

Linkage – Dividing Discipline

Written by A.C. McKeil

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- Peter M. Kristensen, 'Dividing Discipline: Structures of Communication in International Relations' *International Studies Review*, (2012), 14, p.32-50.

'Dividing Discipline: Structures of Communication in International Relations' is an important and well-crafted article. Kristensen's bibliographic analysis provides a fresh and innovative look at the diverse field of International Relations. It should serve as a great source for any student and theorist visiting the topic of IR's dividing lines.

This article fills a quantitative gap in the literature on the divisions of IR scholarship with bibliographic coupling, which maps the communication networks of the discipline, rather than the intellectual and geographic divides. The article's showpiece is the fascinating visual communicative map, which inspires rich interpretation.

Kristensen's analysis benefits from preceding sociological and theoretical approaches to the divisions and debates that characterize the discipline. Immediately, some of the broadest divisions in International Relations are flagged in the methodology section. Preeminently, the linguistic division of IR excludes non-Anglophone sources from bibliometric measurement, particularly, the *Chinese Social Science Citation Index*. This problem, in itself, illuminates a deep and troublesome communicative fault line in IR.

Kristensen makes the important point that the "narrative of a dividing discipline usually relies on the myth that IR was more integrated back in the days, but today we are factionalized and neither read, cite, nor respect each other" and suggests further measurement to test that mythology. However, the fascinating bibliometric analysis certainly does reaffirm America's centrality to IR today and Waltz's important place therein, as his *Theory of International Politics* attains a singular and central place in the map.

Thus, the article provides a fresh and useful source for analyzing the core of IR scholarship. In this respect, a measurement of English media used in IR scholarship is gladly welcomed data for further study. Furthermore, Kristensen's thoughtful interpretive analysis revisits with new insight the old question of IR's relationship or division from Political Science, Economics, and Law.

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