Message from the President:
Stacie Goddard

Dear IHAP Members,

I hope that you are all safe and well. This is my first newsletter as president of the IHAP section and, while it is a strange and fraught time, I feel lucky to be able to continue the significant work of my predecessor, Cecelia Lynch, to introduce the content of this issue, and to outline some of our goals in the year ahead.

In our last newsletter, the IHAP officers published a statement, detailing our commitment to anti-racist activities in our section. We recognize that the study of international history and politics has all too often amplified Eurocentric narratives, excluded Black scholars and scholarship, and overlooked the agency of the Global South in international historical processes. Cecelia’s message outlined five specific measures our section is taking to increase anti-racism both in our governance and in our scholarship.

The theme of this newsletter is “Race, Indigeneity, and the Global South in IHAP.” In the first contribution, Krista Johnson and Owen Brown provide an overview of one of our panels this fall “The Howard School of International Relations: Theory and Practice.” In general, the (virtual) panels of APSA 2020 were more diverse than ever, our other sponsored panels include an impressive variety of papers on a range of historical issues around the globe, from the Qing in the 16th century to colonial Algeria, to contemporary reintegration in South Sudan, among other contributions. All of the contributions to this newsletter are designed to push scholars working in international history to reflect on the ways in which their own work might be founded on raced and racist concepts. Siddharth Mallavarapu, of Shiv Nadar University, highlights to the colonial foundations of the United Nations and asks how scholarship can move beyond these precepts. Other contributions examine how scholarship on transitional justice might be applied to the United States, the role of settler politics in historical scholarship, and the exclusion of colonial violence from historical security studies.
We plan to continue our anti-racist work as we assemble our panels for APSA 2021. As stated in our last newsletter, the Section Officers and Executive Council members have committed ourselves to be intentional about the construction of panels. Our program chair, Marcos Scauso has worked to make this even more specific, and that we have reached out to scholars with diverse backgrounds, locations, experiences, trainings, and methodologies beyond the lists of APSA members. Thanks to the help of other scholars and collectives, we have extended our invitation to present proposals beyond the boundaries of our association, aiming to create not only a more inclusive section, but a more diverse conference and association. Graduate students, junior scholars, and senior scholars have already expressed their wishes to submit proposals. Through this initiative, we hope to encourage more diverse spaces of discussion, including more voices that might be new to APSA, propitiating a possibility to think about our limitations, and “Promoting Pluralism.”

There is, we acknowledge, much more work to be done, but this newsletter highlights a few areas in which we are moving forward. While we hope to do this work in person next APSA, we were fortunate to be able to celebrate IHAP scholarship virtually this year. We were particularly delighted to celebrate our award winners for the Outstanding Article in International History and Politics, and the Jervis-Schroeder Book Prize! The newsletter includes interviews with the Jervis-Schroeder Book Prize co-winner, Ahmet Kuru and Jelena Subotic, and our article prize winners, Eric Hundman and Sarah Parkinson. And please do keep a lookout for the opening of our call for next year’s prizes. The deadline for both will be January 31, 2021.

We are grateful to all of our membership for making virtual APSA a success. We hope to be able to gather in person in Seattle next year.

All the best,

Stacie Goddard
International Relations, as a discipline, has for too long been unable to analyze or accommodate analyses of racism and the dynamics of imperial power and government in the international system. In recent years, scholars on the margins of the field, but also activists and social movements, have forced the discipline to confront its own parochialism and reconsider its strategic relevance in a world where race and racism continue to structure the logics of world politics. As societies grapple with denaturalizing the statues and symbols of empire, IR too must wrestle with the history of racialized international analyses and racism in general, as well as the erasure of the ideas, scholarship and contributions of intellectuals of color.

In this context, the growing interest in the writings and work of a group of African American scholars based at Howard University in the first half of the twentieth century is especially timely. Collectively referred to as the Howard School, these scholars, including Alain Locke, Ralph Bunche, Merze Tate, Rayford Logan, E. Franklin Frazier and others, were unique among their contemporaries in the nascent field of IR in that they sought to directly interrogate and indict the policies and practices of empire and white supremacy, both at home in the United States and elsewhere across the globe. The Howard School thinkers not only offered sharp insights on the imperial, interracial, and international politics of the age, but also contributed novel and indeed prescient theorizations on the functioning and imbrications of empire and international relations, and their meaning for democracy. It was in part these insights and theorization that we sought to examine more deeply in our 2020 APSA Annual Convention panel, “The Howard School of International Affairs: Theory and Practice.”

The “Howard School” panel built on the theme of this year’s conference and introduced the APSA community to three Howard scholars in particular, Alain Locke, Merze Tate and Ralph Bunche, and their analyses of the dangers to democracy by the practices and aspirations of racism and empire. Two papers on philosopher Alain Locke serve to anchor the panel, as Locke is recognized as the founding father of the Howard School and his writing and ideas clearly influenced those of his colleagues. Drawing on some of Locke’s earliest writings on race contacts and interracial relations, Owen Brown’s paper presented a recovery and re-examination of Locke’s conception of imperialism as race practice and the ways in which it constitutes and shapes hierarchy in the international order. In his paper, Errol
Henderson uses Locke’s “diaporist” theorizing and his understanding of racial diasporas as actors in world politics and IR to connect the earlier Howard School with a more recent Howard School of African Diaspora Studies, bringing Locke’s career and influence full circle.

Pearl Robinson’s paper begins to lay out the institutional architecture of the Howard School – in particular, its Division of Social Sciences Annual Conferences and the Howard University Forum; and its publications including the Bronze Booklets edited by Alain Locke and the Journal of Negro Education (JNE), edited by Charles H. Thompson. This institutional architecture, and the people who animated it, reached beyond the walls of Howard University to facilitate a new kind of informed activist role for Black civic engagement in the international community.

Krista Johnson’s paper focuses on the youngest and only female faculty of the Howard School, Merze Tate’s understanding of the relationship between nationalism and imperialism as mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive, and her reticence to see the nation-state as a moral center of global politics. In sum, the papers on this panel not only offered a close reading of these scholars' works but also revealed their continuing relevance to understanding present fissures in Western democracies.

The panel was chaired by Robert Smith, a Howard alum and Professor of African American politics. Robert Vitalis, who introduced IR scholars to the Howard School in his 2015 book White World Order, Black Power Politics, served as discussant and highlighted several insights gleaned from the papers. Vitalis categorized the papers as fitting neatly into the critical intellectual and disciplinary history strand of what is a growing body of literature on Racism in IR. A value in explicating the work of these scholars is that we begin to have a revised and fuller understanding of them as major thinkers. For example, Alain Locke has generally only been read and taught in the discipline of Philosophy and more recently, African American Studies. Yet, as Henderson in particular notes, Locke provided some of the earliest theoretical arguments on cultural groups and cultural change, and their impact on international relations, in addition to theses on the role of imperialism in modern war.

Similarly, through this work, we come to better appreciate and understand the intellectual legacy of Ralph Bunche, who even after he was named Director of the UN’s Trusteeship Division relied on the Howard School’s institutional infrastructure as a megaphone and a sounding board for his decolonization work in the Secretariat. It was his collaborations with scholars in the JNE and his speeches given to the Howard University Forum that Bunche, the intellectual, emphasized an understanding of non-hierarchal human rights for dependent peoples and black Americans that was far

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more expansive and equitable than what came to be defined as ‘civil rights.’

Vitalis stressed the importance of bringing these writings into the canon of IR scholarship, and onto the syllabi of IR scholars. In this regard, the extensive work of Merze Tate and her critique of liberalism, while not a complete embrace of realism, may point to opportunities to explicate key concepts such as power, its mechanisms and motivations in the international system. Indeed, in the current political climate, as disciplines and academic institutions grapple with their complicated and often racist past, and when concepts such as trusteeship are again on the international table, the writings of the Howard School and thoughtful analysis of their ideas will ensure their insights are not overlooked, but are brought to bear on contemporary issues.

Such a reexamination and recovery of the work, theorizations, and insights of the Howard School thinkers is significant for a number of reasons. It not only provides us with a better and more accurate understanding of a significant period of the history – both in terms of the development of the field of IR and international politics more broadly – but it also presents us with a range of productive insights that can help inform contemporary theory and practice: from the influence of racial diasporas on international politics and thought, to the mutually reinforcing imbrications between nationalism and empire, amongst many others. What is more, this re-engagement with the Howard School goes some way to correcting the mistaken notion that the field of IR has never really occupied itself with the meaning of empire and race, or the concerns of the marginalized people and places who bear the brunt of their oppressive weight. Instead, the discussions surrounding and emerging out of this panel have shown that there is, and has been, a rich and lively tradition of engagement and contestation on these subjects in the field since its emergence despite attempts at marginalization and erasure. Indeed, the concerns of the Howard School scholars, like those who work to recover and continue their legacy, were never marginal, but rather get at many of the central problems and questions that drive IR and political science—questions of power, democracy, rights, and interdependence.

