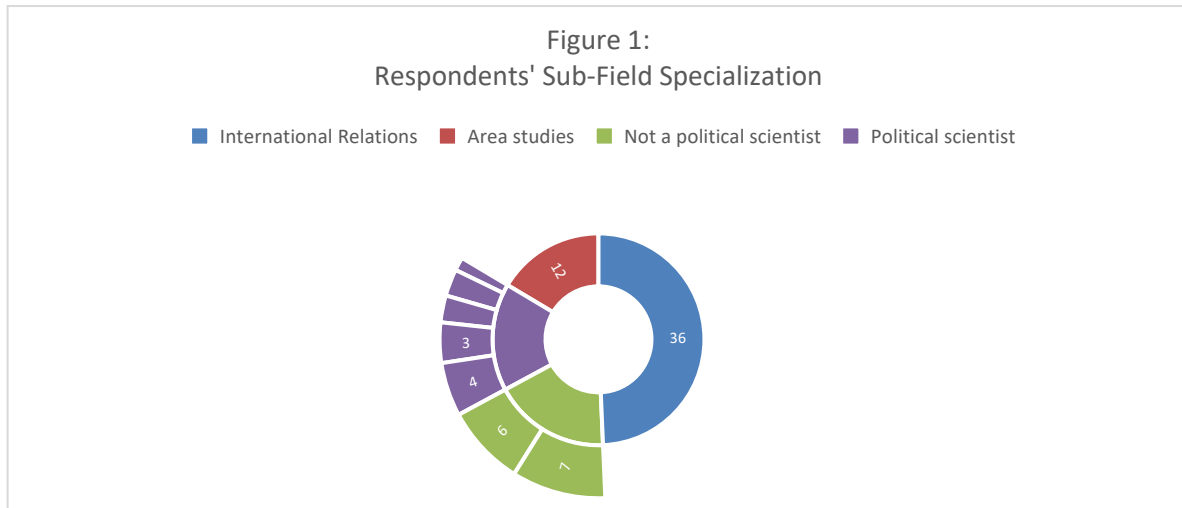
However, there is a significant counter-current which rejects the inclusion of IR into social sciences tracing its genealogy instead from historical science. This makes some sense since many IR research interests (e.g. face-to-face diplomacy and transformations of international systems) are best studied through traditional historiographic approaches. Moreover, the notable IR sub-field of foreign policy analysis fully developed out of the *emphatically atheoretical* and *historically oriented* diplomatic analysis. Only later was it influenced by system-level theory (Potter 2010). Such lack of theoretical foundations is sometimes lionized by some IR scholars, for it constitutes the uniqueness of the discipline thus setting it apart from other social sciences in general and political science in particular. Remarkably, Reynolds explicitly opposed the understanding of IR as a field within social science and suggested the discipline should focus on visions and choices by key players vested with the authority to take decisions at critical junctions of international politics (1973). History, being “a discipline of context” (Stone 1981: 34), is required to avoid overgeneralized theories and study particularities. The same preference for narrative-based explanations, where “the facts speak for themselves”, instead of theory-based explanations is indeed a significant feature for some prominent IR scholars with historical training (see Gaddis 1986; Leffler 1995; Mayer

1969). One might trace the roots of IR in historical science back to Thucydides, who is considered one of the founding fathers of both history and IR.

The debate on whether IR should remain a separate branch of knowledge or be merged with the political or economic sciences is noteworthy in Ukraine for two reasons. First, the Soviet legacy, i. e. earlier establishment of IR, supports a separate standing, providing it with symbolic capital and political importance. This stands in contrast to political science which mostly appeared only after the USSR had collapsed. This tradition grants some IR teaching and studying institutions (most notably the Kyiv Institute of International Relations) a privileged status. Secondly, the post-1991 process of new IR departments branching out from departments of history, geography, and political science and recruitment of specialists with various training to newly created IR departments contributed to the emergence of a particular setting, where IR and its subdisciplines are nested within other social sciences.

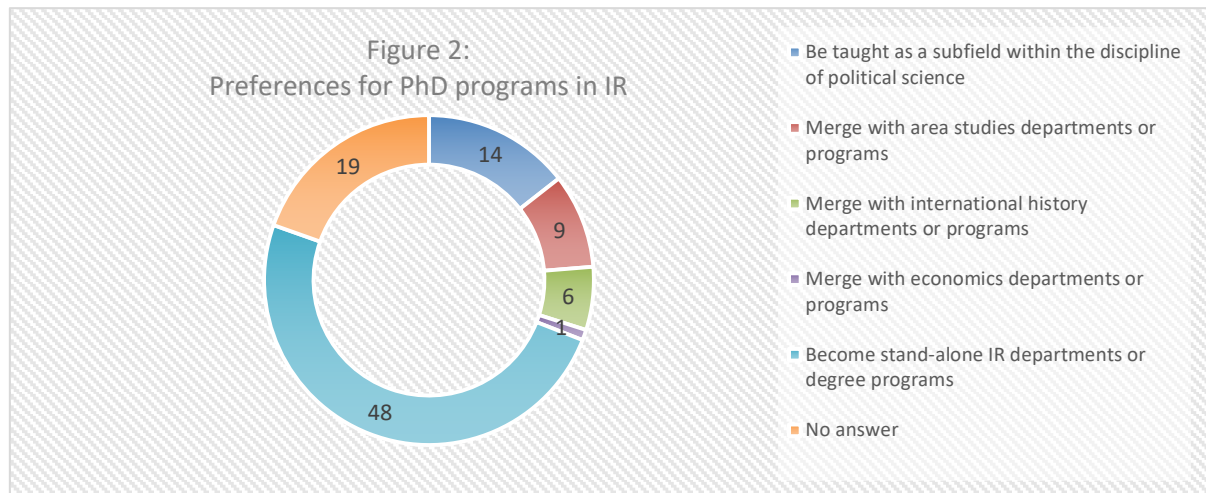
The conflict between the perceived elite position of IR and the mixed reality revealed itself in 2015 when a higher education reform envisaged reviewing the list of higher education specializations in Ukraine. Among other innovations, it categorized “International Relations, Social Communications, and Regional Studies” and “International Economic Relations” as belonging to Social and Behavioral Sciences, on par with the economy, political science, sociology, and psychology. It also suppressed some lesser specializations like “International Information” and “International Business” and placed “International Law” as a subcategory of more general “Law studies” (CMU 2015). Although the reformers justified their decision by the need to align with the western standards, they did not go as far as to place IR under Political Science (see two interviews by the then deputy minister of education: Sovsun 2015a; Sovsun 2015b). The reform elicited a public outcry in the form of the student publications (Sherstiuk et al. 2015) and lack of support both from the MFA and the parliamentary committee on education, but no major public discussion. Thus, the pressure went the informal way: after the change of the government, the status of International Relations as the standalone branch of studies, consisting of “International Relations, social communications and regional studies”, “International Economy” and “International Law” in January 2017, has been reestablished (CMU 2017), which reflects the still significant lobbying power of Ukrainian IR faculty elites.

Our data suggests not only that the Ukrainian IR community holds a two-tiered status, but also that it would like this status to persist. When explicitly asked about their specialization, only 16.4% of the whole sample indicated political science related sub-fields (e.g. comparative politics or political theory), whereas 65.7% indicated international relations, area studies or global politics. Another 17.8%, declared that they were not political scientists outright, claiming to be either historians or economists (see Figure 1).



Equally revealing is that 48 TRIP survey respondents (48.5% of the total number or 61.5% of those who responded the question) signaled that they would prefer standalone Ph.D. programs in IR (See Figure 2). Most Ukrainian IR scholars consider their field too distinct to be taught alongside either political science or history. It is also noteworthy that, unlike in other countries (e.g. the US or Germany), area studies specialists do not consider their craft as a separate branch of IR: none of those 9 people who advocate including IR Ph.D. programs into area studies actually do area studies. Conversely, all area studies specialists opt for standalone IR programs. The relations between IR and area studies will be elaborated upon below.

Thus, IR scholars see their discipline as unique and quite apart from both mainstream political science and history. However, the symbolically important exceptionality stands on a shaky foundation. A doctorate and a professorship in IR are received when one defends one's thesis of a respected degree. Unlike for History or Political Science, there are no specialized "International Relations" boards. To be a Ph.D. or a Doctor of Science in IR, one should defend a thesis in Political Science sub-specialization No. 23.00.04 labeled "Political problems of international systems and global development". A Ph.D. (prior to 2014 "Candidate of Science") or a Doctor of Science holder is a Dr. or Prof. in Political Science with no mention of his/her sub-specialty. In other words, at a closer glance, the IR exceptionality seems to vanish. This, however, is a misleading conclusion, because all the Scientific Councils that award honorary degrees are concentrated in the biggest IR departments controlled by the community. Albeit disciplinary related to political science, IR in Ukraine remains procedurally separate, supporting the power and self-reproduction of the faculty and administration.



All these findings suggest that despite the strong opposition from elites, post-Soviet inertia, and partial rollback of the reform, there is enough space and plenty of institutional capacity to strengthen the IR-Political Science connection typical for Western academia. It is the willingness of the Ukrainian IR community which lacks. It is arguable that the double “political science—history” foundation provides the IR community with particular status among other sciences: it makes the discipline incommensurable thus raising the status of IR scholars who are immunized from methodological critique by *both* social scientists and historians.

