

**The Science of Empire:  
A Critical Disciplinary History of International Relations  
1868-1931**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis repositions International Relations (IR) as an historically contingent science of empire, shaped by emergent interactions across imperial frontiers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It constructs a critical disciplinary history of IR, drawing on the tradition of *Fachgeschichte* (discipline-history). By addressing historical silences in conventional narratives of IR's disciplinary origins, it reframes IR not as the product of a noble pursuit of peace in the aftermath of the Great War, but as a discipline entangled with discourses of imperial reform and science. To do so, it identifies a scientific-imperial épistémè of IR and outlines the historically contingent nature of the formalised academic discipline. It argues that attempts to co-opt 'scientific' discourse and present IR as a science were closely connected with searches for new legitimisations of empire.

Though focussed primarily on the development of IR as a science of empire in the British Empire, it explores co-constitutive interconnexions across imperial frontiers with parallel discourses of science, imperialism, and race in the United States and German Empire/Weimar Republic in the same period. By tracing fragments and silences in IR's disciplinary history, it explores the emergent development of scientific-imperial IR and charts the evolution of elite networks of imperialists embedded in state machinery as a class of 'citizen scholars'. These same scholars would become the canonical founding figures of the discipline and are inextricably connected to established narratives of discipline foundation in the British Empire, Europe, and the United States.

In recentring the focus of IR's disciplinary history to account for its

imperialist interconnectivities, this thesis is directed towards a more introspective history of the discipline. By concluding with a discussion of the disciplinary afterlives these networks left behind long after the period in focus, it demonstrates that much work remains for critical disciplinary historians of IR.

## **Outline**

The introduction lays out the basis of this approach and identifies the core premises that motivate it. Chapter two integrates these foundations into the existing literature on disciplinary history in IR to identify key trends in the treatment of history in an IR context. It distils these trends into a recognition of the need for a critical historical ontology, capable of historicising IR in an attempt to move the discipline beyond the insularity and aversion to introspection which afflict its mainstream scholarship. Chapter three builds this into a targeted methodology, focussing predominantly on the need to address and engage with historical silences. Though deployed with a present-facing focus, this methodology is fundamentally historical and is motivated by the need for critical introspection into the discipline and the historical dynamics with which it is entangled.

To demonstrate both the need for this introspection and its potential, three interconnected contextual case studies follow, each problematising an enduring myth in IR's conventional Western disciplinary history. Chapter four centres on an enduring disciplinary origin story, that the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth marked the birth of IR as a liberal internationalist scholarly endeavour dedicated to pursuing peace in 1919. By repositioning the Wilson Chair alongside parallel professorships in Colonial History and eugenics-inflected Geography and Anthropology, it argues that this attempt to formalise a 'new science' remained closely entangled with empire. Chapter five explores this intersection between empire and race science in an IR context more closely by tracing the development of a Transatlantic

‘Anglo-Saxonist’ movement that left both a disciplinary legacy for IR and enduring fragments that can still be identified in the present-day discipline. Chapter six turns to a parallel German context to outline how this emergent science of empire transcended imperial frontiers, especially with the development of an interdisciplinary IR precursor (*Kolonialwissenschaften/Colonial Sciences*) yet to be incorporated in any discussion of IR’s disciplinary history.

The subsequent two chapters explore the wider entanglements with a longer history of imperial science, internationalism, and elite networks of discipline formation. Chapter seven traces fragments and silences in IR’s disciplinary history through Victorian learned societies and circles of colonial administrators to a proto-IR Imperial Studies movement mirroring German *Kolonialwissenschaft*. As those involved gravitated towards the machinery of the state, a class of ostensibly expert ‘citizen scholars’ was created, who would become the canonical founding figures of the IR discipline, especially in the British Empire. The entanglements of this group extended beyond to the United States and German Empire, and the formation of early disciplinary structures of knowledge production, such as the British Royal Institute of International Affairs and the US Council on Foreign Relations, was a direct product of interactions between members of these networks across imperial frontiers. Chapter eight takes this further by resituating alternative narratives and long-overlooked organisations like the League of Nations Union as fragments of a much broader and more complex history surrounding the interconnected networks of trans-imperial discipline formation. The final chapter brings the thesis together with a discussion of the disciplinary afterlives these networks left behind long after the end of the period in focus, identifying the historical bedrock of a scientific-imperial épistémè of IR.

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## **Author's Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted by this candidate in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere. No sections of the thesis have been published in the same form and the thesis is not the result of joint research.

I declare that ethical approval was confirmed as not being necessary for the research presented, in compliance with sub-clause PR 2.6.3 of the Postgraduate Research Regulations.



**Jude Rowley**

August 2025

This is the final version of this thesis, taking account of the examiners' comments after the viva voce. I reaffirm the above declaration and I declare that the length of this thesis is 81707 words



**Jude Rowley**

December 2025

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 History, International Relations, and Science

If International Relations (IR) is a discipline at all, it is a discipline of paradoxes. Many of its defining mainstream theories position it as ahistorical, or beyond history, and yet there are few disciplines more profoundly historical or rooted directly in historical practice. Many of the canonical founding figures of the discipline were either trained as, or considered themselves, historians: an overlap perhaps most prominently epitomised by E.H. Carr.<sup>1.1</sup> Elements of the IR discipline have long claimed a scientific legitimacy in both conduct and output (particularly in a predictive sense), yet have simultaneously relied on a dated, highly problematic, ‘imperial’ conception of science.<sup>1.2</sup> The disciplinary core remains largely silent on both its relationship with empire and the role imperialism continues to play within its thought and structures alike, yet it was, and is, indisputably a product of empire, even if its attempts to obscure its imperial character have propagated a profound lack of introspection that continues to shroud the discipline in a cloak of wilful ignorance.<sup>1.3</sup>

Connecting each of these paradoxes is a common thread running throughout the fabric of the recognised discipline and underlying many aspects of IR theory. This thread, or this nexus, is the labyrinthine relationship between

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<sup>1.1</sup>David Freeland Duke, ‘Edward Hallett Carr: Historical Realism and the Liberal Tradition’, *Past Imperfect*, 2 (1993), 123-36. doi:10.21971/P7RG67

<sup>1.2</sup>James Bohman, ‘What is to be Done? The Science Question in International Relations’, *International Theory*, 1.3 (2009), 488-98 (p.488). doi:10.1017/S1752971909990170

<sup>1.3</sup>Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, ‘Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations’, *Millennium*, 31.1 (2002), 109-127. doi:10.1177/03058298020310010601

IR, history, empire, and science. Each influences the other in different ways, and the discipline of IR is shaped by interactions between them all. It is a discipline reliant on the construction of historical narratives and has long drawn on discourses from the natural sciences, whether explicitly or otherwise, with both serving a similar legitimising function within the discipline. This is by no means a linear relationship but a broader network influenced by various constituent elements. To some extent, this nexus central to IR can be considered a complex adaptive system, in line with complexity-based approaches to the social sciences. However, whilst this may be still largely applicable, the aim of this thesis is to lay the historico-sociological groundwork for a move beyond complexity in IR, towards a more diverse approach to the discipline based on core principles of historical introspection, interconnectivity, and relationality. As such, it will seek a more critical understanding of the nature of this nexus, drawing upon a range of interdisciplinary concepts and approaches to achieve this.

### **1.1.1 *Scientific-Imperial Épistémè***

It would be impossible to begin this task, however, without first looking at the nature of this nexus and how it is constructed in an IR context. This thesis will seek to situate the historical development of IR as an historically contingent discipline distinct from associated fields of study in political science and history in relation to this nexus. Through an exploration of three interconnected and overlapping silences in the historical sociology of the discipline, it will investigate how the relationship between IR, history, and science has shaped the historical emergence of the discipline via the creation of dominant disciplinary structures, institutions, and epistemic boundaries. In doing so, it will seek to identify a new épistémè of ‘scientific-imperial IR’, both a legacy and an instrument of IR’s colonial past and the continued complex role scientific discourses play within the field. The use

of épistémè in the Foucauldian sense, referring to the boundaries of acceptable knowledge within the discipline, is a deliberate one, to distinguish from the term paradigm which is more familiar to IR and has a long history of usage within the discipline.<sup>1.4</sup> This is because scientific-imperial IR is more than a paradigm in the traditional sense of the term in IR theory, but rather underlies multiple theoretical paradigms which have shared core assumptions and features despite their differences. Through the identification of a scientific-imperial épistémè, it is possible to reframe the very function of IR in relation to its historical development. The IR that emerges from a critical and introspective engagement with the discipline's history is not the noble pursuit of peace through rational scholarly enquiry but instead a science of empire, reliant on the application of metaphors drawn from scientific discourses to the study of global order. Through this lens, IR theories under the scientific-imperial épistémè are not descriptive statements about the way the world is but are normative justifications for a particular order and particular exercises of power.

### **1.1.2 Delimitation of Critique**

Such claims about IR theory and the discipline in a general sense are inevitably totalising, but this thesis is not concerned with a critique of IR itself in any abstract sense, not least because the discipline cannot exist in isolation from the structures that sustain it. Instead, the focus of this thesis is the scientific-imperial épistémè that continues to bind the disciplinary core together. Therefore, except where

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<sup>1.4</sup>Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p.197.

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970).

Ole Wæver, 'The Rise and Fall of the Inter-Paradigm Debate' in: *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, ed. by Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 149-85

clarified, where IR is used in the upper case to refer to the discipline it refers to this épistémè rather than IR *in toto*. As chapter two explores, there are growing currents of critical and reflexive scholarship within an IR context, and further such work is possible. Similarly, critical theory in IR that rejects key aspects of this épistémè is not only possible but has produced a rich vein of scholarship, from Gramscian interpretations of international order to the Queer IR of Cynthia Weber and others.<sup>1.5</sup>

The difficulty arises, however, in delimitating clear boundaries between mainstream IR and its critical counterpart. Rather than neatly bounded, the edges of mainstream IR, as with the discipline in a general sense, are inherently blurred. If critical scholarship relies on disrupting the existing orthodoxy and punctuating its boundaries, it is reliant on these boundaries being clear and identifiable. Though the invocation of the scientific-imperial épistémè proposed above is one approach to identifying the boundaries of mainstream IR, it is neither universal nor infallible, as these boundaries are dynamic and adaptive and therefore will always remain uncertain to at least some degree. This uncertainty inevitably produces paradoxes, such as where E.H. Carr can simultaneously be read both as a canonical forefather of orthodoxy, as in this thesis, and as a critical theorist of IR, as Andrew Linklater demonstrates.<sup>1.6</sup> Even John Mearsheimer, considered

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<sup>1.5</sup>Randall D. Germain and Michael Kenny, 'Engaging Gramsci: International Relations Theory and the New Gramscians', *Review of International Studies*, 24.1 (1998), 3-21. doi:10.1017/S0260210598000035

Robert W. Cox, 'Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method', *Millennium*, 12.2 (1983), 162-75. doi:10.1177/0305829883012002070

Cynthia Weber, 'From Queer to Queer IR', *International Studies Review*, 16.4 (2014), 596-601. doi:10.1111/misr.12160

Cynthia Weber, 'Queer Intellectual Curiosity as International Relations Method: Developing Queer International Relations Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks', *International Studies Quarterly*, 60.1 (2016), 11-23. doi:10.1111/isqu.12212

<sup>1.6</sup>Andrew Linklater, 'The Transformation of Political Community: E. H. Carr, Critical Theory and International Relations', *Review of International Studies*, 23 (1997), 321-38. doi:10.1017/S0260210597003215

by some ‘the most infamous [...] academic in the world’ and therefore hardly a peripheral disciplinary figure, can recognise the common historical assumptions shared by his dominant realist approach and critical theories of IR, as discussed in chapter three.<sup>1.7</sup> As this suggests, the division between mainstream and critical IR theory can never be a binary division between black and white. IR theories, and theorists, can be either, both, or neither, at different times or simultaneously.

This is a consequence of disciplinary boundaries being neither objective nor static. Instead, academic disciplines, like all orders of knowledge, are historically contingent, as discussed both later in this chapter and in chapter two. Drawing from complexity-based approaches, disciplines are emergent, in that they are bounded, constructed, and sustained by interactions between their constituent elements, and IR is no different. Richard Devetak captures this most clearly in positioning critical IR theory as ‘the historical product of contingent intellectual battles and decisions to prefer and legitimise certain modes of theorizing and intellectual compartments at the expense of others’.<sup>1.8</sup> In other words, the boundaries of IR as a discipline are set by both the interactions and contexts that have produced dominant structures, theories, and institutions and the historical narratives that are told about these interactions. It is these historically contingent interactions and narratives that determine what is, and what is not, core or canonical scholarship. In a discipline dominated by the scientific-imperial *épistémè* identified above, to question what distinguishes critical IR from mainstream IR is therefore to encounter the boundaries of this

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<sup>1.7</sup>Gavin Jacobson, ‘The Tragedy of John Mearsheimer: How the American Realist Became the World’s Most Hated Thinker’, *New Statesman*, 29 September 2023, pp.34-8

John J. Mearsheimer, ‘A Realist Reply’, *International Security*, 20.1 (1995), 82-93 (p.92). doi:10.1162/isec.20.1.82

<sup>1.8</sup>Richard Devetak, *Critical International Theory: An Intellectual History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp.2-3

épistémè.

The aim of this thesis is the historical deconstruction of this scientific-imperial épistémè and, by extension, of the disciplinary mainstream in IR. It should not be read as a wholesale rejection of all those working under the auspices of IR, but rather is a critique specifically of the disciplinary core and the enduring historical narratives that are propagated about its development. Its target is therefore the dominant theories, core institutions, and historical narratives tied both to disciplinary claims to 'scientific' objectivity and the interrelated silencing of ties to empire and imperialism. It would be impossible and counterproductive to position this thesis as a work capable of dealing with every IR scholar, theory, or connected institution, and therefore the focus on resituating the scientific-imperial épistémè in historical context. It is not a general critique of everything that calls itself IR, but rather a generalised critique of certain core institutions, theoretical frameworks, and dynamics of power within the recognised discipline, and the historical narratives used to legitimise them. Though some critical IR falls into this category, this is a product of coarse-grained or blurred disciplinary boundaries, discussed in section 2.3 on the need for a dedicated critical historical ontology within IR. Therefore, the boundaries of the central critique of this thesis may appear messy at times, even with the caveat that in the main they refer to the disciplinary mainstream. This is a consequence of the lines between 'mainstream' and 'critical' IR defying clear distinction.

This is not a problem unique to IR, as Ramsés Fuenmayor's reflections on the distinction between 'soft' and 'critical' systems thinking, two apparently opposed but coexisting strands of thought, make clear. Fuenmayor defines critical scholarship, following from the Kantian concept of transcendental critique, as that which identifies the limits of its subject and the hidden assumptions that

sustain it. It is impossible to find these limits and assumptions through ‘just making a historical chronicle’, but instead ‘it is necessary to dig into the epochal foundations’.<sup>1.9</sup> In the disciplinary context, this requires a distinction between historiography and historical ontology, as narrating canonical origin stories as a linear and chronological ‘chain of happenings’ can never provide the tools through which ontological limits and reductionist assumptions can be problematised and challenged. Therefore, critical scholarship requires a closer engagement with the historical context, interactions, and circumstances, or the ‘epochal conditions’, that have shaped what *appears* to have happened. Echoing a Foucauldian ontology of the present, a critical endeavour that seeks to expose such epochal conditions must start from a position of historical introspection into the products of these conditions, namely the disciplinary mainstream they define, sustain, and legitimise.<sup>1.10</sup>

As a result, an attempt to problematise the disciplinary mainstream must approach its epochal foundations with historical introspection and reflexivity, as Meera Sabaratnam and her collaborators recognise in seeking to critique an established IR canon by situating its key thinkers in their historical context.<sup>1.11</sup> What is needed is more than a disciplinary chronology, in the form of a critical and introspective disciplinary ontological history, and it is here that the concept of *Fachgeschichte* provides a valuable methodological and conceptual starting point.

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<sup>1.9</sup>Ramsés Fuenmayor, ‘The Historical Meaning of Present Systems Thinking’, *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 14.4 (1997), 235-99 (pp.239-40). doi:10.1002/(SICI)1099-1743(199707/08)14:4%3C235::AID-SRES135%3E3.0.CO;2-8

<sup>1.10</sup>Ramsés Fuenmayor, ‘The Historical Meaning of Present Systems Thinking’, p.247

<sup>1.11</sup>Meera Sabaratnam, *Critiquing the Canon: International Relations Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023)

## 1.2 Fachgeschichte

Central to the reframing of IR as a science of empire is a rejection of the existing historical frameworks that surround the disciplinary mythology of IR. By extension, this entails a rejection of the Newtonianism in IR identified by Kavalski, and a move away from all of its associated metaphors for approaching the study of IR, predicated as they are on a rigid fascination with linearity, order, universality, and predictability rooted in fundamental laws.<sup>1.12</sup> Kavalski's critique of IR as bounded by its obsession with imitating more traditional 'natural' sciences encapsulated the focus of complexity-based approaches to IR and came in the midst of a wave of a complexity turn from the mid-2000s, along with the work of Geyer, Bousquet, Curtis, and others which sought to push the theoretical boundaries of IR beyond their rigid Newtonian foundations.<sup>1.13</sup>

However, this thesis begins with a recognition that augmenting existing theoretical traditions in IR is no longer enough: there is instead a need for the wholesale dismantling of orthodox IR and the historical, ontological, methodological, and epistemological foundations upon which it is built. This thesis by no means claims to achieve this feat but instead offers as its contribution a recognition that the only way to dismantle the scientific-imperial *épistémè* of IR is through critical historical introspection into both the historical emergence of the discipline and the science-history-IR nexus at its core. The aim of the

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<sup>1.12</sup>Emilian Kavalski, 'Waking IR Up from its "Deep Newtonian Slumber"', *Millennium*, 41.1 (2012), 137-150. doi:10.1177/0305829812451717

<sup>1.13</sup>Robert Geyer, 'European Integration, the Problem of Complexity and the Revision of Theory', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41.1 (2003), 15-35, doi:10.1111/1468-5955.t01-1-00409

Robert Geyer and Steve Pickering, 'Applying the Tools of Complexity to the International Realm: From Fitness Landscapes to Complexity Cascades', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 24.1 (2011), 5-26, doi:10.1080/09557571.2011.55805

Antoine Bousquet and Simon Curtis, 'Beyond Models and Metaphors: Complexity Theory, Systems Thinking and International Relations', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 24.1 (2011), 43-62, doi: 10.1080/09557571.2011.558054

thesis is to undertake the writing of a critical *Fachgeschichte* (or discipline-history) of an interconnected movement of discipline formation in the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth century period from which contemporary Western IR explicitly traces so many of its roots and therefore lay the historical groundwork for a move beyond the rigid orthodoxy of conventional IR theory.

The use of *Fachgeschichte* is not intended as verbose over-abstraction but instead serves to capture the separate practice of introspective disciplinary history, for which the English language largely lacks a dedicated word. The German term is also not entirely alien to IR scholarship. Reflecting on the discipline's future almost two decades ago, Chris Brown suggested that making the distinction between the English 'discipline' and the German '*Fach*' could be an effective means of resolving IR's confusion over its own fragile disciplinarity, as discussed in chapter two of this thesis.<sup>1.14</sup> To Brown, this recognises the distinction between a degree subject and a branch of scholarship with its own methods, focus, and patterns of thought that develop over time. These habits, patterns, and particularities which set subjects apart from others are therefore historically contingent and cannot be understood in isolation from the contexts in which they have developed. *Fachgeschichte* is the process of historicising these particularities. It is a method of unravelling the history of a discipline which seeks, above all, to 'understand the past as a condition of possibility for the present and recognise traces of historical constellations within it'.<sup>1.15</sup>

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<sup>1.14</sup>Chris Brown, 'The Future of the Discipline?', *International Relations*, 21.3 (2007), 347-50. doi:10.1177/0047117807082713

<sup>1.15</sup>Corina Caduff and Michael Gamper (eds.), 'Vorwort' [Foreword] in: *Schreiben gegen die Moderne: Beiträge zu einer kritischen Fachgeschichte der Germanistik in der Schweiz* ['Writing Against Modernity: Contributions to a *Fachgeschichte* of German Studies in Switzerland'] (Zürich: Chronos, 2001), 7-12 (p.7).

'sie begreifen das Zurückliegende als Bedingungsmöglichkeit der Gegenwart und finden in dieser Spuren von historischen Konstellationen wieder'

It is thus an approach to history that must remain present-facing and introspective and accordingly, Fachgeschichte can only begin with a recognition that disciplinary history and the discipline itself do not exist independently of each other and can never be cleanly separated.<sup>1.16</sup> Fachgeschichte brings multiple dimensions of approaches to disciplinary history and historiographical method together. However, building on the work of Andreas Scheu, it is possible to centre three such dimensions in particular, with Fachgeschichte chiefly combining biographical history (a focus on individuals), history of ideas (the intellectual development of discourses within a discipline), and institutional history (a focus on ‘the relevant institutes, learned societies, and organisations’).<sup>1.17</sup> In constructing a critical Fachgeschichte of IR, this thesis will interweave these three elements into a methodology that is reflexive, introspective, and willing to engage with historical silences obscured by established narratives about the discipline’s past, and by extension, about its present.

Once the need for this critical Fachgeschichte has been outlined, the history of IR can be reframed through an introspective exposure of three interconnected historical silences shaping the genealogy of the discipline in emergent ways. The first of these is the liberal imperialism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which saw a turn in mainland Britain and the colonial Dominions towards the codification of a ‘science’ of ordering the world according

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<sup>1.16</sup>Bernhard Streck, ‘Solve et Coagula: Wer Fach und Fachgeschichte trennt, soll sie auch zusammenfügen’ [‘Whoever Separates Discipline and Disciplinary History Should Also Combine Them’], *Paideuma*, 64 (2018), 285-92

<sup>1.17</sup>Andreas M. Scheu, ‘Fachgeschichte als Erinnerungsforschung: Die Beziehung von Fachgeschichte und Fachgedächtnis am Beispiel der deutschen Kommunikationswissenschaft’ [‘Fachgeschichte as Memory Research: The Relationship Between Disciplinary History and Disciplinary Memory Using the Example of German Communication Science’] in: *Handbuch kommunikationswissenschaftliche Erinnerungsforschung* [Handbook of Memory Research in Communication Science], ed. by Christian Pentzold and Christine Lohmeier (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023), 391-406 (p.392). doi:10.1515/978311062974

to levels of civilisational development. This both built on a Victorian fascination with the scientific and was conducted by men largely trained as historians. It was accompanied by the formalisation of these approaches into a newly demarcated academic discipline, with its own academic posts and publications. This is where the relationship between history, science, and IR is obscured by IR's orthodox disciplinary origin story in the 'Aberystwyth myth', which presents the discipline not as a product of empire but of a noble pursuit of peace inaugurated in 1919 and tied closely to the League of Nations. The second silence identified is closely interrelated but necessitates a turn across the Atlantic to trace the influence of a harder, more explicit racial science on theories of ordering the world, allied closely with eugenics and the 'scientific' legitimisation of white supremacist racism. Manifested in various forms but popularised by a new style of popular intellectualism in the United States, this global race science found supporters not just in a much wider public but in mythologised names such as Winston Churchill and Woodrow Wilson. The third is a parallel movement in the German Empire and subsequently the post-war Weimar Republic, since largely written out of IR's disciplinary history. The emergence of a trans-disciplinary '*Kolonialwissenschaften*' ('colonial sciences') research and teaching programme pre-empted the formal institutionalisation of IR and echoed similar movements in other European empires to build a formal 'imperial studies' discipline, notably with explicit claims to a scientific character.

From the interweaving of these strands, a new discipline of IR was pieced together: one that was, in the eyes of its proponents, fundamentally scientific. Its legacy was consciously detached from any ties to empire: this was a supposedly neutral discipline, content merely with describing the way the world is. That such descriptions echoed the language, content, and theoretical bent of those they inherited elements from has so far been under-explored within mainstream

IR in a general sense. This post-war repackaging of the discipline marks a final historical silence that remains unaddressed. By constructing the foundations on which a future attempt to grapple with this might build, this thesis seeks to contribute to both the disciplinary history of IR and present-day understandings of what the discipline is and ought to be. Recognising this silence and rooting it in the longer history of the scientific-imperial *épistémè* allows for the dismantling of claims to neutral, non-ideological, ahistorical IR theories and the reframing of IR as an historically contingent science of empire, inseparable from the various manifestations of imperial order that have shaped its historical emergence. Instead of a story of a noble and scientific scholarly endeavour to preserve peace and describe global order, the disciplinary history of IR becomes one of a discipline forged in the twilight of the British Empire, refined or sharpened in the United States, tested to its limits in wartime Europe, and reinvented as a value-free American social science detached from its own history in the post-war years.

The connective factor tying each of these historical examples together and allowing for the construction of a coherent thread throughout this attempt to trace a critical *Fachgeschichte* of IR is science. IR's claim to scientificity and the role that scientific discourses have played in the emergent development and formalisation of the discipline remain a core feature of orthodox approaches to theorising IR. Narratives of this development in an IR context remain rooted, consciously or otherwise, in what Grovogui calls the 'postulation of Europe as exclusive proprietor of legitimate science'.<sup>1.18</sup> However, the role of science in disciplinary historical narratives, particularly in relation to the earlier history of the formalised academic discipline, remains severely underexplored. Critical histories of IR have emerged in recent years and have made important contributions to introspection within

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<sup>1.18</sup>Siba N. Grovogui, *Beyond Eurocentrism and Anarchy: Memories of International Order and Institutions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), p.28

the discipline, albeit generally from the fringes of the orthodox field.<sup>1.19</sup> There have equally been discussions about the relationship between IR and science, as between science and history. The conventional historiography of the discipline, which traces the development of post-war IR as a linear series of ‘great debates’ between competing theoretical strains, frames the post-Second World War period as contested between historicism and scientificism as two irreconcilable approaches to the discipline, rooted in the encounter between traditionalists and positivists.<sup>1.20</sup>

However, this should not be isolated to a limited period in the mid-twentieth century. Not only did the unresolved second great debate well predate Kaplan’s declaration of its beginning in 1966, but it remains a contradiction on which the very discipline of IR has been built.<sup>1.21</sup> This thesis explores the contradiction between history and science in IR and situates it in its historical context. In doing so, it directs itself towards the construction of a history of ideas. Ideas in this context are taken not as paradigms that have allowed for the linear evolution of a discipline as a progression of increasingly refined theories, but as outputs of interactions between contexts that have developed through emergent and historically contingent processes.

It focusses on ideas which have fallen subject to historical silences, shrouded by linear disciplinary mythologies that present an insular and sanitised vision of the discipline of IR. These ideas leave echoes that can be heard in the present-day fabric of the discipline, and offer access points for addressing the

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<sup>1.19</sup>Kees van der Pijl, ‘Historicising the International: Modes of Foreign Relations and Political Economy’, *Historical Materialism*, 18.2 (2010), 3-34. doi:10.1163/156920610X512426

<sup>1.20</sup>Simon Curtis and Marjo Koivisto, ‘Towards a Second “Second Debate”? Rethinking the Relationship Between Science and History in International Theory’, *International Relations*, 24.4 (2010), 433-55. doi:10.1177/0047117810386071

<sup>1.21</sup>Morton A. Kaplan, ‘The New Great Debate: Traditionalism vs. Science in International Relations’, *World Politics*, 19.1 (1966), 1-20. doi:10.2307/2009840

historical silences that have shaped the historical emergence of IR. The major such ideas that are of particular relevance to this historical project are that of a class of imperial administrators uniquely placed to determine the future of global order (later remodelled in various forms, such as in the idea of a global police force to enforce a hierarchical peace), an Anglo-Saxon world order predicated on racial pseudoscience and pseudohistory, and the political defence of a rational and scientific imperialism that enabled horrific acts of genocide.

These are discourses shaped by exercises of power and reflect the dominant power dynamics of their time. Thus, a historical narrative constructed to unpick these discourses reflects an imbalance of white, wealthy men centred in colonial cores. The reframing of IR as a science of empire makes it clear that the entire formalised field of study, its structures, and its core frameworks were constructed as their discipline and intentionally so. Its core theories and institutions were designed to serve the interests of colonial power, and so unravelling these historical constructions will require an engagement with the legacies of such power. It is only in recognising this that the discipline can be reclaimed and repurposed. There is therefore an imbalance in this thesis and in this history of white, wealthy, men, either from Europe, North America, or the Dominions of the British Empire. Centring this imbalance illustrates that 'canonical' IR was construed as a discipline of these men, for these men. Highlighting this is both deliberate and necessary to reveal the formalised discipline's emergence as a science of empire, rather than the open and pluralistic scholarly endeavour some working within its associated traditions have preferred to imagine. That is not to say there *should* be no incorporation in discussions of disciplinary IR before the 1930s of those excluded by the white, male, imperial class of administrator-scholars who forged the formal structures of the named discipline in their own image but rather, there must be a recognition

that conventional disciplinary histories have succeeded in pushing these to the fringes and margins of 'core' IR.

Much of the most important work in disciplinary history presently lies in addressing such marginalisation. There have, for instance, been key efforts recently to recentre the contributions of women to discourses of international thought, especially that of Patricia Owens and colleagues involved with the Women and Historical International Thought project.<sup>1.22</sup> Women have always been present in the discourse of international order but their exclusion from the mainstream 'canon' of the formal discipline that treats with this subject matter, and especially from its 'traditional' disciplinary history, is more telling of the discipline itself than of the women who were international thinkers in the same period. They were pushed to the margins by a discipline that was imperial in both its outlook and its formal structures, and it is this aspect of disciplinary insularity and exclusion that this thesis seeks primarily to address, even though its case studies focus predominantly on groups largely constituted of and by wealthy white men.

That even Owens' project largely centres on women entangled with the dominant structures of the discipline, such as wealthy, Oxford and Cambridge educated scholars like Agnes Headlam-Morley, Eileen Power, and Florence Melian Stawell, demonstrates the difficulty in broadening the boundaries of the field beyond the insular social, political, educational, and class relations that defined

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<sup>1.22</sup>Patricia Owens, Katharina Rietzler, Kimberly Hutchings, and Sarah C. Dunstan (eds.), *Women's International Thought: Towards a New Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Patricia Owens, *Erased: A History of International Thought Without Men* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2025).

*Women and the History of International Thought*, 'About', <https://whit.web.ox.ac.uk/about> [Accessed 27 August 2025].

its canonical foundations.<sup>1.23</sup> Broadening this dominant class of would-be discipline-builders to the few women or Black and working-class scholars who found a place within its dominant structures will never be enough. Meaningful decolonisation means exposing the marks that colonial power relations leave on the discipline and it will therefore never be sufficient to augment the canon with those excluded by it, if it is not first questioned why this canon is so dominant and totalising in the first place. The first step must therefore be to problematise the scientific-imperial *épistémè* of IR and the historical narratives which sustain its dominance.

### **1.3 Structure**

To do so, this thesis addresses three core historical mythologies surrounding the emergence of IR in a European, British Imperial, and North American context, and problematises them as legacies of a particular relationship between historical narratives and scientific discourses. These are the ‘Aberystwyth myth’ of IR’s supposed origin story, the myth of IR as an American social science, and the presentation of IR’s evolution as a series of post-imperial ‘great debates’ isolated exclusively to the US and Britain, leading to the early attempts to repackage each of these strands into a value-free post-war predictive science. From the dismantling of these mythologies emerges a new *Fachgeschichte* of IR: one that allows the discipline to be better contextualised as the successor to attempts to develop and refine a ‘science’ of empire.

This initial chapter lays out the basis of this approach and identifies the core premises that motivate it. The following chapter integrates these foundations into the existing literature on disciplinary history in IR to identify key trends

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<sup>1.23</sup>Patricia Owens, *Erased*

in the treatment of history in an IR context. It distils these trends into a recognition of the need for a critical historical ontology, capable of historicising IR in an attempt to move the discipline beyond the insularity and aversion to introspection which afflict its mainstream scholarship. Chapter three builds this into a targeted methodology, focussing predominantly on the need to address and engage with historical silences. Though deployed with a present-facing focus, this methodology is fundamentally historical and is motivated by the need for critical introspection into the discipline and the historical dynamics with which it is entangled.

To demonstrate both the need for this introspection and its potential, three interconnected contextual case studies follow, each problematising an enduring myth in IR's conventional Western disciplinary history. The first centres on an enduring disciplinary origin story, that the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth marked the birth of IR as a liberal internationalist scholarly endeavour dedicated to pursuing peace in 1919. By repositioning the Wilson Chair alongside parallel professorships in Colonial History and eugenics-inflected Geography and Anthropology, it argues that this attempt to formalise a 'new science' remained closely entangled with empire. Chapter five explores this intersection between empire and race science in an IR context more closely by tracing the development of a Transatlantic 'Anglo-Saxonist' movement that left both a disciplinary legacy for IR and enduring fragments that can still be identified in the present-day discipline. Chapter six turns to a parallel German context to outline how this emergent science of empire transcended imperial frontiers, especially with the development of an interdisciplinary IR precursor (*Kolonialwissenschaften/Colonial Sciences*) yet to be incorporated in any discussion of IR's disciplinary history.

The subsequent two chapters explore the wider entanglements with

a longer history of imperial science, internationalism, and elite networks of discipline formation. Chapter seven traces fragments and silences in IR's disciplinary history through Victorian learned societies and circles of colonial administrators to a proto-IR Imperial Studies movement mirroring German *Kolonialwissenschaft*. As those involved gravitated towards the machinery of the state, a class of ostensibly expert 'citizen scholars' was created, who would become the canonical founding figures of the IR discipline, especially in the British Empire. The entanglements of this group extended beyond to the United States and German Empire, and the formation of early disciplinary structures of knowledge production, such as the British Royal Institute of International Affairs and the US Council on Foreign Relations, was a direct product of interactions between members of these networks across imperial frontiers. Chapter eight takes this further by resituating alternative narratives and long-overlooked organisations like the League of Nations Union as fragments of a much broader and more complex history surrounding the interconnected networks of trans-imperial discipline formation. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the disciplinary afterlives these networks left behind long after the end of the period in focus, identifying the historical bedrock of a scientific-imperial épistémè of IR.

#### **1.4 Imperialism is a word for scholars**

This thesis hinges on the identification of the thread of empire, which it seeks to identify running throughout the disciplinary historical sociology of IR. Empire, and imperialism, are contested historical concepts, each rooted in long discourses. There are range of approaches for conceptualising this term, each of which captures different overlapping elements of one of the defining phenomena of human historical activity. Defining imperialism is more than a merely academic

pursuit, but it is a term subject to great degrees of postulating in academic circles, prompting an oft-quoted adage that ‘imperialism is no word for scholars’, drawn from the work of W.K. Hancock but repeated in various forms by others.<sup>1.24</sup>

There is some merit in this, albeit likely not in the sense Hancock intended, in that imperialism is not an isolated academic concept detached from human or material realities. In the words of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o: ‘imperialism is not a slogan. It is real, it is palpable in content and form and in its methods and effects [...] it has economic, political, military, cultural, and psychological consequences for the people of the world today’.<sup>1.25</sup> Theorising about empire by leading scholars had direct implications for people living under structures of imperial order. Thus, scholars must be aware of the dangers inherent in engaging with empire, lest they propagate discourses that strengthen its legacies in the present day. Refusing to recognise this and treating imperialism as abstract, scholastic, and somehow removed from material reality neglects the direct complicity of scholars in legitimising and reproducing material injustice through their work.

Framing the relationship between empire and academia in this way should not imply a detachment between the two, the very focus of this thesis is the interconnectivity between those who theorised empire and those who operationalised it. Illustrative of this, Hancock’s words are those of an arch-imperialist who was part of a generation of post-Great War scholars working amid formal decolonisation. The quote concerning imperialism being no word for scholars comes from his defence of empire, published during the Second World War. Implicit within it is the claim that critical uses of the term ‘imperialism’,

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<sup>1.24</sup>William Keith Hancock, *Argument of Empire* (London: Penguin, 1943), p.66.

Harrison M. Wright, “‘Imperialism’: “The Word and Its Meaning”, *Social Research*, 34.4 (1967), 660-674.

<sup>1.25</sup>Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya, 1986), p.2

referring to an ideology of empire, are unscholarly. The underlying suggestion is that imperialism is a word associated with political or ideological critique and not one with a place in serious academic discourse. Such claims are part of a wider tendency to claim a detached objectivity by IR scholars, strongly embodied in calls for the use of 'neutral' language in IR.

Benjamin Cohen, for instance, repurposes a similar argument to Hancock in suggesting that whilst 'it might seem wisest in a scholarly study to drop the word [imperialism] altogether', scholars should instead offer an 'ethically neutral and objective definition' of imperialism.<sup>1.26</sup> This characterises a dominant trend in Anglophone IR and International Political Economy (IPE) in the mid-1970s, when Cohen was writing, but also foreshadows the continued tendency of present-day IR scholars to present themselves as detached from the world they seek to describe. The first assumption implicit in Cohen's call for an 'ethically neutral and objective' usage of the term imperialism is that such a definition is possible. The second is that such a definition would be beneficial in any way to scholars of IR or historians. The third, and possibly most dangerous, is that imperialism is a static phenomenon that can be studied by objective and distanced observers in a value-free way, detached from its historical development and evolution.

Each of these assumptions falls victim to a particular reductionism in presenting imperialism, or IR in general, as a phenomenon that can ever be studied objectively. In doing so, when taken together, these assumptions overlook the dynamic and adaptive character of imperialism and empire in both a present-day and historical context, and by extension strips the formative role of imperialism from disciplinary histories of IR. In seeking to present the emergence

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<sup>1.26</sup>Benjamin J. Cohen, *The Question of Imperialism: The Political Economy of Dominance and Dependence* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp.9-10

of IR as a complex historical process shaped by interactions across imperial frontiers between rival empires and competing modes of imperialism, this thesis challenges this and seeks to incorporate the word ‘imperialism’ into IR discourse in a more meaningful and critical way. It contends that language is never neutral and is instead recognises the argument put forward by Frantz Fanon that ‘to speak means [...] above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilisation’.<sup>1.27</sup> As such, when engaging with discourses surrounding imperialism, scholars must recognise their positionality and assume a stance. Fanon raised this in the context of European languages as a marker of colonised populations’ proximity to whiteness, and concerns surrounding the use of the terms empire and imperialism should by no means be taken as a matter that can readily be compared to this. Nonetheless, it is an issue that bears serious consideration by scholars who would seek to use the language of oppressive structures in the hope of contributing to their undoing.

When working in a field that is dynamic and inherently shaped by positionality, it is impossible to ever approach subjects as a neutral and detached observer without interacting with them. This is almost akin to the observer effect in both classical physics and quantum mechanics: not in the ‘quasi-probabilistic’ sense that an observation is shaped by the sequence in which measurements were taken, but in a broader, metaphorical sense that any observation is an interaction with the system under observation.<sup>1.28</sup> In language more familiar to historians, this reflects Howard Zinn’s formulation about the impossibility of staying neutral on a moving train.<sup>1.29</sup> Scholars and disciplinary historians alike must therefore

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<sup>1.27</sup>Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. by Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1967), pp.17-18

<sup>1.28</sup>Kelvin Onggadinata, Dagomir Kaszlikowski, and Paweł Kurzyński, ‘Observer Effect, Quasi-Probabilities and Generalized Specker’s Boxes’, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, A*, 382.2268 (2024). doi:10.1098/rsta.2023.0010

<sup>1.29</sup>Howard Zinn, ‘Overcoming Obstacles’, Lecture delivered at University of Colorado at Boulder,

recognise that an ethically neutral definition of imperialism is no more possible than an ethically neutral definition of genocide. To use the word imperialism is to engage with a particular syntax of power and there can be no neutrality in such circumstances.

Early canonical scholars of IR, whose work is considered foundational to the mainstream Western discipline, chose their side very clearly in deciding to engage with imperialism, whether directly or indirectly. There were those who explicitly defended imperialism but perhaps more dangerous were those, who by claiming they could engage with imperialism in a ‘scientific’, neutral, and objective manner, served to reinforce and legitimise the epistemic base on which structures of empire were built. This was not a rigid binary and most names and organisational units explored in a historical context in this thesis could fall into either camp at various times, as both were tied together under a broader *épistémè* of scientific-imperial knowledge production. Even ardent imperialists, especially those aligned to what might be called liberal imperialism, popular among a particular section of the British imperial ruling class from the late 1910s, shied away from explicitly using the language of imperialism and instead advocated for a turn towards a semi-euphemistic ‘international consciousness’ as the basis of future imperial reform.<sup>1.30</sup>

This follows a pattern that can be traced throughout the course of the historical development of formal structures of Anglophone and wider Western European IR. There has long been an aversion to directly engaging with

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30 November 2006, in: *Howard Zinn Speaks: Collected Speeches, 1963-2009*, ed. by Anthony Arnove (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2012), 207-224 (pp.208-9)

<sup>1.30</sup>Thomas Jones proposed Alfred Zimmern as the inaugural holder of the Wilson Chair in International Politics on the basis of his ‘international consciousness’. Letter from Thomas Jones to Percy Watkins, 30 November 1918. Aberystwyth, *Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru* (LIGC), Thomas Jones Papers, J12

imperialism, even in the history of the discipline and the structures it has produced and been shaped by. For instance, Ruth Henig's history of the development of the League of Nations, otherwise one of the most developed histories of the Anglophone and European elite debates that contributed to its foundation, makes only one mention of the word imperialism in referring to Britain and France as the 'imperialist powers' to distinguish them from the United States.<sup>1.31</sup> This thesis does not shy away from addressing the imperial subtext of these debates. It identifies calls for the League as deeply tied to broader debates surrounding imperial reform and renewal, embodied in the work of elite scholars like Alfred Zimmern and Philip Kerr as much as in learned societies and political movements like the League of Nations Union and the Round Table.

The reluctance of IR to engage directly with imperialism in more recent decades can be considered a symptom and a legacy of the avoidance of direct engagement in this earlier period. This tendency to reframe imperialism and evade directly confronting questions of imperial order affected not only scholars but extended to the high-level formal structures that they legitimised and defended. The League, for instance, though positioned from the outset as a successor to imperial modes of government, shied away from directly employing the language of imperialism. Prominent imperialists nonetheless tested the limits of this in making an explicit comparison between Empire and League without directly framing internationalism as a fundamentally imperial project. These included Jan Smuts, who declared that 'the British Empire has been so eminently successful as a political system, the League, working on somewhat similar lines, could not fail to achieve a reasonable measure of success' but shied away from explicitly labelling

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<sup>1.31</sup>Ruth Henig, *The Peace That Never Was: A History of the League of Nations* (London: Haus Publishing, 2019)

the League a global empire.<sup>1.32</sup> Instead, Article 22 of its Covenant aspired for a system of global order based on a ‘sacred trust of civilisation’ enacted through the ‘tutelage’ of people incapable, or not yet civilised enough, to govern themselves, to be delivered at the hands of ‘advanced nations’.<sup>1.33</sup> To Alain Locke and Zimmern alike, this was a ‘revision of empire’, with the latter considering the mandate system simply a means of continuing the existing work of the British Empire under the banner of the League.<sup>1.34</sup> It was not an empire in name, but nonetheless was reliant on the reinforcement of a system of imperial relations and was supported by a network of rationalising discourse tied heavily to imperial knowledge production, particularly amongst so-called liberal imperialists.

Though embodied in the League, this lack of direct engagement with empire and imperialism outlived the ill-fated League and persisted well into the ‘formative’ twentieth century years of IR as an academic discipline. The vaunted need for a balanced ‘scientific’ objectivity in developing a non-normative observational science of IR has precluded much direct engagement with imperialism, its consequences, and its legacies, though with notable exceptions. Prior to the 1990s, IR scholars largely avoided direct engagement with questions of empire, preferring instead to focus on states as the core structural units of global interaction. Even after the turn of the millennium, much of the discussion concerning empire and imperialism in mainstream IR has been superficial and steered to fit existing ‘paradigms’ of orthodox IR theory. Hardt and Negri provide a notable exception through their framing of empire as fundamental to the very

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<sup>1.32</sup>Jan Christiaan Smuts, *The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion* (London, Toronto, and New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1918), pp.29-30

<sup>1.33</sup>*The Covenant of the League of Nations* [Reprint of original text] (London: League of Nations Union, 1923), pp.13-14

<sup>1.34</sup>Alain Locke, ‘The Mandate System: A New Code of Empire’, in: *The Works of Alain Locke*, ed. by Charles Molesworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 509-527 (p.527)

structure of the present international system. They similarly recognise that existing IR theories, even those of a critical or 'postmodernist' bent, are 'not only ineffective against but can even coincide with and support the functions and practices of imperial rule'.<sup>1.35</sup>

Defining empire as a historical phenomenon, as merely an administrative structure left behind in a bygone age helps to almost exempt IR scholars from the responsibility of engaging with it. Empire should not, however, be left as the exclusive purview of historians, and nor should imperialism. Imperialism is an ideology of global order and so is as fundamental to IR as concepts like the state and international organisations. This is especially clear once the historical development of IR in Western Europe and North America is situated in its context. Discourses of IR have been shaped by empire in direct and wide-ranging ways both throughout its past and well into the present.

A further difficulty encountered in constructing working definitions of empire is the distinction between imperialism and colonialism. The two terms are often deployed interchangeably, and intersect along several axes, but are products of different historical processes and contexts. The usage of these terms has evolved over time, like any. In the present day, it is possible to define colonialism as an operational practice, whereas imperialism is the underlying ideology that rationalises it. Therefore, the terms will not be used interchangeably throughout this thesis but will be used with significant overlap. Colonialism will be used to emphasise the means and policy of acquiring new colonies, of managing the processes of ordering and exploiting people, resources, and territory under colonial rule. Imperialism, on the other hand, will be deployed as the term to refer

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<sup>1.35</sup>Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press), p.142

to the underlying theories and ideologies designed to legitimise and rationalise these processes.

Walter Rodney outlined a similar division between the two terms in positioning colonialism as one operational aspect of imperialism. Rodney argued that ‘colonialism was based on alien political rule and was restricted to some parts of the world. Imperialism, however, underlay all colonies, extended all over the world [...] and it allowed the participation of all capitalist nations’.<sup>1.36</sup> Under this definition, a lack of formal colonies did not preclude any state from imperialism and the exploitation of the colonised world. In this context, Rodney was referring to the historical position of Germany after 1918, which though stripped of its formal colonies in the aftermath of the Great War still pursued distinctly imperialist ends. However, the same also applies to the United States, particularly in relation to its role in shaping scientific-imperial discourses of IR. Even though any US endeavours of formal colonial expansion were comparatively limited, it is still possible to speak of a US imperialism as part of wider global structures of imperialism. This was shaped in emergent ways by interactions with discourses from the metropolises of formal colonialism, particularly Britain, and it played its own role in shaping these discourses in turn, as will be discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

Even in a British context, the meaning of imperialism was never firmly fixed and instead evolved over time, not least out of political expediency.<sup>1.37</sup> As such, it is impossible to identify a static and universal imperialism, because like empire, imperialism is a complex, emergent, and adaptive phenomenon. The

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<sup>1.36</sup>Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Verso, 2018), p.221

<sup>1.37</sup>Andrew S. Thompson, ‘The Language of Imperialism and the Meanings of Empire: Imperial Discourse in British Politics, 1895–1914’, *Journal of British Studies*, 36.2 (2014), 147-177. doi:10.1086/386132

ideological, political, and epistemological basis on which it can be legitimised thus must continuously adapt to allow for this. It is from here that the need for a ‘science of empire’ of the mould of IR with its scientific-imperial épistémè emerges. Connected to this, the science of empire identified in this thesis is by no means a universal science that captures an objective and unchanging truth but developed as one anchored in a historical claim to legitimacy rooted in established scientific discourse. Not all imperialist discourses cloaked themselves in the language of science, though many did, and not all approaches to scholarship that present themselves as scientific are imperialist. Claudia Jones, for instance, made calls for a ‘scientific assessment of imperialism’ the bedrock of her staunch anti-imperialism.<sup>1.38</sup> Like history, science is contested and is never objective or neutral, at least in the sense that it is regularly invoked.

Instead, the scientific-imperial épistémè at the core of IR as it developed as a trans-imperial ‘science’ was one claim to a particular scientific legitimacy, used to establish and strengthen imperial order and structures of domination. This is the legacy that present-day IR inherits, though mainstream scholarship is largely unwilling to claim and subsequently problematise this. Like empire, this ‘science’ is complex, adaptive, and capable of evolution. Importantly, it is also historically contingent and shaped by the context in which it developed. Thus, though this thesis has been produced under the auspices of a Department of Politics, Philosophy, and Religion and takes International Relations as its formal topic, its focus is nonetheless avowedly historical. It seeks to lay the groundwork for a history of the present in IR, beginning with the foundational myths that shape the historical identity of the present-day academic discipline. It therefore falls into a wider tradition of disciplinary history in IR and must thus begin with some

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<sup>1.38</sup>Claudia Jones, ‘American Imperialism and the British West Indies’, *Political Affairs*, 37.4 (1958), 9-18 (p.15)

discussion of the trends, patterns, and lacunæ within this tradition to ground its own contribution in context.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review: Disciplinary History in IR

### 2.1 Existing Critical Histories

Though this thesis is directed towards addressing silences in the disciplinary history of IR through its construction of a critical Fachgeschichte, it is far from the first attempt to engage with the history of the discipline in a critical way. It seeks to contribute to a rich and growing tradition of scholarship targeted at engaging with IR's historical sociology in critical ways. This has seen a significant expansion since the mid-2010s, with a renewed interest after the murder of George Floyd and the ensuing Black Lives Matter protests in 2020. In this context, this thesis is by no means the first attempt to bring critical introspection to IR's disciplinary history. Discussions problematising some of the core historical features of the discipline have been growing for well over a decade, such as with Brian Schmidt's edited collection on the first great debate and its place in IR's disciplinary mythology.<sup>2.1</sup>

Accounts addressing silences in the discipline on a wider scale, however, are fewer and further between. Nonetheless, that is not to say they do not exist, and this thesis is made possible by a series of works that have contributed to a critical sociological turn in IR's disciplinary history over the course of the last decade. Chief among these are those of Alexander Davis, Vineet Thakur, and Peter Vale tracing the imperial entanglements of IR in South Africa, and of Robert Vitalis in recentring race in early twentieth century US IR.<sup>2.2</sup> These capture a case

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<sup>2.1</sup>Brian C. Schmidt (ed.), *International Relations and the First Great Debate* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012)

<sup>2.2</sup>Alexander E. Davis, Vineet Thakur, and Peter Vale, *The Imperial Discipline: Race and the Founding of International Relations* (London: Pluto Press, 2020)

Vineet Thakur and Peter Vale, *South Africa, Race and the Making of International Relations*

study-based approach to critical disciplinary history in IR, centring on a particular context in order to address a specific historical silence that continues to shape the discipline.

There is also a more general literature that, instead of focussing on in-depth historical case studies, more broadly outlines what a wider intellectual project of critical IR requires. These include the work of John Hobson in exposing the often unspoken Eurocentric foundations of mainstream IR theories and of Amitav Acharya in developing a framework of 'Global IR' which seeks to integrate sources of knowledge ignored by mainstream IR into the discipline.<sup>2,3</sup> Building on this, Nora Fisher-Onar and Emilian Kavalski suggest that the 'toolkits of historical sociology and global IR' can be combined to reimagine IR and forge an alternative discipline better adapted to dealing with the complexity of power relations and grounded in what Sanjay Subrahmanyam calls a 'more textured history of our present'.<sup>2,4</sup> This is not a new demand. Two decades ago, a collection on *Decolonizing International Relations* edited by Branwen Gruffydd Jones brought together these two strands identified by Fisher-Onar and Kavalski by combining broadening the boundaries of IR with critical historical grounding.<sup>2,5</sup>

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(Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2020)

Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015)

<sup>2,3</sup>John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760-2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Amitav Acharya, 'Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds: A New Agenda for International Studies', *International Studies Quarterly*, 58.4 (2014), 647-59. doi:10.1111/isqu.12171

<sup>2,4</sup>Nora Fisher-Onar and Emilian Kavalski, 'From Transatlantic Order to Afro-Eur-Asian Worlds? Reimagining International Relations as Interlocking Regional Worlds', *Global Studies Quarterly*, 2 (2023), 1-11 (p.2). doi:10.1093/isagsq/ksac080

Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia', *Modern Asian Studies*, 31.3 (1997), 735-762 (p.761-2). doi:10.1017/S0026749X00017133 Quoted in: Nora Fisher-Onar and Emilian Kavalski, 'From Transatlantic Order to Afro-Eur-Asian Worlds?', p.9

<sup>2,5</sup>Branwen Gruffydd Jones (ed.), *Decolonizing International Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006)

This collection lays out a theoretically pluralistic alternative to orthodox, Western-centric, insular IR that serves almost as an ontological programme for a counter-discipline. Its contributions centre the importance of critical historical readings of established IR contexts and problematise some of the dominant assumptions characteristic of the orthodox Western IR discipline. Many of its arguments echo those within this thesis, from Sankaran Krishna's positioning of IR as a 'quintessentially "white" discipline constructed around an amnesia on the question of race' to Mustapha Pasha's recognition that the 'appreciation of fractures with the mainstream narrative of IR and identification of contradictions, silences, and repressions merely are first steps toward building viable alternatives'.<sup>2.6</sup> Such historical readings of central features of IR orthodoxy lay the groundwork for a move towards a more introspective discipline. That the volume begins with a recognition that decolonisation in IR must 'expose enduring suppressions in the historical record' of the discipline and ends with the imperative that escaping 'Western imperial imagination requires first of all that IR discourse is situated historically' is indicative of the emphasis its contributors place on historical grounding as the basis of theoretical critique in IR, since expanded further by increasingly critical approaches to disciplinary history in IR that have followed.<sup>2.7</sup> The exercise in critical Fachgeschichte this thesis undertakes is deliberately positioned in the same tradition of decolonisation and accordingly begins with a similar recognition that IR is historically contingent.

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<sup>2.6</sup>Sankaran Krishna, 'Race, Amnesia, and the Education of International Relations', in *Decolonizing International Relations*, ed. by Branwen Gruffydd Jones (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 89-108 (p.90)

Mustapha Kamal Pasha, 'Liberalism, Islam, and International Relations', in *Decolonizing International Relations*, ed. by Branwen Gruffydd Jones, 65-88 (p.81)

<sup>2.7</sup>Branwen Gruffydd Jones, 'Introduction: International Relations, Eurocentrism, and Imperialism', in *Decolonizing International Relations*, 1-20 (p.1)

Branwen Gruffydd Jones, 'Conclusion: Imperatives, Possibilities, and Limitations', in *Decolonizing International Relations*, 219-42 (p.221)

Earlier attempts to decolonise the discipline thus help to lay the groundwork for the introspective historical sociology in an IR context that this thesis is directed towards. A similar intellectual project to problematise silences in the discipline was expanded with later edited collections like *Race and Racism in International Relations* (edited by Alexander Anievas, Nivi Manchanda, and Robbie Shilliam), and *International Relations and Non-Western Thought* (edited by Shilliam).<sup>2.8</sup>

## 2.2 Orthodox Disciplinary History

However, beyond these key attempts to develop a more critical disciplinary historiography, a difficulty arises in that there has been a general, albeit gradual, growth in literature that engages with the history of IR of all perspectives since the turn of the millennium. This has meant that critical works have been accompanied by a similar expansion of accounts that align more closely with conventional disciplinary histories. For instance, Torbjørn Knutsen's attempt at a comprehensive account of IR's historical evolution, published at the turn of the millennium, reinforces several core disciplinary myths in tracing out the development of IR. Knutsen roots the genesis of ideas that shaped IR in mediæval Europe, with the 'infancy of the discipline' proper coming in the interwar years after 1919.<sup>2.9</sup> This is an orthodox account of IR's history, shared by a range of disciplinary historians, including Howard Malchow.<sup>2.10</sup> Positioning IR as a product of exclusively European historical events, structures, and philosophical

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<sup>2.8</sup>Alexander Anievas, Nivi Manchanda, and Robbie Shilliam (eds.), *Race and Racism in International Relations: Confronting the Global Colour Line* (Oxford: Taylor and Francis, 2014)

Robbie Shilliam (ed.), *International Relations and Non-Western Thought: Imperialism, Colonialism and Investigations of Global Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2010)

<sup>2.9</sup>Torbjørn L. Knutsen, *A History of International Relations Theory*, second edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997)

<sup>2.10</sup>Howard LeRoy Malchow, *History and International Relations: From the Ancient World to the 21st Century*, second edition (London: Bloomsbury, 2020)

traditions frames it as a European discipline, overlooks or silences the role European imperialism played in shaping its core structures. This contributes to the propagation of the myth that the formalised academic discipline of IR arose at the end of the Great War out of endeavours to avoid a repeat of the ‘war to end all wars’ and a noble pursuit of a lasting peace. Instead, orthodox or canonical IR should be recognised not as a discourse of Europe, but as a discourse of European imperialism. This is an important distinction that this thesis seeks to emphasise. More recent works have recognised this distinction, including Dina Gusejnova’s identification of the imperial mentalities indelibly interwoven with the very concept of Europe, with both having evolved and adapted in the hands of a continental intelligentsia to meet changing historical circumstances.<sup>2.11</sup> The history of Europe is the history of European imperialism, and it does not serve IR to position it as the product of one without the other.

### **2.2.1 Linearity in Disciplinary History**

Similarly, in tracing a history of realism in IR, Thomas Smith frames its evolution as a linear progression towards the culmination of the relationship between IR and historical methodology, which for Smith comes with the supposed birth of a ‘true science of International Relations’ heralded by the Correlates of War project in the 1960s.<sup>2.12</sup> The presentation of IR’s disciplinary history as a linear process of refinement to ultimately become a purified science is challenged by this thesis, which seeks to root the claims of orthodox IR to a ‘scientific’ character in the historical context of empire and movements for imperial reform in early twentieth century Europe and the United States. Instead of a linear

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<sup>2.11</sup>Dina Gusejnova, *European Elites and Ideas of Empire, 1917-1957* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016)

<sup>2.12</sup>Thomas W. Smith, *History and International Relations*(London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p.119

development through successive stages, this thesis positions IR as a discipline shaped by interactions across discourses, contexts, and frontiers in complex and emergent ways. Viewed through this lens, the trajectory of the historical development of dominant 'knowledge' in IR becomes a case not of one paradigm supplanting another in a cumulative process of theoretical refinement, but of historical circumstances and power relations creating the conditions in which some discourses can cohere and endure, while others fade from prominence or are silenced. This notion of the present in IR, and the dominance of theoretical approaches that define it, as a culmination of a long linear development is not unique to the work of Smith. It remains enshrined in the fabric of the discipline through the propagation of linear histories of IR that saw a major reactivation around the turn of the millennium.

For instance, writing in the same period, Harald Kleinschmidt frames the historical development of IR as a similarly linear progression of IR theories from a universalism descended from the Roman Empire, through mediæval Europe, to a somewhat abrupt culmination in Cold War neo-realism.<sup>2.13</sup> This is most commonly articulated in the narrative of IR's historical development as one of a linear progression through 'great debates' between competing theoretical strands, or in the related framing of 'paradigms' as the key dynamic locus of the discipline. This narrative dates back decades in the historical sociology of the discipline and the use of the term 'great debate' in this context is often traced back at least as far as the early 1950s in the United States, with the interaction between Frank Tannenbaum and Hans J. Morgenthau. Tannenbaum charged the self-described realists with abandoning 'humanitarian[ism]' for 'power politics', while Morgenthau positioned this as the latest in a succession of 'great debates'

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<sup>2.13</sup>Harald Kleinschmidt, *The Nemesis of Power: A History of International Relations Theories* (London: Reaktion, 2000)

over foreign policy which included those over issues like intervention against the Axis Powers in the Second World War, isolationism and the League of Nations in the 1920s, US imperial expansion after the Spanish-American War, support for the US annexation of Texas, and neutrality in the French Revolutionary Wars.<sup>2.14</sup> Morgenthau argued that the utopian versus realist debate was fundamentally different in that both sides supported the same policies, but differed instead on the means of rationalising them. The linear model of great debates is something of a legacy of this claim, and of the deployment of the narrative device of such debates as a tool to construct histories of IR around, with the emergence of the term ‘great debate’ appearing in the dispute waged on the pages of the dominant US IR and foreign policy periodicals of the day.

Many introductory IR courses root the ‘great debates’ in E.H. Carr’s dismissal of the utopianism of ‘idealist’ thought in the interwar years in the *Twenty Years Crisis*, which is still widely claimed as the foundational text of modern IR and enjoys almost unparalleled ‘canonicity’.<sup>2.15</sup> Though Carr framed his critique of the diverse and somewhat inconsistent selection of approaches he grouped together as idealist, the notion of the ‘great debate’ as a rhetorical device in the disciplinary meta-history of IR did not emerge until over a decade later. The term had some earlier usage in discourses surrounding the field, particularly those concerning the League of Nations in one of the so-called ‘great debates’ identified

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<sup>2.14</sup>Frank Tannenbaum, ‘The American Tradition in Foreign Relations’, *Foreign Affairs*, 30.1 (1951), 31-50. doi:10.2307/20030877

Frank Tannenbaum, ‘The Balance of Power Versus the Coördinate State’, *Political Science Quarterly*, 173-97. doi:10.2307/2145721

Hans J. Morgenthau, ‘Another “Great Debate”: The National Interest of the United States’, *American Political Science Review*, 46 (1952), 961–88. doi:10.2307/1952108

<sup>2.15</sup>Edward Hallet Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: MacMillan, 1939)

Tim Rood, ‘E.H. Carr and Alfred Zimmern: Utopia, Reality, and the Twenty Years’ Crisis International Theory’, *International Theory*, preprint (2025), p.21. Available at: <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:17751e19-5e11-4787-ad4e-7fba241d6468>

by Morgenthau. The encounter between A. Lawrence Lowell, a champion of the League as a means of international organisation, and Henry Cabot Lodge, who was more sceptical about US participation in the League, was termed a 'great debate' as early as 1919.<sup>2.16</sup> However, this was an in-person synchronous debate in the traditional sense, rather than a long-running clash between theories in the abstract.<sup>2.17</sup> The use of the concept of a great debate in a sense more analogous to that now familiar to IR's disciplinary history was invoked over a decade later when Philip Kerr challenged Philip Noel-Baker at Chatham House. Kerr declared the onset of a 'final great debate', centred on the question of whether the British Empire would side with the United States or Western Europe in the dispute over the League.<sup>2.18</sup> In this sense, its role within the discipline was that of a narrative tool for demarcating differences, rather than a set time period or a clash between well-defined theoretical strands.

The great debates narrative is thus a historical claim that serves a particular function in demarcating the boundaries of the discipline. Such accounts are usually accompanied with some acknowledgement of the relationship between history and IR. This is normally in a practical sense, however, with understandings of wider international history presented as central to the work of IR theorists, rather than in a meta-historical sense that might account for the role that histories of the discipline play in shaping the research outputs produced under its name. Many accounts, including the aforementioned work of Smith, have focussed on the relationship between history and IR as central to the evolution of the discipline

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<sup>2.16</sup>Elihu Root, 'Letter of Honorable Elihu Root to Honorable Will H. Hays Regarding the Covenant of the League of Nations', *American Journal of International Law*, 13.3 (1919), 580-596 (p.581)

<sup>2.17</sup>Henry Cabot Lodge and A. Lawrence Lowell, *The Lodge-Lowell Debate on the Proposed League of Nations* (Boston, MA: Old Colony Trust, 1919)

<sup>2.18</sup>Philip Kerr, 'Europe and the United States: The Problem of Sanctions', *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 9.3 (1930), 299-324 (p.323)

in the former sense.<sup>2.19</sup> This positions history as a methodological or conceptual tool at the disposal of IR scholars and affords it a central role in theory construction within the boundaries of the discipline. However, the role that science has been permitted to play in these accounts has generally been limited and has been accounted for only in a tangential sense detached from its historical context, as with Smith's invocation of post-war computational approaches as the true science of IR. This thesis seeks to address this by identifying scientific discourses as the connective factor between history and IR, especially in the context of empire.

