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# INTERNATIONAL HISTORY POLITICS

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An organized section of the American  
Political Science Association (APSA)

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## Newsletter Summer 2015, Vol 1, Issue 1

### Message from the President

I am delighted to announce the inaugural issue of the International History and Politics (IHAP) Newsletter. This is a milestone in the Section's history. Founded fifteen years ago, the Section now boasts a membership of over 300. The Newsletter promises to play a vital role in our continuing effort to promote the interdisciplinary study of international politics and foreign affairs.

Since its inception, IHAP has provided an institutional focus for dialogue between political scientists and historians. No member has contributed more to these efforts than our founding Secretary-Treasurer, Colin Elman. Now, after many years of Section leadership, he has decided to "pass the torch." Speaking for myself and on behalf of my predecessors, I want to thank Colin for his service to the Section.

I also want to thank James A. Morrison, our Newsletter Editor. We are fortunate to have someone with his background and vision leading this effort. In this issue, he has assembled a roundtable on the recent "turn to empire" in the study of world politics. Burak Kadercan, Jeff Colgan, and Ayşe Zarakol offer critical reflections on long-standing assumptions about international order in international relations theory. Future issues will host similar featured roundtables, essays, and interviews, along with up-to-date information about the section and upcoming conferences.

Speaking of upcoming conferences, in this issue you will also find a complete listing of the IHAP panels on tap at APSA 2015. Please plan to come, enjoy, and participate in the panel discussions and debates. Please also plan to attend our Section Business Meeting in San Francisco, where the Jervis-Schroeder Book Award and the IHAP Best Article Award will be presented.

Peter Trubowitz  
London School of Economics  
p.trubowitz@lse.ac.uk

Special thanks to the Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) for its financial support in publishing this newsletter.

## Roundtable

# International History and Reconceptualizing Empire

Increasingly, the classic theories of international politics developed by Kenneth Waltz and Hedley Bull are being displaced by new conceptions of international order. Numerous scholars, including David Lake, Stephen Krasner, John Ikenberry, and Andrew Hurrell have called into question the core concept of sovereignty. At the same time, scholars have returned to thinking about empires—albeit with rather new perspectives. The focus has been expanded by considering non-European empires, such as with Iver Neumann’s work on the Mongol Empire and David Kang’s analysis of the Chinese Empire. At the same time, Jack Snyder, Steven Pincus, and Yuen Foong Khong have conceptualized the European and American empires.

What has been the relationship between these two trends? To what extent can rethinking 'imperialism' help us to re-theorize international politics and international order? To what extent can new theories of international politics help us reconsider the history of imperialism? Going forward, how should each enterprise shape the other?

The following brief interventions tackle these questions as they re-examine how our field ought to view empires and the legacies they leave behind.

### **Bringing the “Other” Empires Back In: The Case of the Ottoman Empire**

*By Burak Kadercan, United States Naval War College, USA*

The relationship between the concept of “empire” and international relations (IR) theory has been, at best, problematic, partially due to the analytical priorities of the subfield, usually defined with respect to “nations” and the so-called sovereign territorial state. For one, even the term *international* reveals the conceptual scope conditions of the subfield: IR, almost by definition, is primarily interested in “politics among nations,” suggesting that the subfield imagines nations to be immutable and trans-historical “facts” of global politics. The almost exclusive emphasis placed on the so-called sovereign territorial state, in turn, introduces further analytical blindfolds. Such conceptual commitments -- one may dare say, obsessions -- then tend to make empires, which defined themselves as transnational

political entities that did not adhere to Westphalian territoriality, appear as anomalies. Therein lies the tension. From a global historical standpoint, empires and imperial governance have been the norm, with the sovereign territorial state and the modern notion of nations constituting recent exceptions. Put bluntly, when it comes to the temporal and geographical extent of empires as well as their importance for understanding the evolution of world politics, mainstream IR has history upside-down.

In more recent years, the theoretical and historical leanings of classical IR assumptions came under attack in two ways. First, scholars such as John Ruggie, David Lake, and Stephen Krasner have challenged the historical accuracy of assumptions surrounding state sovereignty (though spending less time problematizing the contingent nature of “nation” in the international).<sup>1</sup> Second, there is an increasing interest in the notion of empires, defined in terms of the roles that Western imperialism as well as non-Western empires played in the constitution of the present-day global order. Put simply, as IR is coming to terms with the plasticity of its core assumptions, it is also exploring the origins, nature, and impacts of different forms of authority and governance on the evolution of the global political order. In this context, the study of non-Western empires presents an open frontier for students of international politics for the simple reason that IR scholarship has paid little attention to such polities until very recently.

***“As a result, the Ottomans, despite all their importance for understanding the historical origins of present-day world politics, are confined to an academic no man’s land.”***

The Ottoman Empire is a case in point. From a historical perspective, while the Ottoman Empire played an important role in global politics between the fourteenth and twentieth centuries, it is virtually “invisible” in IR theory and historiography, with its role relegated -- at best -- to either a “useful other” through which the [European] “international

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1999); David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2009); John Gerard Ruggie, “Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations.” *International Organization*, Vol 47, no. 1 (Winter 1993), pp.139-174.

society” defined itself, or as a marginal footnote.<sup>2</sup> To be precise, the historical and sociological literature on the Ottomans has blossomed in the past decades, but IR -- to a large extent -- still remains oblivious to the empire’s role and place in international politics.

