



From Empires to Nation States?: Enduring Legacies
and Historical Disjunctures

Symposium

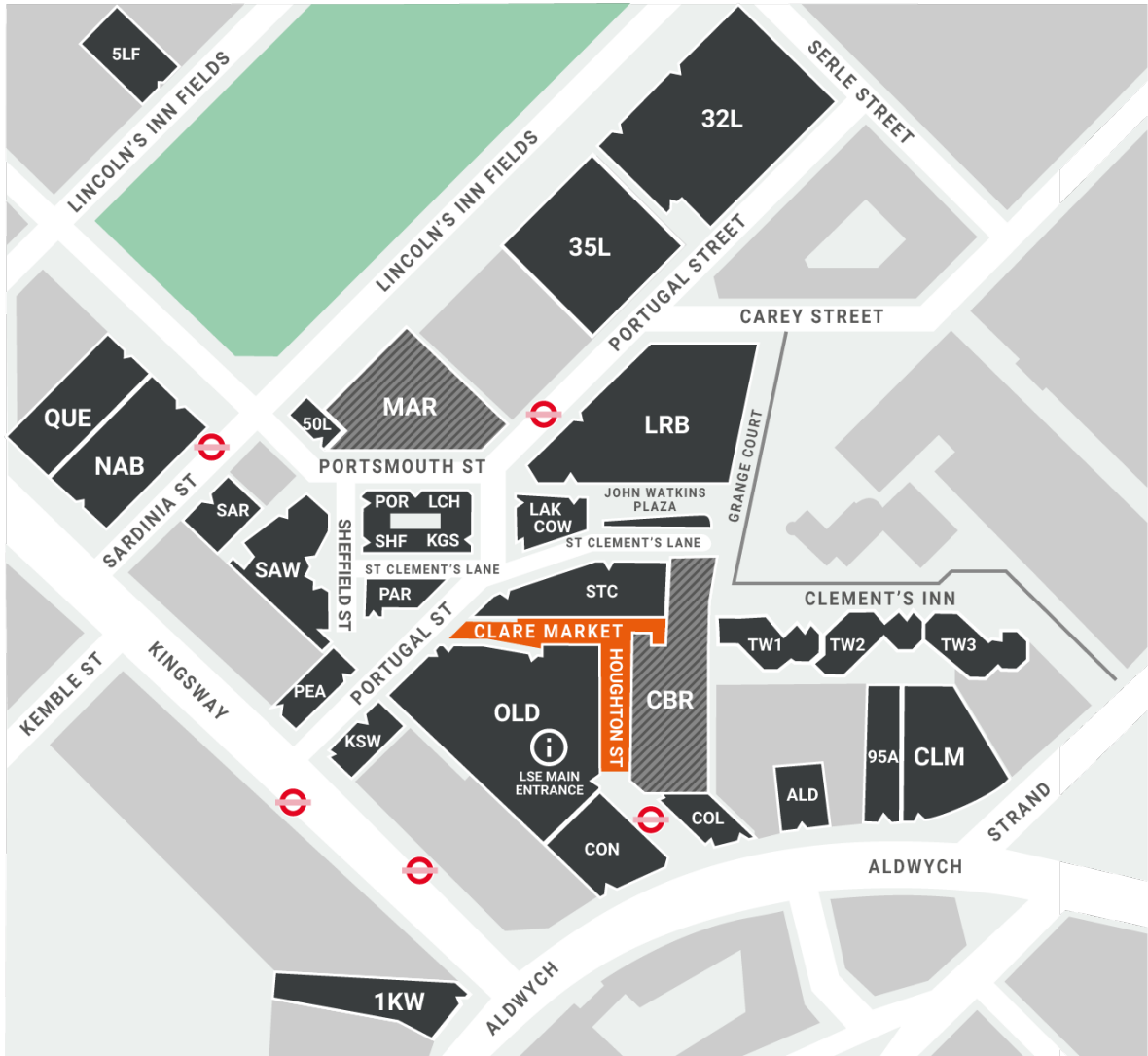
London School of Economics

Clement House

Room 2.02

October 31st – November 1st 2022

Campus Map



Schedule

October 31st

0930-1030 Registration and Coffee

1030-1100 Welcome from the Millennium Team

1100 – 1245 **Panel**

Discussant: Albert Culler-Cano(LSE)