### **2.2.2 Towards Critical Disciplinary History**

Attempts at a critical history of IR were rare throughout much of the discipline's mainstream Western history, but this has changed in recent years with the gradual but important growth of a body of rich historico-sociological scholarship that engages with aspects of IR's disciplinary history in critical ways. Like this thesis, many of the more recent accounts in this tradition centre on the connexions between IR and empire, but before this shift arose, there was an earlier wave of critical IR scholarship that challenged existing disciplinary mythologies outside of the imperial connexion. Amongst these accounts that challenge existing disciplinary mythologies was the work of Benno Teschke, whose comparative historical sociology challenges the enduring myth that the existing international order is 'Westphalian', owing its genesis to the 1648 Treaties of Münster and Osnabrück that brought an end to the Thirty Years War.<sup>2.20</sup> Instead, Teschke argues that this order was a product of property relations that remained largely unchanged before and after 1648, with the only real shift in the international

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<sup>2.19</sup>Thomas W. Smith, *History and International Relations*

<sup>2.20</sup>Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics, and the Making of Modern International Relations* (London: Verso, 2003).

system coming much later with the emergence of modern capitalism. This critique of the underlying assumptions that shape the present-day IR discipline is more significant than a contribution to theoretical debates or existing ‘paradigm wars’, instead serving as an existential challenge to a mainstream discipline that relies on linear historical narratives about the order it purports to describe.

Connecting these histories to class, political economy, and systemic inequality, as Teschke does, exposes the silences inherent in them. His work thus marks a more profoundly radical contribution to IR discourse than less historically introspective works that take the enduring assumptions or disciplinary ‘mythologies’ for granted. In a posthumous critique along similar lines, Susan Strange advances a parallel argument about the Westphalian order being connected to capitalist market economies but instead positions the Westphalian model of relations between states as something that was necessary for this economic system to develop, and vice versa. Strange argues that the Westphalian system is no longer fit for purpose in the present day, if it ever was.<sup>2.21</sup> Both of these works constituted part of a wave of increasingly reflexive scholarship around the turn of the millennium, though this remained one that had yet to account for connexions between IR and empire on a meaningful scale.

Nonetheless, an incisive and somewhat underappreciated critical deconstruction of orthodox approaches to IR had made a rare step towards bridging this gap a decade earlier, penned by Teschke’s future doctoral supervisor, Justin Rosenberg.<sup>2.22</sup> Rosenberg reframes the international as an extension of domestic social forms and thus highlights that it is impossible for IR theories to exist in isolation from both the social structures that produced them and

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<sup>2.21</sup>Susan Strange, ‘The Westfailure System’, *Review of International Studies*, 25.3 (1999), 345-354

<sup>2.22</sup>Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society: A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations* (London: Verso, 1994)

the broader historical context in which they were formulated. Presenting the distinction between the domestic and the international as artificial in this way is of special relevance to questions of imperialism, which ‘was not just an external geopolitical process [but] always also involved a forcible reorganisation of social life in order to facilitate commercial extraction of resources’.<sup>2.23</sup> As the framing of this in the past tense illustrates, imperialism through this lens can only be considered a historically contingent phenomenon, rather than a timeless and unchanging ideology or mode of global order. The implicit conclusion is therefore that IR theories ought to be historicised rather than considered timeless summations of fundamental laws of international order. However, IR’s reluctance to engage with empire, both in theoretical discourse and its disciplinary history, reveals the one area this historicisation is most sorely needed if IR is to break free from the lack of critical introspection embodied in the mythology that surrounds its early development as a formalised academic discipline.

### **2.3 A Disciplinary Gaolbreak**

While such readings of defining myths in IR can be considered more historical than disciplinary historical, they have significant disciplinary implications. Rosenberg’s later work takes up these implications and uses them to deconstruct some of the core assumptions that many IR scholars have long held about their own field. Though, like conventional disciplinary histories, his own historical account begins with the establishment of the first Chair at Aberystwyth in 1919, he identifies one of the defining problems that a critical disciplinary history of IR ought to reckon with: namely, what is the *discipline* of IR?<sup>2.24</sup> By highlighting the absence of definite

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<sup>2.23</sup>Justin Rosenberg, *Empire of Civil Society*, p.167

<sup>2.24</sup>Justin Rosenberg, ‘International Relations in the Prison of Political Science’, *International Relations*, 30.2 (2016), 127-53. doi:10.1177/0047117816644662

disciplinarity in IR, Rosenberg reframes the field, amidst enduring debates over whether it should be considered a discipline at all, instead of merely a subfield of the larger behemoth of political science.<sup>2.25</sup> Rosenberg is far from the first to raise this question, with a sense of disciplinary insecurity troubling Western IR's 'big hitters' as early as the mid-twentieth century.<sup>2.26</sup> By the end of the century, the central problem of IR's disciplinarity had been convincingly identified, namely that 'IR combines global pretensions with an exceptionally insular perspective on itself and its subject'.<sup>2.27</sup> As this suggests, however, the disciplinary 'prison' he identifies has historical roots and antecedents that pervade the canonical history of the discipline. As Rosenberg demonstrates, even E.H. Carr, in apparently laying the foundations of the discipline, merely extends 'the premises of Politics into the international sphere'.<sup>2.28</sup> In doing so, Carr borrows an ontology of political power and repurposes this to deal with 'international' questions, in lieu of a dedicated new ontology of international power. The absence of this dedicated ontology is part of the reason the disciplinary boundaries of IR are so delicate and ill-defined. Whereas historians are theoreticians of temporality, geographers are theoreticians of space, and sociologists are theoreticians of social relations, the IR scholar can lay claim to be the primary theoretician of very little.<sup>2.29</sup> Of the international, perhaps, but this too is a loaded and context-dependent term that has long been problematised.

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<sup>2.25</sup>Olaf Corry, 'What's the Point of Being a Discipline? Four Disciplinary Strategies and the Future of International Relations', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 57.3 (2022), 290-310. doi:10.1177/00108367221098492

<sup>2.26</sup>Morton A. Kaplan, 'Is International Relations a Discipline?', *Journal of Politics*, 23.3 (1961), 462-476. doi:10.2307/212710

<sup>2.27</sup>Vendulka Kubálková, Nicholas Onuf, and Paul Kowert, 'Constructing Constructivism', in: *International Relations in a Constructed World* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 3-21

<sup>2.28</sup>Justin Rosenberg, 'International Relations in the Prison of Political Science', p.131

<sup>2.29</sup>Justin Rosenberg, 'International Relations in the Prison of Political Science', pp.131-132.

William Sewell, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p.6.

The absence of a dedicated ontology in IR means that concepts like this are largely taken for granted and adopted without question, or at least without meaningful problematisation. In this sense, IR's fragile disciplinarity mirrors Slavoj Žižek's formulation that 'we "feel free" because we lack the very language to articulate our unfreedom'.<sup>2.30</sup> IR feels like a discipline because it lacks the tools to question the foundations of its own disciplinarity. In IR, as in Žižek's example, 'the main terms we use to designate [...] are false terms, mystifying our perception of the situation instead of allowing us to think it'.<sup>2.31</sup> Few terms fit this description better than 'international' which, despite being fundamental to the very essence (and name) of the discipline, obscures much of the focus of even self-defined IR scholarship. 'International' implies a concern with interactions between nations, rather than states: a fundamental distinction over which both ink and blood have been spilled across recent centuries. Suffice it to say that IR has yet to revise its 'core understanding of the "international", rooted largely in twentieth century Europe, and has instead 're-asserted the states system'.<sup>2.32</sup> This leaves little room in mainstream IR for nations without states, not least due to the Eurocentric assumptions that structure understandings of what a nation ought to be.<sup>2.33</sup> 'International' is therefore a misnomer for a discipline that is rarely problematised as much as it should be. Much like narratives about its history, the name of the discipline also obscures IR's deep-rooted ties to empire. Explored within this thesis, these ties become impossible to avoid with even the

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<sup>2.30</sup>Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real!: Five Essays on 11 September and Related Dates* (London: Verso, 2002), p.2

<sup>2.31</sup>Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real!*, p.2

<sup>2.32</sup>Moran M. Mandelbaum, 'One State-One Nation: The Naturalisation of Nation-State Congruency in IR Theory', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 16 (2013), 514-38 (p.515). doi:10.1057/jird.2012.22

<sup>2.33</sup>Idreas Khandy and Ceren Şengül, "Emancipatory Nationalisms"? The Nationalisms of Nations without States', *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 22.3 (2022), 181-276. doi:10.1111/sena.12378

slightest degree of historical introspection into the historical development of the discipline in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed, so pervasive are the connexions to empire in this period that 'Inter-imperial Relations' might be a more fitting name for a discipline that deals far more with interactions between empires, states, and their entanglements than between nations.

The centring of the term 'international' also suggests that IR is concerned with something separate and distinct, a loftier realm where the 'ordinary' socio-political rules governing civil society are either suspended or do not apply at all. This is the essence of IR's claim to disciplinarity, fragile though it might be. It is reliant on the reification of the international as an objective and independent material reality rather than a generalised abstract category to make sense of social relations. The reified international is taken as a true representation of societal existence and is taken for granted as an objective reality: a domain external to 'domestic' civil society that has always existed external and always will. To György Lukács, reification becomes self-reinforcing, as the reified consciousness resists attempts to transcend it 'by "scientifically deepening" the laws at work', thus embedding further the detachment from the social relations it obscures.<sup>2.34</sup> IR's very disciplinary boundaries are reliant on this 'scientific deepening', because it is only by justifying the detachment of the international realm from the social relations it obscures that IR can justify its own disciplinarity, or its existence as a stand-alone discipline. The more IR relies on the exceptionalisation of the international, the more it obscures these social relations, and by extension, the more central this artificial distinction becomes to the fabric of the discipline.

Like Rosenberg, Edkins and Zehfuss take issue with the exceptionalisation

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<sup>2.34</sup>Georg (György) Lukács, 'Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat' in: *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), 83-222 (p.93)

of the international as fundamentally separate from the domestic sphere, but go as far as to argue it is only this artificial distinction that allows IR to constitute itself as a discipline'.<sup>2.35</sup> This is far from a recent development, with Edkins and Zehfuss' landmark article being published two decades ago, but their work nonetheless demonstrates IR's deep-rooted disciplinary insecurity. They attempt to 'disestablish' the discipline by dissolving the distinction between domestic and international and instead position the domestic sphere as a form of the 'international in general'.<sup>2.36</sup> In doing so, they explicitly build on the work of Jacques Derrida, recognising the Derridean opposition between the two and deploying what might be understood as Derrida's 'general strategy of deconstruction' to overturn the hierarchy governing the distinction between international and domestic.<sup>2.37</sup> The discipline that emerges from this process is far more general, functional, and accessible, and yet, lacks more than ever a separate ontology to distinguish it from political science. On this note, IR itself perhaps exists in a similar Derridean opposition or binary to political science which ought to be dissolved to produce a 'double science' of the sort envisaged by Derrida.<sup>2.38</sup> Doing so requires the inversion of existing hierarchies alongside a wider displacement of the entire structure of knowledge production that produces these hierarchies. Exposing disciplinary hierarchies or binaries in an IR context, as between 'domestic' political science and 'international' IR, would not only demonstrate that, whilst they remain, the latter can only ever be defined in opposition to the former but also that, by extension, they are therefore inherently both context-dependent and historically contingent.

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<sup>2.35</sup>Jenny Edkins and Maja Zehfuss, 'Generalising the International', *Review of International Studies*, 31.3 (2005), 451–71 (p.470). doi:10.1017/S0260210505006583

<sup>2.36</sup>Jenny Edkins and Maja Zehfuss, 'Generalising the International', p.466

<sup>2.37</sup>Jacques Derrida, *Positions* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1972), pp.56-7

<sup>2.38</sup>Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, p.56

Branwen Gruffydd Jones recognises this in calling for a critical realist ‘stratified ontology’ that dispenses with binaries and is instead able to embrace the complexity of the subjects as emergent phenomena with overlapping properties and interconnected causal aspects.<sup>2.39</sup> In the absence of a stratified ontology of this nature, mainstream IR has long failed to deal with structural racism because it fails to recognise that ‘the unequal distribution of property and power which is now protected through race-free discourse is the historical product of long processes of racialised dispossession over centuries, across the world’.<sup>2.40</sup>

Overcoming this demands a recognition that disciplines and the power relations which shape them are historically contingent and can thus only be understood as a product of their historical development, even if the present-day discourses that surround them obscure, suppress, distort, and silence signifiers of this historical development. Historical introspection into the discipline therefore, especially through highlighting silences, becomes a means of laying the groundwork for future attempts to tackle the Derridean process of disciplinary deconstruction, even though that project lies outside of the manageable scope of this thesis. It also becomes a method for engaging with the discipline, and by historicising IR it is possible to recentre the discipline, both in the context of its distinction from wider ‘political science’ and in relation to its own history. IR, referring to the US/Eurocentric mainstream discipline rather than any subject matter, emerges from this not as a value free, ahistorical science that materialised from nothing at the end of the Great War but as an historically contingent imperial discipline whose structures of knowledge production were constructed as a historical product of interconnected processes of imperial exploitation and

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<sup>2.39</sup>Branwen Gruffydd Jones, ‘Race in the Ontology of International Order’, *Political Studies*, 56 (2008), 907-27 (pp.913-4). doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00710.x

<sup>2.40</sup>Branwen Gruffydd Jones, ‘Race in the Ontology of International Order’, p.924

racialised discourses of global order. These structures cannot be separated from these historical processes and without them cannot properly be understood. Reflexive introspection into these historical processes therefore becomes the only method of engaging with the discipline and problematising its very disciplinarity: it is the ontology demanded of critical IR study. In short, if IR is to be broken free from the prison of political science, it is historians who might lend the keys.

It is only through historicising IR that its insecure disciplinarity can be resolved. In summarising the fragility of this disciplinarity, Janice Bially Mattern argues that IR is an '(un)discipline', or 'a collection of insular research communities'.<sup>2.41</sup> Taking this further, in the absence of a coherent research programme with a dedicated ontology, the essence of IR's 'disciplinarity' can only lie in the common thread that unites each of these communities in the claims they each make to the same historical lineage. Given the fragility and ill-defined object of inquiry of IR, it lends itself to self-definition and intuitive categorisation, resisting any definition beyond a Potter Stewart-esque 'I know it when I see it'. However, even this definition of IR, which includes all that considers itself as such and excludes all that which does not, can only be an historically contingent one. IR encompasses all the scholarship which claims the historical lineage of the formalised academic discipline, whether explicitly or implicitly. To categorise work as IR is to position it in the same tradition as that which precedes it, often drawing an imagined and implicit genealogical descent from the disciplinary origin myth of 1919 and the formalisation of a self-contained IR research programme, distinct from both history and the other would-be social sciences. Defining IR in such historical terms broadens the definition beyond

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<sup>2.41</sup>Janice Bially Mattern, 'The Concept of Power and the (Un)discipline of International Relations', in: *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. by Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, 691-698. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199219322.003.0040

self-defined IR scholarship to also include those insular scholarly clusters that remain entangled with its disciplinary history. In the context of this thesis, this comes to include separate but overlapping disciplines and categories of knowledge such as the *Kolonialwissenschaften* discussed in chapter six.

Historicising IR in this way is, in part, a response to Teschke's call for a counteraction to the 'radical de-historicisation of the fields of ontology, conceptuality, and disciplinarity [...] which in IR's self-perception lends legitimacy to its claim of disciplinary distinctiveness'.<sup>2.42</sup> If IR's disciplinarity is rooted in this de-historicisation, *re-historicising* ontology provides a means of problematising the discipline's reification. Thus, recognising IR as the historically contingent outcome of interactions across and between power relations, rather than a timeless universal 'science', reframes the boundaries of the discipline. Through this lens, historical narratives serve to set the boundaries of the discipline and hence become the walls of Rosenberg's disciplinary gaol cell. Lawson and Shilliam recognise this in positioning IR's history as the foundation of its deep-rooted insularity. They argue that historical narratives about IR, especially surrounding the two mythological dates of 1919 and 1648 identified elsewhere as IR's 'big bangs', restrict the discipline and imbue it with an inability to consider the world beyond Europe, men, and high politics.<sup>2.43</sup> Mirroring Mattern's (un)discipline, the IR that emerges is 'less a coherent body of thought than a hotchpotch of statecraft, diplomacy, history and law', or more prosaically, 'a kind

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<sup>2.42</sup>Benno Teschke, 'International Relations, Historical Materialism and the False Promise of International Historical Sociology', *Spectrum*, 6.1 (2014), 1-66

<sup>2.43</sup>George Lawson and Robbie Shilliam, 'Sociology and International Relations: Legacies and Prospects', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 23.1 (2010), 69-86 (p.70). doi:10.1080/09557570903433647

Benjamin de Carvalho, Halvard Leira, and John M. Hobson, 'The Big Bangs of IR: The Myths That Your Teachers Still Tell You About 1648 and 1919', *Millennium*, 39.3 (2011), 735-758. doi:10.1177/0305829811401459

of disciplinary Polo mint' that lacks a definable centre.<sup>2.44</sup> This visual metaphor is a useful one because, like unbranded toroidal-shaped confectionary, in the absence of a core, IR is defined only by its boundaries. As in any annular structure, there is nothing to bind each element to the absent centre, like a dedicated ontology of the sort identified by Rosenberg. Instead, the cohesiveness of the whole is an emergent property of the connectedness of each element to a small number of the other elements, leaving little contact across the structure as a whole.<sup>2.45</sup> If not for their shared claim to be the historical successors of the broad structural realist tradition (or perhaps even successors to Waltz), what would Kevin Bustamante's call to bring race scholarship into the disciplinary mainstream and John Mearsheimer's positioning of the United States as responsible for causing the post-2022 war in Ukraine have in common as elements in the same disciplinary system?<sup>2.46</sup> Both position themselves in the same tradition and discipline but are connected only by historical narratives of the discipline's own development. Historical narratives are the force that bind elements of the disciplinary annulus to others, in the absence of a centre, and in cohering it together, also set the boundaries of the field.

If the boundaries of IR are set by its history in this way, this is what separates it from the broader discipline of political science. It is distinguished by constitutive historical narratives about its own development, which in turn serve to guarantee its present-day insularity and restrict the limits of, or the conditions of possibility

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<sup>2.44</sup>George Lawson and Robbie Shilliam, 'Sociology and International Relations', p.70

<sup>2.45</sup>Rosalind Armson and Ray Ison, 'If You're a Fish, What Can You Know About the Water?', American Society for Cybernetics 2001 Conference, 27 May - 29 May 2001, Vancouver, Canada. URL: <http://www.asc-cybernetics.org/2001/ArmsIson.htm> [Accessed 21 June 2025].

<sup>2.46</sup>Kevin E. Bustamante, 'Waltz with Me: Structural Realism and Structural Racism in International Politics', *Security Studies*, 33.5 (2024), 742–67. doi:10.1080/09636412.2024.2420061

John J Mearsheimer, 'The Causes and Consequences of the Ukraine War', *Horizons*, 21 (2022), 12-27.

within, the field.<sup>2.47</sup> These narratives are not comprehensive, objective, or universal histories, but rather are images that IR holds of itself. Thus, while IR might lack a distinct ontology in terms of a definable object of inquiry, self-contained terminology, or dedicated conceptual framework, it does not lack an historical ontology. Its ‘disciplinarity’, to the extent it can be identified, is not a product of any timeless universal truth but rather is an historically contingent product of the contexts in which the structures and dominant discourses associated with the field were forged. Historical ontology in this sense is a common framework that underlies ‘acceptable’ knowledge within a field: the assumptions that are taken to be self-evident arising from historical narratives about the field’s own development. Chief among these in an IR context is the historically contingent claim ‘that there is such a thing as a separate discipline of IR, which had its origins in 1919 and which therefore “must” have a specific field of study’.<sup>2.48</sup> Though fundamental to the very definition of the discipline, this claim is rarely spoken out loud. It serves, however, as the ontological glue that binds the entire field together and unites the whole discipline of IR as all that which falls into this ‘specific field of study’ and all that which was facilitated by the gateway event of its ostensible origins in 1919.

Historical ontology is a cumulative sum of the contingent historical developments that have shaped, and continue to shape, a particular order of knowledge categorisation. It is a complex and multi-dimensional term, as vague as International Relations. Nonetheless, a historical ontology can serve to create the disciplinary prison exposed by Rosenberg, Shilliam, and Lawson. It does so via the

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<sup>2.47</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1972)

<sup>2.48</sup> Steve Smith, ‘The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?’, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2.3 (2000), 374-402. doi:10.1111/1467-856X.00042

recursive, self-reinforcing feedback loop effect identified by Ian Hacking, through which classifications imposed on systems of knowledge structure the very world they describe.<sup>2.49</sup> It can, however, also serve as historical method, and is deployed as such by Michel Foucault, especially in works, lectures, and interviews from the final years of his life. To Foucault, given that thought is historically constituted, the ‘history of thought [...] should be conceived of as a history of ontologies’.<sup>2.50</sup> In other words, thought, scholarship, and disciplines in whatever form they may be structured cannot exist independently of the historical conditions that produced them. They are contingent on specific historical conditions and therefore the first prerequisite to be able to conceptualise their present-day state is ‘historical awareness’.<sup>2.51</sup> On this note, conceptualising the historically contingent discipline of IR is impossible without this same historical awareness. Mapping the historically constituted boundaries of IR requires a recognition of the historical conditions that produced them and an awareness of how these have been obscured by well-trodden conventional historical narratives about the discipline’s development. A critical historical ontology, capable of deconstructing the existing historical ontology that binds IR’s fragile disciplinarity together, must therefore be premised on both ‘historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on [IR] and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them’.<sup>2.52</sup> The means of achieving this, in Foucault’s eyes, are critiques genealogical in their design and

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<sup>2.49</sup>Ian Hacking, *Historical Ontology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

Ian Hacking, ‘The Looping Effects of Human Kinds’, in: *Causal Cognition: A Multidisciplinary Debate*, ed. by Dan Sperber, David Premack, and Ann James Premack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 351-94. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198524021.003.0012

<sup>2.50</sup>Michel Foucault, Lecture at the Collège de France (first hour), 2 March 1983, in: *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France 1982-1983*, ed. by Frédéric Gros, trans. by Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010) 299-324 (p.309)

<sup>2.51</sup>Michel Foucault, ‘The Subject and Power’, *Critical Inquiry*, 8.4 (1982), 777-95 (p.778). doi:10.1086/448181

<sup>2.52</sup>Michel Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment?’, in: *The Foucault Reader*, ed. by Paul Rabinow (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1984), 32-50 (p.50)

archaeological in method which do ‘not seek to identify the universal structures of all knowledge’ but instead position instances of discourse as historical events. Critical historical ontology is therefore less a search for universal structures of truth and more ‘historical investigation into the events that have led us to constitute ourselves’.<sup>2.53</sup>

It thus follows that to broaden disciplinary boundaries in IR first requires a broadening of historical narratives about its development. If IR is historically bounded (or imprisoned) as discussed above, it is a lack of historical introspection that produces its fragile disciplinarity. If IR continues to appear boundless, it is because it lacks the terms to describe its own boundaries, which are historically contingent. When repurposed along the lines of a Foucauldian critical historical ontology, this lack of rigid disciplinarity can become a strength in some respects because it allows for creative discussions about what might be incorporated as ontological or methodological features in IR. When this is advanced in a critical and historically-grounded way it can significantly open up IR scholarship and broaden its boundaries well beyond that of a conventional scholarly discipline, such as with Sarah Naumes’ exploration of narrative as method in IR or Barry Buzan’s demand for a multidisciplinary IR that interweaves macro social science with world history.<sup>2.54</sup> In this context, it is possible to imagine what an ‘experiment with the possibility of going beyond’ the limits imposed on IR by a narrow conceptualisation of its own history could look like. However, without a wider embrace of this reflexivity, IR remains an (un)discipline concerned with global interactions but lacking the tools to contextualise these. It is thus a discourse

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<sup>2.53</sup>Michel Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment?’, p.46

<sup>2.54</sup>Sarah Naumes, ‘Is All “I” IR?’, *Millennium*, 43.3 (2015), 820-32. doi:10.1177/0305829815576820  
Barry Buzan, ‘Could IR Be Different?’, *International Studies Review*, 18.1 (2016), 155-7. doi:10.1093/isr/viv025

of everything and a science of nothing, until it is contextualised in historically contingent terms.

It must not be considered an ahistorical, static, and unchanging standalone discipline but can instead only be situated as the product of historical interactions, events, and contingencies that shaped its emergence. The brief for this thesis has thus been outlined in clear terms. It must seek to challenge the insularity of the discipline, reassess its historically contingent nature, and by addressing historical silences left behind by canonical narratives of its development, produce for IR exactly the kind of critical historical ontology that Foucault demands. This thesis, therefore, is not the history of international thought, nor of international relations within or beyond the European continent. Instead, it is a history specifically of an academic project that called (and calls) itself International Relations: a history of IR in the upper case. It seeks to demonstrate that this ‘discipline’, in as much as it can be designated as such, is a product of a particular history (or histories) that bind it closely both to wider histories of empire and imperialism and to discourses of science.<sup>2.55</sup>

A historically sensitive reassessment of the discipline along these lines uncovers its fundamental problem. IR is a discipline without a subject, or rather, it is a discipline with a constellation of ill-defined and overlapping subjects. The reason disciplinary history is so impoverished is because it relies on the assumption assume that a self-contained, unconditional, universal discipline of IR can exist. Failure to embrace the inherent historically constituted nature of IR means its histories will always be reductionist and almost absurdly one-dimensional. On the other hand, by recognising IR as historically contingent,

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<sup>2.55</sup>More specifically of what Foucault calls ‘scientism’, or ‘a dogmatic belief in the value of scientific knowledge’  
Michel Foucault, ‘The Subject and Power’, p.781.

it is possible to situate it more concretely in the historical conditions that continue to set its boundaries. By addressing historical silences left out of canonical disciplinary narratives, it is possible to dissolve these boundaries and reposition IR not as a universal, self-contained discipline, but as an historical project produced and shaped by a specific series of historical interactions and interconnexions. Thus, building on Rosenberg's argument with the assistance of Foucault's critical historical ontology, we free IR from the 'prison' of political science by bringing history back in.

## **Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework, Methodology, and Argument**

### **3.1 Argument**

This need to bring history back in and build a reflexive and introspective critical historical ontology of IR is the primary preoccupation of this thesis. Its central premise is the argument that IR emerged as a historically contingent ‘science of empire’, shaped by debates across imperial frontiers from the late nineteenth century arising out of a search for new legitimisations of imperial order. It is motivated by a commitment to an introspection and reflexivity that the discipline as it is presently constituted has so far largely lacked. In constructing a critical Fachgeschichte of IR, this thesis puts forward the central argument that the discipline in the first half of the twentieth century developed and evolved as a European ‘science of empire’: arising out of a deliberate combination between discourses drawn from the natural sciences, imperialist ideologies concerning the way the world should be ordered, and historical narratives to justify the deployment of each these. The development of this science of empire was not a linear process, but an emergent one, as the discipline adapted to changing circumstances and was shaped by interactions between discourses and across historical contexts.

A critical re-reading of established disciplinary histories reveals this and makes clear that present day orthodox IR owes as much to Victorian learned societies of imperialist elites as to peace movements in the inter-war years. The counterparts of these learned societies in Germany, which similarly began as fora through which the landed and wealthy could advance their calls for imperial expansion, also contributed to the development of a science of empire that would

come to shape discourses now associated with the present-day field of IR. In the United States, which lacked a formal empire but whose citizens were not immune to coveting one, interconnected discourses of imperial science still developed, channelled instead through an especially vitriolic brand of race science and eugenics. The co-constitutive interactions between these contexts shaped the development of a US-European science of empire, which serves as the focus of this thesis. Exploring the history of the discipline from this perspective allows for the orthodox historical narrative of IR's development to be repositioned as a fundamentally trans-imperial story. It was trans-imperial both in the sense that it transcended geographical frontiers and that it was defined by interaction, overlap, and contradiction between modes of legitimising imperial order. The discipline of IR that emerges from this process is not the academic wing of a noble pursuit of peace forged in the aftermath of the Great War, but a discipline deeply imbricated in networks of empire and colonial science. Exploring these networks and the interconnectivity between science, IR, history, and empire in a critical way is a necessary step to reclaim the present-day discipline from the historical narratives that obscure its past.

### **3.1.1 Methodological Underpinnings**

Such an endeavour is not unprecedented. The field of anthropology has undergone several reinventions over the course of the last century, perhaps beginning with the pioneering work of Margaret Mead but continuing well into subsequent decades.<sup>3.1</sup> Such a reinvention, however, can only ever be a 'constant state of renewal',

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<sup>3.1</sup>Charles King, *The Reinvention of Humanity: How a Circle of Renegade Anthropologists Remade Race, Sex, and Gender* (London: Bodley Head, 2019).

Dell Hymes (ed.), *Reinventing Anthropology* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1972)

as Foucault suggests.<sup>3.2</sup> Trouillot recognises this in turning his attention to the disciplinary history of anthropology, warning that ‘changes in the explicit criteria of acceptability do not automatically relieve the historical weight of the field of significance that the discipline inherited at birth’.<sup>3.3</sup> This is particularly acute for an IR that obsesses with narratives of its own origins. Instead, for Trouillot, ‘the burden of a past is alleviated when the sociohistorical conditions that obtained at the time of emergence have changed so much that practitioners face a choice between complete oblivion and fundamental redirection’.<sup>3.4</sup> This is the position IR finds itself in. If the continuance of IR as a distinct discipline is to be justified, it can only be through a meaningful reckoning with its history and an introspective deconstruction of its inheritance from empire and specific ‘scientific’ discourses. The surrounding sociohistorical conditions have changed drastically from those which saw IR reified and institutionalised in the late nineteenth and early twentieth IR centuries, and yet mainstream IR scholars largely remain practitioners of a twentieth century discipline. Until they are willing to acknowledge this past, they cannot be dissociated from it. Disciplines are historically contingent, shaped by the sociohistorical conditions under which they operate. This means that they are not static, or fixed in time, but change, reconstitute, and adapt as the sociohistorical conditions, or the broader historical system of which they form a constituent part, do the same.

Trouillot recognises this historical contingency and argues ‘the sciences of humankind as we now know them are products of the very world that they try

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<sup>3.2</sup>Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1972), p.47

<sup>3.3</sup>Michel Rolph Trouillot, ‘Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness’, in: *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, ed. by Richard G. Fox (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press), 17-44 (p.18)

<sup>3.4</sup>Michel Rolph Trouillot, ‘Anthropology and the Savage Slot’, p.18

to explain'.<sup>3.5</sup> This argument was advanced inversely by Steve Smith in his claim that defining methodological, epistemological, and ontological assumptions that IR theory (in general) makes about the world it describes contribute to shaping it.<sup>3.6</sup> Disciplines, including IR, are shaped by their sociohistorical conditions but concurrently shape these same conditions in complex and adaptive ways. Thus, Smith's claim that 'there can be no such thing as a value-free, non-normative social science' contains the implicit a priori understanding that there can be no such thing as an ahistorical social science either. This is because, in Trouillot's words, 'social sciences in particular solidified as disciplines in degree-granting departments' in times of 'nationalist fervour in the North Atlantic and colonial domination almost everywhere else' and are thus products of a particular history.<sup>3.7</sup> IR is no exception to this, and to some extent Trouillot has captured its disciplinary history in a sentence, but this still leaves the question of how this history ought to be engaged with.

Trouillot described his critical engagement with anthropology and the historical silences that shape the field as an 'exercise in disciplinary reflexivity'.<sup>3.8</sup> IR has not yet faced such an exercise on any meaningful disciplinary scale, though there have long been calls from critical scholars of the field for this reflexivity. Inanna Hamati-Ataya, in outlining a roadmap towards a reflexivist framework for IR, argues that any attempt to deconstruct the discipline and expose its central values must combine meta-theoretical analysis (that is, revealing the underlying epistemic premises of the discipline), with a sociological analysis

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<sup>3.5</sup>Michel Rolph Trouillot, *Global Transformations: Anthropology and the Modern World* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), p.4

<sup>3.6</sup>Steve Smith, 'Singing Our World into Existence: International Relations Theory and September 11', *International Studies Quarterly*, 48.3 (2004), 499-515. doi:10.1111/j.0020-8833.2004.t01-1-00312.x

<sup>3.7</sup>Michel Rolph Trouillot, *Global Transformations*, p.4

<sup>3.8</sup>Michel Rolph Trouillot, *Global Transformations*, p.5

which identifies the factors that have afforded these premises their historical relevance or legitimacy within the discipline.<sup>3.9</sup> Reflexivism in IR would thus entail above all introspection, both epistemological and historico-sociological, into the inner workings of the discipline, its central theoretical frameworks and their historical development, and its methodological conventions.

Historical narratives are entangled with these frameworks and conventions, as demonstrated by John Mearsheimer's insistence that his realism shares common historical narratives with 'critical theories' in IR, specifically in relation to the position of realism as 'the dominant discourse in international politics from about 1300 to 1989'.<sup>3.10</sup> Though a heavily contentious claim, this demonstrates that the critical sociological analysis demanded by Hamati-Ataya cannot focus only on structural realist traditions but must be willing to analyse how the central traditions of orthodox IR thought interact and define each other oppositionally. Through this lens, it is possible to identify the common épistémè of scientific-imperial IR underlying paradigms otherwise considered stark opposites. This supports, for example, Smith's critique of Wendtian constructivism, which he positions as a form of scientific realism in that it is an attempt to develop a science of a social world, just as more orthodox structural realist-influenced approaches seek a science of power politics.<sup>3.11</sup> Conversely, even the work of Waltz, the supposed forefather of structural realism, can be reread through a 'structural functionalist' lens as more closely aligned to constructivist approaches than either self-described realists or constructivists might allow.<sup>3.12</sup>

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<sup>3.9</sup>Inanna Hamati-Ataya, 'The "Problem of Values" and International Relations Scholarship: From Applied Reflexivity to Reflexivism', *International Studies Review*, 13.2 (2011), 259-287 (260). doi:10.1111/j.1468-2486.2011.01024.x

<sup>3.10</sup>John J. Mearsheimer, 'A Realist Reply', *International Security*, 20.1 (1995), 82-93 (p.92). doi:10.1162/isec.20.1.82

<sup>3.11</sup>Steve Smith, 'Wendt's World', *Review of International Studies*, 26.1 (2000), 151-163 (p.153)

<sup>3.12</sup>Stacie E. Goddard and Daniel H. Nexon, 'Paradigm Lost? Reassessing Theory of

In asking whether ‘anybody [is] still a realist’ at the turn of the present century, Legro and Moravcsik concluded that, by conventional definitions, non-realists were few and far between. With the label realist having been stretched so far by its proponents, it now extended to what they identified as ‘minimal realism’, describing any theory based on the assumptions of anarchy and rationality.<sup>3.13</sup> This is how a generic realism is introduced to undergraduates, but under this definition, minimal realism also encompasses many of those traditionally defined in opposition to realists, namely liberals, idealists, moralists, and legalists.<sup>3.14</sup> Conversely, in asking whether anybody is not a liberal, Rathbun concludes that under the conventional definition (again advanced by its proponents) liberalism encompasses any theory that seeks to explain any factor associated with international cooperation and allows room in its analysis of state actors for the influence of non-state elements within the state.<sup>3.15</sup> Thus, the majority of IR scholars can be described as liberal, even many self-described realists of various stripes. As Tim Rood demonstrates, even Carr, the realist par excellence, can be reread as less of a realist than the arch utopian liberal Alfred Zimmern if resituated in his historical context.<sup>3.16</sup> If we are all realists and we are all liberals, with almost all theories simultaneously bordering on critical theory (under Mearsheimer’s definition), it is tempting to ask whether paradigmatic divisions are simply semantic squabbles over how best to package theory construction in IR.<sup>3.17</sup>

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International Politics’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 11.1 (2005), 9-61. doi:10.1177/1354066105050136

<sup>3.13</sup> Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Is Anybody Still a Realist?’, *International Security*, 24.2 (1999), 5-55. doi:10.1162/016228899560130

<sup>3.14</sup> Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Is Anybody Still a Realist?’, p.7

<sup>3.15</sup> Brian C. Rathbun, ‘Is Anybody Not an (International Relations) Liberal?’, *Security Studies*, 19.1 (2010), 2-25 (p.4). doi:10.1080/09636410903546558

<sup>3.16</sup> Tim Rood, ‘E.H. Carr and Alfred Zimmern: Utopia, Reality, and the Twenty Years’ Crisis International Theory’, *International Theory*, preprint (2025). Available at: <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:17751e19-5e11-4787-ad4e-7fba241d6468>

<sup>3.17</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, ‘The False Promise of International Institutions’, *International Security*,

Either all IR scholars can be grouped together as ideological bedfellows under some variant of an overarching critical realist-liberal constructivist label, or it is here that the boundaries of a wider épistémè constraining IR are encountered.

The latter is the more convincing, given that none of the conventional paradigms of mainstream IR thought are self-contained and there remains some room for genuine conceptual divergence within them. Instead, the readily identified paradigms represent the boundaries of what is thinkable in IR, rather than the sum of all theoretical perspectives within the discipline. Rarely can mainstream paradigms convincingly account for the core function of the discipline, which is a task instead generally left as the preserve of ‘metatheory’ in IR.<sup>3.18</sup> It is on this note that Scott Hamilton reframes the ‘inter-paradigm debate’ to suggest that while its practicality as a lens through which to understand the discipline is limited, it can reveal more about modes of thinking in IR than might initially be allowed for when deployed as a historical (or genealogical) tool. When used thus, paradigmatic debates in IR become a marker of the ‘innocuous everyday practice’ of deploying the philosophy of science to construct theoretical conceptualisations within IR.<sup>3.19</sup>

Therefore, what matters for a critical historical sociology of IR is not the content of the theories encompassed by individual ‘paradigms’ but the conceptual and methodological foundations on which they are built. Approaches that cannot appropriately account for these meta-theoretical foundations are incapable of

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19.3 (1994), 5-49 (p.37, fn.128). doi:10.2307/2539078

Mearsheimer treats critical theory as co-synonymous with a remarkably broad and diverse collection of not necessarily complementary approaches, including ‘constructivism, reflectivism, post-modernism, and post-structuralism’

<sup>3.18</sup>Mark Neufeld, ‘Who’s Afraid of Meta-Theory?’, *Millennium*, 23.2 (1994), 387-93. doi:10.1177/03058298940230020401

<sup>3.19</sup>Scott Hamilton, ‘A Genealogy of Metatheory in IR: How “Ontology” Emerged from the Inter-Paradigm Debate’, *International Theory*, 9.1 (2017), 136-70 (p.138). doi:10.1017/S1752971916000257

speaking to the historical roots of the discipline. They can therefore never comprehensively account for the core function of the discipline or identify the historical lineages in which this function is grounded. To counter this, this thesis argues that the function of IR is to provide a scientific legitimisation of existing modes of world order. The hallmarks of this core function can be identified most clearly in the vague but unshakable core assumptions common to each of the so-called major paradigms of IR that underlie the very fabric of the discipline. Viewed from this perspective, arbitrary paradigmatic labels are a distraction at best from a meaningful historical grounding of IR in the power dynamics that have shaped its emergence.

#### 3.1.1.1 *'Great Debates' as a narrative device*

The end of the 'great debates' between competing IR paradigms is readily declared, such as by David Lake in advocating a move towards a more 'progressive' discipline of IR, and far fewer scholars would now openly rely on them as a serious and rigid delimiter of the discipline's historical evolution.<sup>3.20</sup> As Hamilton implies, however, the narrative device of the 'great debates' remains useful to disciplinary historians of IR as an artefact. Echoes of discourses not canonised within the dominant mythology of the discipline can be traced in historical narratives that do not include them directly, when situated in their historical context. If the 'great debates' and paradigms of IR are reframed in this way, they can be understood as fragments of interactions that have shaped the historical evolution of the discipline. For example, in reframing the 'first great debate' as a legacy of the encounter between a 'moralistic' British imperialism and a 'scientific' German

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<sup>3.20</sup>David A. Lake 'Theory is Dead, Long Live Theory: The End of the Great Debates and the Rise of Eclecticism in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 19.3 (2013), 567-587. doi:10.1177/1354066113494330

imperialism, chapter six of this thesis seeks to identify such fragments and resituate them in their historical context. Historical narratives like those of the successive ‘great debates’ are thus useful access points into discourses that shaped the discipline, even when these are not as central to the discipline’s historical sociology as was perhaps the case two decades ago. They are also useful tools for shifting towards a critical historical ontology of the discipline. The use of great debates as a model for the structuring the history of the development of the field is telling of the role history plays in holding IR’s fragile disciplinarity together. Given that IR coheres as a discipline only through its reliance on common historical narratives, as discussed in chapter two, the shift away from the great debates model will necessarily lead to the fragmentation of the discipline, as identified by Peter Kristensen.<sup>3.21</sup>

### 3.1.1.2 *Narratives as historical fragments*

Nonetheless, the great debates narrative tool remains a common feature of teaching practice in mainstream IR as a heuristic device to introduce students to key currents of theorisation within the discipline. Far from being confined to a twentieth century past, this narrative is reproduced in present day IR modules ‘structured around the “Great Debates”’, which continue to be used to introduce students to the discipline.<sup>3.22</sup> Doing so ensures the inter-paradigmatic model and the ‘great debates’ are taken up by successive generations of IR scholars and thus endure well past their usable life. There is a danger in this of reinforcing existing orthodoxy through inflating the significance of established historical

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<sup>3.21</sup>Peter Marcus Kristensen, ‘Discipline Admonished: On International Relations Fragmentation and the Disciplinary Politics of Stocktaking’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 22.2 (2016), 243-67. doi:10.1177/1354066115586206

<sup>3.22</sup>Liverpool John Moores University, Debating International Relations Theories Module Information (5100IRP) (Approved 2022). <https://proformas.ljmu.ac.uk/5100IRP.pdf>[Accessed 18 December 2025]

narratives and it one that this thesis directly encounters. It must be considered whether focussing on elements of IR's established disciplinary mythology, like the 'great debates' or the year 1919, even critically, risks enshrining them further as dominant historical narratives of the discipline's emergence and development. A critical disciplinary history of IR, therefore, must take caution to strike a balance between unravelling existing historical myths and entrenching them further.

This thesis does so by seeking to read established disciplinary histories or 'mythologies' against the grain, not as accounts of what truly happened in the past but as fragments of the historical and contextual circumstances that shaped interactions within and beyond the discipline. These fragments, even the tired narrative of a progression of linear 'great debates', can play a role in identifying historical silences hidden within narratives of the development of IR if appropriately purposed and positioned as methodological tools for the critical disciplinary historian, rather than accurate reflections of courses of historical events.

Beyond such usage, the paradigm model of IR's disciplinary history is obsolete and the continued rigid stratification of theorisation within the discipline into 'traditions' or 'great debates' is increasingly unhelpful for scholars treating with subject matter that is more complex than such linear visions allow for.<sup>3.23</sup> The continued usage of paradigms and great debates alike is reliant on a reductionist and misleading interpretation of the historical sociology of the discipline, shared by many approaches to the theorisation of international order. These 'paradigms' share a common epistemological framework that transcends the rigid pigeon-holing into narrow theoretical camps that graduates of

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<sup>3.23</sup>Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Daniel H. Nexon, 'Paradigmatic Faults in International-Relations Theory', *International Studies Quarterly*, 53.4 (2009), 907-30. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2478.2009.00562.x

introductory IR courses will be all too familiar with. There is a scientific dimension to this in IR's methodological insularity, which can trace at least some of its rigidity to philosophies of science formed in the mould of the imperial sciences of old.<sup>3.24</sup> There is also an historical dimension, in that approaches across paradigms take for granted the same historical assumptions and mythologies that have proved constitutive of major silences in the discipline's historical sociology. For all their theoretical divergence, each of the conventional 'paradigms' shares a common historical grounding. Challenging the dominance of these ways of thought is impossible if these historical foundations are not challenged first.

On similar grounds, there is a grain of truth in Mearsheimer's critique in that many of the more critical or nominally challenging theories of IR do share common historico-sociological and epistemic underpinnings with more mainstream approaches to the field. Despite their merits in widening the frontiers of the discipline, Sandra Halperin recognises that critical theories of IR have continued to accept, or take for granted, both the historical narratives and the basic units of analysis (or referent objects) of mainstream IR theory (namely states). For this reason, Halperin calls for a shift towards a 'horizontal' analytical perspective which emphasises the development and interaction of classes, groups, and social networks rather than the state-centric focus of more orthodox 'vertical' perspectives to better understand and contextualise historical developments in an IR setting.<sup>3.25</sup> This thesis directs itself towards such a horizontal analysis, seeking to situate the underlying assumptions of the discipline in their historical and theoretical context by exploring the relational

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<sup>3.24</sup>J. Ann Tickner, 'Dealing with Difference: Problems and Possibilities for Dialogue in International Relations', *Millennium*, 39.3 (2011), 607-18. doi:10.1177/0305829811400655

<sup>3.25</sup>Sandra Halperin, 'International Relations Theory and the Hegemony of Western Conceptions of Modernity', in: *Decolonizing International Relations*, ed. by Branwen Gruffydd Jones (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 43-64 (p.45)

networks surrounding IR and drawing upon diverse and interdisciplinary methods, approaches, and examples to do so.

However, it is important to recognise that the influences and legacies of certain scientific discourses and problematic conceptual assumptions are not always immediately visible and therefore this thesis must make every effort to avoid the same pitfalls of adopting conventional assumptions about IR without sufficient introspection. Thus, it must be asked whether it is possible to develop an approach that draws upon the meta-theoretical and sociological duality expressed in Hamati-Ataya's interpretation of reflexivism without conceding ground to the established orthodoxy of the discipline. An important element of this is be a critical analysis of the relationship between IR and its own history, drawing heavily on the work of historians like Michel-Rolph Trouillot, and in particular the role that 'silences' in the Trouillean sense play within the construction of the historical narratives that constitute the historical sociology of the discipline, and the associated disciplinary mythologies that surround theoretical traditions within IR.<sup>3.26</sup>

### **3.2 Methodology**

It is here that the thesis encounters a further brief for alternative theories of IR, set out by Justin Rosenberg. Rosenberg argues that such theories must be both historical, in that they allow for the distinction between historically-specific forms and structures rather than relying on universal generalisation detached from historical context, and also able to address the wider societal structures in which both conceptions of the international, and the reproduction of an

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<sup>3.26</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2015)

existing international order, are rooted.<sup>3.27</sup> The dire need for the ‘historical sociological turn’ posited by John Hobson over two decades ago is seen here most conspicuously.<sup>3.28</sup> As Hobson makes clear, the need for this turn is not limited to one IR paradigm, but rather ought to be directed at the common Eurocentric historical assumptions that underlie established Marxist and critical accounts of the international ‘states system’ as much as realist and liberal ones.<sup>3.29</sup>

Therefore, an approach that challenges orthodox assumptions, theories, and structures of IR must go further than laying out the historical sociology of the discipline alone. Foucault’s genealogical approach, uniting the interrelated study of history and scientific discourses, provides some insight into how this historical sociology might be taken beyond a surface level. Foucauldian genealogy centres upon analysis of how bodies of knowledge are shaped by the historical conditions and exercises of power from which they emerge and which they continually encounter and is ultimately a process of uncovering histories of the present.<sup>3.30</sup> Alongside seeking to trace the role scientific discourses have played in IR, this thesis will seek to construct a history of IR’s present by mapping the influence of political structures of empire which defined the positionality of many early canonical scholars of IR, and the descent of the modern discipline from the insular networks that bound these scholars together. This is particularly

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<sup>3.27</sup>Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society: A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations* (London: Verso, 1994), p.38

<sup>3.28</sup>John M. Hobson, ‘What’s at Stake in “Bringing Historical Sociology Back into International Relations?” Transcending “Chronofetishism” and “Tempocentrism” in International Relations’, in Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 3-41 (p.4)

<sup>3.29</sup>John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760-2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p.224

<sup>3.30</sup>David Garland, ‘What is a “History of the Present”?’ On Foucault’s Genealogies and their Critical Preconditions’, *Punishment and Society*, 16.4 (2014), 365-384. doi:10.1177/1462474514541711

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*

true of the foundational figures associated with Milner's Kindergarten in South Africa and the Round Table Movement, many of whom were influential in colonial governance, as explored in chapter seven. Their positionality within colonial power relations shaped their conception of international order heavily. This conception viewed imperial progress as a historical process and relied on a combination between ostensibly objective laws of history and a racial hierarchy drawn from discourses of colonial race science.<sup>3.31</sup> By tracing the historical descent not only of modern IR institutions, such as Chatham House, from movements like the Round Table, but also the descent of contemporary ideologies, paradigms, and modes of international thought from the same intellectual movements, the output of this thesis will to some extent be a history of the present in the Foucauldian genealogical sense, albeit one that engages with examples from the discipline only up to the 1930s.<sup>3.32</sup>

It deploys this Foucauldian approach as a methodological tool rather than an ideological dogma, for which invocations of Foucault are sometimes confused.<sup>3.33</sup> It does not rely solely on Foucault, but by developing this historically-centred method in dialogue with anti-colonial approaches to historical study, like that of Trouillot, provides a reflexive basis for a critical *Fachgeschichte* of the discipline. Doing so emulates the balance scholars like Robbie Shilliam are able to achieve in bringing together Foucault with voices from beyond a white European canon, like that of Édouard Glissant.<sup>3.34</sup> Shilliam uses this

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<sup>3.31</sup>Alexander E. Davis, Vineet Thakur, and Peter Vale, *The Imperial Discipline: Race and the Founding of International Relations* (London: Pluto Press, 2020), p.22

<sup>3.32</sup>Andrea Bosco, 'From Empire to Atlantic "System": The Round Table, Chatham House and the Emergence of a New Paradigm in Anglo-American Relations', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 16.3 (2018), 222-246. doi:10.1080/14794012.2018.1482710

<sup>3.33</sup>David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.5

<sup>3.34</sup>Robbie Shilliam, 'Decolonising the Grounds of Ethical Inquiry: A Dialogue between Kant, Foucault, and Glissant', *Millennium*, 39.3 (2011), 649-665. doi:10.1177/0305829811399144

theoretical undertaking to outline how Western dominance of the discipline is legitimised and justified through the claim of the Western academy to a specific ‘impersonal, rational and universal subjectivity’ which serves to sanctify the European continent as the only site on which legitimate academic discourse can take place.<sup>3.35</sup> The same phenomenon of an implicit legitimacy anchored in Europe forms the basis of Hobson’s critique of the ‘Eurocentric theory and practice of IR’.<sup>3.36</sup> As Hobson suggests, IR as a formal discipline has long been sustained by ‘key disciplinary axioms’ which, once subjected to historical analysis, can be recontextualised as ‘largely Eurocentric myths’.<sup>3.37</sup> In other words, Europe is reified both as the historical birthplace of the formal IR discipline and also the natural home for its core institutions, theories, and scholars . Through this, the discipline is not only geographically bounded, but is inherently racialised. Historical exercises of power, largely (though not exclusively) limiting those afforded a platform within mainstream discourses of IR to male scholars, also see the discipline gendered.

Dealing with discourses that are racialised and gendered poses a particular challenge, and it is one that a disciplinary historian must remain acutely aware of. Given the nature of the research project and the dominant structures of the discipline, most of the individuals and historical contexts encountered herein will be white men, centred around European or US institutions, for here lies the bedrock of the disciplinary mythologies that this thesis is directed towards problematising. That such individuals and scholars remain the most accessible to historians is both a symptom and a cause of the continued dominance of racialised, gendered, and colonial legacies in IR’s historical sociology. This

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<sup>3.35</sup>Robbie Shilliam, ‘Decolonising the Grounds of Ethical Inquiry’, p.651

<sup>3.36</sup>John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics*, p.22

<sup>3.37</sup>John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics*, p.14

problem extends well beyond IR and is encountered by all historians. Trouillot identifies it in outlining the entry of silences into archives, and the process by which some archives are destroyed and others preserved is shaped by exercises of power.<sup>3.38</sup>

The historical record that the historian has access to is shaped by long and complex processes of differential exercises of power across time. This is true not only of physical documentary sources, but equally so of discourses. Access points to historical narratives are available only where fragments of these narratives endure. It is, for instance, much easier to visit Aberystwyth and read the well-preserved and well-catalogued papers of Lord Davies than to recover discourses that were circulating among members of colonised populations in German South West Africa in the 1890s, whose names, let alone thoughts, generally remain inaccessible to historians. This is a shortcoming inherent to a historical project of this nature, but it is not one that can be easily overcome. As this is a history of how empire saw itself, and how imperial power was conceptualised by those who were closest to it, it will naturally bear the echoes and reflections of such imbalances, not least in its bibliographical content and the primary sources utilised throughout. It thus contributes to the propagation of other historical silences like those that it directs itself towards addressing.

This leaves the historian, no matter how critical their bent or how noble their intentions, facing an unenviable dilemma. There is a balance to be struck between introspectively unravelling the legacy that colonial power continues to play in shaping the discipline and re-centring voices that have been silenced by the interactions with this through historic exercises of power. That does not mean that there is no room to consider the role of alternatives, counter currents, and

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<sup>3.38</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*

resistance within such a history, but the ability to do so is inherently constrained by silences in the historical record and the wider archive. As such, there are further silences to address beyond those targeted by this thesis and there remains much work to be done by critical disciplinary historians. This thesis is positioned as a starting point rather than a conclusive and comprehensive history of the type it argues will always remain impossible.

The very heart of the methodology is captured in Trouillot's declaration that 'any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences, the result of a unique process, and the operation required to deconstruct these silences will vary accordingly'.<sup>3.39</sup> There is no singular universal model of writing history, and even different attempts to engage with the same historical narrative can diverge greatly in their content and focus. An alternative history of IR must eventually be written that incorporates a wider range of silenced voices than this one is able to, but at this stage, that is not the aim of this thesis. Instead, its aim is to lay some of the foundations to render such a history thinkable. To do this, it draws on a broad range of methodological tools, combining critical historiographical concepts like silences with concepts drawn from the broad toolkit of complexity to construct a *Fachgeschichte* of IR that is critical, introspective, and relational.

The methodological starting point for a project that seeks to challenge the differential exercises of power that shape historical narratives must be a recognition that the 'master's tools will never dismantle the master's house'.<sup>3.40</sup> Put forward by Audre Lorde, this formulation captures a major problem at the core of the orthodox discipline of IR. Its reductionism extends to methodological

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<sup>3.39</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, p.27

<sup>3.40</sup>Audre Lorde, 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House' in: *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, ed. by Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (Watertown, MA: Persephone Press, 1981), 98-101

insularity. The deployment of the same methodological toolkit sees the same patterns of orthodoxy continually reproduced and propagated, and thus IR scholarship binds itself to the same limits that have historically constrained the mainstream discipline. Existing orthodox methodologies in IR are characterised by a lack of historical introspection, an allegiance to dogma, and defining universalising tendencies. A central focus of this thesis is the need for introspection, which it seeks to incorporate into discussions of IR's disciplinary history in creative ways.

### ***3.2.1 Introspection and Project Origins***

On this note, given the emphasis this thesis places on IR being a contingent product of the historical conditions in which it was formalised, it would be hypocritical to begin without turning this introspection inwards and situating this project in the wider context of its emergence and development. This thesis is ultimately a product of introspection forged in the furnaces of reflexivity and critical self-evaluation over a period of months and years. When the research project was initially designed and proposed in the winter of 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, its remit was far narrower and its focus in many ways almost unrecognisable from the broader project that has since evolved out of the initial idea. This change is not a mistake, and it does not arise out of a desire to make the project more trendy or marketable. It is the outcome of a process of introspection spanning several years. Crucially, this is no accident: it is an integral part of the wider research process, and a project like this would be impossible without such critical introspection. If it is to call for an introspective approach to IR able to adapt and grow in a dynamic way, it can be worth very little if it does not practice what it aims to preach.

Thus, there can be few more appropriate stepping off points for this project

of critical introspection than to start with a reflexive dissection of the original research proposal, devised and submitted to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) on the turn of the decade. The original proposal began with a declaration that ‘when International Relations (IR) began to emerge as an academic discipline in the early twentieth century [...] [it] was deeply rooted in the field of history’.<sup>3.41</sup> This statement remains relevant, and the thesis remains centred around the relationship between IR and history.

However, the outcome of engaging with this relationship critically, and with the disciplinary sociology of IR, for a prolonged period has made it clear that it would be impossible to engage with this relationship in any depth without first contextualising the historical silences that constitute the very bedrock of the present-day discipline of IR. There is much taken for granted in the original proposal that must be problematised and challenged, and much that it overlooked. Even the claim that IR emerged as an academic discipline in the early twentieth century can be problematised, for it silences histories beyond Europe and beyond the narrow chronological frame of IR’s formalisation.

The original proposal was designed as a comparative project, using the Iraq and Falklands-Malvinas Wars to explore the relationship between IR and history, through trends in international thought they might reveal. Focussing on the role of history in shaping both IR theory and foreign policy decision-making, it proposed to assess ‘whether the post-Cold War theoretical shift in the relationship between history and IR has been reflected in and had an impact on UK foreign policy actors, institutions, and policy outcomes’. It was thus policy-orientated but to position itself as such, relied on assumptions about the relationship

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<sup>3.41</sup>Jude Rowley, ‘From Structure to Complexity: Exploring the Relationship Between History and International Relations Theory through the Falklands and Iraq Conflicts’, UKRI Gateway to Research. <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=studentship-2386749>

between historical narratives, IR theories, and policy-making and to take for granted a particular understanding of the discipline's history and structures. The Eurocentrism inherent in this should not be overlooked, especially the implicit assumption that a focus on IR through the lens of British foreign policy could offer universal lessons on the relationship between the discipline and history. Thus, aside from the logistical difficulties arising from the pandemic that made the project undeliverable in its initial form, there were major conceptual barriers limiting the project that it would have been dishonest not to address. It was reliant on the existence of rigidly defined 'paradigms' in IR, taking these at face value without problematising the historical dynamics which produced them. When contextualised, it becomes clear that these paradigms are not only not a reliable means of demarcating self-contained theoretical traditions within the discipline, but that reliance on them serves to obscure important elements of IR's historical development.

Therefore, from an early stage, it became clear that it would be impossible in the current climate of the discipline to explore the relationship between IR and history without engaging with some of the enduring disciplinary mythologies shaping the field. Such a project would be reliant on the implicit assumption that IR theories can provide a framework for detached analysis. However, once the discipline of IR is situated in the historical circumstances that shaped it and its connexions to empire are properly contextualised, continuing to overlook these connexions would propagate one of the defining limitations of IR as a discipline in its general inability to deal convincingly with its imperial past. To make projects that engage critically, such as that initially envisaged for this thesis, possible in the future, a wider exploration of the relationship between IR, history, and empire is a necessary first step. By using science as a connective factor that intersects with each of these aspects and brings them together through vast networks of

interactions, this thesis emerges as much out of an attempt to lay the groundwork for a more introspective and historically engaging discipline of IR.

### **3.2.2 Historical Silences**

Once the recognition that this relationship needed to be explored had been made, the project immediately took on a significant disciplinary historical focus. There was thus room to turn to perhaps the chiefest of all disciplinary historians in Michel Foucault. Building on the work of Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem, Foucault outlines developed methodological questions for historical work of this nature in both his archæological and genealogical work.<sup>3.42</sup> Of specific relevance to this thesis is his acknowledgement that the reinterpretation of historical narratives can ‘reveal several pasts, several forms of connexion, several hierarchies of importance, several networks of determination, several teleologies, for one and the same science, as its present undergoes change: thus historical descriptions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge’.<sup>3.43</sup> The present state of knowledge, namely IR’s deep-rooted disciplinary amnesia surrounding questions of empire and imperialism, is the starting point and chief motivator of this thesis. It follows from an acceptance that new historical descriptions are required to satisfactorily explain the current state of the discipline. Producing these descriptions requires a historicisation of IR’s relationship with empire and science, which canonical disciplinary narratives, well-trodden as they may be, do not adequately account for. Here encountered is a major historical silence in the disciplinary history of IR, and this, above all else,

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<sup>3.42</sup>Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1972)

Michel Foucault, ‘Nietzsche, Genealogy, History’ in: *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by Donald F. Bouchard, trans. by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 139-164

<sup>3.43</sup>Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp.4-5

is the object of this thesis.

The thesis begins from Michel Rolph Trouillot's formulation that 'any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences, the result of a unique process, and the operation required to deconstruct these silences will vary accordingly'.<sup>3.44</sup> This concept of a silence invoked by Trouillot here and throughout his wider oeuvre has crucial implications for historical methodology but has perhaps gone underappreciated by practitioners of historical research and writing. Nonetheless, it is an ideal starting point for challenging historical orthodoxy and thus the concept of historical silences will prove central to the critical Fachgeschichte of IR that this thesis directs itself towards. A silence is inherently difficult to identify, in that it is the absence of something, rather than its presence. It is therefore more helpful to frame a silence as the product of processes of silencing. Trouillot suggests that silencing in this sense is an inherently active and transitive process, comparable to the silencing of a gun.<sup>3.45</sup> Silencing in this sense does not mean the sound is no longer there, but that it is suppressed and modified to be less present. Such is the case with historical silences. Though some histories are lost, with the voices that shaped them all but untraceable, others leave fragments and echoes in other narratives, which though suppressed, can be traced by the historian and partially deconstructed.

The deconstruction of such silences, however, first requires their identification. Trouillot identifies four moments that silences enter the process of historical production. The first two concern the creation of sources and the assembly of archives. At a secondary level, silences enter processes of historical production when sources are retrieved from archives to allow for

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<sup>3.44</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, p.27

<sup>3.45</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, p.48

the construction of narratives. Finally, there is that which Trouillot refers to as the moment of ‘retrospective significance’, or the making of *history* in the final instance.<sup>3.46</sup> As this thesis seeks to unravel the particular bundle of historical silences that shapes the retrospective significance of moments in the making of IR’s disciplinary history, its focus is concentrated most heavily on this latter moment at which silences enter the historical process. Nonetheless, as these entry points for silence overlap and are not mutually exclusive or isolated, each will be incorporated into the historical process of deconstructing silences.

Neither this process of deconstructing silences, nor the processes by which silences are created, are linear. Instead, these processes can be understood as emergent and relational, shaped by interaction between constituent elements and between concepts. Nonlinearity is far from a novel term in the philosophy of science and it is one that has sparked lively debates in fields of mathematics and theoretical physics since at least the mid-twentieth century. Students in these fields are taught that ‘linear models tend to be more appropriate for the study of inanimate systems, where the threads of causality are more easily sorted out, whereas biological systems are usually nonlinear’.<sup>3.47</sup> History is not a biological system in any traditional sense, yet concerned as it is with change, movement, and dynamics, it can also hardly be considered inanimate. Historical narratives are living things, evolving and adapting in emergent ways, and are shaped fundamentally by dynamic social forces. It should therefore be questioned whether linear models are best placed to deal with this nonlinear subject matter. Murray Gell-Mann recognised this, and argued that since ‘no complex, nonlinear system can be adequately described by dividing it up into

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<sup>3.46</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, p.26

<sup>3.47</sup>Alwyn Scott, *Nonlinear Science: Emergence and Dynamics of Coherent Structures*, Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.28

subsystems’, particularisation or ‘specialisation’ should be accompanied by ‘integration’.<sup>3.48</sup> Gell-Mann, no stranger to reusing passages of his work elsewhere, directly repurposed this argument to deal with history. Using the analogy of forking paths drawn from the literary work of Jorge Luis Borges, Gell-Mann positions history as indeterminate, shaped by a combination of ‘fundamental laws and by an inconceivably long sequence of chance events, each of which could turn out in various ways’.<sup>3.49</sup> In Gell-Mann’s view, history therefore occupies an area between order and disorder, or a zone of complexity that defies simple mapping. It is neither entirely random, nor entirely determinate in any Hegelian sense. Like all complex adaptive systems, it is counterproductive to attempt to model in linear, reductionist, or orderly ways. Instead, it is important to recognise that history does not exist independently of those who interact with it, and nor can historical narratives exist in isolation to those who describe them.

Borges puts this more elegantly in his famous aphorism that ‘every writer creates their [own] precursors. Their work modifies our conception of the past, just as it will modify the future’.<sup>3.50</sup> Though speaking in a literary context, this applies equally to the role of historian’s present in influencing historical narratives. The formulation of narratives is not one of translating a comprehensive representation of the past to written word, but rather a process of interpretation that retrospectively shapes both conceptions of the past and the future. Instead, historical narratives are fragments of a past, but also of a present. It might be our

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<sup>3.48</sup> Murray Gell-Mann, *The Quark and the Jaguar: Adventures in the Simple and the Complex* (New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1994), pp.345-346

<sup>3.49</sup> Murray Gell-Mann, ‘The Simple and the Complex’ in: David S. Alberts and Thomas J. Czerwinski (eds.), *Complexity, Global Politics, and National Security* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1997), 2-12

<sup>3.50</sup> Jorge Luis Borges, ‘Kafka y sus precursores’ (Kafka and His Precursors) in: *Otras inquisiciones* (Other Inquisitions) (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1960), 137-140 (p.140). ‘El hecho es que cada escritor crea a sus precursores. Su labor modifica nuestra concepción del pasado, como ha de modificar el futuro. En esta correlación nada importa la identidad o la pluralidad de los hombres’

own, or it might be a present far removed temporally, geographically, or culturally. In any event, the hallmarks of surrounding historical contexts cannot be separated from the narratives they produced.