The lack of attention to the Ottomans has a lot to do with the fact that IR as a subfield was born as an ethno-centric endeavour. The conventional narrative, in particular, revolves around the “birth” of the modern state system in Europe and its “spread” to the rest of the world like an unstoppable virus. This conception rules out the possibility that the “outcome” [read present-day world politics] was more of synthesis of what was spreading and what originally existed elsewhere in the first place. In this context, mainstream IR, re-imagining the past through presentist and ethno-centric lenses, has long treated the Ottoman Empire -- whose date of formal “admission” to the Westphalian club is usually accepted to be 1856 -- as an archaic political entity that had little say over (or impact on) its own fate as well as relevant historical processes. Such interpretations of the past, then, rules out the need for integrating the Ottomans into IR theory and historiography as a subject worthy of study. Ironically, the fact that Ottomans were never truly colonized has also left them outside the scope of post-colonial literature in IR that took off in the last couple of decades. As a result, the Ottomans, despite all their importance for understanding the historical origins of present-day world politics, are confined to an academic no man’s land.

So, how can IR scholars reconcile the study of the Ottoman Empire with the broader IR literature and what can we learn from such reconciliation? In general, three main, if not necessarily mutually exclusive paths, can be invoked. The first involves expanding the empirical scope of IR by thinking of the Ottoman Empire as a “new” case study that can be examined in detail to assess and refine existing approaches. One suggestion, for example, would be to scrutinize the formative centuries of the Empire in a similar fashion with Victoria Hui’s study on the relationship between state-formation processes and

power politics in ancient China.<sup>3</sup> The early Ottoman era, in fact, offers an exceptionally fertile and uncharted territory for research. When the European powers truly began to engage the Ottomans in the sixteenth century, what they observed was a gigantic political-military entity, but this was not always the case. The Ottoman Empire’s origins can be traced to 1299, when the House of Osman was one of the smaller emirates in a post-Seljuk Asia Minor and not the most likely candidate for a future transcontinental empire. Exploring the rise of the Ottomans as well as their modes of competition and cooperation with European *and* non-European polities can help IR scholars assess the validity and scope of competing theories and approaches ranging from neorealist to Marxist accounts.

A second potential path for research can be to study the Ottoman experience as a “mirror case” from which new insights can be generated about the Westphalian narrative. Such a decidedly comparative approach, for example, can emphasize the role of different modes of economic production, types of civil-military relations, or roles played by religious and political institutions.<sup>4</sup> One can criticize this perspective by pointing out that the European and Ottoman experiences were too different to warrant comparison. Emerging historiography on the Ottomans, however, suggests that European states and the Ottomans inhabited “a common world” and were essentially comparable until at least the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Looking beyond the Westphalian experience from a comparative perspective can allow IR scholars to see the same experiences in a new light, which would then make it possible to raise new questions and generate novel insights about the past and present of international political orders.

Lastly, the study of the Ottomans can be incorporated into IR by scrutinizing the legacies of particular modes of Ottoman imperial governance, especially in the Middle East. One potential strategy would be to examine the space-society-politics nexus through which the Ottomans sustained their authority for centuries. While the so-called modern state went through a gradual process that aimed at the homogenization -- or, in John Agnew’s words, “totalization”<sup>6</sup> -- of territories that it controlled (such that they sought increasing levels of uniformity in

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<sup>2</sup> For recent exceptions, see Turan Kayaoglu, “Westphalian Eurocentrism in International Relations Theory,” *International Studies Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (June 2010), pp. 193–217; Kerem Nisancioglu, “The Ottoman origins of capitalism: uneven and combined development and Eurocentrism,” *Review of International Studies*, Vol 40, no. 2 (April 2014), pp 325-347; Burak Kadercan, “Strong Armies, Slow Adaptation: Civil-Military Relations and the Diffusion of Military Power,” *International Security*, Vol 38, no. 3 (Winter 2013/14), pp. 117-152; Ayşe Zarakol, *After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011); A. Nuri Yurdusev, *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

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<sup>3</sup> Victoria Tin-bor Hui, *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe* (New York NY: Cambridge UP, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> See Fn. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Suraiya Faruqi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World around It* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> John Agnew, *Globalization and Sovereignty* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

administrative, legal, political, and cultural spheres), the Ottomans, similar to most empires, established heterogeneous arrangements that were built on pragmatism, flexibility, fluidity, and overlapping modes of governance.<sup>7</sup> From such a vantage point, the instability in the Middle East reveals itself to be a problem that goes beyond “where borders were [artificially] carved out” in the aftermath of the Ottoman demise. The problem, one can argue, has a lot do with the clash between the legacies of heterogeneous territorial governance that the Ottomans perpetuated for centuries and the homogenizing strategies associated with nation-state forms that were introduced to the region afterwards in a rather haphazard and accelerated fashion.<sup>8</sup>

The non-Western empires are no longer alive, but their legacies are most certainly ingrained in the world we inhabit. Accordingly, the origins of the present-day global political order cannot be reduced to a story about the spread of the Westphalian system to the rest of the world through

<sup>7</sup> On the flexibility of Ottoman institutions, see Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> On territorial heterogeneity and homogeneity, see Burak Kadercan "Triangulating territory: a case for pragmatic interaction between political science, political geography, and critical IR," *International Theory*, Vol 7, no. 01 (Spring 2015), pp. 125-161.