2. Please Call Later: The Connection of Ukrainian IR Scholars to the Global Scholarly Networks

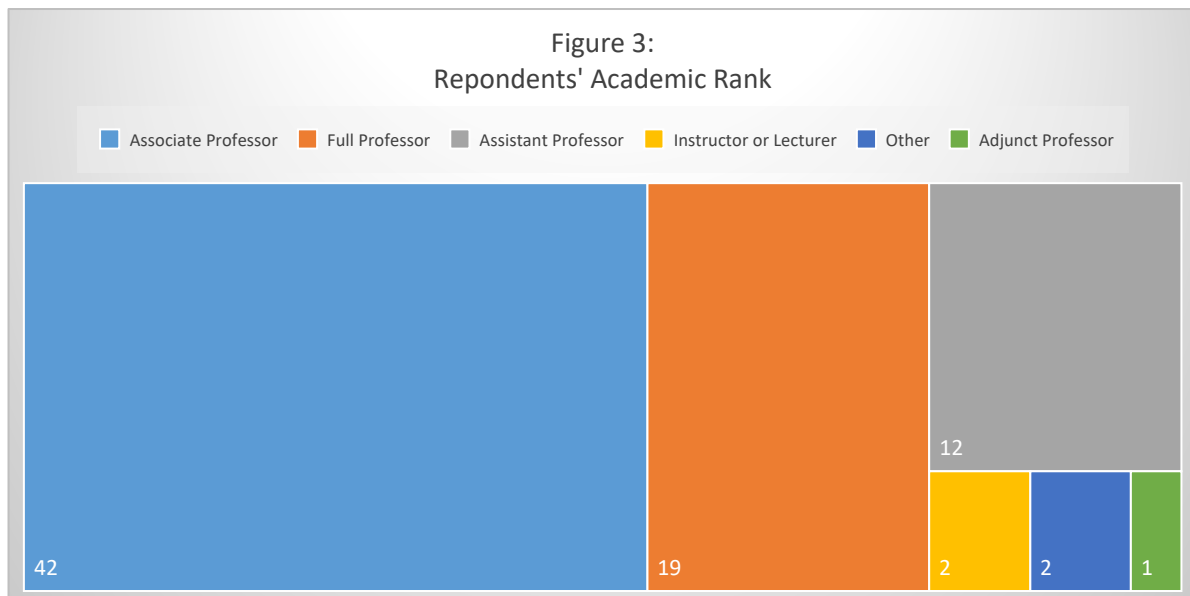
Autarky is far from beneficial to the advancement of science. When excluded from communication with foreign scholars who bring new ideas, methodological innovations, alternative explanations, and research grants, national scholarly communities tend to lose vigor and focus. Numerous cases like information technology in the German Democratic Republic (Geipel 1999), physics in Franco’s Spain (Herran & Roqué 2012), biomedicine in North Korea (Kim 1999) or even the whole scientific institutes like National Council for Research in Mussolini’s Italy (Maiocchi 2015) prove that inertia and inefficiency reign supreme when scholars are enclosed in national autarkic systems. Inclusion into global scholarly networks does not automatically imply compliance with hegemonic discourses: one might voice his/her dissent disseminating alternative interpretations via specialized journals, find likeminded researchers abroad, or even achieve international acclaim as a non-conformist. Integration, in other words, brings exchange and cross-fertilization no less often than slavish copying of foreign patters.

An autarkic attitude is not necessarily imposed on scientists by authoritarian regimes. Scholars may voluntarily seclude themselves in national contexts and topics culturally unimportant for the international audience. In this case, the proliferation of tiny “local schools” energetically demarcating and preserving their identities is to be expected. In addition, there will be notable lack of foreign language proficiency among

the scholarly community, for inability to communicate with foreign partners effectively expels experts out of the “republic of letters.”

The TRIP questionnaire is well-placed to monitor whether IR scholars cooperate with foreign partners or, rather, prefer to insulate themselves from international scholarly trends. Focused on questions of the most influential IR journal, the best publishing house, an individual scholar with the utmost impact over the field in the last 20 years, the most advantageous university to build career in foreign policy, the most prestigious Ph.D. program in IR all, the survey provides quite an accurate assessment of whether scholars are well integrated into the global market of ideas and its underlying institutional machinery.

To interpret this part of TRIP data on Ukraine correctly, some information on the sociological background of the Ukrainian sample is necessary. With a **median of 48.5 years** (ranging from 28 to 83), 55% of the respondents are male and 43% female, the sample is a set of academicians in the prime period of their career. As shown in Figure 3, roughly half of the respondents are Associate Professors and another quarter are Full Professors in their departments. None are Ph.D. students or a new Ph.D. holder in the early stage of his or her career. Therefore, one might expect our respondents to be active in editing articles and books as well as to be acquainted with a number of international scholars. It might also be predicted that being the most active age cohort in both research



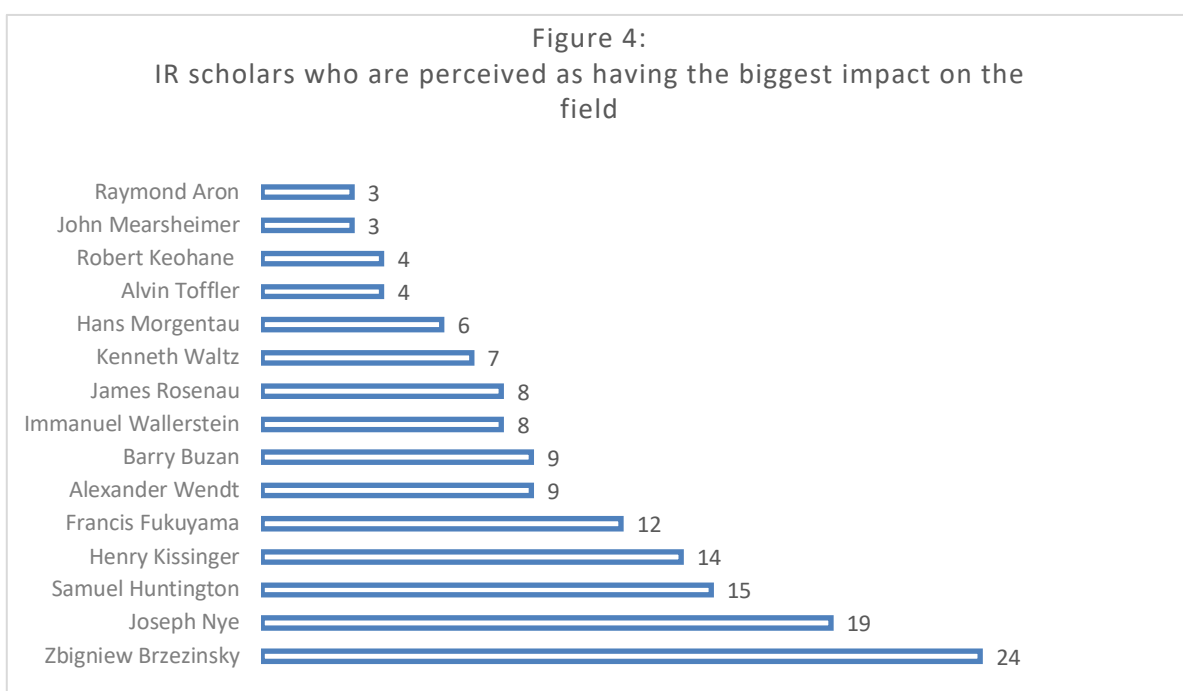
and teaching, the TRIP respondents should participate in theoretical and paradigmatic debates, and policy discussions.

However, the picture presented by the TRIP survey is more complex in several respects. First, only 45% of respondents assessed explicitly their mastery of English as sufficient to read literature and policy documents, with another 20% claiming the same for German, 13%—for French, and 12%—for Spanish. If aggregated, these figures provide an optimistic picture suggesting that Ukrainian IR experts can communicate with international partners. In addition, 50% of the total sample (and virtually everyone who decided to respond to this particular question) stated proficiency in the Russian language.

The data suggest that there is no solid language barrier separating the Ukrainian IR community from the world; however, there is still an important space for improvement.

Second, due to the partial access to the market of ideas, different authors are perceived and incorporated into the local IR canon unevenly. When asked to list 4 scholars whose work has had the greatest influence on the field of IR in the past 20 years, Ukrainian respondents provided a host of answers climbing up to 99 personalities. The list is extremely versatile, for it includes scholars of IR proper (e.g. Andrew Moravcsik and Robert Jervis), area studies specialists (e.g. Stephen Sestanovich and Gerard Toal), historians (e.g. Christopher Hill and Jean-Baptiste Duroselle), founding fathers of the social sciences (e.g. Max Weber and Karl Marx), specialists in transitional studies (e.g. Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter), and even currently fashionable authors such as Nassim Taleb and Fareed Zakaria. Neither the list nor the categories we cite are exclusive. Most of the authors are mentioned only once or twice. Figure 4 shows all those who scored at least 3 votes.

Several noteworthy observations can be made from this data. To begin with, something which remotely resembles a commonly referenced pool of the biggest experts is significantly selective. From the top-5 IR gurus venerated by most of the Ukrainian IR community, only Joseph Nye is a scholar who brought considerable theoretical innovation to the field. Fukuyama, Kissinger, Huntington, and Brzeziński are much more renowned for their input in political science than IR theory. Huntington is known for his contribution to researches on civil-military relations and democratization; Brzeziński is foremost the expert on non-democratic regimes; Fukuyama in another political scientist who studies state-making and good governance; Kissinger is both a historian of diplomacy and a notable policymaker. Thus, it is quite curious that Ukrainian TRIP respondents who, as shown, support a separate identity of IR studies, behold political scientists as the most influential IR authors. This may be a consequence of social context having an impact on



the respondents: after all the problem of state-making, democratization, and effective foreign policymaking are among the most daunting challenges Ukraine is currently facing.

However, an alternative interpretation is more plausible. Since the respondents have only partial mastery of foreign languages, their list of IR celebrities is contingent upon available translations. The uneven arrival of books and names after the USSR collapsed, provoked lopsided results in perceptions of the greatest IR scholar. Translated into Ukrainian in 2000, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* by Brzeziński (2000) became a reference book due to geopolitical importance it ascribes to Ukraine. In contrast in the Global sample of TRIP-2014 Brzeziński does not make it to the top ten, and in the Polish ranking of TRIP 2014, he climbed only to the 10th position. The even more noteworthy translation of Fukuyama's *The End of History?* first published as an article took place in 1990 (Fukuyama 1990) and became a reference text and, later, an object of critique. The same can be said about an article by Fukuyama's former professor, Samuel Huntington, whose *Clash of Civilizations* became available in Russian in 1994 (Huntington 1994). The late 1980s and early 1990s were, presumably, the foundational years for most respondents from the Ukrainian TRIP sample, hence the importance they ascribe to the top-5.

