

Seminar: Europe in the World

Given by Stephanie Hofmann

Thursday, 15:00-17:00

Brightspace: <https://mycourses.eui.eu/d2l/home/15081>

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In this seminar, we will address broad topics of such as international order-making, status, international hierarchies, and Europe's role therein from an interdisciplinary angle. We will tackle these topics with the help of invited guest speakers, who will present their cutting-edge work-in-progress. Inken von Borzyskowski (Oxford University), Giovanni Mantilla (Cambridge University), Kseniya Oksamytna (City University of London), Seo-Hyun Park (Lafayette College), Sebastian Schmidt (John Hopkins University), Patricia Spyer (Geneva Graduate Institute), Lora Viola (Free University Berlin), Stefanie Walter (University of Zurich), and Michael Williams (University of Ottawa) are the confirmed guest speakers.

Each seminar will start with a 30-minute discussion among seminar participants and the seminar instructor, where we will situate the guest speaker's scholarship, before we invite the guest speaker to the 1,5-hour presentation and Q&A. Each seminar participant will at least once take on the role of discussant and "resident expert".

The main goals of the seminar are to (1) familiarize researchers with leading scholars and scholarship in their discipline, (2) discuss the ropes of how to present and (3) discuss academic work constructively and learn about the substantive research areas.

3 October 2024 (Mansarda):

Introduction

24 October 2024 (Belvedere):

[Sebastian Schmidt](#) (John Hopkins University)

“Multinational military exercises, interoperability, and the state in the American order”

Multinational military exercises (MMEs) have been held on a regular basis since the Second World War, and recent decades have seen a proliferation of this form of security cooperation. Alongside this increasing frequency, MMEs have become more complex, promoting enhanced technical and doctrinal interoperability across national militaries. This evolution, in concert with increasingly close relations between national defense industrial bases, suggests that the relationship between the state and security is undergoing significant changes. Security is traditionally viewed as a foundation of the state, and as security practices have radically changed, so, arguably, has the state. This paper will read these developments as falling at the intersection of state formation, globalization, and security studies, which has generally found little resonance in scholarship. Through applying a relational and practice-theoretical lens, the paper develops an analysis of the state and sovereignty in the context of the contemporary American-centered security order.

7 November (Belvedere):

[Inken von Borzyskowski](#) (Oxford University)

“The Reputational Effects of Exiting IOs: How International Actors Respond to State Non-cooperation with IOs”

Do state exits from international organizations (IOs) have consequences for leaving states? We argue that IO exit has reputational consequences, both in the case of voluntary withdrawal and forced suspension. IOs operate as hand-tying, credible commitment devices, so international actors might regard exit as states reneging on their commitments. IO membership also signals cooperation in a social community; exit signals that the association has been broken. Together, exit can therefore generate a perception of higher risk and lower reliability due to the state’s non-cooperative behavior. Empirically, we build on a comprehensive dataset of IO exit from 19193 to 2022. We document the reputational damage of IO exit among two audiences: international investors and other states in the international community (UNSC elections). The results show that while IOs do not have strong enforcement powers, states’ non-cooperative behavior is still punished through reputational damage in the international community.

21 November (Belvedere):

[Michael Williams](#) (University of Ottawa)

“The Crisis of the Conservative World Order”

The crisis of the liberal international order (LIO) is the dominant narrative of our time. It pervades scholarship, journalism, and policy discussion, influencing the ways we see

contemporary global tensions, future possibilities, and political choices. This paper argues that what we are seeing is not simply a crisis of the LIO, but of the CIO – the conservative international order. The postwar order was not constructed by liberals alone. It was also built by conservative governments, politicians, and intellectuals that were crucial parts of the domestic and international accommodations, coalitions, and alliances underpinning the creation and maintenance of the postwar order. The crisis we are witnessing today is, in turn, to a large degree the result of the implosion that has transformed conservatism from a supporter of that order to one of its most powerful opponents.

5 December (Mansarda):

[Patricia Spyer](#) (Geneva Graduate Institute)

“Things That Come and Go: Engaging Atmospheric, Ephemera and Other Fugitive Forms in Social Life”

The presentation explores how fugitive forces—specifically here huge Christian billboards and murals that arose in a Muslim-Christian conflict in the early 2000s in the eastern Indonesian city of Ambon--suffused and oriented the actions and experiences of wartime. I argue that elusive, ephemeral aspects of social life—from such street art to invisible if palpable atmospheric like Carl von Clausewitz’s renowned “fog of war”—deserve our acute attention. For even as they come and go, such phenomena can have lasting impact. Depositing their traces in an assortment of practices and forms they bring about novel formations of sociality and the sensible, altered landscapes of living and cohabitation, and subtly different ways of seeing, dwelling, and engaging the world.

