Rethinking the World Order: 
International Law and International Relations at the End of the First World War

The horrors of the Great War and the desire for peace shaped scholarship in International Law and International Relations (IR) during the late 1910s—a stimulating time for both disciplines. Scholars observed and analysed political events as they unfolded but also took an active part, as governmental advisors or diplomatic officials, in devising the new international order. The Paris Peace Conference and the subsequent birth of the League of Nations as well as the Permanent Court of International Justice served as testing grounds for new legal and political concepts. The end of the First World War was in many ways a milestone for both disciplines, prompting scholars to reflect on the consequences of the war on society, politics, and the world economy. How could another world war be avoided in the future? How could states be held accountable for violations of international law? What were the preconditions for peaceful international governance? These questions led to pioneering research on issues such as arbitration, sanctions, revision of treaties, supra-national governance, disarmament, self-determination, migration, and the protection of minorities. At the same time, the study of International Law and IR also advanced in terms of methodology and teaching, including new professorships, journals, conferences and research centres.

A century later, it is a good moment to reflect upon disciplinary histories and revisit some of the theoretical and practical debates that shaped the period from 1914 to 1945. The workshop conveners are particularly (but not exclusively) interested in the following research questions:

- Was the First World War a watershed moment for the development of International Law and IR?
- Which were the key debates in both disciplines? And how can they be re-interpreted today?
- What were the connections and/or dividing lines between the two disciplines?
- Did International Law and IR evolve similarly across different countries?
- Who were the principle actors, both individuals and institutions, in the respective fields?
- Which role did International Law and IR respectively play in shaping ‘real-world’ policy? And to what extent were theoretical developments shaped by political events?
- How did ideas float between academia and politics?
- How successful were non-governmental organisations—such as academic societies, arbitration clubs, political pressure groups, League of Nations clubs, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), etc.—in achieving their goals?

The two-day interdisciplinary workshop will be held at the European Studies Centre (ESC) at St Antony’s College, Oxford from 31 August to 1 September 2017. We invite abstracts from early career researchers and advanced postgraduate students in history, law, IR and other related disciplines to share their research in a multi-disciplinary environment. By facilitating this exchange we hope to open new avenues of research and to encourage new approaches to the history of both disciplines. We are planning to have six panels, one keynote address, and an open plenary session that allows all participants to pitch their research projects.

Please submit your proposal (including a title, 300 words abstract, and a short bio) to jan.stoeckmann@new.ox.ac.uk by 31 March 2017. Successful applicants will be notified by 30 April 2017. We are currently working on logistical details, including reimbursements and publication plans, and will keep you updated. For updates see: www.rethinkingtheworldorder.wordpress.com

Dr Gabriela Frei
British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Junior Research Fellow in History
Jesus College, Oxford
gabriela.frei@jesus.ox.ac.uk

Jan Stöckmann
DPhil Candidate in History
New College, Oxford
jan.stoeckmann@new.ox.ac.uk
www.rethinkingtheworldorder.wordpress.com