## Reflections on the Political Economy of Decolonization

By Jeff D. Colgan, Brown University, USA

The collapse of empire as a major form of political organization was one of the most significant structural transformations of world politics in the last millennium.<sup>1</sup> Some empires, such as the Ottoman and Japanese, collapsed in a traditional manner: militarily defeated by an external power. This type of demise, however, was not unique to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and does not explain the extinction of empires. What was special was that several major empires collapsed without being defeated militarily by an external power, including the largest ever in existence, the British. In the decades after 1945, imperial powers granted independence to over seventy colonies and dependencies, by far the most

<sup>1</sup> John Gerard Ruggie, “Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis”, *World Politics*, Vol 35, Issue 2 (Winter 1983), pp 261-285. (in so far as the demise of empires facilitated the triumph of the sovereign state)

a linear process.<sup>9</sup> The West interacted with extra-Westphalian polities, and it is only through this interaction that the present-day global order arose. In this context, incorporating the Ottoman Empire, not to mention other non-Western empires, into IR theory and historiography is not only desirable, but also of essential importance for constructing a comprehensive understanding of the origins of the international system.

*Dr. Burak Kadercan is an Assistant Professor of Strategy and Policy at the United States Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He received his PhD in Political Science from the University of Chicago. His research interests lie at the intersection of IR theory, international security, political geography, and international history. The views expressed here are his own and do not reflect those of the Naval War College, the Department of the Navy, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government*



<sup>9</sup> Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism, and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002).

dramatic decolonization movement in human history.<sup>2</sup>

Why did empires die out? Reconceptualizing empire and decolonization is important because different answers to this question have rather different implications for the question of contemporary international order. The existing answers can be grouped under four basic types. One explanation emphasizes the role of ideas, norms, and nationalist movements following World War II.<sup>3</sup> Clearly this change occurred and contributed to decolonization, but it leaves open deeper questions such as why the norms were accepted at that particular historical moment. A second potential answer was the high cost of the war for Britain and other metropolises.<sup>4</sup> There is no doubt that the war

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001): 155.

<sup>3</sup> Philpott 2001; Neta Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization, and Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002); David B. Abernethy, *The Dynamics of Global Dominance: European Overseas Empires* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> For a summary of this view, see John Darwin, *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate* (New York: Wiley,

was costly, but it is historical fact that many metropolises viewed their colonies as a way to economically recover and re-invested in after the war.<sup>5</sup> A third explanation focuses on international pressure for decolonization, especially the efforts of the United States to convince European metropolises to let go of their empires.<sup>6</sup> Yet this view ignores the times and ways in which the US itself has been imperialist.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, even some of the advocates of this view conclude that the United States did not play a decisive role in the critical period of decolonization after 1945.<sup>8</sup>

**“The end of empire is too large a historical process to have a single cause, but motorization offers a lens on imperial demise that highlights unobserved patterns of variation and generates new insights.”**

Finally, a fourth partial explanation for the end of empires focuses on the political economy of the metropole itself.<sup>9</sup> Imperialism created economic

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2006): 43-45; this is also part of Abernethy's (2002: 40-41) explanation, but his view is more nuanced.

<sup>5</sup> Darwin 2006; William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay, 1941-1945: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

<sup>6</sup> Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): xiv; John G. Ikenberry and Daniel Deudney, “Democratic Internationalism: An American Grand Strategy for a Post-Exceptionalist Era” (2015, unpublished).

<sup>7</sup> Jeanne Morefield, *Empires Without Imperialism: Anglo-American Decline and the Politics of Deflection* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Ikenberry and Deudney 2015 (unpublished).

<sup>9</sup> Miles Kahler, *Decolonization in Britain and France* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984); Jeffrey Frieden, “The Economics of Intervention: American Overseas Investments and Relations with Underdeveloped Areas, 1890-1950”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol 31, Issue 01 (1994) pp 55-80; Peter Liberman, *Does Conquest Pay?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and its Competitors* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Kevin Narizny, *The Political Economy of Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Erik Gartzke and Dominic Rohner, “The Political Economy of Imperialism, Decolonization and Development”, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol 41, Issue 3 (2011). Also see John Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study*

winners and losers within the metropole,<sup>10</sup> and the choice to build, maintain, or eliminate an empire rests in large measure on the political contest within the metropole between the winners and losers from imperialist policies.<sup>11</sup> Jeff Frieden argues that one key group of winners from imperialism was colonial investors.<sup>12</sup> Colonialism served as a form of protection from expropriation for foreign investments, but as the nature of foreign investment changed in ways that made expropriation harder, investors did not require colonialism to preserve their assets. Henrik Spruyt also used a political economy explanation to account for the decline in empires, arguing that the value of territory as an economic asset declined because of the rise of a global liberal economic system and the decline of imperial preference schemes.<sup>13</sup>

In new work, I build on this political economy approach to decolonization. I argue that economic transitions within the metropolises in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century contributed to the end of empire, and that the shift towards motorization was central to those transitions. Motorization, which I also call energy modernization, is a stage of development that occurs when engines powered by fossil fuels or electricity become the predominant basis for transportation and physical economic output. It is distinct from industrialization, a stage in which fossil fuels provides industrial heat but only rudimentary forms of agricultural and industrial power.