Next, when considered as a whole, the data in Figure 4 reveals a curious post-Communist trend: Ukraine, Poland, and Russia share a certain corpus of preferred texts. This effect is also contingent upon available translations. As noted by Czaputowicz and Wojciuk (2016), Brzeziński, Kissinger, Fukuyama, and Huntington all appeared in Polish in the early 1990s and were widely discussed. Furthermore, this particular genre, "books offering narratives describing current international phenomena, sometimes successfully combining IR scholarship with visions of global trends, were more popular than ambitious, academic publications. It is only in recent years that the Polish community of IR scholars has become more active and more open to international collaboration. Thus, the past several years have yielded certain overdue translations of classical writings, such as those of Morgenthau, Waltz, Wendt, and Nye" (Czaputowicz & Wojciuk 2016: 7). Likewise, in Russia "the image of western international relations theory [is] almost exclusively based on the works of the political activists like Huntington, Fukuyama, and Brzezinski, who do not occupy any visible place in western university canon" (Astrov 2005). One of the most striking examples is the analysis of the "perception of western theories" in Russia is provided by Tsygankov, which is supposed to be comprehensive but in fact, his list of "western theorists" does not extend beyond Fukuyama and Huntington (Morozov 2009: 203).

Finally, as the Ukrainian TRIP survey reveals, the respondents hold their colleagues (or themselves) in great esteem, for they cite Ukrainian scholars as belonging to those with the greatest influence on the field of IR in the past 20 years. In fact, our total list of 99 personalities included 16 Ukrainians. However, none emerge as a local big name whose prominence is recognized by the Ukrainian IR community as a whole. This might be due to a relatively short and tumultuous history of the IR in Ukraine: the local big name is yet to arrive.

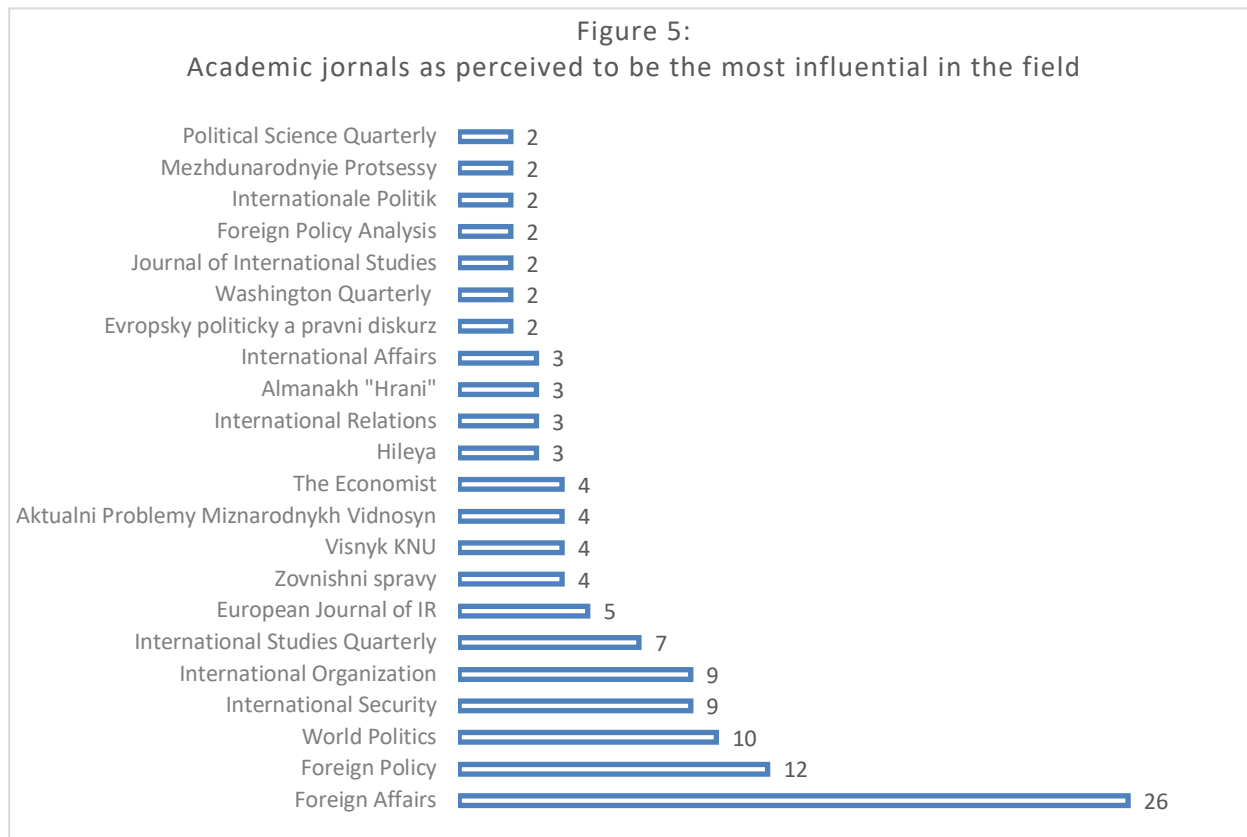
Another important feature of global integration revealed by TRIP is participation in the scholarly publishing industry. The obtained results reveal the complex position of Ukrainian IR scholars. When asked to identify scholarly journals with articles with the most influence on international relations, respondents are significantly unsure. To begin with, 50% of the total sample simply skipped this question. Moreover, the given answers are, once again, extremely versatile. 80 different titles were suggested altogether, 58 of them were mentioned only once. On top of that, the list includes a volatile mix of academic and non-academic, international and national journals, and even newspapers (See Figure 5). There is little consistency in this regard suggesting that each scholar follows individual awareness and publication trajectory.

This reflects several important tendencies. First, written communications of findings in general and scholarly journals are not significantly important for the Ukrainian IR community. In this, the community actually follows the Ukrainian research tradition proper to all disciplines. It comes with little surprise that, given this tradition, none of the Ukrainian journals gathered more than 4 votes. Our respondents referred to *Zovnishni spravy* ("Foreign Affairs"), *Visnyk KNU* ("Kyiv National University Bulletin"), *Aktualni Problemy Miznarodnykh Vidnosyn* ("Current Issues in International Relations"), *Hileya* ("Hileya"), and *Almanakh "Hrani"* ("The Edges' Yearbook"), a very diverse set of national journals both style- and qualitywise. Therefore, we can argue that Ukrainian journals are not the key element of professional communication, and that no single authoritative common-reference journal exists¹⁰⁷.

Second, the high placing of international non-academic *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy* suggests that the practical inclinations of Ukrainian IR scholarship make this type of publications more useful than anything purely academic.

¹⁰⁷ Although it is beyond the scope of our research, on the margins we would like to note that none of those journals is indexed within the international reference bases yet, and although they are slowly updating their submission requirements and peer-review processes, the threshold for being published remains remarkably low. A detailed study of the peculiarities of Ukrainian social sciences journals, like the one recently conducted in Russia (Istomin & Baikov 2013), is thus long overdue.

Third, among the international journals mentioned, two types can be distinguished. The first one includes world-renown IR/Political Science journals, which suggests that Ukrainian scholars are aware of their existence albeit they seldom publish there. The second type is newly established and less-rigorous international journals, often established in cooperation between Ukrainian faculty and their colleagues from CEE countries (e. g. *Journal of International Studies*, *Evropský politický a právní diskurz*), which provide a relatively simpler possibility to obtain an international publication in response to the new standards imposed by the Ministry of Education and Science.



The last important piece of evidence on how deeply Ukrainian scholars and universities are integrated into the global IR community comes from a somewhat unexpected direction. According to the data provided by respondents, the Ukrainian IR community as a whole is extremely homogenized from the perspective of nationality. 77 out of 78 of those who preferred to disclose their country of origin, named Ukraine. This suggests that universities offering IR programs either do not hire or cannot attract foreign specialists. This inhibits the transfer of ideas and limits the exposure of both the faculty members and the students to innovations in theory and in methods.

3. Same Framework, Different Practices: Paradigms and Research Methods in Ukrainian IR

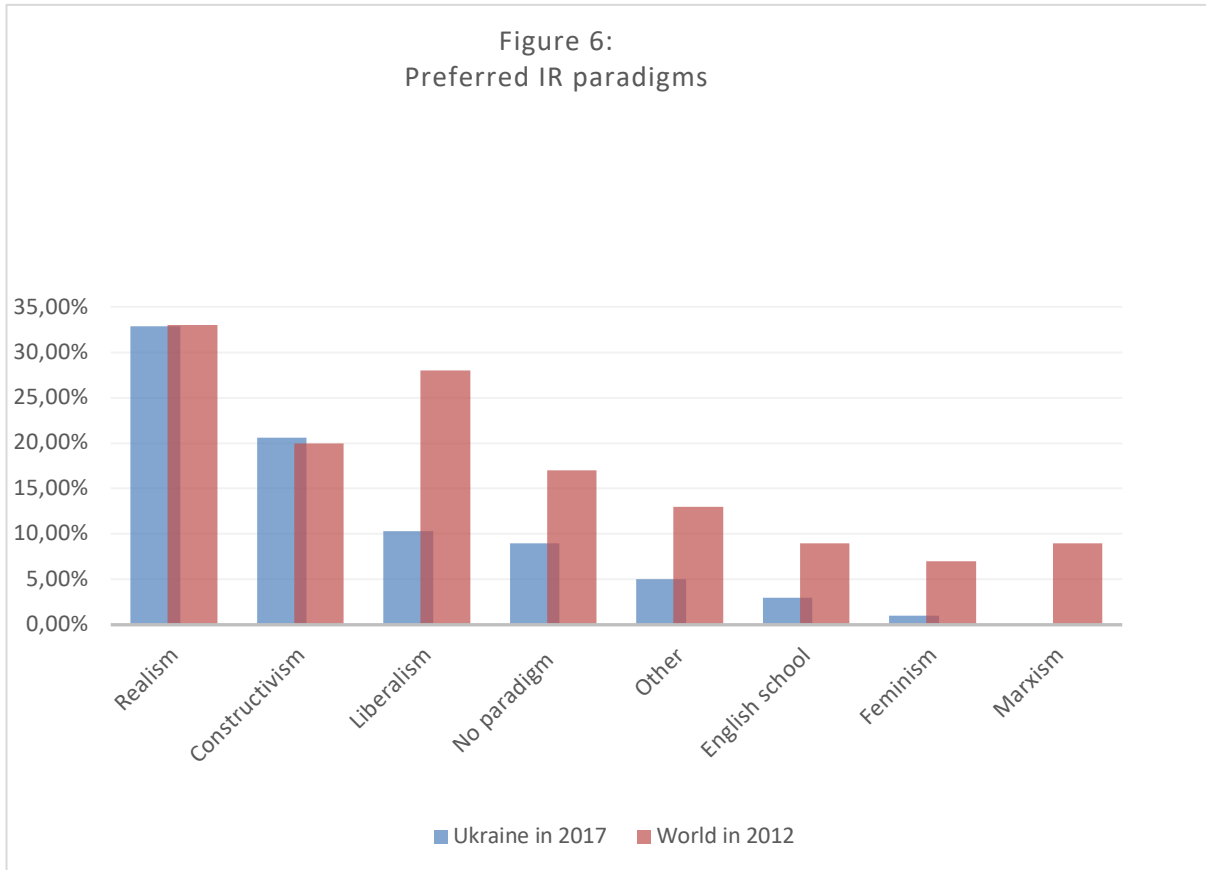
There were several notable IR paradigm wars within US academia. Just a few of them were remembered and transferred to the next generations of scholars. Not much of the legacy of the “First Great Debate”, which pitted realists against the utopians in 1930s-1940s, is considered of practical value for contemporary students of IR. The “Second Great

