



## RETHINKING, RETURNING, REFLECTING

V. Spike PETERSON\*

### ABSTRACT

After almost four decades of feminist International Relations (IR), I here *rethink* the journey this has entailed – for myself and others -- and contemplate where it has taken us. I first consider my own introduction to the discipline of IR and interpret activist commitments of the ‘first generation’ of participants. I then *return* to early developments and initial questions that fostered boundary-transgressing feminist contributions. Recalling three ‘imagined’ critical conversations – regarding empirical criteria, epistemological frames and normative/political strategies – I then *reflect* on the feminist journey of many into, within, and increasingly beyond the constraining boundaries of disciplinary IR.

**Keywords:** Feminist IR, Gender, Critical Theories, Epistemology, Intersectionality.

### INTRODUCTION

As I have taken this feminist journey, I, like all feminists, have become increasingly aware of the issues of knowledge and power – whose knowledge gets validated and whose is forgotten or never heard (Tickner, 2014: xxi).

The call for papers for this Special Issue invited articles focused on the ‘main assumptions and contributions of feminist International Relations (IR)

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\* Professor of International Relations, School of Government and Public Policy, University of Arizona, USA, spikep@email.arizona.edu

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Makale Kabul Tarihi: 09.07.2017

theories.’ Also encouraged were pieces discussing ‘the ways in which feminist IR theory expose, criticize and reconstruct the gendered foundations and concepts of “malestream” IR theory.’ As my title suggests, I intend to share some of my own rethinking about the journey of ‘feminist IR.’ I do so in part by returning to earlier moments, initial challenges and the significance of activist commitments. Three ‘imagined’ critical conversations – regarding empirical criteria, epistemological frames and normative/political strategies – recall anticipated outcomes of ‘taking gender seriously.’ I reference these conversations to reflect on the feminist journey of many into, within and increasingly beyond Disciplinary International Relations (DIR).<sup>1</sup>

## 1. RETHINKING

It is almost four decades since my initial forays into the academic study of International Relations (IR), and I find myself retrospectively contemplating that journey. This ‘rethinking’ includes not just my own experience but that of other early contributors: our collective building of a ‘sub-field,’ securing an effective presence on programs and in conferences, publishing our own journal, and the many subsequent changes in what feminist IR does – or might – mean. What especially intrigues me is how the personal experiences and backgrounds, and especially the feminist *activism*, commitments, and emotional investments of the ‘early group’ – the first generation of feminist IR scholars – seem significant for the ‘feminist IR journey’ that unfolded.<sup>2</sup>

Speaking personally, my initial exposure to international relations had little to do with academic pursuits. I was a feminist, anti-war and civil rights activist in the 1960s, but I had little understanding of conditions outside of the United States. In 1970, however, I encountered ‘international relations’ through the experience of back-packing around the world. This changed my life, and low budget travel in the global South – which I continued on and off for the next ten years – has significantly shaped who I am and what I came to ‘do’ in the academy.

This extended period of traveling and working overseas fueled a career interest in studying international politics. In particular, I sought a better understanding of the world to more effectively change what I perceived as stark inequalities and systemic injustices. I decided to pursue a PhD and began the

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<sup>1</sup>While recognizing there is variation within this categorization, I intend ‘DIR’ as a reference to dominant mainstream, orthodox approaches that sustain narrow disciplinary boundaries and resist virtually any engagement with critical challenges (especially evident in the United States).

<sup>2</sup>My characterizations of this ‘group’ and the ‘journey of feminist IR’ are a product of my particular perspective, priorities and no doubt faulty memory. I do not claim to speak for all the individuals involved, and cannot empirically confirm how ‘accurate’ my interpretations are; I offer them primarily as context.

doctoral program in IR at American University in 1980. My first and surprising impression was how disconnected and even irrelevant the IR knowledge I was learning seemed to be to the world I had experienced. There was too little of 'real life' -- especially in the global South -- or the issues that concerned me and motivated my studies.