Motorization contributed to the demise of empires via three causal mechanisms. First, it shifted the balance within the metropole between economic winners and losers from imperialism, causing the winners (mainly landowners and low-tech exporters who benefited from protected markets) to decline in relative importance as new motorized industries grew. This shift sapped support for empire. For instance, the textile industry was once a major beneficiary from the British Empire, employing over two million people in England, and fiercely resisted any moves to grant India and other colonies greater independence to control their own economic policies. Yet by 1945, the English textile industry had declined precipitously as England's comparative advantage in the global economy shifted towards

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(Spokesman Books, [1902] 1938); Vladimir Illyich Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Resistance Books, [1917] 1999).

<sup>10</sup> Kahler 1984; Lance Edwin Davis and Robert A. Huttenback, *Mammon and the Pursuit of Empire: The Political Economy of British Imperialism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

<sup>11</sup> Narizny 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Frieden 1994.

<sup>13</sup> Spruyt 2005.

more advanced manufacturing. With the textile industry employing fewer and fewer people, its resistance to decolonization mattered less for British policymakers, making it easier for them to accept anti-colonial norms.

Second, motorization increased the fiscal opportunity costs of deploying labor for imperial administration and defense. Motorization greatly increased the domestic productivity of labor, meaning that if workers were at home rather than deployed in the colonies, they would have private sector wages to tax (and not be paid by the government). Finally, motorization shifted new foreign investment away from colonial mines and plantations, which colonialism protected from local expropriation, and towards manufacturing, which is less susceptible to expropriation. Together, these economic shifts reduced the political demand for colonialism in metropolises. Crucially, many imperial metropolises crossed a threshold of energy consumption nearly simultaneously in the period 1945-1973, including Britain, Belgium, Holland, and France. The transition facilitated decolonization. Notably, the United States motorized c.1903 and became the first major power to turn away from imperialism – though not before its own imperial period just prior to motorization.<sup>14</sup>

The end of empire is too large a historical process to have a single cause, but motorization offers a lens on imperial demise that highlights unobserved patterns of variation and generates new insights. Three points stand out. First, motorization helps explain why some metropolises turned away from imperialism earlier than others, variation that often goes unnoticed and unexplained in purely normative accounts. Second, motorization helps explain why empires have stayed dead – rather than experiencing a new period of imperial expansion, a pattern suggested by the historical record and cyclical theories. Third, motorization helps explain why some colonies achieved independence later than others: notably, some colonies had valuable oil reserves that the imperial powers were reluctant to give up. This finding is striking compared to the relative ease with which metropolises released colonies with other valuable natural resources like gold or copper, but makes sense in light of motorization. More broadly, my argument offers a corrective to recent research on energy politics, most of which casts energy in a negative light as a potential source of conflict.<sup>15</sup> My argument here

views it more positively, showing how energy modernization generates disincentives to imperialism, thereby reducing the desire of great powers to fight for territory.

I began this note by asserting that reconceptualising empire and decolonization is important because different views have rather different implications for the contemporary international order. Russia's recent interventions in Ukraine, China's ambitions in the South China Sea, and America's Middle East adventures have raised questions for many observers about the extent to which imperialism is in fact gone. Indeed, several scholars suggest that empires have disappeared only temporarily and might re-emerge at any time.<sup>16</sup> If however, it is true that motorization was a major driver of changes in the political economy of imperialism, it seems much less likely that empires will re-emerge systematically – at least so long as we continue to have and use modern energy resources. Scholarship in this area thus has much to contribute to ongoing debates about international security and structure.

*Dr. Jeff D. Colgan is the Richard Holbrooke Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University. He received his PhD from Princeton University. His research focuses on two main areas: (1) the causes of war and (2) global energy politics.*



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(2008); Michael Horowitz, "The Spread of Nuclear Weapons and International Conflict: Does Experience Matter?", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 53, Issue 2 (2009); Michael Ross, *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012); Rosemary Ann Kelanic, *Black Gold and Blackmail: The Politics of International Oil Coercion*, University of Chicago PhD Dissertation (2012); Jeff Colgan, *Petro-Aggression: When Oil Causes War* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>16</sup> Charles Tilly, E.J. Hobsbawm, and Alexander J. Motyl (three separate chapters) in Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen, eds *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

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<sup>14</sup> Roughly 1865-1918; see Narizny 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Caitlin Talmadge, "Closing Time: Assessing the Iranian threat to the Strait of Hormuz", *International Security*, Vol 33, Issue 3