### **3.2.3 Connected Histories**

Thus, in Trouillot's words, 'the production of a historical narrative cannot be studied, therefore, through a mere chronology of its silences'.<sup>3.51</sup> Instead, critical histories, and a *Fachgeschichte* in particular, must embrace relationality. The concept of connected histories, developed by Sanjay Subrahmanyam in opposition to more orthodox comparative histories, proves especially suited to a *Fachgeschichte* of this nature.<sup>3.52</sup> Connected histories centre not only on the parallels between historical contexts in the way that comparative histories might, but on the direct connexions and interactions between them. A critical *Fachgeschichte* of IR must be a connected history in the sense that, as an inherently global, or as this thesis will argue, trans-imperial discipline, IR cannot be considered a collection of individually isolated national contexts co-existing in synchronicity. Instead, the very discipline arises out of the interaction between these contexts and is a product of the relationality between them. The very name of the discipline, *International Relations*, speaks to this interconnectivity, even if it is an element of IR's historical evolution that has sometimes been overlooked. In a sense, it is a response to Gurminder Bhambra's call to combine 'connected histories and connected sociologies, together with a recognition of "international interconnectedness"' in IR, but seeks to develop this further by resituating the interconnectedness of the orthodox discipline as an historically

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<sup>3.51</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, p.28

<sup>3.52</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia', *Modern Asian Studies*, 31.3 (1997), 735-762 (p.745). doi:10.1017/S0026749X00017133

contingent product of empire and imperial power relations.<sup>3.53</sup>

This thesis directs itself towards constructing a connected history, and as such though it focuses primarily on the British Imperial context, this cannot be separated from its entanglements with connected historical contexts, in this case specifically those centred on the US and Germany. It seeks to trace a trans-imperial history, connecting the three contexts as one in the development of a wider 'science of empire' in the first half of the twentieth century. There are other case studies that could serve a similar role, and many other interactions that could replace those covered in this thesis. However, the combination of aspects from a British, German, and US context selected for this thesis allows for the clear dissection of interconnected discourses of a 'scientific' study of imperial order. Once this is reframed as a connected history, constituent elements of established historical narratives of IR's disciplinary evolution can be resituated in a new light.

The role of the Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, for instance, possibly the first institution of historical significance for the newly formalised academic discipline of IR in Germany, takes on a new significance when situated in relation to its wider trans-imperial connexions. Instead of the locus of one institutional history, it becomes a hub of relations that connects multiple contexts together in one wider historical narrative. These connexions can be traced through those involved in its history, such as with Ernst Jäckh, a close associate of key figures involved at Aberystwyth like David Davies, or through its institutional context, with its connexions to the United States through the funding it received from the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations. Its proximity both in a literal and figurative sense to discourses of eugenics similarly connects it to a dominant race science

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<sup>3.53</sup>Gurminder K. Bhambra, 'Historical Sociology, International Relations, and Connected Histories', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 23.1 (2010), 127-143. doi:10.1080/09557570903433639

movement in the United States in the same period, which again also had British dimensions and co-interactions.

For this thesis, the focus on the British Imperial context, including the dismantling of the Aberystwyth myth, is positioned as central for three reasons: one narrative and two methodological or operational. The extensive archive at Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/the National Library of Wales which contains papers relating to the establishment of the Department of International Politics at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and was the first that the author was able to access following the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the centrality afforded to Aberystwyth in certain disciplinary mythologies as the origin source for the formalised academic field of IR, it also makes an accessible starting point for an historical work aiming to disentangle such mythologies. Secondly, it is the most accessible context to the author based at a university in Britain, where a lasting legacy of empire is the endurance and availability of archives. Additional archival research has been carried out at the Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, and the British Library. Collections such as the digital archives of the London School of Economics, United Nations, US National Archive, and the Universitäts-Archiv Münster have also been used to provide primary source material, but given the logistical considerations of archive accessibility, the balance of source material is heavily weighted towards the British context.

There are also considerations of language barriers. It would not be feasible to deal with the historical development of IR in a Chinese or Russian setting, as the author would not be able to access the source material in the same detail. Though not a fluent German speaker by any means, the ability to provide rough translations of German sources makes these something that can be incorporated in a way that would not be possible with those in other languages. For this reason, however, the

engagement with German sources will not be as developed or as in depth as with those from a British, or even Anglophone context, and therefore it is important to recognise this as a further reason for a focus on the British Imperial context via its entanglements with other contexts, rather than as a series of standalone case study of equal weighting.

The advantage of writing about the British context from a British setting, however, is that it allows for the integrating of the author within the networked relations they seek to describe, and means it is possible to interact first hand with the afterlives of the historical conditions explored within the thesis. This opens new avenues for engaging creatively with source material, as in chapter four with the use of books as material fragments of the conditions in which they were produced. In this case, the book can be taken as a historical artefact, important not only because of the words it contains, but because of its context and its story. Each book thus becomes a fragment of the historical context that produced it and instead of a secondary source to support the foundations on which an argument is built via their content, books become a direct and active tool in research. Historians in recognising this become archæologists of knowledge, or of discourse, treating printed books as material fragments of particular historical conditions in the same way an archæologist of the old order might treat a physical site or material object.

In doing so, elements of Ph.D. research that usually go unspoken become an acknowledged part of the process, and history takes on an inherently auto-ethnographical dimension. Thus, encountering the name Davies by chance in a North Lancashire bookshop becomes an explicit part of the method, albeit not one that can ever be designed, and similarly, so too does unwittingly sitting next to a friend of the same Davies family in an archives centre in Cambridge.

Such interactions need not only include personal encounters but can extend to moments like recognising the irony in the revised edition of Trouillot's book bearing a quotation from *Foreign Affairs* on its front cover.<sup>3.54</sup> This allows for histories to be connected in unexpected ways, sometimes seemingly along the axis of coincidence. For instance, library stamps in a book from 1907 cited in this thesis reveal that the bequest of John Amory Lowell, grandfather of the Abbott Lawrence Lowell discussed in this thesis, funded the purchase of a volume of the German Colonial Society's *Journal of Colonial Policy, Colonial Law, and Colonial Economics* for Harvard College Library.<sup>3.55</sup>

Similarly, the bequest of Archibald Cary Coolidge purchased for the same library a copy of a history of the Hanseatic League, written by Ernst Robert Daenell.<sup>3.56</sup> Both of these scholars feature in this thesis: Coolidge for his role in early twentieth century discourses surrounding IR in the United States and Daenell as an academic delivering lectures in *Kolonialwissenschaften* (colonial sciences) at Münster on topics like the history of British colonial policy at the outbreak of the Great War. There is no evidence to suggest the two men ever met, though Coolidge was likely familiar with Daenell's work to some extent, yet they are both constituent elements of network shaping the emergence of a trans-imperial science of empire, connected through circumstances they played

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<sup>3.54</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*

Kenneth Maxwell, 'Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History' [Review], *Foreign Affairs* 75.4 (1996), 152. doi:10.2307/20047700

<sup>3.55</sup>Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft, *Zeitschrift für Kolonialpolitik, Kolonialrecht und Kolonialwirtschaft* (Journal of Colonial Policy, Colonial Law, and Colonial Economics), 9.1-11 (Berlin: Wilhelm Süsserott, 1907). Copy in Harvard University Library, digitised at: [https://archive.org/details/bub\\_gb\\_ou8OAAAAYAAJ\\_2/page/n1/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_ou8OAAAAYAAJ_2/page/n1/mode/2up) [Accessed 30 July 2025]

<sup>3.56</sup>Ernst Robert Daenell, *Die blütezeit der deutschen Hanse* (The Golden Age of the German Hanseatic League), volume 1 (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1905). Copy in Harvard University Library, digitised at: <https://archive.org/details/diebltezeitderd00daengoo/page/n2/mode/2up> [Accessed 30 July 2025]

little part in shaping directly themselves.<sup>3.57</sup> By the time Daenell's book was purchased with funds from Coolidge's bequest, both men were dead. However, the two are connected through the archive, tied together through a relationship between finance and knowledge preservation that intertwines the overlapping contexts each of the two scholars were shaped by.

In this case, one book on the shelves of a university library becomes a fragment of the relationality that connected Coolidge, the early IR academic, inaugural editor of *Foreign Affairs*, and doctoral supervisor to the white supremacist Lothrop Stoddard, with Daenell, the German historian who taught courses in colonial sciences in the last days of the German Empire. History is the emergent product of networks of interaction. In this sense, the relevant factor in apparent historical coincidences like this is not the relationality between the two individuals, but the symbolic function of this as a marker of the relationality between the contexts they were a part of. The historical coincidence connecting Daenell's book with Coolidge's bequest is a fragment of the relationship between interconnected discourses of imperial science in the United States and the German Empire in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Centring on such connexions serves to illustrate the web of interconnectivity that shapes a particular history. Within this, actors do not only play a role in shaping history through their direct actions, but by the emergent outcomes of their interactions with the wider systems of which they are constituent elements.

This history is shaped as much by the structures of its own time as

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<sup>3.57</sup> Reviews of Daenell's work appeared in the *American Historical Review*, to which Coolidge was a contributor.

Herbert E. Bolton, 'Die Spanier in Nordamerika von 1513-1824 by Ernst Daenell' [Review], *American Historical Review*, 17.2 (1912), 380-1

Archibald Cary Coolidge, 'Geschichte der Russischen Revolution by Ludwig Kulczycki, Anna Schapiro-Neurath' [Review], *American Historical Review*, 17.2 (1912), 378-9

any other. It would be hypocritical to position the imperialist institutions, individuals, and discourses discussed in this thesis as products of the historical circumstances that produced them without also recognising the positionality inherent in this thesis. A central critique of many existing approaches to IR, and historical narratives surrounding its development, in this thesis is that they claim an objective and neutral detachment from the subjects they pertain to describe. It would thus undermine the very purpose of this project to make any such claim to objectivity or detachment in this thesis. It is positional, as all histories are, but it is intended to acknowledge this openly from the outset. As an important distinction, this thesis does not seek to outline the history of IR, in Rankean terms, 'as it truly was' but the history that is *told* about IR, and the conditions that made this history possible.<sup>3.58</sup> In Trouillot's words, history is not what happened in the past, but what is said to have happened in the past.<sup>3.59</sup> This crucial distinction lies at the heart of this thesis, which in seeking to problematise and deconstruct conventional historical narratives surrounding the development of the canonical discipline, seeks to recover the historical conditions these narratives obscure and lay the groundwork for addressing the silences these conditions produce.

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<sup>3.58</sup>Leopold von Ranke, *Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (Histories of the Romance and Germanic Peoples from 1494 to 1514) (Leipzig: Dunker and Humblot, 1885), p.viii

<sup>3.59</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, p.139

## Chapter 4:

### The Aberystwyth Myth: History, Perspective, and Origins

#### 4.1 Positionality and History

History is a site of contestation, but it is also a site of paradox. It is variably envisioned as neutral and yet is so readily weaponised; it is both bound inextricably to time and yet remains, in a sense, timeless; it is cyclical, ever moving, and yet is imagined as linear and directional; it is infinite and unending, and yet its end is readily declared. It is universal and monolithic and yet diverse and fractal and it is on this note that there is a need to engage not just with one vision of historiographical practice and methodology, but multiple. To make this possible, however, it is important to first ask what history is, and more importantly, what the study of or engagement with history should entail. E.H. Carr, who is discussed primarily in the context of this thesis as the fourth Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth but remains one of relatively few scholars whose contributions to two different academic disciplines have borne equal significance to each, raised this question in a series of lectures to his Cambridge undergraduates at the beginning of the 1960s. In doing so, he sparked controversial and long-running debates about the nature of historical method. To Carr, history was ‘a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past’.<sup>4.1</sup> Carr was not the first to reframe the relationship between present and past in this way, but his work carried a resonance that embodied the mid-twentieth century challenge to orthodox historiography from the British

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<sup>4.1</sup>Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (London: MacMillan, 1961), p.35

Marxist school of critical historians.

Willie Thompson situates *What is History?* as a major transformation for Anglophone historiography, presenting it as a critical reaction against an orthodox paradigm of Rankean history.<sup>4.2</sup> Rankean is a common categorisation, or shorthand, for history that attempts to treat the past in an objective and ‘scientific’ way. To its proponents, who present Leopold von Ranke as the forefather of modern historiography, Rankean history seeks only to describe the past ‘wie es eigentlich gewesen’ or ‘as it truly was’.<sup>4.3</sup> It is here that Carr can be read as an anti-Rankean, as Thompson suggests. Carr’s approach to history was a reaction against reductionist histories of the Rankean mould. He explicitly claims that objective histories are not possible but rather that history is shaped by the perspective of the historian. The relationship between the historian and the historical narratives they produce is thus recentred. No longer can the historian be considered a distant and objective observer, but rather is inextricably embedded in the histories they describe.

In constructing a *Fachgeschichte* of IR and focussing on the influence of liberal imperialism on its emergence, this chapter will take this as its starting point. It claims not to be a complete or objective account of its subject but instead recognises its positionality as both a reaction against and a product of the histories it describes. Much of the complexity and disagreement in history is a product of the uncertainty surrounding the distinction between present and past. By recognising their positional relationship with the past, the historian adopts a responsibility to work towards building a ‘political economy of historical truthfulness’, that

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<sup>4.2</sup>Willie Thompson, *What Happened to History?* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), pp.34-5

<sup>4.3</sup>Leopold von Ranke, *Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (Histories of the Romance and Germanic Peoples from 1494 to 1514) (Leipzig: Dunker and Humblot, 1885), p.viii

is, a society in which there is space for ‘the critical understanding and open exchange of multiple interpretations of the past’.<sup>4.4</sup> This does not suggest that all interpretations of the past should be treated as equally valid or deserving of amplification in any liberal sense. Equally, nor does aspiring to ‘historical truthfulness’ imply that any objective and unchanging truth should be found in historical narratives. Instead, a political economy of historical truthfulness at its simplest level describes a state in which our relationship with the past should be active and evolving.<sup>4.5</sup> In addressing IR’s disciplinary history, it is necessary to interrogate the discipline’s relationship with the past, specifically through our own relationship and positionality within this. This can only be possible with critical introspection into existing disciplinary mythologies and an open addressing of what Trouillot refers to as the historical ‘silences’ inherent in every narrative, made possible by the legacies of differential exercises of power.<sup>4.6</sup>

## **4.2 Origins in IR’s Disciplinary History**

The role of the historian is to render intelligible the impossibly vast and navigate the endless source material of all varieties to weave the infinite events, circumstances, stories, and contexts into a cohesive and comprehensible narrative. The first task left to the historian, therefore, is to assign an origin point in whatever narrative they might seek to construct. In practical terms, this is essential for all historical narratives but is particularly important in the context of this thesis as part of the process of constructing a *Fachgeschichte* for a discipline.

Within this disciplinary history, there are multiple proposed origins

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<sup>4.4</sup>Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *The Past Within Us: Media, Memory, History* (London: Verso, 2005), p.244

<sup>4.5</sup>Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *The Past Within Us*, p.27

<sup>4.6</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2015)

for the birth of IR as an academic discipline. David Clinton positions the Prussian-American Francis Lieber as the first forefather of the modern discipline.<sup>4.7</sup> More recently, Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan suggest the American Raymond Leslie Buell as the author of the first IR textbook, drawing on the work of Robert Vitalis on IR's disciplinary history.<sup>4.8</sup> Beyond institutional origins, there remains a popular claim to a classical lineage, with Thucydides positioned as IR's spiritual forefather just as Herodotus was long positioned as the 'father of history'. Some go as far as claiming his *History of the Peloponnesian War* as the first IR textbook.<sup>4.9</sup> Almost all narratives about disciplinary origins, however, share a common fascination with North America and Western Europe to the exclusion of the rest of the world and with a discipline forged in the heartlands of empire and 'civilisation'.

One enduring myth, however, is that surrounding the Woodrow Wilson Chair of International Politics at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. From the positioning of Aberystwyth as the 'cradle of International Relations' by disciplinary historians like Jan Stöckmann to the insistence of IR textbooks that the discipline can be precisely dated to Aberystwyth, 1919, and the pursuit of global peace, the position of Aberystwyth as 'the discipline's birthplace' endures well into the twenty-first century, despite challenges to its dominance.<sup>4.10</sup> In particular,

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<sup>4.7</sup>David Clinton, 'Francis Lieber, Imperialism, and Internationalism' in: David Long and Brian C. Schmidt (eds.), *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005)

<sup>4.8</sup>Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations: Origins and Evolution of IR at Its Centenary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p.86

Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015)

<sup>4.9</sup>Constantinos Koliopoulos, 'International Relations and the Study of History', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (2017). doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.242

<sup>4.10</sup>Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), pp.76-87

Jeffrey Haynes, Peter Hough, Shahin Malik and Lloyd Pettiford, *World Politics* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p.6

the establishment of the first Chair in International Politics at Aberystwyth in 1919 is still often regarded as a foundational moment for the discipline by conventional disciplinary histories, such as in Ken Booth's reflections on the historical development of the discipline, published on the Chair's centenary.<sup>4.11</sup>

Expectedly, this 'origin story' is one that has been especially promoted in recent years by those associated with Aberystwyth University, not least its Department of International Politics and the David Davies Memorial Institute, both of which have been led by Booth during the course of his six decade tenure as an Aberystwyth stalwart. However, Aberystwyth's pioneering role in the institutionalisation of the discipline was not preordained, and its centrality to disciplinary folklore is a consequence of somewhat incidental causal chains. Indeed, had David Davies' plans to co-establish a Lloyd George Chair in the same subject at Strasbourg come to fruition, for which purpose he offered the same sum of £20,000, the disciplinary mythology of IR might have been entirely different.<sup>4.12</sup> Even Davies had not initially selected Aberystwyth as the institutional site for his endeavour. Such an undertaking, he reasoned, would be better suited to one of the metropolises of colonial knowledge, namely Oxford University. It took Thomas Jones to persuade him otherwise, and had the outcome of this interaction unfolded differently, Oxford rather than Aberystwyth might be remembered as the mythological crucible in which the discipline of IR was forged.<sup>4.13</sup> Instead, however, an attempt to address the silences in this mythology requires a turn to

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Kathryn Starnes, *Fairy Tales and International Relations: A Folklorist Reading of International Relations Textbooks* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p.1

<sup>4.11</sup>Ken Booth, 'International Relations: The Story So Far', *International Relations*, 33.2 (2019). 358-390

<sup>4.12</sup>Draft of a letter from David Davies to the Rector of Strasbourg University, 15 February 1919. Aberystwyth, *Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru (LIGC)*, Thomas Jones Papers

<sup>4.13</sup>Letter from Thomas Jones to Percy Watkins, 30 November 1918. *LIGC*, Thomas Jones Papers, J12

Aberystwyth and the hidden context of imperial science historically left out of the disciplinary 'origin story'.

Origins are not necessarily helpful for historians, and are often a point of great dissonance, difficulty, and disagreement. But every narrative must start somewhere. That does not mean, however, that historical narratives must always be linear or ordered chronologically. The *Fachgeschichte* that this thesis seeks to produce relies on narratives that are multi-directional. Connexions are drawn between key contexts, locations, ideas, institutions, and individuals but these can be reversed, reconfigured, and reinterrogated from alternate perspectives to produce different results. Histories of the present must begin in a present, or more specifically in the overlap between a particular present and a particular past. This means that the access points for any historical narrative are diverse and ubiquitous. Every interaction not only leaves its own history but interweaves and interconnects to other interactions through a complex chain of relations. It is therefore possible to interact with the past through the present, and access points to do this can be found anywhere, meaning that in a very concrete sense, history surrounds every setting.

### **4.3 Reading Books as Artefacts**

Historical narratives need not begin with vast empires or long-term patterns of sweeping economic activity but instead can start with an object. Some of the most fascinating works of popular history have been written in this way. Thomas Harding, for instance, narrates the modern history of Germany by centring on the lake house his Jewish ancestors built in Groß Glienicke, and in doing so, produces a highly readable and innovative popular history that goes beyond

academic monographs or lengthy chronologies in terms of its accessibility.<sup>4.14</sup> History is often about connexion on a personal and collective level and objects allow this to be articulated in an especially concrete way. Material histories have long been used to offer valuable insights into various pasts, but all histories can take on material elements to critically explore the relationship between present and past. Archæologists work on an almost exclusively material basis but growing calls for a critical politicisation within that discipline have recognised that approaches dealing with material objects need not make claims to objectivity or detachment from the present.<sup>4.15</sup> To work towards a political economy of historical truthfulness, all histories must make a similar recognition and with this in mind, material elements can augment textual histories in order to better integrate past and present.

However, orthodox material histories tend to differentiate these two types of historiographical practice rigidly, emphasising a clear divide between the material and the textual. This is often framed as a critique of ‘conventional’ histories with the argument that ‘too seldom do we try to read objects as we read books’.<sup>4.16</sup> Material histories generally exclude books as these are considered replicated fragments of a collective written history, yet perhaps books are also too seldom read as objects are read. Books serve as a particularly valuable access point to historical narratives as they occupy the area of overlap between presents and pasts. It is these that this chapter will use as its entry point into the wider historical network of IR’s Fachgeschichte with which it hopes to engage.

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<sup>4.14</sup>Thomas Harding, *The House by the Lake* (London: Windmill Books, 2015)

<sup>4.15</sup>Yannis Hamilakis, ‘Decolonial Archaeology as Social Justice’, *Antiquity*, 92.362 (2018), 518-520. doi:10.15184/aqy.2018.17

<sup>4.16</sup>Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery, ‘Introduction’ in: Stephen Lubar and David W. Kingery (eds.), *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), viii-xvii (p.viii)

In this case, books will be taken as the historical access point that allows for an introspective opening of the connexion between present and past, and three books in particular. Two taken from a university library and one from a second-hand bookshop. A book is a complex and multi-layered object for historians to engage with, as it offers avenues to information on various levels. On the simplest level, it gives an account of its subject, that is, the content of the book. Beyond this, there is the context of the book in a general sense: the circumstances of its publication, the market it was produced for, the number of copies produced and sold, for instance. Even beyond this, each copy has its own history. Two copies of the same book from the same print run can have different histories, depending on the hands they pass through and the circumstances with which they become entangled.

For the historian, books are therefore a valuable framing tool to orient historical narratives in the present towards a particular past. Exploiting the overlap between textual sources and archæological artefacts allows for a wider aperture through which to approach an historical subject, allowing not only for questions about how the content of a book can illuminate the past which produced it, but also surrounding which interactions had to take place for a book to end up where it did. Thus, the process of writing this chapter began with something of an experiment. It required stepping into Lancaster University Library and drawing a pile of ten books from a shelf (QYOL) roughly connected to the period and the movement that this chapter seeks to describe. The assembled books were assorted and varied, albeit not entirely random, and two especially relevant to the intended purpose of the exercise will be discussed in this chapter.

There are many other books, many other shelves, and many other libraries that could be utilised for this exercise, and each would provide an entirely different

result. The general direction of the narrative might be similar, but the content would necessarily be different. The use of this to frame this chapter on the role of liberal imperialism in the Fachgeschichte of IR is not intended to be flippant or a parlour trick but instead is intended as an illustration of how the access points into a particular narrative will determine the outcome and perspective of the narrative itself. This is a mark of recognition that history is relational and is ultimately a product of perspective.

#### **4.3.1 *Adventurers for Peace***

The first book from the library shelves is a long-forgotten work from a minor publishing house by a name all but lost to history: F. Mortimer Grimes' *Adventurers for Peace*. The work itself is relatively typical of its time and expounds a particular vision for a future international order. Beyond the content, however, each book has a history of its own and this copy made its way onto the shelves at Lancaster University as part of the gift of Gladys Chatterjee, an Anglo-Indian lawyer and former colonial civil servant who has signed the endplate 'Xmas 1938'. The book bears an acquisition stamp dated 7 February 1970, and so presumably came from Chatterjee's collection on her death in 1969. Her husband, Atul Chandra Chatterjee, had been the Indian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and a member of the League of Nations Assembly and so the Chatterjees were bound up with both colonial power and the 'idealist' dream of the League that men like Grimes were writing about. How it came into the possession of Gladys Chatterjee over Christmas in 1938 will always remain unclear, but the fact that such ideas were circulating in the administrative circles of empire is particularly notable for any attempt to trace the historical development of international ideas at the time.

In common with the liberal imperialist fascination of the preceding two decades, Grimes' book concerns itself with reimagining the way the globe was

ordered. Giving a distinctly imperial edge to the debates around the League, it imagines Geneva as the capital of a future 'World State' with its own international civil service.<sup>4.17</sup> Despite its international character, however, this civil service would not have equal representation of people from the world's constituent regions, nationalities, genders, and races but would be led by men like the League of Nations Secretary-General, Sir Eric Drummond, a British career diplomat and an Old Etonian. Like the ill-fated League, it would operate in English and French. His plan for the world of the future reads much like a scaled-up version of the model deployed in the British Raj and the 'World State' Grimes imagines carries strong echoes of British imperialist modes of rule. With the context of the provenance of this copy, Grimes' book offers an insight into the ideas that were circulating in British colonial circles at the time, and that books such as this were finding their way onto the shelves of colonial civil servants and the administrators of Empire is indicative of a wider movement that was taking place in the first half of the twentieth century.

#### **4.3.2 Letters to John Bull**

Turning beyond the University Library to the second-hand shelves of Carnforth Bookshop on the outskirts of Lancaster, another book picked up by coincidence carries similar echoes, both in terms of its context and the ideas it espouses. It again bears an inscription from 1938, though from January of that year, and carries a dedication 'to Sedbergh School Library with the compliments of the author', handwritten and signed with the name Davies. The cover of the book, however, bears a different name. It is *Letters to John Bull and Others*, authored under the pseudonym 'Robert the Peeler' and published in 1931. The ideas it puts

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<sup>4.17</sup>F. Mortimer Grimes, *Adventurers for Peace* (Nottingham: Herbert Jones and Son, 1937), p.34

forward echo those of Grimes and centre around the need for an international police force to impose peace on the world. In his words, states could not be relied upon 'to do the right thing or to act justly, unless in the world there are courts to settle disputes and policemen to maintain order'.<sup>4.18</sup> A fitting summary of the Wilsonian liberalism the author was strongly associated with, this illustrates clearly the preoccupation with order that defines early to mid-twentieth century thinking about international relations. More telling, however, is the framing of the approach and the justification used for the ideological arguments put forth by Robert the Peeler. It is couched in sterile, rationalist language and makes a claim to scientificity that has become a key feature of IR discourse and literature for over a century. Robert the Peeler identifies a need to put 'prejudice and pride on one side', instead 'concentrating on hard facts and applying cold reason to our discussion'.<sup>4.19</sup> There are echoes in this of the dispassionate, 'objective' approach of the Round Table group, discussed in chapter seven. What is clear, however, is that proponents of these new theories on how the world should be ordered presented their endeavours as fundamentally scientific.

In this case, the proponent was the pseudonymic Robert the Peeler, whose identity is revealed by the Carnforth copy of *Letters to John Bull and Others*. The Davies who signed the inside cover was David Davies, previously a Liberal MP and later elevated to the peerage. When the book was reviewed in *International Affairs*, it was coyly noted that 'the pseudonym would appear to conceal a well-informed personality'.<sup>4.20</sup> The pseudonym, however, should not be taken as an indication of modest ideas. Davies was a man who wanted his ideas to spread, and devoted

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<sup>4.18</sup> Robert the Peeler (David Davies), *Letters to John Bull and Others* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1931), p.15

<sup>4.19</sup> Robert the Peeler, *Letters to John Bull*, p.14

<sup>4.20</sup> [New Publications], *International Affairs*, 11.2 (1932) 259-260 (p.260)

vast sums of money to ensuring that they did, not least through the academic chairs he funded, as discussed later in this chapter. His personal correspondence reveals that he devoted much energy to circulating his book and ensuring that signed and dedicated copies were sent out strategically.<sup>4.21</sup> He also turned to other avenues for circulating these ideas and the same arguments in favour of an international police force had found their way into the major IR publications of the time under Davies' name rather than that of Robert the Peeler.<sup>4.22</sup>

Nonetheless, Davies is remembered in an IR context not for his ideas, but for his role in funding the Wilson Chair in International Politics at Aberystwyth. With his sisters Gwendoline and Margaret, Davies established a fund worth £20,000 to provide for a new professorship, considered by many to be the first of its kind. The Chair was established ostensibly to encourage 'a truer understanding of civilizations other than our own'.<sup>4.23</sup> As progressive as this may sound, it followed a pattern set by the Orientalists of the preceding centuries whose saw their ability to 'control, contain, and otherwise govern (through superior knowledge and accommodating power)' as rooted in the study and demarcation of difference between the 'civilisations' Davies speaks of.<sup>4.24</sup>

#### **4.4 Aberystwyth and Imperial Science**

In framing the above critique of Orientalists, Said does not turn only to the work of Alfred Lyall or Arthur Balfour, names associated with the pre-Davies generation of imperialist, but to Henry Kissinger, Said's contemporary and an infamous figure both within the post-Second World War IR discipline and beyond. Through his

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<sup>4.21</sup> Correspondence of David Davies. *LIGC*, David Davies Letters, H/7

<sup>4.22</sup> David Davies, 'An International Police Force?', *International Affairs*, 11.1 (1932), 76-99

<sup>4.23</sup> David Davies, 'International Politics - £20,000 for a Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth', *The Times*, 7 December 1918, p.9

<sup>4.24</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 1995), pp.47-48

critique of Kissinger, Said highlights the tendency of Orientalist thought to treat science as the yardstick for civilisation, itself a core feature of the discourse of the liberal imperialists who formalised the study of IR. Kissinger positions scientific knowledge as the dividing line between civilisations: There is the developed world, whose conception of reality is soundly rooted in Newtonian thinking, defined in opposition to the undeveloped world which has yet to experience its own Newtonian revolution.<sup>4.25</sup> Thus, civilisational development is measured in terms of commitment to ‘the notion that the real world is external to the observer, that knowledge consists of recording and classifying data - the more accurately the better’.<sup>4.26</sup> As tangential as this, and Kissinger, may appear to the liberal imperialists and the IR Fachgeschichte endeavour, it encapsulates the mode of thought with which such men approached questions of international order and empire in the early decades of the twentieth century. This scientific-civilisational approach was exactly that which Davies envisaged the Wilson Chair as developing, and the one associated with the Round Table model discussed in chapter seven.

David Davies did not hide his fascination with a ‘scientific’ approach to the study of reordering the globe on imperial lines. In Aberystwyth and beyond, he continued to push for the development of such an approach as a distinct field of study. Even a decade after the establishment of the Wilson Chair, Davies claimed that he was motivated by an urgent need, generated by the Great War, for ‘scientific inquiry’ into how co-operation between the Allied powers would order the post-war world and identified a ‘virgin field for research’.<sup>4.27</sup> In December 1918, with the Great War barely over, the birth was declared at Aberystwyth

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<sup>4.25</sup>Edward Said, *Orientalism*, pp.45-49

<sup>4.26</sup>Edward Said, *Orientalism*, pp.46-47

<sup>4.27</sup>David Davies, ‘An International Police Force?’, *International Affairs*, 11.1 (1932), 76-99, (pp.83-84)

of 'new science, called into existence by the manifest need for the rescue of civilisation from imminent peril'.<sup>4.28</sup> E.H. Carr similarly framed the war as a transitional moment that 'heralded the birth of a new science'.<sup>4.29</sup> Two elements in this are particularly telling of how the so-called forefathers of the discipline conceptualised the newly formalised field of study. Firstly, it was distinctly scientific, distinguishing itself from related fields such as history. Secondly, its focus was grand and civilisational, making it a science in the truest imperial mould. Its focus was set not only on understanding the world, but on securing its salvation, or at least the salvation of its dominant centres of power and their associated cultures.

Curiously, however, if the conventional mythology is to be taken as an accurate account, tracing the disciplinary history of this fundamentally imperial field of study requires a turn not to these dominant centres of power directly or to the heart of the imperial metropole, but to England's oldest colony and the relative provincial fringes of the British Isles. This becomes less surprising when the historical context is considered, and the inclusion of key elements silenced by the mythology surrounding the Wilson Chair makes it clear that rather than the frontier of a utopian quest for modernity and peace, Aberystwyth can be reimagined as a crucible of imperial science.

For instance, when the Chair in International Politics was established at Aberystwyth in 1919, it was seen as a natural accompaniment to another new chair, funded also by the Davies siblings. This Chair was not in political science, but in Colonial History, a discipline considered closely complementary

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<sup>4.28</sup>William Archer, 'A New Science. Brain of the League of Nations'. *LIGC*, Thomas Jones Papers, J12

<sup>4.29</sup>E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: MacMillan, 1939), p.2

to the new field. Addressing Aberystwyth students in that year, the former Prime Minister H.H. Asquith welcomed the turn towards studying these disciplines, which when taken together, served as a sign that the ‘intellectual world knew no geographical boundaries whatever’.<sup>4.30</sup> Though less widely remembered than its counterpart, the plans for the Chair of Colonial History pre-dated the Wilson Chair and David Davies and his sisters had established the endowment fund for this on the 25 June 1915, before the Wilson Chair had been formally conceived.<sup>4.31</sup> T. Stanley Roberts had been appointed to teach Colonial History at Aberystwyth even earlier, in 1907, though this post perhaps did not appeal to contemporary political concerns in Wales as much as the Wilson Chair.<sup>4.32</sup> Given that, in its early years, Aberystwyth’s International Politics Department did not offer a full single honours degree scheme, many of its students will have studied under Roberts and the overlap between the two disciplines cannot be understated, for both were concerned ultimately with the distillation of knowledge concerning empire and ways of ordering the world. The teaching of Colonial History similarly speaks to the Davies’ aim of ‘understanding’ other civilisations and when taken together the Chairs speak to the shift towards a science of empire, championed by the liberal imperialists of the day.

#### **4.4.1 Eugenics**

There is a third vertex to this polygon in another discipline which framed itself in the same terms as David Davies saw the nascent International Politics field. In 1924, the British Eugenics Society, preoccupied as they were with miscegenation,

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<sup>4.30</sup>‘League of Nations of the Mind: Mr Asquith’s Dream’, *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 31 October 1919, p.5

<sup>4.31</sup> Colonial History Endowment. *LIGC*, Thomas Jones Papers, J8

<sup>4.32</sup> Neil Evans, ‘Writing Wales into the Empire, Rhetoric, Fragments - and Beyond?’, in: H.V. Bowen (ed.), *Wales and the British Overseas Empire: Interactions and Influences, 1650–1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 15-39 (pp.22-3)

commissioned an anthropometric study into mixed race children of British and Chinese parents, replete with craniometric observation (skull measurements) and the usual marks of eugenicist 'science'. For this study, they did not approach the Galton laboratory at University College London, remembered as the nucleus of the eugenics movement. Instead, they turned to Aberystwyth, where H.J. Fleure and Rachel Fleming were approached for the task.<sup>4.33</sup> This study reveals the pseudo-scientific character of the field of eugenics and its claims to universality in the period. For instance, Fleming offered the anecdote that their skull measurements had resolved the difficulties of one schoolboy by revealing he was of Welsh extraction, and should therefore be moved to a literary-focussed school, instead of the industrial school he was struggling in, which was ostensibly better suited for Scottish children and their assumed racial characteristics.<sup>4.34</sup> Nonetheless, the assignment of the task to Fleure and Fleming indicates Aberystwyth's prominence as a centre for the study of eugenics and race science. Though Fleming appears to have done most of the work, Fleure was a prominent eugenicist and a figure who has so far appeared in no disciplinary history of IR, but is relevant to this less because of his ideas, and more because of the position he occupied.

Fleure held the Gregynog Chair of Geography and Anthropology at Aberystwyth, to which he was appointed on 29 May 1918. Like the other two chairs mentioned in this chapter, it was funded by the Davies siblings, though in this case Gwendoline and Margaret rather than David.<sup>4.35</sup> Like other Gregynog chairs

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<sup>4.33</sup>Lucy Bland, 'White Women and Men of Colour: Miscegenation Fears in Britain after the Great War', *Gender and History*, 17.1 (2005), 29-61 (pp.48-9). doi:10.1111/j.0953-5233.2005.00371.x

Cora Hodson to Prof Fleure, 8 September 1924, unpublished letters, D179, Box 33, Eugenics Society Archive, *Wellcome Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine*

<sup>4.34</sup>Rachel M. Fleming, 'Anthropological Studies of Children', *Eugenics Review*, 18.4 (1927), 294-301 (p.295)

<sup>4.35</sup>Nonetheless, Fleure corresponded with David Davies over the course of several years and was

in Music and Welsh Literature, it was funded out of the £20,000 ‘Gregynog gift’, named after the stately home used by the sisters from 1920.<sup>4.36</sup>

Unlike the Wilson Chair, however, the Gregynog Chair in Geography and Anthropology and the Chair in Colonial History have escaped much historical discussion. It is here that a silence is encountered in IR’s disciplinary ‘Aberystwyth myth’, which can only be addressed when the three chairs are taken together. All three were a product of their times, and each centred around the study of empire, or more specifically, around ways of ordering the future world. Fleure’s understanding was that his Chair was established out of a feeling that ‘universal mutual knowledge between peoples of different environments ought to be an element in education for peace’, framed in language so alike that used to describe the Wilson Chair that it could be interchangeable.<sup>4.37</sup> It was to eugenics what the Wilson Chair was to IR. Though concealed to a modern audience by the almost euphemistic title, the Anthropology and Human Geography studied in Fleure’s day made no secret of its preoccupation with empire, race and the classification of populations. Fleure set himself towards studying global human needs and conclude that a population ‘of much reduced size but of improved quality’ was needed in order to secure ‘the health and the durability of the commonwealth’.<sup>4.38</sup> In this sense, he shared a dream, at least partially, with Davies, Alfred Zimmern, and the New Commonwealth Society, who framed their work in the context of securing the prosperity of the new model of empire.

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even enlisted to provide tutoring materials for Davies’ children.

Letters from H.J. Fleure to David Davies, 1923. *LIGC*. Llandinam Papers, A1/4

<sup>4.36</sup>E.G. Bowen, ‘Geography in the University of Wales, 1918-1948’ in: Robert W. Steel (ed.), *British Geography, 1918-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 25-44 (pp.28-9)

<sup>4.37</sup>Alice Garnett, ‘Herbert John Fleure’ in: *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society*, 16 (1970), 253-70 (p.260). doi:10.1098/rsbm.1970.0009

<sup>4.38</sup>Herbert John Fleure, ‘Some Aspects of Race Study’, *Eugenics Review*, 14.2 (1922), 93-102 (p.102)

Like Davies, who framed himself as more progressive than some of his more conservative imperialist contemporaries, Fleure was markedly more liberal than other influential eugenicists. He criticised hard-line racial eugenicists like Lothrop Stoddard and their obsession with pure Nordic superiority.<sup>4.39</sup> Nonetheless, his work was still rooted in racial science and he criticised overgeneralisation within racial typologies, rather than the typologies themselves, which he continued to use.<sup>4.40</sup> If Fleure was progressive at all in his day, he was a progressive imperialist and he saw his racial studies as the key to unlocking new ways of social and political organisation to preserve the commonwealth dream. He explicitly called for the ‘liquidation’ of the old model of ‘commercial imperialism’ as potentially ‘the only alternative to disaster’.<sup>4.41</sup> The trilogy of Davies-funded chairs in imperial sciences at Aberystwyth centred around a similar dream. These disciplines were not about the end of empire, but rather its reinvention. Colonial History to address the mistakes and excesses of the past, eugenics and Anthropology to bolster the civilised man’s right to rule, and the keystone, International Politics, to refine and develop new theories of global order. That only one element of this trilogy is remembered by the disciplinary mythology of IR is telling, and yet the story of the Wilson Chair is incomplete without the others.

These were triplets, born of the same genesis, each speaking to an aspect of the new science of empire inaugurated by the post-Victorian reframing of what global order should look like, and expedited by the Great War. The overlaps between the disciplines are clear enough to highlight how these interconnected sciences of empire were forged. At the British Association’s Conference on

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<sup>4.39</sup>Herbert John Fleure, ‘The Nordic Myth: A Critique of Current Racial Theories’, *Eugenics Review*, 21.2 (1930), 117-21

<sup>4.40</sup>Tony Kushner, ‘H.J. Fleure: A Paradigm for Inter-War Race Thinking in Britain’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 42.2 (2008), 151-66 (pp.157-8)

<sup>4.41</sup>H.J. Fleure, ‘Some Aspects of Race Study’, p.100

post-war science, there was no place for a headline international politics speaker, though there were geographers and economists. However, H.J. Fleure was billed to deliver a public lecture on ‘countries as personalities’, marking a foray into the study of the international.<sup>4.42</sup> Equally, the language of the liberal imperialists who turned their attention to the nascent field of IR, like Zimmern and Davies, echoed that of eugenicists who also spoke of a need for ‘unbiased scientific inquiry’.<sup>4.43</sup> Alfred Zimmern’s recognition of the need for ‘scientific analysis’ of history as the bedrock of the study of international politics made a claim to the same goal. His successor, Charles K. Webster, similarly envisaged the ‘creation of a new science of modern diplomatic’ that united history and ‘scientific method’ in the study of international affairs, a decade before his appointment to the Wilson Chair.<sup>4.44</sup> His wish was realised with the formalisation of the new science of empire, and had historical events unfolded only slightly differently, we might know International Relations under this name today, as diplomatic science.

Far from a fringe provincial centre, Aberystwyth became a centre for nascent disciplines to be forged: a crucible of imperial science. This did not happen in isolation, as the following chapter in this section will explore, but the problematisation of the existing ‘Aberystwyth myth’ in IR’s disciplinary sociology and the addressing of its related historical silences provides an ideal entry point into the reframing of IR as a science of empire. Aberystwyth was not alone but did become something of an experimental laboratory for the newly formalised imperial disciplines to be refined and developed. The Wilson Chair and Fleure’s Gregynog Chair were both the first of their kind, and the Colonial History Chair

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<sup>4.42</sup>‘Post-War Science - British Association’s Programme’, *The Times*, 7 June 1921, p.12

<sup>4.43</sup>Francis Galton, ‘The Possible Improvement of the Human Breed’ in: *Essays in Eugenics*, (London: Eugenics Education Society, 1909), 1-43 (p.33)

<sup>4.44</sup>Charles K. Webster, *The Study of Nineteenth Century Diplomacy* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1915), p.29

was the second (after the Beit Professorship in Colonial History at Oxford). None of these events can be taken out of their context. Between the growing need for a revitalised legitimisation of empire and the attention generated by the Great War, the formalisation of these interrelated sciences of empires was a product of its times. At the time the Wilson Chair was established, there was an ongoing revolution in university education in Wales following the 1918 Royal Commission and increasing calls for universities to emphasise ‘pure’ science as opposed to ‘applied’ or vocational courses.<sup>4.45</sup> IR is rarely treated as part of this shift, nor is Colonial History, but it becomes clear when the wider historical context is taken into account that the new discipline was intended above all to serve as a science of global order, and of developing modes of imperial relations better suited to the modern world. In indicating his willingness to accept the inaugural Chair, Zimmern compared the role to that of a ‘chemist’ working ‘in a laboratory’.<sup>4.46</sup> He saw himself as a practitioner of a new science, forged in the furnaces of empire, and it is in this mould that IR in the main has continued to operate for well over a century.

## **4.5 Reinterpreting Aberystwyth**

### **4.5.1 *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law***

It is with Zimmern that the first chapter of this section will conclude, in turning to the final book drawn from the shelves of Lancaster University Library as part of the auto-ethnographical experiment at its beginning. This book, *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law*, falls into a similar category and is interconnected with the

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<sup>4.45</sup>‘The Future of Science in Wales’, *Nature*, 101 (1918), 129-130

<sup>4.46</sup>Letter from Alfred Zimmern to Thomas Jones, 8 December 1918. *LIGC*, Thomas Jones papers

other two.<sup>4.47</sup>

Like Grimes' book, this takes the League as its topic. Its author was Alfred Zimmern, a name bound up with the mythology of the discipline. Though nonetheless more widely remembered within IR than Davies or Grimes, Zimmern's name is also largely inseparable a century on from the context of the Wilson Chair. However, his work was still notable enough to be circulating decades after 1919. The Lancaster University Library copy's acquisition stamp (20 December 1963) dates it as one of the earliest books acquired by the library, before the building itself was constructed. That a book published in 1936 and printed in 1945 not only found its way onto the shelves at Lancaster University, an institution that had not yet been conceived let alone built at the time of its publication, but remained there for 60 years demonstrates the complexity of dealing with material fragments such as these with their multiple pasts. The endurance of books like Zimmern's and Grimes' in the University Library offers a connexion to a particular past but also serves as a legacy of the replication of various power dynamics, closely tied to those that see knowledge reproduced and preserved. It is through these dynamics that the disciplinary mythology of IR has been passed down throughout generations, through differential exercises of power that amplify some narratives and silence others.

Just as dendrochronology turns to growth rings to chart out the stages in the life of a tree, books too offer markers of their own past. Alongside markings dating its acquisition by Lancaster University to 1963, the copy of Zimmern's book bears a printed leaf designating it for the use of HM Armed Forces. That it was re-published in 1945 and designated for a military audience is significant. Zimmern's ideas

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<sup>4.47</sup> Alfred Eckhard Zimmern, *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law, 1918-1935*, second edition (London: MacMillan, 1939)

and the history of the League he constructed were recognised as important to the post-war context, and to the reordering of the world that would follow. 1945 is often posited as a foundational year for the rebirth of IR, particularly in an American context. With the death of the League, and the revival of the internationalist dream with the foundation of the United Nations, the circulation of Zimmern's earlier writings speaks to the continuity of the liberal imperialists beyond the historical period they might most often be associated with. Beyond 1945, or 1963, however, of equal significance is the year in which Zimmern's book was originally published. There are few years in the historical mythology of European international relations with a status as significant as 1936, in what is remembered as the historical turning point that saw the prelude to war in Europe begin its sharp crescendo.

#### ***4.5.2 The Failure of Davies' Aberystwyth Experiment***

Amidst the backdrop of the remilitarisation of the Rhineland, the Italian war of colonial conquest in East Africa, the outbreak of civil war in Spain, and the formation of the Axis, in the unlikely setting of the secluded halls of a provincial university in mid-Wales, conflict of a very different nature was raging. In July of that year, David Davies, ennobled as Lord Llandinam, resigned his position as President of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth in a long-running dispute over hiring practices. Such a dispute is hardly a rare or monumental occurrence alone and will be familiar to those well-versed in the politics of university bureaucracy. Such wranglings might be of some historical import for an institution, but much less a discipline. However, the resignation is significant in that it marked a recognition of the death of a dream. Davies had resigned over the appointment of E.H. Carr to the Wilson Chair, which sat vacant between the resignation of Jerome Greene in March 1934 and Carr taking up the role on the first day of July in 1936. The reasons for this are varied. Davies' concern was,

ostensibly, a matter of principle and a concern that the selection committee for the post was not being managed in a democratic way.<sup>4.48</sup>

Nonetheless, the dispute also had elements of a fundamentally ideological one. Though not initially opposed to Carr, Davies' preferred candidate for the Chair was William Arnold-Forster. An artist rather than a career academic, Arnold-Forster was not necessarily a natural candidate for the role but was a staunch supporter of both the League of Nations and the League of Nations Union. Robert Cecil had written to Davies to recommend Arnold-Forster for the vacant Wilson Chair as early as March 1935 and reiterated this recommendation a year later amidst the selection crisis.<sup>4.49</sup> Given that Arnold-Forster had served as secretary to Cecil between 1929 and 1930, this is perhaps unsurprising.<sup>4.50</sup> Ernst Jäckh, whose name appears more prominently in chapter six of this thesis, similarly advised Davies that, unlike other candidates, Arnold-Forster could be considered a 'sympathetic personality and is in favour of our New Commonwealth policy'.<sup>4.51</sup> Nonetheless, it is indicative of the web of heavily nepotistic connexions surrounding League advocacy networks at the time and the importance of League-adjacent ideas that Davies saw the Wilson Chair as promoting.<sup>4.52</sup> That Cecil and Arnold-Forster were of similar mind on issues of

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<sup>4.48</sup>Letter from David Davies to Ifor L. Evans, 29 January 1936. *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, D4/7.

Brian Porter, 'Lord Davies, E.H. Carr and the Spirit Ironic: A Comedy of Errors', *International Relations*, 16.1 (2002), 77-96. doi:10.1177/0047117802016001006

<sup>4.49</sup>Letter from Robert Cecil to David Davies, 27 March 1935. *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, D4/5

Letter from Robert Cecil to David Davies, 4 March 1936. *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, D4/7

<sup>4.50</sup>William Arnold-Forster, 'Britain's National Peace Ballot', *World Affairs*, 97.4 (1934), 226-229 (Editor's Note, p.226)

<sup>4.51</sup>Letter from Ernst Jäckh to David Davies, 24 April 1935. *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, D4/4

<sup>4.52</sup>William Arnold-Foster, 'Britain's National Peace Ballot', p.226

international co-operation is emphasised in their status as co-authors of a paper on international maritime rights in times of war and peace which Arnold-Forster delivered at Chatham House in February 1929.<sup>4.53</sup> Extending this interconnected web further still, Cecil wrote the preface to the edition of Grimes' book drawn from the University Library, having drawn up the Cecil Plan for the foundation of the League of Nations based on a memorandum by Zimmern years earlier. He was also a key supporter of Davies throughout the foundation of the Wilson Chair and thus enters the narrative at multiple points.<sup>4.54</sup>

The diversion from Zimmern to the bureaucratic struggles over his former Chair long after he vacated it is not intended as an embellishing tangent, but rather illustrates a fundamental difficulty brought about by the continued reliance on the Aberystwyth myth as a foundation story for IR. There lies a contradiction in this mythology, unless the wider context of imperial science is considered. Davies is remembered as the benefactor of the first Chair in the nascent field of IR. Even a biography of Carr, the sometime arch-rival whose appointment in 1936 caused Davies so much disdain, can declare that 'to Davies must go the credit for having founded a new university discipline which is now taught and studied the world over'.<sup>4.55</sup> At the time, however, this might not have appeared the case, not least to those who took Davies at his word as a man who dreamed only of a peace enforced worldwide.

By 1936, the League was all but shattered, having been humiliated at the height of the Abyssinia Crisis. Europe was on the path to war, the Wilson Chair was

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<sup>4.53</sup> Robert Cecil and William Arnold-Forster, 'The Freedom of the Seas', *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 8.2 (1929), 89-116

<sup>4.54</sup> Letter from Viscount Cecil to David Davies, 6 January 1924. *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, D4/1.  
'I have written strongly to the PM about you'

<sup>4.55</sup> Brian Porter, 'E.H. Carr: The Aberystwyth Years, 1936-1947' in: Michael Cox (ed.), *E.H. Carr: A Critical Appraisal* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2000), 36-67 (p.37)

occupied by a man regarded as the antithesis of Davies' 'utopian' ideals (Carr), Davies had lost much of his influence over the University, and the Department was all but floundering after over two years without a Chair. At the time of Davies' resignation, the Department had never seen more than ten students registered in an academic year. The peak for the period would come with the fourteen students registered in 1937-38, but between the opening of enrolment after the Department was established to the outbreak of the Second World War, it registered just 103 students: an average of less than seven per year.<sup>4.56</sup> The Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth might have been the first of its kind, but it was never the biggest. Within the decade, Davies had passed away and war was raging on the continent. His dream and the League which so strongly symbolised it was seemingly destroyed. The Aberystwyth experiment was by all accounts an abject failure.

#### **4.5.3 Aberystwyth and the Science of Empire**

However, it is not remembered as such in IR's disciplinary history and Davies and Aberystwyth remain central to the discipline's mythological origins. It is therefore here that there is room to diverge from this conventional mythology. Davies' dream was never solely about the League. By the time of the resignation crisis, he had long been disillusioned with the League as institution, lamenting that without an international police force, member states were 'helping to dig the grave of the League' and were doomed to another war.<sup>4.57</sup> The League was never more than a vehicle for another aim. It was a vehicle that Davies believed in and defended with fervour, but it was a vehicle nonetheless and remained

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<sup>4.56</sup>Letter from Ifor L. Evans to David Davies, 30 November 1942. *LIGC*, Llandinam papers, David Davies Letters, H/7

<sup>4.57</sup>David Davies, *Nearing the Abyss: The Lesson of Ethiopia* (London: Constable, 1936), p.96

a means to a greater end. Davies' real dream, like that of Zimmern, Fleure, Cecil and their many liberal imperialist contemporaries, was about ordering the world. They constructed a vehicle to develop and refine their ideas, which were separate elements of an ultimate imperialist fantasy: An empire without Empire. To Davies, this took the form of a global police force modelled along British lines, to Fleure and the eugenicists, it was articulated in terms of population as an eternal commonwealth without the need for mercantilist imperialism.<sup>4.58</sup> The two are inseparably interconnected. A discipline may have been formalised at Aberystwyth in the early twentieth century, as the disciplinary mythologies of IR claim, but this must come with three defining caveats to address the deep-seated historical silences neglected by the majority of scholars of IR for over a century.

Firstly, the nascent field of IR was not designed to be concerned with peace in a noble, value-free sense but instead marked the academic formalisation of a post-Victorian obsession with control and empire. Secondly, this discipline did not come alone. With the Gregynog Chair in Geography and Anthropology held by the eugenicist Fleure and the accompanying Chair in Colonial History, the Wilson Chair was part of a triad of posts at Aberystwyth, all funded by the Davies family, that marked the formalisation of studies of aspects of empire and unified these as being directed towards a common end. Finally, and most significantly, when taken with the wider historical context, these interconnected disciplines form part of a wider science of empire. They were united by their ability to draw on scientific discourse to make claims to a particular methodological legitimacy whilst discussing aspects of global order from a reframed focus. It is this feature, and this claim, that continues to define IR through to the present, and it is this,

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<sup>4.58</sup>Martin Pugh, 'Policing the World: Lord Davies and the Quest for Order in the 1930s', *International Relations*, 16.1 (2002), 97-115. doi:10.1177/0047117802016001007

H.J. Fleure, 'Some Aspects of Race Study'

rather than a neutral, objective, and peace-focussed approach to the study of international politics, that marks the discipline's true Aberystwyth inheritance.

## Chapter 5:

### An Anglo-Saxon Social Science?: Race Science and Transatlantic Imperial Connexions

#### 5.1 'An American Social Science'

Less than a decade after the American flag had been planted on the moon, it was firmly planted on the discipline when Stanley Hoffmann demarcated IR as an 'American social science' in 1977.<sup>5.1</sup> Hoffmann's argument would go on to become one of the most famous in the history of the Western discipline and continues to spark existential debates about IR's disciplinary identity.<sup>5.2</sup> Beyond an attempt to claim IR as the United States' own, Hoffmann's article is a work of disciplinary history. It makes distinctly historical claims, and to Hoffmann, this was the history of a new discipline. The opening line of the article positions IR as a subject that had only been developing autonomously from the wider catchment of political science for thirty years, placing the birth of the discipline at some point in the late 1940s.<sup>5.3</sup> Whilst this is a pervasive myth, it overlooks a significant portion of the history of the relationship between IR and the United States. It is

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<sup>5.1</sup>Stanley Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science: International Relations', *Dædalus*, 106.3 (1977), 41-60

<sup>5.2</sup>Robert M.A. Crawford and Darryl S.L. Jarvis (eds.), *International Relations - Still an American Social Science?: Toward Diversity in International Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001)

Charles Jones, 'Another American Social Science: International Relations in the Western Hemisphere' in: Juan Pablo Scarfi and Andrew R. Tillman (eds.), *Cooperation and Hegemony in US-Latin American Relations: Revisiting the Western Hemisphere Idea* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), 33-70

Peter Marcus Kristensen, 'Revisiting the "American Social Science": Mapping the Geography of International Relations', *International Studies Perspectives*, 16.3 (2015), 246-69. doi:10.1111/insp.12061

<sup>5.3</sup>Stanley Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science', p.41

this history that shaped the context in which Hoffmann and his contemporaries were writing. However, this constructed image of IR as a post-war field of study without a longer disciplinary history is one of the major silences that has shaped a discipline dominated by voices centred in the USA throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and beyond. This chapter will seek to redress this balance somewhat by engaging with this history and resituating US IR not as an American social science, but rather an American imperial science that developed in concert with a wider Transatlantic racialised imperialism. In doing so, its aim is to highlight that IR remained an imperial science even beyond the British Empire. That the US context, despite all its specific peculiarities, remained more closely connected to the British Imperial context than is allowed for in existing disciplinary histories is an indication of the strength of the central thread running through the disciplinary history of IR, rooted in the overlap between scientific discourse and modes of imperial control.

Where the US context is of relevance for the construction of a critical Fachgeschichte of IR is in highlighting the extent of the explicit racialisation of IR discourse that took place in its canonical early years. This remains a silence in IR's disciplinary history in the early to mid-twentieth century, where the discipline is again positioned as a noble pursuit of peace that can only have arisen in the inter-war years. Hoffmann, for instance, positions IR as a discipline which could not grow 'in the United States before the 1930s'.<sup>5.4</sup> He was not alone in this assumption: at the time, students of IR in the United States were assured that their discipline was 'relatively new as an autonomous field of study'.<sup>5.5</sup> Yet the stars and stripes in which Hoffmann drapes the new discipline serve a dual function.

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<sup>5.4</sup>Stanley Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science', p.43

<sup>5.5</sup>Robert L. Pfaltzgraff Jr., *The Study of International Relations: A Guide to Information Sources* (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Company, 1977), p.1

Not only is this an attempt at the height of the Cold War to claim IR as a distinctly American endeavour, but it also serves as a cloak to shroud the deeper histories lying behind the mid-twentieth century origins of IR in a United States context.

It is worth questioning why Hoffmann's article has acquired its semi-mythological status on mainstream IR reading lists. The claim to the study of IR as a distinctly American pursuit reflected the personal circumstances of Hoffmann himself, who though Viennese-born and raised in France had been a Harvard mainstay since moving to the United States in his twenties, shortly after the period in which he roots the discipline's American genesis.<sup>5,6</sup> Similarly, this argument was no doubt an attractive one to his US contemporaries, but beyond this, the presentation of IR as an American social science affords an additional legitimacy to theories and approaches rooted in the work of US-based institutions and individuals. No longer could Aberystwyth and Geneva be considered the pioneering centres of a nascent discipline: they were at best provincial subordinates of IR's global institutional core, at the heart of which naturally sat Hoffman's own institution, Harvard. Where there is discussion of Harvard in this chapter, it will come in the context of the racialisation of IR that it championed and in its Transatlantic ties, rather than in any mythologisation of its canonical foundational role in the emergence of a distinctly US IR.

One subtext of Hoffmann's claims is that IR is a British discipline no more. So extensive was the claiming of IR as distinctly American in the mid-twentieth century that the English School, a current of theory centred around the notion of an international society, is remembered as one approach amongst many in the field, and one of few designated by its country rather than institution of origin. Further

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<sup>5,6</sup>Stanley Hoffmann, 'A Retrospective on World Politics' in: Linda B. Miller and Michael Joseph Smith (eds.), *Ideas and Ideals: Essays on Politics in Honor of Stanley Hoffmann* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 3-18

adding to the irony in this distinction, amongst the key names put forward as characteristic of the 'English School' were the South African Charles Manning and the Australian-born Hedley Bull.<sup>5.7</sup> It is no coincidence that this term was coined four years after Hoffmann had declared IR 'an American social science', at a time when the field could almost be categorised by origin into the US and 'other'. Within a fundamentally US-centric discipline, theories drawn from beyond North America could only ever be considered occidental to the mainstream currents of US-based IR theory. Those like the English School emerging outside of this were presented as something eccentric, almost tangential to the main workings of the discipline which by the latter half of the twentieth century claimed distinctly American roots.

Paradoxically, the British institutional context would remain important throughout the twentieth century for the development and propagation of many of the theories associated with 'American' IR.<sup>5.8</sup> However, claiming the discipline as modern and American makes it easier to detach IR from the crucible of empire in which it was forged. In doing so, Hoffman overlooks the strength of the ties between the British Empire and United States in this period of formalised IR's disciplinary history and the extent of the dialogue between the two contexts. Building on Hoffman's argument, Schmidt declares in a major disciplinary history that IR can be considered no more than a sub-field of American political science.<sup>5.9</sup> He does not deny a European tradition but claims this can only be recognised to the extent it contributed to a fundamentally 'American science'.<sup>5.10</sup> He makes

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<sup>5.7</sup>Roy E. Jones, 'The English School of International Relations: A Case for Closure', *Review of International Studies*, 7.1 (1981), 1-13. doi:10.1017/S0260210500115086

<sup>5.8</sup>Steve Smith, 'The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2.3 (2000), 374-402. doi:10.1111/1467-856X.00042

<sup>5.9</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998)

<sup>5.10</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy*, p.14

no mention of contributions from beyond America or Europe, indicating the tendency within disciplinary histories, and the field in general, to define all ‘valid’ IR exclusively in relation to the United States. In Schmidt’s eyes, a disciplinary history of IR is all but indistinguishable from a ‘history of [IR’s] development within the United States’.<sup>5.11</sup>

What is notable, and underexplored, about such claims to Americanism in IR is that there are rarely many degrees of separation between such claims and a wider history of racism and race science that is conventionally excluded from disciplinary histories of IR. Much like imperial eugenics as identified in the previous chapter, the long history of academic racism in the United States is treated as that of a separate movement, distinct from the ‘purer’ IR of the post-Great War years. Not only is there significant overlap between the theories and concepts deployed on either side of this divide, but the process of tracing these connexions can be deceptively straightforward. For instance, Schmidt’s book, published in the late 1990s in IR’s fabled post-Cold War era makes no claims to address race or legacies of racism in IR. In identifying its precursors as foundational figures in the ‘scientification’ of politics and IR, it instead references scholars like Bernard Crick. Crick had advanced a similar argument as an LSE doctoral candidate in the late 1950s, declaring the study of politics an ‘American science’.<sup>5.12</sup>

### **5.1.1 *Burgess and Reinsch***

Tracing some of the references and citations helps to situate such works and the claims they make in a context that might otherwise remain hidden. One name

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<sup>5.11</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy*, p.14

<sup>5.12</sup>Bernard Crick, *The American Science of Politics: Its Origins and Conditions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1959)

mentioned by Crick and Schmidt alike is that of John W. Burgess.<sup>5.13</sup> That both Crick and Schmidt incorporate Burgess into their work suggests that his role in the discipline (and political science more generally) is more than tangential. However, neither Crick nor Schmidt contextualise the role Burgess played, nor the character of his ideas concerning international affairs. Schmidt mentions Burgess only as a 'political scientist', assigning him to a group of early practitioners of a methodology that was seen as 'a scientific mode of investigation, similar in form to the natural sciences'.<sup>5.14</sup> He proceeds to outline Burgess' views on imperialism but does so in the familiar 'neutral' tone of the historian seeking to detach themselves from the political context of which they are writing.

Without this context, it is unclear from the lauding of Burgess as a pioneer of the 'scientific' approach that he was one of the major racist and white supremacist scholars of his time. Denounced by W.E.B. Du Bois as an 'open apostle of reaction' who was 'frank and determined in his anti-Negro thought', Burgess topped Du Bois' list of authors who 'believe the Negro to be sub-human and congenitally unfitted for citizenship'.<sup>5.15</sup> A cursory glance at Burgess' work makes clear why his name was included under this category. In outlining the object and purpose of the field of political science, of which he is still considered a somewhat benevolent forefather, Burgess advocated the centrality of the state as the primary unit of political organisation, echoing later realist schools of thought in IR. However, he defined the state in more direct racial terms than most modern IR scholars might consider. The state was centred around the nation, defined in explicitly racial terms. Burgess lamented that the word nation had lost its 'original and natural'

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<sup>5.13</sup>Bernard Crick, *The American Science of Politics*, p.46

<sup>5.14</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy*, p.59

<sup>5.15</sup>W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1935), pp.718-719 and 731

meaning and argued that the term should be defined as centred on ‘race-kinship’, explicitly imitating the ‘more exact and scientific’ German usage of the term.<sup>5.16</sup> The state constructed along these racial and ethnic lines was to Burgess the ‘objective reality upon which political science can rest in the construction of a truly scientific political system’. Any alternative mode of political organisation was irrelevant to the ‘scientific mind’ when dealing with matters of political science: race, in Burgess’ eyes, was the true focus of political science.<sup>5.17</sup>

As this attempt to graft white supremacy and the ‘scientific’ method together illustrates, Burgess’ claims to scientificity serve a legitimising function to justify his existing racist views. As Du Bois notes, these dated to his background as the scion of a slave-holding family who was brought up to view black people as property.<sup>5.18</sup> Writing in the inter-war years, in the post-Reconstruction era, the argument for rigid racial hierarchy as the natural order of things was perhaps no longer sufficient legitimisation in the way that it once had been, even in the midst of the repressive Jim Crow era. Like Lothrop Stoddard, discussed later in this chapter, Burgess sought new justifications rooted in the supposed objectivity of a ‘scientific’ method to impart renewed legitimacy on his white supremacist prejudice. The scientification of political study, and of IR, provided new legitimisations for old prejudices. These ostensibly ‘scientific’ legitimisations took on an inherently international dimension in propagating the science of empire that was emerging across imperial frontiers and would become better known as the formalised academic discipline of IR.