Debate” between classicists, who preferred historical narrative approach (Bull 1966), and behavioralists, heavily influenced by natural science and its methodology (Kaplan 1966), and the final victory of the latter gave the discipline a typical positivist outlook. Albeit the very incidence of the “Third Great” Inter-Paradigm Debate remains questioned (Waeber 1996), it modified the discipline from now on more than ever focused on paradigms. Finally, the epistemologically driven “Fourth Great Debate”, that is the rivalry between rational positivism and constructivism, produced the canonic repertoire of paradigms inculcated to any IR novice. There are the Big Three approaches (Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism) supplemented with Marxism, English School, and Feminism.

Despite some efforts to reorganize the structure of IR textbooks so that the discussion gravitates toward pressing topics such as international terrorism, global inequality, and climate change instead of paradigms (see Frieden, Lake, & Schultz 2010), a typical US IR textbook and a typical class still focus on paradigms and the different answers they deliver (Maliniak et al. 2011: 441-444). Such a tendency might be responsible for the finding by Matthews & Callaway that although in the US “92% of the textbooks provide at least a foundational level of theoretical coverage in the theory chapters, the lack of theoretical application throughout the material robs students of the ability to see the real of strength of theories” (2015: 17). In other words, it is likely that nowadays IR professors pay customary duty to presentations of theories, but shy away from consistent and thorough usage of them as analytical frames thus widening the gap between abstract theories and practical needs. Yet it is premature to abandon paradigms in IR. As noticed by Guzzini (2001) data never speaks for itself and any meaningful interpretation of events is theory-dependent. Therefore, it is not enough to simply accumulate information about past and ongoing events: all players within the IR domain need conceptual frameworks not only to have some impact but even to be actors. Moreover, mastery of theories improves “the capacity of students to train in clear thinking” (Guzzini 2001: 103).

In the post-Soviet times, when IR studies proliferated in bigger and smaller universities, the previously peripheral department for international relations in Kyiv state university became the key national institution. Its study programs and curricula have been emulated by newly appeared regional universities (Malsky & Moroz 2012: 3). At the same time, Western IR theory became more accessible in Ukraine, although lack of the participation of Ukrainian (Soviet) scholars in the key theoretical debates of the previous decades, compounded by selective translations of books and limited access to the originals, played a role in the way IR paradigms were adopted. The fact that Ukrainian scholars are mindful of paradigmatic differences is corroborated by the handbook publishing. Since 2007, at least 5 university level manuals on Theories of International Relations have been published in Ukraine (see Shepeliev 2004; Kamenetskyi 2007; Malskyi & Matsyakh 2007; Tsymbalistyi 2009; Trebin 2016). Each describes more or less extensively the key theoretical debates. In addition, there is two-volume edition *Ukrainian Diplomatic Encyclopedia* (2004), which treats this question in some length.

In addition to numerous theoretical approaches, the IR discipline has witnessed a considerable proliferation of research methods. Nowadays, a typical research toolkit in IR includes simulation and modelling (Alker & Brunner 1969; Ruloff 1976; Snidal 2004), manual event analysis (McClelland 1970), computational event analysis (Bennett & Stam 2000; Schrodtt 2000), cognitive mapping (Johnston 1995), case study (Bennett and George 2005), statistical analysis (King, Keohane, & Verba 1994; Braumoeller & Sartori 2004), and computer data mining (Unver 2019).

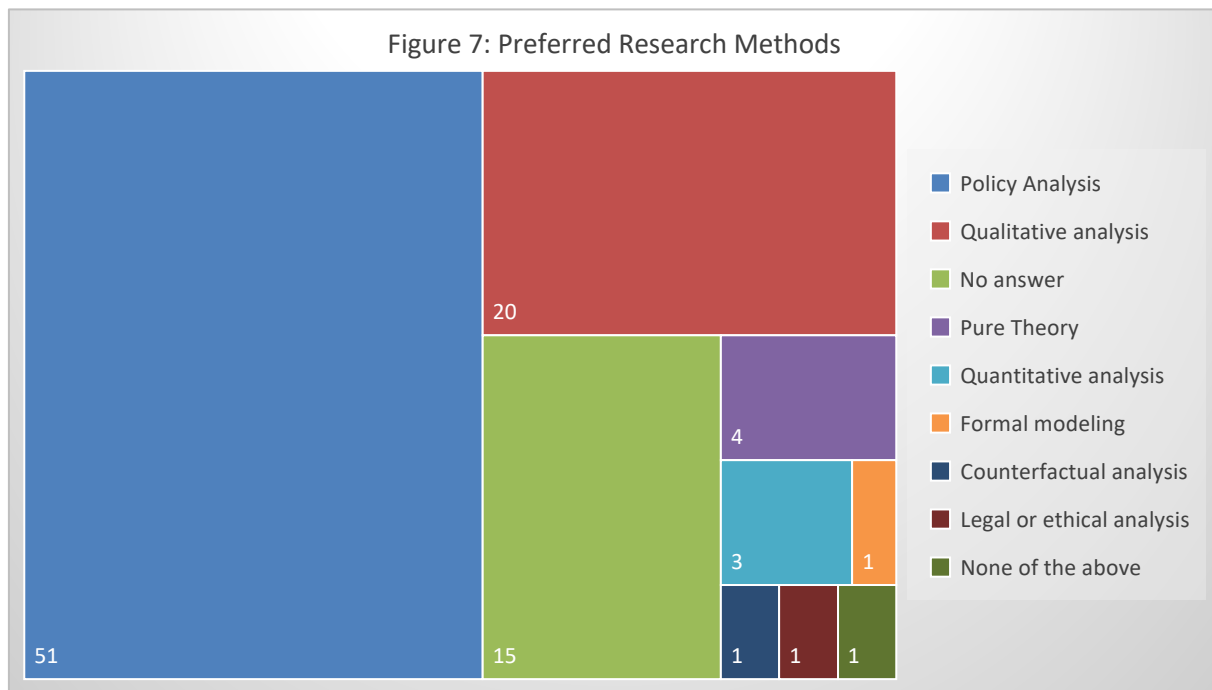


In this section, we analyze the TRIP data in order to understand whether the Ukrainian IR community follows global trends in both theoretical approaches and preferred methods. There are several essential findings.

First, Ukrainian IR scholars are well aware of the existence of the discipline's main paradigms. None of them skipped the question on their paradigmatic approach to study of IR and most of them (80 respondents) provided a definite answer (as opposed to 17 who checked “no answer”). And despite the fact that 9 respondents declare they do not use paradigmatic analysis, the theoretical preferences of the community are quite discernable: 32 are realists, 20 are constructivists, 10 are liberals, 3 lean to the English School, and 1 person espouses a Feminist approach to IR. Remarkably, no one adopts any variation of the Marxist approach (a special prompt invited respondents to choose either Marxist historical materialism or neo-Gramscianism or other critical theory). The distribution is consistent with the universal trends (as registered by TRIP 2012, see Maliniak et al. 2012). To illustrate this, we plotted both data on a chart (see Figure 6). Although the TRIP-2012 numbers add to more than 100%, which is a result of the methodological difference between two survey rounds (unlike in 2017, in 2012

respondents were asked a percentage for each paradigm), it is evident that Realism and Constructivism dominate globally. Ukraine evidently participates in the trend.