## Reconceptualising Empire in IR

By Ayşe Zarakol, University of Cambridge, UK

Major developments in the last decade, from the “War on Terror” to the “Global Financial Crisis” to the various uprisings around the world, have contributed to the conviction that the conceptual toolkit of IR should either be updated or abandoned altogether in favour of more empirical approaches. There may indeed be a growing sense that “textbook” theories of international politics are not particularly well equipped to deal with the changes and challenges ushered in by the twenty-first century.<sup>1</sup> By “textbook” theories I mean the paradigmatic approaches that came to dominate the field (especially in the US) in the late 1970s and early 1980s, such as neorealism, as exemplified by Kenneth Waltz’s *Theory of International Politics*.<sup>2</sup> Much has already been written about the paradigm wars in IR during this period as well as the theoretically barren field they left in their wake.<sup>3</sup> For current purposes, it should suffice to say that what many of the “textbook” approaches of that period had as a common failing was an ahistorical assumption that observations derived from the international system as it was then could be generalised into the past and the future. Good examples of some foundational concepts so temporally stretched are “sovereignty”<sup>4</sup> and “anarchy”<sup>5</sup>. It is no accident then that the theoretical/conceptual field is regenerating around these fissures. New generations of scholars (including those from the “non-West”<sup>6</sup>) are joining<sup>7</sup>

noted scholars who challenge the universality of the orthodox “anarchy” and/or “sovereignty” assumption.<sup>8</sup> The study of empires, then, is an area where these reconceptualisations are likely to be particularly productive.

**“The answers depend on how we define empire, and despite what much of the more policy-oriented literature assumes, there is in fact a great deal of variation among polities in this category. It may indeed be possible to come up with a universal definition as well as more nuanced sub-categories, but for that we have to take history seriously.”**

In some ways, the study of “empire” is not new in IR.<sup>9</sup> As Ikenberry observes in his 2004 article “Liberalism and Empire: Logics of Order in the American Unipolar Age”<sup>10</sup>, debates about American empire tend to correlate with particular periods of American foreign policy such as the post-World War II or the Vietnam War eras. During the most recent such episode, the War on Terror and the unilateralist foreign policies of the George W. Bush presidency once again revived debates about American empire.<sup>11</sup> Disagreements in this literature converge

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. the articles in the “End of Theory” special issue of the *European Journal of International Relations* (19.3; 2013) and the accompanying debates on websites and social media.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979).

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Ole Waever, “The Rise and the Fall of the Inter-paradigm Debate” in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). See also the “End of Theory” issue of *EJIR*.

<sup>4</sup> For a demonstration see e.g. Jens Bartelson, “The Concept of Sovereignty Revisited”, *The European Journal of International Law* 17.2 (2006): 463-474; Jens Bartelson, *Sovereignty as Symbolic Form* (London: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> For a demonstration see e.g. Jack Donnelly, “The Discourse of Anarchy in IR”, *International Theory* (forthcoming).

<sup>6</sup> The aforementioned argument about temporal distortions applies culturally as well. Scholarly communities outside of the West have typically been more sceptical about the orthodox conceptualisations of anarchy and sovereignty. As the field gets more inclusive we are hearing more from these communities (as demonstrated also in the TRIP report).

<sup>7</sup> For example, there is an on-going international collaboration about theorising hierarchies in world politics, which brings together scholars from very different epistemologies and geographies. This collaboration has advanced through three

workshops - publications from this project should be forthcoming within the next year.

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. David A. Lake, “Escape from the State of Nature: Authority and Hierarchy in World Politics”, *International Security* 32.1 (2007): 47-79; David A. Lake *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Cornell University Press, 2009); Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton University Press, 1999).

<sup>9</sup> In fact, it could be argued that the field itself is a product of imperial relations. See Robert Vitalis, “The Noble American Science of Imperial Relations and Its Laws of Race Development”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52.4 (2010) 909-938.

<sup>10</sup> John G. Ikenberry, “Liberalism and Empire: Logics of Order in the American Unipolar Age”, *Review of International Studies* 30.4 (2004): 609-630.

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. Michael Cox, “Empire, Imperialism and the Bush Doctrine”, *Review of International Studies* 30.4 (2004): 585-608; Michael Cox, “Empire by Denial: The Strange Case of the United States”, *International Affairs* 81.1 (2005): 15-30; Niall Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002); Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America’s*

along two main fault-lines: one major concern is the aptness of the “empire” label for the United States, and then among those who think it does apply, there is a second major debate about whether this is a positive thing.<sup>12</sup>

The main flaw running through this otherwise thought-provoking literature is its US-centrism. As noted above, even the timing of various revivals of the empire scholarship in IR correlate strongly with aggressive periods in American policy. As such, this particular episode may even be coming to an end already: Robert Kaplan, a long-time advocate of empires,<sup>13</sup> recently wrote another article extolling the virtues of empires, which was titled “It’s Time to Bring Imperialism Back to the Middle East,” and met with much internet furore as a result. In an addendum to the essay, Kaplan now notes that he had originally titled his essay “Welcome to the *Post-Imperial Middle East*” (italics my own). The essay now has the title “The Ruins of Empire in the Middle East”.<sup>14</sup> It is of course to be expected that an interest in empires in general may be driven by an interest in expansionist moments of American foreign policy. Yet the really interesting questions cannot be answered by focusing on the US alone. Does the US qualify as an empire? Is imperialism good at bringing order to chaos? Could empire-like arrangements fill the void in places where traditional models of nation-state sovereignty never fully concretized on the ground? The answers depend on how we define empire, and despite what much of the more policy-oriented literature assumes, there is in fact a great deal of variation among polities in this category. It may indeed be possible to come up with a universal definition<sup>15</sup> as well as more nuanced sub-

categories, but for that we have to take history seriously.

