



Detail from cover image - ratification of Treaty of Amiens, 1527 (National Archives)

History, Politics, Law: In Conversation Bentham House, UCL / online 15–16 July 2022

To mark the publication of *History, Politics, Law: Thinking through the International* (CUP 2021) the editors are convening a forum for reflection on the interdisciplinary conversations reflected in this volume, and in other recent works including Martti Koskenniemi's *To the Uttermost Parts of the Earth: Legal Imagination and International Power, 1300–1870* (CUP, 2021).

We hope to give participants space to reflect on questions emerging from this work, and explore the future of interdisciplinary interaction, without the pressure of presenting formal papers or needing to prepare publications. The event will have two components: a day of panel conversations and a book event, open to all; and a smaller doctoral workshop, not open to the public.

15 July, c. 9am–4.30pm—Panel conversations (hybrid: mostly online; open to public online; limited in-person places)

The *History, Politics, Law* volume presented overarching methodological reflections, and a series of chapters from lawyers and historians arranged around themes of potential dialogue ('Law and Constructions of the Political'; 'Empires, States and Nations'; 'Institutions and Persons'; 'Economics and Innovation'; and 'Gender'). We hope to spark further grounded yet open-ended exchanges through thematic panels on:

- Discipline, identity and responsibility
- Beyond the textual
- Translation
- Temporality, chronology and periodization

A **detailed schedule is overleaf**. Each panel will begin with a loose set of shared questions, and panelists will speak to these questions for c. 8–10 minutes through the lens of their own work, past or current; followed by discussion between panelists and audience Q&A. Panelists are not expected to speak 'for' their discipline in any sense, but rather 'through' their own, more specific, work: the emphasis is not to converge on methodological prescription but to see what emerges from juxtaposing some distinct projects.

15 July, c. 5.30–6.30pm—Author interview and audience Q&A with Martti Koskenniemi (hybrid: open to public online; limited in-person places)

This session will focus on Koskenniemi's new monograph, *To the Uttermost Parts of the Earth: Legal Imagination and International Power, 1300–1870*. This work offers a sweeping resource from and through which to think about many of the themes explored in the panels, as well as new avenues for reflection across disciplines and periods.

16 July, c. 9am–5.30pm—Doctoral workshop (closed to public)

History, Politics, Law: In Conversation

Moot Court, UCL Bentham House (8 Endsleigh Gardens, WC1H 0EG) / online, 15 July 2022

9am **Welcome**

9.15–10.15am **Discipline, identity, responsibility**

One dimension of, and response to, interdisciplinary interaction has been an effort at self-description: articulating what it is that scholars are doing when they write or argue in particular ways. We wanted to start with this, not to re-establish disciplinary boundaries at the outset, but rather to make those boundaries—where they come from, how we negotiate them, the fissures within disciplines—an explicit ground for reflection. For that reason we have coupled discipline with some other terms too: responsibility, one which Anne Orford has foregrounded in her writing, and identity, which might be capacious enough to capture a whole range of concerns about why we focus on the work we do. Our guiding questions here include what sources, commitments or practices—if any—are definitional to particular disciplinary or sub-disciplinary identities? To and for what and whom are we responsible in doing the work we do?

Chair and introduction: Megan Donaldson

Anne Orford (Melbourne)

Karen Knop (Toronto)

Anna Becker (Aarhus)

COFFEE

10.45–12pm **Beyond the textual**

Many of us grapple in different ways with the fragile and partial reach of the textual evidence and sources which enjoy a central position in both historical and legal work. This panel opens up for exploration how we work with what lies beyond the text: ways of conceiving of the extra-textual (action, practice, ritual, image, object, structure ...), and of drawing this into historical and legal accounts; as well as insights from and for 'global' or 'international' histories which seek to encompass peoples and communities with very different relations to texts.

Chair: Annabel Brett

Saliha Belmessous (UNSW)

Duncan Bell (Cambridge)

Isobel Roele (QMUL)

James Lowry (Queens CUNY)

LUNCH

1.30–2.45pm **Translation**

The practice of translation is central to the discipline of history of political thought, and yet poses a challenge to the contextualist precept that meaning is inevitably bound into a specific moment or locale. This panel explores translation as a larger theme: both questions thrown up in the process of translation, and questions about whether translation as a concept, practice or rubric might operate

beyond its canonical, linguistic sense. Might translation, for example, be a productive way of thinking about more diverse processes of reasoning, whether in history or in law?