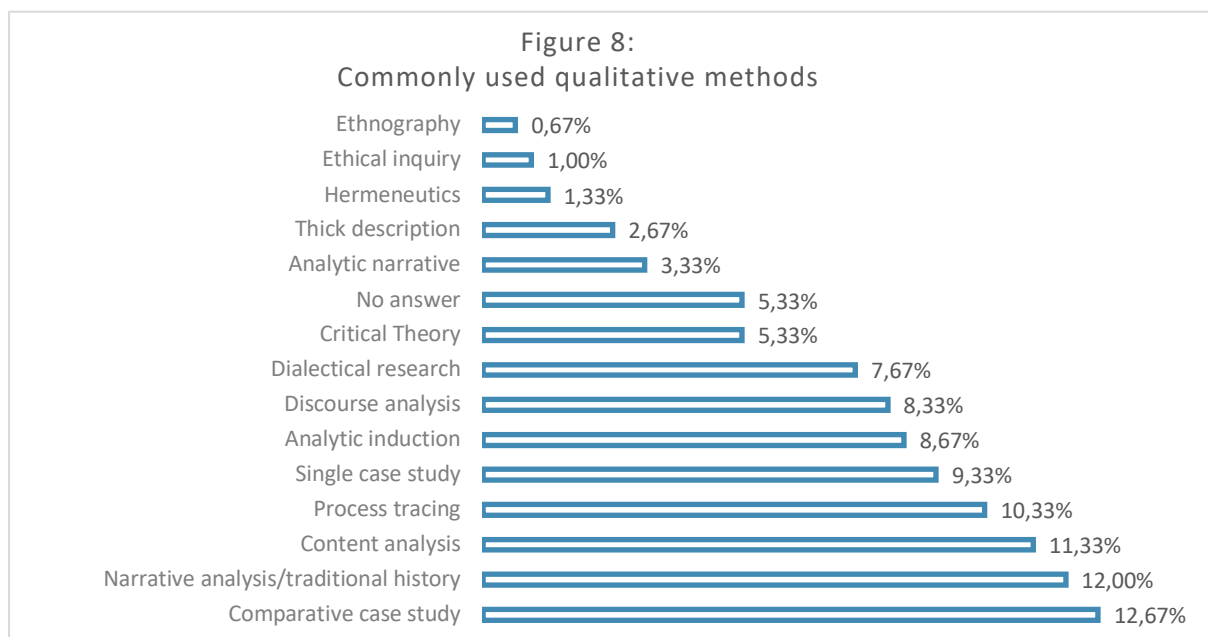
This is not surprising: despite their epistemological opposition, both Realism and Constructivism are mutually reinforcing, for Constructivism provides an additional ideational and identarian supplement to the state-centered realist approach. Thus, in the circumstances of post-Soviet IR traditionally focused on states, Constructivism was a fresh albeit not an incompatible innovation easily absorbed by the scholarly community. We find the obvious underestimation of Liberalism to be more noteworthy. The low esteem in which Liberalism is held makes Ukraine comparable to only two countries in the TRIP 2012 survey: Finland and Hong Kong. This is especially concerning given the high place that Ukrainian diplomacy accords to cooperation with partners and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, as well as its high esteem for international law and international organizations. It requires a further in-depth study into whether the lack of prestige for Liberalism corresponds to a particular political positioning of the countries outside military alliances.



The most fundamental division between Ukrainian and global IR communities concerns methodology. In Western, and foremost in US IR studies, methodological preferences have been gradually shifting to empirical performance, and measuring covariation in big data in particular to the extent that some scholars started voicing up warning signals that the field is moving towards “simplistic hypothesis testing... with most of the effort devoted to collecting data and testing empirical hypotheses” (Mearsheimer & Walt 2013: 438). This shift is a logical extension of the positivist research program which, all epistemological debates notwithstanding, dominates in Western lecture halls and research centers. This would be impossible without the ever increasing reliance upon quantitative methods that became almost compulsory for any research. The advent of quantitative-based science has had an enormous impact on both political science and IR thus constituting an important bridge between two sub-disciplines.

In Ukraine, conversely, IR remains resistant to the quantitative drive, starting with basic statistical analysis. This might be a long-lasting legacy of the Soviet-style IR which relied heavily upon narrative policy analysis and thick description.

The TRIP survey corroborates this tendency among our respondents. (See Figure 7.) 51 scholars, which constitutes 52.5% of the whole sample or 62% of those who replied to the question, indicate policy analysis as their primary method. With other qualitative methods adding up to 28.6%, a meager fraction of 4% resort to quantitative analysis or formal modeling so ubiquitous in Western academia. When we pry open the “black box” of qualitative methodology, a clear tendency to narration and descriptive approach becomes obvious (See Figure 8): case studies, narrative analysis, process tracing, content, and discourse analysis prevail; even the dialectical research returns linking the Soviet past with the post-Soviet present.



Both dominant theoretical frameworks and preferred research methods suggest commonalities between Ukraine, other CEE countries, and Russia. Approaches inherited from the Communist times are responsible not only for the lasting influence of Realism but also the absorption of compatible aspects of Constructivism. Soviet Realism in IR was highly intuitive in its nature as its premise (the state is of utmost importance and its actions are not to be judged within the moral framework of individuals) came hand in hand with statism proper to the Soviet political agenda. Due to this reliance upon unproblematized assumptions, there were little theoretical elaborations. This gap was later filled with borrowings from Western academia and locally produced texts. In Soviet times a methodological component of research remained underdeveloped: scholars typically relied upon highly descriptive policy analysis and narration especially useful to case studies or area studies. Cross-national variations or computational large N-analysis, however, were scarce. In addition, unlike in the US where the behavioralist revolution in IR brought the discipline closer to social sciences and was responsible for quantitative revolution, in Ukraine the double structure of IR simultaneously residing on historical and political science approaches has never been liberated from descriptive tendencies. To put

it bluntly, scholars find that it suffices to provide a more or less detailed description of facts (e.g. recent political developments in a foreign country or preparation for a regional conflict) in order to have a text published and recognized by the community. This impeded the advent of methodological innovations and had IR studies effectively frozen in an underdeveloped state. The preference for thick description also confined most IR specialists to the arena of area studies. Although viable as a temporary solution, this might be detrimental to further developments of IR studies in Ukraine.

4. Eyes to the West: Ukrainian IR as Area Studies

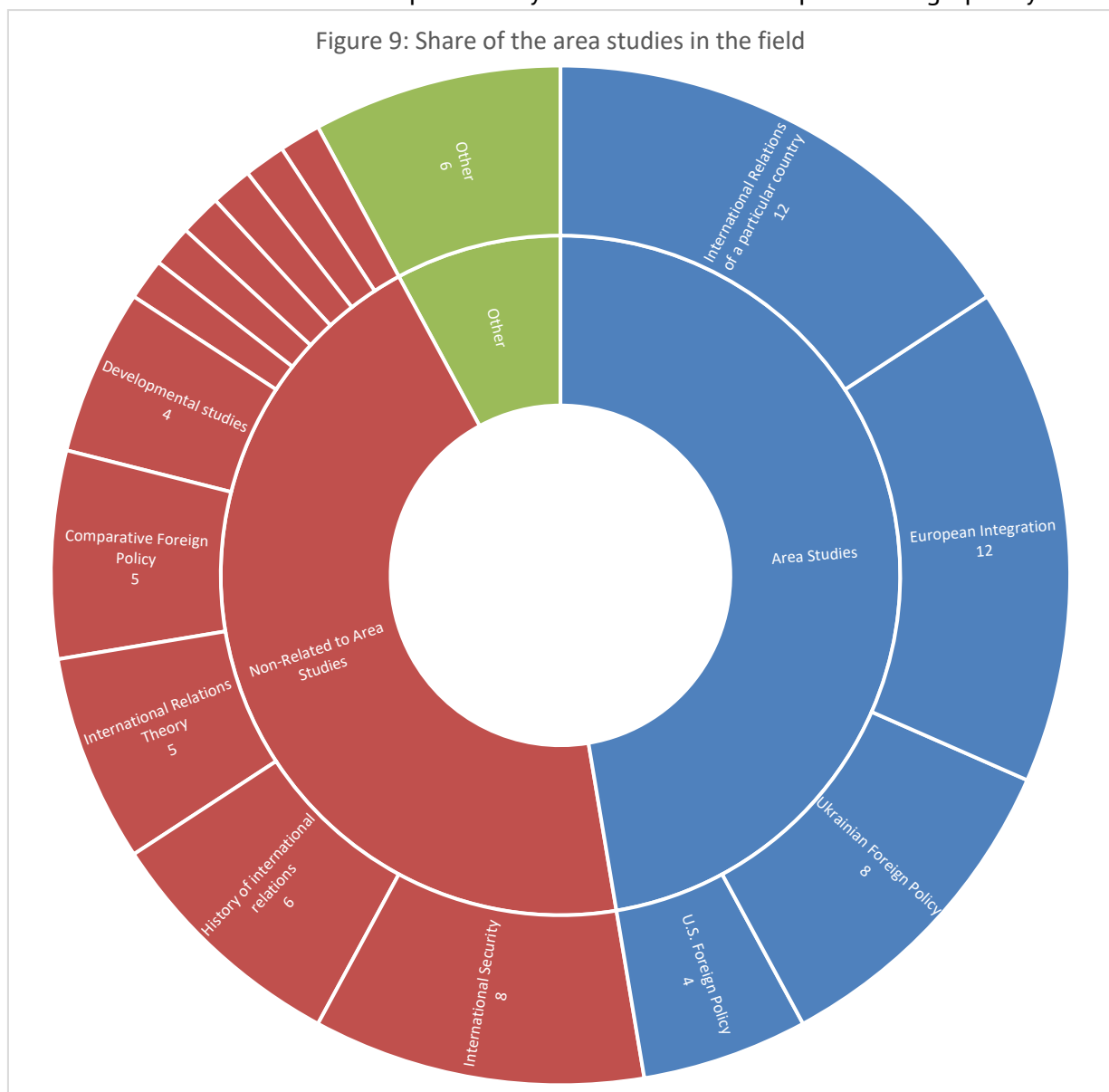
International relations have a rather mixed attitude towards area studies. With its emphasis on language and cultural context, being overtly grounded in humanities, area studies represent a descriptive and interpretative way of studying foreign policy and relations between nations. It has much more in common with atheoretical historical approach than with systematic approach proper to social sciences. Consequently, the fate and fame of area studies have been inconsistent in recent decades. In the post-1945 bipolar world, with two superpowers competing for regional allies, it seemed essential to understand the mindset of populations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as well as cultural sensitivities of local elites. Cultural studies, regional history, and psychology coalesced to accomplish the mission (Capshew 1999). In addition, area studies experts collaborated extensively with the intelligence services (Cumings 1997) providing much-needed information through access to local media, field observations, and diplomatic back-channeling. Thus, the discipline evolved from a juncture of intelligence, statecraft, and soft power policy into strategic monitoring of regional integration policy.

As area studies proliferated, the expertise of its scholars contributed to many successful policies (notable examples include democratization of Japan, modernization of Turkey, viable state-building in Jordan) and was thus held in great esteem by experts and policymakers (see Kirk 1947; Hall 1948). During this honeymoon period, IR scholars did not shy away from the claim that “International Relations needs Area Studies” (Modelski 1961: 143). The situation was similar on the other side of the “iron curtain”: whole institutes (e.g. the Institute of Asian and African Countries at Lomonosov Moscow State University, the Institute of Latin America, Institute for the Study of the USA and Canada, the Institute of the Far East, and the Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System at the Academy of Sciences of the USSR) pursued area studies in the USSR and some of the most prominent social scientists and politicians started their career as specialists in area studies (e.g. Georgi Derluguian was a specialist of Mozambique and Yevgeny Primakov specialized in Arab studies).