My aim here is not to dismiss the arguments in the aforementioned literature but to underline the significance of the historical turn in IR that goes beyond the mere use of historical examples. In a good portion of contemporary debates about American empire we see many references to historical empires, but this is not enough, especially considering the fact that many of the polities so described would not have defined themselves as such. For example, the “Ottoman Empire” was never called that by its own officials; the preferred term was “Devlet-i Aliye”, which could be translated roughly as great/grand state (all the while recognising that their understanding of “state” was also markedly different from ours). The Ottoman rulers did not see themselves as an imperial force, though they were certainly grandiose in other ways. The Ottoman “Empire” came to be called that first by its European rivals and only much later was the term imported into Turkish historiography of the polity. I do not point this out to rescue the Ottomans from charges of imperialism but rather to underline the fact that what seems to be a catch-all category is actually rather complicated once brought under scrutiny. Many seemingly universal definitions of empire are laden with anachronistic assumptions; for example, Ikenberry defines empire as “the formal or informal control by a *leading state* of the foreign and domestic policies of weaker units”<sup>16</sup> (italics my own); he also cites Doyle defining empire as “a relationship, formal or informal, in which *one state* controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society” (italics my own).<sup>17</sup> Both definitions assume it is obvious what a “state” is, not to mention the other assumptions they make about the boundedness of societies (as well as the foreign/domestic division). At the heart of these definitions are ultimately nineteenth century templates of empire wherein a “nation-state” (often nascent but nevertheless approximating sovereignty in the modern sense) colonizes other, geographically removed territories. Even leaving the differences among ideological justifications aside, the “empires” of the previous historical period (sometimes called pre-modern) did not at all fit this pattern because

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*Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004); Robert Jervis, “The Compulsive Empire”, *Foreign Policy* (July/August 2003): 82-87; Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrow of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004); John G. Ikenberry, “The Illusions of Empire”, *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2014); Michael Mann, *Incoherent Empire* (London: Verso, 2003); M.J. Williams, “The Empire Writes Back”, *International Affairs* 83.5 (2007): 945-950.

<sup>12</sup> See also Daniel H. Nexon and Thomas Wright, “What’s at Stake in the American Empire Debate”, *American Political Science Review* 101.2 (2007): 253-271 for an overview.

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. Robert D. Kaplan, “In Defense of Empire”, *The Atlantic*, April 2014 (<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/04/in-defense-of-empire/358645/>).

<sup>14</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, “The Ruins of Empire in the Middle East”, *Foreign Policy* May 25, 2015 (<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/25/its-time-to-bring-imperialism-back-to-the-middle-east-syria-iraq-islamic-state-iran/>). The addendum at the end has the story of the changing titles.

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. Nexon and Wright, “What’s at Stake in the American Empire Debate”, p.258, or Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic*

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*Empires, and International Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p.72, or Christian Reus-Smit, *Individual Rights and the Making of the International System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p.12, for examples of definitions that do not come with built-in anachronistic assumptions.

<sup>16</sup> Ikenberry, “Liberalism and Empire”, p. 615.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), p.45, as cited in Ikenberry, “Liberalism and Empire”, p. 615.

they did not have such “states” at their core. Studying yet another period and/or geography would complicate the picture of “empires” even further.

For these reasons, it is not enough, say, to compare the US to the British Empire (or other modern European empires) and to conclude that it does not qualify as an “empire”. “Empires” look very different from period to period and from setting to setting. What is needed is for the literature to detach itself from the current period and to seriously engage, without relying on anachronistic assumptions, with the questions of 1) what is the essence, if there is one, that unites all polities that common-sense tells us are captured by the label “empire”? and 2) what does “sovereignty” look like under imperial conditions? For those interested in these questions, the growing historical IR scholarship on empires<sup>18</sup> is an excellent place to start.

<sup>18</sup> See e.g. Daniel H. Nexon and Thomas Wright, “What’s at Stake in the American Empire Debate” for an example how history can productively inform contemporary debates (as well as the follow up discussion by Alex Cooley, “America and Empire: Thoughts on a Debate” at [http://3quarksdaily.blogspot.com/2007/06/america\\_and\\_emp.html](http://3quarksdaily.blogspot.com/2007/06/america_and_emp.html)); see also Alexander J. Motyl, *Imperial Ends: The Decay, Collapse, and Revival of Empires* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Victoria Tin-bor Hui, *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe*



Dr. Ayşe Zarakol is a University Lecturer in International Relations in the University of Cambridge’s POLIS Department and a Fellow at Emmanuel College. She received her PhD in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her primary research interests are in

international security with an emphasis on approaches rooted in social theory and historical sociology.

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Andrew Phillips, *War, Religion and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Sandra Halperin and Ronen Palan, eds., *Legacies of Empire: Imperial Roots of the Contemporary Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) for other examples in historical IR of attempts to engage with various past “empires” on their own terms (this is not meant to be exhaustive list).