Aisha Paulina Lami Kadiri(École Normale Supérieure)& Kasper Molich(University College Copenhagen): The Commonwealth and its peripheries

Sarp Kurgan(UCSB Global Studies): The Progressive Path to Liberation: Intellectual Assessments of Nationalist Regimes in Turkey, Iran, and Egypt in the 1930s

Mateus S. Borges(PUC Rio): Grievances, hopes, and revolution: the affective politics of anticolonial nationalism in Iran

Rafael Bittencourt Rodrigues Lopes (PUC Minas): Two centuries and still not enough? The durability of the colonial legacy from the Latin American experience and its impact on rethinking International Relations

1245-1345 **Lunch**

1345-1515 **Panel**

Discussant: Eva Leth-Sørensen(LSE)

Victoria H. Bergström(Providence College): Resisting Change: The Geopolitics of Arctic Decolonisation Within Empires

Pedro Salgado(Oxford Brookes): Against sovereignty: the colonial limits of modern politics

Halvard Leira & Benjamin de Carvalho(Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo): Recovering the Politics of the Sea in International Relations

1515-1545 **Coffee Break**

1545-1700 **Panel**

Ehud Eiran(University of Haifa): The effect of colonialism and the decolonial moment on post-colonial territorial conflicts

Maria Ketzmerick(University of Bayreuth): Researching Colonial (Dis)Continuities in Critical Security Studies and the Postcolonial Dilemma: A Research Heuristic

1900-2100 **Dinner(Location TBC)**

November 1st:

1000-1145 Panel

Discussant: Dipyaman Chakrabarti(LSE)

Sanchi Rai(RV University): Resolving the Theseus Paradox at the Cusp of Independence: The Battle to become the Legal Successor of British India

Swati Chawla(Jindal Global University): From Empire to Nation-States along India's 'Mongolian Fringe'

Emre Demir(TED University): British Discourses on the "Sick Men of Europe and Asia": A Comparative Analysis

1145-1245 Lunch

1245-1430 Panel

Discussant: Martin Bayly(LSE)

Shikha Dilawri(SOAS): On the 'worldmaking' of vernacular capitalists: tracing entanglements between race, caste, and capital

Robbie Shilliam (John Hopkins): Republicanism and Imperialism at the Frontier: A Post-BLM genealogy of International Relations

Giorgio Shani(International Christian University): From 'Critical' Nationalism to 'Asia as Method': Tagore's Quest for a Moral Imaginary' and its implications for Post-Western International Relations

1430-1500 Coffee Break

1500-1615 Roundtable

George Lawson(Australian National University) & Ayse Zarakol(University of Cambridge): Imperial-National States and the Formation of Modern International Order

Anna Agathangelou(University of Toronto): Decolonial Dawn: On Black Reparative Claims for a Planetary Otherwise

1615-1630 Closing remarks

1800-1930 Public Event: From Empires to Nation States?: Enduring Legacies and Historical Disjunctures

1930-2030 Drinks Reception

Abstracts

From ‘Critical’ Nationalism to ‘Asia as Method’: Tagore’s Quest for a Moral Imaginary’ and its implications for Post-Western International Relations