The artificial separation between scientificity and racism in IR’s disciplinary

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<sup>5.16</sup> John W. Burgess, *The Foundations of Political Science* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), p.3

<sup>5.17</sup> John W. Burgess, *The Foundations of Political Science*, p.62

<sup>5.18</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, p.718

history is a legacy of a process of historical silencing. The imperial science, with all its racially imbued precepts, cannot be detached from the ‘scientific’ turn that took part in this period. Thus, when disciplinary historians overlook the ideological motivations of men like Burgess and accept them instead as scholarly pioneers of a modern ‘scientific’ approach, a crucial part of the discipline’s history is silenced. This is a theme throughout Schmidt’s disciplinary history of IR. Race is only meaningfully mentioned in direct quotes from Paul Reinsch, about the white man’s burden, and from Alleyne Ireland, justifying Reinsch’s approach.<sup>5.19</sup> Like Burgess, Reinsch is described only as ‘one of the founding figures of the field of international relations’.<sup>5.20</sup> However, equally like Burgess, Reinsch and his work are imbricated in a much wider history of white supremacy and the use of scientific discourse to legitimise deeply divisive ideologies. In reviewing Schmidt’s work, Chris Brown praises the repositioning of Reinsch, Ireland, and Francis Lieber, as ‘the founders of the discipline’ but encourages Schmidt to avoid focussing too closely on disciplinary history, warning: ‘one shudders at the thought that the history of the discipline might itself become a recognised research field’.<sup>5.21</sup> Recovering the entanglements of these canonical IR authors with scientific racism and racial hierarchies, however, reveals far more about the historical conditions shaping US IR than Brown’s dismissal would suggest.

Reinsch authored ‘scientific’ treatises on IR long before the discipline had its mythological birth, promising to send the ‘electric searchlight’ of science ‘into the hidden recesses of existence’.<sup>5.22</sup> Though a critic of formal imperialism, he

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<sup>5.19</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy*, pp.74-5 (Reinsch), pp.133-4 (Ireland)

<sup>5.20</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy*, p.75

<sup>5.21</sup>Chris Brown, ‘International Political Theory – A British Social Science?’, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2.1 (2000), 114-23 (pp.117-8). doi:<https://www.doi.org/10.1111/1467-856X.00029>

<sup>5.22</sup>Paul S. Reinsch, *World Politics at the End of the Nineteenth Century as Influenced by the Oriental Situation* (New York and London: MacMillan, 1904), p.242

advanced a brand of civilisational dichotomy not entirely dissimilar from that of Huntington a century later. He warned of the need to prevent a huge civilisational clash between East and West and declared that ‘the Western powers should exert all their influence’ to ensure ‘Western thought and life’ dominated in South East Asia.<sup>5.23</sup> Alongside his ostensibly scientific methodology, Reinsch’s work carried a deeply moralistic tone, arguing that constraining ‘unfavorable influences [...] from Oriental civilization’ was the only way to protect against ‘the degradation of women, whom Western ideals have placed on an equal intellectual and moral footing with men’.<sup>5.24</sup> Few women in 1904 are perhaps likely to have shared Reinsch’s confidence in the state of gender equality in Western Europe and the United States at the time.

Reinsch was similarly paternalistic about other minoritised groups. In claims imbued with the language of the white salvational civilising mission, he asserted that ‘the negro race has shown no tendency toward higher development, except under the tutelage of other races’.<sup>5.25</sup> That the tone of Reinsch’s work foreshadows the content of the *Journal of Race Development*, in whose pages his work would be cited, is indicative of the longer histories that the institutionalisation of IR was drawing upon.<sup>5.26</sup> Like many of his contemporaries, Reinsch was prone to deploying racial pseudo-science to justify his views, such as his claim that the intellectual development of black people stops at puberty due to the closing of their ‘cranial sutures’ at an early age.<sup>5.27</sup> A common theme throughout his work is the centrality apportioned to race, even if Reinsch is considered more

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<sup>5.23</sup>Paul S. Reinsch, *World Politics*, p.241

<sup>5.24</sup>Paul S. Reinsch, *World Politics*, p.243

<sup>5.25</sup>Paul S. Reinsch, ‘The Negro Race and European Civilization’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 11.2 (1905), 145-67 (p.156)

<sup>5.26</sup>J. Howard Stoutemyer, ‘Race Education’, *Journal of Race Development*, 5,4 (1915), 438-66

<sup>5.27</sup>Paul S. Reinsch, ‘The Negro Race and European Civilization’, p.154

of a liberal internationalist than the more vocally xenophobic Burgess. Reinsch was an advocate of internationalism before the Great War, but this was an internationalism that maintained room for 'ethnic entities' within its limits, like that later echoed by Burgess.<sup>5.28</sup>

The explicitly racist declarations made by Reinsch are more obviously dated than some of his other arguments, but it is not possible to separate the two. The academic formalisation of political science in the United States towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the associated debates in IR into which it fed, were fundamentally rooted in a discourse of race science and white supremacy. This a major silence in IR's disciplinary history and is one that shapes the discipline in the present-day. Reinsch's work on the East, quoted above, still makes its way into the work of present-day scholars of IR.<sup>5.29</sup> Doubling down on his earlier positioning of Reinsch as a foundational figure in IR, Schmidt laments that he is not better known amongst scholars of IR in the present day and offers a much more developed discussion of Reinsch's views than was offered in his 1998 disciplinary history.<sup>5.30</sup> Though his attribution of the relative present-day invisibility of Reinsch to sanitisation and political correctness within the field is an uneasy one, there is some validity in his insistence on the importance of not ignoring the history of such figures within the disciplinary history of IR.<sup>5.31</sup> This is a hugely significant consideration for disciplinary historians of IR. Each time the presentation of IR as a field of scientific endeavour is invoked, IR scholars are drawing on long genealogies

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<sup>5.28</sup>Paul S. Reinsch, 'The New Internationalism', *Forum*, 42 (1909), 24-30 (p.27)

<sup>5.29</sup>Emilian Kavalski, 'Conclusion: Recognizing Chinese International Relations Theory', Niv Horesh and Emilian Kavalski (eds.), *Asian Thought on China's Changing International Relations* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 230-47

<sup>5.30</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, 'Paul S. Reinsch and the Study of Imperialism and Internationalism' in: David Long and Brian C. Schmidt (eds.), *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 43-70

<sup>5.31</sup>Brian C. Schmidt, 'Paul S. Reinsch', p.46

of discourse that include individuals like Burgess and Reinsch among their ranks. This can be knowingly or otherwise, but due to the silences imposed on large sections of IR's formal disciplinary history, it is often the latter. Acknowledging the names of such figures as simply 'forefathers' of the discipline without engaging with their thought and its legacy is not a substitute for engaging with this history in a meaningful and critical way.

A critical *Fachgeschichte* of IR must identify this silence inherent in disciplinary histories and acknowledge that these foundational figures are rarely centred in their historical context. It is only by doing this that it is possible to critically deconstruct the emergence of the formalised academic discipline in this period and in doing so trace its legacies through to the present. On this note, a critical disciplinary history is largely a study of such ideas, the contexts that shaped them, and the interactions across contexts that have allowed these ideas to develop their own complex legacies reverberating through the decades in a field that rarely remembers the circumstances that produced it. Though the names mentioned thus far in this chapter have largely been ones associated with the United States, it would be remiss not to explore the interactions between this geographical context and others that produced the distinctly trans-imperial science of empire that IR in this period can be understood as.

Incorporating the US context and the British imperial context as interconnected and overlapping, rather than as individual phases in a linear historical progression, allows for a major resituating of IR as a science of empire. When conceptualised thus, these historical contexts appear not with one as an extension of another, but as interconnected constituent elements of a wider network that combined in complex ways to produce an emergent theory of scientific-imperial 'Anglo-Saxonism'. Viewed through a complexity-inflected

lens, this reframes the history of twentieth century IR as the imperial pursuit of a science beyond borders, rather than the preserve of one state, as the following section will explore.

## **5.2 Trans-Imperial Connexions**

As the examples highlighted above illustrate, institutions and individuals in the United States contributed heavily to a more explicit racialisation of IR discourse, but to present this as entirely separate to the discourse evolving in the British Empire around the same period overlooks the profound overlap in terms of theories, concepts, and ideologies that tied the two contexts together. In many cases, this overlap was more than incidental: it was fundamental to the theories and ideologies developing on either side of the Atlantic. Proponents of scientific-imperial approaches to IR, particularly in the first three decades of the twentieth century, showed a tendency to describe their theories, empires, and race as 'Anglo-Saxon': a term that this chapter will explore.

The interconnectivity between the two geographical contexts is too strong to be overlooked. It is impossible to speak of American IR in contrast to British IR, but the two are united as the product of a dialectic between competing theories of imperial world order that were reconciled and refined through the study of IR. To shift towards a relational approach to constructing a *Fachgeschichte* of IR, it is necessary to trace contexts through their interactions with one another, rather than treating them in isolation. To speak of a British phase, followed by a German phase, and a subsequent American phase in IR's disciplinary history, as is common and as was initially considered for the structure of this thesis, is an historical fallacy. Reducing the disciplinary history to a neat linear progression, imitating the 'great debates' narratives that have proven so problematic for critical disciplinary historians of IR, can only replicate reductionist mythologies of IR's

history and its contemporary function. Instead, through a relational lens, it becomes clear that the canonical myths of IR's conventional disciplinary history cannot be separated from the inter-imperial context that shaped them. Eugenics, internationalism, fascism, and post-war realism were separate movements that all played a role in shaping IR's emergence as a science of empire but each was interconnected in different ways, and none of them can be isolated to a particular territorial context. In illustrating this, the racialisation of a distinctly 'Anglo-Saxon' IR, the precursor to Hoffmann's claims about the innate Americanness of IR will be the focus of this section. This has been long overlooked by disciplinary historians, with many major works on this period in IR's history making no mention of the term.<sup>5.32</sup> For this reason, it marks a useful stepping off point for an exploration of the development of IR as an imperial science between empires, drawing heavily on racial science. Exploring this provides an opportunity to address one of the major silences in the historical sociology of the discipline.

Rather than an exclusively British imperial story, even the Aberystwyth myth discussed in the previous chapter is rooted in a much wider global context. It is impossible to tell the mythological Aberystwyth origin story without incorporating the United States. When Charles Webster was employed as the second Wilson Chair, he spent more of his time in some academic years in the United States than he did in Wales. He reported back that he had been 'been much impressed by the great desire for teaching on this subject in the United States' and advised his parent

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<sup>5.32</sup>Even two of most comprehensive and significant critical disciplinary histories of IR from recent years, for all their merits, do not mention this movement.

Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019)

The latter makes a brief mention of Anglo-Saxon racial unity in relation to the thought of J.R. Seeley (p.47), but beyond this the movement is not discussed

institution: 'I think that I ought to take advantage of this circumstance and devote as much time as possible to the United States'<sup>5.33</sup> He would spend 12 weeks teaching diplomatic history at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis) from 5 January 1925, followed by a lecture tour of the United States. He would remain in the United States from December 1924 to July 1925, lecturing at no fewer than twelve universities and colleges.<sup>5.34</sup> His colleague Sydney Herbert subsequently spent much of the following year in the United States, after taking a Laura Spelman Rockefeller Fellowship at Harvard University.<sup>5.35</sup> Following this, Webster noted that 'no less than five people [...] connected with the Department... [had] been in the United States' during the course of that year.<sup>5.36</sup> The Aberystwyth origin myth is presented as one of an isolated birth, facilitated by the Davies family through the strength of their internationalist convictions alone. However, once situated in the wider Transatlantic context, it becomes clear that Aberystwyth and the ideas it championed were instead the emergent product of discourse and dialogue across imperial frontiers.

There were discussions of formalising the ties between the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth and Harvard, with Gilbert Murray suggesting after returning from a year lecturing at Harvard that 'America has a certain special connexion' with

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<sup>5.33</sup>Charles K. Webster, 'Wilson Chair of International Politics: Report for the year 1924-1925'. Aberystwyth, *Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru (LIGC)*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1

<sup>5.34</sup>Charles K. Webster, 'Wilson Chair of International Politics: Report for the year 1924-1925'. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1.

The institutions Webster lectured at were as follows: University of Minnesota (Minneapolis), University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Los Angeles, Pomona College, University of Wisconsin (Madison), University of Chicago, Northwestern University (Chicago), McGill University (Montreal), Kansas State College (Manhattan), University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), and Carleton College (Minnesota)

<sup>5.35</sup>Charles K. Webster, 'Wilson Chair of International Politics: Report for the year 1924-1925'. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1.

David Davies' concern was less that Herbert would be in the United States and more one of 'who does his work?', which he scrawled in the margin of his copy of Webster's annual report

<sup>5.36</sup>Charles K. Webster, 'Wilson Chair of International Politics: Report for the year 1924-1925'. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1

the Wilson Chair.<sup>5.37</sup> Though university managers in Wales noted that ‘it might be a good thing for us in Aberystwyth to be closely linked up with the great Harvard University’, the suggestion of collaboration was initially made on Harvard’s initiative, seeking to secure an agreement for the Wilson Chair to teach for one semester each academic year in their Department of History.<sup>5.38</sup>

This suggestion came directly from A. Lawrence Lowell, then President of Harvard University. He shared a commitment to League-centred internationalism with his Aberystwyth counterpart in this role, David Davies. Lowell was a public advocate for establishing the League as the executive Chairman of the League to Enforce Peace, roughly equivalent to the League of Nations Society (later the League of Nations Union) in Britain.<sup>5.39</sup> His publications on this topic included multiple articles in *Foreign Affairs* and major contributions to an essay collection on the League Covenant. For instance, in the same month he was corresponding with Aberystwyth, Lowell published a commentary on the changing nature of the British Empire and Commonwealth and what this meant for citizenship, self-government, and diplomatic relations between the Dominions and the United States, explicitly drawing upon the work of Alfred Zimmern.<sup>5.40</sup> Transatlantic connexions aside, what sets Lowell apart from Davies was his more vocal and explicit commitment to eugenics. As President, Lowell played a major role in

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<sup>5.37</sup>Letter from Gilbert Murray to David Davies, 16 April 1927. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1

<sup>5.38</sup>Letter from Edward Edwards to David Davies, concerning correspondence from Harvard University, 2 April 1927. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1

Copy of a letter from Edward Edwards to President Lowell concerning ‘the possibility of Professor Webster being engaged for a period in the year to deliver lectures at Harvard University’, 7 April 1927. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1

Letter from Edward Edwards to David Davies, 7 April 1927. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1

Letter from A. Lawrence Lowell to Gilbert Murray, concerning plans to approach Aberystwyth and Charles Webster to teach at Harvard, 2 April 1927. *LIGC*, Llandinam Papers, D4/1

<sup>5.39</sup>A. Lawrence Lowell, *A League to Enforce Peace*, World Peace Foundation Pamphlet Series, 5.5(1) (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1915)

<sup>5.40</sup>A. Lawrence Lowell, ‘The Imperial Conference’, *Foreign Affairs*, 5.3 (1927), 379-92 (p.379)

restricting the numbers of African American and Jewish students to Harvard and supported the work of Charles Davenport's Eugenics Record Office by granting their access to Harvard student records.<sup>5.41</sup>

Such overlaps between eugenics and the emergent academic discipline of IR are a defining feature of scholarship in this era but are one that has only recently attracted the attention of disciplinary historians. The relationship between the formalisation of IR as an academic discipline and discourses of race, empire, and racial science or eugenics, remains a defining silence for a discipline that generally shies away from meaningful introspection into its past. However, it is not a silence that has gone entirely unaddressed. Within the last decade, Robert Vitalis' critical work of historical introspection into the disciplinary emergence of IR in a US setting has made a major contribution to a recentring of the historical sociology and historiography of IR.<sup>5.42</sup> Though not a territorial recentring in the sense that its focus necessarily remains rooted in the continental United States, Vitalis' effort marks a spatial recentring in that in focussing on the structures of elite American university institutions it moves beyond them, to address voices excluded by dominant historical narratives. More importantly, it marks a de-centring in the sense proposed by Natalie Zemon Davis in challenging the silences created by differential exercises of power (as Trouillot identifies) by using local stories to deconstruct global histories.<sup>5.43</sup> By incorporating histories of interpersonal politics, racial segregation, political movements, and barriers erected in the face

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<sup>5.41</sup> Abbott Lawrence Lowell to Charles B. Davenport, 12 April 1913, quoted in: Presidential Committee on Harvard and the Legacy of Slavery, *Harvard and the Legacy of Slavery* [Report], 2022, pp.44-5. <https://legacyofslavery.harvard.edu/report>

<sup>5.42</sup> Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015)

<sup>5.43</sup> Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Decentering History: Local Stories and Cultural Crossings in a Global World', *History and Theory*, 50.2 (2011), 188-202. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2303.2011.00576.x

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2015)

of challenges to dominant discourses of power, Vitalis is able to identify glaring silences in the disciplinary history of North American IR in a way that deploys historical analysis towards a critical end. Vitalis is not alone in this, and other works in recent years like Davis, Vale, and Thakur's 'The Imperial Discipline' have made similarly significant efforts to broaden the disciplinary history of IR through a critical introspection into its interconnected relationships with race, empire, and colonial science.<sup>5.44</sup> What makes Vitalis' work one of the most important contributions to IR's historical sociology since the turn of the millennium however, even beyond its content or its core arguments, is the challenge it poses to IR scholars seeking a more critical and introspective perspective on the network of relations that shapes the formalised discipline.

Alongside a contribution to the historiography of IR in a US context, Vitalis' work is a call to action. It is a limited history in that its focus is relatively narrow, but this is by design. The de-centred historical narrative offered within is intended more as a starting point than a comprehensive rewriting of the history of IR. Vitalis concludes with a recognition that the histories of some of the defining moments for the discipline have 'yet to be written'.<sup>5.45</sup> He notes that the role of his work is not to address the need to write all of these histories, but rather to identify 'weak points' that can allow avenues of access for the critical disciplinary historians of IR.<sup>5.46</sup> This chapter, and indeed the wider thesis of which it forms a part, is a response to this call. The weak point it seeks to address is the disciplinary silence surrounding the historical roots of the relationship between IR and scientific discourses.

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<sup>5.44</sup>Alexander E. Davis, Vineet Thakur, and Peter Vale, *The Imperial Discipline: Race and the Founding of International Relations* (London: Pluto Press, 2020)

Vineet Thakur and Peter Vale, *South Africa, Race and the Making of International Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2020)

<sup>5.45</sup>Robert Vitalis, *White World Order*, p.180

<sup>5.46</sup>Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics*, p.179

Uniting the US context with the British imperial and emphasising the relationship between IR and scientific discourses allows for this weak point to be addressed. Doing so identifies two competing strands in the disciplinary history in this era, one surrounding race science and the construction of a 'scientific' discipline but also the formal institutionalisation of IR. This chapter will seek to address the first, in order to problematise elements of the second. IR's formal disciplinary history cannot be detached from the ideas that circulated around the discipline as these ideas and the interactions surrounding them played a fundamental role in shaping the character of the emergent field. The interactions with scientific discourses and between imperial frontiers both contributed to the development and propagation of a Transatlantic science of empire. Crick emphasises this in dubbing Charles Darwin the American Hegel, noting the influence Darwinian ideas had on a range of ideas across political science in the United States including those justifying the 'dominance of the Anglo-Saxon race'.<sup>5.47</sup>

This racial-political Anglo-Saxonism was a product of interconnectivity with certain discourses in the natural sciences in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but also of interactions between debates in the United States and the British Empire in the same period. Eugenics publications of the late nineteenth century identified a Transatlantic 'Anglo-Saxon' race and declared it superior as a product of innate racial characteristics.<sup>5.48</sup> This would continue throughout and beyond movements calling for an Anglo-Saxon imperial alliance on racial grounds in an IR context. This is not a linear phenomenon that can be identified as a case of a discourse being developed in one field and supplanted onto another. Distinguishing between a political Anglo-Saxonism and

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<sup>5.47</sup> Bernard Crick, *The American Science of Politics*, p.46

<sup>5.48</sup> William Aikman, 'Race Characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon', *Phrenological Journal and Science of Health*, 75.5 (1882), 237-41

scientific Anglo-Saxonism is a hopeless endeavour: the two developed entirely in concert. The two were frequently combined, sometimes supplanted with religious overtones, to allow for the construction of an ideology that transcended boundaries both disciplinary and geographic with ease.<sup>5.49</sup>

This same complex and entangled ideological, cultural, and political force is identified by Duncan Bell in his exposition of the discourse of Anglo-America, an inter-related and overlapping movement from the late nineteenth century onwards.<sup>5.50</sup> Perhaps most significantly, Bell's tracing of the genealogy of IR's democratic peace thesis to the 'Anglotopian' visions of a universal racial peace that circulated across and around the Anglo-Saxonist movement ties the development of the discipline firmly to movements for Transatlantic racial unity.<sup>5.51</sup> Framing the direct influence of this movement on the present-day IR discipline in this way has unsurprisingly sparked critical discussion among disciplinary-historical scholars of IR, as captured in the 2023 *International Politics* forum on Bell's work.<sup>5.52</sup> Of particular relevance is Tomohito Baji's recognition that the post-war mainstream discipline that emerged from the influence of Bell's Anglotopia was just 'one IR cultivated for white world order and centered around Chatham House in London as well as its sister institution, the Council on Foreign Relations in New York', rather than the monolithic discipline Hoffmann imagines it to be.<sup>5.53</sup> To build on this, it is possible to reposition the American social science Hoffmann spoke of as an *Anglo-Saxon* social science, anchored directly

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<sup>5.49</sup>John L. Brandt, *Anglo-Saxon Supremacy: or Race Contributions to Civilization* (Boston, MA: Richard G. Badger, 1915)

<sup>5.50</sup>Duncan Bell, *Dreamworlds of Race: Empire and the Utopian Destiny of Anglo-America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020)

<sup>5.51</sup>Duncan Bell, *Dreamworlds of Race*, pp.301-56

<sup>5.52</sup>Lucian M. Ashworth, 'Introduction: Duncan Bell's Dreamworlds of Race—A Conversation', *International Politics*, 60.3 (2023), 712-5. doi:10.1057/s41311-023-00439-7

<sup>5.53</sup>Tomohito Baji, 'An Apex of the Racialization of the World', *International Politics*, 60.3 (2023), 720-6 (p.723). doi:10.1057/s41311-023-00441-z

in discourses of racial unity, cultural dominance, and political subjugation. To do so takes the context identified by Bell as a foundation but recognises that this is a rich seam that can be mined further. In particular, there is room to account for the role science played in shaping, legitimising, and spreading these discourses as part of a wider movement of scientific-imperial Anglo-Saxonism.

### 5.3 An Anglo-Saxon Social Science?

This Anglo-Saxonism, as applied to global order, drew on a wider political and cultural nineteenth century movement of Anglo-Saxonism. This sought to ‘scientificise’ and validate earlier racial and civilisational prejudices by associating them with Darwinian theories of evolution, using allusions to the ‘supreme scientific concept of the age’ to create an ostensibly scientific ideology of global order.<sup>5.54</sup> Anglo-Saxonism in this context can be understood as a proto-IR theory, and one that would endure well beyond the end of the nineteenth century in binding US racial ideologies with British imperialism. It was also influential in a foreign policy context, with Stuart Anderson attributing the US government’s support for the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ British over the ‘Dutch’ Boers in the Second Boer War to the explicitly racial worldview of prominent Anglo-Saxonists, chiefly the Secretary of State, John Hay, and the soon-to-be President, Theodore Roosevelt.<sup>5.55</sup> Nonetheless, there has been comparatively little room afforded to ‘Anglo-Saxonism’ in the disciplinary history of IR, with notable exceptions in the

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<sup>5.54</sup>Stuart Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement: Anglo-Saxonism and Anglo-American Relations, 1895–1904* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1981), p.36

Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought, 1860-1915* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1944)

<sup>5.55</sup>Stuart Anderson, ‘Racial Anglo-Saxonism and the American Response to the Boer War’, *Diplomatic History*, 2.3 (1978), 219-36. doi:<https://www.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1978.tb00433.x>

work of Anderson, Srdjan Vucetic, Inderjeet Parmar, and Mark Ledwidge.<sup>5.56</sup>

In part, this is due to the absence in the conventional disciplinary mythology of American IR of the close ties to British imperialism it continued to share into the twentieth century, as outlined above. This is a crucial element to focus on in constructing a critical *Fachgeschichte* of IR, because it makes clear that the interconnected network of interactions shaping, producing, and propagating the dominant discourse of the emergent discipline was neither strictly territorially-bounded nor something whose disciplinary history can be neatly broken up into clearly defined phases or periods. The interconnectivity between the old Empire and the nominally anti-imperialist former colony speaks strongly to the strength of empire as a factor in early IR discourse. It is also a symptom of the racialisation of IR that has remained a common feature throughout much of the discipline's history, albeit in adapting forms. To contextualise this racialised character of IR, it is imperative to unite a historical analysis of both the British Imperial and US settings to deconstruct the interaction between them. Thus, it becomes counterproductive to speak of US versus British IR in this early twentieth century period, for the two developed symbiotically. At times, such as in the history of some of the major publications of the day, the interaction between the two becomes so strong as to render them indistinguishable. Scholars at the time described their context not strictly as British or North American, but as Anglo-Saxon.

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<sup>5.56</sup>Srdjan Vucetic, *The Anglosphere: A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011)

Inderjeet Parmar, 'The World-View of Chatham House and the CFR' in: *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy: A Comparative Study of the Role and Influence of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939-1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 48-74

Mark Ledwidge and Inderjeet Parmar, 'Clash of Pans: Pan-Africanism and Pan-Anglo-Saxonism and the Global Colour Line, 1919-1945', *International Politics*, 55 (2018), 765-81. doi:10.1057/s41311-017-0105-1

### 5.3.1 *Anglo-Saxon Review*

No example illustrates this more clearly than the *Anglo-Saxon Review*. Though a publication that perhaps plays a less direct role in the disciplinary history of IR than the *Journal of Race Development*, in part due to the fact that only ten volumes were published in its three years of operation between 1899 and 1901, it precedes the latter by over a decade and the content of its pages highlights that conceptualisations of international order were rooted in racialised terms long before the discipline had its canonical birth. It was edited by an American with strong British connexions in Jennie Spencer-Churchill, whose son remains the quintessential symbol of the ideal of a unified Transatlantic aristocratic, imperialist class. It would not be recognised as an IR journal of the contemporary mould but can instead be understood as a general miscellany of matters relating to empire, racial ideology, and so-called ‘Anglo-Saxon’ culture. It featured contributors from either side of the Atlantic, drawn from backgrounds in colonial administration, the natural sciences, and the literary arts, echoing the disparate but interconnected Davies-funded chairs at Aberystwyth.

The disciplinary boundaries now imagined as rigid between history, the natural sciences, and IR are largely a late twentieth century construction: to their proponents, and to present-day observers with a critical eye, the seemingly disparate scientific and literary disciplines in this period were united by an underlying ideology. This ideology can be understood as scientific-imperialism, the belief that a chosen race, the ‘Anglo-Saxons’ had the right, or even the responsibility, to determine the fate of the world. This applied to both the political and cultural domains and so reordering the empire and securing the propagation of an elite ‘Anglo-Saxon’ culture were both aspects of the hegemony of the imagined ‘Anglo-Saxon’ civilisation. This logic was conceptualised and purposed as theory

in different ways. Those associated with Aberystwyth discussed in the previous chapter would not have used the term in the same sense, but their arguments about the need for a world order constructed around a central civilising force overlapped significantly. What their counterparts on either side of the Atlantic who subscribed to 'Anglo-Saxonism' brought was a more explicit racialisation of the same arguments. This was a similar utopianism, albeit one often couched in different terms, in that it imagined a world empire marked by perpetual peace. It designated the role of steward of this new global empire not to the British Empire or the League but the collective might of so-called 'Anglo-Saxon' civilisation. This offered the twin function of escaping the restraints of the weak and dated nation-state and reorganising the globe instead on the basis of civilisations, defined in supposedly 'scientific' racial terms. In justifying each, it sought to demarcate a threat that was both cultural and biological, and thus drew on a wide ideology that encompassed cultural elements as much as ostensibly scientific ones.

The *Anglo-Saxon Review* embodied this blend of literary, political, and scientific. The pages of the first volume were shared by a British physicist offering explanatory notes on wireless telegraphy, a pre-Raphaelite poet commemorating the centenary of a great British Imperial naval victory, an American diplomat penning thoughts on a changing international system, and one British Prime Minister reviewing a biography of another.<sup>5.57</sup> A further article from the British

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<sup>5.57</sup> Oliver Lodge, 'The Scientific Principles of Wireless Telegraphy', *Anglo-Saxon Review*, 1 (1899), 191-203

Algernon Charles Swinburne, 'The Centenary of the Battle of the Nile, August 1898', *Anglo-Saxon Review*, 1 (1899), 186-187

Whitelaw Reid, 'Some Consequences of the Last Treaty of Paris: Advances in International Law and Changes in National Policy', *Anglo-Saxon Review*, 1 (1899), 66-83.

Reid expresses his hope that 'the Briton and America' might continue fighting side by side, and again against savages' (p.66)

Lord Rosebery (Archibald Primrose), 'Sir Robert Peel', *Anglo-Saxon Review*, 1 (1899), 97-123

Resident-General in Malaya provided an especially misogynistic caricature of the racial characteristics of Malay women, with a stark warning against the dangers that any degree of 'education' or 'emancipation' of this group would bring.<sup>5.58</sup> As this illustrates, the journal covered a broad range of subjects, and its tone was distinctly imperial and racialised. It can stake a claim, however, to being one of the first periodicals to treat with what might now be understood as conventional IR.

In 1900, it published a commentary on 'international relations' by Arnold White, centred on the ostensibly urgent need for a strong Transatlantic alliance on explicitly racial grounds to deliver 'the Message of the Anglo-Saxon race [...] to the world'.<sup>5.59</sup> This was a movement that used pseudo-scientific language concerning race to legitimise its claims to the right of global domination, but beyond race, was also reliant on the construction of a wider multi-levelled hierarchy to justify a particular global order. The imperial-racial axis on which this order hinged also occupied the overlap and intersection between race, gender, and class. The reordering of empire envisaged by the scientific-imperialists of the day was not solely on racial grounds. It is in this vein that the term 'Anglo-Saxon' was shorthand for the 'right kind' of whiteness. The heavy emphasis on culture speaks strongly to this. The confusion around whether Germans should be considered Anglo-Saxon for the purposes of constructing theories of world order illustrates that the terms were not always as clear cut as the more ardent racial eugenicists would like to claim.<sup>5.60</sup> Nonetheless, it is significant that this article on international relations, one of the first of its kind, was penned by a notable

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<sup>5.58</sup>Frank Swettenham, 'A Mezzotint', *Anglo-Saxon Review*, 1 (1899), 215-224

<sup>5.59</sup>Arnold White, 'England and America: "Strangers Yet"', *Anglo-Saxon Review*, 7 (1900), 8-22 (p.22)

<sup>5.60</sup>Charles Walston (Waldstein), *The English-Speaking Brotherhood and the League of Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; New York: Columbia University Press, 1919), pp.50-51

eugenicist in Arnold White. A periodical focussing on the overlap between social and scientific pursuits pertaining to Transatlantic interconnectivity could hardly avoid this scientific zeitgeist at the turn of the twentieth century.

#### 5.4 Ideas, Emergence, and Reactivation

The Anglo-Saxon Review was a response and a successor, rather than a clear pioneer. It succeeded a spate of similar publications with a broad Transatlantic focus combining literary and cultural pursuits with history and explicitly ‘scientific’ discourse that emerged around the same period. One of the few examples that would remain in print for an extended duration was the *Atlantic Monthly*, established in 1857 and enduring to the present day. In 1896, a contribution from George Burton Adams foreshadowed much of the discourse that would follow in coming decades, addressing the global role of what he called the ‘Anglo-Saxon race’.<sup>5.61</sup> He identified a new stage in international relations in which the ‘actors are no longer nations in the sense of a hundred years ago, but great races or nations with a world-position [empires]’.<sup>5.62</sup>

Far from a relic of his time, many of the ideas Adams puts forward in defence of a global Anglo-Saxon empire will be familiar to present-day scholars of IR. Alongside his dismissal of ‘the balance of power’ as a dated concept from another era, illustrates that discourse and terminology within the field is not static but adapts to its context in complex and emergent ways.<sup>5.63</sup> Concepts are not born: they adapt and can be repurposed in emergent ways to their surrounding context.<sup>5.64</sup> An even starker example is Adams’ argument that humanity had

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<sup>5.61</sup>George Burton Adams, ‘The United States and the Anglo-Saxon Future’, *Atlantic Monthly*, 78 (July 1896), 35-44 (p.36)

<sup>5.62</sup>George Burton Adams, ‘The United States and the Anglo-Saxon Future’, p.35

<sup>5.63</sup>George Burton Adams, ‘The United States and the Anglo-Saxon Future’, p.35

<sup>5.64</sup>Erik P. Hoel, Larissa Albantakis, and Giulio Tononi, ‘Quantifying Causal Emergence Shows

entered a new, 'final epoch' or final stage of history that would lead only to 'the domination of the world, in ideas and arts and institutions, by some one racial type'.<sup>5.65</sup> Preceding Fukuyama by a century, Adams advanced the argument for an end of history embodied in the coming global hegemony of the United States. He expressed it in racial and cultural terms, as opposed to the cultural, economic, and political terms favoured by Fukuyama, but with a similar core argument.<sup>5.66</sup> Nonetheless, Fukuyama does not reference Adams' argument and is unlikely to have ever read his work. That the same argument could be produced in different contexts a century apart is a product of the emergent nature of ideas and discourse.

This vision of an end of history brought about by the progress of an anointed civilisation reoccurs in multiple historical contexts and differences between iterations are telling about the respective historical contexts in which they emerged. Foucauldian 'archæology' deals with this in the concept of 'reactivation', referring to the reconstitution or importation of ideas from past contexts into present and their adaptation to the boundaries of the system into which they are reactivated.<sup>5.67</sup> In Foucault's words, the historian should 'seek in the discourse not its laws of construction [...] but its conditions of existence'.<sup>5.68</sup> Where ideas find themselves repeated across contexts, it is possible to identify some of the interactions that have shaped their development. The term 'Anglo-Saxon' serves as a particularly illustrative example of this. Situating this term in relation to its reactivation in the Foucauldian sense offers

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that Macro Can Beat Micro', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 110.49 (2013), 19790-19795

<sup>5.65</sup>George Burton Adams, 'The United States and the Anglo-Saxon Future', p.35

<sup>5.66</sup>Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992)

<sup>5.67</sup>Michel Foucault, 'Politics and the Study of Discourse', *Ideology and Consciousness*, 3 (1978), 7-26 (p.15)

<sup>5.68</sup>Michel Foucault, 'Politics and the Study of Discourse', p.15

insight into both its emergent properties and the functions it has been repurposed to fulfil.

#### **5.4.1 Re-activating Anglo-Saxon**

Anglo-Saxon, which has since become a relatively uncontroversial term in mainstream discourse (supplanted perhaps by Anglo-American), carries its own history and is tied to power dynamics stretching back centuries. The term may be deployed as a racial delimiter, but it is also one that can be centred around its cultural and political implications. Nathan Hare, for instance, in a famous polemic against the co-opting of the civil rights movement by moderates, dubbed middle-class African Americans who sought to imitate the hegemonic culture of wealthy white Americans ‘Black Anglo-Saxons’.<sup>5.69</sup> This marks a deployment of the term further detached from both its historical and racial pseudo-scientific usage and is one that the white eugenicists discussed in this chapter would have considered fundamentally contradictory. Much of the confusion in the usage of the term stems from the fact that the people and political structures historically imagined as ‘Anglo-Saxon’ did not use this term themselves, and it was a product of later political and historiographical movements which sought to construct a past that legitimised a particular present. This detachment from the political function of the term and the invented historical lineage it is designed to claim have made possible the repurposing of the term Anglo-Saxon for various ideological ends.

It is possible to identify three emergent ‘reactivations’ of the term Anglo-Saxon. Each of these are shaped by interactions and encounters within different historical contexts. When identifying ‘Anglo-Saxonist’ IR, it is important

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<sup>5.69</sup>Nathan Hare, *The Black Anglo Saxons* (New York: Marzani and Munsell, 1965)

to qualify the history (or Foucauldian archæology) of the term in relation to its emergent development. No recognisable 'Anglo-Saxon' scholars of IR in any formal sense remain known to us, even if many of the peoples and groups associated with the term were practitioners of some form of diplomatic relations.

Like 'balance of power', 'Anglo-Saxon' functions as both an historical delimiter and an ideological precept. It fulfils an anthropological function in referring to a group of people in an ethnic or territorial sense. This, however, is a limited and impractical one that is both imprecise and tied to histories of racism, race science, and imperialism. In its conventional historical usage, Anglo-Saxon is used to refer to a vast period of seven centuries of history in North-Western Europe, especially the southern and eastern portions of the British Isles, from the sub-Roman 'dark age' to the coming of the Normans after 1066. It is used almost exclusively in relation to the history of England, and specifically the varied and fluid petty kingdoms controlled by ruling classes descended from migrations from continental Europe, largely made up of Angles, Frisians, Jutes, and Saxons. Like most terms of historical periodisation, 'Anglo-Saxon' was retroactively imposed on the era it pertains to describe. It was not a term that those it describes are likely to have used to describe themselves widely. Instead, it is drawn from the Latin 'Angli Saxones' and emerged in the work of continental historians like the Lombard Paulus Diaconus.<sup>5.70</sup> It referred not to one ethnic group but a diverse range of groups across several kingdoms. The earliest written records of so-called Saxons in Britain mistakenly use the term to refer to Jutes.<sup>5.71</sup> Frisians were also at other times described under the catch-all term of Anglo-Saxon, illustrating that it

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<sup>5.70</sup>Kemp Malone, 'Anglo-Saxon: A Semantic Study', *Review of English Studies*, 5.18 (1929), 173-85 (p.175)

<sup>5.71</sup>Beram Saklatvala, *The Origins of the English People* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1969), p.14

was far from a clear-cut one.<sup>5.72</sup>

The first major contemporary references to this term are in the titles of kings, specifically to impart a legitimacy on the claim of Ælfred of Wessex to rule over a unified ‘English’ people as ‘Angulsaxonum rex’ (King of the Anglo-Saxons).<sup>5.73</sup> There is little evidence to suggest it ever had vernacular usage, but instead, it took on new meanings through its reactivation in other historical contexts. Its first reactivation can be identified in contemporary attempts to claim a legitimacy to a newly unified people across so-called Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the face of the threat posed by Norse invader-occupiers and the establishment of the Danelaw (itself a retroactively constructed term).<sup>5.74</sup> Historical annals, most notably the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, used Anglo-Saxon to emphasise the unity of the people under Ælfred, in opposition to the Danes.<sup>5.75</sup> Their function was not entirely dissimilar from that deployed in later attempts to construct an ‘Anglo-Saxon’ world order in IR. The second reactivation of Anglo-Saxon arose out of a late mediæval desire to strategically claim Germanic lineage for religious purposes to justify the break from the Roman Catholic Church during the Reformation.<sup>5.76</sup> Like the weaponisation of eugenics and racial science to legitimise certain IR theory claims, the Anglo-Saxon myth is a tool of power, used to rationalise and justify specific ideological claims. In this sense, it is an invented history with a legitimating function that has since evolved well beyond the scope

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<sup>5.72</sup>Rolf H. Bremmer Jr., ‘Late Medieval and Early Modern Opinions on the Affinity Between English and Frisian: The Growth of a Commonplace’, *Folia Linguistica Historica*, 22.9/1 (1989), 167-92

<sup>5.73</sup>Asser, *Annales rerum gestarum Ælfredi Magni*, ed. by Francis Wise (Oxford: 1722), p.51

<sup>5.74</sup>Martin J. Ryan, ‘The Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings c. 825-900’ in: Nicholas J. Higham and Martin J. Ryan, *The Anglo-Saxon World* (London and New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 232-283

<sup>5.75</sup>Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp.32 and 103

<sup>5.76</sup>Reginald Horsman, ‘Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain Before 1850’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 37.3 (1976), 387-410

intended by those who first used it to justify the separation from Rome.

A further reactivation of this term comes with 'Anglo-Saxonism' in IR, or the attempt from the late nineteenth century onwards to claim a Transatlantic Anglo-Saxon identity built on a discourse of racial science. Drawing on the cultural weight of an imagined 'Anglo-Saxon' history and associated culture, the reactivation of Anglo-Saxon arose out of attempts to adapt this to a context marked by imperial transition. In one sense, this parallels the claim of the realist tradition in IR theory to draw a lineage from figures from antiquity such as Thucydides. As discussed above, the term itself is of less significance than its interactions with its surrounding contexts. Thus, while the use of the term Anglo-Saxon in this Transatlantic IR context was as detached from Ælfred as it was from the Reformation, of most significance is the ideological function it played within the boundaries of its own historical and political surroundings. It carried a shared meaning amongst a cross-imperial white elite as shorthand for a race science-inflected view of world order. This would become closely integrated into the core of the IR discipline, particularly through the development of publications like the *Journal of Race Development*.

#### **5.4.2 *Journal of Race Development***

This journal, published from July 1910 onwards, is one focus of Vitalis' historical assessment of race in the emergence of IR in a US context.<sup>5.77</sup> Whether knowingly or not, most present-day IR scholars will likely have read articles from this same publication, and it continues to be stocked by most, if not all, university libraries with an IR section. It now bears a different name, however, and since 1922 has been published under *Foreign Affairs*, after a brief interlude as the *Journal of*

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<sup>5.77</sup>Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics*

*International Relations (1919-1922).*

The leading article in its first issue, penned by the eugenicist G. Stanley Hall, set out the journal's commitment to civilising the so-called 'primitive races' on the basis of 'not merely philanthropy but science'.<sup>5.78</sup> It was imbued with general eugenicist tropes on the white man's responsibility to civilise colonised people but more notably, it framed one of the biggest colonial anxieties about the changing international system in explicitly scientific terms. Hall warned that Western powers, and Western civilisation more generally, required 'a larger statesmanship than the world has yet evolved' in order to avoid dropping the 'torch' of civilisation and thus neglecting the central task of 'ushering in the kingdom of the superman', which would be instead taken up by other races.<sup>5.79</sup> This anxiety united individuals and institutions across the British Empire, the post-Reconstruction United States, and later the Third Reich in their attempts to conceptualise a hierarchised world order that could respond.

It is also undoubtedly an IR theory, and one whose descendants echo down to the present, albeit couched in less explicitly racialised terms. This proto-IR theory is a product of the intersection between imperial control and racial pseudo-science and represents a view of the international system through the lens of the white man's burden. The *Journal of Race Development* was not alone. Many other 'pioneers' of IR and political science in this period shared the view that there was 'no subject of more vital importance at the present time to the nations of the world' than 'racial conflict'.<sup>5.80</sup> With eugenics, scholars drew upon scientific discourse for both the legitimisation of, and the vaunted solution to this

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<sup>5.78</sup>G. Stanley Hall, 'The Point of View Toward Primitive Races', *Journal of Race Development*, 1.1 (1910), 5-11 (p.6)

<sup>5.79</sup>G. Stanley Hall, 'The Point of View Toward Primitive Races', p.11

<sup>5.80</sup>Cyril Edward Alfred Bedwell, 'Eugenics in International Affairs', *Eugenics Review*, 14.3 (1922), 187-189 (p.188)

fear, questioning whether there was the ‘possibility that science can maintain the Aryan claim to superiority over savage races’.<sup>5.81</sup> The Anglo-Saxonism discussed above, the Teutonism that would be associated with similar circles, and the claim to ‘Aryanism’ made here by C.E.A. Bedwell, each describing ostensibly the same race, illustrate how confused and shaky the supposedly scientific basis on which these claims were built really was. It mattered less what this racial grouping was called and more how it was understood, as will be illustrated subsequently with the case of Stoddard and the ‘Nordic’ race.

Like the *Anglo-Saxon Review*, the pages of the *Journal of Race Development* featured a blend of US and British authors. Similarly, it also offered a genuinely interdisciplinary mix of contributors, mirroring the three chairs in Davies-funded imperial science at Aberystwyth. Within its pages, an historian sought to explain the impossibility of ‘Pan-Americanism’ through identifying intrinsic traits in the temperament of Latin American people distinguishing them from their ‘Anglo-Saxon’ counterparts, carrying a familiar echo of colonial race science.<sup>5.82</sup> Through different authors, this was a core logic that could be adapted to any context, under the guise of a ‘scientific’ analysis of the selected circumstances, territory, or people. The subtext underlying many of the articles and running as a clear thread throughout each issue of the *Journal* was that conformity was the path to harmony. Old talk of ‘civilising the savage’ was being replaced by a no less paternalistic suggestion that native cultures could be allowed to thrive, but only if certain rational modes of governance were adopted from the so-called

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<sup>5.81</sup>C.E.A. Bedwell, ‘Eugenics in International Affairs’, p.188

<sup>5.82</sup>William R. Shepherd, ‘The Psychology of the Latin American’, *Journal of Race Development*, 9.3 (1919), 268-282

Shepherd’s obituary remembered him for both his ‘scientific’ approach and his belief that the ‘elimination of international strife’ could result from a ‘régime of mutual understanding’ between ‘the various racial and cultural groupings of mankind’.

Cyrus H. Peake, ‘William Robert Shepherd’, *Open Court*, 48.4 (1934), 193-195

‘Anglo-Saxon’ model.

In the Journal’s earlier years, the primary preoccupation of its contributors was Japan when, in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War, the previously unthinkable situation of a non-white population holding the potential to shape global inter-imperial affairs was becoming an ever more threatening reality. Elsworth Huntington, a geographer of a similar mould to H.J. Fleure and future President of the American Eugenics Society, attributed the rise of Meiji Japan to the purported racial characteristic of the Japanese people to ‘assimilate’ to ‘European methods’, speaking to the heavily paternalistic tone of the Journal and its contemporaries.<sup>5.83</sup> It similarly fell to an anthropologist to defend the contribution of black people to human civilisation, concluding that ‘old imperialism’ ought to make way for a restructured global order.<sup>5.84</sup> The same anthropologist, Alexander Francis Chamberlain, would argue in the pages of a subsequent issue that any merit in indigenous art could only be a product of contact with white people.<sup>5.85</sup>

Avoiding the explicit and direct derogatory white supremacist language of contemporaneous organisations like the Ku Klux Klan, the Journal relied on a more paternalistic racism, echoing the liberal imperialists of the Aberystwyth mould. It was couched in the language of ‘science’ rather than political vitriol, which perhaps rendered it even more dangerous because of the air of respectability this afforded to ideas concerning eugenics and imperialism alike. The Journal published varied opinions on race, but all were united by the centrality they apportioned to race as the defining focus of international affairs. Just as in the work

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<sup>5.83</sup> Ellsworth Huntington, ‘Geographical Environment and Japanese Character’, *Journal of Race Development*, 2.3 (1912), 256-281

<sup>5.84</sup> Alexander Francis Chamberlain, ‘The Contribution of the Negro to Human Civilization’, *Journal of Race Development*, 1.4 (1911), 482-502 (pp.500-501)

<sup>5.85</sup> Alexander Francis Chamberlain, ‘Some Influences of Race-Contact upon the Art of Primitive Peoples’, *Journal of Race Development*, 2.2 (1911), 206-209

of Burgess and Reinsch discussed above, it is possible to identify the central threat of an inherent civilisational struggle, or in other terms, a race war, being invoked in IR discourse.

#### **5.4.3 Stoddard and the (P)reactivation of the Clash of Civilisations**

As Vitalis notes, scholars like Samuel Huntington and the neo-liberal IR theorist Joseph Nye, alongside their contemporaries, represent an element of continuity from their intellectual predecessors and through their views of the international system ‘reanimate the arguments of an earlier, not very well-known era when biological racism and resource imperialism shaped the discipline and, not coincidentally, the policies of successive US administrations’.<sup>5.86</sup> Vitalis goes as far as arguing that Huntington’s ‘clash of civilisations’ thesis is an intellectual successor to Lothrop Stoddard’s *The Rising Tide of Colour* (1920), a controversial but hugely popular book from the early years of US IR.

With Huntingtonian evocations, Stoddard prophesied that twentieth century world-politics would be defined by ‘the relations between the primary races of mankind’.<sup>5.87</sup> He echoed calls for a world order determined and partitioned by race in far more explicit and inflammatory terms, calling on those studying the international relations of the day to recognise ‘the supreme importance of heredity, not merely in scientific treatises but in the practical ordering of the world’s affairs’, attempting to legitimise his racism on the basis that ‘men are not, and never will be, equal’.<sup>5.88</sup> Referring to the Great War as a

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<sup>5.86</sup>Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics*, p.5

<sup>5.87</sup>Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1922, p.4

cf. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997)

<sup>5.88</sup>Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color*, pp.305-6

civil war within the white European race, Stoddard divided the globe into racial (or civilisational) camps.<sup>5.89</sup> By categorising Europe into three races (Nordic, Alpine, and Mediterranean), Stoddard framed the unit of analysis of IR in racial terms, and extrapolated the roots of particular conflicts from supposedly intrinsic racial characteristics.<sup>5.90</sup> It is here that the most apparent break from conventional classical realism can be found: rather than states, he centred races as the primary actors, supposedly stratified ‘scientifically’, with his own Nordic race expectedly the predominant force in global affairs. This dominance was not guaranteed, however, and Stoddard’s work was a call to arms to defend this world order from supplantation by an ‘inferior’ race from the East.<sup>5.91</sup> It would be easy to view Stoddard as a pantomime villain bounded by the circumstances of his time, whose work is not only not taken seriously by contemporary IR scholars in the present day, but remains unknown to most. However, his ideological descendants consciously or unconsciously carry forward similar theories well into present day IR, as Vitalis argues.

The popularity of Stoddard is also less a thing of the past than present-day observers might hope. The *Rising Tide of Color* was reprinted in 2019, in the full form of the original and without a contextualising introduction or similar.<sup>5.92</sup> It is important to emphasise the immense popularity of Stoddard in the 1920s United States, in one of the contexts in which IR as an institutionalised academic discipline was emerging. The *Rising Tide of Color* was recommended by the President, Warren G. Harding, as essential reading on the ‘race issue that the

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<sup>5.89</sup>Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color*, p.196

<sup>5.90</sup>Lothrop Stoddard, *Racial Realities in Europe* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1924)

<sup>5.91</sup>Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color*, pp.360-5

<sup>5.92</sup>Barnes and Noble, *The Rising Tide of Color: Against White World Supremacy* [Illustrated Edition] (2019). <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/rising-tide-of-color-against-white-world-supremacy-theodore-lothrop-stoddard/1103233169> [accessed 19 September 2022]

whole world confronts'.<sup>5.93</sup> It is perhaps best remembered a century later for its inclusion in *The Great Gatsby*, published five years later by the same press, in which F. Scott Fitzgerald satirised the popular fixation with Stoddard's book through the pretentious boasts of the cruel antagonist Tom Buchanan:

Have you read 'The Rise of the Colored Empires' by this man Goddard? [sic] [...] It's all scientific stuff; it's been proved [...] It's up to us, who are the dominant race, to watch out or these other races will have control of things.<sup>5.94</sup>

Beyond a symbol for the vulgarity of the prejudiced landed class, even *Gatsby's* suspiciously immaculate library contains a volume of 'the Stoddard lectures', suggesting that Stoddard's work was a symbolic must-have for the well-read man of the 1920s USA, regardless of whether it had actually been read.<sup>5.95</sup> That these readers would emphasise the 'scientific' nature of Stoddard's white supremacy is not picked up on by Fitzgerald by coincidence. The vast public popularity that met *The Rising Tide of Color* was rooted in its ability to afford a 'scientific' legitimacy to existing racial prejudices and wider societal anxieties about the decline of 'white' civilisation. His work was deliberately marketed to a general reader who fancied himself as an armchair intellectual or amateur scientist, providing an altogether more refined racism that felt more at home in 'respectable' parlour conversation.

Stoddard explicitly positioned his work as something too important to leave as the exclusive preserve of 'scientists and historians' and instead targeted his work at the 'banker, manufacturer, politician, farmer, professional man, or

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<sup>5.93</sup>Warren G. Harding, *Address of the President of the United States at the Celebration of the Semicentennial of the Founding of the City of Birmingham, Alabama* [Speech delivered 26 October 1921] (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1921), p.6

<sup>5.94</sup>F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p.13

<sup>5.95</sup>F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, p.46

wage-earner'.<sup>5.96</sup> This was unapologetic white supremacy packaged as science for the everyman, illustrating the dangers of claims to a science of international (or inter-imperial) relations in this period. The pages of popular science magazines, like *Scientific American*, bore advertisements for Stoddard's work.<sup>5.97</sup> That one such advertisement was printed adjacent to an advertisement for asbestos is an ironic reflection that scientific discourse is not static, but evolves over time.

Stoddard, proclaimed as 'a true expert on world affairs' of the 'soundest scientific training', became one of the first celebrity intellectuals of his generation.<sup>5.98</sup> To contextualise the immense public appeal of Stoddard's work at the time, it might be compared to a similarly popular present-day book, such as Yuval Noah Harari's *Sapiens*. Though of a very different nature in content and character, this is a work of popular science, recommended by the President (Obama rather than Harding) and widely celebrated by scores of generally liberal middle-class intellectuals. Stoddard was a Klansman, but he was also a Harvard doctoral graduate, which gave him the ability to espouse the same venomous rhetoric as his hooded peers but with a far greater degree of public respectability, whilst also being taken more seriously within the white academy. This was not, however, without sharp criticism from Black liberation movements or from W.E.B. Du Bois, who confronted Stoddard's white supremacy in a public debate.<sup>5.99</sup>

Nonetheless, Stoddard was far from an isolated figure in his day. There

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<sup>5.96</sup>Lothrop Stoddard, *Racial Realities in Europe*, pp.3-4

<sup>5.97</sup>Charles Scribner's Sons, 'The New World of Islam by Lothrop Stoddard' (Advertisement), *Scientific American*, 126.1 (1922), 75

<sup>5.98</sup>Charles Scribner's Sons, Three Books by Lothrop Stoddard (Advertisement), *TIME Magazine*, 1.1, 3 March 1923, p.29

<sup>5.99</sup>Negro World (Unsigned Editorial), 'Back to the Mayflower!' (1923). Reproduced in: Tony Martin (ed.), *African Fundamentalism: A Literary and Cultural Anthology of Garvey's Harlem Renaissance* (Dover, MA: Majority Press, 1991), 101-103 (p.102)

Fred Atkins Moore (chair), Lothrop Stoddard, and W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *Shall the Negro Be Encouraged to Seek Cultural Equality?: Report of a Debate Conducted by the Chicago Forum, 17 March 1929* (Chicago, IL: Chicago Forum, 1929)

have been suggestions that ‘Goddard’ in *The Great Gatsby* is an amalgam of names targeted at Stoddard and Madison Grant, known to the public at the time as ‘the apostle’ and ‘the prophet’ of ‘scientific racism’ respectively.<sup>5.100</sup> Grant was a fellow peddler of pseudo-scientific white supremacy whose poisonous blend of environmentalism, ethno-nationalism, and eugenics, coupled with his subsequent influence on right-wing figures like Adolf Hitler and Anders Breivik, earn him the unenviable claim to perhaps being the original forefather of eco-fascism.<sup>5.101</sup> Alongside the preface to Stoddard’s book, Grant wrote his own heavily racist works on white supremacy and world affairs that were well-received (albeit in the restrained ‘balanced’ terms characteristic of those influenced by the Round Table movement) in the pages of the *Journal of Race Development* and in the circles surrounding associated sections of the field.<sup>5.102</sup>

Whilst the direct connexion with the discipline that came to be known as IR might not immediately be apparent, and Stoddard would not have described himself as an IR scholar, it is impossible to detach the discipline from this earlier context of scientific racism that was inseparable from the discipline on both sides of the Atlantic. Stoddard himself was well connected within early US IR circles. His Ph.D. thesis, which declared in its preface that ‘the world-wide struggle between the primary races of mankind [...] bids fair to be the fundamental problem of the twentieth century’ was supervised by Archibald Cary Coolidge, a foundational figure in canonical US IR and a founding figure of the Council on

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<sup>5.100</sup>Mick Gidley, ‘Notes on F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Passing of the Great Race’, *Journal of American Studies*, 7.2 (1973), 171-181 (p.173)

Jonathan Peter Spiro, *Defending the Master Race: Conservation, Eugenics, and the Legacy of Madison Grant* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2009), p.173

<sup>5.101</sup>Sam Moore and Alex Roberts, *The Rise of Ecofascism: Climate Change and the Far Right* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022), pp.21-28

<sup>5.102</sup>G.H.B., ‘The Passing of the Great Race or the Racial Basis of European History. By Madison Grant’ (Review), *Journal of Race Development*, 8.1 (1917) 153-154

Foreign Relations.<sup>5.103</sup> To Stoddard, racial science was indistinguishable from the field of ‘world affairs’, a topic he wrote widely on, including with a monthly column in *The Century Magazine* from February to September 1922.<sup>5.104</sup> In the same year, the pages of this publication were shared by many of the other ‘pioneers’ of IR, including Alfred Zimmermann.<sup>5.105</sup>

Though Stoddard held a wider and more general audience than figures like Arnold White or Paul Reinsch and more established IR voices in the early 1920s, he should be considered no less a part of the disciplinary history in this period. Other figures within the emergent academic discipline saw the relevance of Stoddard’s work, and accordingly, it was regularly reviewed in the key publications of the day, including *International Affairs*.<sup>5.106</sup> In one case, the reviewer defended Stoddard’s views and concurred that ‘the balance of scientific evidence shows that the miscegenation of races’ would lead to ‘a disastrous deterioration’ and would create a ‘more bitter and more disastrous’ international system.<sup>5.107</sup> Again, the claim to scientificity is invoked to justify particular value statements about global order, based on an implied recognition that ‘scientific’ at least partially meant racial in this period.

It would be easy to dismiss the explicit white supremacy of Stoddard and other figures discussed in this chapter as symptomatic of a different era, with the implication that this might explain, if not justify, them. However, this is a dangerous historical assumption to entertain. That Transatlantic ‘Anglo-Saxonist’ IR emerged

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<sup>5.103</sup>T. Lothrop Stoddard, *The French Revolution in San Domingo* (Boston, MA and New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914)

<sup>5.104</sup>Lothrop Stoddard, ‘The Month in World Affairs’, *Century Magazine*, 104.1 (1922), 149-156

<sup>5.105</sup>Alfred E. Zimmermann, ‘The Convalescence of Europe’, *Century Magazine*, 103.3 (1922), 360-370

<sup>5.106</sup>C.A.M., ‘Reforging America. By Lothrop Stoddard’ (Review), *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 7.2 (1928), 143

<sup>5.107</sup>J.R.C., ‘Clashing Tides of Colour. By Lothrop Stoddard’, *International Affairs*, 14.4 (1935), 555-557 (p.557)

in this period is the product of a wide network of exercises of power. It is, after all, a discourse of power and order, shaped by powerful scholarly and administrative elites. If it was emblematic of its time, that is because it is part of a narrative that has survived where others have been silenced, in the Trouillotian sense. This was not the only discourse of the international taking in this era, or in this geographical context.

Black socialist and internationalist Hubert H. Harrison concurred with Stoddard that the global ‘color line’ would be the ‘problem of the twentieth century’, but instead suggested that studying the problems of international relations was the route to addressing the global racial inequality on which views like Stoddard’s were propped up.<sup>5.108</sup> That Harrison’s short editorial shared a page with discussions of the ongoing establishment of the League is a reminder that he was making these arguments at exactly the same time the Department of International Politics was being founded in Aberystwyth. At the same time as Davies and other wealthy white men were designing an institutionalised academic pursuit, working class African Americans in Harlem were being urged to confront the challenges surrounding international order. They were not only operating in the same intellectual space, but doing so using the same terms. Harrison had explicitly been theorising ‘international relations’ as early as 1921, while encouraging his readers to do the same to counteract existing theories that justified white supremacy.<sup>5.109</sup> That one of these is told as an IR origin story while the other remains largely forgotten indicates the role historical silencing plays in shaping the history and present of the discipline.

These histories are harder for disciplinary historians to access, and so the

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<sup>5.108</sup>Hubert H. Harrison, ‘Our Larger Duty’, *A Magazine for the New Negro*, 3.7 (1919), 5-6

<sup>5.109</sup>Hubert H. Harrison, ‘The Theory and Practice of International Relations Among Negro-Americans’, *Negro World*, 22 October 1921, 11.10, 6

cycle of silence is self-perpetuating. It is almost impossible to know, for instance, whether female African American activists like Williana Burroughs engaged in debates that can be associated with IR, for so little of the discourse in which she participated has been preserved. She was not a grandchild child of a wealthy industrialist like the Davies siblings, but the child of an enslaved woman, and the dynamics of power surrounding her were markedly different. Addressing silences such as this is a difficult task but it must be a future task of those willing to undertake critical disciplinary histories of IR if the discipline is to escape the boundaries of the scientific-imperial épistémè that constrains it in the present day.

## **Chapter 6: Kolonialwissenschaft: The German Science of Empire**

Of the entry points for silences in historical narratives that Trouillot identifies, the moment of retrospective significance or the making of history in the final instance is of key importance for the disciplinary history of IR and its relationship with science, reliant as it is on a particular historical mythology. As approaches to the historical sociology of IR become increasingly introspective, the legacies of imperialism that shape the discipline are being recentred and reconsidered. Critical discussions about the role of British imperialism in the development of IR are well underway. However, there remains a relative silence surrounding the role of German discourses of empire, science and the international, even though these coexisted with their British counterparts and in many cases overlapped. This chapter will attempt to write the role of German scholars, institutions, and debates back into IR's disciplinary history to illustrate that attempts to construct a 'science' of global order were not confined to the Anglophone world.

The interconnectivity between the British and US contexts discussed in the previous chapter with the rise of an 'Anglo-Saxon' racialised and scientificised IR demonstrates that the development of the discipline in the early twentieth century was far from a singular event that can be confined to specific individuals or dates. Instead, it was a complex and emergent phenomenon spanning geographical, temporal, and political contexts. The first half of the century saw an IR that was emerging as a science of empire across imperial frontiers. The final stage in unravelling and emphasising the trans-imperial nature of this science of empire before its post-war repackaging can be discussed is to broaden this yet further by incorporating the interconnectivity with the German context. This chapter will

seek to identify a thread running throughout and across the Wilhelmine period, the Weimar Republic, and into the onset of the Third Reich. In each of these eras, which cannot be considered rigid delimiters, it is possible to identify elements of an IR that presented itself as scientific but was heavily racialised and tied to ideas of domination and imperial (re-)ordering. In doing so, it will contribute to the historical recovery of a science of empire that spanned diverse frontiers. This was by no means a universal science, but conflicts and interactions within this diversity served as the engine that powered its dynamic evolution. Differences over the 'lessons' of this science contributed to the defining conflicts of twentieth century Europe and in this sense, interconnected discourses of science, history, and IR position the discipline as much more than an intellectual pursuit restricted exclusively to academics and scholarly institutions.

### **6.1 Mis-remembering German Imperialism: The Dangers of Historical Revisionism**

The absence of German imperialism in IR's disciplinary history is a major historical silence of a very different order to those identified by Trouillot and others working in anti-colonial traditions, but it is a silence nonetheless. That discussions of British liberal imperialism and American race science endure in IR, albeit in a limited sense, but comparatively little is discussed of their interactions with parallel German discourses of empire in the same period is telling of a discipline that has yet to convincingly engage with the trans-imperial connexions that shaped its historical evolution. Historical discussions of German imperialism are thus easy to co-opt and are left as the reserve of revisionists and apologists for the far right. Though the focus of this thesis is historical, that should not suggest that the use of scientific discourses to legitimise imperial logics is a thing of the past. As so-called culture wars are declared on multiple fronts in academia, the arguments made

today by self-identified right-wing academics, especially in the United States, are a reactivation of those made by their predecessors over a century ago and in this sense are a fragment of a particular history.

