

# **New Directions in Russian International Studies**

Edited by  
Andrei P. Tsygankov and Pavel A. Tsygankov

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## Abstracts

### **New directions in Russian international studies: pluralization, Westernization, and isolationism**

*Andrei P. Tsygankov and Pavel A. Tsygankov*

The essay argues that Western scholars can improve their understanding of post-Soviet Russia by studying the new discipline of new Russian International Relations (IR). The other objective of the essay is to move away from the excessively West-centered IR scholarship by exploring indigenous Russian perceptions and inviting a dialogue across the globe. The essay identifies key trends in Russian IR knowledge reflective of the transitional nature of Russia's post-Soviet change. It argues that Russian IR continues to be in a stage of ideological and theoretical uncertainty, which is a result of unresolved questions of national identity. For describing Russia's identity crisis, the authors employ Erving Goffman's concept of *stigma* defined as a crisis of social acceptance by Russia's significant Other (West). The essay suggests that, until this crisis is resolved, much of Russian IR debates can be understood in terms of search for a national idea. It also introduces the authors of the volume and summarizes their contribution to our understanding of Russian (and Western) IR.

### **Discussions of international relations in post-communist Russia**

*Alexandr A. Sergunin*

The article describes the progress in Russian theoretical thinking about the world. The author reviews post-Soviet IR discussions and traces how they progressed from one paradigm to another in response to shifts in social issues and political agendas. The paper concludes that although realism has emerged as a prominent theoretical paradigm, Russian IR is still in a process of its self-definition and remains widely open to various intellectual influences.



## **The Russian Realist school of international relations**

*Tatyana A. Shakleyina and Alexei D. Bogaturov*

This article analyses the realist school in Russian International Relations scholarship and introduces the debates among Russian realists. It focuses on the characteristics of the newly-emerging world order and the development of an adequate strategy for Russia to pursue in its international undertakings. The authors argue that, over the 1990s, realism has made considerable intellectual progress and has gained the status of a leading intellectual movement in Russia. It assisted the Russian intellectual and political community in defining the country's interests and priorities in the emerging international relations, and it provided a necessary analysis of the world order's structure and polarity.

## **Dilemmas and promises of Russian liberalism**

*Pavel A. Tsygankov and Andrei P. Tsygankov*

The authors analyze the divisions within Russian liberalism—another influential IR theory—and the contradictory nature of this intellectual movement. In particular, they draw attention to the debate between pro-Western and more nationally-oriented liberals, which they propose to understand in terms of the familiar disagreement between supporters of cosmopolitan and communitarian thought. Whereas cosmopolitans insist on the emergence of a single humanity and emphasize factors of a unifying and homogenizing nature, communitarians underscore the role of national and cultural bases for building democratic institutions in the world. The authors trace how various liberal currents understand the nature of the post-Cold War order, Russia's national interests, and its foreign policy orientations.

## **Studies of globalization and equity in post-Soviet Russia**

*Mikhail V. Il'yin*

The article reports on the progress of Russian research on globalization and equity. Building on Stein Rokkan's classification of social cleavages, the author identifies several schools in Russian globalization studies. Namely, he discusses how the distinctions of *authority—people, church—state, land—indus-*

*try, owners—workers, metropolis—colony, and network—hierarchy* find their reflection in current Russian research. The article shows that Russian scholars have recently engaged in a series of discussions of globalization's equity criteria and democratic governance applying the world system approaches, civilization analysis, and the theory of Kondratieff's cycles.

### **Geopolitics in Russia—science or vocation?**

*Eduard G. Solovyev*

The author describes the development of geopolitical studies in Russia after the Soviet breakup. He identifies two main schools of geopolitical analysis, Traditionalism and Revisionism. Traditionalism is inspired by old European and Russian geopolitical theories and views the world through the lens of confrontation over power and resources. The revisionist school, on the other hand, adopts a considerably broader definition of what constitutes geopolitics by proposing to study various forms of organizing space on a global scale. According to the paper's central argument, Russian geopolitics, while having emerged as a vocation, it is yet to turn into a fully-fledged academic discipline. It continues to lack coherent and scientifically testable theoretical propositions and needs a broad discussion of its issues with the participation of both traditionalists and revisionists.