Chair: Martti Koskenniemi

Lena Foljanty (Vienna)

Annabel Brett (Cambridge)

Emma Hunter (Edinburgh)

Sudipta Kaviraj (Columbia)

COFFEE

3.15–4.30pm Temporality, chronology, periodization

There has been rich work within history on the construction of regimes of temporality. Scholars of law have also commented on the way law seems to operate between (to quote Janet McLean) a ‘real time’ (chronological), ‘no time’ (the eternal present of much analytical jurisprudence), and a constructed and often non-linear ‘law time’. Recent exchanges about the law/history interaction have also often been framed in terms of the relation between past and present, or the relationships between meaning and time. This panel explores ways in which different disciplines approach time and temporality, and whether temporality offers a promising avenue for further work on, and between, disciplines. It might also touch on scholarly orientations to particular chronological ranges: in which periods do we feel at home, or adept as readers and analysts; what sort of chronological reach is desirable and possible?

Chair: Karen Knop

Natasha Wheatley (Princeton)

Martin Clark (La Trobe)

Mamadou Hébié (Leiden)

Megan Donaldson (UCL)

WINE RECEPTION

5.30-6.30pm Author interview: Martti Koskenniemi on *To the Uttermost Parts of the Earth*

7pm *DINNER (for in-person panelists / doctoral workshop presenters only, Norfolk Arms, 28 Leigh St)*

List of Panelists

[Anna Becker](#) is Professor MSO in History of Ideas at the School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University.

[Duncan Bell](#) is Professor of Political Thought and International Relations in the Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge. His comments will draw on work including Bell & Zacka (eds), *Political Theory and Architecture* (Bloomsbury, 2020).

[Saliha Belmessous](#) is Associate Professor in the School of Humanities & Languages, University of New South Wales.

[Annabel Brett](#) is Professor of Political Thought and History at the Faculty of History, University of Cambridge.

[Martin Clark](#) is a Lecturer in Law in the Law School, La Trobe University. His comments will draw on work including 'Ambivalences, anxieties / Adaptations, advances: Conceptual History and International Law' (2018) 31(4) *Leiden Journal of International Law* 747.

[Megan Donaldson](#) is Lecturer in Public International Law at the Faculty of Laws, University College London.

[Lena Foljanty](#) is Professor of Globalisation and Legal Pluralism in the Department of Legal and Constitutional History, University of Vienna.

[Mamadou Hébié](#) is Associate Professor of International Law at the Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies, Leiden University.

[Emma Hunter](#) is Professor of Global and African History in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology, University of Edinburgh.

[Sudipta Kaviraj](#) is Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University.

[Karen Knop](#) is Professor of Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto. Her comments will draw on work including Karen Knop, Ralf Michaels and Annelise Riles, 'From Multiculturalism to Technique: Feminism, Culture, and the Conflict of Laws Style' (2012) 64 *Stanford Law Review* 589; and Karen Knop and Annelise Riles, 'Space, Time and Historical Injustice: A Feminist Conflict-of-Laws Approach to the 'Comfort Women' Agreement' (2017) 102 *Cornell Law Review* 853.

[Martti Koskenniemi](#) is Professor of International Law and Director of the Erik Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights, University of Helsinki.

[James Lowry](#) is Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, Queens College, City University of New York.

[Anne Orford](#) is Melbourne Laureate Professor and Michael D Kirby Chair of International Law at Melbourne Law School, University of Melbourne. Her comments will draw on work including *International Law and the Politics of History* (CUP, 2021).

[Isobel Roele](#) is Senior Lecturer in Law in the School of Law, Queen Mary University of London.

[Natasha Wheatley](#) is Assistant Professor of History in the Department of History, Princeton University. Her comments will draw on work including Wheatley, Edelstein & Geroulanos (eds), *Power and Time. Temporalities in Conflict and the Making of History* (Chicago, 2020); and Wheatley, 'Law and the Time of Angels: International Law's Method Wars and the Affective Life of Disciplines' (2021) 60(2) *History and Theory* 311.