Much changed in US academia after 1991, when globalization seemed equivalent to homogenization and the end of history was considered nigh. As a result, generous funding by government and private foundations went dry, universities cut expensive local language instruction (Katzenstein 2002: 131), and the area studies suffered methodological attacks as inadequate (Bates 1997). As one scholar sarcastically put it: “The problem with ‘area experts’ is [...] they are unable to define the theoretical structure of their field of study, to spell out the principles of their trade, to tell

what the rules are of the game they are playing” (Kuijper 2008: 207). Nowadays in the US, IR enjoys much more prestige than area studies.

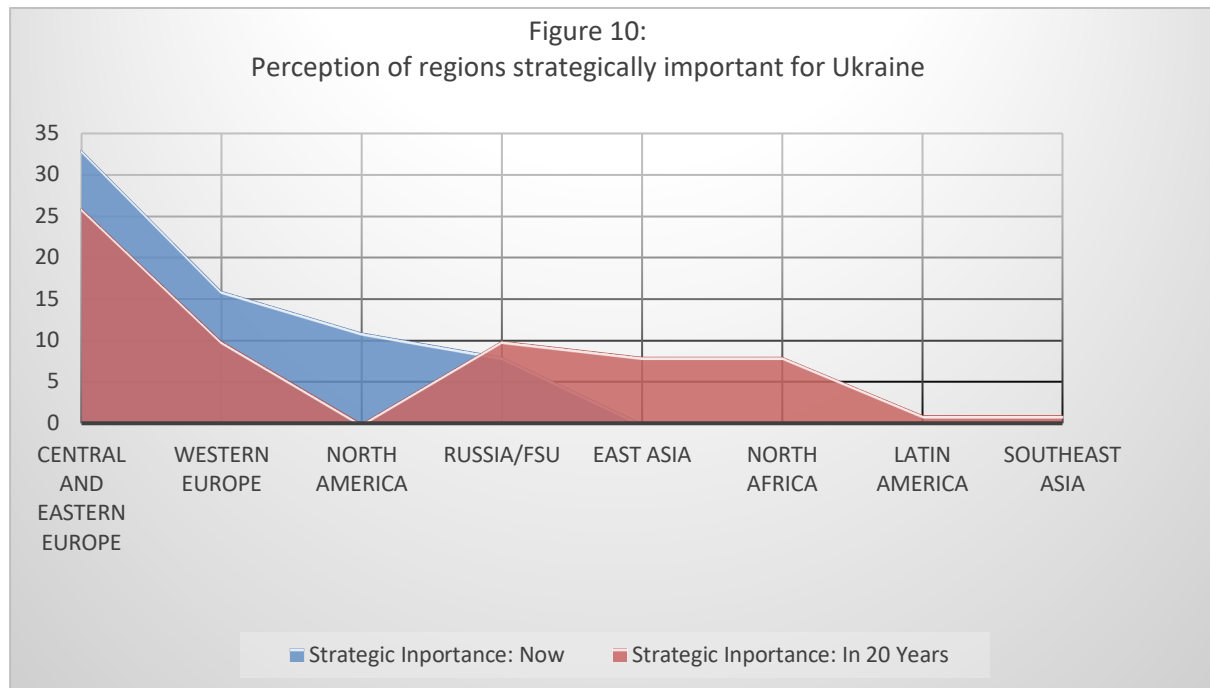
In the post-Soviet world, however, area studies did not suffer such a drastic reversal of fortune. In Russia, up to 58 universities offer a BA in area studies (Zarubezhnoye regionovedeniye 2019). Furthermore, area studies degree proves to remain a good starting point for many politicians, diplomats, and statesmen. Unlike Soviet Russia, Soviet Ukraine used to be a backwater of diplomacy and great power politics, so there was no well-functioning conveyor belt which would link area studies with statecraft. Nevertheless, integrated into many IR university curricula, area studies persevered and gained much of the veneer associated with diplomatic service. In short, no rupture between IR and area studies has occurred in post-Soviet academia; two sub-disciplines are considered more or less complimentary in their efforts to explain foreign policy.



The TRIP survey reveals the dominant position of area studies within the Ukrainian IR community. 40% of all respondents described focus on region or country to be their main area of research as opposed to 38% of those who work in pure IR domains like

“International Security” or “Human Rights” (see Figure 9). The figure for area studies should actually be even higher, for some respondents who opted for the “other” category specifically mentioned “International/Transnational Regionalism” or “Diplomacy and Ethnicity” as their main research agenda. None of the respondents considers himself/herself to be primarily a specialist in international political economy, international law, international health, global environmental politics, Chinese foreign policy, gender in IR and religion and IR. No doubt, there are specialists in international political economy and international law at Ukrainian universities, but they are concentrated in their respective chairs and departments and tend to affiliate with law or economics rather than with IR. Furthermore, when TRIP respondents were prompted to define their secondary areas of research, Ukrainian foreign policy (indicated by 10%), European Studies (9.34%), International Security (9%), and International Relations of a particular region or country (8.3%) emerged as the four most common answers. Yet another TRIP question corroborates the dominant status of area studies in Ukraine: 67% of participants conduct regionally focused studies, a towering figure when compared with 16,5% of those who use global and cross-regional data instead. Given this data, we can safely conclude that **most of the IR experts in Ukraine are area studies specialists**. Given historical legacies, mastery of the Russian language, and the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict, one might expect that Russia and the Former Soviet Union to constitute the primary research focus. This is not the case. The Russia/FSU region – as a primary region of studies – shares a relatively low-ranking 5th position with the North America region: only 5.15% of respondents study one of the regions. A significantly larger number of scholars focus on Central and Eastern Europe (30.93%) and Western Europe (13.40%). Moreover, when asked about the most important region(s) for Ukraine now and in 20 years, respondents are notably consistent: the very same regions, Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe, are considered of utmost importance for further research. (Remarkably, the Ukrainian IR community is confident that in the next 20 years the North American region will lose its importance, whereas that of the North African region will increase (See Figure 10).

The predominance of area studies as *the* way to study international relations suggests that, in this respect, Ukraine has not shed its Soviet heritage. However, the developmental trajectory of area studies in Ukraine is somewhat particular and has more



in common with CEE countries rather than with Russia.

There are, however, several significant inconsistencies in Ukrainian area studies. The most evident is the place of Russia. As noted, scholarly interest in studying Russia and FSU countries is unexpectedly low, and appears in conceivably meaningful figures only as a secondary choice. This comes in a striking contradiction to the fact that most TRIP respondents described Russia's "aggressive foreign policy" as **one of the top three key security threats** to Ukraine. So, they acknowledge the challenge but prefer to focus on other issues instead. This is a clear indication of a regrettable lack of academic Russian studies in Ukraine precisely at the critical juncture when expert opinion on the country is needed to guide Ukrainian foreign policy. Partially, the current state of affairs might be attributed to the fact that Ukrainian scholars do not categorize their own region as the one belonging to Russia and FSU countries. This may be puzzling for Western experts, but the data suggests that Ukrainian IR community identifies Ukraine chiefly with the CEE region.

Next, there is an issue of primary source access. Notwithstanding the overt tendency to focus on Central and Eastern Europe, only 25.7% of the total TRIP sample indicated they master any language of the region. Polish was the most popular answer, but there are a number of individuals who speak Czech, Croatian and Slovenian. None has declared proficiency in Hungarian, Bulgarian, Romanian or any Baltic language. Thus, not only do specialists on the region have little access to original primary sources but also the sources they do deal with are lopsided towards the Polish case. Poland is undoubtedly one of the most important partners for Ukraine in the region, but it is far from being the only one, so there is a problematic imbalance to regional expertise. Moreover, when we

looked at the specialization of respondents who speak Central European languages, we discovered that only 6 are area scholars, 7 study IR outside political science (e.g. economy or international law), and 17 are IR scholars. The data suggest that IR specialists or even jurists decide to focus on CEE at some period of their career rather than area studies expert offer their insights on the region built upon profound expertise in language and culture. In other words, area studies are practiced out of political expediency by people who were not trained to do it but decided to bridge the gap when the need arose.

Finally, the prevalence of area studies is a characteristic symptom of Ukrainian IR in general. There is a kind of international division of labor in the discipline with Western academia elaborating and refining general IR theories, while the rest of the world (global South) collects data and raw materials for this theory development. Still, the more non-Western scholars focus on data collection, the less time and resources they have necessary to develop original theoretical frameworks. They, therefore, grow increasingly dependent on theoretical approaches borrowed from the West. This division of labor amplifies the peripheral status of regional scholars whose data and localized insights are rarely published or cited compared to important theoretical generalizations. In the Ukrainian case, this amplifies the local traditions of isolated and practice-minded research.

Therefore, focusing exclusively on area studies induces peripheralization. This fate befell, among others, IR specialists in CEE: they are inclined to produce texts that are not especially rich in theoretical insights but instead pay attention to their particular region of which they provide extensive descriptions of political developments. Since such minutiae are of interest primarily to other specialists on the region, the field grows increasingly isolated, the feedback loop perpetuates itself, and the peripheral status of the discipline with all the detrimental effects of scientific autarky we described above.

5. Middlemen Reaping the Benefits: Closing the Gap Between IR Research and Foreign Policy

One of the ever-open-ended questions for the IR discipline is: whether IR scholars should keep their research as practical as possible and avoid unwarranted theorization or, rather, they should uphold the high academic standards without compromising themselves to meet the needs of politicians. While too much theorization is likely to make scholars' messages inaccessible for policymakers, lack of theorization unravels the distinction between a scholarly point of view and a layperson's guess.