### **Ethnicity and the study of international relations in post-Soviet Russia**

*Nayil' M. Mukharyamov*

The essay concentrates on Russian studies of ethnicity and identifies Substantialist and Relational approaches to studying ethnicity in international relations. Substantialists see the impact of ethnicity as the main organizing force of international politics and posit states as principally ethnocentric units driven by ambitions of large ethnic groups. In their turn, Relationists question the essentialist assumptions and seek to depoliticize the notion of ethnicity. Rather than concentrating on states or large ethnic groups in international politics, they take the individual as the main unit of analysis and argue that ethnicity is a choice, not destiny. The author sees both substantialism and relationism as

actively developing in Russia and associates progress in the field with further development and cross-fertilization of the two ideas.

### **The study of international political economy**

*Stanislav L. Tkachenko*

The author argues that International Political Economy (IPE), however prominent in the West, is not nearly as established in Russia as an academic discipline. In the Russian policy community, the main debate is between Liberal Institutionalists, who advocate the country's integration into the global economy, and the so-called Dirigists, who promote relative economic autonomy. These two schools' ideas, however, only begin to find their way into academia. Three main problems impede IPE development in Russian academia — a strict separation of political science from economics, a deficit of theoretical generalization, and weaknesses of the of educational curriculum.

### **From prominence to decline:**

#### **Russian studies of international negotiations**

*Marina M. Lebedeva*

The essay analyzes progress in the field of international negotiations. In the author's assessment, Russian research on negotiations, once a prominent discipline, is currently in decline. Despite the persistent need to study international negotiations, most scholars that had formerly been active in the field have moved to other areas. The rise of new issues demanding urgent attention, the principally changed shape of international negotiations' *problematic*, as well as serious financial difficulties have all contributed to the discipline's decline. The author ends on a positive note and expresses the conviction that international negotiations will be revived as an academic field in Russia. She bases that conviction on the country's practical needs, as well as its growing integration into Western IR studies.



# I. New directions in Russian international studies: pluralization, Westernization, and isolationism

*Andrei P. Tsygankov and Pavel A. Tsygankov*

## 1. Introduction

Russian society has changed dramatically after the USSR's disintegration. By no stretch of imagination can the post-Soviet society be described as "totalitarian," "communist," or "authoritarian." In attempting to understand the social and political system that has emerged after the USSR, scholars have produced a plethora of new conceptual labels and theories, such as "electoral monarchy," "market bolshevism," or "illiberal democracy" (Klyamkin and Shevtsova 1999; Reddaway and Glinski 2001; Sakwa 2002, 455). Yet there has been little systematic effort to understand the paths of academic knowledge emerging as a foundation of new Russian society. In order to contribute to filling this gap, we have selected for analysis one branch of Russian newly emerging Social Science—International Relations.<sup>1</sup>

The new Russian IR has been understudied. Aside from rare individual articles,<sup>2</sup> there has been practically no effort to investigate the subject in the West.<sup>3</sup> The contrast with the wealth of Western studies of the Soviet IR is a striking one.<sup>4</sup> Russia is no longer a threat to the West, and that alone seems to have directed some of the sharpest pens away from studying this country's

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<sup>1</sup> We hope that others attempt similar analyses of the state of Russia's other Social Sciences—Sociology, Sociolinguistics, Political Science, and Modern History. For a recent cross-disciplinary analysis of postcommunist transformation, see Bonker, Muller, and Pickel 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Kubalkova 1992; Patomaki in Millennium 1999; Sergunin 2000; Andrei Tsygankov 2003a, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Russians, on the other hand, study Western IR very carefully. For recent reviews of Western IR theories by Russian academics, see especially Pavel Tsygankov 1998, 2002; Lebedeva 2003.

<sup>4</sup> For studies of Soviet IR, see especially, Zimmerman 1967; Kubalkova and Cruickshank 1985; Hough 1986, Lynch 1987; Shenfield 1987; Light 1988.

attitudes and behavior. Yet the non-threatening Russia is not a less interesting one, and Western scholars have not come to understand Russia better just because the Iron Curtain is no longer in place.