**Black Rage and Reconciliation in the US: Insights from Transitional Justice**

*Alexandra Raleigh, Case Western Reserve University*

The election of Joe Biden to the United States presidency has been hailed as the beginning of a new chapter in American history. But, as the large number of votes for Donald Trump from the November 2020 election suggest, the road to reconciliation in America remains long, with much work to do to remedy the racial divisions amplified by the Trump Administration’s tenure.

On June 4, 2020, as the United States reeled from peaceful protesters demanding recognition that Black lives matter, Representative Al Green (D-Tex) introduced H.Con.Res.100, a House resolution proposing the establishment of a United States Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation. Arguing that the state of racial injustice against Black people in America is the result of a lack of reconciliation, Representative Green aims, through the proposed Cabinet-level department, to both address the symptoms of racism and invidious discrimination and prevent its recurrence in the future. The Department of Reconciliation would
“acknowledge, memorialize, and be a catalyst for progress toward jettisoning the belief in a hierarchy of human value, embracing our common humanity, and permanently eliminating persistent racial inequities.” Tasked with the development and implementation of a national strategy to combat institutional and invidious discrimination, the Department would promote legal initiatives as part of a “war on racism and discrimination.”

In a recent interview, Representative Green intimated that the pursuit of reconciliation is a vehicle by which anger at the racial injustices suffered by Black Americans can be constructively channeled. His reference to the need to “do something constructive” with his anger at the murder of George Floyd prompts the question: what is the role of Black rage in the quest for racial justice, both in America and beyond its borders? Black people across the world are tired. We are exhausted by the incessant pain of white supremacy and the perpetual drip of systemic racism. And we are angry. What role should – and will – our anger play in the movement for Black lives?

Notably, this question is not confined to any geographic region. As the Black Lives Matter movement gains traction in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and elsewhere, the salience of negative emotions such as anger and despair to prospects for reconciliation and racial justice increases at the same time. Writing within the context of post-conflict transitions, Mihaela Mihai has described the destructive and constructive impact that so-called negative emotions such as resentment and indignation can have on attempts at reconciliation and the deepening of a culture of human rights in society.1 Her research on transitional justice projects in South Africa, Argentina, and Peru confirms the vital role that national institutions such as the courts and truth commissions can play in channeling negative emotions. By constructively engaging with feelings of anger and resentment held by both victims and victimizers, these institutions work to cultivate democratically acceptable forms of emotional expression and prevent these emotions from being expressed in destabilizing ways.

Rejecting characterizations of Black rage as pathological, a sign of powerlessness, Bell Hooks urges for a reconceptualization of such anger as empowering: “Renewed, organized black liberation struggle cannot happen if we remain unable to tap collective black rage. Progressive black activists must show how we take that rage and move it beyond fruitless scapegoating of any group, linking it instead to a passion for freedom and justice that illuminates, heals, and makes redemptive struggle possible.”2

Black rage must not be denied a space in the global movement for Black lives and the broader anti-racist struggle. Rather than choke down our rage, we must, as Bell Hooks writes, instead link our anger to love for our community and passion for justice. A Department of Reconciliation under the Biden Administration might serve a vital role in establishing those links and channeling our rage into sustainable change.

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Reimagining the Mosaic

Liam Midzain-Gobin, Brock University

As race has become a more prominent feature of mainstream discourse these last number of years, a familiar refrain has popped up again across Canadian media: the insistence of our own identity as a multicultural mosaic. Here, formal equality reigns and we purposively imagine ourselves as distinct from both our British imperial forefathers and the American racial empire to our south. This self-understanding roots our history as one of immigration, with our population reflecting an inclusive attitude towards newcomers from around the world and a commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples at home. Of course, this mythology moves quickly past less-welcoming moments in our history such as the Chinese head tax, the internment of Ukrainian-Canadians during World War I and Japanese-Canadians during World War II, and the continuous journey regulation that deliberately sought to exclude those from non-white jurisdictions. Rather than focusing on this disjuncture, however, I want to offer some brief reflections on the imagery and impact of the mosaic-as-metaphor. Drawing on my background studying the operations of settler colonialism, I use the concept of settler coloniality and connect it to an understanding of race as a process. I do so, not to condemn the image in and of itself, but instead to highlight how focusing our attention on questions of race-as-fact, we support ongoing moves to obscure, whereas analysis attentive to racialization can open new avenues for engagement.

By way of beginning, I write this as a settler Canadian scholar of color whose background is raced in a way that reflects this mosaic. In reflecting on the mosaic from this position, however, I am always struck by competing visions of them. First, mosaics can be constructed of differently-shaped pieces that are arranged to fit together (Figure above). Alternatively, the creator of the mosaic shapes each tile to fit together in a pattern imagined by them (Figure below).

While being cautious not to ascribe too much meaning to a metaphor, I want to suggest that the Canadian mosaic more closely aligns with the second form. That is, the various racial and cultural communities – these two

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As I noted above, Canada as a state rests on both a settler colonial foundation and the present. This reflects the operation of what is perhaps most effectively understood as settler coloniality following the decolonial literature in its understanding of the hierarchical relations that remain constitutive of global order. That is, as Sabaratnam writes, wherever modernity emerges, we must always understand that it “always carries within it a racist, dualistic hierarchy of the human which enables forms of conquest, appropriation, violence and domination.” My own work uses settler coloniality to denote the way settler colonial liberal democratic governments, such as the example of Canada used here, require the ongoing erasure of indigeneity. Formal equality and recognition are possible only where Indigenous nationhood is fundamentally unthinkable. However, Indigenous peoples have refused to be erased, and thus, the settler state must continue to its processes of racialization in order to erase them – either directly through genocidal policy as identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, or through their assimilation into whiteness.

What this points to is the way that racialization, especially when deployed as a technology of governance, obscures and erases at the same time as it captures and enables. There are numerous ways this can be seen, but I want to highlight two as they relate

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to the settler coloniality I identified above. The first move to obscure relates to the construction of governable populations by the modern state, thus seeking to obscure the actual diversity of the population to be governed. In Canada, this meant the homogenizing of a diverse collection of Indigenous nations into three broad Indigenous populations: First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The second move is that racialization obscures the non-human relations and responsibilities that we hold. The Indigenous resurgence and decolonial traditions – along with others who ground their work in Indigenous thought – write of what Anishinaabe theorist Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark describes as a ‘right relationship’ with not only the natural world but also kinship ties to non-human spirits and the spiritual realm. These cosmological relations are deliberately ignored in the tools of colonial administration whose operations rest on racialization to obviate colonial difference, and the reification of the (human) racial categories that make up such metaphors as the multicultural mosaic. However, as my reference to the Indigenous resurgence and decolonial traditions illustrate, even where the colonial state seeks to obscure through racialization, the colonial project remains unrealized. In closing then, I want to suggest that attention to race as a process may in fact allow us to move past a focus on the operations of settler coloniality. Even where racialization operates on a more than skin deep level to organize the world along what has been described as the “global color line,” it never fully erases. Indigenous nationhood has continued to be practiced by many despite the operations of the settler state, and recent examples of Indigenous assertions of authority have been done explicitly to maintain those cosmological relations and responsibilities. These are but two examples I have come across in my own work, but there are many more. The attention to the importance of race and racialization in our analyses, rather than a deconstructive project aimed at doing away with assumed realities and images such as the mosaic, can instead offer us ways to see otherwise.

“Indigenous peoples have refused to be erased, and thus, the settler state must continue to its processes of racialization in order to erase them”

Resource Politics in the Global South: Whose Curse Is It?

Naosuke Mukoyama, University of Oxford

The paradox of resource wealth has received attention from political scientists and economists for decades. A windfall of revenues from the production of natural resources has been associated with various negative outcomes, including autocracy, slower economic growth, and civil conflict. They are collectively called the "resource curse." This "curse" is particularly prevalent in the Global South, most notably in the Middle East and Africa, while resource producers in the Global North seem to be free from it. Typical examples of the curse like Saudi Arabia and Nigeria are often compared with exceptional cases such as Norway and Canada.

It is notable that the curse is frequently attributed to the mismanagement of resource revenues by individual governments in the Global South. For instance, in her speech at a conference in Mongolia in 2011, Helen Clark, then Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, stated that the difference between those that fell into the curse and those that did not lay in whether they “have translated their resource wealth into human development,” pointing out that “[t]hrough good governance and sound long-term development planning, countries can avoid the effects of the resource curse, and provide quality services, such as education and healthcare, to their citizens.”