This article will show how Tagore’s critique of the nation, most presciently delivered in a lecture delivered in Japan as the First World War unfolded, which remains fundamental to the Westphalian imaginary of IR unlocks the potential of ‘Asia as method’ (Chen 2011). Tagore was an anti- imperialist but cannot be described as a nationalist since he was ‘critical’ of the ideology of nationalism which he considered to be both pernicious and alien to ‘Asian’ societies. His attempt to transcend the imaginary of the nation-state led him to posit ‘Asia’ as a ‘moral imaginary’ (Kaviraj 2019) to counter the Westphalian imaginary of IR. As a ‘moral imaginary,’ Pan-Asianism allowed Tagore to critique not only the nation-state but implicitly the ‘methodological nationalism’ which continues to characterise IR. However, this imaginary, based to a large extent on Orientalist readings of Asian history and civilization (Said 1978), was co-opted by the main object of his critique: the nation-state. It subsequently was subordinated to, and helped legitimize, Japanese imperial ambitions. Rather than seeing Tagore’s flawed imaginary as merely highlighting the ‘deadlocks’ of post-western IR theory, I argue that it can be seen as unlocking its potential by positing Asia as an ‘imaginary anchoring point’ with which to critique the Westphalian imaginary of IR.

Giorgio Shani

Professor of International Relations

International Christian University

Japan

Visiting Professor in the Department of International Relations

LSE

From Empire to Nation-States along India’s ‘Mongolian Fringe’

Phrenological and racial taxonomies invented in nineteenth-century Europe were writ large upon colonial policy and realpolitik in the Himalaya. In a 1940 official note, British Indian Foreign Secretary Olaf Caroe conceptualized the “Mongolian Fringe” as the empire’s “inner ring of defense,” comprising Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and the “North East Frontier Tracts.” He believed that the inhabitants of this region had a “predominantly Mongolian population,” and were of an inferior racial stock than the people of the plains. Postcolonial India inherited this prejudice, and the suspicion of borderland populations.

This racialized thinking also informed struggles for self-determination in the region. In this paper, I show how the Himalayan Buddhist kingdoms of Bhutan and Sikkim deployed the vocabulary of racialized othering of their peoples as “Mongoloid” to chart the un-/successful transition from being “protectorates” of the Indian empire to modern states. Upon the lapse of British paramountcy in 1947, Bhutan and Sikkim emphasized their connection with Tibet and the institution of the Dalai Lama, and distanced themselves from princely states that were slowly getting folded into the Indian Union. Of the two, Bhutan made the successful transition to a Westphalian nation-state, while Sikkim was merged into India in 1975.

Drawing on archival evidence from Gangtok, Delhi, and London, as well as private papers of Indian officials posted in Sikkim and Bhutan, I will analyze the factors that led to or prevented this transition from being on “fringes” of empire to a nation-state. I will also show how the story of these eastern Himalayan kingdoms expands the timeline of decolonization in South Asia, and points to its limits.

Swati Chawla

Assistant Professor (History),

School of Liberal Arts and Humanities

O.P. Jindal Global University

The Progressive Path to Liberation: Intellectual Assessments of Nationalist Regimes in Turkey, Iran, and Egypt in the 1930s

This paper comparatively analyzes native intellectual responses towards Turkish, Iranian, and Egyptian nationalist regimes in the 1930s. Specifically, it examines how progressive revolutionary intellectuals in these countries, which generically fell under national liberation and socialist schools, articulated on their respective regimes’ successes and failures. Crises, wars, foreign occupations, and revolutions in the 1900s and 1910s in these countries led to the making and entrenchment of new nationalist regimes in the 1920s. The successes and failures of these regimes in liberation from monarchy and colonialism have constituted lively intellectual debates. The research is based on the varied nature of intellectual production, which includes scholarly works, memoirs, letters, journal and newspaper articles, interviews, speeches, court defenses, and literary works such as novels, short stories, poems, and plays. Progressive intellectuals understood national liberation as a dual struggle against monarchical autocracy (with its feudal associates) and imperialism (with its native bourgeois associates). The study argues that in progressive revolutionary paradigms, success in national liberation depended upon realizing sovereignty in four distinct yet interdependent realms: 1)state sovereignty, 2)national sovereignty, 3)economic sovereignty, and 4)intellectual sovereignty. Moreover, these intellectual assessments of regimes in the 1930s were foundational in the making of twentieth-century Middle Eastern progressivism. In other words, these realms of sovereignty constituted the bases of native responses against 1)imperialism, 2)fascism, 3)capitalism, and 4)orientalism, which future generations of progressives reproduced. This research primarily contributes to Middle Eastern intellectual history. It also engages in studies of political theory, modernization, democracy, development, gender and sexuality, ethnicity, religion, and nationalism.