Feminists, however, had begun to interrogate practices of knowledge production and were reconfiguring disciplinary foundations *elsewhere* in the academic world. This work *was* exciting, engaging and definitely relevant for addressing inequalities and pursuing social change. The few of us who were studying IR (or already teaching it) *and* committed to feminist theory/practice gradually became aware of each other -- through conferences, publications and social networks. It was a fascinating group of energized, fun-loving and smart individuals, and thus began the journey of feminist IR.

Our feminist commitments and lived experiences situated us in particular ways within the disciplining practices of IR. Self-acclaimed feminists acknowledge that their work is informed by normative commitments. What that means individually varies, but the very acknowledgment of a commitment to 'ameliorating gender inequalities' links and strengthens feminists, even as it also complicates solidarities (as meanings and priorities differ) and works against feminist projects by fueling resistance from those who deny the politics of all knowledge production or repudiate gender equality. I think it is fair to characterize many in the first generation of feminist IR students/scholars as individuals who were as much -- and for some of us *more* -- interested in doing IR *as* feminist theory/practice, than in pursuing straight IR while being feminist activists 'on the side'; which is actually to say, 'outside' of academic IR.

Given DIR's resistance to critical theory/practice and apparent ignore-ance of social movements, as far as I know none of us were exposed to gender or feminist perspectives as part of our IR training (in classrooms or on syllabi, etc.). We all *brought* our particular feminist theory/practice *to* our IR studies and subsequent research. For most of us, what we 'brought' was our social activist experience and consciousness. But our interventions in IR were crucially informed by the path-breaking scholarship emerging in other disciplines. Most immediately relevant was feminist work on peace, war, security and the politics of protection by scholars whose 'home discipline' was not IR (Enloe, 1983; Stiehm, 1983). Equally vital were feminist critiques of foundational premises emerging across the disciplines, especially philosophy (Harding and Hintikka, 1983; Lloyd, 1984), science (Bleier, 1984; Keller, 1985), anthropology (Leacock, 1981; Sacks, 1982), history (Lerner, 1986; Nicholson, 1986), political theory (Eisenstein, 1984; Brown, 1988), and economics (Mies, 1986; Sen and Grown,

1987). Rarely discipline-specific, anti-racist and postcolonial critiques also exposed power operating in knowledge production (Combahee River Collective, 1979; Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 1982; Spelman, 1988).<sup>3</sup> Combining resources, the early group drew on our activist experience and the flourishing feminist scholarship elsewhere to push, pull and pound on DIR, trying mightily to shift its dominant paradigms.

In rethinking the journey of feminist IR, it seems our feminist backgrounds played a particular role with respect to epistemological orientations. I refer to the generalization that most work identified with or as ‘feminist IR’ is disinclined toward positivism and favors instead some version of post-positivist, constructivist or poststructuralist orientation. I don’t think this is typical in other disciplines, where those who identify as feminists more often favor positivist/empiricist commitments. I have wondered both why this is so and how it shaped, and shapes, the trajectory of feminist IR.

My selective interpretation is this: that our participation in feminist activism and conscious investment in changing structures of (gender) inequality affected how we encountered DIR, imagined changing it, and adopted intellectual toolkits that best promised transformative critiques. For many of us, a priority was to actively *change* IR, not just participate in the discipline by ‘adding something’ – the conventional strategy. The relatively unique temporal context in which we were operating – the turbulence in social theorizing and epistemological debates of the 1980/1990s – gave us several advantages. First, feminists in other disciplines had done ground-breaking work that we could build on, especially in regard to critiques of science and their implications for rethinking social theory and epistemological premises. DIR was so devoid of gender sensitivity that merely ‘adding women’ did not seem adequate (especially as what that meant was already being debated among feminists). Second, the flaws of rationalist, positivist/empiricist methods were increasingly exposed and epistemological paradigms were widely debated. Feminists working in IR readily favored, and proceeded to pursue, alternatives to positivist/empiricist constraints, apparently happy to turn a corner on binary categories. Constructivism was gaining adherents even within DIR, and some feminists favored that affiliation; others leaned toward poststructuralism. One effect was considerable solidarity among those who identified with or as ‘feminist IR,’ and