Admittedly, it is true that the presence of the resource curse depends partly on how the wealth is handled. Corruption and the rent-seeking behavior of politicians often lead to political and economic maladies. There is a growing literature that focuses on the role of institutions in the resource curse. However, attributing the curse solely to the wrongdoings of governments in the Global South misses an important aspect of the issue, namely the colonial origins of the resource curse. It can lead to an oversimplification of the long-term and complex phenomenon, as well as the misplacement of responsibilities. To avoid such problems, one needs to consider historical and international factors.

“By overlooking history, they also fail to account for the international nature of resource politics that played an important role in the colonial period.”

The scarcity of historical and international accounts of the resource curse derives from the history of the literature. Problems of resource-rich states started to catch attention during and after the oil boom in the 1970s, when various issues presented themselves. Naturally, scholars and policymakers placed their focus

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on contemporary politics to understand this “new” phenomenon. However, being a new issue does not necessarily mean that its causes are also new. In the case of the resource curse, there were also decades-long causal mechanisms that happened to become visible in the 1970s, which most existing studies fail to consider. By overlooking history, they also fail to account for the international nature of resource politics that played an important role in the colonial period.

There is ample evidence that colonial powers exerted a significant influence on the emergence of the resource curse. For instance, Brunei, an absolute monarchy in Southeast Asia, once experienced a popular movement for democratization during the colonial period that was suppressed with the help of the colonizers, namely the British. The Brunei People’s Party (Parti Rakyat Brunei: PRB) was supported by 75% of Brunei’s adult male population in 1957. It demanded the Sultan of implementing a democratic election and establishing an elected government. Although an election for the District Council was held in 1962 and the PRB won in a landslide, it was unable to influence the policy of the central government due to the Sultan’s refusal to cooperate. As a result, the PRB came to realize that it would not be possible to rise to power within the existing political system and, therefore, decided to resort to a violent uprising to overturn it. On December 8, 1962, the military wing of the party rebelled against the government and swiftly seized most of the state, including the capital and the largest oil field. However, the Sultan asked the British for military assistance, and British regiments were immediately sent to Brunei. As a result, the revolt was suppressed in only two weeks, and the PRB was outlawed. The British are said to have believed that the PRB was a threat to British interests in Brunei or special privileges of Brunei Shell, which prompted them to intervene in favor of the existing regime. British intervention stifled movements for democratization, and consequently, Brunei has been under autocracy to date.

Colonial policies also played a crucial role in civil conflict. In Aceh, Indonesia, the discovery of natural gas in 1971 triggered the rise of secessionism. However, natural gas was not the root cause of secessionism; rather, it enabled underlying issues of sovereignty and territoriality in Aceh that date back to the colonial period to resurface. That is, Aceh was a separate, autonomous sultanate with a distinct language, institutions, and culture before it was forcefully annexed by the Dutch into the East Indies. Prior to the incorporation, Aceh had been considered to be connected more to the Indian Ocean and the Malay Peninsula than the Java Sea economically, politically, and culturally. It was first the agreement

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20 Hussainmiya, 300–311.
between the British and the Dutch in 1824 that included the entire Sumatra into the Dutch sphere and then the forceful annexation of the Dutch that created the “unhappy marriage,” which eventually led to a secessionist conflict between Aceh and the Indonesian central government.

As these examples tell us, historical and international angles highlight the problems of the conventional understanding of the resource curse. The problems of resource-rich states are so deeply entangled with their colonial experience that a simple remedy of good governance would not easily solve them.

Not Citizens in Waiting

Gustavo Alvim de Góes Bezerra, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro and the Office of the Public Prosecutor from the State of Rio de Janeiro (MPRJ)

Slavery in Brazil precedes Brazil as a country. This anteriority helps to understand the naturality with which the institutionalized violence against black people was understood until the early 1990s. This also sheds some light on the prevalence of narratives of 19th Century Brazil in which the uphill battle against the maintenance of enslavement is portrayed as a progressive march towards liberation and equality. The effort of building a liberal state that would mimic the British experience is portrayed in the traditional historiography that deals with the institutional history of the country. Such History is marked by the dispute between the political parties whose supposed distinction was not reflected in the composition of its ranks. It should go without saying, that in this scenario of homogenous elite and an extensive population of enslaved people, the idea of building a liberal state is one that blurs the line between History and wishful-thinking. However, despite the evidence against it, the idea that Brazil could build a liberal state in the 19th century has strong roots, even after much has been argued against the liberal categories.

I understand that the intersection between slavery and the 19th century goes beyond the borders of Brazil. Haiti, Cuba, and the USA (just to keep on this side of the Atlantic, the “receiving” end of the “trade in the living”, to use Alencastro’s term) have also been molded by the experience of the legal/legitimate trade of laboring people. However, I find the colonization of Brazil to be central to the creation of the phenomenon of modern slavery and its profound relation with racism. Thus, just like the English experience is inescapable to Locke’s theorization on citizenship and State, it might be fruitful to look to the south-Atlantic experience with slavery to elaborate on ways of politically acknowledging its experience and long-term impacts.

If we were to consider the necessity of broadening the references, we mobilize in


25 It is important to highlight that the idea of slavery is used to account for different experiences of forced labor throughout History. Cambridge University Press has four volumes on World History of Slavery edited by David Eltis and Stanley Engerman that help to differentiate these phenomena. When categorizing as Modern slavery, my goal is to specify the phenomenon that helped to create the Atlantic space from the 16th century onwards. A phenomenon that, in itself, suffered many transformations in its meaning. On the mutation of the meaning of enslavement, specially its significance during the 19th century, see TOMICH, Dale. Through the Prism of Slavery: labor, Capital and World Economy. London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004.
In order to expand the political framing, we should begin by understanding the intertwined relationship between State, and citizenship. It is a State’s attribution to recognize those who are their citizens, which is in itself an interesting turning point from the abstraction of the social contract that represents the citizens agreeing upon in order to found the State. Those recognized as citizens are allowed rights – sometimes mistaken as privileges – which include the possibility of having seen as legitimate uprisings against the tyrants. At least John Locke saw it that way.

Locke wrote his *Two Treatises of Government* while observing revolutionary movements in England. He thought through the transition that revolution represented towards a modern State featuring representativeness and the institutionalization of limits to the power of the King. However, Locke, who happened to be a partner in a company that profited from the selling of African people to the Americas, was not considering the situation of those whose life he traded upon, for the peoples who were enslaved were not seen as endowed with the same legitimacy to an uprising. In Locke it is possible to see arguments contrary to the violent imposition of the state against anyone, since he advocates for challenging the tyrants who would be in disarray with the “civil society,” imposing itself on it and ignoring the rights and lives of the subjects of the king.

To do justice to the author, Locke’s most famous book would not envision the conditions of building a State in a non-European country – it is debatable if he would have considered States to be a possibility in any other continent (except perhaps the British colonies in North America). There are interests at play in colonies in recognizing Liberalism as a “one-size-fits-all” theoretical approach since it arrives with the glow of central capitalist states and rhetoric of universality while allowing for the invisibility of extensive portions of populations that do not fit the basic parameters of citizenship.

The two-fold movement of attributing a universality to a parochial text, while ignoring the History and the dynamics of the spaces to which this discourse is brought allows for a crystallization of the concept of citizenship. It becomes such a central concept that we actually make an effort of interpreting the History of slavery through it, as if enslaved people would be the antithesis to citizenship, a telling misconception, for what is denied to someone enslaved is not citizenship, but rather his/her humanity.

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My argument is that if, instead of defining the abstract citizen as the point of departure to the writing of the History of the modern international, we lean towards the idea of the enslaved individual as the point of departure, we would have a completely different perspective on the trajectory of and the current dynamics of politics. The ubiquitous state optics, for instance, would be challenged for there were/are similarities in the categories of exclusion that do not depend on the direct manifestation of the State – as it happens in the case of citizenship. Take racism against a black person in contemporary Brazil or the US and how it relates to the experience of slavery. One can argue that the liberal state was the one that abolished enslavement, let’s only hope that this same person can account for the lack of policies on such states to cup with the inequality that the centuries of slavery ingrained in the populations.

Ana Agathangelou used the notion of enslaved as a metaphor for the universal outcast. On a similar note, Orlando Patterson defined it as the “social death.” Although these definitions fall back on the complexity of the enslaved society that at the time denied every right to those people, was also extremely dependent on their work; they say a lot on the experience that the people under the violence of slavery suffered. Being socially dead is a powerful way of relating with the idea of a person spending much of his/her existence trying to prove – legally or on other spheres of life – that s/he is actually a person. This is less than an analytical abstraction and more of a reality of many minorities that, still to this day, do not fit the parameters established by the citizenship framework and do not fully comprehend the distinction between rights and privileges: both equally distant.