Some authors are apprehensive the policymaking sphere and academia are converging more than they should. Hill and Beshoff invite scholars to avoid the "the siren song of policy relevance" cautioning: "where a dialogue with the world of policy is achieved, there are likely to be opportunity costs in terms of the time available for basic research." (1994: 220). Guzzini suggests that a simplification of the academic message, especially simplifications of theoretical models as a way to achieve higher policy-relevance might be counterproductive due to "the remoteness of applied studies from any direct practical value" (2001: 98).

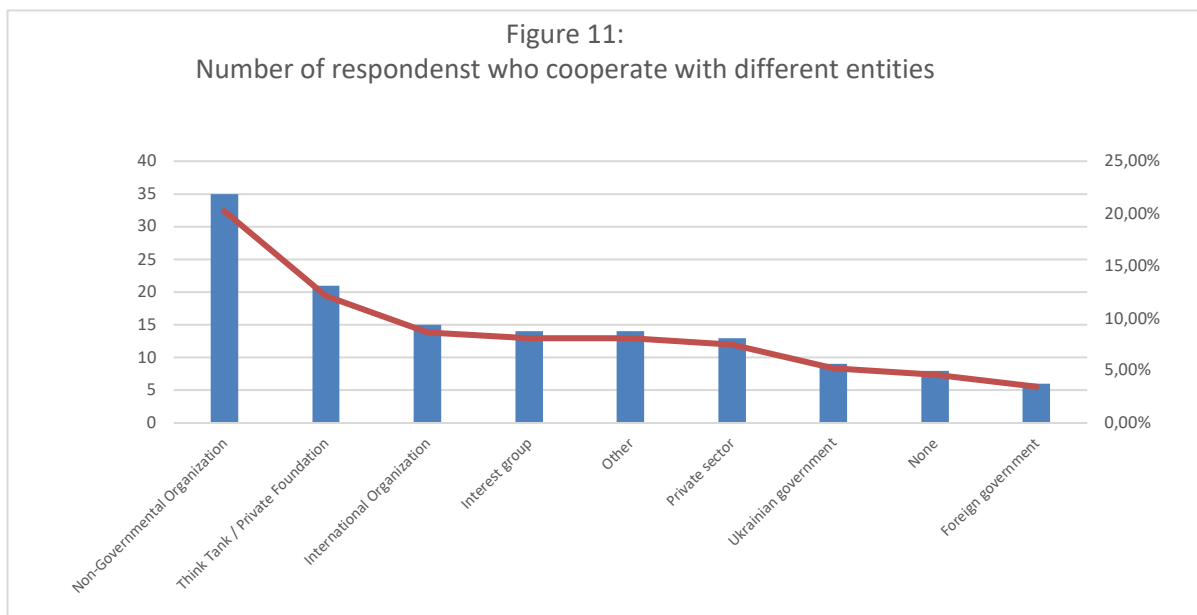
Others, however, argue that IR drifted further away from the world of policymaking due to the effort to establish itself within the realm of pure theory. As stipulated by George, “most university professors write largely for one another and have little inclination or ability to communicate their knowledge in terms comprehensible to policymakers” (1993: 7). Wallace warns that “there is a danger that our discipline could follow the path that sociology took, becoming too self-preoccupied, too determined to leave its origins in applied research and policy-related work behind, to take refuge in increasing abstractions, theories, and meta-theories: to move from scholarship to scholasticism” (1996: 311). Lake concurs that “having created academic sects based on incommensurate assumptions and supported by selective evidence, we do not seek to assess which approach helps us understand world politics best” (2011: 471).

In the background of these mostly US-based discussions lies the fact that in the United States a significant bridge links the ivory tower of academia to the keep of policymaking. Four presidents had been active in scholarly communities prior to entering politics; three prominent political scientists, W.W. Rostow, Henry Kissinger, and Zbigniew Brzezinski left their universities (MIT Center for International Studies, Harvard, and Columbia respectively) to continue their careers as National Security Advisors. During his academic years, Kissinger beat Brzezinski for tenure at Harvard, who not only evicted Kissinger from office when President Carter came to power but also taught a future Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright. In fact, links between theory and practice influenced not only biographical twists of the key players, but also the research itself: “the money and attention from the policy community came with strings attached – most notably, an expectation for immediately relevant research” (Potter 2010: 3).

Although in the USSR the link between policymaking and research was not as strong, it contributed to the strong demand for practicality and application of scholarship for the needs of diplomacy. While formally framed within the only true Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the “IR community – policymaking circles” complex developed on the basis of practical state-centered analysis, mostly concerning the questions of regional dynamics, but also of some pressing issues on the international agenda with clear institutional links, and sometimes even elite rotations.

Soviet Ukrainian IR research followed the general trend on a lesser scale: it was undertheorized, practical, state- and region-centered, conducted via the framework of “intuitive realism”. In the absence of a single Institute for International Studies, the expertise was used instead through the eventual individual involvement of scholars and remained markedly peripheral compared to Moscow. Even the CEE states were in a somewhat better position: they established connections with the local research institutions, as their sovereignty was not as drastically limited as in the case of the Soviet republics, and have further developed them since the independence. Nowadays, the CEE states boast relatively strong government-founded and -funded research and policy institutions.

While the differences between Russian and Ukrainian IR research and its political application in USSR seemed to be either those of scale or of simplified center-periphery dynamics, marked and profound distinctions can be traced with both Russia and CEE states since the USSR's collapse. The Russian State has made a great effort to bring IR research closer to the needs of foreign policy. It consolidated key governmental and government-supported analytical centers and research divisions both for the development and communication of its foreign policy abroad. The extent of the trend was so strong, that in last year's analysis of how Russia instrumentalizes its state and state-supported private think-tanks and academics for promoting its views have become a common subject of analysis (Vendil Pallin & Oxenstierna 2017; Smagliy 2018).



The TRIP 2017 data indicate that Ukrainian IR community deems it necessary to pay attention to the needs of current politics. 45% of the total sample claim to have responded to major world events by taking them into account in their research or making their research more relevant for policy practitioners as opposed to 15.5% who have not (regrettably, 37% ignored the question). Still, there are several inconsistencies between foreign policy priorities and foreign policy academic research. First, as mentioned in the subchapter on the specifics of the regional studies, Ukrainian IR scholars underestimate the need for the Russian studies even in the middle of half-decade of armed and political conflict. Second, although Ukrainian diplomacy relies heavily on diplomatic dialogue and the instruments of the international law while dealing with Russia on the international scale, the Liberal paradigm remains among the least favored by Ukrainian academics.

Finally, as Figure 11 illustrates, despite all the emphasis on the practicality of their research, only a minority of Ukrainian IR faculty mentions working directly for the Ukrainian government (9 persons). A much greater fraction resorts to intermediaries, namely NGOs (35) and think-tanks (21) to conduct practical research. While NGOs and think-tanks are more often than not mixed in Ukraine fusing analysis and advocacy (Livny, 2013: 18), the combined data – 56 persons contributing to NGOs/think-tanks explains a key difference between Ukraine on the one hand, and her Eastern and Western neighbors on the other. Namely, in Ukraine, neither research institutions, nor universities, nor even

state-funded think-tanks ever achieved significant influence on government policy analysis. A poll in 2016 (Bekeshkina et al. 2016: 44) has shown that while governmental institutions rely on old habits of requesting the expertise of individual scholars, they are less inclined to rely on the state think tanks than on non-state analytical institutions (See Table 1).

Table 1: If you ever need some policy analysis, you would rather address?

	Number of mentions	%
State research institution	46	29.1
University	24	15.2
Engaging individual Ukrainian scholars	82	51.9
Non-governmental think tank	81	51.3
Ukrainian consulting agency	9	5.7
Foreign consulting agency	19	12
Engaging individual foreign scholars	27	17.1
Would do all the analysis ourselves	31	19.6
Other	5	3.2
Difficult to say	8	5.1

On the contrary, Ukraine experienced a push for government institutions to cooperate extensively with non-governmental organizations, supported organizationally and financially by external donors. These NGOs often coopt university professors and instruct them in delivering foreign policy memos and briefs. Direct contacts between university and decision making are rare, which is explained by their overtheorization and lack of responsiveness. A typical justification why non-governmental NGOs/think tanks that should be supported goes as follows:

“The circumstances are that neither parliament, nor political parties, nor ministries have their own analysis units, which would produce the needed analytical products in the context of reforms that are being implemented. State research institutions—institutes, academies of sciences and even agency-level ones—are more oriented towards academic research and not enough effective in resolving the current issues that state and local authorities face in their everyday activities” (Kermach & Sukharyna 2016: 8).

This trend started to gain momentum under President Yanukovich but achieved full speed after an ambitious reform agenda was launched in 2014. Numerous studies on how to encourage closer cooperation between government and think-tanks appeared (Livny 2013; DIF 2015; Bekeshkina et al. 2016; Kermach & Sukharyna 2016; IRF 2017)

often driven by normative reasoning. It did not concern foreign policy – it was only one among the other sectors that needed reform – but the foreign-policy think tanks clearly benefited from the key program in the field – *International Renaissance foundation's* program “Think-tank development initiative for Ukraine”, scheduled to operate within the period between 2014 and 2020, and aimed at improving institutional, organizational capacities as well as the links with the government¹⁰⁸. NGOs/think tanks have joined the initiative and started pushing the government for increased cooperation themselves, through signing Memoranda of cooperation, inviting individual MFA representatives to public conferences and private opinion exchanges, as well as providing the research both on demand and proactively.

Thus foreign-policy NGOs/think tanks act partly as intermediaries for university faculties, and partly as new and even more important players that offer analysis for governmental agencies. This does not necessarily mean that NGOs/think tanks have inherently better expertise, but the early analyses indicated the key problems that must be overcome: the gap between policy demand and policy supply, poor methodological quality, descriptiveness, ineffective communication and lack of engagement with policymakers (Livny 2013: 3). While in the PACT/KIIS survey of 2012 almost 70% (80 among the NGOs and academics themselves) claimed that “non-governmental think-tanks do not significantly affect public policy and management decisions”, with especially low impact in the spheres of national security and international relations (cited via Livny 2013: 10), the sustained effort and attention of the donors helped to reverse the situation, intensifying both the cooperation with government, and the participation of foreign policy experts.

