believed to have resulted from hackers engineering misinformation campaigns that affected the 2016 elections (pp. 26–51).

Chapter 6 deals with Trump’s public embrace of the Russian government and his non-repudiation of Russia after an assassination attempt of Sergei Skripal in March 2018. Here, Boyd-Barrett illuminates political contexts in which Western governments engineered disinformation campaigns of their own. He observes that Trump’s strategy to downplay this and other Russian disinformation campaigns, although designed to tamp down Russia’s geo-political power globally, resulted in a propaganda campaign on its own.

The U.S. government continues to classify many findings on Russia, only making public information deemed not to pose a threat to its intelligence community or allies. Ultimately, according to Boyd-Barrett, the Mueller inquiry’s indictments against Russian agencies and citizens emboldened the Trump administration to denigrate the inquiry—a disinformation scenario that ultimately backfired. As Russia claimed innocence and Trump continued (while he was president) to undermine the legitimacy of the inquiry, a culture of propaganda and disinformation blossomed on both sides, making it difficult for either one to claim the moral high ground in the fight against propaganda and disinformation. The book highlights the urgent need for affected institutions/governments to confront the machinery of disinformation/propaganda machinery through an “assessment of public media and its structures” (p. 99).

In the end, Russiagate and Propaganda is a relentless reminder of how two parties who believe in different philosophies can use misinformation to misplace loyalty and radicalize citizens. It astutely discusses how even the news industries in Russian and, yes, in the United States, get conscripted into propaganda campaigns. With its unsparing and expansive look at disinformation campaigns, this book builds a strong framework for the study of propaganda among governments and political parties, wherever they may be.

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Reading Márton Demeter’s bold and incisive book on global imbalances in knowledge production at the end of 2020, one feels its release was well timed to coincide
with the heightened efforts to decenter academia beyond the White, male heterosexual from the Global North. (2020 was the year when the world witnessed large-scale protests against racial discrimination inspired by the Black Lives Matter Movement.) However, the book not only offers a fresh perspective into the center-periphery problem in academia, but it is a product of Demeter’s extensive empirical work into power relations in academia over the years. Indeed, this book richly documents “western exclusivism” and exploitation of the Global South. Its purpose is to serve as ammunition in sustaining epistemic resistances against racism and class inequalities perpetuated by higher education institutions in North America and Europe.

It is important at the outset to understand that Demeter is a product of the periphery (as he was educated in Hungary). He is currently an associate professor at the National University of Public Service in Hungary. In the book, Demeter, who specializes in the subject of knowledge production as a media and communication scholar, shows it is a long way up the academic ladder for many like himself, especially because education in the periphery is considered low grade in global scholarship. He is categorical that his mission is to advocate for the dismantling of barriers that discriminate against the periphery because, as he puts it, “talent is universal and is equally distributed all around the world” (p. viii).

Taking a world-systems approach, Demeter describes with statistical evidence the stark imbalances that exist in knowledge production between the Global North and Global South. He asserts that while global inequalities in knowledge production are extensive and might even seem insurmountable (due to the Matthew Effect), he seeks to promote a counter-hegemonic onslaught against the status quo—a mission that he hopes is embraced in both the center and the periphery. He sees antielitism and epistemic resistance from below as intertwined, and therefore, this book reinforces an “activist” campaign in academia and beyond.

For Demeter, the Global North’s dominance is sustained by privileged scholars from the periphery who have accumulated academic capital and enjoy the benefits of working in resource-rich Western institutions. He emphatically states that this group of scholars is a letdown in the quest to decenter knowledge, even referring to them as “centrophiles” or “agents” of the Global North. He calls for Global South scholars to adopt a “systemic protagonism” and display “authentic, autonomous and non-Western academic selves” in their quest to build an inclusive and diverse intellectual community (p.76). The call might seem unpalatable to scholars from the Global South who have accumulated academic capital and have a visa-free entry (no pun intended) to institutions in the Global North.

What perhaps emerges as inadequate in the book is his reflection on the concept of knowledge. The book is limited to modern scientific knowledge, but knowledge could be considered as being in flux. Furthermore, debate exists about the nature and extent of indigenous knowledge in the Global South—what perhaps might provide a different picture of contemporary global inequalities.

As a theoretical approach, world-systems theory appears limiting in the book, unable to fully encapsulate knowledge generated from the periphery. One wonders whether knowledge can grow beyond the Global North’s infrastructure and system of
production, interpretation, and circulation, thus perhaps showing that the real problem is the West’s resistance toward knowledge from the periphery.

In some parts of the book, one wishes there was brief contextualization of debates in postcolonial or critical studies, which specialize in the knowledge production debate. However, Demeter is clear that his goal is to lay bare the class and racial inequalities that are a blot to academic institutions, paradoxically making claims about being rational, fair, and inclusive. Indeed, the author does not burden the reader with in-depth theoretical discussions or sophisticated statistical findings, making the book accessible for a newcomer in the knowledge production debate. However, to explain the core-center problem as clearly as possible, the author tends to be very repetitive throughout the book.

What cannot escape attention is Demeter’s use of the terms “West/Rest” and “Global South/North,” concepts that have been criticized as either reductive or misleading. Lately, scholars are leaning toward more accurate conceptualizations of the core-periphery divide, that is, Majority World Countries (to refer to North America, Europe, and Australasia) and Minority World Countries (Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East). Perhaps the two concepts could align better with the author’s counter-hegemonic stance toward the (less populated) countries’ exploitative nature.

In general, the book successfully meets its aim to document the extent to which the center dominates knowledge production, even though Demeter recognizes that the periphery is starting to rise. For example, China has shown steady publication output in quantitative terms, even though this output is qualitatively weak. In all, this book is essential reading, particularly for early-career scholars who wish to understand power relations and global inequalities in knowledge production as they begin their academic careers.


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Among the European countries, Spain is without doubt one of the most fragmented from the point of view of regional identities. The long dictatorship established by Francisco Franco in 1936 has contained the request for autonomy of Catalonia, Basque Country, Galicia, and Andalusia. The transition to democracy, started after Franco’s death in 1975, determined the establishment of autonomous communities and recognition of Catalonia and Basque Country’s nationality, while Andalusia and Galicia were defined as historical nationalities.

Different from Basque Country, Catalonia has never embraced the armed struggle to gain its independence from Spain. Rather, it has adopted a pacific and democratic