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<sup>3</sup>These are merely suggestive examples of burgeoning feminist critiques that were unsettling masculinist and disciplinary ‘givens.’ Here I restrict my examples to pre-1990, after which there was considerable expansion of feminist scholarship across most disciplines. Indeed, the extraordinary growth and breadth of feminist IR scholarship makes it impossible to adequately cite references regarding any particular topic, and elsewhere in this article I (problematically) limit citations to particularly relevant or ‘classic’ entries.

few stormy conflicts over methods; at a minimum, pluralism reigned.<sup>4</sup>

How does this history matter? I don't mean to claim any authoritative accuracy, to speak for others involved, or exaggerate the significance of this interpretation. I offer it to provide context for rethinking feminist IR as a journey spanning four decades, which took us well beyond this simpler configuration. As background, it helps situate which questions we initially pursued and suggests how these proliferated and generated the vibrant and much more diverse field of inquiry we celebrate today (e.g., Zalewski, 2013; Shepherd, 2015).

## 2. RETURNING

A key initial question feminists brought to the study of IR was simply: 'What difference *does* gender make?' Of course it was no simple matter to unpack what gender meant, how it related to sexed categories, sexualities, 'femaleness' and 'maleness,' femininities and masculinities, and other 'identity markers' and statuses. Nor was it simple to interpret 'difference' and how it gets 'made' or matters. Feminists immediately confronted 'boundary questions' posed by defining terms and the politics of inclusion and exclusion these entail.

As a discipline, IR pays some attention to boundaries; after all, states/nations mark boundaries that constitute the system of states and hence the field of inquiry foregrounded as 'international relations.' In the late 1980s, the discipline of IR was slowly and reluctantly waking up to debates in social theory and the challenges they posed to status quo theorizing.<sup>5</sup> In particular, the premises of dominant IR paradigms were revealed as boundary projects as well; they constituted inclusions and exclusions with powerful effects. At issue were fundamental and power-laden concerns regarding theoretical premises.

First, theories reflect *who* asks *what* questions. Boundaries here include *whose* voice, authority, concerns, experience, expertise, aspirations, objectives, worldviews or dreams are taken seriously; who 'counts' in authorizing the field's central questions. This shapes as well the boundaries of *what* questions are included -- as credible, meaningful, relevant, interesting, worthwhile, essential or urgent -- and what questions are not, will not or cannot be asked.

Second and of course related, theories presuppose methods, hence *how* answers will be pursued (via rules, models, expectations) and how, and to what extent, knowledge claims are deemed credible. The valorization accorded the

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<sup>4</sup>Other and differing surveys of feminist or 'gender-sensitive' approaches include Sylvester, 1994; Ackerly, Stern and True, 2006; Soreanu and Hudson, 2008; Hansen, 2015.

<sup>5</sup>Familiar references include Lapid, 1989; Ashley and Walker, 1990. But feminists were publishing critiques of disciplinary 'givens' as well, e.g., Cohn, 1987; Grant and Newland, 1991; Tickner, 1988; Whitworth, 1989; Peterson and Runyan, 1991; Peterson, 1992b.

latter powerfully shapes publishing, employment options, promotions and academic acclaim (Maliniak, Powers and Walter, 2013). Boundaries here involve distinctions often presupposing asymmetric binaries: quantitative-qualitative, objective-subjective, fact-value, certainty-ambiguity, predictable-indeterminate, rational-emotional, etc. Favored methods are more readily accorded credibility and valorized; alternative or marginalized methods fight an uphill battle for such acclaim.

Boundary markers privileged by the ‘center’ are inherently conspicuous from the ‘margins,’ where the horizon differs. Feminists are located at the margins of the discipline and less inclined to take boundaries for granted and more inclined to question who makes which boundaries for what purposes and with what gendered effects. The initial feminist challenges of defining ‘woman’ – who is included or excluded? – had already generated intense debates and not a few conflicts, but also pushed feminists to think harder and more complexly about categories, discourse, culture, difference, and the knowledge/power nexus. This anti-essentializing momentum extended into IR, where feminists questioned the discipline’s foundational categories and claims – especially those presumed to define what counts as war, violence, security, peace, sovereignty, etc.