“Those who wrote histories of Brazil through institutions were unable to see how the socially dead resisted and negotiated their lives with the conditions they had at their disposal in spaces unseen by institutionalized Justice.”

The fact that there has never been a law that made slavery legal in Brazil, allowed for the legal norms of the 19th century Liberal State to be presented as the ground in which liberty was built while, actually, it operated as a way of legitimizing it. This brings us to the last aspect of the liberal State: the fiction that the legal norms would mirror social relations. Those who wrote histories of Brazil through institutions were unable to see how the socially dead resisted and negotiated their lives with the conditions they had at their disposal in spaces unseen by institutionalized Justice.

It is extremely difficult to make sense of social dynamics when the categories one has at his/her disposal are off. When you try to fit phenomena to the concepts, we have at hand we, more often than not, only find death in spaces of resistances and negotiations.

The Pendulum Swings: Tethering Histories and Futures of the United Nations

Siddharth Mallavarapu,* Shiv Nadar University

*A special thanks from the IHAP newsletter editors to Siddharth Mallavarapu who was supposed to contribute to the canceled spring 2020 issue of the newsletter on the 75th anniversary of the UN, which was canceled due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The following contribution touches on issues of the Global South and the United Nations: past and futures.

Going against the grain of advice offered by Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga in their fascinating account of ‘New Histories of the United Nations’, I step back in order to draw ‘lessons’ for the future.30 To facilitate this think piece, I draw on other intellectual allies as well.31 Heuristically, the intent here is to tease elements from recent histories that could contribute to a checklist for envisaging better and brighter futures for the UN, particularly from the vantage point of the global South.

Seventy-five years in an institution’s life provides an adequate moment for critical pause and stock taking. A few questions are in order. What do historians, whose task is to illuminate slices of time, tell us about broader patterns and enduring tropes with regard to the UN? What can the UN do differently now? What may have changed in our ‘scope conditions’ to warrant a re-assessment of the UN? Will the UN reboot and unapologetically take on a world in which internationalism and multilateralism have become muddied words? Can the UN surmount these immediate challenges without losing sight of the big picture - the normative ideals it had originally set out for itself?

I am thinking of a still elusive international peace that reminds us of all the unfinished global engagements that the UN has to transact to bring us closer to that ideal. Simply put, to reiterate, we must ask what a wish list from the perspective of the global South may look like today when it comes to the UN and its possible futures. To do this, we need as a preliminary exercise to glean what some historians are telling us about the past(s) of the UN until more recently. An optimistic note to perhaps end on is to ask what the best that still rests dormant in one form or the other in the inventory of sensibilities in the UN is and how this can be re-kindled to secure ultimately our shared collective future.

To Amrith and Sluga, the UN is the historian’s laboratory. It offers plenty of nourishment for a curious mind. It hinges on an opening acknowledgment that ‘…the UN [is] a historiographical actor in its own right’ while simultaneously conceding “…that the UN itself is part of the genealogy of ‘world history’ as a field of research.”32 A number of tropes are opened up in the specific intervention here – a recognition of the

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complexity of actors on the world stage, the need to look beyond the West when it comes to historicizing the UN, the silences around race, class and gender at different historical moments in the life of the UN and the tendency to peculiarly fixate over the state form and national sovereignty sometimes overriding all else. Amrith and Sluga also gesture to the ‘egalitarian rhetoric’ of the UN and its failure to establish this globally. They advocate the gains of ‘a prosopographical approach to UN history’ and recognize the virtues of contributing to a ‘shift in the current research from the national to the transnational as the focus and framework of scholarly research.’

Another perceptive account by the historian, Madeleine Herren, explores the life of international organizations from 1865-1945. There are a number of interesting takeaways from this account, but I shall at the risk of caricature make a mention of the most salient. First, we learn about the genesis and growth of ‘political internationalism’ in the nineteenth and earlier part of the twentieth century. Second, the ‘professionalization’ of international organizations with its accompanying claims of ‘expertise’ is equally riveting. Third, the historical drivers of international organizations from ‘pacifist oriented civil societies’ to states and ‘epistemic communities’ come in for special mention. Fourth, the colonial context of early international organizations cannot be missed and the transition from a world of more fluid ‘semi-official character’ international organizations to that of more formal international organizations speaks to something we may have lost en route. How many of us have heard of figures like Atul Chandra Chatterjee or F.T.Cheng? Both Asians who come in for special mention while discussing the history of the League of Nations.

B.S. Chimni carries Herren’s narrative forward in his account of international organizations from 1945 to the present throwing in an interesting mix of ideas, especially from a TWAIL (Third World Approaches to International Law) perspective. These include the notion that international organizations represent movement towards an inching ‘world state’, the deep entanglement of the UN in the Cold War

...the need to look beyond the West when it comes to historicizing the UN, the silences around race, class and gender at different historical moments in the life of the UN and the tendency to peculiarly fixate over the state form and national sovereignty sometimes overriding all else.”

years, residual colonial and now neo-colonial influences in the establishment and running of international organizations, the ‘excruciatingly slow’ institutional reform processes in motion and the need to contend with serious ‘democratic deficits’ as well as the ‘imperial character’ of the newly emerging ‘world state’.

A final account here for consideration is that of Aditya Balasubramanian and Srinath Raghavan that examines the Indian presence at the Bretton Woods Conference. Not surprisingly, it turns out that India’s ‘… first brush with the liberal international order proved to be a salutary reminder of the asymmetries of power…’.

The piece makes a passionate plea for ‘historians …to pay as much attention to national economic histories as to the global context, to power politics as much as discourses of development.’

Finally, akin to Herren’s reminder of amnesia when it came to Asian figures and their contribution to early international organizations, Balasubramanian and Raghavan suggest likewise that ‘…recovering these forgotten voices and submerged histories acquires new importance’ both from the perspective of an unsure ‘liberal international order’ and in sync with discourse around rising powers and their desire to address long-standing ‘democratic deficits’ in the make-up of contemporary international organizations.

What does all of this add up to in terms of a wish list from the perspective of the global South when it comes to envisaging diverse futures for the UN? There are several possibilities, but I shall confine myself to flagging nine elements.

‘…recovering these forgotten voices and submerged histories acquires new importance’ both from the perspective of an unsure ‘liberal international order’ and in sync with discourse around rising powers and their desire to address long-standing ‘democratic deficits’ in the make-up of contemporary international organizations.”

First and foremost is the challenge of moving away from any taint of neo-colonial tutelage in terms of mindsets. Old assumptions for instance relating to development aid shall have to be discarded. Second, long-pending institutional reforms in the UN system are on everybody’s radar screen in the global South. Whether it comes to quotas and voting rights in the IMF or the reform of the UNSC, a UN of the future should have addressed these

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43 Balasubramanian and Raghavan, “Present at the Creation: India, the Global Economy, and the Bretton Woods Conference” (2018):93
44 Balasubramanian and Raghavan, “Present at the Creation: India, the Global Economy, and the Bretton Woods Conference” (2018):94
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conspicuous ‘democratic deficits’.\textsuperscript{46} Third, getting equations of race, class and gender right at the UN still involves a fair amount of translation work on the ground and the UN could potentially be a trend setter on these matters.

Fourth, the UN must move beyond the espousal of ‘egalitarianism’ to actually help realize these goals more substantively in the real world.\textsuperscript{47} The rewards for this will be long-term when it comes to global income and wealth inequalities. Fifth, the UN must continue to find ways to allow for ‘semi-official’ parleys much like the world that preceded the establishment of modern international organizations.\textsuperscript{48} This also means a lower threshold of obsession with the state form and national sovereignty in a classical idiom. Sixth, the UN must come clean on its politics. It must not be an ‘anti-politics machine,’ a term deployed by James Ferguson to refer to the World Bank officialdom in Lesotho.\textsuperscript{49} This entails a willingness to go beyond technical resolutions and engaging more meaty political questions of ‘burden-sharing’ and ‘distributional outcomes’.\textsuperscript{50}

Seventh, the UN will have to enliven internationalism. While it is clear that not all forms of internationalism are necessarily benign, the UN has to be a force for more humane variants of internationalism.\textsuperscript{51} Eighth, a natural form this internationalism could assume is multilateralism. The UN has to revive faith in multilateralism against all odds particularly given the current \textit{zeitgeist}. Finally, the UN will have to widen its historical and spatial canvas and overcome amnesia in terms of critical inspiring figures who straddled many worlds when it comes to re-imagining international organizations for the twenty-first century. This might seem a tall order. However, it is a menu worth mulling over and translating into practice for anybody who cares about ensuring a much more robust UN at the end of the day.