Analyzing the emerging Russian IR can help us answer some of the key questions about Russia. How does the new Russia see itself in the world? How does it perceive the new international environment? Which social and political institutions does it see appropriate to develop after the end of the Cold War? These are the questions that are at the heart of the new Russian IR scholarship, and these are the questions that continue to drive Western scholarship about the new Russia. The central question behind our IR story is also the question of the new Russian society. By tracing the processes of knowledge accumulation in Russian IR, we hope to contribute to the understanding of how much and in which direction this society has changed since 1991.

Our second goal is more specific: it is the development of international studies as a global discipline. For a long time, International Relations has been developing as an excessively West-centric and pro-Western branch of research. As many scholars pointed out, IR all too often reflects political, ideological, and epistemological biases of Western, particularly American, civilization.<sup>5</sup> As a result, a perception has developed across the world that Western IR—and Western Social Science in general—is nothing but a sophisticated ideology and a set of conceptual tools that serve to justify Western global hegemony. In various parts of the globe, West-centered world-order projects have often been perceived as unable to promote a just and stable international system because of their exclusively Western orientations and lack of empathetic understanding of other cultures. Some scholars have argued that rather than promoting the dialogue necessary for finding an appropriate international system, these projects contribute to further isolationism and hostility among international actors (Alker et al. 1998; Rajaei 2000; Tsygankov, 2004). We

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<sup>5</sup> For various analyses of International Relations as a discipline that is ethnocentric and reflects American/Western civilizational biases, see Hoffmann 1977; Alker and Biersteker 1983; Holsti 1985; Inayatullah and Blaney 1996; Waever 1998; Crawford and Jarvis 2001. The ethnocentrism, of course, may be just as widespread in non-Western cultural contexts—Russian, Chinese, Iranian, and other—an issue that still awaits its researchers.

would like to challenge the perception that IR is primarily about justifying the West's cultural hegemony and to move away from the identified ethnocentrism of IR knowledge. Taking Russian IR seriously is a step in this direction. By exploring indigenous analytical impulses and perceptions, we hope to move away from excessively West-centered IR scholarship, invite a dialogue across the globe and therefore enrich our knowledge about the world.

In this essay, we identify pluralization, Westernization, and isolation as key trends in Russian IR knowledge cumulation. These trends do not yet reflect the emergence of some cohesive paradigm of knowledge and are reflective of the transitional nature of Russia's post-Soviet change. Unlike the United States, Great Britain, or China, Russia has not yet developed its own ideological "mainstream" in international studies. While the "great" ideas of "democratic peace," "international society," and "great harmony," respectively, serve to provide such a mainstream in the three identified countries (Callahan 2003), Russia remains a playground of ideological and theoretical competition. Examples of such ideological competition include those of the Eurasianists versus Westernizers, Democrats versus supporters of the Strong State, and Ethnonationalists versus Civic Identity advocates.<sup>6</sup>

Russia therefore has decided against Soviet Marxism,<sup>7</sup> but not yet in favor of the next "great" post-Soviet idea. *Pluralization* of Russian IR has emerged in response to the decline of Soviet Marxism, and it signifies a growing diversity of social science in the absence of a framework for growth of academic knowledge. In the absence of such a framework, current Russian IR can be described in terms of contestation between two additional key trends—Westernization and isolationism—that have emerged as a response to the identified

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<sup>6</sup> The articles collected in this issue by Sergunin, Shakleyina and Bogaturov, Solovyev, and Mukharyamov analyze these ideological and theoretical discussions in greater detail.