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## IHAP Section Panels at APSA Meeting (3-6 September 2015)

### THURSDAY

#### 2:00 PM:

POSTER SESSION II: POSTER SESSION:  
INTERNATIONAL HISTORY AND POLITICS  
(Hilton, Grand Ballroom)

#### Posters:

- International Relations Theory with Chinese Characteristic  
*Hun Joon Kim, Korea University*
- Norms and Torture in the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902  
*William d'Ambruso*
- The Failure of "Failed States" and the Promise of the State Capacity Concept  
*Sarah Elizabeth Peters, University of Notre Dame*
- Who Speaks for the Local? The Contested Role of Civil Society in Central Africa  
*Joshua Shurley, University of Manchester*

#### 4:15 PM:

INTERNATIONAL HISTORY AND THE BIG QUESTIONS (Parc 55, Davidson)

#### Chairs:

Charles Eugene Gholz, *University of Texas at Austin*  
Brian C. Rathbun, *University of Southern California*

#### Panelists:

- “Profiles in Statesmanship: Bringing Leaders Back into the Analysis”  
*Bruce W. Jentleson, Duke University*
- Contagion Processes in the First World War: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis  
*John A. Vasquez, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*
- Covert Communication: Signals, Inferences and Secrecy in World Politics  
*Austin Carson, University of Chicago*  
*Keren Yarhi-Milo, Princeton University*
- Realism, Imperialism, and the Expansion of Overseas U.S. Military Bases  
*Andrew Yeo, Catholic University of America*  
*Stacie Pettyjohn, RAND Corporation*

- Maritime Piracy Across Time: Recurring Patterns from the Bronze Age to Today  
*Samuel R. Rohrer, University of North Georgia*

Discussant:

Brian C. Rathbun, *University of Southern California*

**FRIDAY**

**7:30 AM:**

IDEAS AND DOMESTIC POLITICS IN AMERICA'S RISE TO POWER (Parc 55, Stockton)

Chair:

Daniel Deudney, *Johns Hopkins University*

Panelists:

- Republican Empire: Partisanship and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1866-1898  
*Paul Musgrave, Georgetown University*
- Thinking about Expansion: Ideas and America's Emergence as a World Power  
*Kyle M. Lascuertes, Lewis & Clark College*
- To Hop or to Hold: Island Territories and U.S. Annexation  
*Richard W. Maass, University of Evansville*
- Recognition and Rapprochement: America's Peaceful Rise  
*Michelle Murray, Bard College*

Discussant:

Henry R. Nau, *George Washington University*

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**11:30 AM:**

CHINA AND ASIA, PAST AND PRESENT (Parc 55, Mission I)

Chair:

Brantly Womack, *University of Virginia*

Panelists:

- Carrots and Sticks: The Domestic Political Determinants of American Strategy toward China  
*Jungkun Seo, Kyung Hee University*  
*Peter Trubowitz, London School of Economics*
- Great Power Politics and Postwar Regional Security Architectures  
*Ji Hye Shin, University of Notre Dame*
- Internationalization and Hegemonic Authority: Korea under Chinese Hegemony  
*In Young Min, University of*

*Southern California*

- Realism Revisited: Why Tributary System Matters in China's Wars against Koguryo  
*Christina Jun-Yao Lai, Georgetown University*
- Status Insecurity and Temporality in World Politics  
*Joshua Meir Freedman, Northwestern University*

Discussant:

Hyon Joo Yoo, *Trinity University*

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SECRECY IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (Hilton, Union Square 24)

Chair:

Dan Reiter, *Emory University*

Panelists:

- Secrets in the Secretariat: Intelligence Disclosures and Power in IOs  
*Allison Carnegie, Columbia University*  
*Austin Carson, University of Chicago*
- Extraordinary Rendition Flight Paths and Oversight of National Security Policy  
*Michael P. Colaresi, Michigan State University*  
*Lora DiBlasi, Michigan State University*
- Why do States Launch Regime Changes? U.S.-backed Regime Change in the Cold War  
*Lindsey O'Rourke, Boston College*
- The Seen and the Unseen: Secrecy, Deception, and the Conduct of Intervention  
*Michael Poznansky, University of Virginia*
- The Security Effects of Enemy Collusion When Secrecy Takes Two  
*Shawn L. Ramirez, Emory University*

Discussant:

Joshua Rovner, *Southern Methodist University*

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**1:15 PM: IHAP SECTION BUSINESS MEETING (Hilton - Union Square Room 13)**

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**2:30 PM:**

STATE AND ANTI-STATE VIOLENCE, THEN AND NOW (Hilton, Union Square 23)

Chair:

Abhishek Chatterjee, *University of Montana*

Panelists:

- The Logic of Violence in State Building: Modern and Medieval Parallels  
*Deborah A. Boucoyannis, University of Virginia*
- Comparing Post-Feudal Actors to Current Violent Non-State Actors  
*Ana Alves, Lee University; Abby Attia, Lee University*
- Violence at the Margins: Propaganda of the Deed and State Formation in Europe  
*Mark Alexander Shirk, University of Maryland*
- Imperial Reforms and Early Nationalism in the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires  
*Margarita H. Petrova, Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI)*

Discussant:

Cameron G. Thies, *Arizona State University*

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**4:30 PM:**

IDEAS IN TRANSNATIONAL SPACE (Parc 55, Mason)

Chair:

Joel R. Campbell, *Troy University*

Panelists:

- Norm Strength and the Norm Life Cycle  
*Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch, Wellesley College*  
*Jennifer M. Dixon, Villanova University*
- Political Dimensions of 9/11 Narratives in History Textbooks Worldwide  
*Elizabeth Danielle Herman, UC Berkeley*
- Revolutionary Waves: The International Effects of Threatened Domestic Order  
*Chad Nelson, Brigham Young University*
- Reaching Across the Border: Internationalizing Citizenship as Domestic Strategy  
*Hadas Aron, Columbia University; Emily Holland*
- Diffusion or Modernization? The Sources of Death Penalty Abolition Since 1945  
*Seva Gunitsky, University of Toronto*