An emblematic example is Bruce Gilley, who laments that ‘overwhelmingly left-wing’ academics and ‘ideologically driven university bureaucracies’ have destroyed the potential for objective, value-free ‘scientific inquiry’.<sup>6.1</sup> In invoking this claim, Gilley uses the cover of supposedly objective and value-free ‘science’ to advance arguments that might have sat uncomfortably even a century ago. Gilley is best known for his revisionist defence of colonialism as a ‘beneficial’ and ‘legitimate’ civilising force advanced in a now withdrawn article in *Third World Quarterly*. Alongside rehabilitating imperialism, genocide, and slavery as both necessary and legitimate, Gilley goes further to advocate a return to colonialism, including the creation of new Western colonies.<sup>6.2</sup>

This is a fringe argument, and Gilley is not a major name in his field in the way as fellow imperial apologist Niall Ferguson. Ironically, if Gilley had not been ‘cancelled’ as he claims, few IR scholars would likely have heard of him. However, while Gilley is a contrarian whose scholarship thrives on attracting controversy, he is willing to carry the scientific-imperial approach to IR to its logical conclusion in a way that more mainstream counterparts are unable to. Utilising a particular claim to scientific method to justify hierarchical ordering of the world that was introduced into IR to legitimise empire and racial hierarchy will only lead to continued legitimisations of the same. Thus, when Gilley picks up the master’s tools, it should come as no surprise that he seeks to use them to rebuild the master’s house. In doing so, he eschews all talk of informal colonies, hegemony,

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<sup>6.1</sup>Bruce Gilley, ‘Taking Power in the Academy’, *First Things*, 301 (2020), 11-14 (p.11)

<sup>6.2</sup>Bruce Gilley, ‘The Case for Colonialism’, *Third World Quarterly* (2017: retracted). doi:10.1080/01436597.2017.1369037

and regime change that might be associated with present-day neo-imperialism in favour of a distinctly older model of empire. Instead of adapting the language in which his argument is expressed to the present political circumstances, he uses language from another era to justify a mode of ordering the world that has spanned each of these eras in varying forms.

Gilley's work marks a blatant reactivation of the 'scientific' justification of empire and hierarchy that IR was built around. He transplants arguments in defence of empire from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and legitimises them with claims to a supposedly timeless and objective science. Alongside a more familiar apologism for British imperialism, Gilley is an especially staunch apologist for the colonial rule of the German Empire. In part, his work is a redeployment of an old argument that German imperialism was an altogether more refined mode of empire concerned not with the moralistic platitudes of the liberal British, but with a more rational, scientific, industrialised imperialism fit for a modern age and ostensibly more beneficial to colonised populations. This argument was long been made by defenders and apologists for German imperial ambitions, not least by colonial administrators and ideologues in the early years of the twentieth century.

Over a century before Gilley's work, Paul Rohrbach had defended the German approach to 'handling natives, severe and at the same time just' on the basis that this was 'the right way for the Africans and superior to the English system of spoiling them'.<sup>6.3</sup> At the crux of this is a historically contingent dispute between British and German imperialism which is explored in this chapter. Nonetheless, Gilley's revisionism risks allowing for the revival of a 'scientific' justification for

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<sup>6.3</sup>Paul Rohrbach, *Die Hilfe*, 2 November 1916, p.718. Quoted in Edwyn Bevan, 'Introduction' in: Emil Zimmermann, *The German Empire of Central Africa* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1916), trans. by Edwyn Bevan, vii-lxii (p.xxii)

imperialism, particularly of the German model, with a much longer history.

It is therefore no surprise that Gilley's legitimisation of German colonialism has found its most zealous champions in the German far right, including the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party, to whom it is useful in the same way that eugenics and race science provided imperialists and fascists a century ago with a legitimisation for the world orders they sought to construct. When Gilley addressed AfD MdBs in the German Bundestag, his introduction insisted that the controversy surrounding him was unjustified, given that his work met 'all scientific standards'.<sup>6.4</sup> After affirming the scientific nature of his work, he put forward the provocatively-titled 'Case for German Colonialism', which combined familiar tirades against the so-called woke left with a brand of imperial apologism that would risk making Rhodes himself blush. Gilley, for instance, excuses the genocide of the Herero and Nama people as the personal actions of a rogue governor, explicitly denying that it was a genocide at all.<sup>6.5</sup> The ease with which Gilley's revisionist claims were weaponised by the AfD as a value-free justification for their own policies of historical revisionism illustrates a very practical danger of purportedly objective 'scientific' conceptions of IR and international history.

Gilley's arguments were used by the AfD to launch a motion in the Bundestag on the same day calling for a rehabilitation of the German colonial

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<sup>6.4</sup>Bruce Gilley, 'The Case for German Colonialism (Die Vorteile des deutschen Kolonialismus)', Talk delivered in the AfD-Fraktionssaal in the German Bundestag, 11 December 2019

<sup>6.5</sup>Bruce Gilley, *In Defense of German Colonialism: And How its Critics Empowered Nazis, Communists, and the Enemies of the West* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2022), [ebook, no pagination].

'there was no genocide in German Southwest Africa, not even close. Nor do any of the other alleged "colonial crimes" of Germany like the Maji Maji or the Sokehs counterinsurgency campaigns fit that description'

past.<sup>6.6</sup> It is no coincidence that, in this motion, the AfD coupled Gilley's 'scientific' arguments with the language of antisemitic conspiracy theories. The motion claims that anti-colonialism is a product of 'kulturmarxistisch' (cultural Marxist) influences, directly echoing the warnings of 'kulturbolschewismus' (cultural Bolshevism) deployed by their Nazi predecessors to justify the persecution of Jewish people, communists, and designated intellectuals.<sup>6.7</sup> This illustrates the dangers of historical revisionism, which is not a matter of abstract debate confined to universities. The discourses IR scholars choose to engage with and amplify have real and tangible impacts on the surrounding world and the people within it. Thus, IR scholars do not have the luxury of confining themselves to the academy: they are inherently political actors and must at the very least be aware of their positionality.

It ought to be questioned whether such views should be used to open a chapter of a thesis that seeks to address historical imbalances in the disciplinary history of IR. However, Gilley has been included because it is imperative that a critical Fachgeschichte of IR engages not only with central canonical figures, but also with the apparent extremes or excesses that betray an underlying logic extending far wider than the reach of individual articles and talks by 'rogue' scholars like Gilley. There are plenty of orthodox IR scholars who advance the same argument in more moderate terms, Gilley simply articulates this as more explicit imperial apologism. Proponents of hegemonic stability theory, for instance, see a predominant state actor that can mould the world in its image as the only guarantee of stability and economic order. That such theorists

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<sup>6.6</sup>Fraktion der AfD, Die deutsche Kolonialzeit kulturpolitisch differenziert aufarbeiten ('Reappraise the German colonial era in a culturally and politically differentiated way'), Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 19/15784, 11 December 2019. <https://dserver.bundestag.de/btd/19/157/1915784.pdf>

<sup>6.7</sup>AfD, Die deutsche Kolonialzeit kulturpolitisch differenziert aufarbeiten, p.9

traditionally model the ideal hegemon on the role of 'Britain in the late nineteenth century' when the Empire was at its zenith is no coincidence.<sup>6.8</sup> By hegemon, they are referring to an empire in all but name. Whether this is a formal territorial empire of the sort defended by Gilley, or the more informal economic, political, and cultural empire associated with the twentieth century United States, the principle remains the same: both are structures of domination and order. It is necessary not to dismiss Gilley and his ilk as fringe academics but to critically situate their ideas in the wider context of the discipline and its history.

Gilley's most noticeable overlap with more mainstream IR scholars is in his use of a claim to a 'scientific' objectivity to legitimise his work and his arguments. He can draw on a long line of predecessors in deploying this. To attack supposed left-wing bias in academia, for instance, Gilley quotes a 1907 article by A. Lawrence Lowell's predecessor as President of Harvard University, Charles W. Eliot, which made a similar call for academics to remain free to espouse whatever views they chose, detached from political concerns.<sup>6.9</sup> Like Lowell, and other members of a generation of scholars whose legacy is now invoked by self-proclaimed crusaders against 'woke' academia, Eliot was a committed eugenicist. He insisted, for instance, that it was 'not desirable' for Americans to 'assimilate any foreign people'.<sup>6.10</sup> Fifteen years earlier, he had similarly addressed the so-called 'negro problem', claiming that as black people were only 'a few decades removed' from barbarism, they could not be treated on an equal footing for another '500 or 1000 years'.<sup>6.11</sup> That Gilley chooses to situate his work in the tradition of eugenicists like Eliot is telling. The claim to 'scientific'

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<sup>6.8</sup>Michael C. Webb and Stephen D. Krasner, 'Hegemonic Stability Theory: An Empirical Assessment', *Review of International Studies*, 15.2 (1989), 183-98

<sup>6.9</sup>Charles W. Eliot, 'Academic Freedom', *Science*, 26.653 (1907), 1-12

<sup>6.10</sup>'Dr Eliot Urges Jews to Uphold Traditions', *New York Times*, 13 December 1924, p.2

<sup>6.11</sup>'Dr Eliot Favours Racial Dead Line', *New York Times*, 15 March 1909, p.3

objectivity deployed by Gilley and his predecessors alike is particularly suited to the justifications of racism, exploitation, and white supremacy that they espouse as it lends the otherwise unpalatable a renewed legitimacy. Eliot sought to deny the partisan character of his views by rooting them in his individual empirical experience, while Gilley anchors his historical revisionism in similar claims that the past should be detached from present-day ideologies and prejudices.

Despite the framing utilised by defenders of colonialism and white supremacy then and now, claims to a ‘scientific’ character should not be taken to suggest any degree of universality. Nor should Gilley’s invocation of historical scholars be taken as an excuse to treat views like Eliot’s as simply the product of a different time. Eliot was condemned in his own era for his ignorance and ‘iniquitous prejudice’ in the pages of an African American newspaper, which declared his views ‘unmindful of history and of fact’.<sup>6.12</sup> The claim to a balanced scientific objectivity falls flat when challenged in this way, as critics of so-called race science were aware in Eliot’s day. The newspaper, the *Baltimore Afro-American*, which challenged white eugenicists like Eliot a century ago, held as its motto ‘independent in all things: neutral in nothing’, posing a direct challenge to the myth of fact as ideologically neutral.<sup>6.13</sup>

The type of history that Gilley purports to write, somehow detached from positionality, is impossible. As such, the deployment of ‘science’ as a cover for this is dangerous, and it is important that such attempts are challenged wherever they arise. Despite whatever claims they might make to a balanced scientific approach, neither Gilley, nor Eliot, nor any present-day IR scholar or historian can be neutral. However, this is far from a weakness of the discipline, but when

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<sup>6.12</sup>‘Should Races Intermarry?’, *Baltimore Afro-American*, 3 January 1925, p.16

<sup>6.13</sup>*Baltimore Afro-American*, 3 January 1925, p.16

recognised, can be its greatest strength. This makes critical histories possible and allows for the exploration of the past from different perspectives. Therefore, like the *Baltimore Afro-American*, historians and IR scholars alike should recognise and embrace an approach to disciplinary history that is ‘neutral in nothing’. It is the very non-neutrality of history that allows for a diversity of narratives and approaches and thus makes histories useful. If a neutral, all-encompassing, objective history could ever exist, there would be no need for historians. Instead, positionality is the engine of history. Dialectical engagement with histories that contradict one another allows for a process of introspective narrative development and ultimately produces more critically engaged histories.

This thesis is an attempt to construct a critical history of IR and acknowledges from the outset that it is avowedly anti-imperial. It thus shares little in common with Gilley’s work. However, given its non-neutral positionality in this relationship between past and present, even Gilley’s work remains useful for identifying silences in the disciplinary history of IR as it is a fragment containing significant echoes of old discourses that are now rarely engaged with in either a historical sense, or in the context of IR theory. German imperialism is a missing element in the disciplinary history of IR and leaving it as such surrenders it to scholars like Gilley who would seek to invoke its legacy and exonerate its excesses. Gilley’s revisionism of German imperial history is possible only because of a wider reluctance among historians, scholars, and practitioners alike to engage with German imperialism. This is not a complete silence and historians including Shelley Baranowski, Erik Grimmer-Solem, and, as editors of a collection, Nina Berman, Klaus Mühlhahn, and Patrice Nganang have engaged with German imperialism in a more critical way in recent years.<sup>6.14</sup> Fewer IR scholars, however,

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<sup>6.14</sup>Shelley Baranowski, *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

have incorporated discussions of German imperialism into disciplinary histories. Far less attention is afforded to German imperialism than its British counterpart. This thesis argues that both are of similar significance in the disciplinary history of IR, and both contributed to the emergence of a ‘science of empire’ by the mid-twentieth century, in concert with their counterparts in the United States.

## 6.2 Methodological Considerations

Like each chapter of this thesis, this chapter is presented with limitations. Many of these are common to the entire process and are a symptom of the wider process of writing history, such as the imbalance of voices in the extant archive. Others, however, arise as a product of the contextual focus of the chapter. This chapter suffers most acutely, given that its focus is the role played by German scholars, institutions, and political events in the development of a trans-imperial science of empire. As such, unlike previous chapters on the emergence of IR as a science of empire in the British Empire and the United States, most sources relied upon in this chapter are written in German. This poses particular challenges to a researcher who is neither a fluent speaker of the German language nor a resident of Germany. Though a limitation affecting this thesis, it is not unique to it. As Geoffrey Parker highlights, a historian of the Thirty Years War seeking only to utilise the existing documentary archival material would require a reading familiarity with at least 15 languages, ranging from Latinised High German and Swedish to Aragonese and Court Persian.<sup>6.15</sup> This is an all but impossible task, but should not discourage the historian from engaging with a diverse range of examples and

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Erik Grimmer-Solem, *Learning Empire: Globalization and the German Quest for World Status, 1875-1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019)

Nina Berman, Klaus Mühlhahn, and Patrice Nganang, *German Colonialism Revisited: African, Asian, and Oceanic Experiences* (University of Michigan Press, 2018)

<sup>6.15</sup>Geoffrey Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, second edition (London: Routledge, 1997), p.xiv

archives. Nonetheless, this must come with a recognition of the positionality inherent in the process of historical writing. Analysis of German source material requires more work and requires a greater awareness of what might otherwise be an implicit cultural context.

Excluding a brief period in Franconia in the summer of 2023, the entire process of producing this thesis, from inception to submission, has taken place in Britain. It is thus shaped most heavily by this geographical and political context and will therefore display a methodological bias towards both British primary sources, as these are inherently the easiest to access, and the English language, in which the thesis has been written. Recognising this and acknowledging that the thesis is an exploration of a trans-imperial science of empire that centres the British context above others is a necessary step before proceeding. That does not make it less valid as a work of historical analysis but instead illustrates the role the relationship between the historian and their subject plays in all historical writing.

To mitigate this, methodological and presentational steps have been taken. Where a German language source has been used and a translated title is required, this can be found in the associated footnote. Where a quote translated into English by the author is included, the original German quoted text can similarly be found in the footnotes. In some cases, sources used are historic translations of works published previously. In other cases, differences in the bibliographic details of a translated work and the original have been used to offer contextual insight, such as with Friedrich Naumann's *Mitteleuropa*. In these cases, the original and the translation have been cited as separate sources.

Beyond translation barriers, the additional difficulty posed by distance is that access to German sources has been limited to those available in the UK or online. Nonetheless, this distance is occasionally surmountable. The

wider German reckoning with colonial pasts has taken on a different character to that in Britain, but in general German institutions and bodies have proven better committed to digitising relevant archives. Some sources, such as course syllabi in ‘Colonial Science’ from the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster, are more readily available than their British or US counterparts as a result. The consequence is that a broad range of primary sources can be coupled with a wider body of secondary literature to produce an exploration of the trans-imperial evolution of IR. Beyond individual British, US, or German stories, the result allows for the integration of multiple perspectives on an interconnected and emergent phenomenon. IR, as the ‘science of empire’, did not emerge in one context but across the intersections between multiple. The German context explored in this chapter is just one of those, but is presented as an integral one, in concert with the British and US contexts explored in the other chapters.

### **6.3 King or Kaiser: Liberal internationalism and Anglo-German Imperial Rivalry**

Much has been made of the centrality of the year 1919 to disciplinary mythologies of IR, as discussed throughout this thesis. It is taken for granted that the Great War, especially its end, was a formative moment for the new discipline and marked a clear break from IR’s nineteenth century pre-history. However, intra-imperial conflicts were hardly rare in Europe prior to the twentieth century, even during the so-called ‘long peace’ of the Concert era.<sup>6.16</sup> What set the Great War apart was its nature as a war fought over competing visions of imperial order and not over the future of individual empires, but the future of imperialism itself.

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<sup>6.16</sup>It has been convincingly suggested that this ‘long peace’ can instead be framed as a ‘long war’, especially from the perspective of those colonised and suppressed by the European empires. Sheldon Anderson, ‘Metternich, Bismarck, and the Myth of the “Long Peace”, 1815–1914’, *Peace and Change*, 32.3 (2007), 301-28. doi:10.1111/j.1468-0130.2007.00443.x

This was no war between armies in any conventional sense, with mass mobilisation of civilian populations and industries required to sustain the scale of the fighting. Despite the modern state-centric international order it is associated with inaugurating, it would be equally inaccurate to describe the Great War as a conflict between states. Instead, this was a war between empires. Not only was the entire apparatus of the state mobilised for conflict, but so too were entire imperial resources, populations, and powers. This central imperial focus defined both the landscape and combatants of the conflict and set the Great War apart as a global imperial war, even if the locus of the outbreak was Europe. Contrary to the popular image of the conflict as one between Pickelhaube-sporting Germans fighting British Tommies in trenches in the fields of Flanders, the colonial dimension of the Great War cannot be ignored. Within the opening months of the war, for instance, East African Askaris of the German colonial Schutztruppe fought against South Asians of the British Indian Army in the Battle of Tanga. Most combatants in engagements such as this were drawn from the colonised populations of the respective empires.<sup>6.17</sup> Thus, it would be inaccurate to describe the Great War as a war of the traditional type associated with pre-twentieth century Europe which was defined by continental conflicts with a secondary global dimension. The War of the Austrian Succession between 1740 and 1748, for instance, was fought over dynastic squabbles in Europe, but resulted in fighting as far afield as South Asia and North America. Instead, in the Great War, the global dimension was no longer secondary. This was a conflict fought not only between European conscripts in Europe, but between colonised populations in colonised territories well beyond the European mainland. The two were interconnected so

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<sup>6.17</sup> Only one British Regular Army unit served in East Africa during the entire course of the war, the Second Battalion of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment  
Harold Carmichael Wylly, *The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment*, vol. 2, 1914-1919 (London: Royal United Services Institution, 1933), pp.75-7

fundamentally as to be inseparable, and this is rooted in the overall struggle over which the Great War was waged.

Beyond a war between quarrelling European dynasties, the Great War was the defining imperial struggle between different modes of empire. Elements of this argument are as old as the war itself, but are rarely connected directly to the emergence of debates around IR. As early as 1915, Alexandra Kollontaï denounced the war as one ‘waged in the name of the “right” of the great powers to oppress as many possible alien peoples and to rob as many possible colonies’.<sup>6.18</sup> Vladimir Lenin expanded this into his famous critique of the war as one that was ‘imperialistic [...] on the part of both sides’ and fought over ‘the partition and repartition of colonies’, which was penned later in the conflict.<sup>6.19</sup> However, this is only one dimension of the dynamic connecting imperialism and the conflict. Though no doubt a contributing factor, there is a counter-productive reductionism in viewing the war as one concerned only with territorial and economic expansion, motivated by a capitalist pursuit of new markets to exploit on the part of the ‘great powers’. Instead, it is possible to take this further. The war was not fought only over the issue of imperial expansion, but over the very nature of empire and the legitimacy of different modes of imperial rule.

It is tempting to take imperialism as a homogenous and universal historical term. This is a particular generalisation that is entirely applicable and legitimate in certain cases. It is appropriate to speak, for instance, of the brutal impact of European imperialism on the indigenous peoples of the Americas. However, historical narratives are necessarily granular and bounded by the blurring that

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<sup>6.18</sup>Alexandra Kollontaï, ‘Who Needs the War?’ in: *Selected Articles and Speeches*, trans. by Cynthia Carlile (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1984), 75-91 (p.84)

<sup>6.19</sup>Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), p.9

must be applied to render them interpretable. Though practical in some cases, in others this serves to mask the contradictions within imperialism as a general term and the role interactions *between* imperialisms played in shaping an emergent and adaptive discourse of empire in a historical sense. IR has generally treated pre-war imperialism discontinuously, if it all: as a catch-all term, centred implicitly on the British Empire but encompassing the imperialism of the French, Dutch, German, Spanish, and beyond.<sup>6.20</sup> Nonetheless, it is necessary to problematise this to recentre the contradiction and conflict within European imperialism and explore its defining implications for the disciplinary history of IR. Interactions between modes of imperialism were not always mutually supportive of but instead were marked by violent contradiction. However, it was from this contradiction the strongest legitimisation for imperialism arose with the trans-imperial emergence of a science of empire, shaped in part by interactions that were rooted in this intra-imperialist conflict waged not over principles, but over methods.

In the final year of the Great War, a report on colonialism in South-West Africa was published by the British Government in London. For an official publication, it is heavily critical in condemning excesses of colonial rule, especially against the native populations of occupied African territories.<sup>6.21</sup> As ironic as this appears from a British Empire that had colonised much of the globe, its central focus was in keeping with the preoccupation of British policy at the time. It is critical not of colonialism, but colonialism done improperly, taking as its target the apparent unreserved cruelty of German administrators and colonial settlers that set the German model of imperialism apart from its more respectable British equivalent. This was a defining contradiction in the early twentieth

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<sup>6.20</sup> Leong Yew, *The Disjunctive Empire of International Relations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp.25-6

<sup>6.21</sup> *Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1918)

century, rooted in the distinction between British visions of imperialism and their German counterparts. British imperialists were not alone in this, and parallel German reports circulated at the same time documenting perceived British and French transgressions in the German colonies under their wartime occupation (specifically against the white settler populations).<sup>6.22</sup> Absent in all of this are the voices of the colonised populations themselves. Despite the operational reports and criticisms of respective colonial policy, the contradiction between competing modes of imperialism was structured more as a high-level debate about competing visions of imperial order than of a genuine concern for the welfare of the people suffering under colonial occupation. This debate was the defining interaction between British and German imperialism, one of conflict and tension, and it would come to create the context in which post-war IR developed and evolved.

The distinction between the two became a common feature of discourse well beyond the borders of either empire during the war. For example, a pamphlet published in the United States in 1915 and penned semi-anonymously on behalf of the Irish republican movement, sought to outline the distinction between the British and German models, illustrating the global dimensions of the contradiction between the two. Designed for a US audience, it presents the British Empire as a distinctly English one, 'created by Oliver Cromwell' and ruled in an indifferent, almost pragmatic, manner with imperial policy designed only to serve the interests of England regardless of any moral considerations.<sup>6.23</sup> The German Empire, on

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<sup>6.22</sup>Reichs-Kolonialamt, *Verhalten der englischen und der unter englischem Oberbefehl stehenden französischen Truppen gegen die weiße Bevölkerung der deutschen Schutzgebiete Kamerun und Togo* (Behaviour of the English and French troops under English command against the white population of the German protectorates of Cameroon and Togo) (Berlin: E.S. Mittler und Sohn, 1916)

<sup>6.23</sup>P.J.R. (possibly Patrick James Ruttledge), *British versus German Imperialism: A Contrast* (New York, Neutral Publishing Company, 1915)

the other hand, is presented as one bound together by geographical unity and racial homogeneity, echoing both pre-war conceptions of *Mitteleuropa* and the expansionist racial supremacist visions that would later be enacted under the Third Reich. In contrast to a British Empire spread across the globe, the German Empire is framed as a territorially contiguous unit, with a population that was not necessarily completely racially uniform but was still sustained by ties based on an imagined racial kinship.

As this presentation of the German Empire as one bound by a duty to its constituent peoples and unified in some imagined racial or territorial brotherhood suggests, this is taken from an account sympathetic to German imperialism. It is a polemic piece, whose tone betrays the Irish republican background of its author as someone who was directly resisting British imperialism and occupation, and thus was more inclined to romanticise German imperialism as the lesser evil. Nonetheless, this framing of the conflict between approaches to imperialism inverts the traditional presentation of a liberal, moralistic British imperialism constituted in contrast to its cold, rational German counterpart. In doing so, it illustrates that the divide between the modes of imperialism was not as rigid as might appear. Though a moralistic British imperialism could be presented as a kinder, more benevolent alternative to a callous and systematic German colonial order by British liberal imperialists, a modernised 'scientific' German imperialism could similarly be presented as a counterweight to the self-serving colonial rule of the British. This was the approach taken by German imperialist scholars from the last decades of the nineteenth century onwards, who in developing what might be called a 'pre-IR' discourse, sought to emphasise the scientific character of German imperialism.

This clash between modes of colonial rule made it into public discourse,

as embodied by a cartoon from the colonial special issue of the German satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* in 1904 (Figure 6.1).<sup>6.24</sup> It purports to depict the differences between the colonial powers (*Kolonialmächte*). The German coloniser, grey as to be almost imperceptible, affixes a muzzle to a crocodile while giraffes are drilled to march in unison in a highly ordered Prussian *Stechschritt* (the ‘goose-step’ in the Anglophone world). The German mode of colonialism is presented as rigidly ordered, with the giraffes in the background clearly numbered and neatly ordered like a catalogue of scientific specimens. The panel depicting German colonialism is the only one devoid of colonised people. It features only animals and the German colonisers, as if the native Africans are entirely absent or irrelevant to the process. The ‘English’ mode of colonisation is presented in stark contrast. The pith-helmeted Englishman wrings gold coins out of an African native, while a Scotsman forcibly imbibes him with whiskey, and a Christian missionary reads verses from the Bible. Here captured through German eyes is the hypocrisy of moralistic British imperialism, preaching civilisation as it ruthlessly exploits.

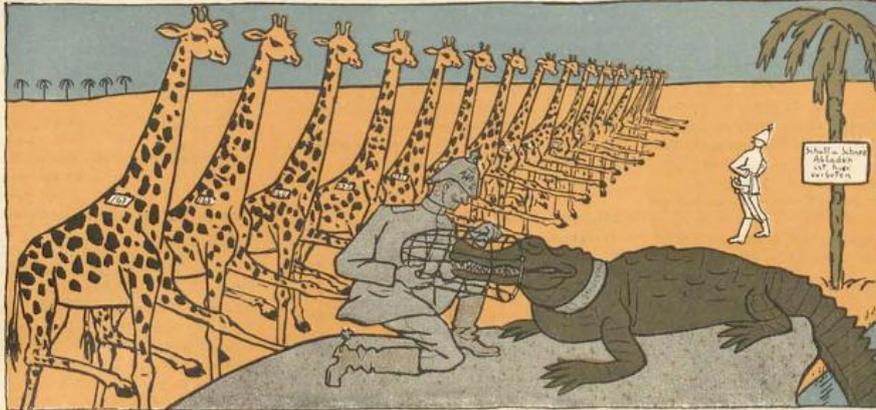
Meanwhile, the smaller panels offer similarly unsympathetic depictions of the ‘lesser’ colonialism of the other European powers in Africa. French legionnaires seduce black African women as a mixed-race child looks on, whereas the Belgian, resembling Leopold II, cannibalises an African man who he has roasted over a fire and beheaded. The inescapable focus of this cartoon is the comparison between modes of colonial rule. At the crux of this is a clash between science with no pretensions of moral benevolence as embodied by the German model, and exploitation under the banner of paternalism, captured best by the British approach to colonialism. In caricatured form, decades before the formalisation of the academic discipline, *Simplicissimus* provides an

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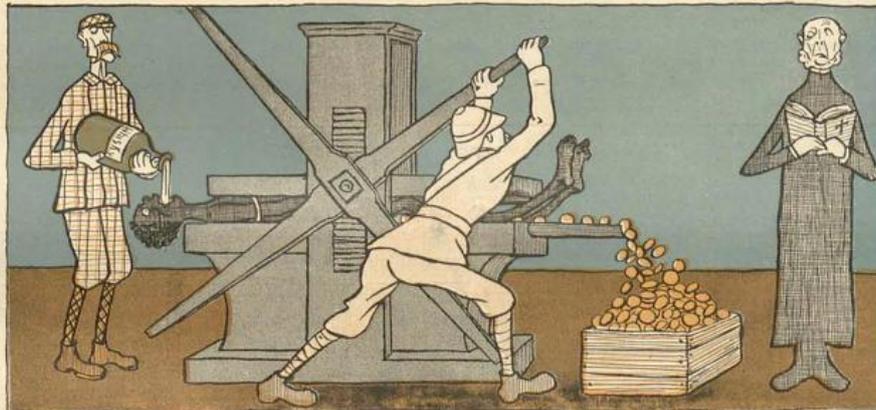
<sup>6.24</sup>Thomas Theodor Heine, ‘Kolonialmächte’ (Colonial Powers), *Simplicissimus*, 9.6 (1904), p.55

# Kolonialmächte

(Zeichnungen von Th. Th. Heine)



So kolonisiert der Deutsche.



So kolonisiert der Engländer.



So der Franzose



und so der Belgier.

Figure 6.1: 'Kolonialmächte' (Colonial Powers), a cartoon by Thomas Theodor Heine in *Simplicissimus*, 1904

early depiction of what would become IR's defining 'great debate'. The German coloniser wields power to manifest order. He is acting in his own interest as the distance from the absent African natives suggests, but with the implication that this is also ultimately in the interest of the colonised. He is thus presented in stark contrast to other European colonisers, absent of the implied hypocrisy of British imperialism, sentimentality of French imperialism, and cruelty of Belgian imperialism. To borrow the language of Morgenthau and the classical realists, the *Simplicissimus* cartoon, sardonic as it may be, presents the actions of the German coloniser as the embodiment of 'interest defined in terms of power', detached from the 'moral excess' and 'political folly' that his fellow European colonisers are susceptible to.<sup>6.25</sup> In another context, the German coloniser might therefore cut the figure of the ideal post-war realist, with the European intra-imperialist rivalries foreshadowing the emergence of the canonical first debate in subsequent decades.

As an artefact of the historical dynamics that allowed for the emergence of IR as a discipline of empire, the first 'great debate' continues to carry hidden echoes of this contradiction within imperialism through to the present. Though few IR scholars would root this directly or explicitly in imperialism, its historical genealogy can be traced to a conflict over modes of imperial order emerging from the era of 'new imperialism'. In this interaction between British and German discourses of empire, the genesis can be identified of what would evolve into one of the defining myths of IR's historical sociology in the first of the so-called great debates. This is enshrined in IR's disciplinary history as a defining formative encounter between realism and idealism (or liberalism) that remains the starting point for introductory IR courses well beyond Europe. Much has been written

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<sup>6.25</sup>Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, second edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), p.10

on the significance of this debate and whether it was ever resolved, if it even took place at all. It is a disciplinary myth that has been problematised from various perspectives since the turn of the twenty-first century. For example, Peter Wilson argues that the realist/idealist dichotomy was a straw-man constructed by E.H. Carr as a rhetorical device to legitimise the ‘science’ of IR that he sought to construct, while Quirk and Vigneswaran position it as a ‘half-truth’ that only captures a partial historical picture.<sup>6.26</sup> Lucian Ashworth similarly challenges the disciplinary mythology by arguing that any foundational debate did not involve realism at all, but instead refers to an era in which a dominant liberal internationalism was threatened by socialist critiques in Britain and by isolationists in the United States.<sup>6.27</sup>

Aspects of each of these critiques of the first great debate can be brought together in a historical reframing of the encounter as a fragment of a historical silence. The rigid traditional division of the field into realist and idealist strains can be rooted in its close associations with the inter-war work of Carr, as Wilson and others suggest. Similarly, though the deployment of the realism versus idealism dichotomy as a retroactive construction positions it as event that occurs only in IR’s disciplinary mythology, it does capture fragments of the surrounding context in Western European and US IR in the interwar years, even if these are lost in the traditional framing of IR’s evolution through a series of great debates. It is a remnant of a wider clash between modes of empire, since written out of the

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<sup>6.26</sup>Peter Wilson, ‘The Myth of the “First Great Debate”’, *Review of International Studies*, 24.5 (1998), 1–16. doi:10.1017/S0260210598000011

Joel Quirk and Darshan Vigneswaran, ‘The Construction of an Edifice: The Story of a First Great Debate’, *Review of International Studies*, 31.1 (2005), 89-107 (p.91). doi:10.1017/S0260210505006315

<sup>6.27</sup>Lucian M. Ashworth, ‘Did the Realist-Idealist Great Debate Really Happen? A Revisionist History of International Relations’, *International Relations*, 16.1 (2002), 33-51. doi:10.1177/0047117802016001004

disciplinary history.

### **6.3.1 Narrative Disentanglement**

As historical narratives are coarse-grained, the process of constructing them is necessarily one of assembling fragments of a particular past. Through the selectivity required by the impossibility of producing all-encompassing histories and the need to render historical narratives coherent, some fragments are included and others excluded. However, those excluded from narratives do not cease to be part of history. A narrative cannot exist independently of the silences that constitute it, and thus that which is absent is as integral as that which is present. In this, it is possible to identify a phenomenon of narrative entanglement, mirroring the concept of quantum entanglement drawn from physics that so troubled Einstein in the 1930s. This is by no means a perfect metaphor for the process of historical narrative construction, but it is a helpful frame through which to conceptualise the relationship between narrative and silence in a historical context. Entanglement refers to the relationality that exists between two systems that interact and subsequently separate. If knowledge of only one of these systems is retained and all direct knowledge of the other is lost, observation of one can allow for knowledge of the other to be inferred, or recovered, through a process of disentanglement.<sup>6.28</sup> Narrative disentanglement would therefore require the identification of absences in a historical narrative in order to make possible the recovery of fragments of the context that shaped it, but that were largely not preserved in the process of narrative construction.

Disentanglement in the context of the first great debate requires the

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<sup>6.28</sup>Erwin Schrödinger, 'Discussion of Probability Relations Between Separated Systems', *Mathematical Proceedings of the Cambridge Philosophical Society*, 31.4 (1935), 555–63 (p.555)

resituating of the theoretical strands it seeks to capture in the historical period it pertains to. Even if the first great debate never took place, at least along the lines enshrined in traditional Western accounts of IR's evolution, there remains the question of from where the disciplinary mythology surrounding it arose. To reconcile this and resituate this disciplinary myth in the context of IR as the science of empire, this debate must be resituated as a legacy of encounters between competing visions of imperial order. This context was stripped away with the repackaging of the discipline after the war into a field detached from its imperial origins, which rendered the linear narrative of a great debate between competing theoretical strands a historical possibility. In this battle, British imperialism is remembered as victorious, leading to the reform movement associated with the League of Nations Union and similar liberal imperialist circles, and yet curiously, it is realism that is considered to have formed the basis of the post-war discipline, especially in a US context. Ashworth's critique of the debate as one that instead concerned liberal internationalism and challenges to its dominance can explain some elements of this apparent discrepancy. Under this lens, the triumph of realism is a retroactive construction intended to justify the dominance after 1945 of IR as a non-normative science detached from its pre-war historical context, and specifically its associations with German colonial order.

In this, two fragments of the historical context that gave rise to the myth of the first great debate can be identified: one that has endured, in the claims of realism to a 'scientific' character, and one that has been silenced, in the relationship between liberal internationalism and imperialism. The first can be traced in part to Carr, who adopted the term realism for his approach out of a conscious attempt to claim a scientific character to both his theories and the discipline he saw himself contributing to. Carr defined realism as the period in 'the development of a science' that 'marks the end of its utopian period' with the

recognition that the observer is 'powerless to influence or alter' the world they seek to describe.<sup>6.29</sup> In doing so, Carr positions his approach to IR theory in a distinctly scientific tradition. For post-war theorists of IR, especially in a US context, who sought to invoke a similar detached and 'objective' scientific lineage, realism thus provided an appropriate theoretical starting point from which to construct a new orthodoxy, regardless of how closely their theories matched those marked with the same label in earlier decades. As the above quotation suggests, Carr's realism was historically contingent, defined in relation to the historical stages in the development of a discipline that preceded and followed it. The imprecision of the term in later years is a consequence of the shift away from this historical grounding.

An enduring legacy of the 'first great debate' is the vague and evasive nature of the terms realism and idealism in mainstream IR theory. As discussed in the introductory chapters, these are broad, catch-all terms that are applied inconsistently and do not refer to narrow and well-defined paradigms of thought, despite continuing to be invoked to serve this purpose. This too can be considered a fragment of a forgotten element of IR's disciplinary history, dating back to a time when realism and idealism were deployed as rhetorical tools, rather than markers of self-contained schools of thought or theories, as post-war disciplinary histories of IR would suggest. Realism and idealism were not theories in the sense they are now imagined but claims to a particular legitimacy that could be invoked by scholars of all ideological traditions. Realism, at least in the interwar era, was rooted not in realpolitik, but in a scientific realism, tied heavily to philosophies of science.

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<sup>6.29</sup>Edward Hallet Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: MacMillan, 1939), p.10

Part of the reason the realist tradition is so broad is that it is variably traced to realpolitik, but to Carr, invoking the term in an IR context was instead intended to root his work and the field in a scientific lineage, drawing on a scientific realism rather than an outwardly political one. His precursors in this were not Bismark and Hobbes, but early twentieth century philosophers and historians of science. Carr deliberately framed IR as a science, not only anchoring it in the same tradition as medical science but formulating realism through explicitly scientific metaphors. On this note, he likened idealism to alchemy, noting that historic structures of capitalist expansion produced a need for more gold, which spawned the field of alchemy, once considered a legitimate scientific pursuit in mediæval Europe.<sup>6.30</sup> When this failed to produce the anticipated results, it became clear that a more 'realistic' approach to physical science was necessary, and alchemy was abandoned in favour of more familiar variants of material science. According to Carr, this was the position IR found itself in at the end of the interwar period. The alchemists of liberal idealism needed to be supplanted by a colder, more 'scientific' realism better suited to the pressures of the age. Thus, the term realist as used in the present-day has its origins in a distinctly scientificised conception of knowledge production in relation to global affairs, as do self-described realist traditions in contemporary IR.

Carr was not opposed to idealism in and of itself. After all, without alchemy there could have been no Newton. He was openly sympathetic to its aim of building a new world but instead argued that the material conditions in a global context at the time were not suited to this. This is what Paul Howe draws on in identifying a utopian element to Carr's realism.<sup>6.31</sup> Carr presented IR as a

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<sup>6.30</sup>E.H. Carr, *Twenty Years Crisis*, pp.8-9

<sup>6.31</sup>Paul Howe, 'The Utopian Realism of E.H. Carr', *Review of International Studies*, 20.3 (1994), 277-297

dynamic field, much like a 'natural' science, and recognised the transitive nature of theories within this context. He was thus opposed to universalism, and Carr's realism is therefore far removed from the detached obstinacy associated with later 'structural realists' who would claim Carr's legacy. Instead, Carr presented the development of a science as an almost linear progression that would see periods of idealism followed and counteracted by periods of realism, echoing orthodox Marxist visions of the stages of economic development. The terms realism and idealism alike thus become delimiters of particular intellectual climates which make a claim to a scientific legitimacy, rather than the diametrically opposed schools of thought presented in narratives of a first 'great debate'.

To further illustrate the complexity of these terms and their sometimes-contradictory usage in this period, it is possible to turn to Norman Angell, who in Carr's eyes was the idealist par excellence and who is widely remembered as such within the discipline. In his unambiguously-titled polemic 'Prussianism and its Destruction' published early in the Great War, he charges Germans with an idealism of their own for their belief in the crude 'ideal' that by becoming 'master of Europe, and so the world, and [imposing German] culture thereon', the German Empire would be better placed to make its citizens 'better off as the subject of a great empire than as the subject of a small one'.<sup>6.32</sup> Here, the arch-idealist Angell can dismiss *realpolitik* as idealist, and the arch-realist Carr can show idealist sympathies of his own. The boundaries between the two thus appear less rigid than orthodox disciplinary histories of IR in interwar Europe might suggest.

In this sense, Carr's formulation of 'realism' can be recovered not as a statement of theoretical principles but as a claim about the very nature of the

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<sup>6.32</sup>Norman Angell, *Prussianism and its Destruction* (London: William Heinemann, 1914), pp.9-10

discipline. He sought to present IR as a distinctly scientific endeavour, rooted firmly in the historical and philosophical tradition of other sciences. Scholars remembered as idealist shared this, and thus the realist versus idealist dichotomy falls away in the context of a far broader science of empire that united the two foundational ‘theories’. Disentangling historical narratives of this dichotomy from the past they purport to represent leaves two fragments that have largely been left out of the orthodox disciplinary history. These are claims to a scientific legitimacy and a preoccupation with empire, core features of the discipline of IR throughout much of its history, but ones that are not always afforded the centrality that befits them.

### **6.3.2 Recovering an Imperialist First Great Debate**

The inter-war orthodoxy that Carr sought to supplant can be reread not as a liberal internationalism, but as competing strands of a liberal imperialism that consciously presented itself as internationalist. As Ashworth points out, Angell, one of the supposed arch-idealists who drew a significant proportion of Carr’s ire, used his theories of global interdependence as a justification of imperialism in terms echoing the moralistic ‘civilising mission’ of earlier generations of British imperialists.<sup>6.33</sup> Despite Angell’s claims by the 1930s to have ‘opposed imperialism all his life’, he had been a staunch defender of its benefits throughout the pre-Great War period and had long championed imperial evolution.<sup>6.34</sup> For example, at Chatham House in 1931, he spoke of the need for a renewed form of imperial federation to capitalise on the benefits of economic markets, as he claimed capitalism had neutralised the effectiveness of military power as a means

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<sup>6.33</sup>Lucian M. Ashworth, ‘Did the Realist-Idealist Great Debate Really Happen?’, p.37

<sup>6.34</sup>Norman Angell, *The Defence of the Empire* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1937), p.17

of empire-building.<sup>6.35</sup>

Zimmern was similarly a champion of imperial reform but was more closely wedded to traditional concepts of an imperial ‘civilising mission’. In an otherwise relatively complimentary review of the *Twenty Years Crisis*, Zimmern chastised Carr for failing to make the central task of his work ‘bringing to bear [...] the traditional standards of Western civilisation’ on all parts of the world in the twentieth century.<sup>6.36</sup> That is not to say that Carr was an outwardly anti-colonial theorist of IR, though this argument has been put forward in Haro Karkour’s reassessment of Carr and the realist tradition.<sup>6.37</sup> Instead, it illustrates that there were competing tensions in IR’s historical development that are overlooked by the reductionist division of the interwar years as one of debate between realism and idealism in Europe and North America. In problematising the myth of the first great debate, Ashworth frames it as a conflict around liberal internationalism with both British and American dimensions. Though both contexts were key to the development of dominant trans-imperial discourses of IR in this period, further situating the myth in its historical context requires a turn beyond Britain and the United States. To reframe the first debate as a fragment, or an echo, of a conflict between modes of imperial order crystallised in the Great War, this requires an exploration of the connected historical context of the German Empire. The imperial dimension is one that remains mostly absent from traditional accounts of IR’s disciplinary history but reframing the first great debate in light of this allows

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<sup>6.35</sup> Norman Angell, ‘The New Imperialism and the Old Nationalism’, *International Affairs*, 10.1 (1931), 69-83

<sup>6.36</sup> Alfred E. Zimmern, ‘A Realist in Search of a Utopia’, *The Spectator*, 24 November 1939, 163.5813, 750

<sup>6.37</sup> Haro L. Karkour, *E. H. Carr: Imperialism, War and Lessons for Post-Colonial IR* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2022)

For a brief discussion of why this portrayal of Carr can be considered historically problematic, cf. Jude Rowley, ‘E. H. Carr: Imperialism, War and Lessons for Post-Colonial IR. By Haro L. Karkour’ [Review], *International Affairs*, 99.2 (2023), 840–41. doi:10.1093/ia/iad045

for the reincorporation of a clash between modes of empire as central to the early twentieth century development of IR as a formalised academic pursuit and the theories that comprised its orthodoxy. Disentangling the debate between realism and idealism and the wider historical context of imperial renewal requires a recognition of the interconnectivity between the two.

Fragments of this interconnectivity between the first great debate narrative and the imperial conflict that shaped it, can be found in Alfred Zimmern's work. In a series of wartime essays, Zimmern framed the conflict as a 'war of ideas' between a British and German civilisational culture.<sup>6.38</sup> He distilled this to a conflict between 'law' and 'force' as the rationalising basis for a respective British and German mode of colonial rule.<sup>6.39</sup> In this, it is possible to identify the partial genesis of the division of IR into 'idealist' and 'realist' theoretical camps. Through this lens, traditional idealism corresponds with the British mode of rule and realism with its German counterpart. The reality is more complex than this suggests, but Zimmern's framing of the ideological and theoretical basis of the conflict is telling of how this was conceived by those operating in IR discourses prior to the emergence of the disciplinary mythology of the first great debate. Zimmern's framing of the Great War in this way speaks to a clash between what he saw as competing 'cultural' motivations for the respective policies of the imperial governments in the context of the war.

There is an inter-state policy dimension to this, in the same sense terms such as realism and idealism would be used in an orthodox IR context in later years, but significantly, there is also an imperial dimension which remains underemphasised in discussions of the 'first great debate'. There

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<sup>6.38</sup> Alfred E. Zimmern, 'German Culture and the British Commonwealth' in: *War and Government with Other War-Time Essays* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1918), 1-31 (p.1)

<sup>6.39</sup> Alfred E. Zimmern, 'German Culture and the British Commonwealth', p.2

were clear imperial implications to the conflict between a moralistic British imperialism ostensibly based on order and justice and a colder, explicitly scientific German imperialism rooted in rationalism. Via Zimmern, the liberal British model was presented as a distinctly ‘moral’ imperialism built on the basis of ‘making men fit for free institutions [...] and training them to recognise the obligations of citizenship’ whilst also encouraging colonised populations to ‘subordinate their own personal interests or inclinations to the common welfare, the “commonwealth”’.<sup>6.40</sup> It is on this note that Zimmern betrays his own affinity for the paternalistic imperialism of the age in praising the ‘civilising’ work of the British Empire in places like ‘backward Africa’.<sup>6.41</sup>

Though Zimmern promised to present his account ‘as impartially as possible’, echoing the approach of his Chatham House and Round Table contemporaries, it becomes clear that his views align far more closely with the imperialism rooted in a moral basis that he associates with the British Empire. This would be echoed two decades later in his calls for a colonial policy based on Christian morality, ethics, and values.<sup>6.42</sup> Zimmern perhaps felt a heightened need to emphasise his commitment to the British model of imperialism, not least given the suspicion his German surname drew when he was appointed at Aberystwyth at the end of the war.<sup>6.43</sup> Nonetheless, it is clear that this was a real conflict between modes of imperialism in the eyes of those shaping mainstream IR discourses at the time. The identification of the Great War by contemporaries

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<sup>6.40</sup> Alfred E. Zimmern, ‘German Culture and the British Commonwealth’, p.15

<sup>6.41</sup> Alfred E. Zimmern, ‘German Culture and the British Commonwealth’, p.15

<sup>6.42</sup> Alfred E. Zimmern, ‘The Colonial Problem’ in: *Spiritual Values and World Affairs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), 152-177

<sup>6.43</sup> Zimmern had overheard casual references to his ‘German extraction’ and raised these frankly with David Davies during the process of his appointment to the Wilson Chair. Letter from Alfred Zimmern to David Davies, 24 March 1919, p.8. Aberystwyth, *Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru (LIGC)*, Thomas Jones Papers, J12

as a conflict of ideas with imperial dimensions recentres its position in the historical sociology of Western IR. The encounter between German and British imperialism, crystallised around the Great War, marked a divergence in competing conceptualisations of the normative study of world order. However, advocates of both used similar language in framing their approach as ‘scientific’. For example, Anglophone audiences in 1915 could read Paul Rohrbach’s boasts that the ‘German idea’ of world order was anchored to a scientific superiority which ‘neither the Anglo-Saxons nor the Romanesque’ could rival.<sup>6.44</sup> At the same time, the same audiences could read assurances from Charles Lucas of the Colonial Office that the British approach to Empire was better able to harness scientific advances relative to that of the Germans, with an insistence that ‘while science is weakening the position of England as an island kingdom, it is greatly strengthening the position of England as an Empire’.<sup>6.45</sup>

On this note, the dichotomy between modes of empire was not as rigid as Zimmern suggests, and elements of a ‘scientific’ element to British imperialism can be identified as much as a clear moralistic paternalism can be identified in its German counterpart. Nonetheless, in contrast to the ‘moral’ liberal imperialism of the British Empire, the imperialism of the German Empire was presented as one rooted in a rational, legal, and scientific order. This was not a presentation confined to external observers writing in Britain. In his assessment of British imperialism at the turn of the twentieth century, Gerhart von Schulze-Gaevernitz noted with some pride that the German people were ‘more scientific’ than the English.<sup>6.46</sup> Similarly, Maximilian von Hagen, in reviewing the broad literature on

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<sup>6.44</sup>Paul Rohrbach, *German World Policies (Der deutsche Gedanke in der Welt)*, trans. by Edmund von Mach (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1915), pp.100-102

<sup>6.45</sup>Charles Prestwood Lucas, *The British Empire* (London: MacMillan, 1915), p.230

<sup>6.46</sup>Gerhart von Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus und englischer Freihandel zu Beginn des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts* (‘British Imperialism and English Free Trade at the Beginning of

German imperialism in the final year of the Great War saw fit to group the various strands together as ‘the science of our colonial policy’ in producing a bibliography of German *Kolonialwissenschaft*, or colonial science.<sup>6.47</sup>

#### 6.4 Kolonialwissenschaft

Von Hagen’s bibliography serves as an enduring fragment of this historical context. Given the centrality afforded to ‘science’ within rationalisations of German imperialism, it is perhaps no surprise that in this early twentieth century period, there was a growing movement towards the academic formalisation of the study of *Kolonialwissenschaften* (colonial sciences). This predated the Great War, with the Hamburg Colonial Institute (Hamburgische Kolonialinstitut), founded in 1908.<sup>6.48</sup> From the same year, the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität in Münster offered courses in ‘Kolonialwissenschaften’, illustrating that this was not isolated to an individual institution but was a decentralised movement across German academia. The surviving curricula for these courses offer a picture of a broad and interdisciplinary science of colonialism, resembling later university courses in IR. That summer, lectures were offered on the German colonies, colonial politics/policy, colonial law, and modern economic history with an emphasis on colonialism.<sup>6.49</sup> That this interdisciplinary combination foreshadows the content of many present-day IR courses, albeit excluding the further super-curricular

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the Twentieth Century’), (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1906), p.67  
‘Das deutsche Volk ist “wissenschaftlicher” als das englische’

<sup>6.47</sup> Maximilian von Hagen, *Die Wissenschaft unserer Kolonialpolitik* (‘The Science of Our Colonial Policy’) (Munich: Georg D.W. Callwey, 1918)

<sup>6.48</sup> Jens Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus als “Wissenschaft und Technik”: Das Hamburgische Kolonialinstitut 1908 bis 1919* (‘Colonialism as “Science and Technology”: The Hamburg Colonial Institute 1908-1919’) (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2007)

<sup>6.49</sup> *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen an der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster für das Sommerhalbjahr 1908 (21. April bis 15. August)* (‘List of lectures at the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster for the summer semester of 1908’) (Münster: Universitätsbuchdruckerei Johannes Bredt, 1908), p.41. Münster, *Universitäts-Archiv Münster*, U MS 26 1908/1

‘colonial-zoological’ demonstrations and excursions available by appointment for students in Münster, poses a notable historical challenge for a discipline that generally situates its formal academic origins a decade later. Though Münster’s role in IR’s disciplinary mythology is traditionally limited to its connexion with the Peace of Westphalia, it is possible to position these courses in ‘colonial sciences’ as the first IR university curriculum and thus afford it a notable significance as one of the potential origins of the formalised academic discipline in Europe.

For all the overlap, however, the academic programmes offered in Münster in the early twentieth century are distinguished from present-day IR courses by their accompanying focus on the natural sciences. Alongside disciplines that would now fall under the humanities or social sciences like colonial law, students in the winter semester of 1908/9 could attend lectures in colonial botany, colonial geology, and colonial diseases, for instance.<sup>6.50</sup> These were accompanied by a range of other courses over the subsequent eight years, which sought to unite disciplines traditionally associated with the natural sciences with explorations of the political, historical, and economic aspects of empire. For example, Josef Schmidlin, subsequently positioned as the founder of the field of ‘missionary science’ (*Missionswissenschaft*), offered weekly lectures on the recent history of colonial missions in 1909/10.<sup>6.51</sup> Schmidlin championed Christian missionary work as a vehicle for imperial expansion, and thus was able to

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<sup>6.50</sup> *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen an der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster für das Winterhalbjahr 1908/09 (15. Oktober bis 15. März), Ausgabe B* (‘List of lectures at the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster for the winter semester of 1908/09’) (Münster: Universitätsbuchdruckerei Johannes Bredt, 1908), p.23. Münster, *Universitäts-Archiv Münster*, U MS 26 1908/2 B

<sup>6.51</sup> *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen an der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster für das Winter-Semester 1909/10 (15. Oktober bis 15. März), Ausgabe A* (‘List of lectures at the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster for the winter semester of 1909/10’) (Münster: Universitätsbuchdruckerei Johannes Bredt, 1909), p.42. Münster, *Universitäts-Archiv Münster*, U MS 26 1909/2 A

expound both theological and pseudo-scientific justifications for imperialism.<sup>6.52</sup> Such interdisciplinarity served as the foundation of the Kolonialwissenschaften offering at Münster, and the connexion between traditional sciences and emerging theorisations of the contemporary social world proved especially central.

Though they soon became a standalone unit of the University's academic programme, the courses in colonial sciences were initially positioned under the Faculty of Philosophy and Natural Sciences. This is a combination that would likely seem out of place in present-day universities but is one with a far longer history in the German-speaking world and was a particularly convenient administrative demarcation in an era when claims to scientific justifications could be deployed as a political tool to detach academic discourses from accusations of ideological partiality. As in Victorian Britain, this applied to a wide range of academic disciplines in German universities, but it provided the historical context that rendered the emergence of Kolonialwissenschaften possible. This was a new discipline that brought together discourses from a wide range of others and sought to impart a 'scientific' basis to discourses of imperial organisation and colonial administration. It was also one shaped by the historical and political context that surrounded it.

For example, by the summer of 1914 teaching had been scaled back almost entirely, with Hubert Raendrup's fortnightly seminar on colonial law marking the only offering in colonial sciences.<sup>6.53</sup> Nonetheless, the onset of the Great War brought opportunities for imperial renewal and created a fitting

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<sup>6.52</sup>Albert Wu, 'In the Shadow of Empire: Josef Schmidlin and Protestant-Catholic Ecumenism before the Second World War', *Journal of Global History*, 13 (2018), 165-187

<sup>6.53</sup>*Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen an der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster für das Sommer-Semester 1914 vom 15. April bis zum 15. August* ('List of lectures at the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster for the summer semester of 1914') (Münster: Universitätsbuchdruckerei Johannes Bredt, 1914), p.29. Münster, *Universitäts-Archiv Münster*, U MS 26 1914/1

pretext for an expansion in colonial sciences teaching, which was met with an increased offering at Münster. This was short-lived and in the subsequent years of the conflict, offerings in Kolonialwissenschaften were intermittent. However, in the early months of the conflict, there was a notable revival of teaching in this inter-disciplinary field. The first semester after the outbreak of war saw an expansion of available courses, including a topical lecture series on English colonial policy from the seventeenth century to the present, delivered by Ernst Robert Daenell. Daenell was an historian of pre-unification Germany but contributed to debates surrounding colonial policy during the wartime period, especially in relation to German perspectives on British imperialism. He was a contributor to *Das Grössere Deutschland*, a journal established in the months prior to the outbreak of war as the ‘Weekly for German World and Colonial Policy’.<sup>6.54</sup> This was established by Ernst Jäckh and Paul Rohrbach in April 1914 as a means of promoting popular engagement with themes of empire and international politics, just as the post-war Deutsche Hochschule für Politik would seek to promote a similar engagement with political science and IR. The imperial connexions transcend this chronological boundary and unite both the pre- and post-Great War contexts. Pre-war elements of this are largely ignored by orthodox disciplinary histories of IR, yet *Das Grössere Deutschland* can be considered one of the first scholarly publications in Western Europe dedicated to the study of IR.

#### **6.4.1 *Das Grössere Deutschland, Mitteleuropa, and Mittelafrika***

*Das Grössere Deutschland* was part of the ‘liberal’ tradition of imperialism and imperial reform that Jäckh would become closely associated with. Walter Mogk

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<sup>6.54</sup>Ernst Robert Daenell, ‘Die Wirkungen des U-Bootkriegs auf England’ (‘The Effects of Submarine Warfare on England’), *Das Grössere Deutschland: Wochenschrift für Deutsche Welt- und Kolonialpolitik*, 4.27 (1917), 825-831

positions it as such and similarly places Rohrbach at the centre of a movement for ‘ethical imperialism’.<sup>6.55</sup> The emergence of the periodical accompanied the introduction of courses in Kolonialwissenschaften at Münster as part of the wider formalisation of colonial sciences as a distinct academic endeavour. A key name in these circles was Friedrich Naumann, a leading German liberal and member of the Reichstag in the final years of the German Empire, who expressed a call for a liberal imperialism in 1915 in articulating the concept of *Mitteleuropa*. Though translated almost immediately into English as ‘Central Europe’, the literal meaning of the term, this does not capture the spirit of what was fundamentally an imperial idea.<sup>6.56</sup> To Naumann, *Mitteleuropa* referred to the ideal of a unified territory stretching across Europe from the North Sea to the Alps in the south, the Vosges mountains on the post-Franco-Prussian War German border with France in the west to the Vistula river in present-day Poland in the east.<sup>6.57</sup> The unified *Mitteleuropa* imagined by Naumann would be ‘a brotherhood of many members’ and a ‘defensive alliance’ but would exist under an implied German leadership, forming the bedrock of an expanded German Empire.<sup>6.58</sup>

Though the territorial aims laid out by Naumann would be realised under German occupation during the Second World War, at this point (1915) he framed them differently: as imperial ambitions legitimised by strong allusions to historical narratives of a unified Germanic culture. In doing so, the vision of *Mitteleuropa* foreshadows classical realism in orthodox IR theory, with the need for a unified

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<sup>6.55</sup>Walter Mogh, *Paul Rohrbach und das Größere Deutschland: Ethischer Imperialismus im Wilhelminischen Zeitalter* (Paul Rohrbach and “Das Größere Deutschland”: Ethical Imperialism in the Wilhelmine Era’) (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann, 1972), pp.159-163

<sup>6.56</sup>Friedrich Naumann, *Central Europe*, trans. by Christabel M. Meredith (London: P.S. King and Son, 1916)

<sup>6.57</sup>Friedrich Naumann, *Mitteleuropa* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1916), p.3  
‘von Nords und Ostsee bis zu den Alpen ... was zwischen Weichsel und Vogesen liegt’

<sup>6.58</sup>Friedrich Naumann, *Mitteleuropa*, p.4

and expanded *Mitteleuropa* put forward on the basis that the time in which ‘small and mid-sized powers’ could play a meaningful role in global politics had passed, and that such powers after the outbreak of the Great War would subsequently only be able to act subject to the will of the great powers.<sup>6.59</sup> *Mitteleuropa* was thus an instrument for preserving the relevance of the German Empire and its power and enshrining its post-war status as the continental hegemon in Europe. Others shared this view, including Hermann Oncken, who distinguished between two phases in the conceptual history of *Mitteleuropa*. There was the ‘old Mitteleuropa’ captured in Bismark’s policy of alliance building and pre-twentieth century German ambitions of Central European expansion and the ‘new Mitteleuropa’, which it would fall to Germans in the aftermath of the Great War to reinvent and build anew.<sup>6.60</sup>

Oncken justified this in similar terms to those employed by Naumann, echoing what would become balance of power theory, closely associated with mainstream IR discourse in the second half of the twentieth century. He positioned the new *Mitteleuropa* as a counterbalance (‘Gegengewicht’) to the British Empire, and a direct challenge to ‘outdated English claims to power’.<sup>6.61</sup> Oncken stressed the importance of the new *Mitteleuropa* coming ‘under the leadership of the German Empire’ (‘unter Führung des Deutschen Reiches’) and insisted that this was in the interest of the ‘smaller European states’ which would otherwise risk extinction in the face of ‘the land-devouring giants’.<sup>6.62</sup> Oncken

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<sup>6.59</sup>Friedrich Naumann, *Mitteleuropa*, p.4

<sup>6.60</sup>Hermann Oncken, *Das alte und das neue Mitteleuropa: Historisch-politische Betrachtungen über deutsche Bündnispolitik im Zeitalter Bismarcks und im Zeitalter des Weltkrieges* (‘The Old and the New Mitteleuropa: Historical-Political Reflections on German Alliance Policy in the Age of Bismarck and in the Age of the World War’) (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1917)

<sup>6.61</sup>Hermann Oncken, *Das alte und das neue Mitteleuropa*, p.149

<sup>6.62</sup>Hermann Oncken, *Das alte und das neue Mitteleuropa*, p.149  
‘kleineren europäischen Staaten, die ihr Selbst gegen die Länder verschlingenden Riesen zu behaupten haben’

and Naumann are names largely unknown to the discipline of IR, but fragments of defining debates associated with a much later period in the discipline's history can be identified in the concept of *Mitteleuropa* they championed. In articulating the need for a German-led continental empire, they took for granted that a defining clash between empires formed the bedrock of the international system, which can be more properly identified as an 'inter-imperial' system in this period, and that the endurance of this beyond the end of the Great War would create new opportunities for imperial renewal. Their work provided a theoretical justification of German imperial expansion as part of this renewal by framing the inter-imperial system as one in which stability could only be ensured by a considered balancing of power. When the concept of *Mitteleuropa* is situated in these historical circumstances and read against the trans-imperial setting that surrounded it, it takes on new relevance as a marker and legacy of one of the major interactions between empires that shaped IR's disciplinary development. It can not only be framed as a proto-IR discourse that anticipated later debates, but as an IR discourse proper that contributed to starting them.

However, such visions of imperial expansion and renewal were not limited to the European continent. There was also a colonial dimension to the imperial fantasies of a contiguous territory embodied in the *Mitteleuropa* ideal. This was articulated through the inter-related vision of *Mittelafrika*: an analogous African colony to accompany German territorial expansion on the European continental mainland.<sup>6.63</sup> Whereas the *Mitteleuropa* ideal was at least nominally put forward as a free association of fraternal peoples, no such pretence was upheld with *Mittelafrika*. Recognising that 'the *Mitteleuropa* idea' was not enough to counteract 'the Anglo-Saxon' 'World-Syndicate in raw

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<sup>6.63</sup>Paul Leutwein, *Mitteleuropa, Mittelafrika* (Dresden: Globus wissenschaftliche Verlagsanstalt, 1917)

materials directed against Germany', Emil Zimmermann expressed the need for a complementary German imperial project to dominate 'Tropical Africa' and exploit the 'last remaining tropical areas of economic value' which were positioned as 'undeveloped territories of the future'.<sup>6.64</sup> The realisation of the colonial dream of *Mittelafrika* would secure German economic ascendancy through the exploitation of natural resources, which to Zimmermann, included the '30 to 40 million' Black Africans resident in the Central African territories earmarked for German control.<sup>364</sup> Human considerations were secondary to the economic benefit offered by the realisation of the *Mittelafrika* project, which was framed explicitly in terms of imperial rivalry and strategic power politics. To Zimmermann, this strategic dimension was clear, and he articulated its importance to German imperialism in arguing that 'through Mittel-Afrika we should really take our place as a World-Power... and Mittel-Afrika gives us a far more secure position, as against the Anglo-Saxon, than does the Flanders coast'.<sup>6.65</sup>

Others, such as Bernhard Stichel, presented *Mittelafrika* in similar terms as an economic necessity for future German prosperity, concluding that the possession of colonies, even as far north as Morocco, was 'a condition of life for Germany'.<sup>6.66</sup> This was accompanied with the expected scientific and civilisational rationalisations. In outlining the need for a radical interpretation of the importance of *Mittelafrika*, Stichel reasoned that the continued work of German scientists could allow expanded colonial efforts to 'graft Germanic culture onto the black continent'.<sup>6.67</sup> It is thus possible to locate in the *Mittelafrika* ideal the synthesis of

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<sup>6.64</sup>Emil Zimmermann, *German Empire of Central Africa* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1916), trans. by Edwyn Bevan, pp.4-11

<sup>6.65</sup>Emil Zimmermann, *German Empire of Central Africa*, p.12

<sup>6.66</sup>Bernhard Stichel, *Die Zukunft in Marokko* ('The Future in Morocco') (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1917), p.69  
'Der Besitz von solchen Kolonien... ist eine Lebensbedingung für Deutschland'

<sup>6.67</sup>Bernhard Stichel, *Die Zukunft in Marokko*, p.82

the two approaches to imperialism over which the great British-German rivalry of the first two decades of the twentieth century was waged. The moralistic liberalism of the British, anchored in the ‘civilising mission’ of old, is combined with the colder, rationalistic model of colonial expansion for economic benefit justified by science that was supposedly a distinctly German construction. This further emphasises the complexity of the relationship between the two modes of British and German imperialism, which though marked by the heavy tension embodied by the Great War, could also take on almost symbiotic elements.