### 3. REFLECTIONS

Asking ‘What difference does gender make?’ generated a variety of research and teaching efforts. As papers, presentations and publications accumulated it was obvious that taking gender seriously constituted both an enormous challenge and an expansive opportunity for rethinking foundational ‘givens.’ From the beginning of feminist interventions, and for many still today, the significance of gender was/is hardly obvious. A first (and regrettably continuing) task was to clarify whether and how gender *did* make a difference in the production of knowledge claims. Toward that objective, in early work I specified three ongoing and overlapping conversations: participants in all three are deliberating issues of knowledge and power, but their contributions are differentiated by empirical, epistemological and critical (ideological, political) commitments (1992a). These are conversations in which feminist and other theorists participate and to which *feminists add a distinctive voice*. It is the distinctiveness of the feminist voice – the ‘difference that gender makes’ – and how this contributes to, complicates and transforms the conversations, that it was imperative to foreground. The conversations thus specify and importantly reveal how feminism is empirically, epistemologically, and politically/normatively *significant*, and how ignoring this impoverishes intellectual inquiry. I review these conversations below, and use that framing to

conclude with an assessment of how they have been 'taken up,' or not, in the journey of *feminist theorizing* within and beyond IR.

The first conversation specifically engages the *empirical* adequacy, accuracy and/or reliability of knowledge claims. Harding and Hintikka (1983: x) write: 'What counts as knowledge must be grounded on experience. Human experience differs according to the kinds of activities and social relations in which humans engage.' Knowledge claims about 'humans' that are based only on the experience of elites or another subset of humanity are simply inaccurate. Their partiality cannot help but distort our understanding of actual social relations. Feminists note that the lived experience of females, who constitute *one-half of humanity* – is typically not counted, or is simply discounted, in producing claims about humans.

The distinctiveness of the feminist voice in this conversation is readily apparent: it is *women's* bodies, feelings, activities, and knowing that must be included if we are to more accurately understand human life and social relations. In this case, 'adding women' is a key 'corrective' to the androcentric partiality and distortions of dominant narratives – regarding history, art, science, economics, politics, etc. – that have long prevailed and continue to play a disproportionate role not only in scholarship but also popular culture (Milestone and Meyer, 2012).

Moreover, the implications of this insight are multiple. First, it undermines and demands correctives to *all* claims about 'humanity' that exclude the experience of marginalized groups; the latter constitute large social groupings typically 'not counted' by reference to culture, sexuality, ability, race/ethnicity, class and national location, etc. This conversation then resonates with the initial efforts of minority and/or marginalized groups to 'make themselves visible'; to document their exclusion or trivialization in dominant narratives and demand that their history, culture, knowledge and experience be 'taken seriously' in constructing knowledge claims about human history and present realities (Moraga and Anzaldúa, 1981; Mohanty, 1984; Alexander and Mohanty, 1997).

Second, this insight is linked to the important development of intersectional analysis by Black feminists criticizing racism and anti-discrimination legislation that insisted on discrete categories of race *or* gender (Crenshaw, 1991; Nash, 2013). The complexity of acknowledging, and accounting for, intersecting 'identities' and interacting inequalities has both stymied and stimulated feminist analyses. Recognizing that bodies never constitute singular 'identities' and 'woman' is not a homogenous category pushed feminists beyond 'adding women' to deeper interrogations of meaning, knowledge and power.

As one response, the second conversation shifts from empirical to more epistemological issues. Participants here reject the positivist model of science and knowledge production. They may variously self-identify – with constructivism, postpositivism, interpretivism, hermeneutics, phenomenology, poststructuralism, post-modernism – but share anti-foundational premises that reject ‘essentializing’ (ahistorical, decontextualized) objectivist metaphysics and the categorical separation of subject-object, fact-value, theory-practice, rational-irrational underpinning this metaphysics. Participants recognize all knowledge claims as socially (inter-subjectively) constructed and not ‘objectively’ determined through a neutral method.