Discussant

Eric Grynaviski, *George Washington University*

**SATURDAY**

**2:00 PM:**

DIVERSIFYING INTERNATIONAL STRUGGLES: THEORY AND PRACTICE IN GLOBAL JUSTICE (Parc 55, Mission I)

Chair:

Julie Hollar, *City University of New York Graduate Center*

Panelists:

- "They All Think They Are Here to Stay": Resistance to Governance in Herat  
*Bojan Savic, Assistant Professor of International Relations*
- Doubting Dogma: Interrogating IR's Constructivist-Critical Theory Synthesis  
*Laura E Sjoberg, University of Florida*  
*J. Samuel Barkin, University of Massachusetts Boston*
- International or Western criminal court? Insights from CLS and Constructivism  
*Lucrecia Garcia Iommi, Fairfield University*
- Decolonizing Sovereignty: Indigenous Contributions to Political Science  
*Sandra Cristina Alvarez, Chapman University*
- Towards Queer Cosmopolitanism? Re-thinking Butler's theory of performativity  
*Bogdan Popa, Oberlin College*

Discussants:

Mauro J. Caraccioli, *Saint Michael's College*

Isaac Kamola, *Trinity College*

**SUNDAY:**

**10:15 AM:**

AMERICA, LIBERALISM, AND EMPIRE (Hilton, Golden Gate 6)

Chair:

Peter Trubowitz, *London School of Economics*

Panelists:

- The Wilsonian Limits to Liberal Imperialism  
*Tony Smith, Tufts University*

- Liberal America and the Globalization of the Westphalian System  
*Daniel Deudney, Johns Hopkins University*  
*G. John Ikenberry, Princeton University*
- Liberal Hegemony, Illiberal Empire, and the American Republic  
*David C. Hendrickson, Colorado College*
- The Construction of the American Standard of Civilization

- *Taesuh Cha, Johns Hopkins University*
- America's Strategy of Imperial Decline  
*Henry R. Nau, George Washington University*

Discussants:

John J. Mearsheimer, *University of Chicago*  
Atul Kohli, *Princeton University*

## Upcoming Events and Workshops

### September 2015

Strengthening Electoral Integrity: What Works?  
*September 2<sup>nd</sup>: Grand Hyatt, San Francisco, California, USA*

[More Information](#)

Change, Resistance and Collective Action in Southern Italy: A Multidisciplinary Symposium  
*September 4<sup>th</sup>: Canterbury, UK*

[More Information](#)

UACES 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on European Studies

*September 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>: Bilbao, Spain*

[More Information](#)

Annual PSA/BISA Teaching and Learning Conference

*September 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>: Bristol, UK*

[More Information](#)

27<sup>th</sup> British International History Group Annual Conference

*September 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>: University of Kent, UK*

[More Information](#)

Elections, Public Opinion and Parties (EPOP) 2015 Conference

*September 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>: Cardiff, UK*

[More Information](#)

9<sup>th</sup> Pan-European EISA Conference

*September 23<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>: Naxos, Sicily, Italy*

[More Information](#)

### October 2015

Between Impossibility and Virtue: New Configurations of Ethics in World Politics  
*October 1<sup>st</sup>: London, UK*

[More Information](#)

ISSS-ISAC Annual Conference 2015

*October 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>: Springfield, Massachusetts, USA*

[More Information](#)

Annual Millennium Conference: Failure and Denial in World Politics

*October 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>: London School of Economics and Political Science, UK*

[More Information](#)

12<sup>th</sup> International Holocaust Studies Conference: Global Perspective on the Holocaust

*October 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>th</sup>: Murfreesboro, Tennessee, USA*

[More Information](#)

ISA South Annual Conference 2015

*October 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>: Tampa, Florida, USA*

[More Information](#)

### November 2015

Development of Government Conference

*November 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>: University of Manchester, UK*

[More Information](#)

Mediating Democracy: Media and Politics Specialist Group Conference

*November 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>: Chester, UK*

[More Information](#)

ISA Northeast Annual Conference 2015  
*November 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>: Providence, Rhode Island, USA*  
[More Information](#)

Popular Culture and World Politics 8 (PCWP8)  
*November 20<sup>th</sup>: University of Westminster, London, UK*  
[More Information](#)

ISA Midwest Annual Conference 2015  
*November 20-21<sup>st</sup>: St. Louis, Missouri, USA*  
[More Information](#)

### **January 2016**

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on the Political Economy of  
International Organizations  
*January 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>; Salt Lake City, Utah, USA*  
[More Information](#)

### **February 2016**

2016 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference  
*February 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>: Portland, Oregon, USA*  
[More Information](#)

### **March 2016**

Exploring Peace: ISA's 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
*March 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>: Atlanta, Georgia, USA*  
[More Information](#)

66<sup>th</sup> PSA Annual International Conference  
*March 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>: Brighton, UK*  
[More Information](#)

### **April 2016**

3<sup>rd</sup> European Workshop in International Studies  
*April 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>: University of Tübingen, Germany*  
[More Information](#)

ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops  
*April 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>: University of Pisa, Italy*  
[More Information](#)