<sup>7</sup> By "Soviet Marxism," we understand the Soviet Leninist-Stalinist interpretation of Marx's original work. Although Soviet Marxism was in many respects principally different from what Marx had intended, its commitments to eradicating private property, religion, and other "bourgeois" institutions from social life allow us to place Soviet Marxism within the broader Marxist tradition. The term "Soviet Marxism" is not new and has been used before by both leftist (Marcuse 1958) and conservative thinkers (Kolakowski 1978). We further elaborate on our understanding of the term below.

ideological and theoretical vacuum. While *Westernization* implies Russia's growing dependence on the West's mainstream theoretical concepts and its mode of knowledge cumulation, *Isolationism* is recessive and represents an essentialist reaction to the excesses of Western positivism. While the trend of Westernization helps to bring Russian IR in tune with social science developments in the West, it also holds the potential of underestimating the indigenous intellectual tradition. Isolationism responds to the excesses of Westernization and calls for Russia's autarchic intellectual development, thereby depriving Russian IR of opportunities to learn from foreign cultures and social sciences. Both of these trends are influential in current Russian international studies. The essays in this issue further describe and, to some degree, represent the identified trends of pluralization, Westernization, and isolation in the country's relatively new discipline.

This ideological and theoretical uncertainty of Russian IR can be understood as a result of unresolved questions of Russia's national identity. Until Russia knows what it is and until it clearly defines its post-Soviet values and international orientations, Russian IR will remain an area of ideological contestation. The roots of Russia's identity crisis can be understood with the help of Erving Goffman's (1963) concept of *stigma*, which he defined as a crisis of broader social acceptance. The fact that for almost the entire twentieth century Russia has been "disqualified from full social acceptance" (Goffman 1963, i) by its "significant other" (West) contributed greatly to the country's current identity crisis, in which the choice of a "great" idea is yet to be made. The West has yet to accept Russia as a part of itself, and Russian society has yet to develop its identification with the West.<sup>8</sup> So long as this is the case, much of Russian IR debates should be understood in terms of the country's search for a "great" idea.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Some data strongly indicates that the Russian public is well aware of the society's cultural distinctiveness from the West. In December 2001, according to the respected polling agency VTSIOM, 71 percent of Russians agreed with the statement that "Russia belongs to a special 'Eurasian' or Orthodox civilization, and therefore cannot follow the Western path of development." Only 13 percent counted Russia as a part of Western civilization (VTSIOM 2001).



The essay is organized as follows. The next section develops the notion of stigma in Russia's Soviet development. The sections 3 and 4 trace patterns of knowledge accumulation in new Russian IR. The final two sections introduce the authors of this issue and discuss their contribution to our understanding of Russian international studies. They also formulate conclusions about the overall growth in Russian IR knowledge and its implications for future developments in Russian and Western social sciences.

## **2. Soviet Marxism and the stigma of the Russian self**

Russia's current identity crisis can be traced back to the developments before the Bolshevik revolution of October 1917. At the time, Europe played the role of Russia's significant Other, and, at least since Czar Peter the Great, had figured prominently in Russia's debates on national identity. It was Europe that created the larger meaningful environment in which Russia's rulers defended their core values.<sup>10</sup> It was in the European context of secularization that Peter assumed power in 1694 and introduced a new ideology of state patriotism, or loyalty to the state (Tolz 2001, 27). However, the egalitarian ideas of the French revolution of 1789 split Europe into progressive and anti-revolutionary camps, and Russia had to decide between the two. Some rulers—most prominently Alexandr I and Alexandr II—attempted to yet again redefine the country's identity in line with the new European ideas of Enlightenment, Constitutionalism, and Capitalism. Others sought to defend the old Europe and preserve the basic features of the autocratic regime.

The Bolshevik revolution of October 1917 reflected the struggle of the two Europes and the resulting crisis of Russia's external identification. The spread of extremist Marxist ideas in Russia and the country's eventual break with Europe was a product of two factors: Europe's own agonizing identity crisis and Russia's rulers' unpreparedness to deal with the crisis. In the absence of the czar's ability to answer the newly emerged identity questions, it was the

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<sup>9</sup> We build here on some recent IR research that has further challenged the positivist concept of knowledge cumulation by emphasizing instead the national-cultural foundations of social science development (Weiver 1998; Callahan 2003).

<sup>10</sup> On Russia's engagement with various European ideas, see especially Neumann 1996.