Rather than simplistic notions of objectivity, rationality, and the neutrality of method(s), participants note that science is a human activity, embedded in contingent, specific contexts and shaped by discourses, valorizations and power relations operating in that context. Untainted objectivity (understood as a ‘perspectiveless’ or ‘unsituated’ gaze), is thus impossible in a socially constructed world; rationality is not transcendental but a historically specific, learned activity; and methods are necessarily contextual, therefore, shaped by culture, history and particular interests.

Feminists bring to this conversation the epistemological and theoretical implications of ‘taking gender seriously.’ Their distinctive contribution is to extend and deepen anti-foundational critiques by identifying objectivity, rationalism, and even science itself as specifically male/masculine ways of knowing (derived from male ways of being under heteropatriarchal relations). That is, feminists locate masculinism at the ‘roots of Western epistemology, even Western culture itself’ and argue that ‘the fundamental dichotomies...between subject/object, rational/irrational, culture/nature, and reason/emotion are all a product of the basic male/female hierarchy that is central to patriarchal thought and society’ (Hekman, 1987, 68).<sup>6</sup>

Feminists produced an array of (not mutually exclusive) arguments in support of characterizing ‘Western philosophy (as well as political theory) as male. One argument focuses on who and what are prioritized, noting that Western philosophy as practice has been dominated by elite (European, white) males; as subject matter it has projected a construction of “men’s nature” as ‘human nature’ and focused on (male dominated) public-sphere concerns (politics, freedom, universal truth); and as an institution it has reproduced the

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<sup>6</sup>Feminists were among the first critics of objectivist metaphysics and its asymmetrical binaries. It is worth noting how feminists produced a deconstruction that is arguably unique: drawing not only on grammatological and ontological premises, but exposing the gender of binaries through historical, material and embodied practices as well (Bordo, 1988; Chodorow, 1978; Lerner, 1986).



authority and legitimation of patriarchal experience and world view.<sup>7</sup>

An additional argument features feminist object relations theory, which deploys psychoanalytic theory to explain the development and normalization of dichotomized masculine (objectifying and autonomous) and feminine (empathizing and relational) subjectivities and cognitive styles (Chodorow, 1978). A key point is the significance of childhood development (problematically presupposing heteropatriarchal, nucleated family arrangements) and socialization into belief systems that equate lauded qualities of objectivity and science with masculinity, and relegate femininity to 'soft,' affective and empathizing qualities. Similarly, some feminists draw on Lacanian psychoanalysis and argue the phallogocentric Western symbolic order privileges masculine qualities of 'unity, stability, identity, and self-mastery' over and at the expense of feminine forms of 'body, spontaneity, multiplicity, loss of self' (Bordo, 1988: 621).

In short, what feminists contribute to the second conversation is the powerful claim that gender hierarchy is not coincidental to but constitutive of Western philosophy's objectivist metaphysics and its model of modern 'science.' In practice, this model (re)inscribes the identification of (hegemonic) masculinity as objectivity, reason, freedom, transcendence, and control over and against femininity as subjectivity, feeling, necessity, contingency, and disorder. Excluded from privileged notions of rationality and objectivity, females are excluded from the authority of knowing and, by extension, authority more generally.

The distinctiveness of this feminist contribution has implications that I believe are rarely recognized but crucial for interpreting *responses* -- and especially, resistances -- to non-positivist epistemologies in DIR and elsewhere. First, insofar as masculine qualities are privileged and positivist/rationalist (read: rigorous, scientific, reliable) epistemologies are identified with masculinity, critics of positivism meet resistance not only to their argumentation per se but also to the 'demasculinization' (read: feminization, degradation) of instrumental rationality their argument entails. Second, insofar as the binary of masculine-feminine (read: gender hierarchy) is constitutive of objectivist metaphysics (as feminists in this conversation claim), moving beyond objectivism/positivism/rationalism requires moving beyond essentialized sex/gender categories and identities as well (Peterson, 1992b). In other words, taking critiques of positivism/rationalism seriously entails taking feminist critiques of gender itself seriously, which is to say, taking feminism seriously. In

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<sup>7</sup>I draw here on throughout this section on points made in Peterson (1992a); see also Lloyd, 1984; Okin, 1979.

short: an adequately theorized rejection of positivist/rationalist epistemologies, and their binaries, demands a rejection of gender binaries (and an adoption of feminism!); and non-positivists who eschew feminist insights have not theorized deeply enough.