#### **6.4.2 Colonial Science without Colonies**

The end of the conflict was equally influential in shaping the contextual circumstances that produced discourses of IR and imperial science in Germany. The interwar years in the Weimar Republic saw a transition from science with an explicitly colonial focus to a more outwardly ‘international’ science that carried forward elements of earlier discourses of colonial science but saw them repackaged into a new discipline, more directly resembling of present-day IR. At Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität in Münster, this transition was made explicitly clear with the direct replacement of ‘Kolonialwissenschaften’ with ‘Auslandskunde’ (foreign studies) in 1917, towards the end of the Great War.<sup>6.68</sup> This direct rebranding is indicative of a process that took place from the inter-war years onwards and was not isolated to Germany.

In this transition, disciplines and discourses with roots in the ‘scientific’ approaches to theorising, studying, and rationalising imperialism from decades

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‘germanische Kultur auf den schwarzen Kontinent aufzupropfen’

<sup>6.68</sup> *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen an der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität in Münster für das Winterhalbjahr 1917/18 vom 17. September bis 2. Februar* (Münster: Universitätsbuchdruckerei Johannes Bredt, 1917), p.28. Münster, *Universitäts-Archiv Münster*, U MS 26 1917/2

prior took on a new character, largely framed as a scholarly extension of the internationalist movement. This was as true in the British Empire with the inauguration of 'International Politics' or IR as a newly formalised academic discipline as it was in the post-imperial Weimar Republic with the shift away from discourses concerned explicitly with the colonial sciences that had been growing in popularity prior to the outbreak of war. The distinction between the two disciplinary clusters on either side of this chronological divide was far from rigid or clear cut. As the rebranding of the courses at Münster suggests, the same institutions, individuals, and publications that had previously contributed to discourses of *Kolonialwissenschaften* transitioned and evolved towards a reframed focus on questions of the international rather than the imperial. The same scholars who had contributed to German discourses of scientific imperialism continued working along similar lines, albeit often under the banner of a reframed discipline. This is illustrated by the cases of Ernst Jäckh and Friedrich Naumann, who featured in the previous section of this chapter.

#### 6.4.2.1 *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*

Jäckh and Naumann had contributed to discourses surrounding *Mitteleuropa* and had similarly edited and contributed to publications in the interdisciplinary field of *Kolonialwissenschaften* prior to the war. This would continue into the Weimar Republic and they would remain connected to both each other and the wider formalisation of an imperial science without empire during the era of the Weimar Republic. Much like the Davies siblings, Naumann sought to put his ideas into practice through patronage of the institutionalisation of the discourses he sought to propagate, utilising his position as a privileged member of a dominant class. Naumann had founded the *Staatsbürgerschule* ('Citizen's School') in Berlin in 1918 towards the end of the Great War. This name was initially suggested by

Wilhelm Heile and captures the vision of establishing an institution for the teaching of political science, detached from the ‘narrow-mindedness’ of partisan politics, that Naumann saw as the culmination of his life’s work.<sup>6.69</sup>

The Staatsbürgerschule endured for two years, with its Chair taken up by Ernst Jäckh after Naumann’s death in August 1919. Jäckh felt the institution needed to better reflect the ‘new Germany’, and with a recognition of wider calls for an educational institution to champion political science with both a civic and international focus, the Berliner Staatsbürgerschule was reworked into the Deutsche Hochschule für Politik (DHfP) (‘German College for Politics’).<sup>6.70</sup> This new institution, the first of its kind in the Weimar Republic, was established in October 1920 and by the end of the decade would come to define itself as a leading exponent of the ‘scientific’ approach to questions of political science and foreign policy.<sup>6.71</sup> The DHfP emerged out of a longer movement to institutionalise the formal study of questions of global order that dated back to the era of the Kaiserreich and would endure beyond the Weimar Republic. There was thus continuity, albeit not always seamless, between discourses of German imperialism during the Great War and the years that followed, despite the abdication of the Kaiser or the rise of fascism.

#### 6.4.2.2 Colonial Science in the Third Reich

This is illustrated by a course of special lectures offered by the DHfP in the 1930s, which carried forward the same themes well into the era of the Third Reich. As late as 1937, this included a lecture on the need to resolve the ‘German

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<sup>6.69</sup>Martin Wenck, *Friedrich Naumann: Ein Lebensbild* (Berlin: Staatsbürgerschule, 1920), p.152

<sup>6.70</sup>Ernst Jäckh, ‘Zur Vorgeschichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik’ (‘The Prehistory of the DHfP’), *Zeitschrift für Politik*, 13 (1924), 16-19 (p.17)

<sup>6.71</sup>Ernst Jäckh (ed.), *Politik als Wissenschaft: Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* (‘Politics as a Science: Ten Years of the DHfP’) (Berlin: Hermann Reckendorf, 1931)

colonial problem' by reclaiming the entire colonial empire 'as it was in 1914 on the outbreak of war'.<sup>6.72</sup> This was delivered by Paul Schnoeckel of the NSDAP Office of Colonial Policy (KPA), who would give a lecture on the same topic in Hamburg in February 1938 and was a contributor to the 'Book of German Colonies' in the same period.<sup>6.73</sup> Though founded in the Weimar era, the DHfP would become increasingly closely aligned with the Nazi regime. The lecture series was explicitly designed to impart 'the scientific foundations of the National Socialist worldview', with the inaugural lecture given in 1933 by Joseph Goebbels.<sup>6.74</sup> The combination of lectures on topics such as 'National Socialism and International Law' (Carl Schmitt), 'Science and Philosophy in the Third Reich' (Alfred Klemmt), and 'the German Racial Idea in the World' (Walter Groß), mirrors that of the broad and interdisciplinary 'Kolonialwissenschaften' of the pre-Great War years, albeit with the incorporation of a distinctly fascist framing.<sup>6.75</sup> The DHfP thus marked a point of continuity between the German Kolonialreich and the Third Reich that allowed for the continued formulation and propagation of 'scientific' justifications of German imperial order.

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<sup>6.72</sup>Paul Schnoeckel, *Das deutsche Kolonialproblem* ('The German Colonial Problem'), Schriften der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, 24 (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1937), p.26  
'Unabhängig von solchen kolonialpolitischen Erwägungen wird Deutschland stets darauf bestehen, sein gesamtes Kolonialreich, wie es im Jahre 1914 beim Ausbruch des Krieges bestand, zurückzuverlangen'

<sup>6.73</sup>Major a. D. Schnoeckel über: Weltpolitik um kolonien' ('Major (Retd) Schnoeckel on: World Politics Over Colonies'), *Hamburger Nachrichten*, 3 February 1938. Hamburg, *Hamburgisches Welt-Wirtschafts-Archiv/ZBW – Leibniz-Informationszentrum Wirtschaft* (Leibniz Information Centre for Economics). <https://pm20.zbw.eu/folder/pe/015820/00001>

<sup>6.74</sup>Joseph Goebbels, *Der Faschismus und seine praktischen Ergebnisse* ('Fascism and its Practical Results'), Schriften der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, 1 (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1933)

<sup>6.75</sup>Carl Schmitt, *Nationalsozialismus und Völkerrecht* ('National Socialism and International Law'), Schriften der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, 9 (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1933)

Alfred Klemmt, *Wissenschaft und Philosophie im Dritten Reich* ('Science and Philosophy in the Third Reich'), Schriften der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, 32 (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1938).

Walter Groß, *Der deutsche Rassengedanke und die Welt* ('The German Racial Idea in the World'), Schriften der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, 42 (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1939)

Despite the liberal origins of the DHfP, those leading it were quick to embrace the new order under Nazism, and Ernst Jäckh met with Adolf Hitler and Alfred Rosenberg in March 1933.<sup>6.76</sup> This sentiment was mutual, and organisations like the New Commonwealth Society, in which Jäckh played a leading role, were not only tolerated by the Nazi regime, but actively encouraged.<sup>6.77</sup> Thus, from an academic endeavour which developed in the Kolonialreich era, colonial science expanded and evolved through the subsequent decades as a distinctly German approach to the same science of empire that was circulating across imperial frontiers. The formalisation of a ‘scientific’ approach to the study of empire in the German context could trace its lineage through decades of political tumult and change stretching back almost to unification. Throughout all its guises, at the centre of this evolution was a claim to scientific legitimacy and all products of it were pervaded by legacies of empire. German IR was therefore a science of empire, but one capable of adapting to changing times and changing ideological functions. Seemingly disparate actors, from the colonialists of the Kaiserreich to Weimar-era liberal imperialists like Naumann and Jäckh, and finally the ideologues of the pre-Second World War Third Reich, were united by the common claims to a scientific legitimacy that the emerging discourses provided. In this, post-war IR had a varied and adaptive base on which to build.

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<sup>6.76</sup>Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945* (Cambridge, MA: 1968), pp.174-175

<sup>6.77</sup>Ofer Ashkenazi, ‘Transnational Anti-war Activity in the Third Reich: The Nazi Branch of the New Commonwealth Society’, *German History*, 36.2 (2018), 207–228. doi:10.1093/gerhis/ghy004

## Chapter 7:

### **‘Citizen Scholars’ of a ‘Noble Science’: Learned Societies, Officialdom, and Imperial Studies**

If German colonial science had long afterlives into post-war IR, the British Imperial tradition of ‘scientific’ knowledge production was no less enduring. Once the myth of IR as a noble pursuit of peace is recontextualised, critical disciplinary historians must consider where else they might look for nascent signs of the field’s development. The relationship between empire and visions of global order in the Victorian era, identified by Duncan Bell as a relative blind spot in historiographical discourse, provides fertile ground for exploring what might be termed IR’s disciplinary pre-history.<sup>7.1</sup> The period is often presented as one of boundless scientific advancement and an almost obsessive fascination with ‘knowledge’ assemblage and categorisation. A vast wave of new disciplines and sub-disciplines emerged in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, all sharing the common claim to a ‘scientific’ approach to the surrounding world. John Pickstone goes as far as arguing that the term science itself was constructed in Victorian England (rather than Britain) as a means of imparting a unity on mechanisms of knowledge production for political purposes.<sup>7.2</sup> Science began to carry a new political weight that enabled self-proclaimed ‘scientific’ theories to serve a legitimising function for ideological pronouncements about the future direction of

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<sup>7.1</sup>Duncan S.A. Bell, ‘Empire and International Relations in Victorian Political Thought’, *Historical Journal*, 49.1 (2006), 281-98. doi:10.1017/S0018246X05005133

<sup>7.2</sup>John Pickstone, ‘Science in Nineteenth-Century England: Plural Configurations and Singular Politics’ in: Martin Daunton (ed.), *The Organisation of Knowledge in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 29-60

British imperialism.

Towards the turn of the twentieth century, as the end of the imperial apotheosis became an increasingly stark reality for the ruling class, old 'pre-scientific' legitimisations of empire no longer held as strongly as they once had done. The result was a widening of discourse around empire and its future and the vast expansion of the apparatus of imperial knowledge production. This took place over a remarkably short period, stretching broadly from the 1857 Indian Rebellion (or 'Sepoy Mutiny') to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, but with an epicentre between 1908 and 1912. In these four years, formative in Britain as well as in Germany, the laying of the foundations for IR's imperial-scientific disciplinary *épistème* was at its most intense. These years saw the institution of systematised, regulated, and explicitly scientific programmes of imperial study: 'Imperial Studies' in the British Empire or *Kolonialwissenschaften* ('Colonial Sciences') in the German Empire. Imperialism was progressively scientificised and institutionalised by insular networks of elite actors, bound together by their class, educational influences, and commitment to empire. However, in orthodox historical narratives, IR is firmly positioned outside of this historical trajectory. The Great War is positioned as a prelude that heralds its birth, not an end that punctuates its beginnings. This chapter will seek to invert this and resituate IR as the inheritor of a far longer tradition of imperial-scientific knowledge production.

It will argue that Victorian learned societies were a predecessor of IR's disciplinary structures. These left both a structural legacy and direct, traceable connexions, with foundational members of groups like the later Royal Institute of International Affairs occupying the same social and political spaces and networks that shaped earlier learned societies. Modelled on these learned societies of old, an adapted network of influential institutions emerged in the first two

decades of the twentieth century. Defined by their insularity, these were shaped by a small group of well-connected individuals, almost all white, wealthy men educated at the leading hub of imperial knowledge production, Oxford. The personal connexions between them overlapped and were institutionalised into a framework that would shape the discipline of IR as it is canonically understood. This network was defined by its push to institutionalise the ‘scientific’ study of IR and to integrate it into the structures of government. The outcome was a semi-official ‘science’, which was progressively entwined with the mechanisms of governance, decision-making, and intelligence, particularly with the formalisation of the Foreign Office Historical Section and Chatham House in connexion with the Paris Peace Conference. This newly expanded science was practised almost exclusively by men of a select social and political class, at the exclusion of women, the working class, racial ‘others’, and those with competing views on imperialism.

### **7.1 Imperial Studies Movement**

Even in orthodox disciplinary historical narratives of IR, there are fragments of its imperial ‘pre-history’. There are individuals and institutions whose names appear on either side of the early twentieth century gateway event that repositioned the study of imperial order as the study of international order. Many of these will appear throughout this chapter, in the form of a canonical generation of largely white, British-born, Oxford-educated, upper-class men who are connected to IR not in spite of their imperial pasts, but because of them. This insular group encompassed names like Philip Kerr, Alfred Zimmern, and G.W. Prothero, but chief among them was Alfred (Lord) Milner.

Notwithstanding the absence of Milner’s direct involvement with the Foreign Office Historical Section and Political Intelligence Department in later years, despite Amery’s intentions, as discussed later in this chapter, it is striking

that his name appears connected to attempts to establish the new science of empire at every turn. A key reason for this is that he had led such attempts before and had been substantively involved with at least two initiatives to lay foundations for a new field of study. Milner is best known in an IR context through association with the Round Table, which became a predecessor of both the PID and Chatham House and a model for them to emulate, as discussed subsequently. He was, however, deeply imbricated in a movement to formalise ‘Imperial Studies’, which reached its zenith immediately prior to the end of the Great War, and subsequently all but disappeared around the same time the discipline of IR is supposed to have been forged from the ruins of the conflict. It should be taken as no coincidence that Imperial Studies ‘withered away in the new climate of the inter-war years’, just as this same climate was nurturing the development of the newly formalised IR discipline.<sup>7.3</sup> The interwar clamour to establish the field as a formal programme of study largely picked up where the earlier movement had left off.

The unofficial manifesto for the earlier movement was Sidney Low’s 1912 call before the British Academy for a new discipline of ‘Imperial Studies’ designed primarily to train up ‘young men’ for careers in the Colonial Office, though envisaged to appeal also to ‘persons of both sexes preparing for commercial, industrial, scientific, or philanthropic careers in the oversea colonies’.<sup>7.4</sup> Low outlined the urgent need for a new systematised and interdisciplinary field centred on research and teaching in ‘all branches of the science, history, economics, and jurisprudence of Empire’.<sup>7.5</sup> As this suggests, the ‘Imperial Studies’ he envisioned

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<sup>7.3</sup>John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880–1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p.149

Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022)

<sup>7.4</sup>Sidney Low, *The Organization of Imperial Studies in London* (From the Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. 5) (Oxford: Henry Frowde/Oxford University Press, 1912), pp.19-20

<sup>7.5</sup>Sidney Low, *The Organization of Imperial Studies in London*, p.8

was essentially British Kolonialwissenschaften, directly mirroring the colonial science disciplines instituted in the preceding half-decade in Germany. Any such parallels were not accidental. Low explicitly modelled his vision on one that had been realised in Germany with the Hamburg Kolonialinstitut.<sup>7.6</sup> He considered it a matter of national (and Imperial) embarrassment that there was no British institute for Imperial Studies to rival the Kolonialinstitut or its French equivalent, the Parisian École coloniale.<sup>7.7</sup> In Low's view, London, with its existing institutions like the Royal Colonial Institute and the London School of Economics, was the only feasible centre for such a discipline.<sup>7.8</sup>

Accordingly, a lecture series was convened in London in direct response to Low's rallying cry, to be hosted at King's College in May and June 1913. This haphazard syllabus offers an insight into what an Imperial Studies programme might have looked like. Encompassing international law, politics, modern history, and questions of extra-state organisation, it was also unquestionably a proto-IR curriculum. Aside from its content, the names chosen to deliver this programme blended academics with government officials (or 'practitioners' in later IR parlance). Alongside those given by leading academics like Hugh Egerton, then Beit Professor of Colonial History at Oxford, lectures were delivered by a former Prime Minister of South Australia (John Cockburn) and Governor of Fiji (Everard im Thurn).<sup>7.9</sup> This illustrates that structures of knowledge production in these nascent imperial disciplines were tied firmly to the structures of the state.

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<sup>7.6</sup>Sidney Low, *The Organization of Imperial Studies in London*, pp.16-8

<sup>7.7</sup>Sidney Low, *The Organization of Imperial Studies in London*, p.14

<sup>7.8</sup>Sidney Low, *The Organization of Imperial Studies in London*, pp.10-11

<sup>7.9</sup>Hugh Edward Egerton, 'The Colonial Reformers of 1830', 141-80

John A. Cockburn, 'Problems of Australian Federation', 73-106

Everard im Thurn, 'Native Land and Labour in the South Seas', 33-72

All in: Fossey John Cobb Hearnshaw (ed.), *King's College Lectures on Colonial Problems* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1913)

This point is further emphasised by the publication of the lectures with a foreword from Lewis Harcourt, the incumbent Liberal Colonial Secretary.<sup>7.10</sup> Mirroring a tendency imported to IR decades later, proximity to the centre of imperial power was the judge of intellectual authority.

One of those who made use of this proximity was Charles Lucas, until 1911 a senior civil servant in the Colonial Office. Reflecting on the relationship between science and the Empire, Lucas espoused the case for a distinctly ‘scientific’ imperialism, lauding that ‘science is lending out the white man’s intellectual capital to the coloured man’.<sup>7.11</sup> Invoking a quote from ‘either or both’ Edward Grey and Lord Milner at a recent Royal Geographical Society dinner, he outlined the central credo of the Imperial Studies movement and its relationship with the future of the Empire: ‘knowledge, scientific or other, had not much to do with acquisition of Empire, but it has everything to do with retaining it’.<sup>7.12</sup> This captures the genuine anxiety about the future survival of the British Empire that motivated those who championed Imperial Studies as a new discipline.

To follow this, the collegiate University of London soon established an Imperial Studies Committee in 1914 to further the endeavour of building a new discipline, and tellingly, Milner was appointed as Chair. In this capacity, and as a Vice-President of the Royal Colonial Institute, Milner oversaw the creation of a keynote lecture series organised jointly between the Institute and the Imperial Studies Committee. Under the broad grouping of ‘political sciences’, its panel of lecturers included key figures in the Imperial Studies movement such as Sidney Low, alongside a broad mix of interdisciplinary scholars, including historians

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<sup>7.10</sup>Lewis Harcourt, ‘Prefatory Note’ in: F.J.C. Hearnshaw (ed.), *King’s College Lectures on Colonial Problems*, v-vii

<sup>7.11</sup>Charles P. Lucas, ‘The Influence of Science on Empire’, F.J.C. Hearnshaw (ed.), *King’s College Lectures on Colonial Problems*, 107-40

<sup>7.12</sup>Charles P. Lucas, ‘The Influence of Science on Empire’, pp.138-9

like H.A.L. Fisher and Harold Temperley and geographers like Halford Mackinder. Most significantly, numbered among its lecturing faculty were Alfred Zimmern and Charles Webster, later the first and second holders of the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth respectively.<sup>7.13</sup> There are therefore direct continuities between pre-war Imperial Studies and post-Great War International Relations, both in an individual, institutional, and conceptual context.

The onset of the Great War and the associated transition of these scholars from Imperial Studies to International Relations was not so much a diversion of their attention as a reframing of their political goals. This period, considered formative in IR's disciplinary history, punctuated an existing trajectory rather than beginning a new one. As such, it was a gateway event that facilitated the emergence and institutionalisation of an IR discipline. That is not to suggest that IR entirely replaced Imperial Studies, as demonstrated by the 1921 establishment of the Imperial History Seminar in London, convened ever since by the Institute of Historical Research.<sup>7.14</sup> Instead, however, IR inherited a broad tradition of treating the study of empire and of global order more generally in a 'scientific' way, specifically geared at influencing decision-makers and government actors.

The Imperial Studies movement developed between two significant periods for the relationship between science and the state, particularly in the British Empire, but also in the German Empire and elsewhere. It preceded the interwar incorporation of academic experts into the machinery of government, particularly in the context of diplomacy and international affairs. However, this movement did not arise from an historical vacuum. In turn, it was the inheritor of a much longer

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<sup>7.13</sup>Royal Colonial Institute, *Year Book 1916* (London: Royal Colonial Institute, 1916), pp.38-39

<sup>7.14</sup>Sarah Stockwell, 'The Imperial and World History Seminar' in: David Manning (ed.), *Talking History: Seminar Culture at the Institute of Historical Research, 1921-2021* (London: University of London Press, 2024), 175-200

tradition of imperial knowledge production. The explosion of learned societies that marked the 'scientification' of British Imperial high society from the mid to late nineteenth century laid further foundations on which the discipline of IR would later construct its defining structures, institutions, and ideas. With the immediate 'pre-IR' context outlined, it is now possible to revisit these nineteenth century scientific-imperial institutions and in doing so resituate them as part of a *Fachgeschichte* of IR. In turn, this reveals a key historical silence, obscuring the relationship between the inter-war institutionalisation of IR and a longer history of scientific-imperial knowledge production which preceded it. Revealing this makes it possible to question why it is that IR's disciplinary history is assumed to begin with the founding of the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth, rather than with the founding of earlier scientific-imperial predecessors, like the Royal Colonial Institute in 1868. This thesis takes 1868 as its starting point not to supplant one mythological origin point with another, but to make clear that when dealing with a coarse-grained history of this nature, a broader perspective can allow for the resituating of seemingly unconnected phenomena like the scientific-imperial learned societies movement as part of IR's disciplinary history.

## **7.2 Imperial Learned Societies**

According to Walter Rodney, European racism 'was a set of generalisations and assumptions, which had no scientific basis, but were rationalised in every sphere from theology to biology'.<sup>7.15</sup> This rationalisation was carried out through a series of instruments, some more directly visible than others. One such instrument was the learned society. These were formal associations of scholars and professionals, almost invariably wealthy men, that provided spaces for the regulation and

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<sup>7.15</sup>Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Verso, 2018), p.103

propagation of discourse within the set field.<sup>7.16</sup> Though this section will explore their specific prominence in the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century imperialism, they were not a new feature in this period and in some cases were as old as the British Empire itself, dating back at least to Robert Hooke's seventeenth century description of the Royal College of Physicians as 'the most illustrious and most learned Society of the Physicians of London'.<sup>7.17</sup>

As empire expanded, so too did the scale and scope of learned societies, which could speak for the disciplines they represented and set the boundaries of orthodoxy within them. As a result, a network of interconnected learned societies emerged from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, in Britain, Germany, and the rest of Western Europe, but also in the United States. These societies were eager to present themselves as guardians of legitimate knowledge within the boundaries of the disciplines, fields, or interests they represented, and as such framed themselves as objective, apolitical, neutral bodies, intent only on the abstract and noble goal of the furtherance of knowledge.

In the British Empire, learned societies were predominantly private institutions, somewhere between private members clubs and present-day thinktanks. Many were nonetheless bestowed a Royal Charter as a symbol of their imagined objectivity and a seal of tacit monarchical approval for the work carried out under their auspices. These included the Royal Colonial Society/Institute (1868), Royal Historical Society (1868), and Royal Anthropological Institute

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<sup>7.16</sup>For a discussion of interconnected and parallel women's societies that championed imperialism, see: Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2000)

Tellingly, these were largely organisations with an explicitly social focus, often avoiding 'scientific' or otherwise formally academic discourse

<sup>7.17</sup>Robert Hooke, *Micrographia: Or Some Physiological Descriptions of Minute Bodies Made by Magnifying Glasses with Observations and Inquiries Thereupon* (London: Royal Society, 1667), p.138

(1871). Alongside societies representing the natural sciences, technological developments, and specific professions or sectors, a collection of societies emerged that could now be associated with the discipline of IR, though it was not until the foundation of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in 1920 as a product of this imperial learned society tradition that the link would be made explicit.

### **7.2.1 Royal Colonial Institute**

Of these new societies that exploded into being in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the Royal Colonial Society, soon renamed the Royal Colonial Institute (RCI), bears the strongest parallels to the discipline that would become IR. This was explicitly a scientific endeavour, with the first rule of the Institute's charter declaring that its purpose was 'to undertake scientific, literary, and statistical investigations in connexion with the British empire'.<sup>7.18</sup> The Institute was part of a wider movement of emerging scientific institutes in this period, not all of them explicitly concerned with empire directly, but which often overlapped with imperial projects. For example, the Institute explicitly modelled itself on existing societies like the Royal Geographical Society, with the wide coalition of noblemen and politicians who joined its ranks united by their hopes of a globe 'thickly peopled by the British race' mirroring in various ways the existing groups who similarly sought to 'increase and propagate that scientific knowledge of all things pertaining to the colonies'.<sup>7.19</sup> Organisations like Chatham House and the League of Nations Union would later inherit elements of the legacies of predecessors like the RCI, albeit with a much remodelled focus for the post-Great War era.

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<sup>7.18</sup>'Proceedings at the Inaugural Dinner', *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute*, 1 (1869) (London: Royal Colonial Institute, 1870), 19-50 (p.20)

<sup>7.19</sup>Chichester Fortescue, quoted in: 'Preliminary Proceedings', *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute*, 1 (1869), 1-18 (p.7)

The existing historiography of the RCI is varied and does not underplay its historical significance. Edward Beasley advances the argument that the RCI defined British imperialism, shifting the very meaning of a term that, before the Indian Rebellion of 1857, was generally considered a narrow and disparaging appellation to refer to the domestic policies of Napoleon III.<sup>7.20</sup> Instead, imperialism became both a political ideology and a normative call for how the world ought to be ordered. Beasley argues that, in the development of this world view, private groups like the RCI led where state institutions followed. This captures a complicated relationship between state structures and interconnected networks of private but socially elite individuals common to late nineteenth century imperialist learned societies and the twentieth century institutions long considered formative to the discipline of IR. However, the RCI is rarely associated with the IR discipline directly. By reading it as part of broader historical trajectories, it is possible to position learned societies like the RCI as precursors to organisations like Chatham House, particularly in their attempts to formalise the ‘scientific’ study of empire and to integrate this within formal and semi-formal mechanisms of state decision-making.

However, it should not be overlooked that these institutions were also close contemporaries. From 1910, the RCI published an in-house journal, *United Empire*, which became an organ for a brand of reformist imperialism that captured the zeitgeist amongst the British ruling class at the time. Poetic lines penned by Amy Strachey adorned the front page and captured the combination of paternalism and ‘scientific’ endeavour that the journal and the Institute that published it sought to embody, claiming that ‘love without knowledge is a barren

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<sup>7.20</sup>Edward Beasley, *Empire as the Triumph of Theory: Imperialism, Information and the Colonial Society of 1868* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005)

word'.<sup>7.21</sup> Love in this case, in keeping with a peculiarly aristocratic paternalism, is the administration of the colonies and knowledge is the 'scientific' analysis that *United Empire* was designed to provide.

The prevalence of colonial governors, knights of the realm, and high-ranking military officers amongst the Fellows of the Institute further illustrates that the Institute and its journal were designed as a reserve of the elite, like many of the scientific learned societies it sought to follow. These included men like Admiral Frederick Bedford, former Governor of Western Australia, and Bampfylde Fuller, former Lieutenant Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam and sometime 'scientist' of human nature.<sup>7.22</sup> Membership was demarcated along rigid class, racial, and gender lines, made apparent most clearly in the lists of Fellows appointed to the Institute. Women could be named only as 'Associates', a role reserved again for a small group of wealthy individuals. When these women were appointed, many of them appeared either under gender ambiguous pen names and pseudonyms, as in the case of C. de Thierry (Jessie Weston) and D.H. (Rose) Moutray Read or under their husband's names.<sup>7.23</sup> Similarly, positioning itself as an empire-wide project, the Institute incorporated individuals from the overseas colonies as 'Non-Resident Fellows' but these came from a similar colonial governing class as their 'Resident' counterparts, especially in the case of the settler colonies. Tasmania, for instance, was represented by its Governor, Harry Barron, and the multiple Canadian MPs appointed as Fellows included Frank Oliver, then Minister of the Interior, notorious for his persecution

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<sup>7.21</sup> Amy Strachey, 'Dedication, to the Service of the Empire', *United Empire*, 1.1 (1910), 1

<sup>7.22</sup> 'Proceedings of the First Ordinary General Meeting', *Journal of the Royal Colonial Institute*, 1 (1909), 1-35 (p.2)

Bampfylde Fuller, *The Science of Ourselves* (London: Hodder and Stoughton and Oxford: Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1921)

<sup>7.23</sup> 'Notices to Fellows', *United Empire*, 1.1 (1910), 66-68 (p.66)

of indigenous populations and his attempts to limit immigration to Canada to white Europeans.<sup>7.24</sup> Such Fellows were not necessarily all white Europeans, and included names like George Fitzpatrick, a Trinidad-based representative and barrister of East Indian origin, but exclusively represented powerful interests. Like the Round Table Movement and Royal Institute of International Affairs that followed it, the RCI was thus representative of a trans-imperial dominant class.

This is reflected in the discourse that surrounded the Institute, rooted in fears of an imperial decline undermining the hegemony of this class and a recognition of the corresponding need for imperial reform to secure the dominance of imperialism as a mode of global order. Few articles captured the spirit of the Institute's ideological foundations more clearly than Richard Jebb's contribution to the inaugural issue which expressed an anxiety about the fortunes of imperialism in the new decade, centred on the hope that:

this is for our cause the dark hour before the dawn; and that the present chaos is heralding a new phase in the Imperial movement, when all parties will agree in recognising, not merely that closer union of the Empire has now become a national necessity, but that the only way to achieve it is by treating the question as a problem not of sentiment but of science.<sup>7.25</sup>

This distinction between sentiment and science was frequently alluded to in imperialist discourses throughout the early twentieth century. Science is deployed to imply an academic objectivity, consciously detached from the bias and imbalance of partisan politics or the 'militarism and jingoism' characteristic of an apparently less refined non-academic imperialism that other contributors to

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<sup>7.24</sup>'Proceedings of the First Ordinary General Meeting', p.2

<sup>7.25</sup>Richard Jebb, 'The New Phase', *United Empire*, 1.1 (1910), 17-20 (p.20)

*United Empire* were quick to condemn.<sup>7.26</sup> It might thus be considered a precursor to IR's insistence that it exists to describe the world rather than make normative decisions about it, as identified by Steve Smith.<sup>7.27</sup> In turn, as Smith notes, this echoes a distinction between the Weberian vocations of science and politics, with the former ostensibly value-free and of the same unsentimental character claimed by *United Empire*.<sup>7.28</sup> In claiming to put sentiment or political bias to one side to offer a 'scientific' objectivity to imperialist analyses, *United Empire* also joined the Round Table and preceded other publications like *International Affairs* that would later become more significant features of the IR landscape. This wider movement of 'scientific' imperialism can be considered a precursor to non-normative theories of IR that promise a detached and balanced account of the world they seek to describe.

Though this claim to scientificity united a range of approaches to imperialism under one banner, there was not necessarily a unity to the conclusions produced from discourses of imperial science, even within individual institutions. For instance, unlike many of his contemporaries, Jebb called for a rejection of racial justifications for empire. He dismissed the calls for an Anglo-Saxon world empire held together by a mythical racial unity of the type discussed in chapter five, not least because he recognised that 'the vast majority of British subjects are not Anglo-Saxon'.<sup>7.29</sup> However, if those working in this tradition did not share the same arguments, they remained committed to the same

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<sup>7.26</sup>J. Murray Clark, quoted in: 'Forty-Second Annual General Meeting', *United Empire*, 1.4 (1910), 243-255 (p.250)

<sup>7.27</sup>Steve Smith, 'Singing Our World into Existence: International Relations Theory and September 11', *International Studies Quarterly*, 48.3 (2004), 499-515 (pp.500-2)

<sup>7.28</sup>Max Weber, *Wissenschaft als Beruf* ('Science as a Vocation') (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1919)

Max Weber, *Politik als Beruf* [Politics as a Vocation] (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1919)

<sup>7.29</sup>Richard Jebb, 'The New Phase', p.19

methods. IR as an academic discipline adopted the same claims and methods and was founded along these lines as a science of empire, both in the sense that its practitioners were rooted in colonial dynamics of power, and that it set as its focus the reordering of imperial control for a new century. The concern with the rigid production, categorisation, and dissemination of 'official' scientific knowledge under the guise of 'objectivity' or balance was a central feature of Victorian learned societies and was taken up in the early twentieth century as IR became formalised and institutionalised as a new imperial science.

#### 7.2.1.1 *German Parallels of the Royal Colonial Institute*

This claim to the a 'scientific' approach to empire and global order was not unique to the British Empire or to the self-described 'Anglo-Saxonists'. Just as the Royal Colonial Institute had emerged in the British Empire out of a formalisation of 'scientific' discourses of empire through learned societies, a similar turn in the years immediately following German unification saw a proliferation of imperialist societies and pressure groups, largely focussed on metropolitan centres of the German Empire like Berlin and Frankfurt. The most prominent example, the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (German Colonial Society), was founded in 1887 via a merger of two of these predecessors in the Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation (Society for German Colonisation, GfdK) and the Deutschen Kolonialverein (German Colonial Association). The former sought to provide a forum through which to justify German colonialism, procure capital to support it, and encourage German emigration to the colonies, whereas the latter was intended more generally to 'support the colonial aspirations of the German people'.<sup>7.30</sup> As this suggests, there was major overlap between the two

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<sup>7.30</sup>*Satzungen der Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation* ('Statutes of the GfdK') (Berlin: Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kolonisation, 1884). Koblenz, *Bundesarchiv*, [Papers of the]

organisations from the outset, and the confusion this perhaps expectedly caused may have contributed to the decision to amalgamate, with letters from the GfdK stressing that it was ‘not to be confused with the deutschen Kolonialverein’ within weeks of its founding.<sup>7.31</sup> Both were focussed more on the practical and logistical aspects of colonisation, rather than conventionally academic pursuits, but this changed somewhat with the merger in 1887.

The consolidation of the two into a wider forum for wealthy and landed individuals to channel their support for imperial expansion into political action makes it something of a direct parallel to the Royal Colonial Institute, established in Britain two decades prior. Like the RCI, the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft also published its own periodicals, first with the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* and later the *Zeitschrift für Kolonialpolitik, Kolonialrecht und Kolonialwirtschaft* (‘Journal of Colonial Policy, Colonial Law, and Colonial Economics’), which carried a more deliberately academic character and serves as a more direct historical parallel to *United Empire*. These publications similarly championed imperialism but also exerted an explicit pressure on political leaders by pushing beyond German colonial policy in the period. For example, articles published in its pages at the turn of the century advocated further informal colonisation as far afield as Turkey and called for this to be carried out by German ‘men of action’ following the ‘path shown by German science’.<sup>7.32</sup> The common call for a ‘scientific’ approach to imperial expansion that united the British and German settings in this era marked a distinct shift in the relationship between policy and academia in an

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Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation, I (1884-1887), R 8023/263

<sup>7.31</sup> Letter from the Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation to the editor, June 1884. Koblenz, *Bundesarchiv*, [Papers of the] Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation, I (1884-1887), R 8023/263

‘nicht zu verwechseln mit dem deutschen Kolonialverein Abtheilung Berlin’

<sup>7.32</sup> H.H., ‘Das Grundeigentum in der Türkei’, *Organ der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft* (*Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*), 18.36 (1901), 354-5 (p.354)

imperial context. The boundaries between the two became increasingly blurred as formalised institutes and societies arose in the well-connected circles of the imperial ruling class to provide a 'scientific' basis to justify imperial expansion and colonial activity.

These organisations received some state support, engaged in dialogue with the formal structures of colonial policy, and counted high-ranking officials amongst their membership but nonetheless formally remained private endeavours. This is perhaps reflective of the opportunities that colonisation presented to private capital, and such groups did not disguise their intentions to use colonial endeavours as a route to vast profits through exploitation of the 'uncivilised' world. However, the private nature of these organisations also allowed for their claims to an objective, 'apolitical' detachment, itself tied to the presentation of private imperialist structures as 'scientific'. The GfdK, for example, insisted that all supporters were welcome, regardless of their political persuasions.<sup>7.33</sup> By presenting themselves as 'apolitical' or neutral in this way, such organisations echoed learned societies associated with the natural sciences more than pressure groups with outwardly political objectives. The origins of IR as a value-free, non-normative social science can be traced in part to this learned society model in the late nineteenth century, with its emphasis on a 'scientific' detachment. That this united the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft in the German Empire with Royal Colonial Institute in the British Empire is indicative of the trans-imperial interconnectivity that contributed to development of a science of empire across frontiers from this period onwards.

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<sup>7.33</sup>'Satzungen der Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation', p.5

### 7.2.2 British 'Kolonialwissenschaften'

As Rodney's claim quoted above suggests, a wide range of disciplines were purposed towards the rationalisation of structures of empire and were deeply imbricated in them, even those that might not conventionally be associated with imperial sciences.<sup>7.34</sup> Learned societies were a key element towards this end. An annual yearbook of 'Scientific and Learned Societies', published from 1884 onwards offers a telling picture of the breadth and scope of these groups.<sup>7.35</sup> The yearbook was divided into various categories, spanning all manner of learned societies. They included those covering conventional sciences such as biology (including anthropology), chemistry, astronomy, and medicine, alongside other disciplines like literature, history, law, and archæology. The Royal Colonial Institute fell under the broader 'general science' category, listed between the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the Balloon Society of Great Britain.<sup>7.36</sup> As this suggests, 'science' in this period was a far less exclusive classification than that associated with the present-day natural sciences. The annual yearbook series charts the gradual expansion of 'scientific' learned societies, alongside a broad collection of groups with wide-ranging literary, philosophical, and historical interests.

The outcome of this expansion meant that by the end of the nineteenth century, a complex and interdisciplinary mix of colonial sciences existed in the British Empire, mirroring the German 'Kolonialwissenschaften' of subsequent decades.<sup>7.37</sup> This was championed by a wide network of learned societies, whose

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<sup>7.34</sup>Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, p.103

<sup>7.35</sup>*Yearbook of the Scientific and Learned Societies of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 1 (London: Charles Griffin and Company, 1884)

<sup>7.36</sup>*Yearbook of the Scientific and Learned Societies of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 1 (1884), p.9

<sup>7.37</sup>Illustrating this contiguity, an advertisement for the equivalent German compendium of scientific associations and societies appeared in the first issue of the British yearbook.

remits, members, and objectives overlapped. Listed among the papers given at the Royal Scottish Geographical Society in 1897, for instance, was one on the topic of the 'Unity of the Empire'.<sup>7.38</sup> Published in the Society's magazine, it was a summary of lectures delivered by J. Kirkpatrick on 'The Anglo-Saxon Race' and G.W. Prothero on 'The British Colonial Empire'.

Delivered under the auspices of a scientific institute, the objective of both lectures was firmly fixed on providing a scientific basis for 'further consolidation and unification of the British Empire'.<sup>7.39</sup> The first claimed that 'the laws of evolution apply to ethnical as well as to natural science' and argued that a failure to expand the Empire in line with these fundamental laws would mark 'a reversal of all historical evolution'.<sup>7.40</sup> This was imperialism framed explicitly in the language of Darwinian contemporary science. Like Lothrop Stoddard over two decades later, Kirkpatrick made a 'realist' argument in racial rather than state-centric terms, advocating for an approach to international affairs that would promote not the 'welfare of the whole human race' but instead that of the white 'Anglo-Saxon'.<sup>7.41</sup> On these grounds, he called for consolidated imperial federation with a 'true Imperial Council', in which colonies were not 'mere bondmaids of the mother-country' but were united by a shared commitment to the 'continuity of the race, with all its traditions, its culture, education, and religion'.<sup>7.42</sup> In this, there are strong echoes of the Anglo-Saxonist movement of the age. This is made

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'Die Wissenschaftlichen Vereine und Gesellschaften Deutschlands' ('The Scientific Associations and Societies of Germany') [Advertisement] in: *Yearbook of the Scientific and Learned Societies of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Charles Griffin and Company, 1884), advertisements section, p.4

<sup>7.38</sup> *Yearbook of the Scientific and Learned Societies of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 15 (London: Charles Griffin and Company, 1898), pp.98-9

<sup>7.39</sup> John Kirkpatrick and George Walter Prothero, 'The Unity of the Empire', *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 13.6 (1897), 308-315 (p.308). doi:10.1080/14702549708555007

<sup>7.40</sup> John Kirkpatrick and George Walter Prothero, 'The Unity of the Empire', p.309

<sup>7.41</sup> John Kirkpatrick and George Walter Prothero, 'The Unity of the Empire', p.308

<sup>7.42</sup> John Kirkpatrick and George Walter Prothero, 'The Unity of the Empire', p.312

doubly apparent when, in centring racial unity as the bedrock of international relations, Kirkpatrick provided the cautionary tale of the ‘Southern Colonies’ of North America. Here, he claimed, a failure by colonists to stay true to the ‘continuity of the race’ had led to ‘the penalties of civil war and an unduly large negro population’.<sup>7.43</sup>

It is telling that Kirkpatrick begins with an appeal to ostensibly fundamental laws of science and immediately devolves into a racism characteristic of the late nineteenth century imperial intellectual class he represented. In this sense, his work serves as something of a bridge between two eras of imperial knowledge production. On one side is the Victorian imperial science of the old learned societies, while on the other is the hard racial science and debates around imperial reform that would define elite discourse in the core of the empire in subsequent decades. Prothero’s contribution to the discussion was less directly racially charged. He similarly directed his oratory efforts towards championing imperial federation but did so from an historical perspective, rather than making as direct a use of popular scientific discourse. This is indicative of the fact that, though addressing the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, the two men were historians rather than scientists or geographers. Both men held academic posts at the University of Edinburgh at the time, where Kirkpatrick was an historian of law and Prothero of modern Europe.

As the use by historians of scientific discourses from fields like evolutionary biology to address geographers suggests, ‘science’ in this period was more fluid, interdisciplinary, and prone to repurposing than might be imagined over a century later, with permeable boundaries between fields. This raises two possibilities. The first is that class and standing were worth more than specific academic

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<sup>7.43</sup>John Kirkpatrick and George Walter Prothero, ‘The Unity of the Empire’, p.311

background or disciplinary training in securing 'scientific' credibility. The position of scholars like Kirkpatrick as learned men was perhaps enough to secure them an audience irrespective of the subject on which they intended to speak. The second possibility is that science was broader than might be imagined today, incorporating a broad mixture of what might otherwise be considered natural sciences, humanities, or social sciences. It may have been a greater degree of disciplinary flexibility than present in professional scientific institutions today that facilitated the co-opting of 'hard' scientific discourse within the 'softer' sciences of fields like geography.

The convincing solution lies somewhere between the two. This burgeoning science of empire was an interdisciplinary one, but it was doubtless also an elite pursuit. The boundaries of science were flexible, but the ability to practice it remained restricted on grounds of class, social status, race, and in most cases, gender. Learned societies provided a means of safeguarding this, ensuring that 'legitimate' science, regardless of its focus, could remain the preserve of a particular section of imperial society. On this note, despite their ostensible disciplinary breadth, it is indicative of the insularity of these learned societies that the Royal Scottish Geographical Society at this time was chaired by the ninth Marquess of Lothian, whose scion, Philip Kerr (eleventh Marquess), would become a leading foundational figure in both the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the Round Table movement a generation later. As this suggests, an early twentieth century generation of upper class, well-connected individuals inherited, to some extent literally, an organisational tradition from the learned societies of the Victorian imperial zenith.

### 7.3 'Citizen-Scholars' of a 'Noble Science'

Even more telling is the case of Prothero, who served as a direct institutional link between the Victorian learned societies and the post-1919 disciplinary structures of IR. Four years after his address to the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, Prothero became President of the Royal Historical Society and played an influential role in building that institution. In an address to the same Society over a century later, he was presented by Michael Bentley as the embodiment of a generation of 'scientific' historians who considered themselves akin to 'those experimentors and inventors, mathematicians and philosophers who were changing the face of human knowledge in late Victorian Britain'.<sup>7.44</sup> This was reflected in his historical work, which took on a decidedly Rankean character. After studies under Heinrich von Sybel in Bonn, he had sought to import a German historiographical tradition to the British Empire, not least by translating Ranke's work into English.<sup>7.45</sup> He was also deeply imbricated in the elite social network that would provide the foundations on which IR's disciplinary structures were to be built.

Prothero was one of several historians turned scholar-diplomats who gravitated towards the machinery of the state in the first two decades of the twentieth century, alongside others like Viscount (James) Bryce and James Headlam-Morley with whom Prothero corresponded widely.<sup>7.46</sup> Like

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<sup>7.44</sup>Michael Bentley, 'The Age of Prothero: British Historiography in the Long Fin de Siècle, 1870-1920' (The Prothero Lecture, 1 July 2009), *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 20 (2010), 171-93 (p.180)

<sup>7.45</sup>Leopold von Ranke, *Universal History: The Oldest Historical Group of Nations and the Greeks*, ed. and trans. by G.W. Prothero (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884)

<sup>7.46</sup>Letter from James Bryce to George Walther Prothero, 15 November 1912. London, *Royal Historical Society*, Prothero Papers, PP/1/4/8

Letter from James Bryce to George Walther Prothero, 19 January 1912. London, *Royal Historical Society*, Prothero Papers, PP/1/4/6

Letter from James Wycliffe Headlam to George Walter Prothero, 19 May 1915. London, *Royal*

Headlam-Morley, who attended as part of the Foreign Office secretariat, Prothero would be invited to the Paris Peace Conference as the official Foreign Office historian.<sup>7.47</sup> In Paris, they joined a wide array of names who would go on to become key touchstones in IR's canonical disciplinary history including Philip (Noel-) Baker, E.H. Carr, Philip Kerr, and Robert Cecil.<sup>7.48</sup>

This was not restricted to the British delegation: the US contingent included Aberystwyth's future third Wilson Chair, Jerome Greene ('Secretary for Questions Relating to the Reparation of Damage'), as well as names like Isaiah Bowman ('Chief of Territorial Questions'), and George Louis Beer (expert on 'Colonial Questions').<sup>7.49</sup> The close proximity between leading scholars from either side of the Atlantic allowed for direct interaction on a scale that was largely unprecedented in an age before mass aviation. Beer, for instance, met Alfred Zimmern for the first time at the conference and left Zimmern convinced that his American counterpart was the model 'citizen-scholar'.<sup>7.50</sup> Zimmern cultivated a similar image for himself, though was later criticised as insufficiently scientifically minded by Felix Frankfurter, a delegate of the Zionist movement to the Paris Peace Conference and later a US Supreme Court Justice. Frankfurter lamented to Zimmern in 1925 that his transition from 'disinterested searcher for truth' to 'propagandist for panaceas' had disillusioned the 'rigorous and objective' scholars like Frankfurter who approached questions of international order like 'devotees of science'.<sup>7.51</sup>

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*Historical Society, Prothero Papers, PP/1/7/15*

<sup>7.47</sup> Department of State (United States), 'Directories of the Peace Conference' in: *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. 3 (Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1943), 1-91 (p.12)

<sup>7.48</sup> Department of State (United States), 'Directories of the Peace Conference', pp.8-9

<sup>7.49</sup> Department of State (United States), 'Directories of the Peace Conference', p.4

<sup>7.50</sup> Julia Stapleton, *Political Intellectuals and Public Identities in Britain Since 1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp.102-103

<sup>7.51</sup> Felix Frankfurter to Alfred Zimmern, 7 April 1925, Frankfurter MSS, container 113 (mf. 69), Library

Nonetheless, the ‘citizen-scholar’ imagined by Zimmern and assessed in detail by Julia Stapelton needed not only to be an objective searcher for truth but also had to recognise that the academic ought to be integrated into the machinery of the state, building on Edwardian ideals of civic duty. They were to serve as an ‘objective’ observer, purportedly able to analyse the world through an expert lens and feed it in interpretable terms to policymakers, perhaps foreshadowing those ‘experts’ condemned by Michael Gove at Chatham House a century later.<sup>7.52</sup> In 1917, before taking up his post at Aberystwyth, Zimmern had sought to put this into practice by joining with his former student, Arnold Toynbee, to call for the official instituting of a group of ostensibly objective experts to conduct dispassionate research and accordingly present relevant ‘facts’ to policymakers to inform key political decisions.<sup>7.53</sup> This echoed the ‘scientific’ approach to IR championed in the same period and later, which ostensibly required the separation of the observer from the world they observed.

### **7.3.1 Political Intelligence Department and Foreign Office Historical Section**

In response to Zimmern and Toynbee’s call, the British government eventually established the Foreign Office Historical Section (FOHS) and the Political Intelligence Department (PID). Initially set up in the Admiralty, but transferred to the Foreign Office in February 1918, the Historical Section would employ

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of Congress. Quoted in: Julia Stapleton, *Political Intellectuals and Public Identities in Britain Since 1850*, p.103

<sup>7.52</sup>Thomas Farrar, ‘Michael Gove on the Trouble with Experts’ [Interview], *Chatham House*, 3 March 2017 (last updated 10 May 2023). <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2017/03/michael-gove-trouble-experts> [Accessed 29 March 2025]

<sup>7.53</sup>Arnold J. Toynbee and Alfred Zimmern, ‘Peace-Terms Intelligence: Suggestions for a Peace Terms Intelligence Section to be added to the Existing Intelligence and Propaganda Departments’, n.d. [late Jan. 1917], CAB 21/62/f15/E1. London, *National Archives*. Quoted in: T.G. Otte, “‘The Light of History’”: Scholarship and Officialdom in the Era of the First World War’, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 30.2 (2019), 253–87. doi:10.1080/09592296.2019.1619035

leading historians and direct their efforts towards providing analysis upon which political decision-makers could act.<sup>7.54</sup> The Political Intelligence Department was similarly positioned as a ‘small circle of experts’ that could study developments in international affairs, particularly through open source intelligence like foreign press coverage, and distil this into relevant guidance for policymakers.<sup>7.55</sup> Together, these new units formalised the role of the ‘citizen-scholar’ and firmly anchored professional scholars in state bureaucracy. Reflecting the insularity of the circles that had produced them, the former was headed by Prothero while Headlam-Morley was Assistant Director of the latter. On a wide and sustained scale, the state began to recruit professional academics, largely historians, whose scholarly expertise could directly shape government decision-making. This reflected both pre-war colonial networks, like Milner’s Kindergarten, and the post-war disciplinary landscape of IR that would follow, particularly with institutions like Chatham House that continue to maintain close ties to structures of government decision-making.

Though initially intended to prepare the British delegation for the post-war peace negotiations in Paris, many involved envisioned the PID and FOHS becoming permanent post-war fixtures. The crowning achievement of the FOHS was the production of 162 handbooks to prepare delegates to determine the fates of regions of the world they were largely unfamiliar with, published in the aftermath of the Peace Conference to provide what might be considered a major

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<sup>7.54</sup>Letter from G.W. Prothero to Ernest Satow, 23 February 1918. London, *National Archives*, Sir Ernest Mason Satow Papers, PRO/30/33 13/5

‘Institution of an Historical Section of the Foreign Office at 3 Great College Street, Westminster, under Directorship of Dr G W Prothero’. London, *National Archives*, CO 323/775/96 (formerly 13901/1918)

<sup>7.55</sup>Erik Goldstein, ‘Historians Outside the Academy: G. W. Prothero and the Experience of the Foreign Office Historical Section, 1917–20’, *Historical Research*, 63.51 (1990), 195–211. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2281.1990.tb00882.x

IR library, combining tentative ventures into area studies with heavier primers on history. These included a volume on European diplomatic history from the French Revolutionary Wars onwards, authored by the same F.J.C. Hearnshaw who had edited the series of King's College London Imperial Studies lectures seven years prior.<sup>7.56</sup>

The project to produce the handbooks and thus demarcate an official knowledge with recognised boundaries that could be propagated and made accessible to a wider public largely marked the realisation of the Imperial Studies dream. State endorsement gave the endeavour the sort of resources, in terms of political and institutional capital, that even the well-funded Royal Colonial Institute could not have imagined. The FOHS, however, was not set apart primarily by financial factors. Prothero oversaw the editorial process meticulously, but funds were strained, with authors of the handbooks receiving a £25 honorarium for their work.<sup>7.57</sup> The formal institutional backing that incorporation into the Foreign Office provided, however, set the initiative apart from informal networks of knowledge production in prior decades. The state recognised the importance of sustained study of all aspects of international order and, significantly, entrusted its production to the same class of imperial 'citizen-scholars' who had dominated earlier movements advocating for the expansion of Imperial Studies.

The production of handbooks was a mammoth endeavour, leaving virtually no region of the world untouched. The geographical areas covered spanned from

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<sup>7.56</sup>Fossey John Cobb Hearnshaw, *European Coalitions, Alliances and Ententes Since 1792*, Handbooks Prepared Under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.152 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

<sup>7.57</sup>Ernest Satow, diary entry, 5 June 1919. London, *National Archives*, Sir Ernest Mason Satow Papers, PRO/30/33 17/4, fol.115.  
'Rec'd from Prothero an order for £25 as honorarium for writing "International Congresses". He says he is "fully conscious that as a payment it is very inadequate but the fund we have to draw upon is almost exhausted". It is the same as what Gubbins received for his monograph on Japan' See: John Harrington Gubbins, *Japan*, Handbooks Prepared Under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.73 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

Portuguese Timor to Easter Island and Rhenish Prussia to Kiachow and Weihaiwei, with additional volumes covering topics as diverse as Islamic history and the Scheldt river.<sup>7.58</sup> Volumes like Charles Webster's handbook on the Congress of Vienna became essential components of the Peace Conference even beyond the British delegations, despite President Wilson's insistence (to Webster's amusement) that 'no odour of Vienna' be brought into the proceedings.<sup>7.59</sup> That these works were circulating in such circles is indicative of how tightly wedded scholarly endeavours were to official channels of decision-making. This is also suggestive of the mark the work of the FOHS left on the discipline beyond the borders the British Empire. One of the earliest IR syllabi still extant from the United States in the 1920s features the Foreign Office handbooks heavily among its extensive reading lists.<sup>7.60</sup>

The impact of the FOHS on the discipline is largely yet to be assessed or accounted for, but some indication can be found in the reflections of Philip Reynolds, the fifth Wilson Chair and long-time friend of Webster. Four decades after their publication, Reynolds directly identified the influence that the method

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<sup>7.58</sup>G.W. Prothero (ed.), *Portuguese Timor*, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.80 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

G.W. Prothero (ed.), *Kiaochow and Weihaiwei*, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.71 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

G.W. Prothero (ed.), *Rhenish Prussia*, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.38 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

G.W. Prothero (ed.), *Mapelo, Cocos, and Easter Islands*, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, nos.141 and 142 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

G.W. Prothero (ed.), *Mohammedan History*, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.57 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

G.W. Prothero (ed.), *The Question of the Scheldt*, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.28 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

<sup>7.59</sup>Charles K. Webster, *The Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815*, second edition, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1963), p.15

<sup>7.60</sup>Parker Thomas Moon, *Syllabus on International Relations: Issued by the Institute of International Education*(New York: MacMillan, 1925)

deployed in the handbooks had on the 'study of international relations as an academic discipline'.<sup>7.61</sup> In particular, he directly positioned Webster's work as the precursor to the use of decision-making analysis as a conceptual and methodological framework in IR, albeit without the grand generalised hypotheses that were in vogue in the discipline by the time of Webster's death in 1961. Reynolds thus draws a direct line between Webster and the post-war US IR scholars who succeeded him, with both using their proximity to structures of government decision-making to produce ostensibly detached analysis.

Building on this, the work of the FOHS and associated departments not only provided a partial knowledge base for the development of the growing discipline but also created an institutional precedent. Many of the principles of earlier initiatives were revived during and after the Second World War to fulfil a similar advisory role, and it was no coincidence that the same people, including Webster, Zimmern, and Toynbee, were involved in both cases.<sup>7.62</sup> Toynbee made this explicit in directly suggesting that Chatham House in the Second World War ought to fulfil a similar function to that of the PID in the first.<sup>7.63</sup> The interconnected histories of these initiatives and the wider networks of individuals involved are telling of a shifting relationship between academia and the state in this period. Though this is a debate well-rehearsed by present-day scholars of IR, it is often written out of the discipline's canonical foundation narratives. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify echoes in the FOHS and PID of features that would come to define the post-war Western discipline of IR.

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<sup>7.61</sup> Philip Alan Reynolds, Introduction in: Charles K. Webster, *The Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815*, second edition, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1963), 9-12 (p.12)

<sup>7.62</sup> P.A. Reynolds and E.J. Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat: Charles Kingsley Webster and the United Nations, 1939-1946* (London: Martin Robertson, 1976)

<sup>7.63</sup> Robert A. Longmire and Kenneth C. Walker, *Herald of a Noisy World - Interpreting the News of All Nations: The Research and Analysis Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office* (London: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 1995), p.13

### 7.3.2 Milner's Kindergarten

The Historical Section might have thus had an IR future, but equally significant was its imperialist past. As the FOHS was being established, an unlikely ally had been won over to this idea of a 'dispassionate' expert unit in Leo Amery. One of the staunchest imperialists of his day, Amery was also a leading 'regionalist' in his conceptualisation of world order, in direct opposition to the liberal internationalism championed by Zimmern.<sup>7.64</sup> Viewing the Great War as a racial conflict between 'Slav and Teuton' (and to a lesser extent between 'Teuton and Gaul'), Amery looked to Naumann's *Mitteleuropa* as a stronger basis for continental stability than the nascent League idea.<sup>7.65</sup> A decade after Versailles, he continued to champion British imperialism as an alternative to the League and positioned British imperialism as the historical force on which the League itself was modelled. When he declared to Chatham House in 1929 that 'British imperialism, so far from being an out of date reactionary force, is in its new form... the leading example of the new line of progress which the world is going to take', he was condemned by J.A. Hobson for making 'a pro-German argument' that would allow German 'scientific ability' to dominate Europe.<sup>7.66</sup>

Though far from a natural ally to Zimmern, as this suggests, a shared understanding of 'scientific' knowledge production nonetheless brought them together. Like Zimmern, Amery recognised a defining methodological tension between 'concrete, scientific and historical analysis' and 'the method of

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<sup>7.64</sup>Liane Hewitt, 'The World in Blocs: Leo Amery, the British Empire and Regionalist Anti-internationalism, 1903–1947', *Journal of Global History*, 18.2 (2023), 236-258. doi:10.1017/S1740022822000262

<sup>7.65</sup>Leo S. Amery, 'The British Empire and the Pan-European Idea', *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 9.1 (1930), 1-22

<sup>7.66</sup>L.S. Amery, 'The British Empire and the Pan-European Idea', pp.12-15

unscientific, a priori abstraction'.<sup>7.67</sup> They thus found common ground in the proposals for an ostensibly dispassionate expert analytical unit, which Amery hoped to work with Mark Sykes and Thomas Jones in creating.<sup>7.68</sup> Though the former, an aristocratic Conservative imperialist (of Sykes-Picot fame), would soon succumb to influenza at the Paris Peace Conference, the latter would go on to play a decisive role in establishing the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth. It is telling that Amery suggested that such a department might be led by another arch-imperialist, in Lord Milner.<sup>7.69</sup> His nomination is unsurprising, given that Amery's lifelong loyalty to his 'old chief' was enduring enough to earn him the moniker of Milner's 'disciple'.<sup>7.70</sup> Nonetheless, Amery not only idolised Milner as an 'Olympian figure', in the words of his biographer, but also subscribed to the same hierarchical, distinctly white supremacist imperialism as the former Transvaal Colony Governor.<sup>7.71</sup>

It is common for historians to generalise and speak of married couples in almost indistinguishable terms, treating a wife as the extension of a husband.<sup>7.72</sup> This has often been the case with Lucie Hirsch Barbier and Alfred Zimmern, for instance, despite the well-documented contribution of the latter to international

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<sup>7.67</sup>L.S. Amery, *National and Imperial Economics*, Second Edition (London: National Unionist Association, 1924), p.11

<sup>7.68</sup>Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British Diplomatic Strategy, Peace Planning, and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916-1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p.21

<sup>7.69</sup>Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, p.21

<sup>7.70</sup>L.S. Amery, 'Foreword' in: Vladimir Halpérin, *Lord Milner and the Empire: The Evolution of British Imperialism* (London: Odhams Press, 1952), 7-23

Zbyněk A.B. Zeman, *A Diplomatic History of the First World War* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), p.319

<sup>7.71</sup>William Roger Louis, *In the Name of God, Go!: Leo Amery and the British Empire in the Age of Churchill* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Co., 1992), p.39

<sup>7.72</sup>Ann Oakley, *Forgotten Wives: How Women Get Written Out of History* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2021)

Patricia Owens, *Erased: A History of International Thought Without Men* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2025)

thought in her own right.<sup>7.73</sup> Rarely, however, is the same lens applied to two heterosexual men, unconnected by domestic relationships. Nonetheless, reflecting the insularity of their class and socio-political circle, Milner and Amery were ideologically and professionally inseparable. Milner had accepted the post of Colonial Secretary in David Lloyd George's post-war Cabinet on the condition that Amery be appointed as his Under-Secretary. Amery believed Milner only took the job so his protégé could be well-placed to 'carry on [Milner's] ideas on Imperial matters' after his retirement.<sup>7.74</sup> As this illustrates, complex networks of interdependence were built along class lines, but also on personal relationships within these, anchored in the overlap between the common ideological and professional interests that these men shared. Tracing the genealogy of institutions central to canonical narratives of IR's disciplinary history uncovers a complex web of interactions and personal relationships between those involved in formalising them from which the discipline cannot be separated. Read against the grain, these canonical historical narratives thus reveal the extent to which the orthodox discipline was shaped by a small group of socially elite, well-connected men who were connected by intersecting social, professional, and political relationships.

To illustrate this further and close this circle: if Milner had been the defining intellectual influence on Amery's professional life, the equivalent on Milner's had been Arnold Toynbee senior: uncle and namesake of the aforementioned memorandum's co-author.<sup>7.75</sup> Along with Gilbert Murray, who became Toynbee

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<sup>7.73</sup>One recent disciplinary history mentions 'Mrs Zimmern' only once, in relation to the disruption their marriage caused to her husband's career  
Jo-Anne Pemberton, *The Story of International Relations, Part One: Cold-Blooded Idealists* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020), p.108

Patricia Owens and Katharina Rietzler, 'Polyphonic Internationalism: The Lucie Zimmern School of International Studies', *International History Review*, 45.4 (2023), 623–42. doi:10.1080/07075332.2023.2177321

<sup>7.74</sup>William Roger Louis, *In the Name of God, Go!*, p.78

<sup>7.75</sup>Alfred Milner, *Arnold Toynbee: A Reminiscence* (London: Edward Arnold, 1895)

junior's father-in-law in 1913, the memorandum's authors constituted a notable trio of 'classicising internationalists' who wielded significant disciplinary influence on IR in the interwar period.<sup>7.76</sup> Like the learned societies of old, the network of semi-official discourse that shaped calls for a 'scientific' approach to IR in the final years of the Great War was extraordinarily insular. It was an old boys' club, often literally as well as figuratively. Not only were Zimmern, Murray, Milner, Amery, and the Messrs. Toynbee old Oxonians, but the latter four had all studied at Balliol College, and Zimmern and the younger Toynbee had attended the same public school (Winchester College). Similar connexions pervaded the interwar institutions considered foundational to the discipline of IR. This is not coincidental but reveals the narrow social circle from which structures of knowledge production in the nascent 'science' emerged.