Bolsheviks who made the key identity choice by proclaiming Russia's break with its "bourgeois" past and in 1922 pronouncing it the Soviet Union. Unlike some previous critics of the two Europes, the Bolsheviks adopted not merely a *non-European*, but an *anti-European* identity.<sup>11</sup> Their socialist identity vision implied the perceived superiority of Russia relative to the liberal and autocratic Europes.

In this context, Soviet Marxism served as the new officially sanctioned "great" idea. It helped to legitimize Russia's new socialist identity and provided intellectuals with principally new lenses through which to analyze the world. Both ontologically and epistemologically, Marxism presented an important challenge to Western social sciences and International Relations. At least three key features deserve to be mentioned here. First, the new way of thinking about the world was *socially critical* or emancipatory. Marx's dictum that philosophers must go beyond explaining the world and toward changing it radically drew attention to the relationships between theory and practice and therefore shattered the very foundations of status-quo-oriented positivist thinking. Secondly, Marxist *historically-structural* approach meant to link world affairs to the existing phenomena of global exploitation and inequality and to reveal their origins and social roots. Finally, Marxist analysis was *holistic and global*, as it understood the world as globally united and globally divided at the same time. As opposed to the three familiar levels of analysis in mainstream International Relations—individual, national, and systemic—Marxism viewed the struggle for human liberation and emancipation as universal and without boundaries. All these features were instrumental in the subsequent development of critical tradition in international relations, both in the Soviet Russia and outside.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> In response to the crisis of European identity, some Russian intellectuals began advocating a break with both old-nationalist and new-liberal Europes as early as in the 1840s-1850s. Alexandr Herzen, for instance, grew disappointed with European conservative restorations and—long before the Bolsheviks—turned to socialism arguing for Russia's own, non-European way of "catching up" economically and socially. The Bolsheviks pushed this line of thinking to its extreme.

<sup>12</sup> The fact that the critical tradition in Western IR is alive and well (see, for example, the recently published volume on historical materialism and globalization by Rupert and Smith 2002) should in part be attributed to the richness of Marxist social thinking.

However, Marxism played a dual role in Russia's social science and International Relations. By legitimizing Russia's new identity, the Soviet regime also developed a self-serving vision of Marxism and legitimized the country's social stigma, or the lack of its "self's" acceptance by the European "other." In addition to some of its progressive and liberating elements, the Soviet version of Marxism served as an ideologically pretentious way to preserve a statist status quo and as a tool of suppressing dissent. The lack of acceptance by the outside world further developed this defensiveness of Soviet Marxism into a siege mentality, with dire consequences for the social sciences.

Dogmatism and isolationism, in particular, set in as essential features of Soviet social science. The official ideological hegemony of Soviet Marxism stiffened creative thought by imposing rigid canons on scholars of International Relations and encouraging dogmatic interpretations of world affairs. Epistemologically, scholars had to write in the crude positivist tradition of "we are ahead of the world and therefore know the truth," suppressing the critical potential of original Marxist theory. Substantively, IR "scholarship" was all too often reduced to interpretations of official documents and speeches of the leaders to the Communist Party Congresses.<sup>13</sup> Isolationism was also a product of the country's social stigma. Soviet Marxism allowed for only a minimal dialogue with non-Marxist scholars. Even Marxist and neo-Marxist developments outside the Soviet Union, such as the Frankfurt School in Germany, were not welcome. Cross-fertilization with the outside world was therefore negligible and confined to very narrow circles of elite scholars with privileged access to information.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The 1983 verdict of the General Secretary Yuri Andropov "we don't know the society in which we live" highlighted best that scholars were no longer in the business of raising new and important questions; instead, they were repeating and interpreting official mantras.

<sup>14</sup> Only in Moscow's special libraries that were closed to the public, some scholars were able to obtain access to books critical of the official Soviet Marxism. In order to secure such access, they had to obtain permission of their employers and the Communist Party authorities.