Sarp Kurgan.

PhD candidate

UCSB Global Studies

Resolving the Theseus Paradox at the Cusp of Independence: The Battle to become the Legal Successor of British India.

This paper attempts to answer important questions about the extents to which newly decolonised nations wish to maintain colonial legacies –or jettison them. More viscerally, how are post-colonial identities defined? These questions are particularly intricate in the context of British India’s partition. Before Independence, stakeholders debated whether India and Pakistan should be regarded as two new states, or was India a continuation of British India, with Pakistan seceding from it? In the former scenario, the earlier ‘India’ would have ceased to exist. These points are brought out through extensive archival research into the negotiations governing the transfer of power, and furnish a crucial jigsaw piece in the state formation puzzle. The paper focuses on two clear lines of inquiry. Firstly, and perhaps counterintuitively, India’s keenness to become the legal successor to British India and accept the consequent treaty obligations. Archival research shows that INC, especially Nehru, fought uncompromisingly for this legal status. It was a matter of ‘prestige’ that the India they had fought hard to free legally continue to exist; that its enduring identity and essence align with its new legal personality. Secondly, the relatively unexplored story of how London sought to saddle the new states with its own commitments in South Asia, and the complicated legal jugglery that ensued. The aforementioned treaty obligations became an important aspect of Independent India’s foreign policy, especially on the eastern border, with ramifications for Tibet and Sino-Indian relations, underlining the continuity of British Indian Foreign Policy post-Independence.

Dr. Sanchi Rai

Assistant Professor

RV University

British Discourses on the “Sick Men of Europe and Asia”: A Comparative Analysis

Abstract This study aims to explore the close nexus between knowledge production and power structures, the heterogeneity and multiplicity of knowledge and the influence of locality on knowledge production by comparing the British discourse about the 19th and early 20th century Ottoman and Qing Empires. To do so, this study asks, “What can be learned about the heterogeneity of knowledge production, the relationship between power and knowledge and the region-centricity of knowledge production efforts in social sciences by comparing the English language Western discourse about the 19th and early 20th century Ottoman and Qing Empires?”. Therefore, the focus of this study is the British discourse about the 19th and early 20th century Ottoman and Qing Empires, when these empires were labelled as “the sick man of Europe” and “the sick man of Asia”, respectively. These two empires’ fall in the hierarchy of the world order led to an intense debate at the time regarding the changing status of the Ottomans and the Qing. This context can provide an important entry point for understanding and explaining the close link between power and knowledge production and the heterogeneity of knowledge, especially when the intellectual hegemony of the West and Western-centric perspectives in social sciences and in the field of IR considered. Comparative methodology both enables the analysis of the Western discourse about the semi-colonization periods of the aging Ottoman and Qing Empires and helps to reveal the locality of the knowledge produced in the English-speaking world and its links with power structures.

Dr. Emre Demir

TED University Ankara

The effect of colonialism and the decolonial moment on post-colonial territorial conflicts

The paper argues that colonialism, anti-colonialism, and the decolonial moment are significant explanatory variables in the evolution and development of post-colonial territorial conflicts. This understanding can play a role in both developing and critiquing post-colonial literature.

To substantiate the claim, the paper identifies pathways that span both material and conceptual drivers and appear in more than one level of analysis:

Territorial conflicts between post-colonial states, mostly in cases where the principle of *Uti Possidetis Juris* was not followed, and the colonial unit was partitioned. A noted case is the Indo-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir.