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\textsuperscript{47} Amrith and Sluga, ‘New Histories of the United Nations’ (2008): 258;269

\textsuperscript{48} Herren, ‘International Organizations, 1865-1945’ (2016): 112

\textsuperscript{49} James Ferguson, \textit{The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1994)


\textsuperscript{51} Herren, “International Organizations, 1865-1945” (2016): 91-112
Moving Beyond Inclusivity

Garrett FitzGerald, University of Notre Dame
&
Justin de Leon, University of Notre Dame

Despite recent interest in issues of race, empire, indigeneity, and suppressed knowledges, the study of international history and politics remains implicated in the material and epistemic erasure of Indigenous lives and lifeworlds. 52 This tendency remains particularly visible in the field’s enduring “methodological nationalism,” or presumption of the Westphalian nation-state as the basic ontological and analytical unit. 53 Academic discourse around international history and politics thus continues colonial patterns that erase Indigenous peoples and their attendant non-Western ontological and philosophical realities. But rereading these concepts—‘history,’ ‘politics,’ and ‘the international’ itself—with an eye to indigeneity also opens spaces both within and beyond this system for imaging alternative futures.

We write as early-career scholars located at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, an institution increasingly dedicated to exploring intersectional and decolonial conceptions of peace. But we also write as settlers with roots in the Aeta and Igorot regions of the Philippines and in Ireland and the United Kingdom. Our work therefore foregrounds tensions that emerge from pursuing inclusive and intellectually generative visions of international history and politics while occupying the traditional homelands of Indigenous peoples whose understandings of peace, politics, and history remain excluded from academic spaces and discourses. Our own subfield of International Relations (IR) reflects interlinked racialized, gendered, and territorialized exclusions in its construction of authorized knowledge, remaining conceptually centered around an international system itself defined by imperialism and colonialism. 54 Because their myopic focus on a particular understanding of the international actively erases Indigenous peoples, prevailing approaches to the study of international history and politics are understood to be “epistemically imperial,” and therefore cannot be ‘decolonized’ as such. 55

However, the presence of concepts within Indigenous knowledge systems roughly analogous to those that anchor IR indicates one possible path by which scholars of international history and politics might pursue contingent, pragmatic encounters with Indigenous and other ways of knowing. Critical IR scholars indicate how applying a “relational logic” to the irreducible plurality

54 Julian Saurin, “International Relations as the Imperial Illusion; or, the Need to Decolonize IR,” in Decolonizing International Relations, ed. Branwen Guffydd Jones (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 23–42.
of meanings possessed by concepts such as sovereignty, peace and conflict, governance, security, treaties, democracy, and rights and obligations might improve the field’s adeptness at navigating questions of epistemological, ontological, and cosmological difference.\(^{56}\) It is important to note, however, that “dialogue within discipline and dialogue with Otherness are not the same”; one maintains a hegemonic “self-referentiality” while the other challenges this purported universality, shifting engagements onto discursive terrains that do not presume the authorization of specific frameworks of meaning.\(^{57}\)

Dismantling colonial politics of knowledge requires more than increasing the sensitivity or inclusivity of our disciplines. It requires radically reimagining the possible meanings of our fields’ central concepts and unsettling the types of subjects deemed capable of producing knowledge about these concepts—and what counts as knowledge in the first place.\(^{58}\)

There exists an urgent need to protect, recover, and rediscover suppressed genealogies of knowledge, both to ensure their survival and as sources of alternative political grammars. This project is at the heart of the Indigenous resurgence paradigm, a set of literature calling for the reclaiming of Indigenous practices of nationhood, sovereignty, and treaty-making in ways that are not dependent upon settler state mechanisms.\(^{59}\)

Bridging international history and politics, Indigenous governance, and First Nations and Indigenous Studies, Indigenous resurgence foregrounds Indigenous knowledges and practices to think about new horizons of social, economic, and political possibility. Unfortunately, aside from the works of scholars like Sheryl Lightfoot, Marshall Beier, Karina Shaw, Neta Crawford, and Matthew Wildcat, normative approaches to the study of international history and politics have made little effort to engage these alternative conceptions of the field’s central concepts.

In thinking about missed opportunities and possible futures, we also point to the work being done that engages Indigenous futurisms, which have been proliferating recently alongside parallel futurisms within Black abolitionist and African American Studies spaces. Indigenous futurisms, as

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\(^{56}\) Tamara Trownsell et al., “Recrafting International Relations through Relationality,” *E-International Relations*, 2019, 4–5.


expressed through Indigenous art, storytelling, filmmaking, and activism, act as “imaginary landscapes of possibility centered on Indigenous traditional knowledge, value systems, and most of all, active presence,” explains Blaire Topash-Caldwell. For peoples whose past and presence face continued erasure, futurism provides a creative and political way to write lifeworlds into being, to reimagine futures based on marginalized pasts and presents.

While Indigenous resurgence and futurisms help us think about ways to look outside existing systems to generate alternative practices, it is also important to think about ways to work within these systems, despite the inevitable incommensurabilities and difficulties generated by trying to imagine new worlds from within old structures. Writing under the pseudonym La Paperson (2017), scholar of ethnic and critical race studies K. Wayne Yang describes refashioning and reworking aspects of the colonial machinery. Connecting agency and structure, La Paperson proposes the notion of scyborg, a machined person embedded within this system through legitimated knowledges. The scyborg is a being in assemblage—not only of the colonial structure but also of potential decolonial machinery—which allows for agency that extends beyond the individual and into the transformation and assemblages of new systems. As La Paperson describes, “The scyborg is like R2D2 in the Death Star, opening escape tunnels, lowering and raising doors to new passageways, making the death machine run backward, and ultimately releasing the plans for its destruction”—the scyborg is thus an agent in the “un/patterning of relations of power.”

Reflecting on missed opportunities and possible futures for international history and politics revealed through attention to race, empire, and indigeneity indicates urgent and necessary transformations to settler systems of power both within and beyond academic spaces and discourses. Such reflections must grapple with the epistemic and ethico-political tensions and incommensurabilities that arise from centering the lived experiences and knowledges of Indigenous peoples. Scholars should thus not be tempted by calls to ‘decolonize international relations’ or ‘decolonize political science,’ which implicitly suggest that academic disciplines and the colonial systems of knowledge and power with which they are coimbriated can be critically reconstituted apart from the social, political, and economic structures of settler-colonial societies. Reducing engagements with Indigenous experiences and knowledges to conscientization on the part of settler scholars risks simply hitching oneself to the academy’s current “decolonial bandwagon,” increasing the danger of bringing forth symbolic, rather than structural, transformations.

But especially for those of us living in settler societies, exploring analogous concepts that bridge epistemic, ontological, and cosmological differences can provide crucial points of contact for the development of

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contingent, context-specific forms of encounter and solidarity rooted in place-based knowledges of Indigenous communities.\textsuperscript{64} Engaging with alternative understandings of concepts like sovereignty, nationhood, and peace—especially those understandings native to the lands we occupy—can help us to “deparochialize” the prevailing concepts and theories in our fields through dialogical engagement with Indigenous and other knowledge systems currently excluded from academic discourses.\textsuperscript{65} Through these comparative, dialogical encounters, scholars of international history and politics might yet learn to reread these concepts in ways that do not exclude and erase Indigenous lives and lifeworlds, and embrace more fully the responsibility for the internal transformation of oppressive systems by engaging with knowledges that seek futures beyond them.

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The Past, Present and Future of Race, Indigeneity and Empire in International Relations

Desirée Poets, Virginia Tech

Race and indigeneity articulate key questions, concepts and themes in the field of International Politics, such as sovereignty and international law, diplomacy, territory, the nation and nationhood, world order, conflict and peace, and terrorism and counterterrorism, to name only a few. Race and indigeneity are intrinsically entwined in global politics, not only through transnational systems of oppression but also of resistance and solidarity, laying bare the material and ontological foundations of our global order. They draw our attention, for example, to how nation-states around the world, including in Europe and North America, have been (re-) produced through Empire and (settler) colonialism – through exploitation, oppression and dispossession – on an inside/outside continuum.