Participants in the third conversation are engaged in criticizing modernity's interlocking systems of inequality (structural hierarchies) and domination. They acknowledge normative/political interests in pursuing a more just, egalitarian and peaceful world. Engaging empirical and theoretical concerns in varying proportions, these critical voices include feminists, neo-marxists, world system enthusiasts, Frankfurt School theorists, ecologists, peace proponents, and social change activists. Various explored are multiple contradictions and contemporary crises--of instrumental rationality, global inequalities, environmental deterioration, nationalist populism, migration pressures, and militarized conflicts. Processes of objectification are foregrounded insofar as they variously operate to render human beings and nature 'objects' whose commodification, exploitation, manipulation and/or destruction is considered 'acceptable' – and indeed even 'necessary.'

Again, feminists share the critical activist/normative/political commitments of the conversational group. But they insist that all of these crises and inequalities are profoundly gendered and critical thinking that neglects this gendering remains partial and, to that extent, less effective. Their distinctive contribution includes both historical-empirical *and* theoretical insights, to support the claim that gender hierarchy is constitutive of domination in its many guises. On the one hand, females constitute at least one half of most (though not all) subordinated groups and are disproportionately subject to cultural trivialization, limited education, inadequate health care, sexual and other violence, economic dependence and political subordination. On the other hand, the naturalization of gender inequality (normalizing females/femininity as inferior – weaker, dependent, irrational, unruly, etc. – to males/masculinity) serves as the model for depoliticizing the objectification, exploitation and oppression of other marginalized groups ('natives,' ethnic/cultural minorities, homosexuals, etc.) as well as 'mother nature' (Peterson and Runyan, 2010).

Two key observations emerge: First, as one-half of most oppressed social groups, and subject to disproportionate harms, "women's issues" should be focal, not marginalized or 'postponed,' in social movements espousing the emancipation or equality of an oppressed group. To ignore female/feminized experience is empirically inadequate and ethically problematic. Second, feminist interest in and accumulated understanding of how objectification operates is particularly valuable in identifying, contesting and transforming how oppressive practices are normalized. In particular, feminists argue that processes of

objectification and practices of domination are socially constructed and culturally legitimated; they are neither 'natural' nor the inescapable consequence of marking 'difference.' We must ask 'who benefits?' from these familiar notions and to resist the normalization of 'domination as natural.' The latter operates powerfully to legitimate and reproduce social inequalities: through the internalization of oppression, the avoidance and/or silencing of protest, and the de-politicization of exploitative practices. In sum, failing to engage and utilize this feminist knowledge unnecessarily weakens how oppression is analyzed and strategies for change are formulated.

Feminist critiques of 'naturalized' subjection not only protest injustice but also offer resources for (re)visioning, resisting, and transforming social relations. The point is not that feminist critiques necessarily be prioritized or that gender take precedence when analyzing oppressive dynamics. It is rather to note that feminist work generates alternative interpretations and visions; that gender domination is not reducible to some other form (or vice versa) and, therefore, transformative social movements must engage female/feminist concerns; and that, while not always the most salient, gender is inexorably a product/productive of oppressive relations and 'taking it seriously' improves our critical understanding and possibilities for change.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

How have the points raised in these conversations been taken up, or not, and with what effects on the journey of feminist IR as it enters its fourth decade? This too is not a simple question, but some general observations survey the promise of and subsequent constraints on the early portion of the journey, and suggest just how far we have come.