Irredentist claims by new states that seek, among other things, to secure legitimacy beyond, or instead, the one conferred to them by their colonial precursor.

Territorial conflicts initiated by elites in post-colonial states, to signal their commitment to the new national cause. In many cases, in order to counter claims that these elites emerged to prominence under colonial wings. A noted example is the support of the Moroccan monarchy for expansion into Western Sahara.

Strategies pursued by new, post-colonial states, in territorial conflicts that draw on traditional colonial conflict mitigation strategies. For example, the Indonesian uses the Dutch-colonial population transfer strategy (*Transmigrasi*) to quash ethnic opposition.

Based on these pathways and the specific cases that support them, the paper revisits foundational arguments in post-colonial studies. The conclusion shows how this new outlook on the colonial sources of territorial conflicts refines portions of post-colonial literature while challenging others.

Ehud Eiran

Senior Lecturer

University of Haifa

Resisting Change: The Geopolitics of Arctic Decolonisation Within Empires

Abstract: Name changes and border shifts are some of the visual representations of independence from empires. During the global transition from empires to nation-states, explicit forms of reclamation embraced decolonial thought and practices. This era in the mid-20th century marked the decolonial movement amongst conflicts and strife for independence. Conversely, some colonised areas and peoples have not reached decolonisation. Regions like the Arctic face the paradox of decolonialism while under coloniser rule.

The failures of the decolonial movement are not simply in the creation of nation-states. Instead, the losses of decolonialism are within the limitations of self-determination. The failure of decolonisation mars indigenous Arctic groups, such as Sámi and Inuit. Symbolic decolonial notions vary from the treatment of indigenous cultures, legal boundaries, and lack of socio-

spatial control. Therefore, questions of violence and strife being prerequisites for liberation and freedom are examined within the intertwining of indigenous Arctic thought.

This paper explicates the extent of decolonial efforts and their occurrence in the Arctic under coloniser rule. Through technological endeavours and resource extraction, endless activities benefit former empires. Therefore, the amelioration of decolonial thought must reassert self-determination. The scope of further decolonisation and power reconsiderations are essential to assessing power and control in the Arctic. Instead of decolonial efforts, symbolic notions are uncovered and visualised to promote geopolitical disconnectivity. Ultimately, decolonial thought and activities within empires show the limits and boundaries to self-determination.

Victoria H. Bergström

Graduate Student

Providence College

On the ‘worldmaking’ of vernacular capitalists: tracing entanglements between race, caste, and capital

Following recent calls to “deprovincialize racial capitalism” (Ince 2021), this article traces the colonially-inscribed spread of global capitalism through the lives and legacies of “vernacular capitalists” (Birla 2008) in the Indian Ocean region during the early-to-mid twentieth century. It asks what their itineraries reveal about the connected histories of racial capitalism and struggles against it. Informed by methodological insights from global historical sociology, the article turns to autobiographical and other archival sources to illuminate occluded projects and practices of “worldmaking”(Getachew 2018) of Indian merchants and industrialists circulating between the sub-continent and East Africa.

Through homing in on figures who shaped and challenged the infrastructures and outcomes of empire and advanced visions of ‘unity’ which transcended the nation but were predicated on forms of hierarchical differentiation – between capital and labour, and across race and caste - this articles make two main interventions. First, it complicates existing literature on ‘worldmaking’ by highlighting figures in a register distinctive from sometimes-romanticised internationalisms associated with the Bandung moment. Second, it builds on interventions showing material and ideational entanglements between race, caste, and capital, by examining processes through which local hierarchies have been formally subsumed into the differentiating logics of colonial capitalism. Following vernacular capitalists helps stretch beyond spatial and temporal impasses which contribute to a reading of racial capitalism as a ‘Atlantic phenomenon’ and caste as a subcontinent-bounded, feudal residue. Ultimately, this article complicates a binary reading of postcolonial difference and underscores the importance of deprovincializing both racial capitalism *and* caste in our postcolonial present.