The continuities between policing ‘at home’ and international conflicts ‘abroad’ illustrate this point. Taking the example of the US, scholars have demonstrated policing’s colonial roots in slave patrols, later merging with state militias, the Ku Klux Klan and the federal military after the Civil War; the development of counterinsurgency during 19th century Indian Wars; the feedback loops between the Philippine-American war, post-WWII global counterinsurgency, and

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domestic policing, and, since the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11, the significant flow of military equipment, funding, training, expertise, and surveillance and intelligence infrastructure for counter-terrorism to police departments and federal agencies such as ICE. The violent suppression of the 2014 and 2020 Black Lives Matter and 2016-17 NODAPL protests at Standing Rock were a material manifestation of this inside/outside continuum. In the words of Jessica Katzenstein: “Every attack in the name of national security on Brown and Black countries in the Global South, every massive injection of public tax dollars into the U.S. military, has both ravaged communities abroad and rebounded on American subjects—particularly the most marginalized. Indeed, Indigenous peoples, the original (and ongoing) victims of North American settler colonialism, remain the racialized group most likely to be killed in confrontations with U.S. police.”

Despite the centrality of violence and conflict to much International Relations (IR) scholarship, traditional Security and Strategic Studies have mostly relegated policing to domestic politics and, disciplinarily, to Criminology. But some Critical Security Studies scholars have accounted for the intertwinements of militarization at home and abroad. Similarly, Robbie Shilliam (2020) has recently reminded us that, while some strands of IR research continue to marginalize race and indigeneity, we would be mistaken to assume that the field has not developed a by now significant inheritance of scholarship on race, indigeneity, and Empire.

In a key text, Anievas, Manchanda and Shilliam have shown how race and racism “were in fact integral to the birth of the discipline.” IR, they contend, “was founded, in large part, as a policy science designed to solve the dilemmas posed by empire-building and colonial administration facing the white

77 Ibid., p.6.
Western powers” in the early 20th century, remaining complicit with them. One common-cited evidence for this is that Foreign Affairs was originally called the Journal of Race Development. But once again, here too we find a critique. Black thinkers, including DuBois, were already ‘writing back’ in this early period, the authors remind us, and more recent scholars have expanded this tradition, especially since the 2010s. Having said this, indigeneity and settler colonialism have, perhaps, so far received the least sustained attention in IR, and Indigenous (and Black) scholars are still a minority in the field. But this is changing through the work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous early career scholars. Put succinctly, those asking after race, indigeneity and Empire and/in IR have never been alone.

When scholarship pays attention to race and indigeneity, it soon begins to unravel a contested but nevertheless still Eurocentric capitalist global order as well as IR’s complicity with it. Race and indigeneity make transparent and challenge this order’s wider onto-epistemological scaffolding. Of particular importance is, for example, how Europeans’ relegation of Native American/Indigenous and African peoples to non- or sub-humans shines light on Enlightenment Science’s division between Human/Nature, a critique that several subfields of critical IR, drawing for example from Quantum Physics, political ecology and post-humanism, have taken up. But even before these trends, African and Native/American Indigenous cosmologies and onto-epistemologies (to name only two) have always rejected this way of knowing and being in the world. Put differently, race and indigeneity are not only important for their power to critique. Their transformative potential becomes concrete in their rebellious world-making capacity.

“When scholarship pays attention to race and indigeneity, it soon begins to unravel a contested but nevertheless still Eurocentric capitalist global order as well as IR’s complicity with it.”

Having said this, as at least some strands of IR integrate such approaches, spurred in part by the increasing popularity of Decoloniality, the ever-present risk of epistemic violence through an appropriation of such knowledges that disavows their radical redistributive and reparative political

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projects remain. On a related note, the 2008 financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the protests against anti-Black and anti-Indigenous violence around the world have evinced the ongoing relevance of such radical projects and political thought, especially when located outside of the Eurocentric canon. We can think of Third World Marxism and The Red Nation as examples here. In an academic environment still very much attached to post-Marxism, post-structuralism and post-modernism, this risk of epistemic violence is particularly acute.

In sum, race, indigeneity, and Empire are essential to international politics and foundational to the field of International Relations. While such work does not come without its challenges, IR’s inheritance to future generations, to return to Shilliam, will hopefully be increasingly plural, shaped by Black, Indigenous, Chicana, and ‘other’ non-Western researchers and perspectives.

“race, indigeneity, and Empire are essential to international politics and foundational to the field of International Relations.”

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**Congratulations to the 2020 IHAP Section Award Winners!**

**The 2020 Outstanding Article in International History and Politics**

Committee Members: Helen Kinsella (Chair), Jordan Branch, and Christopher Darnton

The winners of the 2020 Outstanding Article Award are: **Eric Hundman and Sarah E Parkinson** for their article: “Rogues, Degenerates, and Heroes: Disobedience as Politics in Military Organizations” *European Journal of International Relations (EJIR)* Vol. 25 (3) 645-671. Please find the article available [here](#).

**The 2020 Robert L. Jervis and Paul Schroeder Best Book Award**

Committee Members: Martin Heisler (Chair), Arjun Chowdhury, and Kathryn Lavelle

The co-winners for Robert L. Jervis and Paul Schroeder Best Book Award are:


How did you become interested in the intersection between international history and politics?

Both of our dissertations initially examined contemporary phenomena in military organizations. Separately, we both realized that we couldn’t possibly explain the dynamics that interested each of us without delving further back into history. But, honestly, we were both also trained in a tradition that strives to examine contemporary politics in a historical arc and that appreciates the evolution of political processes over time. We both think that there is something of a false dichotomy in the question; political scientists study power dynamics that are often inherent aspects of human behavior, which means that any boundary between “history” and “politics” is ultimately arbitrary.

How did this co-authorship come about? What allowed the two of you to connect to produce such an insightful and rich article?

We both received our PhDs from the University of Chicago, where we both also studied with John Padgett, a scholar of social network theory and organizational decision making. He shaped our thinking both about these questions and about how to answer them via a detailed, evidence-based approach.

Also at UChicago, Paul Staniland hosted a writing group that focused on networks and violence,
which included the three of us and Jonathan Obert. Some of our ideas for this project began to percolate in that group, and we started putting concepts to paper around 2011. We presented the first version of this paper at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Social Science History Association, but we didn’t generate the first draft of the key diagram that ended up on page six of the article until we got together for drinks at APSA in 2014. We drew it on a hotel Post-It.

How did you become interested in organizational behavior and military disobedience in your respective areas of expertise?

The answer to the first part of this question is John Padgett. Both of us took his course on social network theory -- which fundamentally changed how each of us looked at the world -- and then TA’ed his organizational decision-making course. It’s an extremely rich and often under-explored theoretical realm in political science.

When it comes to the second part of the question, we have different answers. In Parkinson’s case, she was interviewing current and former members of Palestinian militant groups in Lebanon. Disobedience usually didn’t surface in first interviews, but over time, she started hearing stories of well-trained, loyal-to-the-cause militants who people held in high esteem because they had disobeyed orders, including from high-ranking figures such as Yasir Arafat. That seemed like a contradiction given how military organizations operate and what military sociology tells us about them, so she began to very carefully explore the lore that surrounded these individuals. For Hundman, he was reading widely in military history while working on his dissertation proposal and noticed a number of cases of disobedience that existing research couldn’t easily explain.

How do you navigate the tension between detailed historical research and macro theoretical claims, between contingency and generalizability?

In general, part of what sets social network theory and analysis apart from other ontological and methodological approaches lies in its scalability; it allows us to move seamlessly between micro-level evidence, meso- and macro-level processes, and broader theoretical claims. One way to think about this is “you have to get more granular in the empirical data to build a better theory.” In effect, detailed, individual-level data (whether focused on individual people, organizations, states, whatever) is essential to building strong theories of network dynamics because the approach centers actors’ behaviors in response to other actors in their social worlds. This means that the role contingency plays -- regardless of the content of a contingent event -- is generalizable in our theory. In other words, we can’t predict precisely which social ties will activate in response to a specific order, but we can theorize that when this type of interaction occurs, the resulting dynamics often lead to disobedience. We tried to show this sequence in the extra cases for the article’s appendix: the contingent events in each were different, but the fact of that contingency played a similar role in each case of decision making.

What was the most challenging aspect of working with the
Hundman: Our historical materials for this project were quite different! The materials I used were written records of several different types. My first major challenge was discovering that the language used in writing during my case’s time period was distinct enough from both contemporary Chinese and the “standard” classical Chinese that it required dedicated study. Once I surmounted that hurdle, I had to get up to speed on the shorthand conventions in different types of writing -- court records versus telegram readouts, for instance. Finally, much of the remaining work involved searching for usefully relevant materials in the vast archival holdings scattered throughout libraries and museums in both Beijing and Taipei.