However, Milner was connected to the scientification of the discipline by more than social or personal ties. He saw his role as that of the 'patron and leader' of those who shared his ambition to transform the Empire into a 'race-nation', willing to nurture a new generation of colonial administrators and scholars turned experts to carry on his work after his retirement.<sup>7.77</sup> In his words, his aim was to 'leave behind me young men with plenty of work in them'.<sup>7.78</sup> He was the namesake of 'Milner's Kindergarten', a similar circle of well-connected colonial administrators and scholars in South Africa, so named because of Milner's penchant for attempting to mould bright young Oxford graduates into a new generation of imperial citizen-scholars in his own image. In this, Milner was

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<sup>7.76</sup>Liam Stowell, *The Athens of Example: The Classical World in British International Thought, 1900–1939* (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 2020)

<sup>7.77</sup>Walter Nimocks, *Milner's Young Men: The Kindergarten in Edwardian Imperial Affairs* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1968), p.157

<sup>7.78</sup>Percy FitzPatrick, *Lord Milner and His Work: An Appreciation* (n.d., c.1925). Quoted in: Alfred M. Gollin, *Proconsul in Politics: A Study of Lord Milner in Opposition and in Power* (London: Anthony Blond, 1964), p.41

engaged in a type of discipline-forming. He hoped to establish a form of Imperial Studies as the basis on which imperial civil servants might be trained. Frustrated at ‘the plentiful lack of thought and energy devoted to even the biggest problems of Empire’, Milner identified a need for the serious organised and systematic study of empire to provide future colonial administrators with specialist knowledge on which to base their work.<sup>7.79</sup>

He presented this not only as a scientific endeavour but as a necessarily elite one. In Milner’s words, ‘such work, like all scientific work, naturally appeals only to a limited class’.<sup>7.80</sup> He saw this limited class as the guardian of the Empire’s future, and from its ranks, he drew his legion of protégés. They were young Oxford graduates, all of them men, almost all unmarried and in their twenties, united by their common subscription to both the importance of empire and the need for its consolidation through imperial federation. Of the eleven central members of the ‘Kindergarten’, eight were alumni of New College, Oxford, in Robert Brand, Lionel Curtis, John Dove, Richard Feetham, Lionel Hitchens, Philip Kerr, J. Frederick ‘Peter’ Perry, and Hugh Wyndham. They were joined by Balliol alumnus Patrick Duncan, Dougal ‘Dougie’ Malcolm of All Souls, and Geoffrey Robinson (later Dawson) of Magdalen.<sup>7.81</sup> Associates outside of the core membership included the similarly Oxford-educated Zimmern and Amery, alongside the novelist and future Governor General of Canada, John Buchan, who had initially studied under Gilbert Murray at Glasgow but had followed this with a spell at Brasenose College. Another associate, F.S. Oliver, marked a rare exception amongst an otherwise

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<sup>7.79</sup>Alfred Milner, ‘Crown Colonies’ (An address delivered before the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce), 7 June 1910, in: *The Nation and the Empire, Being a Collection of Speeches and Addresses* (London: Constable and Company, 1913), 461-9 (pp.467-8)

<sup>7.80</sup>Alfred Milner, ‘Crown Colonies’, pp.467-468

<sup>7.81</sup>Harry V. Hodson, ‘The Round Table, 1910-1981’, *Round Table*, 71.284 (1981), 308-333. doi:10.1080/00358538108453540

Oxonian collective, having studied at Trinity College, Cambridge after Edinburgh.

As this suggests, the Kindergarten was as heavily restricted on class and status grounds as any of the imperial learned societies of old. It was built by Milner on the premise that, in the absence of experienced dons, young Oxford-educated scions of upper-class families provided a fertile field from which to harvest the ‘experts’ destined to build a new rigorous and scientific approach to empire. The preference for old Oxonians was not a result of Milner’s personal prejudices given his own educational background but is instead reflective of the defining dynamics and insularity of knowledge production at the time. Given Oxford’s unique position as a ‘nursery’ of statesmen, administrators, and the political elite, its graduates dominated positions of influence across British Imperial politics, society, and governance throughout the Edwardian period and beyond.<sup>7.82</sup>

Unsurprisingly, IR was no exception and the same ‘limited class’ of Oxford-educated young men courted by Milner would form the bedrock of the post-war discipline. Many of the names connected to ‘Milner’s Kindergarten’ would be as recognisable to disciplinary historians of IR as they are to scholars of Edwardian imperialism, especially those of Kerr and Curtis. The continuity between the Edwardian era of citizen-scholars and the interwar discipline was a product in no small part of the overlapping institutions and networks that traversed both, populated largely by the same individuals. These were interconnected with other learned societies, from which they drew a degree of direct structural inspiration. Milner himself was a Vice-President of the Royal Colonial Institute and

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<sup>7.82</sup>Thomas Weber, ‘Oxford and Heidelberg in their National Contexts’ in: *Our Friend ‘The Enemy’: Elite Education in Britain and Germany before World War I* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 15-47

On the same dominance in the present day, see:  
Andy Beckett, ‘PPE: The Oxford Degree that Runs Britain’, *Guardian*, 23 February 2017.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/feb/23/ppe-oxford-university-degree-that-rules-britain>  
[Accessed 18 July 2024]

addressed its Manchester branch as the peace negotiations in Paris approached their conclusion.<sup>7.83</sup> Like learned societies, however, these groups, which might be considered proto-IR institutions, were not static and instead evolved over a relatively short period of time. The basic belief in the necessity of a strong relationship between dispassionate experts and the mechanisms of decision-making on which the Kindergarten was premised was a starting point that would evolve into a more influential trajectory. In the process, it would beget other institutions and channels of knowledge production that intersect with the canonical disciplinary history of IR, even if they have not traditionally been centred within this.

From Milner's Kindergarten emerged the semi-secret 'Fortnightly Club', populated by Kindergarten members and a few dozen well-connected fellow travellers. This was part private members social club and part forum for 'experts' to pontificate on the fate and future of imperial reform, occupying a peculiar place between colonial learned society and proto-thinktank. Legitimised by the expertise of those who populated it, the discourse propagated under its auspices was capable of taking on a directly racially charged character, as with Lionel Curtis' suggestion to Patrick Duncan that imperialists ought to abandon the old 'civilising mission' in favour of a system of racial segregation that 'encourag[ed] as far as possible the black man to separate from the white'.<sup>7.84</sup> It also sought to tap into an identified need to develop new 'scientific' legitimisations for empire and create spaces for detached observers to develop these that would mirror established learned societies. Dubow positions this as part of the same 'trend to

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<sup>7.83</sup>Royal Colonial Institute, Manchester Branch, Visit to Manchester of the Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, Principal Secretary of State of the Colonies, April 9th, 10th, and 11th, 1919 (Manchester: Royal Colonial Institute, 1919). Oxford, *Bodleian Libraries*, MS. Milner dep. 464

<sup>7.84</sup>Saul Dubow, *A Commonwealth of Knowledge: Science, Sensibility, and White South Africa 1820-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.177

pronounce on the “native question” with greater technical precision and scientific detachment’ that facilitated the expansion of colonial social sciences, especially anthropology.<sup>7.85</sup> However, this pursuit of ostensible ‘scientific detachment’ also had a decisive impact on the development of IR’s canonical foundations.

### **7.3.3 The Round Table**

A far more significant pillar in these foundations than the Fortnightly Club was the Round Table movement, which also evolved from Milner’s Kindergarten but has justifiably received more scholarly attention from historians of empire, and to some extent from disciplinary historians of IR for its defining influence on the development of the field, particularly in the Anglophone world. The Round Table movement was the formalised scholarly corollary of the Kindergarten. When John Buchan wrote to Gilbert Murray as early as 1902 that the defining feature of the Kindergarten’s work was the ‘plain dealing with facts’ encouraged by Milner, he foreshadowed a sentiment that would become the touchstone of the Round Table movement.<sup>7.86</sup> It operated on the premise that international relations, and specifically Imperial relations, could be analysed with a ‘scientific’ detachment by ostensibly ideologically neutral expert observers. The Round Table’s goal would later be summarised by Reginald Coupland, the future two-time editor of its journal and long-serving Beit Professor of Colonial History at Oxford by virtue of Curtis’ patronage.<sup>7.87</sup> In Coupland’s words, the Round Table aimed ‘to look afield and ahead, to detect the crucial problem, if we can, before the crisis is

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<sup>7.85</sup>Saul Dubow, *A Commonwealth of Knowledge*, p.177

<sup>7.86</sup>Daniel Gorman, *Imperial Citizenship: Empire and the Question of Belonging* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p.81

<sup>7.87</sup>‘Reggie Coupland had been brought over Empire studies by Lionel Curtis, who regarded himself as Coupland’s creator, as in a sense he was’  
Alfred Leslie Rowse, *All Souls and Appeasement: A Contribution to Contemporary History* (London: MacMillan, 1961), pp.25-6

upon us, and to prepare ourselves betimes to solve it by scientific study'.<sup>7.88</sup> The implication was that international affairs within and beyond the British Empire could be modelled, predicted, and shaped by a class of expert scholars turned political administrators, and thus the Round Table was instituted.

Its primary concern, like the Kindergarten from which it emerged, was the future of the Empire, but its focus also extended to wider international affairs. In Buchan's words, these men were motivated by 'a vision of what the Empire might be made' and, echoing the Transatlantic Anglo-Saxonist discourse circulating at the same time, envisioned this future Empire in explicitly racial terms as 'a world-wide brotherhood with the background of a common race and creed' which held to the 'white man's burden' as 'a new philosophy of politics'.<sup>7.89</sup> Directed towards achieving imperial reform towards this end, the Round Table emerged from a group centred largely on South Africa that sought to expand itself to the wider Empire after the unification of the British South African colonies. Like the Wilson Chair, however, disciplinary historians must look to Wales for its formal origins. Though a product of existing networks that had undergone a long gestation between 1907 and the summer of 1909, the Round Table was officially founded in early September 1909, with a conference at Plas Newydd on Ynys Môn. With branch groups installed in all corners of the Empire, it expanded the Milnerite network beyond South Africa into a pan-Imperial movement. At Plas Newydd, the network was given formal structure with Curtis and Kerr installed as its first members of staff. Their annual remuneration of £1000 each (equivalent to £101,044.14 in February 2025) was a princely salary at a time when the average

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<sup>7.88</sup>Reginald Coupland, *The Empire in These Days: An Interpretation* (London: MacMillan, 1935), p.10

<sup>7.89</sup>John Buchan, *Memory Hold-the-Door* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1940), pp.124-5

annual wage was £58 12s.<sup>7.90</sup> This indicates the capital behind the organisation, which was sustained by donations from wealthy and well-connected supporters of Milner's 'imperial unity', many of them peers of the realm.

These funds were diverted to the establishment of an official mouthpiece of the Round Table, edited by Kerr and occasionally proclaimed the 'first journal of International Relations in the world'.<sup>7.91</sup> This organ, titled *The Round Table* and published quarterly from 1910, was modelled on an earlier publication edited by Kerr and Curtis, published in the nascent Union of South Africa as *The State*. The articles published in this earlier journal reveal an obsessive pre-occupation with race, not least in provocatively-titled pieces like 'Should We Civilize the Kafir?'.<sup>7.92</sup> *The Round Table* often deployed less polemically racist language but treated with the same subjects and was prone to amplifying the same racist and segregationist views in its pages as its South African predecessor. It had been founded on the premise that it aired unopinionated factual pieces from contributors rather than imposing editorial lines, yet the editors did not shy away from intervening to identify the threat posed to 'Western civilisation' by the 'colour problem'.<sup>7.93</sup>

Nonetheless, foreshadowing the ostensibly detached approach associated with 'scientific' IR in decades to come, its opening article promised to analyse questions of Empire 'with knowledge and without bias'.<sup>7.94</sup> It was, in the words of Alfred Zimmern within its pages, 'an attempt to apply the methods

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<sup>7.90</sup>Charles Feinstein, 'New Estimates of Average Earnings in the United Kingdom, 1880-1913', *Economic History Review*, 43.4 (1990), 595-632 (p.603). doi:10.1111/j.1468-0289.1990.tb00547.x

<sup>7.91</sup>Timothy Shaw, 'UWI hosts 100th Anniversary Celebration for IR Journal', University of the West Indies, St Augustine, 1 December 2009. <https://sta.uwi.edu/news/releases/release.asp?id=433> [Accessed 11 April 2025]

<sup>7.92</sup>L. E. de Payre, 'Should We Civilize the Kafir?', *State*, 4.3 (1910), 542-9

<sup>7.93</sup>John Dove, 'Editor's Preface' to: Anonymous (Richard Feetham), 'The Colour Question in Politics', *Round Table*, 13.49 (1922), 38-70. doi:0.1080/00358532209411923

<sup>7.94</sup>Anonymous (Philip Kerr), 'The Round Table', *Round Table*, 1.1 (1910), 1-6 (p.2)

of scientific study to politics'.<sup>7.95</sup> A much older imperial tradition was echoed in this, of the 'noble Science of Politics' envisioned by Thomas Babington Macaulay almost a century earlier in his critique of John Stuart Mill.<sup>7.96</sup> To Macaulay, problems of societal and international order, such as the commercial policy of Prussia in his day, ought to be treated in the same manner as a physician might diagnose a malady. The appropriate method of analysis was thus to be conducted by 'observing the present state of the world, by assiduously studying the history of past ages, by sifting the evidence of facts [...] by perpetually bringing the theory which we have constructed to the test of new facts'.<sup>7.97</sup> This framework and the language used to articulate it will sound familiar to present-day scholars of IR, but it also helps to expose a broader relationship between knowledge, empire, and the state from the nineteenth century onwards.

Catherine Hall tackles this relationship to remedy key historical silences surrounding it. Most significantly, she argues that for Macaulay, colonial knowledge became an epistemological strategy: it was an exercise of power that created distance between the observer and the observed.<sup>7.98</sup> Becoming the arbiter of legitimate knowledge about the colonised world became a means of managing and controlling it. There are strong, albeit underexplored, parallels in this of the activities of the Round Table in later decades. This network similarly sought an 'official' knowledge created by those in closest proximity to the machinery of power, especially in the colonial context, to both legitimise and develop modes

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<sup>7.95</sup>Anonymous (Alfred E. Zimmern), 'The Imperial Dilemma', *Round Table*, 6.24 (1916), 688-712 (p.688). doi:10.1080/00358531609414072

<sup>7.96</sup>Thomas Babington Macaulay, 'Essays on Government Jurisprudence, the Liberty of the Press, Prisons and Prison Discipline, Colonies, the Law of Nations, and Education. By James Mill, Esq.' [Review], *Edinburgh Review or Critical Journal*, 97 (1829), 159-189

<sup>7.97</sup>Thomas Babington Macaulay, 'Essays on Government Jurisprudence', p.188

<sup>7.98</sup>Catherine Hall, *Macaulay and Son: Architects of Imperial Britain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012)

of imperial order. This network, and the role and impact of the Round Table in IR, has been addressed and exposed in detail in the landmark work of Davis, Thakur, and Vale, who position the Western discipline's commitment to Curtis' so-called 'scientific method' as the enduring legacy of the movement.<sup>7.99</sup> In particular, they frame this method as one that emerged at the intersection between 'truth and propaganda' in the administration of the British Empire where the process of 'knowledge-making' met that of 'world-making'.<sup>7.100</sup> In other words, in these liminal spaces between academia and government, setting the boundaries of legitimate knowledge meant setting the legitimate trajectory that future policy ought to follow. Knowledge-producing institutions, with formal or informal backing from the state, provided the tools with which a particular class of colonial administrators turned scholars believed they could engineer progress.

Zimmern and his contemporaries sought to expand the same principles and embed them within the mechanisms of British government bureaucracy at the same time the Round Table was finding its feet. This was the context Zimmern and Toynbee were working in when they called for formal channels through which to incorporate the same principles of 'scientific study' into the machinery of government. Milner did not lead the official units that were subsequently established but the invocation of his name in their early stages of development is indicative of the type of institution Zimmern and Toynbee envisaged. Just as it had been for Milner's Kindergarten, expertise in international affairs was tied heavily to both historical scholarship and colonial administration. Men like Prothero who were not only historians by trade but who also had close ties to the structures

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<sup>7.99</sup>Alexander E. Davis, Vineet Thakur, and Peter Vale, *The Imperial Discipline: Race and the Founding of International Relations* (London: Pluto Press, 2020)

Vineet Thakur and Peter Vale, *South Africa, Race and the Making of International Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2020)

<sup>7.100</sup>Alexander E. Davis, Vineet Thakur, and Peter Vale, *The Imperial Discipline*, pp.28-29

of colonial administration made ideal candidates for the official institutions envisioned by the Toynbee-Zimmern proposal.<sup>7.101</sup> Illustrating the centrality of colonial administration further, the establishment of the PID had been overseen by Charles (Lord) Hardinge, who punctuated his two spells as Foreign Office Permanent Under-Secretary with a stint as Viceroy of India (1910-1916). There was a tangible sense that the lessons learned in administering British colonies could be applied in constructing a post-war world order, and thus historians of the old world like Prothero were in demand to accompany those experienced imperialists and diplomats of old like Hardinge who had shaped it. Hardinge, for his part, was not a historian, but saw himself as a skilled practitioner of the 'science of diplomacy'.<sup>7.102</sup> Nonetheless, the walls between scholarship and administration, or between theory and practice, in this period were both highly permeable and inflected by imperialism.

Both the Round Table and the official units that evolved out of it were premised on the notion that studying international affairs was as much the reserve of an expert class as shaping them. The lines between scholars and the decision-makers they informed were blurred, and the expectation that both ought to be socially well-connected as well as highly educated and experienced on international matters meant that the two often came from the same social and political circles. These circles intersected so much that they were almost interchangeable, and it is for this reason that the same names occur repeatedly throughout this chapter. However, it is important to stress that a reliance on these

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<sup>7.101</sup>In the early 1890s, Prothero had been an examiner for the 'Open Examination for the Indian Civil Service' assessing candidates in English and European History  
'Testimonials in Favour of G.W. Prothero MA Litt D, Candidate for the Vacant Professorship of History in the University of Edinburgh' (1894). *London, Royal Historical Society Archive, George Walter Prothero Papers*, PP 2/1/10, p.4

<sup>7.102</sup>Charles Hardinge, *Old Diplomacy: The Reminiscences of Lord Hardinge of Penshurst* (London: John Murray, 1947), p.13

names is not to fall into the trap of Carlylean ‘great men’ approaches to history. Instead, it is intended to demonstrate the insularity of the elite group lionised in canonical disciplinary historical narratives of IR. Aspects of this history have been told in fragments from the canonical origin story of Zimmern taking the Wilson Chair to Goldstein’s assessment of Prothero’s role in Paris and Davis, Thakur, and Vale’s exposition of the role of the Round Table in building a distinctly imperial IR. However, it is only by bringing these strands together and demonstrating that they were intertwined at every stage that it is possible to uncover the continuous historical context that produced a distinct ‘science of empire’ in this period. As a result, this chapter is less about the men involved and more about the material, societal, and historical conditions that produced them.

The endurance of the Milner’s Kindergarten circle is telling of the historical continuity between the pre-war and interwar period. Educated at Oxford, forged as experimenters in the laboratory of British colonisation of South Africa, and architects of the Round Table, they were already tied up both in the institutionalisation of a new scholarly discipline and the governance of the Empire. By the middle of the Great War, the same men had integrated themselves into the heart of government not only in South Africa, but in Westminster and the imperial core. As Hardinge would note, to his chagrin, ‘foreign affairs and diplomacy were carried on at this time by Lloyd George with a Secretariat, nicknamed the Downing Street Kindergarten, run by Philip Kerr’.<sup>7.103</sup> There is a continuity both in the vision of a ‘scientific’ approach to the study of imperial and international questions and in the individuals who championed this. A direct experience of managing and strengthening colonial occupation was imported to the core with the ‘expert’ class of international affairs specialists installed firmly in the seat of power. In

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<sup>7.103</sup>Charles Hardinge, *Old Diplomacy*, p.214

this capacity, individuals like Kerr alternated between theorists and practitioners. The same network, with the establishment of Chatham House, would extend this further still into the interwar years and beyond. This continuity highlights that the institutional bedrock of post-war Anglophone IR, far from a product solely of the Great War, was built around colonial administration and discourses that had been circulating around it long prior to 1919.

### 7.3.3.1 *Oxford and an Imperial Education*

Thomas Richards convincingly uncovers that ‘the administrative core of the Empire was built around knowledge-producing institutions like the British Museum, the Royal Geographical Society, the India Survey and the universities’.<sup>7.104</sup> Learned societies of the old order had undoubtedly played a significant role in shaping Imperial administration prior to the turn of the century. However, the reverse was also true, and this relationship was not unidirectional. These knowledge-producing institutions were built around the administrative structures of the Empire, and the two were so deeply imbricated together as to be inseparable. The Round Table movement, like Chatham House as discussed in the subsequent part of this chapter, was a product of the closer integration of governance and scholarship. The implicit premise of these groups that blurred the lines between scholar and administrator was that those who governed the world were best placed to study it, and that those who studied it were best placed to govern, or at least determine how it ought to be governed. The institution of formal units, such as the Historical Section, marked the further embedding of this premise within the machinery of the state.

The administrators and scholars on either side of this were products

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<sup>7.104</sup>Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993), p.4

of the same class, cultural, and educational backgrounds and were not only largely committed to the same visions of how the world ought to be but shared a confidence in their own ability to make it so. There is no suggestion that these individuals were explicitly motivated by some instinctive commitment to a Platonic ideal of sophocracy: a government of philosopher kings, justified by virtue of knowledge. However, their shared class background and common education contributed to a collective world view to at least some extent. Derek Drinkwater's reading of Harold Nicolson as a theorist of IR accounts heavily for the educational influences of a philhellenic tradition on men like Nicolson, as well as on fellow Oxonian philhellenes and future IR scholars like Zimmern. Drinkwater suggests that the Oxford education designed to prepare young men for careers in high politics and imperial administration owed a heavy debt to a Greek-inflected philosophic tradition of classical idealism which, in combination with teaching in modern history, 'set standards of responsible citizenship by enumerating the qualities required of Britain's rulers'.<sup>7.105</sup> That is not to say that all those attracted to classical studies at Oxford became colonial administrators or defenders of empire. Jane Malloch and Henry Brailsford, for instance, were militant philhellenes inspired by their studies under Gilbert Murray but distanced themselves from the Empire, with the former becoming a prominent campaigner for women's suffrage and the latter a socialist critic of imperialism and a proponent of a 'radical' proto-IR theory, now largely forgotten by the discipline.<sup>7.106</sup> Nonetheless, whether inspired by a classical ethic or not, the Oxford education

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<sup>7.105</sup>Derek Drinkwater, *Sir Harold Nicolson and International Relations: The Practitioner as Theorist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp.38-40

<sup>7.106</sup>Elizabeth E. Pender, 'Classical Idealism and Political Action in the First World War: Jane Malloch and Henry Brailsford' in: Federica G. Pedriali and Cristina Savettieri (eds.), *Mobilizing Cultural Identities in the First World War: History, Representations and Memory* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020), 19-56

Peter Lamb, 'Henry Noel Brailsford's Radical International Relations Theory', *International Relations*, 25.4 (2011), 479-98. doi:10.1177/0047117811404581

and the accompanying formative spaces shared by those who would go on to shape the canonical discipline of IR established a model image of what the ideal architect of international order looked like. This image largely mirrored the ‘citizen-scholar’ envisioned by Zimmern, and became a model to emulate for a generation of academics who would, in the eyes of canonical disciplinary narratives, invent the new discipline of IR.

The insularity of the institutional basis on which the structures of the interwar discipline were constructed was no coincidence. This was a product of decades-old structures of imperial rule. Oxford had produced the decision-makers, administrators, and ideologues of the Empire for several generations. It should thus be no surprise that it also produced champions of the various strands of a new ‘scientific’ imperialism that propagated in early twentieth century, or that the stalwarts of its new institutions were drawn from their ranks.<sup>7.107</sup> The PID was to recruit according to two criteria. It would require experts with ‘valuable experience in watching the course of events and opinion in foreign countries and who already knew one another and had learned to co-operate with one another’.<sup>7.108</sup> Inevitably, in this case, the PID drew from a shallow barrel. Its recruits shared a narrow class basis and were also inflected with the marks of a common education.

Much of this education rested on a Victorian ideal about the relationship between knowledge and state, which positioned the state as the ultimate arbitrator of legitimate knowledge.<sup>7.109</sup> Legitimate knowledge required validation

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<sup>7.107</sup>Richard Symonds, *Oxford and Empire: The Last Lost Cause?* (London: MacMillan, 1986)

<sup>7.108</sup>Memorandum by James Headlam-Morley, 28 October 1919. London, *National Archives*, FO 371/4382/PID 619.

Quoted in: Erik Goldstein, ‘The Foreign Office and Political Intelligence, 1918–1920’, *Review of International Studies*, 14.4 (1988), 275–88 (p.277). doi:10.1017/S0260210500113154

<sup>7.109</sup>Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive*, p.74

by state structures, and those acting in the name of the state (or Empire) required justification for their actions, in turn provided by the legitimate knowledge of the sort suggested by Hall.<sup>7.110</sup> A feedback loop is thus uncovered at the intersection between knowledge and propaganda identified by Davis, Thakur, and Vale, where the reciprocal relationship between knowledge and power, or scholarly argument and colonial administration, becomes self-reinforcing.<sup>7.111</sup> Similar patterns can be identified in the present day discipline, where legitimate knowledge continues to be judged by its relationship to the state. These are, however, generally detached both from the imperial connexions and the visions of a global state that motivated early twentieth century initiatives to more closely integrate knowledge production with structures of control and administration.<sup>7.112</sup> The wider historical trajectory of this captures the transition from a nascent Victorian science of empire to a post-war IR discipline. An insular network of wealthy, well-connected, and largely Oxford-educated individuals, interested as much in administrative decision-making as questions of global order, inherited a Victorian learned society tradition. They subsequently moulded themselves as good civic scholars or engineers of colonial progress, and imbricated themselves in the machinery of the state, contributing in the process to the production of a science deeply connected to government, officialdom, and the complex relationship between knowledge production and the state.

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<sup>7.110</sup>Catherine Hall, *Macaulay and Son*

<sup>7.111</sup>Alexander E. Davis, Vineet Thakur, and Peter Vale, *The Imperial Discipline*, pp.28-9

<sup>7.112</sup>Duncan Bell, 'The Victorian Idea of a Global State' in: Duncan Bell (ed.), *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 159-85

## 7.4 Institutionalising a New Imperial Science

This transition was catalysed by the wartime incorporation of academic ‘experts’ into foreign policy and intelligence spheres. A generation of ‘expert’ scholars who had cut their teeth in the twilight of nineteenth century imperialism of the old order now integrated themselves into the mechanisms of government, establishing an institutional basis that would endure into the interwar years. This was expedited by the wartime expansion of a ‘complex and reciprocal relationship’ between academic dons and government officialdom, especially in the realm of intelligence.<sup>7.113</sup> These ties would become long standing, illustrated half a century later when the wartime director of the reconstituted PID, Cecil Parrott, would travel in the opposite direction by retiring from the Foreign Office to take up a professorship in Russian and Soviet Studies at the University of Lancaster.<sup>7.114</sup> However, this relationship can be traced back to the period between 1908 and 1912 when the lines between colonial and knowledge production were blurred by both the institutionalisation of the Round Table and the Imperial Studies movement, which subsequently left a legacy with Chatham House, via the Historical Section. This laid the foundations for IR’s disciplinary niche, occupying a complex liminal space between academia and government. For generations its celebrated scholars have drifted between universities and government, with lines between official and scholar blurred, particularly in a United States context. Nonetheless, the emergence of this ‘noble science’ owes much to its nineteenth century ‘pre-history’.

Its transition in this period overlaps with the broader contours of social and

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<sup>7.113</sup>T.G. Otte, “‘The Light of History’: Scholarship and Officialdom in the Era of the First World War”, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 30.2 (2019), 253–87 (p.254). doi:10.1080/09592296.2019.1619035

<sup>7.114</sup>Jude Rowley, ‘The Rise and Fall of Soviet Studies at Lancaster’, *EPOCH*, 14 (2023). <https://www.epoch-magazine.com/post/the-rise-and-fall-of-soviet-studies-at-lancaster>

scientific development in Britain and Europe across the nineteenth century. Jim Secord identifies this as an epoch of science in transition, developing out of an early nineteenth century era of imperial expansion in which ‘science was seen as the handmaiden of empire... in underwriting perceptions of European superiority and the virtues of governing those lower down in the scale of civilization’.<sup>7.115</sup> It was in this epoch that the learned societies of old had flourished. They constituted a key component of a vast imperial apparatus of knowledge production and dissemination. They would, however, take on a far greater significance as empire expanded and old legitimisations of imperial order as an implicitly Christian civilising mission unravelled. Helped by the growing popular appeal of science among the middle class, as identified by Secord, science emerged for the first time as a genuine legitimising force for imperial expansion, and importantly in later decades, imperial reform.<sup>7.116</sup>

The early twentieth century institutionalisation of IR in the British Empire can be positioned within this longer trajectory. It was rendered possible by the remains of an historical climate in which ‘during the middle and later decades of the nineteenth century, the sciences played a vital role in developing new and more powerful visions of progress’.<sup>7.117</sup> John MacKenzie presents the array of imperial learned societies that emerged between the late nineteenth century and the Great War, such as the Royal Colonial Institute, as part of an ongoing effort to revitalise and repackage ‘imperial propaganda’ that might otherwise have become ‘institutionally ossified’. In his words, ‘each new society represented

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<sup>7.115</sup>James A. Secord, *Visions of Science: Books and Readers at the Dawn of the Victorian Age* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014), p.240

<sup>7.116</sup>James A. Secord, *Victorian Sensation: The Extraordinary Publication, Reception, and Secret Authorship of Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000)

<sup>7.117</sup>James A. Secord, *Visions of Science*, p.240

not so much a dissipation of effort as a fresh infusion of energy at critical moments'.<sup>7.118</sup> MacKenzie suggests this trajectory lasted until the Great War, but under a different name, it is possible to trace the continued evolution of the same networks and institutions. The same scholars who had lectured in Imperial Studies in 1916, not least Zimmern and Webster, were lecturing in International Relations before the decade was out. It is therefore possible to reposition IR as a similar refresh of Imperial Studies, infusing new energy at a critical historical moment. In both cases, learned societies provided a means of legitimisation for existing interconnected networks of elite social actors from a narrow circle of personal and class interests, and a means of dissemination of 'objective' expert knowledge to wider populations under the guise of science. The expansion of this into new learned societies for an interwar age with the foundation of Transatlantic institutes of IR and their corollaries further afield constituted a transition from the work begun by Victorian learned societies like the RCI towards the globalisation of a science of empire.

#### **7.4.1 A Transatlantic Round Table**

After attending a dinner party at the Parisian Hôtel Majestic on 30 May 1919 where Lionel Curtis presented his proposal to establish 'an institute for the study of foreign affairs', James Headlam-Morley noted in his diary the need for a new learned society for the study of International Relations which looked to the Royal Society as a model. Tellingly, he spoke of the problems faced by 'other learned societies', suggesting that Curtis' proposed Institute was explicitly intended as one.<sup>7.119</sup> Once established, the (after 1926, Royal) Institute of International

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<sup>7.118</sup> John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880–1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p.148

<sup>7.119</sup> James Headlam-Morley, *A Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference 1919*, ed. by Agnes Headlam-Morley, Russell Bryant, and Anna Cienciala (London: Methuen, 1972), pp.132-133

Affairs was a learned society for a new age. It was to an Edwardian wealthy intellectual class what societies like the Royal Colonial Institute had been to their Victorian forebears. It did not come alone, sharing significant ties to the United States while also remaining connected to a wider political movement, not least in its sibling institute in the Council on Foreign Relations which was born of the same Parisian genesis. Many of the men who had gathered in Paris from the British Empire and the United States were already firm believers in a growing Transatlantic internationalism. Prothero, for instance, had shared hopes with American counterparts like Lowell and Cheyney about the League and its prospects for reshaping the modern world.<sup>7.120</sup> Neither of the twin institutes that emerged from this context, in the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House (from 1926) and the US-based Council on Foreign Relations, can be treated in isolation. They were instead two wings of the same attempt to construct a Transatlantic ‘expert’ class, which would leave an institutional legacy with both. It was in Paris, during the Peace Conference, that these ties would be forged.

In an age before instant communication or widely accessible timely international travel, Paris provided an important space for political and scholarly discourse between a Transatlantic class of kindred spirits. For instance, whereas G.L. Beer had left Paris impressed with Alfred Zimmern, Leo Amery ironically found a kindred spirit in Beer, who shared such an admiration for Amery’s patron that W.R. Louis would later dub him ‘an American Milnerite’.<sup>7.121</sup> It is therefore little

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<sup>7.120</sup>Letter from Edward Potts Cheyney to G.W. Prothero, c.1921. London, *Royal Historical Society Archive*, George Walter Prothero Papers, PP/1/13/3

Letters from Abbott Lawrence Lowell to G.W. Prothero, concerning the League to Enforce Peace, 13 February to 25 July 1918. London, *Royal Historical Society Archive*, George Walter Prothero Papers PP/3/1/1

<sup>7.121</sup>George Louis Beer, ‘Lord Milner and British Imperialism’, *Political Science Quarterly*, 30.2 (1915), 301- 8. doi:10.2307/21419240

William Roger Louis, *In the Name of God, Go!*, p.80

surprise that when outlining plans for his proposed Transatlantic institute, Curtis put Beer's name forward for the editor of its yearbook, with Robert Cecil and Tasker Bliss as co-Chairs.<sup>7.122</sup> Three years earlier, in April 1916, Beer had dissuaded Curtis from establishing a US branch of the Round Table, fearing that the group's explicitly imperial focus would alienate otherwise sympathetic Americans.<sup>7.123</sup> These interactions demonstrate that the ties solidified in Paris did not emerge in a vacuum. There had also been a long running affinity between publications like *The Round Table* and their US counterparts like *New Republic*, especially in the context of a growing political Anglo-Saxonism movement.<sup>7.124</sup> Beer, however, had identified a significant barrier to the further solidification and Transatlantic expansion of existing imperialist movements.

Curtis agreed, and with Philip Kerr, began to understand the need to rebrand the earlier movement to secure the support of US-based fellow travellers. Inderjeet Parmar argues that this was the origin of the Institute's 'scientific' framing, motivated by the need to disguise the imperialism outwardly championed by its antecedent in the Round Table in terms likely to be more palatable in the United States. As Parmar suggests, Curtis 'conceived of the Institute in scientific terms, at least partly, to cloak its "pro-imperial/commonwealth" aims', recognising (in Curtis's words) that the 'foundation of Chatham House was a necessary tactical change to effect the same strategic object' that the Round Table had spent the previous decade working towards.<sup>7.125</sup> At the same time, US

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<sup>7.122</sup>James Headlam-Morley, *A Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference 1919*, p.132

<sup>7.123</sup>Priscilla Roberts, 'World War I and Anglo-American Relations: The Role of Philip Kerr and The Round Table', *Round Table*, 95.383 (2006), 113-39 (p.125). doi:10.1080/00358530500389519

<sup>7.124</sup>Patrick M. Kirkwood, 'A War Time Love Affair: The Round Table and The New Republic, c.1914-1919', *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 20.1 (2021), 44-65. doi:10.1017/S1537781420000754

<sup>7.125</sup>Inderjeet Parmar, 'Anglo-American Elites in the Interwar Years: Idealism and Power in the Intellectual Roots of Chatham House and the Council on Foreign Relations', *International Relations*, 16.1 (2002), 53-75 (p.56). doi:10.1177/0047117802016001005 Letter from Lionel

Anglo-Saxonists were making a similar realisation. George Burton Adams, over two decades on from his *Anglo-Saxon Review* contributions discussed in chapter five, argued that the ‘league of peace’ the world needed was an ‘Anglo-Saxon union’: a racial-linguistic alliance of six English-speaking nations.<sup>7.126</sup> Though this was to be modelled on principles of imperial federation, Adams argued it could not bear the name of the Empire as this would make US involvement ‘doubtful and difficult’.<sup>7.127</sup> Like the Round Table, it would instead need a rebadging to secure Transatlantic support.

Despite this rebadging, from the outset the twin institute initiative was a Transatlantic, and specifically Anglo-Saxonist, endeavour, uniting British Imperial liberal internationalism with the more explicitly racialised discourses of global order circulating in the United States. Parmar recognises this ‘Anglo-Saxonist’ element in developing possibly the most critically reflexive comparative study of the twin institutes.<sup>7.128</sup> By centring the ‘scientism’, ‘elitism’ and ‘Anglo-Saxonism’ that united both sides of the proposed Transatlantic institute, Parmar reveals the common context that shaped imperialist aims on both sides of the Atlantic, and specifically the role that discourses of ‘science’ played in rationalising these aims. From the outset, the two proposed institutes mirrored each other. They were to be led by an insular group of leading figures, elite in class and diverse in partisan loyalties, imbued with the same racially-coded commitment to Anglo-Saxonism, and above all, dedicated to the ostensibly ‘scientific’ study of international affairs.

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Curtis to Philip Kerr, 24 June 1938. Oxford, *Bodleian Library*, Lionel Curtis Papers, MS. Curtis 12. Quoted in the above

<sup>7.126</sup> Adams’ ‘Anglo-Saxon’ nations were the United States, Britain (presumably including Ireland), Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

George Burton Adams, *The British Empire and a League of Peace: Suggesting the Purpose and Form of an Alliance of the English-speaking Peoples* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1919), pp.13-15

<sup>7.127</sup> George Burton Adams, *The British Empire and a League of Peace*, p.13

<sup>7.128</sup> Inderjeet Parmar, ‘Anglo-American Elites in the Interwar Years’

Though the twin institutes were established along different lines than those initially imagined, they marked the firm institutionalisation of a scientific-imperial épistémè of IR, bringing together earlier discourses of imperial reform, race science, and Anglo-Saxonism and establishing new successors of the imperial learned society tradition as the guardians and arbiters of legitimate knowledge within the discipline.

On this note, the British Institute can be understood not only as a direct successor to the Round Table, but as the thread, or transitional stage, directly connecting an earlier epoch of late nineteenth century Milnerite imperialism to the US hegemony of the post-Second World War period.<sup>7.129</sup> It is impossible to imagine the descent of the post-war 'American social science' from Victorian and Edwardian 'Imperial Studies' without this key process of disciplinary formalisation, which drew heavily on interconnected networks of scholars between the United States and British Empire. The wave of disciplinary institutionalisation that followed would be defined by the expansion and solidification of these Transatlantic ties, even if these ties were not always as seamless as the Anglo-Saxonists had hoped. The Anglo-Saxon union that Adams and his contemporaries had demanded would not be formally realised. The closest this came was perhaps with proposals for the League of Nations mandates system to be an 'Anglo-American project', which were derailed both by US reluctance to get involved in the League and the premature death of Beer, the man earmarked to lead it.<sup>7.130</sup> Beer had envisaged this system as a new form of colonial rule that would expand British Imperial standards to insufficiently

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<sup>7.129</sup>Andrea Bosco, 'From Empire to Atlantic "System": The Round Table, Chatham House and the Emergence of a New Paradigm in Anglo-American Relations', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 16.3 (2018), 222-246. doi:10.1080/14794012.2018.1482710

<sup>7.130</sup>Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p.35

developed former colonies of the German and Ottoman Empires.<sup>7.131</sup> Under the stewardship instead of Philp Noel-Baker, the mandates system became more of a British-German endeavour, with ‘imperial experts’ recruited from the ranks of former German colonial officials to develop a system which, in the words of George Padmore, saw colonised peoples across the globe ‘ruthlessly exploited and oppressed by [...] the same old imperialist brigade’.<sup>7.132</sup>

However, though the mandates system was not an ‘Anglo-American project’, the scholarly institutes that developed after the Paris Peace Conference undoubtedly were. The two institutes did not emerge as the twin branches of the same organisation that had been envisaged in Paris but would instead ultimately become parallel independent organisations in Chatham House and the Council on Foreign Relations. Despite the initial Parisian optimism, the initiative for twin branches of the same Transatlantic institute stalled, not least due to the same reluctance in the United States that had derailed British-American cooperation on the mandates system. Practical difficulties were also soon encountered, not least when the formative New York branch refused to admit members who were not American citizens, amidst frustrations from the British side that their ringleaders had been far more proactive in setting up a branch. It therefore became clear that, in practice, the level of integration envisaged by Curtis would not work. When Whitney Shepardson begrudgingly broke this news to his would-be British colleagues, he found them somewhat sheepishly relieved. They had reached

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<sup>7.131</sup>Susan Pedersen, ‘An International Regime in an Age of Empire’, *American Historical Review*, 124.5 (2019), 1676–80 (pp.1676-77). doi:10.1093/ahr/rhz1028

<sup>7.132</sup>Sean Andrew Wempe, ‘From Unfit Imperialists to Fellow Civilizers: German Colonial Officials as Imperial Experts in the League of Nations, 1919–1933’, *German History*, 34.1 (2016), 21-48. doi:10.1093/gerhis/ghv124

Sean Andrew Wempe, ‘A League to Preserve Empires: Understanding the Mandates System and Avenues for Further Scholarly Inquiry’, *American Historical Review*, 124.5 (2019), 1723-31. doi:10.1093/ahr/rhz1027

George Padmore, *Africa and World Peace* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1937), p.205

the same conclusion but had been too polite to tell the Americans.<sup>7.133</sup> The two institutes thus developed after 1921 as estranged siblings rather than twins but nonetheless left an enduring imprint on the discipline of IR, remaining influential institutions in shaping the structures of canonical knowledge production within the present-day field.

#### 7.4.1.1 Chatham House

The Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA), as the British branch became, was explicitly founded to ‘encourage and facilitate the scientific study of international questions’.<sup>7.134</sup> The scientific character that it claimed positioned the Institute in the same tradition as its early predecessors but set it apart from expressly political societies established in this same earlier period, such as the Fabian Society. Like the Royal Colonial Institute and the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft established in Germany in the same period, the RIIA sought a similar claim to be an apolitical voice on matters of IR. From its foundation, it was framed as an imperial concern and made no secret of the position it targeted as a voice of a British Imperial ruling class, essentially positioning its focus as the Empire and those who ran it. In targeting all ‘public men throughout the Empire’ who considered themselves ‘serious students of foreign affairs’ as members, it sought to present itself as avowedly non-partisan.<sup>7.135</sup> Alongside senior Conservative political figures like George Curzon, Robert Cecil, and Arthur Balfour, it counted the former Liberal Prime Minister David Lloyd George and Labour stalwart J.R. Clynes as its Presidents. The inclusion of some element of partisan diversity

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<sup>7.133</sup>Peter Grose, *Continuing the Inquiry: The Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996* (New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996), pp.8-9

<sup>7.134</sup>John Price, *Foreign Affairs and the Public* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946), p.4

<sup>7.135</sup>‘Canada’s Gift to London’, *Daily Telegraph*, 15 October 1923, p.10

should not disguise the narrow membership the Institute existed to represent. Though appointed as one of the Presidents, the Lancashire trade unionist Clynes was far from characteristic of the demographic that dominated the Institute's membership. Instead, leading figures of the Institute were almost exclusively drawn from a narrow imperial ruling class. In this regard, it paralleled its contemporary, the League of Nations Union, whose leadership comprised a similarly broad partisan coalition made up of individuals largely from the same narrow political and socio-economic class.

The parallels did not end here and there was much overlap between the Institute and the Union. In opening the new headquarters of the Institute prior to the move to Chatham House, which were shared with the Institute of Historical Research, the responsibility for delivering the inaugural address fell to a Vice-President of the League of Nations Union in H.A.L. Fisher, the Liberal President of the Board of Education.<sup>7.136</sup> Though a historian by trade, Fisher was well connected in the academic circles of the nascent IR discipline and had written a reference in support of Alfred Zimmern's appointment as Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth, having previously examined him for a scholarship at Oxford.<sup>7.137</sup> He would also be tangentially involved in the Garnett-Hearnshaw controversy discussed in the subsequent chapter, initially sparked by Hearnshaw's allegation that Garnett had attempted to influence Fisher.<sup>7.138</sup> The address Fisher delivered foreshadowed the concern over 'biased' history teaching that the controversy centred on. There reads an almost comedic irony in this address on the central

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<sup>7.136</sup>On Fisher's public advocacy of the League, see:  
H.A.L. Fisher, *An International Experiment: The Earl Grey Memorial Lecture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921)

<sup>7.137</sup>Letter from the Right Hon. H.A.L. Fisher, LL.D., M.P., President of the Board of Education (March 1919). Aberystwyth, *Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru (LLGC)*, Thomas Jones Papers, J12

<sup>7.138</sup>Maxwell Garnett, 'History to Order' (Letter to the Editor), *The Times*, 12 Jan 1922, 6

importance of ‘dispassionate’ impartiality, punctuated as it was with criticism of the trade unions, the Labour Party, German academia for encouraging a ‘dislike of England fostered by every academic art for a generation’ (met with, he insisted, ‘no corresponding effort on our side’), American ignorance about the British (with the noted exception in Fisher’s eyes of A. Lawrence Lowell), government interference in history teaching, and the poor state of British higher education.<sup>7.139</sup> Though the Institute itself abstained from endorsing any formal platforms, it remained a forum for such platforms to be put forward. Despite its claims to the absence of political bias, its aims and structures also set the Institute apart as a fundamentally political endeavour from the outset. This claim to objectivity was connected to the self-presentation of the Institute as a scientific organisation. By drawing on a tradition of ‘scientific’ learned societies, it framed itself as a detached observer. It cultivated the image of a vehicle for distant scholars turning to questions of imperial organisation as an academic matter, in the same way that a member of the Royal Society of Chemistry might conduct a seemingly dispassionate, value-free experiment on the reactions of an organic radical.

#### 7.4.1.2 *Council on Foreign Relations*

Though Chatham House became the guardian of scientific knowledge in the would-be discipline in the British Empire, the same scientific approach also co-evolved with its sibling institute across the Atlantic. The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), formally founded at the end of July 1921, drew on a longer context of the ostensibly ‘scientific’ treatment of IR in the United States, where antecedents of a ‘science’ of IR had circulated before the end of the war. Though IR had not been explicitly included on the agenda for discussion at the second

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<sup>7.139</sup>Herbert (H.A.L.) Fisher, ‘The Institute of Historical Research and the Anglo-American Historical Conference’, *History*, 6.23 (1921), 143-154

Pan-American Scientific Congress (1916), for example, the study of international law and diplomacy was covered, accompanying subjects like meteorology, plant protection, geodetic observatories, and archæology. Cecil Spring Rice, the British Ambassador in Washington, noted in reporting back to the Foreign Secretary that the Congress had resolved education in international law should emphasise ‘cases and facts’, rather than ‘universal peace propaganda’, again foreshadowing the Garnett-Hearnshaw dispute of the following decade.<sup>7.140</sup>

A similarly ‘scientific’ approach to the study of international order would soon find an advocate in W.H. Buckler, a lawyer and archæologist by trade who spent the Great War serving as a US diplomat in London. Buckler used his offices to advance a call for a ‘scientific peace’ to resolve the war, based not on abstract conceptions of national interest but on dispassionate expert analysis of perceived international problems and their potential solutions.<sup>7.141</sup> These calls reached the State Department, and via the Assistant Secretary of State, William Phillips, caught the attention of Edward House, President Woodrow Wilson’s closest advisor.

House was subsequently tasked with establishing ‘the Inquiry’: an ‘earnest and scholarly group of men’ recruited to give ‘deep and impartial study to the tremendous and complicated problems’ of international affairs arising from the Great War.<sup>7.142</sup> Formed along similar lines to the Political Intelligence Department, the Inquiry was intended as a circle of experts who would devote their efforts to the dispassionate study of international affairs in order to better inform US negotiators of the post-war peace settlement in Paris. As well as ensuring these

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<sup>7.140</sup>Sir C. Spring Rice to Sir Edward Grey, 13 January 1916. Foreign Office: Confidential Print North America, Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of North America, XII (1916). London, *National Archives*, FO 414/244

<sup>7.141</sup>Lawrence Emerson Gelfand, *The Inquiry: American Preparations for Peace, 1917-1919* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963), pp.15-16

<sup>7.142</sup>William Wiseman, ‘Wiseman Memorandum on the Inquiry’, 5 June 1928 in: *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, ed. by Charles Seymour, vol. 3 (London: Ernest Benn, 1928), 174-176

negotiators were not caught off guard when redrawing global borders, the Inquiry was ostensibly designed with the loftier goal of ensuring that the Conference and its outcomes should be conducted, in Wilson's words, on 'the most scientific basis possible'.<sup>7.143</sup>

In practice, the Inquiry echoed the Foreign Office Historical Section in its output, producing an intimidatingly extensive series of reports treating with topics that ranged from steamship lines in the Ottoman Sanjak of Karasi to H.A.L. Fisher's impact on the British education system in comparison to his German, French, and Russian counterparts.<sup>7.144</sup> Like Chatham House, however, it also turned to the learned societies of an earlier epoch for its model. When, in Paris, Lionel Curtis had declared that the Transatlantic joint institute proposals should aim to 'create institutions like the Royal Geographical Society', he did so in the context of an already close relationship between the Inquiry and the Society's US counterpart, the American Geographical Society (AGS).<sup>7.145</sup> The Inquiry was based in the offices of the AGS, where its activities were ostensibly 'conducted in a scientific spirit by specialists and scholars'.<sup>7.146</sup> The Society's Director, Isiah

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<sup>7.143</sup>Woodrow Wilson, quoted in: 'Notes of a Conference Held in the Prime Minister's Flat at 23 Rue Nitot, Paris', 20 March 1919, Paris Peace Conf. 180.03401/101 IC-163A in: *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. 5 (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), 1-14 (p.12)

<sup>7.144</sup>Sherwood Owen Dickerman, 'The Independent Sandjak of Karassi', Inquiry Document 122. College Park, MD: *US National Archives*, Records of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Record Group 256, M1107, Roll 10, NAID: 26984105, p.19

Paul Monroe and Isaac L. Kandel, 'Educational Reforms During the War: Proposed or Accomplished', Inquiry Document 388. College Park, MD: *US National Archives*, Records of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Record Group 256, M1107, Roll 22, NAID: 26997436, pp.13-5

<sup>7.145</sup>'Institute of International Affairs Founded in Paris 1919'. London, *National Archives*, Foreign Office Records, FO 608/152/2 (formerly FO 502/4/1), 56

Curtis also invoked the name of the Royal Geographical Society in an attempt to persuade the Foreign Office to allow its staff join the new Institute, since no such impediments to them freely voicing their opinions as members of the RGS.

Note from Lionel Curtis. London, *National Archives*, Foreign Office Records, FO 608/152/2 (formerly FO 502/4/1), 13154, 31

<sup>7.146</sup>The American Geographical Society's Contribution to the Peace Conference', *Geographical*

Bowman, would become the Inquiry's de facto leader after a power struggle with House's brother-in-law, Sidney Mezes, further integrating the nascent IR institute within the existing apparatus of learned societies.<sup>7.147</sup>

The idea behind the Inquiry was not a new one. Expert analysis of international order had been in vogue as early as the eighteenth century with 'inquiries' (or 'enquiries') often following major conflicts. A notable example can be found in the British 'Enquiry' on the eve of the Anglo-Spanish War of 1727-29 that tasked itself with determining 'what is likely to be the Fate of Europe; and what will become of the Balance of Power' and used terms so familiar to contemporary IR scholars that it might have been written in response to the Treaty of Versailles rather than the First Treaty of Vienna (1725).<sup>7.148</sup> However, what set the Wilsonian 'Inquiry' apart was its rigid and explicit commitment to 'science', and specifically to academic study as the basis of a future 'scientific peace' via the development of 'scientific and rational solutions to geopolitical problems'.<sup>7.149</sup> This vision was premised on the assumption that an objective study of the available information could allow experts to provide a 'guaranteed position' on foreign policy, backed up by 'the aura of science' and methods of detached and impartial study that evoked those of natural scientists more so than conventional historians.<sup>7.150</sup>

This echoes the approach taken by the PID, and the two can be considered parallel and interconnected groups, with Arthur Balfour as Prime Minister

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*Review*, 7.1 (1919), 1-10 (p.2)

<sup>7.147</sup>Inga Floto, *Colonel House in Paris. A Study of American Policy at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget i Aarhus, 1973), pp.62-3

<sup>7.148</sup>[Benjamin Hoadly], *An Enquiry into the Reasons of the Conduct of Great Britain, with Relation to the Present State of Affairs in Europe* (London: James Roberts, 1727), p.41

[Benjamin Hoadly], *A Defence of the Enquiry into the Reasons of the Conduct of Great Britain, &c* (London, James Roberts, 1729)

<sup>7.149</sup>Alexander J. Kent, 'A Picture and an Argument: Mapping for Peace with a Cartography of Hope', *Cartographic Journal*, 56.4 (2019), 275-9. doi:10.1080/00087041.2019.1694804

<sup>7.150</sup>Lawrence Emerson Gelfand, *The Inquiry*, p.330

appointing William Wiseman as the dedicated liaison between them.<sup>7.151</sup> It is therefore unsurprising that Chatham House and the CFR which emerged from them respectively were similarly interconnected.<sup>7.152</sup> After the Majestic meeting, which had brought leading figures from both groups together, these connexions were further formalised and a Transatlantic provisional committee was assembled for the proposed joint enterprise, including names like Archibald Cary Coolidge, Lothrop Stoddard's former doctoral supervisor.<sup>7.153</sup> Though the proposed institute did not come to be as envisioned, it captures the close ties between British and US networks of individuals and institutions in this period, and demonstrates that the 'scientific' approach to empire and global order was a Transatlantic pursuit.

The Institut für Auswärtige Politik (Institute for Foreign Policy), an analogous German institute for the study of international affairs, similarly arose out of the Paris Peace Conference, as did parallel institutes across the British Empire.<sup>7.154</sup> However, no example illustrates the Transatlantic dimension of the institutionalisation more clearly than the emergence of the twin leading institutes of IR in the aftermath of the Paris Peace Conference in Chatham House in the British Empire and the CFR in the United States. Though rarely associated with

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<sup>7.151</sup>Volker Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-Determination: British, French, and American Peace Planning, 1917-1919', in: *The Politics of Self-Determination: Remaking Territories and National Identities in Europe, 1917-1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 21-53

Wilton B. Fowler, *British-American Relations, 1917-1918: The Role of Sir William Wiseman* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 199-202

<sup>7.152</sup>Andrea Bosco, *The Round Table Movement and the Fall of the 'Second' British Empire (1909-1919)* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), p.8

<sup>7.153</sup>'Institute of International Affairs Founded in Paris 1919'. London, *National Archives*, Foreign Office Records, FO 608/152/2 (formerly FO 502/4/1), 39.

'Report and Resolutions [of the proposed Institute of International Affairs]'. London, *National Archives*, Foreign Office Records, FO 608/152/2 (formerly FO 502/4/1), 43-4

<sup>7.154</sup>Muriel J. Grindrod, 'The Institut für Auswärtige Politik', *International Affairs*, 10.2 (1931), 223-9

Ralph L. Harry, 'The Australian Institute of International Affairs and its Overseas Counterparts', *Australian Foreign Affairs Record*, 51.5 (1980), 136-40

the formalisation of imperial sciences in the Victorian era, they can be positioned as a direct legacy of this 'scientific' tradition. Similarly, precursors like the Royal Colonial Institute and the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft are not considered a part of IR's disciplinary history but were as central to its development as any academic institute explicitly directed towards the study of IR in a canonical sense.

By situating later developments in the formalisation of IR as an academic discipline in the wider historical trajectory of imperial science, it is possible to both widen disciplinary historical narratives and reframe IR not as a standalone, distinctly modern science of global peace, but as the successor to a long and oft-observed history of a formalised academic wing of imperialism. As an academic discipline, it was more a product of the imperial model of learned 'scientific' societies than a noble endeavour to manifest the League of Nations dream. It was founded above all as a science of empire, both in the sense that its practitioners were rooted in colonial dynamics of power, and that it set as its focus the reordering of imperial control for a new century. The concern with the rigid production, categorisation, and dissemination of 'official' scientific knowledge under the guise of 'objectivity' or balance was a central feature of Victorian learned societies and was taken up in the early twentieth century as IR became formalised and institutionalised as a new imperial science, specifically in a Transatlantic context. These are the historical conditions which saw the formation of two institutions that continue to dominate the orthodox discipline in the present day.

## **Chapter 8:**

### **Disciplinary Afterlives: Insular Networks and The League of Nations Union**

#### **8.1 Beyond Aberystwyth**

Despite the exploration of Aberystwyth's role in the historical narrative of IR as a science of empire, there is a danger in focussing too closely on this historical example and in doing so inadvertently apportioning it the same mythological status that this thesis attempts to dismantle. Aberystwyth was, as discussed in chapter four, a crucible of imperial science, but its significance to the *Fachgeschichte* of IR that this thesis is directed towards constructing lies not in the particularities of Aberystwyth itself, but in its place as part of a wider movement of the institutionalisation of IR as an imperial science. There could be no Davies, no Zimmern, and no Fleure without the wider movement of post-Victorian imperial reordering that institutions like Aberystwyth formalised with the emergence of the three Davies-funded chairs in imperial sciences. Therefore, in addressing IR's disciplinary mythologies, it is necessary to look beyond Aberystwyth and towards the wider context that saw the emergence of IR as a formalised science of empire. Similarly, Chatham House and the Council on Foreign Relations remain the canonical 'founders' of the Transatlantic discipline, but they were not the only discipline-building organisations active in this period.

This chapter will reposition Aberystwyth and the Transatlantic institutes as significant only as part of a wider movement they embody. They are not the be-all and end-all for the disciplinary historian searching for IR's origins. There

were other would-be Aberystwyth moments, and each may be considered as significant depending on the focus of the narrative in which they fall. The focus on Davies and Aberystwyth should not be taken as an absolute necessity for historical sociologies of IR. Rather, this is one anchor point amongst many. Its status as the mythological origin story of IR makes it a suitable launching off point to challenge some of the silences inherent in such narratives. The first element of this myth, that the motivation of the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth was above all a noble pursuit of a peace secured by the League of Nations was addressed in chapter four. The second element of the Aberystwyth myth, that the establishment of the Wilson Chair was a unique origin point or a ‘big bang’ for the formalised discipline of IR, is the product of a historical silence that enters the narrative at the moment of retrospective significance identified by Trouillot.<sup>8.1</sup>

De Carvalho, Leira, and Hobson recognise this in positioning 1919 as one of the defining myths of IR’s disciplinary history, along with 1648 and the Peace of Westphalia. They frame the myth of Aberystwyth and 1919 as part of a paradox ‘wherein the discipline’s prevailing mythical self-image can only be maintained through a deep structural amnesia that coexists with a highly selective recollection of the discipline’s ‘origins’.<sup>8.2</sup> In other words, the foundational significance apportioned to the Aberystwyth myth and 1919 is especially telling of a discipline determined to present itself as a post-war endeavour forged out of a noble desire to build a lasting peace. Aberystwyth serves as a point of crystallisation for this origin narrative by encapsulating the direct academic formalisation of the ideas circulating around the nascent League that 1919 is used as shorthand for in IR’s

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<sup>8.1</sup>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2015), 58-9

<sup>8.2</sup>Benjamin de Carvalho, Halvard Leira, and John M. Hobson, ‘The Big Bangs of IR: The Myths That Your Teachers Still Tell You About 1648 and 1919’, *Millennium*, 39.3 (2011), 735-58 (p.750). doi:10.1177/0305829811401459

disciplinary mythology. However, it is not the only possible myth that could have cohered to serve this function.

### **8.1.1 Lowes Dickinson of the LSE**

Many institutions have their own historical mythologies dating from the same period, and Aberystwyth is neither alone nor exceptional in this regard. The London School of Economics (LSE), for instance, claims Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson as a foundational figure for the discipline unduly neglected by historians of IR following his 1911 appointment as Lecturer in Political Science.<sup>8.3</sup> Indeed, Lowes Dickinson can lay claim to coining the terms League of Nations and international ‘anarchy’: both core features of IR discourse in Europe and North America in this era and beyond.<sup>8.4</sup> He also formed part of a wide network of wealthy white intellectuals surrounding some of the liberal imperialist circles discussed in the context of this section and as such will be revisited later in this chapter. In many respects, Lowes Dickinson was likely a more directly influential name than Zimmern on the post-Second World War discipline in the US and Western Europe, at least in a theoretical and conceptual sense. Nonetheless, Aberystwyth and Zimmern remain central to IR’s origin mythology and putting forward the claim of Lowes Dickinson to the same is mostly reserved to LSE itself.

In recent years, there have proved exceptions to this, notably with Paul Poast of the University of Chicago, who champions the claim of Lowes Dickinson to be considered the first modern theorist of IR. Poast publicised this in 2021 via tweet

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<sup>8.3</sup>Michael Cox, ‘Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, LSE and the origins of International Relations’, *LSE History Blog*, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsehistory/2018/12/12/goldsworthy-lowes-dickinson-lse-and-the-origins-of-international-relations/> [Accessed 18 July 2023]

<sup>8.4</sup>Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, *The International Anarchy, 1900-1914* (New York: The Century Co., 1926)

Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, ‘A League of Nations’ in: *The Choice Before Us* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1917), 170-90

and subsequently appeared on a popular IR podcast to defend his argument.<sup>8.5</sup> However, in general, this is a claim that has yet to displace the Aberystwyth myth surrounding IR's disciplinary origins. That the presentation of Lowes Dickinson as IR's founding father is largely put forward by those affiliated to LSE is by no means a negative reflection on the institution, which has made a major contribution to mainstream discourses of IR in Europe, but rather is an indicator that institutional and disciplinary mythologies of this nature are fundamentally perspectival.

It is for similar reasons that Oxford University's Department of Politics and International Relations continues to claim that IR only 'developed as an autonomous field of study' nearly two decades later, given that this was when its own Montague Burton Chair in International Relations was established in 1930.<sup>8.6</sup> This highlights that historical narratives are perspectival and are shaped by positionality. They are also dynamic and evolve over time. As historical narratives are shaped as much by the contextual circumstances of the period in which they are constructed as by those in the period they describe, new mythologies can emerge and evolve well after the event they pertain to. For instance, when LSE published an official history of IR at the institution in 2003, it made no mention of Lowes Dickinson, instead positioning the Great War as the 'starting point' for the study of IR.<sup>8.7</sup> The centrality of Lowes Dickinson as a founding figure emerged only

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<sup>8.5</sup>Paul Poast (@ProfPaulPoast, 21 August 2021), 'G. Lowes Dickinson is the first "modern" international relations theorist. You probably haven't heard of him. But he's also why "Offensive Realism" – you \*might\* have heard of it – is the original "modern" international relations theory. Time to #KeepRealismReal! [THREAD]' (tweet), <https://twitter.com/ProfPaulPoast/status/1429052769923633153?lang=en> [Accessed 19 December 2023]

'Anarchy vs The Anarchy', *Whiskey and International Relations Theory*, episode 26, 11 October 2022. [https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/whiskeyindiaromeo/episodes/2022-10-11T15\\_48\\_33-07\\_00](https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/whiskeyindiaromeo/episodes/2022-10-11T15_48_33-07_00) [Accessed 19 December 2023]

<sup>8.6</sup>Department of Politics and International Relations (University of Oxford), 'History of DPIR', <https://www.politics.ox.ac.uk/history-dpir> [Accessed 19 December 2023]

<sup>8.7</sup>Harry Bauer and Elisabetta Brighi (eds.), *International Relations at LSE: A History of 75 Years* (London: Millennium, 2003), p.7

in the intervening two decades, highlighting that disciplinary history is not merely a matter of describing the past ‘as it truly was’ but a fluid and transient process that evolves over time. This is also indicative of how institutional accounts continue to shape disciplinary mythologies in IR, and how new mythologies can emerge over time.

On this note, origin stories, like all historical narratives, are not always mutually exclusive. For instance, with no mention of Lowes Dickinson, a December 2024 job advertisement for the Montague Burton Chair in International Relations at the LSE dated the study of IR at the institution to the 1924 appointment of Philip Noel-Baker and suggests that their Department of International Relations was ‘the first of its kind’ when established in 1927.<sup>8:8</sup> As this suggests, disciplinary history, even on an institutional level, is rarely clear or static. The waters are muddied further as these narratives evolve and are repurposed over time, as the LSE case illustrates. The allusion to disciplinary origin myths as the opening line in job advertisements highlights the use of these narratives in constructing a sense of historically-grounded prestige by turning to disciplinary pasts to legitimise the disciplinary present.