Shikha Dilawri

PhD Candidate

SOAS, University of London

The double-edged sword of postcolonial diplomacy: The Commonwealth and its peripheries

In recent weeks, both Barbados' decision to become a republic and the visual politics of a British Royal visit to Caribbean nations have once again thrust questions of the current state of empire into the limelight. And while the last couple of years have seen a reckoning with the continuing legacies of imperialism and colonialism, the Commonwealth of Nations has often escaped scrutiny. Interestingly, an astonishing number of former territories, colonies and protectorates voluntarily entered the organisation of states after gaining independence. Similarly, also Barbados has chosen to stay within the Commonwealth. Neither the historically fluent transition between the colonial British Empire and the Commonwealth of Nations, nor the central role that the United Kingdom assumes due to the organisation's historical development is readily apparent from the Commonwealth's official presentations. This begs the following question: Is the Commonwealth diplomatic network a perpetuation of pre-existing power structures established by the United Kingdom? In an attempt to answer this question, I employ social network analysis (R) to examine the nexus between empire, diplomacy and post-coloniality. Postcolonial diplomacy within the Commonwealth emerges as a double-edged sword. Only a few states manage to gain an advantageous position and the periphery remains largely unconnected. I argue that this analysis aids a better understanding of the "post" of post-coloniality, subsequent departure points for decolonial politics, and small state diplomacy.

Aisha Paulina Lami Kadiri & Kasper Mollich

École Normale Supérieure Paris/University College Copenhagen

Two centuries and still not enough? The durability of the colonial legacy from the Latin American experience and its impact on rethinking International Relations

Much of the post-colonial discussion tends to focus on the decolonization experiences of Asia and Africa in the 20th century, which are much more recent than the independence of American countries more than two centuries ago. If efforts to promote development and state-building promise an improvement in living conditions, the experience of Latin American countries suggests that overcoming the colonial legacy is still far from being a reality. Local theoretical contributions, such as dependency theory and decolonial studies, more than presenting development problems based on the specificities of a region, provoke International Relations to rethink itself as a study of an international hierarchy of States, whose colonial trajectory seems impossible to overcome. The tensions in the environmental agenda highlight this problem since the countries of the Global South were exploited by the colonial powers to sustain their industrialization processes and are now the most affected by the collateral effects of this same path. Based on both Latin American theories and the empirical evidence of our development projects and historical attempts of international insertion, this article will seek to discuss how these issues provoke IR to rethink itself as a field that replicates colonialities rather than fighting them. Special attention will be given to the cases of Brazil and Bolivia, countries very different in scale, one colonized by Portuguese and the other by Spaniards, but both demonstrating in different ways how these problems are perceived locally.

Rafael Bittencourt Rodrigues Lopes

PhD in International Relations

PUC Minas (Brazil)

Researching Colonial (Dis)Continuities in Critical Security Studies and the Postcolonial Dilemma: A Research Heuristic

Despite their significance in shaping contemporary political and social realities, the processes of decolonization are rarely in the center of peace and security research. However, to analyze current conflicts it is essential to understand the historical legacies and embeddedness of peace and conflict in today's structure. The paper argues that following dis/continuities of colonial relations supports an understanding of contentious processes and marginalized positionalities. More research is needed without reiterating power relations to explore the ambiguities of these legacies and who had a say in shaping historical events. In focusing on the Cameroonian internationalized decolonization process under UN-Trusteeship and its relations to the current Anglophone conflict the paper points to possibilities and dilemmas of researching colonial dis/continuities with post/decolonial theories in security studies. The paper contributes to debates within post/decolonial research, peace, security and conflict studies.