Parkinson: This is going to sound weird, but I didn’t go looking for data on disobedience, specifically. I was engaged in long-term, ethnohistorical research (including participant observation, oral histories, in-depth interviews, and archival research) on the evolution of Palestinian militant organizations in Lebanon. I had to build an understanding of the context in which I was working and the lived experiences of my interlocutors to even contemplate relevant questions to ask. Some of those questions eventually focused on disobedience. But, even once I knew that there were questions to be asked about disobedience, there’s the added challenge of it being a quite delicate matter; one does not simply ask about that time someone violated a military chain of command, particularly if they’re still a member of the group.

For example, the first interview cited in the paper’s Palestinian case, with Ahmad, occurred in 2011. By then, I had known him for over a year, had spent days shadowing him, had even stayed at his house with his family, but he didn’t bring up the Damour story until over a year into our relationship. I actually think there was an element of luck, too; we were sitting outside at a cafe in South Lebanon and an UN helicopter flew over us. That event at least in part helped to surface Ahmad’s memory of Lebanese Interior Minister Camille Chamoun’s helicopter escape from Damour, which fed Palestinian militants’ resentment towards Arafat and the subsequent theft of Dany Chamoun’s car, which Ahmed then related to me in the context of our conversation. So, the hardest parts of the project involved having patience, continuing to return to the field despite contradicting incentives, developing context-informed questions, and finding appropriate ways to ask people about difficult or controversial moments in their careers. I had faith in ethnographic methodology, which is something that both Lisa Wedeen and Elisabeth Jean Wood taught me. That doesn’t mean that the process isn’t challenging.

What was the most unexpected thing you found in conducting your historical research?

Hundman: How big the gaps in our understanding of major historical periods can be. There has of course been an enormous amount of research – primarily by historians – into the 19th century in China, but most of that interest is focused at the beginning and middle of the century. The late 19th century (before the First Sino-Japanese War) was seen by many as uninteresting and was thus
overlooked, even though it was a period of immense change in China’s domestic politics and foreign relations alike! This meant that I couldn’t take for granted that conclusions about China’s politics from several decades’ prior would apply to my cases, so I ended up doing a lot of the historical contextualizing myself.

Parkinson: Honestly, how exciting it was. I became obsessed with piecing together the minute details of that car theft. In 2012, at a workshop, someone told me to put a formal model into the (then very underdeveloped) paper and call it a day, and instead I flew right back to Lebanon and started cautiously asking people if they had “heard similar stories” to that of the car theft (so as not to ask about disobedience directly). I will never forget the conversation when I mentioned the incident to Abu Huli during that 2012 trip. He casually responded something like “oh yeah, the guy’s brother lives in X, you want to meet him?” and I nearly fell off my chair. Part of me believed the story might be apocryphal (which would be a different, though still fascinating and important, type of data). But, at that point, Abu Huli didn’t even know that Abu Khalid had told his brother to burn the car, he just knew that the brother and his friends had burned the car (the brother had passed away only a few months earlier). Then, when I finally met Abu Khalid, the minute I asked about his brother and the car, he launched into his side of the story with Arafat and Abu Iyad and it was like fireworks went off overhead. Details kept accumulating in a way that is really only possible in historical research, when you’re carefully piecing together events or processes that played out decades or centuries ago. It’s incredibly satisfying to assemble the pieces. Some didn’t even “technically” matter, but there’s a joy in getting the little things right, so to speak. For example, initially, back when I wrote the early drafts, my part of the paper was called “Stealing the Red Ferrari” because all I knew was that the guerrilla had stolen a very expensive, European sports car. Then Abu Khalid told me it was a Jaguar; he was absolutely certain of it. I spent days confirming that you could, in fact, buy a red Jaguar in 1975 Lebanon.

What do you think are the major differences in how political scientists and historians “do” history?

There has been a tendency among many political scientists to try and gather data stripped from its context in pursuit of generalizable tests, whereas historians are often more focused on contextualizing the environment in which individuals were operating at the time they were making decisions. Both of these approaches are valuable. But especially when we are talking about trying to understand military decision making and strategizing in war, we think it is crucial to examine what individuals knew at the time and how they understood it, rather than assuming a given officer was able to know any single “best” course of action.

What would you like to see more of in terms of research into international history and politics, either methodologically or substantively?

We’d like to see more acknowledgment that “historical” scholarship can be relevant to present concerns! In many cases historical work is dismissed
simply because it appears too distant to be relevant, but we’d like to see more engagement with historically oriented work on the merits of its arguments about how sociopolitical phenomena work.

**Are there any scholars that you look to as role models? Or pieces of scholarship that you view as being templates for excellent research?**

Generally, our inspirations for this piece -- and the examples that motivated us to keep working on it for so long -- were all of scholars who worked hard to publish brand-new ideas, to leverage non-mainstream methodological approaches, and to generally go against the grain, especially those who drew on work from multiple disciplines to do so. Both of us of course looked to work from the advisor we shared, John Padgett. For Hundman, one other touchstone was Alastair Iain Johnston’s work using historical Chinese texts to distill an argument about Chinese strategic culture. For Parkinson, in addition to those already mentioned, the late Lee Ann Fujii was a huge intellectual influence. Not only was Fujii’s work (also largely historical) both innovative and empirically unassailable, she was also absolutely unconcerned with coloring within the disciplinary lines, so to speak. Fujii did research that she loved and that was meaningful, all while passionately encouraging the junior scholars who she mentored to approach their work in a similar way.

**What do you think are the biggest lessons that publics and/or governments should take from your work?**

First of all, military disobedience isn’t always a bad thing! In one of our cases, a key act of disobedience turned out to be strategically advantageous, and left China in a much better position against its adversary than would have been the case if the commander in question had obeyed. Second, and related, it will never be possible to eliminate disobedience -- there will always be social cleavages that make some orders problematic to a subordinate. Policymakers should therefore focus on encouraging members of the military to be productive and principled in their resistance, wherever possible, rather than portraying unquestioning obedience as the paramount virtue of military service.

Understanding how competing social ties lead people to decide to disobey also sheds light on urgent contemporary questions. For instance, we recently drew on our work to explore one reason why the Trump administration probably chose to rely on federal law enforcement rather than locally-trained National Guard troops to control protests in Washington, DC over the summer: the federal forces had fewer local ties to civilians and thus were more likely to obey orders to be violent against them.

**What tips would you give graduate students or junior scholars interested in historical methods?**

Sometimes worthwhile projects take a very long time! This project took eight years to come to fruition, which has had costs. We both repeatedly upended our lives to do years of fieldwork, each of us frustrated some members of our dissertation committees with the extended periods we spent in the field, and our research and travel has
drawn unwanted attention from law enforcement agencies. To be honest, this isn’t always the type of work that political science rewards; some reviewers repeatedly told us we weren’t even doing political science. But, we were trained by scholars who believe in taking time because some phenomena simply can’t be explained without doing so. Don’t believe people who tell you the details don’t matter, and don’t oversimplify when an important phenomenon is highly complicated and contingent. Some political phenomena are just complex! What matters is that you can find the methodology that fits the question, and that you clearly describe and theorize the phenomena of interest.

2020 Robert L. Jervis and Paul Schroeder Best Book Award Co-Winners:


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**Interview With Ahmed T. Kuru:**

**How did you become interested in the intersection between international history and politics?**

I became interested in that intersection when I wrote my PhD dissertation, which was later published as a book, *Secularism and State Policies toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). While writing it, I was trying to understand why American state policies were more tolerant toward public visibility of religious symbols in comparison to French and Turkish states. My analysis reveals that this policy difference was based on two different secular ideologies—passive secularism in the United States, and assertive secularism in France and Turkey. But I did not stop there and asked, what makes passive secularism dominant in the United States, and assertive secularism in France and Turkey? This question brings me to the analysis of international history. My book shows that the presence of an old regime based on the marriage between the monarchy and hegemonic religion made republicans in Turkey and France assertive secularist, whereas the absence of such an old regime made the founding fathers passive secularist in the United States. In short, this is how I became interested in combining international history and politics, and how I used that approach in my first book.

**What led you to undertake this particularly broad ranging historical book that links developments in the Muslim world to both contemporary politics and a comparative account with Western Europe?**

A similar causal explanation emerges in my new Islam book, which received this IHAP award. I initially asked, why do 49 Muslim-majority countries exhibit low levels of democracy and socio-economic development in comparison to world averages? My historical research makes this question more puzzling, because Muslim countries were philosopheically and economically more developed than Western Christian countries between the ninth and twelfth centuries. Hence, I examined the reasons for this reversal of fortunes. My analysis reveals that the relations between four (religious, political, economic, and intellectual) classes explain this transformation from history to the present. During their “Golden Age” between the ninth and twelfth centuries, Muslim countries had dynamic intellectual and merchant classes, which supported each other, whereas Western Europe was dominated by the alliance between the Catholic Church and the military aristocracy. Later, however, class relations changed. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, there emerged an alliance between the ulema and state authorities in the Muslim world, and this alliance eventually marginalized intellectuals and merchants. Western Europe, however, experienced the opposite trend—dynamic classes of merchants and intellectuals emerged in European cities during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and these two classes led to the long-term process called “the rise of the West.”
Are there any scholars that you look to as role models? Or pieces of scholarship that you view as being templates for excellent research?