In the first conversation, feminists expose conventional knowledge claims as androcentric: disproportionately representing and 'counting' male/masculinist authority, interests and experience and presupposing (elite) male experience as the 'human' norm in universalizing claims. Feminists in IR and other disciplines have been most successful engaging this conversation: by exposing the omission of females in conventional accounts, and through an extraordinary array of research 'adding women' and their experience to prevailing disciplinary narratives. This is most evident in now a very extensive feminist scholarship engaging IR's key themes: states/nations, sovereignty, security, militarism, conflicts, war and peace (Cohn, 2013; Sjoberg, 2013; Wibben, 2016). Asking 'where are the women?' (Enloe, 1990: 3) also expanded research in development economics and international political economy, with implications for rethinking how 'work' is 'counted,' financial crises are gendered, and inequalities shape global assembly lines and health care chains (Peterson, 2003; Griffin, 2009;

Marchand and Runyan, 2011; Rai and Waylen, 2014). Importantly, this research also entailed engaging race and class hierarchies, and is linked to the study of transnational feminisms as well as post-colonial critiques (Chowdhry and Nair, 2002; Mohanty, 2003; Moghadam, 2005; Agathangelou and Ling, 2009). Finally, the politics of sexuality have intermittently appeared and recently secured more extensive and productive attention (Peterson, 1999; Weber, 2014; Weber, 2016).

The second conversation's epistemological focus has had varied effects. For the most part, feminists in IR continued to favor non-positivist orientations and contributed analytical insights in ongoing social theory debates. Their attention to embodiment and everyday practices advanced material analyses while they also encouraged innovations and openness to affect, subjectivity, discourse, and cultural productions as constitutive of 'real world' politics (Zalewski, 2000; Ackerly, Stern and True, 2006). New generations of feminists and expanding interests included (non-feminist) positivist studies of gender, which mobilized new, ongoing and productive debates (Carver, 2003). Disappointing, however, is the considerable (and costly) indifference of most (non-feminist) non-positivist IR theorists to feminist interventions (Agathangelou and Ling, 2004; Zalewski, 2007). Rather than taking seriously the feminist deconstruction of foundational binaries and positivist/rationalist knowledge claims, these non-feminist theorists for the most part prioritized their particular 'dissident' discourses and discontinued collaboration with and citation of feminist scholars. The reasons (fear of feminization?) for this are no doubt multiple and complex, but in general the effect is to reduce the quality and credibility of all non-positivist – and especially, feminist – theoretical claims (Sylvester, 2007).

In similar ways, but less starkly divisive, non-feminists in the third conversation have often disregarded feminist insights. Nationalisms and 'revolutionary' independence movements remain dominated by male leaders and masculinist priorities, though women have made valiant and often effective attempts to insist on their participation as activists during struggles and as agents in negotiating the settlement of conflicts and future movement agendas. Feminists in IR have made significant contributions to analyzing the causes, processes, contradictions, and effects of violence in its many manifestations (Cockburn, 2010; Ahall and Shepherd, 2012; Sjoberg, 2013). In particular, they reveal linkages among domestic violence, militarized practices and geopolitical conflicts. Additionally, they have produced key interventions shifting IR discourse from abstract or limited premises of national 'security' to considerations of 'human security' and its manifold implications (Shepherd, 2008, 2013; Wibben, 2016). Yet feminist deconstructions of objectification and the naturalization of domination rarely feature in non-feminist accounts. The

consequences are less comprehensive and nuanced understandings of how power operates to normalize domination, and a continued marginalization of feminists' significant contributions.

In summary, feminist IR has produced an extraordinary outpouring of vital, innovative, critical and transformative research and analytical insights. From a small group and early questions, feminist IR has expanded into an extremely diverse terrain of knowledge production. Its interrogation of initial questions generated key insights that continue to inform our theory/practice. And the spirit of critical inquiry prompted excursions into unanticipated areas of inquiry, innovations in theoretical framing, and further problematizations of disciplinary givens.

Recalling Tickner's opening quotation, issues of power have shaped a wider reception and integration of feminist IR knowledge. From my perspective, non-feminists have resisted acknowledging these contributions and integrating feminist research in ways that would advance overall inquiry, and especially, critical analyses. The summary presented here encapsulates too simplistically, and therefore inadequately, the 'journey of feminist IR.' The latter is richer, deeper, more fraught, more fun and more politically relevant than a synopsis can convey. Most importantly, the feminist IR journey is not over but continually underway, and it warrants our attention, acclaim and critical reflection.

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