Dr. Maria Ketzmerick (she/her)

Assistant Professor

Chair Sociology of Africa

University of Bayreuth

Recovering the Politics of the Sea in International Relations

The sea was crucial to the age of colonisation and empire-building, as the majority of colonised peoples and places were colonised across the sea. Some important aspects of this have been explored, in particular the transatlantic slave trade. And yet, the importance of the sea itself has largely been forgotten in disciplinary IR, focused as it has been on states, rather than empires. The absence of the sea in IR is problematic in its own right, but particularly so as it erases the space between coloniser and colonised, closing the waters between them, thus obliterating the oceans as a political site of struggle, subjugation and domination. Most importantly, forgetting the sea in IR diverts attention from its gendered and racialized character.

We aim to discuss, criticise and destabilise the colonial attempts to order the world in their own image. Western imperial powers constructed the sea as wild, unruly and seductive; qualities diametrically opposed to the orderliness and structure of idealised masculinity, and in need of subjugation to a male order. Challenging the traditional Western representations is important, as the gendering and racialisation of the sea has led to forgetting and normalisation. Forgetting of the many different ways in which gender and race has been intertwined with ocean life, and normalisation of an idealised Westernised and masculine approach to the sea. Uncovering this may, again, help us make sense of how the often violent domination of the sea still underpins current notions of global order and hegemony.

Halvard Leira & Benjamin de Carvalho

Norwegian Institute of International Affairs

Grievances, hopes, and revolution: the affective politics of anticolonial nationalism in Iran

What accounts for the persistence of the nation as a central object of identification in anticolonial movements during the 1960s and 1970s? How can we understand the appeal and pervasiveness of such a construct that was heralded as one of the bulwarks against anticolonialism itself? This paper addresses some of these questions in relation to anticolonial nationalism in Iran, its pitfalls, political possibilities, decolonial fantasies, and desires. I discuss how three figures broadly identified with the Iranian Left articulated discourses of national liberation which mobilized different attachments to the nation in pre-1979 Iran, attempting to understand what these affective relations with nationalism provided as political imaginary and subjectivity, what was lost, and whose decolonial hopes were crushed. Through a psychoanalytical framework rested on the theories of Jacques Lacan and Frantz Fanon, I analyze the writings of Ali Shariati, Forugh Farrokhzad, and Jalal Al-e Ahmad to grasp the rhythms and textures of enjoyment those imaginaries assumed while being discursively constituted around specific signifiers and identifications, such as decolonization, race, nationalism, Third Worldism, and Islam. The paper relies on a discourse analysis to assess the meanings and elusive silences Iranian national consciousness evoked in the form of desires and fantasies of liberation and decolonization. Thus, I also aim to acknowledge and discuss the transnational entanglements and symbolic connections these Iranian figures articulated within the Third World, positioning them in an infrastructure of anticolonial connectivity and showing how they are in debt to the theory and praxis of other movements, intellectuals, and struggles.

Mateus S. Borges

MSc Candidate PUC-Rio

PUC-Rio

Imperial-National States and the Formation of Modern International Order

This paper explores the transformation from a world of empires to a global order dominated by nation-states. Rather than beginning in the post-war period, we argue that the roots of this transformation can be found in the interwar years. On the one hand, this period was marked by considerable continuities in the forms of statehood that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – in the “core” of the international system, most polities remained “imperial-national states”. On the other hand, the interwar period saw the establishment of projects intended to accelerate and, in some cases, challenge the formation of the modern state. In the “semi-periphery” and “periphery”, elites and publics sought to overcome conditions of domination through a range of projects: national and pan-national, reformist and radical. The legacies of these developments carried through into the post-war world and continue to endure today: in practices of governance and law, patterns of capital accumulation and financial flows, experiences of racism and migration, and in the stigmatization of many former semi-peripheral and peripheral peoples. At the same time, within this general trajectory can be found considerable variation. While many parts of the “semi-periphery” embraced “modernising missions” centred around the nation-state model, large parts of the “periphery” embraced more

subversive, often transnational, projects. This suggests that the transformation from empires to nation-state was not a big bang, but one with deep historical roots and a varied spatiality.