### 3. Pluralization and the birth of the new “self”

Russia’s new search for its identity did not emerge after the Soviet disintegration but can rather be traced to the post-Stalin’s era. As European crisis and confrontation gave a way to the continent’s relative consolidation after the Second World War, Soviet rulers increasingly began to identify with the new liberal-democratic Europe and the West in general. The intercourse with Western ideas grew stronger after Nikita Khrushchev’s famous de-Stalinization speech at the XXth Communist Party congress, in which he pledged, among other things, to bring Soviet Russia closer to Europe.<sup>15</sup> Despite Khrushchev’s removal from power, the impact of de-Stalinization proved to be irreversible—a considerable part of a new intellectual generation now referred to themselves as the “children of the XXth party congress” and worked within and outside the establishment to bring Soviet Russia closer to the West.<sup>16</sup> It was the post-Stalin era that saw, in particular, a growth of specialized institutions in which researchers carefully analyzed mainstream Western ideas, such as those generated by American IR scholars.<sup>17</sup> Ultimately, it was Europe’s and the West’s new identity consolidation that brought to power the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, who proclaimed a new era in relationships with the West.

IR developments that accompanied these changes can be described as a growing pluralization of knowledge. By pluralization we mean the theoretical divergences from the official line of thinking that were taking place within Soviet social science. Soviet Marxism had never been entirely homogeneous—ever since the death of its founder, Vladimir Lenin, in 1924, at least two schools competed for the status of official ideology and “loyal” interpreter of Leninist intellectual legacy. Radicals advocated forceful methods of industrialization, whereas moderates argued for a more gradual process of development and proceeded from the late-Lenin’s notion of “co-existence” with the Western “capitalist world.” This debate had been shut down by Stalin after his

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<sup>15</sup> Khrushchev saw Russia as culturally close to Europe, and at one point he proposed the mutual disbandment of NATO and the Warsaw Pact accompanied by withdrawal of American military forces from the continent (Donaldson and Noguee 1998, 69).

<sup>16</sup> For analyses of this era, see especially Arbatov 1992 and English 2000, chaps. 2-3.

<sup>17</sup> For details, see sources listed in fn. 4.

break with Lenin's post-1921 philosophy of moderation in relations with the peasant class and the external world, and was only revived after Stalin's death. Soviet Social Science also began to slowly absorb the ideas from the West and *Samizdat*,<sup>18</sup> some of which were revisionist Marxist in nature, others liberal and anti-communist, and still others fiercely nationalistic and critical of the official ideology from the traditionalist conservative perspective. Often without citing the original sources, some of the most daring social scientists began to use Western and Samizdat ideas in public discourse in order to advocate change from the past.<sup>19</sup>

Soviet decline and Gorbachev's Perestroika accelerated the pluralization of knowledge. Reflecting Gorbachev's own evolution, official Marxism evolved along the lines of European Social Democracy (Herman 1996; English 2000). Opposition to it came from the neo-orthodox thinking advocated by the newly emerged Communist Party of the Russian Federation and its leader Gennadi Zyuganov. Zyuganov's "Marxism" is a merger of old Stalinist ideas, traditional geopolitics, and Russian imperial nationalism (Zyuganov 1997, 1998). Aside from Gorbachev and Zyuganov, Marxist scholars also developed an interest in world-system approaches, often associated, in the West, with the name of Immanuel Wallerstein. Both Gorbachev's New Thinking and world system analysis, as Mikhail Il'yin suggests in this volume, continue a long-standing tradition of Marxist "global thinking" and have roots in domestic interest in global issues as the environment, population dynamics, and the arms race.

Outside of the Marxist worldview, a variety of new schools has emerged and began to develop. Most of them are heavily influenced by the ideas developed in the West as transmitted by local representatives of various social sciences. Following the three familiar perspectives in Western IR, the new

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<sup>18</sup> *Samizdat* refers to self-produced, self-published, and self-circulated ideas that became characteristic of the post-Stalin's era.

<sup>19</sup> For instance, Gorbachev's team had been influenced by Western ideas of growing interdependence in the world before they came to power. Gorbachev was exposed to similar thinking through Georgi Shakhnazarov, his future advisor. Shakhnazarov first met Gorbachev in the early 1980s, and they had an extended conversation about world order and Shakhnazarov's unorthodox views expressed in his book "*Gryadushchi miroporyadok*" (1972), which Gorbachev had read (For more details, see Shakhnazarov 2000, 277-282).