Joel Migdal was my PhD advisor at the University of Washington, and I worked closely with late Alfred Stepan during my postdoc at Columbia University. I learned many things from both of them. In terms of books, my classics include:

- Plato’s *Republic*
- Ibn Rushd’s *Decisive Treatise*
- Ibn Khaldun’s *Muqaddimah*
- Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*
- Barrington Moore’s *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*
- Marshall Hodgson’s *The Venture of Islam*
- Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*
- Robert Putnam’s *Making Democracy Work.*

How do you navigate the tension between detailed historical research and macro theoretical claims, between contingency and generalizability?

My writings always try to bring together the detailed information about certain cases and the generalizable results. Documenting a generalizable argument requires a substantial amount of data about the details of the cases. Therefore, I see them as complementary, rather than contradictory.

What was the most challenging aspect of working with the historical material used in the project?

In my new Islam book, the most challenging aspect was reading a great number of books about not only histories, but also ideas of historical authors. My university librarians were shocked by the number of books I checked out. In fact, they did not know that I was also buying many books and reading many articles, in addition to the books from the library.

What was the most unexpected thing you found in conducting your historical research?

It was clearly traceable how the early Muslims’ books on political philosophy, written between the tenth and the fourteenth centuries, were intellectually deeper than the later Muslims’ books on that subject, written between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries, with very few exceptions. This was unexpected.

What do you think are the major differences in how political scientists and historians “do” history?

Political scientists can ask big questions and make historical analysis more relevant to current events. Unfortunately, political scientists are generally discouraged from conducting historical analysis given the fact that our discipline has been dominated by quantitative methods and rational choice theory.

What would you like to see more of in terms of research into international history and politics, either methodologically or substantively?

The new editorial board of American Political Science Review has recently written a letter which declares that political science is “becoming irrelevant” because “our discipline operates with an overly narrow view of what
counts as political science.” I support this letter as a step forward, but it does not mention “the cause” of the problem. The hegemony of quantitative methods and rational choice theory have imposed “an overly narrow view” and made our discipline “irrelevant.” This hegemony should end. We need more scholars conducting qualitative and historical methods.

What tips would you give graduate students or junior scholars interested in historical methods?

Three lessons. First, all countries should appreciate intellectuals and economic entrepreneurs. Even in the United States, intellectuals are challenged today by anti-intellectual politicians and religious conservativism. The clergy-state alliance that has led to stagnation in the Muslim world is not unique to Muslims. It can happen anywhere, including in the United States. Second, Islamophobia is normatively wrong and factually inaccurate. Islam was historically perfectly compatible with philosophical and economic progress. Certain anti-intellectual and anti-bourgeois interpretations of post-eleventh century ulema reflect this class’s interests, rather than Islamic principles. Finally, Muslims need a critical self-reflection. It is not enough to label any critical mind as an “Orientalist.” Without promoting critical thinking, Muslim societies cannot solve their problems of authoritarianism and socioeconomic underdevelopment.

What do you think are the biggest lessons that publics and/or governments should take from your work?

They should write on subjects they really love. Dissertations and books cannot be written simply for earning money or finding a job. One should have an intellectual curiosity on a subject he/she writes on.

Interview With Jelena Subotic:

How did you become interested in the intersection between international history and politics?

I find it hard to understand politics without understanding history first. My earlier work was about very recent history – the wars of Yugoslav succession in the 1990s. But as I worked on that project, I realized very quickly that that particular conflict was waged in many ways – discursively but also operationally – as a continuation of World War II. At least this is how many protagonists themselves thought of it. It also became apparent that to fully understand the historical legacies of WWII I also needed to more fully understand the historical legacies of communism. This became my new research agenda – the intersection between WWII and communism, and the implications of both for contemporary political conflicts and disputes.

How did you navigate writing this book as a study of Holocaust remembrance in Eastern Europe and its contemporary ontological insecurities along with your personal history through your grandfather in the preface?

I only fully understood the role of my grandfather (as the head of Belgrade Special Police in the first three months of the Nazi occupation of Serbia in 1941) as I was writing the book. The book was certainly not the product of
me trying to understand my family history. In fact, it was quite the opposite. It was researching the book that made me find out some very new details about my grandfather’s role in WWII. The reason I even included the information about my grandfather was to illustrate the complex notions of collaboration and rescue and the way in which private memory or family memory tends to obscure larger events, and focus on our own suffering without leaving much space for the suffering of others. I wanted the story about my grandfather and the way in which my family remembered WWII and the post-war era to be an example of the complexities of memory.

**Are there any scholars that you look to as role models? Or pieces of scholarship that you view as being templates for excellent research?**

I really aspire to write in as accessible as possible manner, limiting academic jargon, and weaving in stories and narratives that even non-specialists can enjoy. The scholars I enjoy reading are those who pay attention to the craft of writing and bring the reader into the intimate world of their book’s topic. When writing my latest book, some of the books that I felt most closely matched that goal were *East/West* by Philippe Sands and *Postwar* by Tony Judt.

**How do you navigate the tension between detailed historical research and macro theoretical claims, between contingency and generalizability?**

I guess I don’t worry about this too much. I think that my argument cannot have that much generalizability if the cases on which it is based are not researched in as much meticulous detail as possible. I would much rather learn about the cases in depth and really understand the micro processes going on, than read a relatively superficial analysis of many cases that only shows patterns, without really grappling with the underlying questions of why we see these patterns in the first place. I think political science, at least as developed in the United States, has focused so much on generalizability and prediction in both research and graduate training, that it has often lost sight of what is gained by working on nuances, details, and context.

**What was the most challenging aspect of working with the historical material used in the project?**

The hardest part – by far – about working on this topic was the emotional toll it took to read so many testimonies, letters, diaries and personal accounts of the Holocaust. I read such a huge amount and looked at so many incredibly detailed archival documents that there were many moments when I simply had to stop reading and take breaks. I also felt acutely the ethical issues of doing research on the Holocaust, the exploitative nature of this research and struggled a lot with how to reconcile the reader’s curiosity and provide as much context and detail while at the same time does not engage in gratuitous descriptions of unimaginable violence.

**What was the most unexpected thing you found in conducting your historical research?**

Other than discovering things about my family that I did not know before, what I found perhaps most amazing was the incredibly vibrant cultural and social life many Jewish ghettos had during the worst phases of the Holocaust. I could
not quite comprehend that Jews confined in the Vilna ghetto in Lithuania, for example, organized and performed regular theater and music performances, and even competitions with prizes for student musicians. The desire for cultural life at the gates of certain death was almost inconceivable to read about.

**What do you think are the major differences in how political scientists and historians “do” history?**

Historians, I think, are not so burdened with the need for generalizability and prediction. But they can often get bogged down in the details and not see the larger patterns. There is also sometimes an aversion to offering a theory – the focus can be too much on description. I also find some historians to be too much of gate-keepers, even hostile to non-historians doing historical work. This is a shame, as there is much to be gained by a different take on a historical period, by comparing some aspects of a historical event with aspects of events from a different period or location.

**What would you like to see more of in terms of research into international history and politics, either methodologically or substantively?**

I would like to see much more robust historical work in political science more broadly. There has already been great and robust development of historical International Relations, but other subfields of political science – comparative politics, especially – are lacking. I would like to see scholars venture further in the past – look at 19th century, medieval period, the antiquity, and apply the tools and theories of IR or other subfields to historical epochs that remained understudied in political science.

**What do you think are the biggest lessons that publics and/or governments should take from your work?**

I would like the message of the book to be that political memory matters, and it matters not just at the individual level, but at the level of state policy. How states remember their pasts has a direct bearing on how they organize their contemporary politics, how they pursue their foreign relations, and how they treat their minorities (ethnic, racial, religious, sexual). The past is not just something that belongs in a museum – it is the organizing principle of how state decisions get made.

**What tips would you give graduate students or junior scholars interested in historical methods?**

The most important thing is to not be afraid to do historical work. Yes, it is not the most common approach in political science, but interest in history is growing, and there is a strong research community now that makes it much easier to collaborate and be part of the group. Historical work, however, requires a lot of patience. There are many dead ends that you end up in, many false clues to chase. The payoff, however, can be immensely rewarding.