George Lawson & Ayşe Zarakol

Professor/Professor in International Relations

Australian National University/University of Cambridge

Republicanism and Imperialism at the Frontier: A Post-BLM genealogy of International Relations

Borders are one of the fundamental framing devices in IR theory - from Weberian understandings of the monopoly of violence within contiguous boundaries to more constructivist and poststructuralist articulations of bordering as a verb. Yet much early twentieth century thought on geopolitics also made use of another modality of cutting land and space: the frontier. What if we rethought IR theory with the frontier as a fundamental organizing principle of the violent pursuit of power? In this paper, I focus on the influential Turner thesis: that American democracy was forged on the frontier of the polity's expansion. For Turner, the domestic and international collapse at the frontier. I retrieve the underexamined influence of medieval history in Turner's thought. I follow this to the 15th century and an era where some fundamental turning points were made in the imperial crafting of global order and which were conceived of by Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic forces as an apocalyptic struggle over the revelation of humanity's fate. I make the case that Turner's frontier thesis sees this struggle finally resolving in the closing of the American frontier. Wilson, influenced by Turner, then opens up that frontier again in his visionings of the League of Nations. A focus on borders - and perhaps even bordering - might obfuscate the ways in which IR inherits an apocalyptic vision of contending frontiers, the violent closure of which seals humanity's fate.

Robbie Shilliam

Professor

John Hopkins University

Against sovereignty: the colonial limits of modern politics

IR as a discipline is premised upon the idea that a premodern world of empires and colonial domination was gradually replaced through the global spread of modern sovereign nation-states. The present article explores the counterintuitive tension in presenting the modern notion of sovereignty as being itself one of the core legacies of colonialism. Decades of post-/decolonial scholarship and the growth of the literature on state formations have shown fundamental continuities in these 'transitions to modernity', which are often overlooked by the assumption that establishes the discipline. The radical political change often imposed as a necessary condition to tackle many of our present challenges creates an imperative of thinking not only beyond, but against sovereignty. I present this here through two essential engagements. First, with alternative forms of conceptualising political authority in anarchist thought and decolonial conceptions of subjectivity. Second, by rethinking the notion of geopolitics through the ways in which social practices imply specific territorialities, legal and political institutions, and even legitimise the use of force. While such a rejection of sovereignty

is by no means a finished project, it is a necessary component of contemporary political action (and academic reflection) that aims to look for alternative ways of addressing the many crises of the present while abandoning the colonial legacies of our current political forms.

Pedro Salgado

Lecturer of International Relations

Oxford Brookes University

Decolonial Dawn: On Black Reparative Claims for a Planetary Otherwise

We are confronted with multiple urgencies and decimations in world politics ranging from land thefts and displacements to labor exploitation, pandemics, and planetary catastrophe. While many have rushed to focus on climate change and mitigation efforts as claims of possible change, these demands fall short. To grapple with these daunting challenges, I argue we need to attend to the claims and demands for reparations about climate change. In this paper I engage with ways that artists make such demands by experimenting through poetry, art, dance, and writings. In a conversation with the poetry of Guinean poet Keita Fodeba and work of artist John Akomphrah *Vertigo* (2015) I demonstrate how they shift our thinking about dominant accounts of climate change and mitigation including politics, aesthetics and ethics that come in the form and configuration of caging metaphysics and an onto-epistemological empire: it is master, in the form of a secular god, the subject of will and determinacy and its sovereign institutions that subtends the entanglement of land theft, coloniality of worldviews and imaginations, enslavement and decimation of sacred life and ecosystems. In experimenting then with their “black parabasis” (invocations, dance, poetry), I point to some possible openings and from the vantage point of the infinity of existence to a decolonial dawn, to the shifts away from decimations of the planet and sacred life. I conclude with an experiment that radically re-orient the reader to focusing on decolonial invention, reparations and “sacred authenticity” as an enactment of planetary justice.

Anna M. Agathangelou

Professor

York University