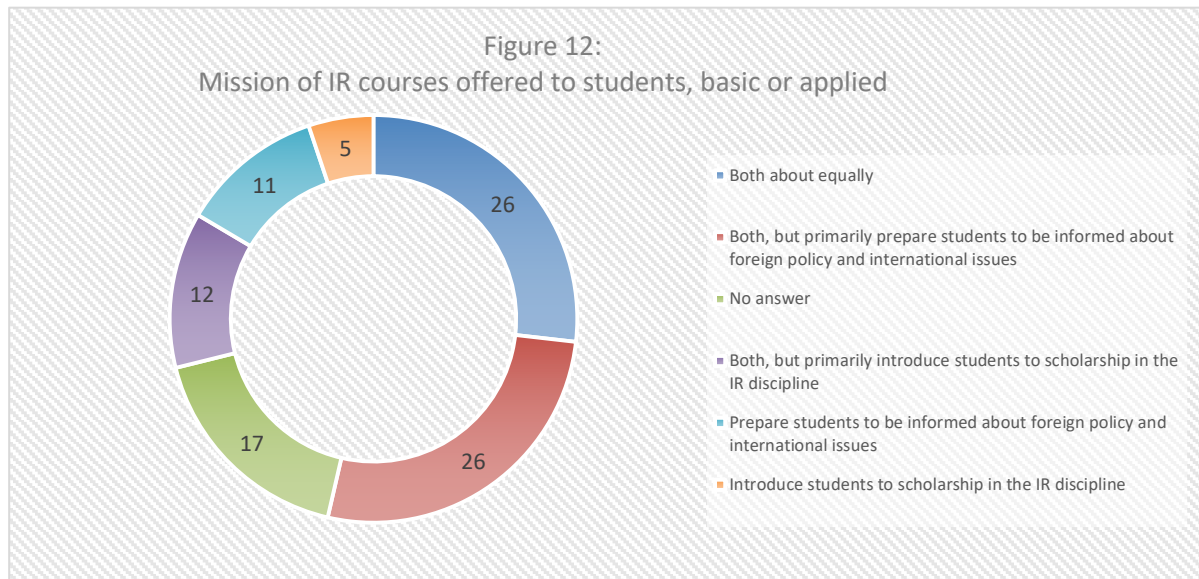
It is safe to assume that NGO/think-tanks attract many young specialists away from academia. It is equally significant that although in Ukraine the cadre rotation between academia and power is rather negligible, a number of former think-tankers penetrated practical politics in 2014, thus making a shift from analyzing and influencing the politics to make the politics. As Axonova & Zubko (2017: 186) note, there were at the very least three experienced politicians with the background of think-tankers in the realms of foreign policy and security agenda in 2014-2019 government, namely Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze (vice-prime minister responsible for European and Euro-Atlantic integration), Oleksandr Lytvynenko (Deputy head of the Council of National Security and Defence), and Svitlana Zalishchuk (MP very active in the Committee for International Affairs). After the end of the 2019 electoral cycle, these personalities lost their respective positions. More importantly, none of the think-tankers have joined the MFA. Informing and influencing foreign policy remains the key agenda for the aforementioned think-tanks.

Given these developments, it is little wonder that, as revealed by the TRIP 2017, the Ukrainian IR community is unsure whether its work is applied or theoretically oriented. Two questions tested this particular aspect. The first one probed the perceived mission of courses taught to IR students: is it to introduce students to IR scholarship or

¹⁰⁸ See the webpage of the program for more information: <http://www.irf.ua/en/programs/support-think/>

rather prepare them to be informed about foreign policy issues. Answers are close to the even distribution (see Figure 12).

The second question invited scholars to reflect on whether their own research is basic or applied. Only a fraction took the “pure” options, primarily basic (8.2%) or primarily applied (10.3%). Most IR scholars claim they do “both equally” (21.6%), “both, but more applied than basic” (20.6%), and “both, but more basic than applied” (22.6%). Statistically, this is a normal distribution, but interpretatively the data suggests that Ukrainian IR scholarship is neither sufficiently theorized nor directly applicable to foreign policy.



Conclusions

In the post-Soviet period, the development of the IR discipline in Ukraine can be partially compared with that in Russia and the post-communist CEE states. While sharing some common past with Russian IR, it does not devote as much attention to the creation of a national school of foreign relations, and nor does it obsess over great power status or have as strong connections with the state as the Russian analog. The commonality with the CEE experience lies in the attempted Westernization, which, however, remains less consequential.

Arguably, IR in Ukraine is still going through a transitional phase. The conversion from the Soviet tradition of studying and practicing IR to the Western one is rather painful, incomplete, and prompts an isolationist attitude. The field thus faces two challenges: The integration of new standards in research methods and new theoretical approaches into the flimsy institutional framework of the post-Soviet high educational system, and the particular legacy of Soviet IR has also left some deep marks on the discipline itself.

To grasp the particularities of Ukrainian IR, we structured the analysis of the TRIP-2017 respondents' responses along five axes and reached the following conclusions:

First, the Soviet-inherited perception of IR as a knowledge area persists, separate not only from political science but even from all the other social sciences. Although in practice the extensive growth of IR studies since the 1990s prompted many IR departments to be situated within either history or political science departments, and current practices of awarding the doctorates clearly place IR into the political science framework, the power of IR scholarly elites is strong enough to thwart any formalization of this link via governmental reform. Thus, we observe the dual standing of Ukrainian IR, for it exists simultaneously in and out of the political science discipline framework.

Second, TRIP-2017 suggests that the Ukrainian IR community remains poorly integrated into the global IR network. Consequently, it nourishes vague and often inconsistent perceptions regarding influential IR thinkers, academic journals, publishing houses, and Master and Ph.D. IR programs worldwide.

Most conspicuously, Ukrainian scholars are virtually absent in international journals despite government efforts to incentivize publishing (see MESU 2016), which is corroborated by the data not related to TRIP. Even if compared to other countries of the region, Ukraine belongs to the second tier both according to the number of published articles (226 publications, 10th rank out of 23) and the number of 2.22 citations per article (15th out of 23). The top three regional publishing countries are Russia with 3605 publications, Poland with 1036 publications, and Czechia with 729 (see SJR 2019), which transpires that the publication impact of Czechia, having 4 times less population and less extensive IR research institutions network, is almost three times more effective than that of Ukraine. Furthermore, the SJR data lumps together political science and IR publications, so that the real presence of Ukrainian IR experts might be even smaller.

Third, the scholarly IR community in Ukraine is populated predominantly by experts who are relatively indifferent to developing theoretical aspects of IR. Although well aware of the major paradigms, the inherited preference for Realism limits the application of theoretical paradigms: skillful elaboration on conceptual assumptions of Constructivism, and especially Liberalism, is flagrantly lacking in Ukrainian IR scholarship. In addition to a lack of theorization, broader issues like human rights, global health or climate change are also relatively unimportant for Ukrainian IR. On the contrary, the Ukrainian IR scholars largely focus their research on regional studies, historical treatises, and immediate practical issues, accordingly opting for policy analysis and case studies as the preferred methods of research.

Therefore, Ukraine fits within the cross-regional observation that working on theoretical issues remains the privilege of Western academia, whereas the rest of the world collects data and provides cases. This international division of labor decreases the international visibility of local scholars because theoretical generalizations are quoted more often than observations on regional developments. This lesson has been well learned by the CEE IR communities during the post-Communist transition. We do not invite Ukrainian IR scholars to create esoteric nativist paradigms. Still, finding a way to contribute to the global IR instead of either closing upon its community or (partially) following the Western trends is essential.

Fourth, while digging deeper into the peculiarities of the area studies *à la ukrainienne*, we discover that scholars conduct their research with two practical issues in mind: European integration and Ukrainian foreign policy. They believe two regions to be of utmost importance for the domains in questions, namely Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe. A highly problematic regional omission is Russia and FSU countries: despite the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict, the Ukrainian IR community - although explicitly acknowledging the role of Russia as a security threat - tends to eschew Russia studies. Other strategically significant regions also remain virtually uncharted. As the TRIP reveals both by direct answers and the self-assessed language proficiency, only a few scholars focus on East Asia, the Middle East, or Latin America. Thus, we could argue that partial Westernization has also impacted Ukrainian IR in choosing topics for their research, probably supported by more readily available funding and cooperation opportunities. This creates visible asymmetries in Ukrainian area studies.

Fifth, the responses to the TRIP 2017 show that, despite its manifestly practical, politically relevant, and state-minded approach, IR faculty in Ukraine cultivates limited and poorly institutionalized links to practical policy-making and providing informed advice. This role has been assumed by largely non-governmental think-tanks that have recently grown both in personnel and in impact. The recommendations they provide are heeded more attentively so that today there is a better chance of influencing foreign policy via advocacy networks than via academia. Nowadays, different foreign policy NGOs/think tanks either directly compete with the academic community in the arena of foreign policy analysis or become an irreplaceable intermediary link, often luring young specialists away from the latter.

Bringing these five trends together, we argue that the perils of transition currently faced by the IR community in Ukraine are best conceptualized as “double peripheralization”. The first aspect of double peripheralization is a visible gap with the global IR community, where Ukrainian scholars are poorly integrated. The second aspect of double peripheralization is the lack of prestige within the national community, where they have lost policy relevance to non-governmental think-tanks. Isolated and ignored, the IR community could decline rapidly, so it is imperative to overcome the double peripheralization in order to revive the discipline. We hope that better awareness of the peculiarities of Ukrainian IR, dealt with in this study, might suggest the ways for the IR community for further development.

In general, the TRIP-2017 survey provided an opportunity to take a snapshot of Ukrainian IR today, almost 30 years after the USSR collapsed. Its 69 questions revealed noteworthy regularities in how it perceives and assesses its key challenges and characteristics, offering some vistas to be developed in further research. In particular, IR sociology offers particularly promising perspectives. While conducting this study, we discovered that important pieces of the puzzle remain to be found: for example, studying the evolution and content of IR publications and journals (both national and international) seems especially promising. Beyond that, the development of curricula, quality standards and their evolution, comparative development of IR teaching and research in different regional universities, the effectiveness of the higher education

reforms on the discipline development could initiate a long-missing and evidence-based discussion on the current state and future developments of the IR studies in Ukraine.

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