16 January (Belvedere):

[Stefanie Walter](#) (University of Zurich)

“Responding to Non-Cooperative International Behavior: Balancing Reputational and Material Concerns”

When other states act non-cooperatively, governments must choose between yielding or taking a tough stance, often incurring material costs. Despite these costs, governments are incentivized to sanction non-cooperative behavior for reputational reasons, although garnering voter support for this approach can be challenging. This paper explores how different framings of the trade-off between material benefits and reputational concerns influence voter support for a tough, costly response. Through survey experiments a variety of countries, it examines voter reactions to various frames in three scenarios: cherry-picking (Swiss and UK EU market access), violations of international law (Russia's invasion of Ukraine), and coercive bargaining (Turkey's NATO veto, EU's funding threats to Hungary). Results show that emphasizing reputational risks reduces voter willingness to compromise, while highlighting material consequences increases it. Ultimately, voters prioritize national reputation, indicating an understanding of strategic foreign policy considerations.

30 January (Belvedere):

[Lora Viola](#) (FU Berlin)

- title and abstract coming soon -

13 February (Belvedere):

[Kseniya Oksamytna](#) (City University of London)

“International Organizations, Individual Biases, and the Perpetuation of Racial Hierarchies”

International organizations (IOs), such as the UN, are often tasked with “assisting” states classified as “failing” or “weak”, with such assistance ranging from development aid to peacekeeping. While such interventions are ostensibly aimed at “levelling the playing field” by bringing conflict-affected nations (back) into the community of “well governed” and “resilient” states, they have often been criticized for resembling past colonial expeditions, undermining local ownership, and imposing unsuitable models of governance on target countries. However, research to date has paid little attention to the role of racial biases in these processes. Indeed, IO officials may hold views on the characteristics, capacities, and aspirations of host societies that perpetuate rather than transform racial hierarchies in the international system. This paper investigates what biases (if any) IO officials hold and whether and how such biases affect their work, using an in-depth case study of UN peacekeeping. Based on more than 200 interviews with officials across several peacekeeping operations in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean, we demonstrate the pervasiveness of racial beliefs among IO officials that maintain racial hierarchies, even though such officials perceive themselves as working towards more egalitarian and inclusive forms of multilateralism.

27 February (Belvedere):

[Giovanni Mantilla](#) (Cambridge University)

“The Curious Case of the United Nations Security Council Expansion of 1963”

Reforming the UN Security Council seems a nearly impossible goal. Ongoing efforts since the early 1990s have stalled or dragged on for decades, with unclear resolution. Only once -- in 1963 -- has a reform initiative succeeded, expanding the non-permanent membership of the Council from 6 to 10 states, largely to the benefit of African and Asian countries. Why and how did UNSC reform prosper in 1963? This paper addresses this historical puzzle through primary research in the archives of six states: the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia. To draw comparative lessons, I consider a subsequent reform initiative from the late 1970s and early 1980s, which ended in failure despite occurring in the same political context of the Cold War and decolonization. The paper demonstrates the importance of group cohesion and practical negotiating competence, both by the reformist Afro-Asian coalition in the 1960s and by the reluctant Great Powers in 1979-1981, and underscores the importance of procedural tactics and historical contingency in producing these outcomes.

13 March (Belvedere):

[Seo-Hyun Park](#) (Lafayette College)

“Nonstate Actors in Regional and Global Wars in Late Nineteenth Century East Asia”

During the Sino-French War (1884-1885) and the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), regular and irregular Vietnamese and Korean forces took up arms alongside and against French, Japanese, and Chinese troops. Rather than treating this multitude of armed (and unarmed) participants in Nguyễn Vietnam and Chosŏn Korea as purely passive observers (invisible) or hijacked partisans (incompetent or corrupt), this study empirically demonstrates how the monarchy, government officials, local administrators, scholars, religious networks, merchants, mercenaries, peasants, rebels, paramilitary groups, and “righteous armies” (*nghĩa quân* in Vietnamese; *uibyŏng* in Korean) forged strategies and armed alliances. By centering Vietnam and Korea in the analysis, it moves away from victimhood narratives, where Vietnamese and Koreans become objects of imperial action—first by China, then by France and Japan respectively. It also avoids the trap of treating European-style colonialism in East Asia (and elsewhere) as inevitable, as no more than a changing of guards over already-subjugated polities.