Implicit in such claims is the suggestion that an institution that pioneered the field is best suited to remain a leading voice in the present-day discipline it contributed to founding. Though LSE, Aberystwyth, and Oxford are far from the only institutions to utilise claims about disciplinary origins in this way, they are indicative of a wider tendency in IR to use disciplinary history as a tool to justify images of the discipline’s present. Controlling the history of the discipline allows for the controlling, or at least the claiming, of its dominant structures

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<sup>8:8</sup>‘Montague Burton Chair in International Relations’ [job advertisement], *London School of Economics*, posted 9 December 2024. <https://jobs.lse.ac.uk/Vacancies/W/6872/0/443000/15539/montague-burton-chair-in-international-relations> [Accessed 11 December 2024]

of knowledge production in the present. There is a self-reinforcing element in the use of disciplinary mythologies in this way, in that this further entrenches the dominance of self-proclaimed elite institutions within the context of the present-day discipline. A time-honoured institution able to position itself as a founder of the discipline will perhaps always appear better suited to shape the future of the field than new institutions that cannot claim to inherit the same intellectual and institutional traditions.

It is therefore unsurprising that persistent disciplinary mythologies in IR concern European institutions, specifically in the British Empire in this period but later in the United States, and centre around white men of privileged socio-economic standing. It is in these institutions and by members of these demographics that the historical narratives shaping these mythologies have been written. That is not to say that disciplinary mythologies do not exist beyond the West but wherever they arise, they are shaped by the positionality of their proponents. In the disciplinary history of IR in the People's Republic of China, for instance, 1919 is of far lesser significance than 1949 which is taken as the foundational year for the discipline with the establishment of the Institute of International Relations (国际关系学院) in Beijing.<sup>8.9</sup> A linear 'great debates' model has similarly been applied to the disciplinary history of Chinese IR, but naturally focusses on different, albeit overlapping, theoretical strands.<sup>8.10</sup> Though, like the Aberystwyth myth, this has increasingly been challenged as historically inaccurate and unhelpful, it illustrates the relationship between historical narratives and positionality in an IR context.<sup>8.11</sup> Positionality is the root of the endurance

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<sup>8.9</sup>Yih-Jye Hwang, 'The Births of International Studies in China', *Review of International Studies*, 47.5 (2021), 580-600. doi:10.1017/S0260210520000340

<sup>8.10</sup>Yaqing Qin, 'Development of International Relations Theory in China: Progress Through Debates', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 11.2 (2011), 231-57. doi:10.1093/irap/lcr003

<sup>8.11</sup>Lu Peng, 'Pre-1949 Chinese IR: An Occluded History', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*,

of mythologies like that surrounding 1919 and Aberystwyth, perpetuated by institutional claims to a special relevance to the field. This does not mean such mythologies must be abandoned outright, but it is worth engaging with them critically to unravel some of the contingent forces that shape them.

It will be noted that some of the references in the above section contrast with the academic journals and monographs cited elsewhere in the thesis. It is sometimes necessary to turn to sources like the tweets, podcasts, blogs, and departmental web pages cited above because the counter mythologies explored here, even those closely connected with the circumstances surrounding the Aberystwyth myth are harder to locate in the traditional scholarly literature. Such alternative spaces are slowly but progressively allowing for an increased diversity of discussion concerning IR's disciplinary history, even within the boundaries of orthodox IR discourse. There remains an emphasis, however, on 'great men' and foundational fathers as the anchor point for such narratives to cohere around.

## **8.2 League of Nations Union**

This thesis seeks to diverge from this imbalance and is not designed as a history of individuals, but rather one of ideas and structures. Though it retains in parts a heavy focus on individual figures, it does so out of a need to situate these figures and the mythologies or historical narratives that surround them in their historical context. Doing so reveals that the origin myths perpetuated by Aberystwyth, LSE, and Oxford are not mutually exclusive, but capture fragments of the same wider narrative. The need to formalise an academic discipline surrounding liberal

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68.2 (2014), 133-55. doi:10.1080/10357718.2013.861385

Feng Zhang, 'The Tsinghua Approach and the Inception of Chinese Theories of International Relations', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 5.1 (2012), 73-102. doi:10.1093/cjip/por015

imperialism and the new League was not unique to the Davies family, nor was Zimmern alone as the first academic appointed to work in this vein. Instead, they were part of a much wider network of interconnected individuals, which included Davies and Lowes Dickinson as much as it included Philip Noel-Baker and Gilbert Murray. Alongside organisations and groups more familiar in disciplinary histories of IR, such as Chatham House or the Round Table, at the centre of this network were organisations such as the League of Nations Union (LNU), which served as formal vehicles through which the interests, resources, and activities of a particular circle of the imperial governing class could be pooled and directed towards the construction of new political and ‘scientific’ discourses. In this sense, they were also successors to the Victorian learned societies that championed imperial sciences and the predecessors of the scholarly institutions that would constitute the bedrock of IR as a discipline, at least in the global north. Like those state-affiliated groups discussed in chapter seven, the LNU formalised a network of influential elite figures and imbued it with a scholarly salience, even if many of its leading members were not professional academics in any formal sense.

Looking at the archived papers of each of these figures reveals the webs of overlapping correspondence between them. Many, such as Lord Davies’ papers at the LIGC and Philip Noel-Baker’s papers at the Churchill Archives Centre, contain copies of the same documents, circulated widely amongst each of the fellow travellers, alongside replies between the interconnected individuals and institutions. The interconnectivity between these individuals is highlighted by their common membership of organisations and networks, not least the LNU. Lowes Dickinson founded the League of Nations Society in 1915, before this merged with the League of Free Nations Association to form the LNU in 1918.

Hallmarks of the Davies family, discussed in chapter four, can similarly

be identified on the LNU in its early years, not least in the organisation being one of the first to produce propaganda materials in Welsh immediately after the Great War.<sup>8.12</sup> However, these entanglements go far beyond one family. The membership lists for the LNU provide a veritable ‘who’s who’ of both the liberal imperialist movement and the canonical ‘founding fathers’ of IR. Later dubbed ‘some of the worst cranks I have ever known’ by Austen Chamberlain, its governing executive committee and sub-committees counted Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, Gilbert Murray (Chair), David Davies, Alfred Zimmern, and H.G. Wells (despite his comparatively humble origins) among their members from the outset.<sup>8.13</sup> Its Vice-Presidents similarly spanned the imperial ruling class, including names like H.A.L. Fisher, Robert Cecil, James Bryce, and Jan Smuts, alongside those of the Prime Minister and the Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>8.14</sup> Like the learned societies of old, groups like the LNU drew some legitimacy from the number of leading names among their ranks, which captured a cross section of the imperial ruling class. Though there were prominent women amongst their number, such as the suffrage campaigner Millicent Fawcett (listed as ‘Mrs Henry Fawcett’) and her niece Margery Spring Rice, the LNU leadership remained very insular and was restricted largely to a group of upper-class men: broad in number but narrow in background.<sup>8.15</sup>

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<sup>8.12</sup>Welsh National Council of the League of Nations Union, *Cyflafareddiad, Diogelwch, Diarfogiad: Y Tri Cham Tuag at Heddwch* (‘Arbitration, Security, Disarmament: The Three Steps Toward Peace’) (Cardiff: Undeb Cymreig Cynghair y Cenhedloedd (Welsh League of Nations Union), c.1919). Cardiff, *Cardiff University Library*, Salisbury: WG4.2.L.

Though dated in the archive to c.1916, this pamphlet makes reference to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and so must date from after the Great War

<sup>8.13</sup>Austen Chamberlain to Lord Tyrrell, 13 February 1933. Birmingham, *University of Birmingham Library*, Austen Chamberlain Collection, AC 40/5/12

<sup>8.14</sup>League of Nations Union Provisional Executive Committee, Minutes of a Meeting Held at 22 Buckingham Gate, 21 November 1918. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/2

<sup>8.15</sup>League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee, 7 November 1921. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/3

Members of this group shared common political, financial, and socio-economic interests as well as overlapping family trees. It is particularly telling on this note that, though the LNU was ostensibly a campaigning organisation, its governing members were united more by class than by identifiable political common ground, even if all shared some degree of interest in the League as the guarantor of the post-war international order. By 1920, for instance, Oswald Mosley and Lord Queenborough (Almeric Paget), both better known for their later support for fascism, sat on the Executive Committee.<sup>8.16</sup> They sat alongside Liberal grandees like the Viscountess Gladstone (née Dorothy Paget) and David Davies, as well as a small number of socialists like J.R. Clynes and the architect, Raymond Unwin.<sup>8.17</sup> Helen McCarthy attributes the LNU's sustaining of cross-party unity more successfully than contemporary political groups like Mosley's New Party to its ability to 'revive late-Victorian norms regarding the exclusion of foreign affairs from the arena of partisan conflict'.<sup>8.18</sup> This had historical antecedents as well as successors. Julia Bush identifies the same phenomenon in Edwardian imperialist campaigning societies, noting that by 1908 the Victoria League counted among its Vice-Presidents such varied names as Lord Milner, epitomic high tory Rudyard Kipling, and socialist stalwart Sidney Webb,

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<sup>8.16</sup> League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee, 4 November 1920. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/3

Mosley also sat on the Union's Disarmament Committee.

League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Management Committee, 17 February 1921. Cambridge, *Churchill Archives Centre*, Churchill College, Papers of Baron Noel-Baker, GBR/0014/NBKR 4/438

<sup>8.17</sup> League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee, 1 July 1920. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/2

League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee, 22 July 1920. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/2

<sup>8.18</sup> Helen McCarthy, 'Leading from the Centre: The League of Nations Union, Foreign Policy and "Political Agreement" in the 1930s', *Contemporary British History*, 23.4 (2009), 527-42 (p.528). doi:10.1080/13619460903198143

alongside the leaders of both the Conservative and Liberal parties.<sup>8.19</sup> Described by Eliza Riedi as ‘the only predominantly female imperial propaganda society’, even the Victoria League supplemented its female leadership with a cadre of well-educated male ‘experts’, illustrating that rigid class and gender hierarchies pervaded such organisations whilst providing another basis on which they could claim to transcend partisan loyalties.<sup>8.20</sup> Chatham House inherited a similar tradition of cross-party unity, as well as a similar insularity in terms of class, race, and gender in its leadership, and this marked a common feature of the imperial political and learned societies that preceded the LNU.

This broad political unity, on both partisan and class fronts, was a feature of the LNU and of the broader League cause. Even by the time of the Abyssinia crisis in 1935, this cause continued to make unlikely comrades of progressive Labour upstarts and patinated stalwarts of the aristocratic old guard alike. The Marquess of Hartington (Edward Cavendish), heir to a tenth dukedom, joked that he might have inadvertently become a socialist when recognising the ability of this improbable alliance to bring together “‘peace cranks” or enthusiastic supporters of the League of Nations Union’ and ‘sound, old fashioned Tories’ who did ‘not like to see John Bull eating humble pie at the behest of any member of one of the Latin races’.<sup>8.21</sup> The influential Labour MP Hugh Dalton immediately rose to speak in agreement, bridging traditional political divides.<sup>8.22</sup> Such unity was the basis on which groups like the LNU were built, much like the imperial learned societies that preceded them. The apparent ability of such groups to transcend

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<sup>8.19</sup> Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2000), p.65

<sup>8.20</sup> Eliza Riedi, ‘Women, Gender, and the Promotion of Empire: The Victoria League, 1901-1914’, *Historical Journal*, 45.3 (2002), 569-99 (p.572). doi:10.1017/S0018246X02002558

<sup>8.21</sup> League of Nations and Abyssinia, House of Commons, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates* (19 December 1935, vol. 307, col. 2096)

<sup>8.22</sup> League of Nations and Abyssinia, col. 2101

existing partisan divisions and exist outside of explicitly political spaces lent them a cultivated legitimacy but also spoke to their loftier aims.

The LNU existed not to advance one partisan political view, but to enforce a new scientific consensus, and in this succeeded in uniting a potentially fragmentary imperial governing class. Its dominant executive committee made it possible for prominent figures from relatively diverse political circles to sit together comfortably, able to set aside their other political differences through a shared commitment to a new scientific imperialism. It was not formally a learned society, instead perhaps more closely echoing imperial propaganda societies like the Victoria League, but it nonetheless carried forward the preoccupation with science and objectivity that had defined imperial learned societies. Specifically, the governing hierarchy of the LNU positioned the organisation as the guardian of ‘a new science, that of the organisation of Peace’.<sup>8.23</sup> Calls for this ‘scientific’ approach, rooted in ostensibly dispassionate and unbiased study of global affairs, became a common feature of LNU literature, not least in calling for the League to take a ‘disinterested and scientific’ approach to conflict resolution.<sup>8.24</sup> In the words of Arnold Toynbee, formerly of the Political Intelligence Department, the LNU advocated for a future where international affairs lay under the ‘scientific superintendence of an international authority like the League’.<sup>8.25</sup> As well as championing a ‘systematic and scientific’ mode of study for international affairs across Europe, the pages of its journal, *Headway*, featured calls for a ‘scientific’ approach to organisation and activity.<sup>8.26</sup> Members instructed each other, for

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<sup>8.23</sup>League of Nations Union, *League of Nations Union Library* (London: League of Nations Union, 1930). London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/7/7

<sup>8.24</sup>League of Nations Union, ‘Statement on the Chinese Situation’, 3 February 1927, p.3. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/8 (S.G.1593)

<sup>8.25</sup>Arnold Toynbee, ‘The New World: XVI. Turkey’, *Headway*, 6.1 (1924), 9-10 (p.9)

<sup>8.26</sup>Louise Weiss, ‘A School of Peace’, *Headway*, 12.12 (1930), 227

instance, to ‘drop all this pacifist rot and sloppy sentimentalism’ and ‘organise League publicity on scientific lines’.<sup>8.27</sup> It is no coincidence that the same names championing such an approach at Aberystwyth and elsewhere were also deeply imbricated in the governing structures of the LNU.

### **8.2.1 Imperialism and the League of Nations Union**

Despite its claims to mass membership status, the LNU remained heavily centralised with the locus of much of its activity firmly anchored on its London headquarters, at 15 Grosvenor Crescent on Hyde Park Corner, which could scarcely have been closer to both the seat of domestic power and the heart of the imperial core. As a result, it is unsurprising that its defining objectives reflected decades-old core principles of the British Empire and its defenders. The LNU aimed to ‘bring about such a world organisation as will guarantee the freedom of nations, act as trustee and guardian of backward races and undeveloped territories, maintain international order, and finally liberate mankind from the curse of war’.<sup>8.28</sup> Though referring directly to the internationalist dream of the League, such statements remain unmistakably couched in the language of imperialists of the old order. The allusion to ‘backward races’ perhaps deliberately recalled a 1902 Romanes Lecture at Oxford given by chief Anglo-Saxonist and future LNU Vice-President, James Bryce, but it also echoed discourses of racial science circulating when the LNU was founded, particularly in the United States.<sup>8.29</sup> At the same time would-be founding figures of US IR like A.C. Coolidge were deploying racial pseudoscience to convince their readers that

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<sup>8.27</sup>Headway Editors, ‘Public Opinion and the League’, *Headway*, 12.12 (1930), 233-4 (p.234)

<sup>8.28</sup>League of Nations Union, *Objects and Rules of the League of Nations Union* (London: League of Nations Union, 1919). London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, CHAT D4/30, p.4

<sup>8.29</sup>James Bryce, *The Relations of the Advanced and the Backward Races of Mankind* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902)

liberty, equality, and human rights need not be extended to people who ‘belong to inferior, or at least backward, races’, ‘scientific’ textbooks in British schools were instilling in pupils the mission of ‘the Anglo-Saxon race to uplift and succour the backward races of the world’.<sup>8.30</sup> The LNU inherited this terminology, and though it coupled these ideas with a new vocabulary of internationalism, the presence of heavily racialised discourses of civilisation was unmistakable from its foundation. It was both the successor and the contemporary of a longer imperialist tradition that transcended imperial frontiers and echoed far older discourses of empire and imperial reform.

This was not unique to the British branch, though this is the main focus of this chapter. Parallel branches existed in other countries and were similarly marked by colonial interconnectivities. For example, by 1933, the same man was President of both the German League of Nations Union and the *Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft* in Heinrich Schnee. In the space of two decades, Schnee had been the final Governor of German East Africa, the editor of the *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon*, an extensive encyclopædia of German colonialism that would become a defining reference text for scholars of *Kolonialwissenschaften*, a Nazi member of the Reichstag, and a leading figure in the LNU and wider internationalist movement.<sup>8.31</sup> Schnee thus demonstrates a direct continuity between pre-war imperialism and inter-war internationalism. In the British context, a similar continuity in ideas can be traced to either side of this period, with League

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<sup>8.30</sup> Archibald Cary Coolidge, *The United States as a World Power* (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1912), p.61

Ellis W. Heaton, *The Senior Scientific Geography* (London: Herbert Russell, 1921) [Reprint, original published 1910], p.666

<sup>8.31</sup> Heinrich Schnee (ed.), *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon*, vol. 1 (A-G) (Leipzig: Quelle and Meyer, 1920)

Heinrich Schnee, ‘Speech by Dr Schnee, President of the German League of Nations Union, at the Plenary Assembly of the International Federation of the League of Nations Societies, Montreux, June 5<sup>th</sup> 1933’, *Völkerbund*, 62 (1933), 1-3

internationalism echoing earlier discourses of imperial reform and federation. For instance, a similar vision to that championed by the LNU had been distilled at the end of the nineteenth century, decades before the League had even been conceived. As British imperialism shifted away from a European empire of military conquest of the old 'laissez aller' model, its proponents turned towards a new vision of:

'a world-empire, the separate parts of which are being more and more closely linked by the discoveries of science, enjoying in each separate part absolute independence, connected, not by coercion of paper bulwarks but by common origin and sympathies, by a common loyalty and patriotism, and by common efforts after common purposes'.<sup>8.32</sup>

In the eyes of LNU proponents, the League provided a means of realising this late Victorian dream, captured by the same Hugh Egerton who would later contribute to the 1913 King's College London lecture series on Imperial Studies. Alongside being central to the activities of the LNU, the same ideas (often couched in the same terms) were also enshrined in the core structures of knowledge production that came to constitute the formalised discipline of IR, given the positions of influence LNU proponents and leading figures occupied within these. Perhaps the clearest example is that of the Wilson Chair, founded with 'the creation of a World State' as one of its core objectives.<sup>8.33</sup> The endurance of the terminology associated with these visions of imperial reform and the overlap between organisations dedicated to achieving them capture a historical transition in discourses of imperialism. These discourses were shifting from late Victorian (or Milnerite)

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<sup>8.32</sup>Hugh Edward Egerton, *A Short History of British Colonial Policy* (London: Methuen and Co., 1897), p.7

<sup>8.33</sup>Memorandum on the Establishment of a Chair of International Politics in the University of Wales' [undated, circa 1919]. *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, D4/5

ambitions of imperial federation towards an outwardly internationalist discourse of world-empires and world-states. This transition, however, was neither total nor instantaneous. The LNU remained entangled with longer-established orders of imperial knowledge production and continued to exist alongside the organisations whose traditions it inherited.

The LNU fit comfortably into the existing apparatus of imperial learned societies and campaigning organisations. In many cases, it collaborated directly with these other organisations, such as in organising the Women's Section of the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924. The LNU appointed organising committee representatives to sit alongside those from the Royal Colonial Institute, the United Empire Circle, and the Victoria League in producing the grand imperialist spectacle of 'education and pleasure', which marked the realisation of an idea dreamed up in the meeting rooms of the RCI fourteen years earlier.<sup>8.34</sup> The involvement of the LNU in the Empire Exhibition, coupled with the incorporation of League content into Empire Day celebrations at the encouragement of the LNU, serve as evidence for the expanded 'link between internationalist ritual and imperialist propaganda' in this period, as identified by Helen McCarthy.<sup>8.35</sup> This was further captured when, reporting on the Wembley exhibition, *The Times* implicitly questioned the need for the League at all, declaring that 'the Empire is a League of Nations' already.<sup>8.36</sup> This ambiguity suited the LNU, which brought together older traditions of imperialism with new discourses of

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<sup>8.34</sup>British Empire Exhibition Women's Section, *Women and Wembley: The British Empire at Home* (London: Women's Section British Empire Exhibition, 1924). *LSE Library*, Interwar Feminist Pamphlet Series

*Souvenir of the British Empire Exhibition (1924)*(London: Fleetway Press, 1924)

'The King's Visit: An Imperial Enterprise', *The Times*, 23 April 1924, p.15

<sup>8.35</sup>Helen McCarthy, 'The League of Nations, Public Ritual and National Identity in Britain, c.1919–56', *History Workshop Journal* 70.1(2010), 108–32. doi:10.2307/40981161

<sup>8.36</sup>'The Lesson of Wembley', *The Times*, 23 April 1924, p.15

interwar internationalism. The associated interconnected ritual and propaganda developed and deployed through LNU activities can be considered part of the organisation's central objective not only of constructing a science of empire but disseminating this to a wider public.

### **8.2.2 Constructing a Popular Science**

There were two elements of the LNU, often competing in strained dialectical tension. Alongside the insular Executive Committee, crowded with prominent names, a mass movement was also constructed under its banner. By 1921, there were almost 450 branches across Britain, and the Union boasted that a new branch was founded daily on average.<sup>8.37</sup> A century later, the LNU continues to be positioned as a defining peace movement of its time, with widely repeated claims that its total membership reached a peak of 400,000, or even a million members (if taking the LNU's own figures), by the early 1930s.<sup>8.38</sup> This overlooks the somewhat mendacious reporting strategies of the executive committee. In seeking to draw legitimacy from mass membership status, the LNU relied on a form of 'double book-keeping' which saw the inclusion of lapsed, resigned, and deceased members in publicised statistics.<sup>8.39</sup> Donald Birn positions the manipulation of these numbers as a tactic to ensure the dominance of the executive committee over the membership.<sup>8.40</sup> The continual reinforcement of the executive committee with an ever swelling wave of prominent names served a similar purpose, though at times the leadership and the membership seemed to

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<sup>8.37</sup>League of Nations Union, *The Work and Needs of the League of Nations Union* (London: League of Nations Union, 1921). Cambridge, *Churchill Archives Centre*, Churchill College, Papers of Baron Noel-Baker, GBR/0014/NBKR 4/438

<sup>8.38</sup>Cecelia Lynch, *Beyond Appeasement: Interpreting Interwar Peace Movements in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), p.99

<sup>8.39</sup>Donald S. Birn, *The League of Nations Union, 1918-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p.130

<sup>8.40</sup>Donald S. Birn, *The League of Nations Union*, p.129

exist as parallel organisations, rather than one and the same.

Membership by June 1934 was approximately 189,682 (with 30,682 new members having joined in the preceding twelve months).<sup>8.41</sup> These members comprised a broad coalition, generally more radical than the leadership and more diverse in terms of class composition. This divide was recognised acutely by left-wing sceptics of the liberal imperialist movement. Ellen Wilkinson, for instance, dismissed the LNU as ‘misguided and bourgeois’ but remained willing to address working class members of its Ashton-under-Lyne branch.<sup>8.42</sup> Reckoning with this divide between an elite leadership and a broad, often working class, membership, the governing structures of the organisation remained heavily paternalistic. Publications and promotional material were specifically commissioned to frame the LNU in language that might appeal to the working class.

One such pamphlet assured workers that support for the League was the only safeguard against ‘the destruction of European civilisation, of European industry, and of the white working man’s standard of life’.<sup>8.43</sup> Through such appeals, the LNU constructed a heavily racialised vision of international order. Though couched in the language of interwar internationalism, this remained anchored in the logic of nineteenth century imperialism. It can be read as an appeal to ‘White Labourism’: the distinct racialisation of the working class to construct new political coherencies in the face of a changing Empire.<sup>8.44</sup> In

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<sup>8.41</sup> League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee, 5 July 1934. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/13

<sup>8.42</sup> Laura Beers, *Red Ellen: The Life of Ellen Wilkinson, Socialist, Feminist, Internationalist* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 2016), pp.3 and 126

<sup>8.43</sup> League of Nations Union, *The Co-operation of Labour with the League of Nations Union* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920), leaflet no. 6. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/7/1

<sup>8.44</sup> Jonathan Hyslop, ‘The Imperial Working Class Makes Itself “White”’: White Labourism in Britain, Australia, and South Africa Before the First World War’, *Sociology Lens*, 12.4 (1999), 398-421.

recognising an existing order, the LNU sought to develop new justifications for its continuation. 'The destruction of European civilisation' is a fundamentally different threat to the destruction of humanity and betrays the racial basis underlying the liberal internationalism of the day. This was the ideal peace that those who constructed new disciplinary structures in the aftermath of the Great War spoke of and saw as the object of IR studies. Liberal internationalism advocated a League to secure lasting peace, but this peace resembled the one envisioned by the LNU more than any other. If the League was to exist to protect anything, it was a peace that protected the interests of their society, 'civilisation', and race.

Though this pursuit was led by elite class and social interests, it required at least some rhetorical compromise to secure the buy-in of a growing working class then being tempted towards communism. To this end, the internationalism championed by the LNU, vocally centred the 'white working man's standard of life', and framed this as a referent object of its protective endeavours. More explicitly racialised discourses of internationalism predated the Great War, especially in the United States. Racial internationalists, like the peace activist Andrea Hofer-Proudfoot, drew on discourses of racial science, such as the 'recognized science' of 'inter-racial geography', to argue for an internationalist global order based on eugenics.<sup>8.45</sup> Though the LNU did not go as far in openly embracing eugenics, it advanced a similarly racialised and gendered internationalism and targeted this towards the white working class as much as to its plutocratic committee members.

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doi:10.1111/1467-6443.00098

<sup>8.45</sup>Andrea Hofer-Proudfoot, 'Internationalism', *Advocate of Peace*, 75.5 (1913), 102-103

### **8.2.3 Education and the League of Nations Union**

On this note, part of the LNU's educational strategy was to take the ideas it championed out to the masses in a series of cross-country 'pilgrimages' to gather supporters in key towns and cities for rallies. The pilgrimage initiative had implicit religious overtones, and the LNU inherited other religious elements, with branches established out of churches, non-conformist motions on temperance reform, and hymnals produced for specific LNU-centric church services. However, the pilgrimages were intended more as an exercise in propaganda and knowledge circulation, designed to disseminate the ideas associated with the LNU as far and wide as possible. Mapping the 1921 LNU pilgrimage provides a visual indication of how widespread these endeavours were, with routes covering the breadth of England and Wales and leaving few areas untouched.

The pilgrimage initiative became a feature of both the LNU and other associated liberal internationalist movements. The same idea would be revived over a decade later when a group of Bangor students offered to take up David Davies' proposal to complete a similar pilgrimage across Wales to support the 'International Police Force' idea and disseminate it to the masses.<sup>8.46</sup> Though the pilgrimage was put on indefinite hold when Davies declined to purchase a caravan, the New Commonwealth did provide literature so that the students might better educate themselves on Davies' ideas.<sup>8.47</sup> For the LNU, however, such pilgrimages were a direct means of disseminating ideas and literature to wider audiences, and a central element of this was the strong emphasis the Union placed on education.

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<sup>8.46</sup> Letter from Jean Jones to David Davies, 19 July 1934, *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, A4/7

<sup>8.47</sup> Carbon copy letter from David Davies to Jean Jones, 16 August 1934, *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, A4/7

Carbon copy letter from Assistant Secretary (unnamed) to Jean Jones, 22 August 1934, *LIGC*, Lord Davies of Llandinam Papers, A4/7

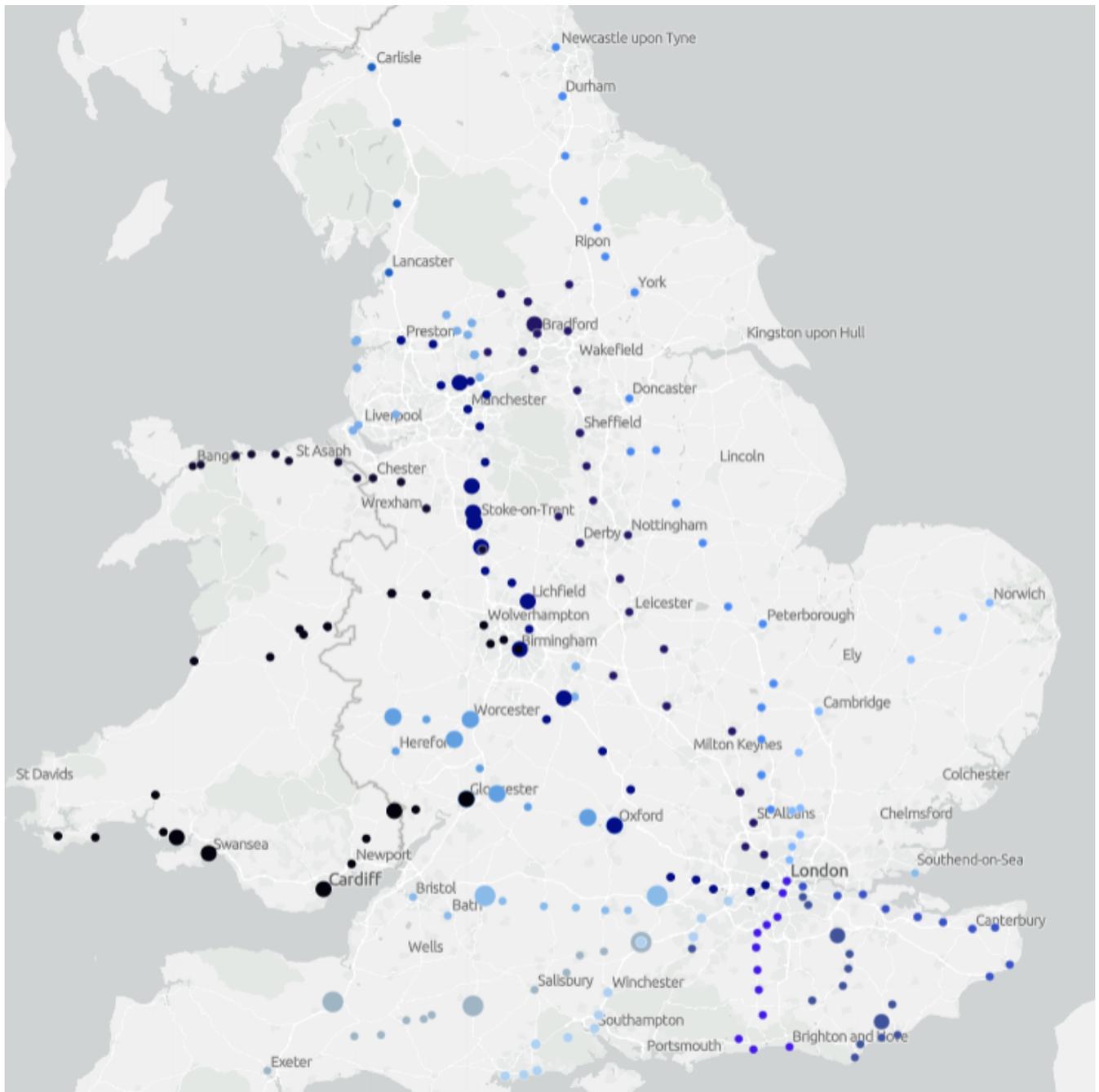


Figure 8.1: Map displaying the routes of the LNU pilgrimage in May and June 1921.

Each colour denotes a different one of the eleven routes or variants taken by LNU 'pilgrims' to promote the League idea across England and Wales

Basemap contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2025

The activities of the LNU centred heavily on education at all levels and ‘Junior Branches’ were formed in grammar schools, along with dedicated League of Nations reading rooms such as the one opened at Bolton Girls’ School, where appeals from Gilbert Murray and Lord Grey were read directly to pupils.<sup>8.48</sup> By the beginning of 1926, there were 293 such junior branches, rising to 650 by 1929, and 1,300 by mid-1933, as the LNU expanded its educational endeavours across Britain.<sup>8.49</sup> In these endeavours, it inherited the explicitly ‘scientific’ overtones of earlier imperial learned societies, and in schools it ‘taught about the Covenant of the League of Nations as science teachers explained wireless sets, or attempted to explain Einstein’.<sup>8.50</sup> The assumption that League-centric internationalism could be distilled to a classroom ‘science’ and could therefore ostensibly be explained to pupils rationally, methodically, and apolitically is telling of the way the LNU both understood its ideas and sought to disseminate them as widely as possible through the means of a formal educational programme.

To support this, the LNU issued ‘approved’ lists of books for children, students, and teachers. Alongside works by Gilbert Murray, such lists recommended a Rockefeller-funded survey by the US educationalist, Daniel Prescott, of education and its potential role in shaping international relations favourable to the League, and the work of Zimmern, which in the words of the LNU, outlined the ‘needs and possibilities of scientific thought and intellectual co-operation in international affairs’.<sup>8.51</sup> Tellingly, the same list also recommended

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<sup>8.48</sup>Mary G. Platt, ‘The League of Nations Union’, Bolton School Girls’ Division Magazine, January 1926, pp.18-19. *Bolton School Digital Archive*

Mollie B. Penston, ‘Bolton School Junior Branch of the League of Nations Union’, Bolton School Girls’ Division Magazine, 1930, p.26. *Bolton School Digital Archive*

<sup>8.49</sup>B.J. Elliott, ‘The League of Nations Union and History Teaching in England: A Study in Benevolent Bias’, *History of Education*, 6.2 (1977), 131-41 (pp.134-5). doi:10.1080/0046760770060205

<sup>8.50</sup>Kathleen Gibberd, *Politics on the Blackboard: An Autobiographical Essay* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), p.94

<sup>8.51</sup>League of Nations Union, ‘Books on the League of Nations Suitable for Children and Teachers:

that students, teachers, and study circles read ‘Africa and Some World Problems’ by Jan Smuts, then between his two tenures as Prime Minister of South Africa. Smuts’ defence of scientific over sentimental imperialism concluded with a call for a new era of the ‘scientific expert’ in international affairs, echoing the calls embodied in the formalisation of the scientific-imperial IR discipline.<sup>8.52</sup> This was a collection of recent lectures delivered by Smuts at the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, Oxford University (for the Rhodes Memorial Lectures), and the London Guildhall for the LNU’s tenth anniversary, demonstrating the ability of the LNU to bridge between both old Rhodesian imperialism and the new science of IR, and Victorian imperial learned societies and the internationalist educational organisations which succeeded them. Through this, and the broad educationalist strategy it constructed, the LNU positioned itself as the custodian of a new science of internationalism. It sought to spread its ideas as far and wide as possible in the construction of this ‘science’, as demonstrated by the efforts it devoted to educating children and secondary school pupils.

This was not restricted to schools and from its outset the Union was as much an educational organisation as a political pressure group. Notably, at the same time the Wilson Chair was being formalised in Aberystwyth, the Union designed and published its own educational curriculum to be taught in a strictly organised study group format to disseminate its ‘scientific’ understanding of the League and the world surrounding it. In 1920, the official LNU syllabus consisted of six ‘specially written’ pamphlet-style text books, each running to roughly twenty

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1930 supplement’. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/7/7

Daniel Alfred Prescott, *Education and International Relations: A Study of the Social Forces that Determine the Influence of Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1930)

Alfred Zimmern, *Learning and Leadership: A Study of the Needs and Possibilities of International Intellectual Co-operation* (London: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press, 1928)

<sup>8.52</sup>Jan C. Smuts, ‘Democracy’ in: *Africa and Some World Problems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), 149-80 (pp.168-9)

pages and sold at a shilling apiece, by Gilbert Murray ('The League and its Guarantees'), C. Delisle Burns ('The League and Labour'), Norman Angell ('The Economic Aspect of the League' [sic]), Leonard Woolf ('Mandates and Empire'), Arnold Toynbee ('The League in the East'), and Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson ('The Future of the Covenant').<sup>8.53</sup>

The inclusion of recognisable IR scholars on this list is no coincidence, and nor is the attention devoted to the study of Empire. Even those who would not widely be recognised as IR theorists specifically can be resituated as such with a closer historical reading. Robert Vitalis does this in reading Woolf's imperial writings as an influential contribution to IR theory, not least in his early invocation of a line from Thucydides' Melian dialogue ('the powerful exact what they can, and the weak grant what they must') which would become the central creed of a generation of post-war realists.<sup>8.54</sup>

By bringing together scholars who would become known for IR work and focussing on questions of interstate organisation, imperial reform, and global order, the LNU constructed an interdisciplinary IR curriculum. Despite its absence from historical narratives of IR's disciplinary history, it is possible to position the

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<sup>8.53</sup>League of Nations Union, *Hints for Study Circle Leaders* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920), leaflet no. 14. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/7/1, pp.9-11

Gilbert Murray, *The League and its Guarantees* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920)

Cecil Delisle Burns, *The League and Labour* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920)

Norman Angell, *The Economic Functions of the League* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920)

Leonard Woolf, *Mandates and Empire* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920)

Arnold Toynbee, *The League in the East* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920)

Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, *The Future of the Covenant* (London: League of Nations Union, 1920)

<sup>8.54</sup>Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), pp.169-70

Leonard S. Woolf, 'International Morality', *International Journal of Ethics*, 26.1 (1915), 11-22 (p.13)

LNU curriculum as the first coherent IR syllabus in Britain. That it came neither from a university or a learned society like the Royal Institute of International Affairs is revealing of the wider movement of knowledge dissemination that accompanied the discipline of IR's mythologised formal origins. In the LNU syllabus, there were strong echoes of the Imperial Studies movement, as encapsulated by the King's College lecture series in 1913. Such syllabus formation attempts also had significant academic and disciplinary entanglements. After the LNU met with the President of the Board of Education, H.A.L. Fisher, in 1921, Philip (Noel-)Baker suggested through the offices of the League of Nations Secretariat that he might recommend 'skeleton bibliographies' on League topics to be included on the Economic and Historical Triposes taken by students at the University of Cambridge.<sup>8.55</sup> As this demonstrates, the LNU saw itself as an educational authority on international affairs that could use its influence to steer academic curricula towards the new science of internationalism its leading figures championed.

#### 8.2.3.1 Garnett-Hearnshaw Controversy

However, the LNU's attempts to further expand this to all areas of the national educational curriculum sparked a public dispute between the editor of the King's Imperial Studies series, F.J.C. Hearnshaw, and the Secretary of the Union, Maxwell Garnett, over whether the LNU was going too far in its attempts to advance its ideas in an educational context.<sup>8.56</sup> After the meeting on the topic of history teaching in schools, where Fisher had sympathised with the LNU delegation but insisted

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<sup>8.55</sup>Minute from P.J. Baker to John Palmer, the Economic Section, and the Library, 11 July 1921. Geneva, *United Nations Library and Archives*, Papers of the League of Nations Secretariat, R1712/44/13975/13975

<sup>8.56</sup>Maxwell Garnett, 'League of Nations Union and History Teaching', *Manchester Guardian*, 12 Jan 1922, 8

Maxwell Garnett, 'History to Order' (Letter to the Editor), *The Times*, 12 Jan 1922, 6

he had no authority to change school textbooks, Hearnshaw expressed concerns that the LNU was meddling too forcefully in influencing the school curriculum.<sup>8.57</sup> Garnett, who had been part of the deputation to Fisher, championed the freedom of the history teacher to present their own views to students, arguing that biases would balance out and give the student a far richer picture of the historical landscape overall, whereas Hearnshaw was sceptical and believed no good would come from straying from a commitment to objectivity. Dubbed a ‘controversy’ by the press, the Garnett-Hearnshaw dispute is revealing both of the influential public standing of the LNU and of its attempts to use education as a vehicle for disseminating its ideas.<sup>8.58</sup> Beyond a public spat in newspaper columns over Garnett’s defence of opinionated history teaching and Hearnshaw’s stark aversion, it was a debate about the fundamental nature and purpose of education. It was also a dispute between an historian and a physicist, with Garnett better known a century on for his earlier work in mathematical physics, and chiefly the Maxwell Garnett approximation for predicting the optical properties of composite materials, than for any of his LNU work.<sup>8.59</sup> Hearnshaw, meanwhile, was predominantly a political historian of both modern and mediæval Europe but treated with what would now be called IR, not least in his wartime exposition of the balance of power concept.<sup>8.60</sup>

It may appear contradictory that the trained physicist embraced positionality while the political historian stuck rigidly to fact-based objectivity, but this dispute centred on a tension over what ‘scientific’ academic and educational

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<sup>8.57</sup>Minutes of Proceedings of a Deputation from the Education Committee of the League of Nations Union, 31 May 1921. Geneva, *United Nations Library and Archives*, Papers of the League of Nations Secretariat, R1712/44/13975/13975

<sup>8.58</sup>‘History and the League of Nations’, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 28 Jan 1922, 43

<sup>8.59</sup>James Clerk Maxwell Garnett, ‘Colours in Metal Glasses and in Metallic Films’, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, A*, 203 (1904), 385-420. doi:10.1098/rsta.1904.0024

<sup>8.60</sup>F.J.C. Hearnshaw, ‘The Balance of Power’, *Fortnightly Review*, 102.612 (1917), 917-27

practice ought to look like. Both men shared a commitment to science and considered their approach to their own work 'scientific'. Garnett had recently devoted his own efforts to developing a 'scientific' approach to education, which he saw as the basis of internationalist global citizenship, particularly among English-speaking peoples.<sup>8.61</sup> Less than a decade prior, Hearnshaw had warned that 'the use of History to point "morals" is an immoral perversion of a science the very breath of whose life is truth'.<sup>8.62</sup> To Garnett, well versed in the natural sciences, there was no shame in accepting the inescapable relationship between ideas and accepted truth. To Hearnshaw, wedded to a Newtonian caricature of scientific detachment, acknowledging that the historian should deal with anything other than distilling objective truth from concrete facts meant polluting the scholar's craft with bias and sentiment.

There is no small irony in that, despite his protestations against 'bias' in history, Hearnshaw was possibly the most polemical conservative historian of his day. Reba Soffer positions Hearnshaw as a scholar who, as the elder statesman of an influential generation of conservative historians, used history as a means of 'providing injunctions to patriotism, arguments for the importance of Empire, and prescriptions for national feelings'.<sup>8.63</sup> This did not go unnoticed by his contemporaries, in both history and IR contexts. In *International Affairs*, G.M. Gathorne-Hardy compared Hearnshaw unfavourably to the 'temperate and cautious' E.H. Carr precisely because he deployed his polemic and opinionated style 'to an extent incompatible with the writing of serious history'.<sup>8.64</sup> Conversely,

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<sup>8.61</sup>James Clerk Maxwell Garnett, *Education and World Citizenship: An Essay Towards a Science of Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921)

<sup>8.62</sup>F.J.C. Hearnshaw, 'The Place of History in Education', p.37

<sup>8.63</sup>Reba N. Soffer, 'Conservatism as a Crusade: F.J.C. Hearnshaw' in: *History, Historians, and Conservatism in Britain and America: The Great War to Thatcher and Reagan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 51-85 (p.58)

<sup>8.64</sup>Geoffrey Malcolm Gathorne-Hardy, 'International Relations Since the Peace Treaties by E.H.

the following year, Maxwell Garnett, who had championed the freedom of the educator to express their perspective through their teaching, would resign his long-held post as LNU Secretary over fears the Union was being used as ‘an instrument of political propaganda’.<sup>8.65</sup>

It was not that their positions had reversed in the intervening years, but rather, as this demonstrates, that their positions were not as incompatible as the 1922 controversy suggests. The two men agreed both on the importance of a ‘scientific’ approach, even if they disagreed on how such an approach ought to be framed, and on the impossibility of avoiding bias when dealing with subjects like the League in an educational context. Like Maxwell Garnett, Hearnshaw recognised that bias could not be escaped when dealing with recent history (which in his view began in 1815) because personal political prejudices meant ‘the detachment of mind which is necessary for the highest type of scientific investigation’ was impossible.<sup>8.66</sup> Echoing more established canonical IR names, he considered the work of the historian and the scholar of politics (especially international politics) interchangeable, frequently seeking to draw present-day lessons from the past on the basis that history was ‘race-memory’ to be used as a ‘storehouse of political precedent’.<sup>8.67</sup> For example, he positioned the League as the improved successor of the post-Napoleonic Holy Alliance, expressing his hope that it might restrain Bolshevism just as its prototype had sought to restrain the surviving ideas of the French Revolution a century prior.<sup>8.68</sup> Nonetheless, he

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Carr and Prelude to 1937 by F.J.C. Hearnshaw’ [Review], *International Affairs*, 16.6 (1937), 977-9. doi:10.2307/2602807

<sup>8.65</sup> Frank Bowman, ‘Dr Maxwell Garnett’ [Obituary], *Nature*, 181.4617 (1958), 1175-6 (p.1176)

<sup>8.66</sup> F.J.C. Hearnshaw, *Main Currents of European History, 1815-1915* (London: MacMillan, 1931), pp.10-11

<sup>8.67</sup> F.J.C. Hearnshaw, ‘The Place of History in Education’, *History*, 1.1 (1912), 34-41 (p.39)

<sup>8.68</sup> F.J.C. Hearnshaw, ‘Vienna and Versailles, 1815 and 1919’, *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law*, 1.1 (1919), 90-4 (p.94)

considered the teaching of modern history suitable only for ‘mature intelligences’, hence his opposition to LNU attempts to teach about the League to secondary school pupils.<sup>8.69</sup> The disagreement was thus not over whether education ought to advance the aims of the LNU, but at which level this should begin. At its essence, it was a dispute over whether the ‘scientific’ approach to recent political history that both men considered necessary ought to be the universal discipline envisioned by Garnett or the elite discipline envisioned by Hearnshaw.

This tension between a universal science and an elite one was intra-organisational, as both Maxwell Garnett and Hearnshaw were active members of the LNU.<sup>8.70</sup> They shared similar politics, at least on the Union’s brand of internationalism, as Garnett would make clear in his rejoinder.<sup>8.71</sup> Thus the ideas were not in dispute, and nor was the common recognition of the need for a ‘scientific’ approach. Instead, this was a dispute about how an internationalist ‘science’ ought to be presented. Such disputes pervaded the organisational lifespan of the LNU. They would spill over into the structures of the formal discipline, such as with Lucie Zimmern’s criticism of David Davies in *International Affairs* for demanding new global mechanisms for an international police force instead of dedicating efforts to educating the public about an existing mechanism to achieve the same, in the League Covenant.<sup>8.72</sup> Such disputes and the contexts in which they unfolded reveal the LNU as a vehicle for developing an educational strategy, rather than a conventional political pressure group.

Though outside of the structures of academia, the LNU unquestionably

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<sup>8.69</sup>F.J.C. Hearnshaw, *Main Currents of European History*, pp.10-1

<sup>8.70</sup>F.J.C. Hearnshaw, ‘History to Order: Should Text Books Be Revised?’, *The Times*, 14 Jan 1922, 6. Also printed together with Garnett’s letter as: ‘History to Order’ (Letters to the Editor), *The Times Educational Supplement*, 21 Jan 1922, 32

<sup>8.71</sup>Maxwell Garnett, ‘History to Order: A Reply to Professor Hearnshaw’, *The Times*, 20 Jan 1922, 6

<sup>8.72</sup>Lucie A. Zimmern, ‘Force by Lord Davies’ [review], *International Affairs*, 14.1 (1935), 128

sat alongside formal institutions like the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth, or elite learned societies like the Royal Institute of International Affairs in the development of an ostensibly ‘scientific’ approach to the study of global order. It was no less an elite organisation and worked on the premise that ‘what the university in its nobler elements was thinking to-day the nation would be thinking to-morrow’.<sup>8.73</sup> In other words, proponents of the ‘scientific’ internationalism advocated by the wealthy, connected circles associated with League ideas claimed a need for an elite intellectual vanguard to develop such ideas, echoing Curtis and the Round Table. Like the Round Table, this vanguard could then disseminate their ‘scientific’ theories through organisations like the LNU and its associated publications. It therefore occupied a crucial place in the development of a ‘science’ of internationalism and should be considered an integral part of IR’s disciplinary history, especially in relation to the formalisation of the discipline in the British Empire. It can be situated as a constituent part in a broader complex system of disciplinary development that connected enduring IR institutions with a wider historical context of imperial knowledge production.

It also shared significant interconnectivity both with these canonical IR institutions and with other longer established learned societies and political movements. For instance, in 1920 the LNU borrowed the Adelphi premises of the Royal Society of Arts to host a ‘special meeting for service women’, addressed by Muriel Innes Currey.<sup>8.74</sup> Using established learned society spaces to disseminate its ideas in this way is indicative of the public role the LNU saw itself playing. It was an educational institute as much as a political campaign group. Its choice of speaker also demonstrates its long-overlooked interconnectivity with the

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<sup>8.73</sup>Harry Miller, quoted in: ‘Had There Been League of Nations in 1914 - Ex-Moderator Addresses Glasgow Students’, *Dundee Courier*, 5 May 1931, 5

<sup>8.74</sup>‘League of Nations Union’, *Old Comrades Association Gazette*, 1.6 (1920), 6

formal institutionalisation of IR. Though Currey is better remembered for her later support for fascism, she can also be understood as an IR scholar contemporary to the generation of canonical disciplinary ‘founding fathers’.<sup>8.75</sup> In a genealogy of her intellectual contribution to IR from the periphery of the discipline, Kye Allen highlights that Currey has ‘attracted minimal scholarly attention within disciplinary histories of international relations (IR)’, despite being a prominent contributor to journals like *International Affairs* and a frequent attendee of events at Chatham House.<sup>8.76</sup> The same is true of the LNU in the main. Though positioned as a notable, albeit ill-fated, movement in British interwar social and political history, it remains firmly outside of the disciplinary history of IR and does not figure in established narratives of the discipline’s development.

Despite its absence, it plays a key function in this history as a link between the imperial learned societies of old and the interwar institutions that explicitly sought to formulate a ‘scientific’ approach to international affairs. Though groups like the LNU are often understood as the predecessors of present-day political pressure groups, it is more helpful to situate them as the successors to learned societies of an earlier era which were similarly comprised of an elite class of scholars and political actors and were similarly devoted to the dissemination of specific orders of knowledge. It did not exist in isolation and was instead deeply interconnected with the apparatus of the developing discipline, despite being left out of established narratives concerning its disciplinary history. Like Chatham House, the Round Table, and the Foreign Office Historical Section, it was also deeply interconnected with the British Imperial establishment. The elite connexions of its members further demonstrate its insularity and its

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<sup>8.75</sup>Julie V. Gottlieb, *Feminine Fascism: Women in Britain’s Fascist Movement, 1923-1945* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000), pp.127 and 292-3

<sup>8.76</sup>Kye J. Allen, “A Pro-Fascist English Lady”: The International Thought of Muriel Innes Currey’, *Global Studies Quarterly*, 3.1 (2023), 1-13 (p.2). doi:10.1093/isagsq/ksad015

disproportionate influence in the highest levels of government and foreign policy decision-making. The intellectual and political vanguard it sought to construct included both the leaders of Empire and the theorists of its renewal. Thus, like the Royal Society and the imperial learned societies of old, it should be considered 'part of that network of institutions which collectively made up the British state'.<sup>8.77</sup> 10.1017/S0007087499003593 A closer exploration of these elite connexions and their interconnectivity with the academic circles in which IR was formalised repositions the LNU as an integral contributor to the evolution of a science of empire, albeit one that operated outside of the formal academic structures on which established disciplinary narratives centre.

### 8.3 Elite Connexions of the LNU

In contrast to the official involvement of 'citizen-scholars' in wartime intelligence, the LNU served as a decidedly more informal organ of the British state. The Union hosted a dinner at the London Guildhall in 1930 for delegates of the Imperial Conference, numbering the prime ministers of the six 'white dominions' (Australia, Canada, Newfoundland, New Zealand, South Africa, and the Irish Free State). The keynote speaker was the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) who made explicit that the League ought to model itself on the British Empire. Boasting that 'one-fourth of the entire human race [...] under the British Crown, had solved the problem of disarmament', the Prince invoked the language of IR's self-styled 'first great debate' to ask: 'is it mere idealism that the remaining three-fourths should be able to tread the same path?'.<sup>8.78</sup> This marked the general theme of the function and the dinner provided, in connexion with the Imperial Conference, a platform

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<sup>8.77</sup>John Gascoigne, 'The Royal Society and the Emergence of Science as an Instrument of State Policy', *British Journal for the History of Science*, 32.2 (1999), 171–84 (p.181). doi:10.1017/S0007087499003593

<sup>8.78</sup>'Prince & the Cause of Peace', *Daily Telegraph*, 31 October 1930, p.8

on which to celebrate the Imperial dimension of the League and by extension the Union which championed it.

The conference itself was a landmark event in the evolving trajectory of British imperialism, and was famously positioned by George Woodcock as ‘the grand climacteric of the Empire’ after which ‘all the ways of Empire turned downward’, at least from the perspective of his fellow imperial romanticists.<sup>8.79</sup> However, another transition was underway in parallel with the restructuring of the Empire, one that appears to have escaped the attention of Woodcock at the time he was writing in the 1970s. His ‘inquest’ into the ostensibly premature death of the British Empire recognises the vulnerability caused by external factors and territorial overstretch but still apports the blame firmly to M.K. Gandhi as the one individual ‘more responsible than others for the death of the Empire’.<sup>8.80</sup>

Nonetheless, despite focussing on the shift from Empire to Commonwealth, Woodcock’s account makes no mention of the Union, and little mention even of the League itself. This overlooks that the governing elite of the LNU, and that large section of the governing elite of the Empire with which it overlapped, saw themselves at the forefront of the transition to the ‘shadowy Commonwealth’ that Woodcock laments.<sup>8.81</sup> They neither saw their movement as detached from Empire nor considered the shift to a new form of imperialism regrettable. Instead, the LNU existed above all else to encourage this move beyond nineteenth century imperialism towards an expanded global Commonwealth, as reflected in the future King’s address to the Guildhall dinner. It sought to expedite this transition and saw education as the means through which

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<sup>8.79</sup>George Woodcock, ‘1930: The Climacteric of Empire’, *History Today*, 24.10 (1974), 673-83 (p.683)

<sup>8.80</sup>George Woodcock, *Who Killed the British Empire?: An Inquest* (New York, NY: Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1974), p.330

<sup>8.81</sup>George Woodcock, ‘1930: The Climacteric of Empire’, p.673

this could be achieved. In his keynote speech, the Prince of Wales championed the educational function of ‘our own society, the League of Nations Union’ above all its other activities, noting that ‘educational work in a methodical and businesslike manner’ was the way to expand the League and build on the British Imperial ‘brotherhood’ to create a ‘similar brotherhood among all nations’.<sup>8.82</sup>

There are long-running historiographical debates about the direct influence, scale, and legacy of the LNU’s educational activities, though Susannah Wright has assessed the role its educational programmes played in combining imperial loyalties with liberal internationalism to develop a notion of hierarchical ‘world citizenship’.<sup>8.83</sup> In any event, the LNU was closely tied to the development of a formal academic discipline concerned exclusively with the study of global order and its future and so is heavily interconnected with the IR discourses and institutions, even if it has so far escaped the attention of many disciplinary historians. It was also indelibly tied to a transition in imperialism that was underway during the first half of the twentieth century. It used educational initiatives as a tool to help expedite this transition and so marks part of a wider shift in Britain from imperial orders of knowledge production to the ‘internationalist’ orders of the interwar period. That its supporters numbered the leaders of Empire alongside foundational figures in IR’s canonical disciplinary narratives demonstrates the place it occupied at the intersection between imperial renewal and the formalisation of an academic discipline directed towards rationalising this.

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<sup>8.82</sup> ‘Prince & the Cause of Peace’, p.8

<sup>8.83</sup> Susannah Wright, ‘Creating Liberal-Internationalist World Citizens: League of Nations Union Junior Branches in English Secondary Schools, 1919–1939’, *Paedagogica Historica*, 56.3 (2018), 321–40. doi:10.1080/00309230.2018.1538252

Susannah Wright, “Some Change of Feeling and Purpose”: The League of Nations Union, Emotions, and World Citizenship in Britain, 1919–1939’, *European Educational Research Journal*, online pre-publication (2024). doi:10.1177/14749041241295320

It is telling that the royal and elite political supporters of the LNU did not only attend its events or fund its activities as fiduciary benefactors. As the address from the Prince of Wales illustrates, the cause of liberal internationalism was so broad that even the apolitical royal family could vocalise their support. Messages of support for the LNU from the King (George V), the Prime Minister (Ramsay MacDonald), and the League of Nations Secretary-General (Eric Drummond) were also among those read out to guests at the 1930 dinner. The attendees were no less prominent, and so august was the extensive guest list that it was published in the *Telegraph*. It included established names in the movement, such as Norman Angell, David Davies, and Philip Noel-Baker, alongside leading political figures from across the partisan spectrum like Viscount Hailsham (Douglas Hogg), Ethel Snowden, and Clement Attlee, eminent academics like H.A.L. Fisher and the French historian of philosophy Théodore Ruysen, as well as fixtures of the aristocracy such as the Earl of Clarendon (George Villiers) and the Duchess of Norfolk (Gwendolen Fitzalan-Howard).<sup>8.84</sup> This illustrates the extraordinary insularity of the LNU and its support base. It captures an intersection of British Imperial high society and knowledge production where class outweighed politics, and where socialists might sit alongside well-born former colonial governors like the Earl of Selborne (William Waldegrave Palmer), provided, like Attlee and Snowden, they were from a genteel enough middle-class background.

Such functions echoed those held by the learned societies of a previous era, such as the late spring dinners of the Royal African Society, which had long been a feature of the Imperial high society social calendar. Four months earlier, the African Society dinner held two miles down the Strand had brought together a similar assemblage of well-heeled imperialists and across the political spectrum.

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<sup>8.84</sup>'The League of Nations Union: Guests at Guildhall Dinner', *Daily Telegraph*, 31 October 1930, p.13

These ranged from noble Conservative imperialists like Eleanor Wilson-Fox, who had attended the LNU Guildhall dinner and was serving concurrently as Vice-Chairman of both the imperialist Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women and the Women's Advisory Committee of the LNU, to Beatrice Webb (recently ennobled as Lady Passfield), the Fabian socialist and LSE co-founder.<sup>8.85</sup> The overlap between the intersecting organisations and imperial learned societies in the interwar years that this demonstrates extended into the circle of canonical founding figures of the nascent IR discipline. Their interconnectivity with these elite networks left an indelible mark on the mainstream structures of knowledge production in the discipline, particularly in the British Empire.

With many canonical IR names not only being members of the LNU, but interconnected by all manner of overlapping personal relations, the circles from which the defining interwar IR institutions emerged were marked by a similar insularity. Many of these names had cycled through the governing structures of the LNU. When Lowes Dickinson resigned from the LNU Executive Committee in 1919, for instance, the next meeting saw Philip (Noel-)Baker recruited as a replacement.<sup>8.86</sup> That the same figures would continue to interact with each other within an explicitly disciplinary context is no coincidence. There is a danger in presenting these individuals as a monolith, as they did not always agree on all matters, political or otherwise. Nonetheless, they were always present in similar spaces and represented the same narrow socio-economic and intellectual class. As such, they shared a common understanding that underpinned the approach

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<sup>8.85</sup>'Dinner of the Society', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 29.117 (1930), 529-34

'Wilson-Fox, Hon. Mrs. Eleanor Birch, C.B.E.' in: *Who's Who 1930: An Annual Biographical Dictionary*, (London: A&C Black, 1930), 3374

<sup>8.86</sup>League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee, 31 July 1919. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/2

League of Nations Union, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee, 24 November 1919. London, *LSE Library*, Papers of the League of Nations Union, LNU/2/2

to the study of IR they championed. Following the autumn 1923 Corfu crisis, for instance, Noel-Baker condemned Lowes Dickinson for his pessimism about the future and efficacy of the League but did so under a pseudonym ('B') and suggested it was only the latter's 'passion for righteousness' that had clouded his judgement.<sup>8.87</sup> The elite circle shaping IR discourse in this period was insular and self-reinforcing, reflecting the disciplinary structures that followed.<sup>8.88</sup> There is an irony in a discourse that was proudly international being shaped by such a small circle of figures. They shared not only similar backgrounds and socio-professional circles, but similar futures. Both Angell and Noel-Baker, for example, would be elected as Labour MPs in the 1929 General Election and go on to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. This insular network inherited much earlier structures from elite imperial learned societies but also echoed the enduring disciplinary structures of knowledge production that followed.

#### **8.4 Disciplinary Afterlives**

These disciplinary structures would continue to be indelibly marked by the insularity of these formative circles well after the initial generation of individuals within them retired. When Noel-Baker vacated the Cassel Chair at the LSE to take up his seat in Parliament in 1929, for instance, his old comrades, Arnold Toynbee (by then Director of Chatham House) and Gilbert Murray (Chairman of the LNU), intervened to ensure its endurance against university cuts through the financial support of menswear magnate Montague Burton.<sup>8.89</sup> Succeeding

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<sup>8.87</sup>B (Philip Noel-Baker), 'Can These Bones Live?', *Nation and Athenæum*, 6 October 1923, pp. 12-13. Cambridge, *Churchill Archives Centre*, Churchill College, Papers of Baron Noel-Baker, GBR/0014/NBKR 4/438

<sup>8.88</sup>Ole Wæver, 'The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations', *International Organization*, 52.4 (1998), 687-728

<sup>8.89</sup>Peter Wilson, 'The Montague Burton Chair in International Relations at LSE and its Occupants: A Brief History', *LSE Department of International Relations Blog*, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/internationalrelations/2021/01/14/the-montague-burton-chair-in->

Noel-Baker, the newly-renamed Montague Burton Chair was then taken up by the South African Charles Manning. Manning was an ex-League functionary who had already replaced Noel-Baker in one role after becoming personal assistant to the League's Secretary-General, Eric Drummond, in 1922. From 1925, he was both a Laura Spellman Rockefeller Fellow at Harvard and a summer tutor at Lucie and Alfred Zimmern's Geneva School of International Studies.<sup>8.90</sup> In the Second World War, Manning would go on to serve in the Foreign Research and Press Service (FRPS): a joint Foreign Office and Chatham House initiative quartered at Balliol College, Oxford which Toynbee envisaged as a reborn Political Intelligence Department.<sup>8.91</sup> At the FRPS, Manning's colleagues had included former PID and Historical Section stalwarts, two former Wilson Chairs in Alfred Zimmern and Charles Webster, alongside Zimmern's old classmate (at both Winchester College and New College, Oxford) and *Round Table* contributor Robert Seton-Watson.<sup>8.92</sup> As this demonstrates, the insular circles connecting earlier movements with formal structures of disciplinary knowledge production were connected across several decades and played a direct role in shaping the discipline long after canonical disciplinary narratives about an interwar idealist pursuit of peace can account for.

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international-relations-at-lse-and-its-occupants-a-brief-history/ [Accessed 18 July 2023]

<sup>8.90</sup> Manning, Prof. Charles Anthony Woodward', *Who's Who 1971-1972: An Annual Biographical Dictionary* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1972), 2069

Patricia Owens and Katharina Rietzler, 'Polyphonic Internationalism: The Lucie Zimmern School of International Studies', *International History Review*, 45.4 (2023), 623-42. doi:10.1080/07075332.2023.2177321

<sup>8.91</sup> Robert A. Longmire and Kenneth C. Walker, *Herald of a Noisy World - Interpreting the News of All Nations: The Research and Analysis Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office* (London: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 1995), p.13

<sup>8.92</sup> Seton-Watson penned a piece after the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, which has since become notorious for its complaints about 'Jewish parasites' undermining prospects of peace between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.

[Robert William Seton-Watson], 'The Austro-Servian Dispute', *Round Table*, 4.16 (1914), 659-76.

Republished after the Great War as: Robert William Seton-Watson, *Europe in the Melting-Pot* (London: MacMillan, 1919)

Meanwhile, the namesake Montague Burton Chair at Oxford similarly demonstrates the legacy left by this initial insular circle well into the mid-twentieth century and beyond. Alfred Zimmern held the chair until 1944, when he was replaced by Llewellyn Woodward. Woodward had been Zimmern's colleague in the PID a quarter of a century earlier and had written the Historical Section handbook on the Congress of Berlin in advance of the Paris Peace Conference, before returning to the Foreign Office on secondment in 1939 and becoming its official historian of wartime foreign policy.<sup>8.93</sup> After Woodward's short tenure, Agnes Headlam-Morley was appointed to the Chair in 1948, becoming the first woman to hold a full professorship at Oxford. Later remembered as 'perhaps the most prominent female, though not feminist, IR scholar of her time', Headlam-Morley was similarly connected to the same influential intellectual and social circles as her predecessors.<sup>8.94</sup> She was the daughter of former PID Assistant Director and Foreign Office historian James Headlam-Morley and had worked with the Zimmerns as a tutor at the Geneva School in 1930.<sup>8.95</sup> The insularity marking this influential network at the core of the discipline's structures of knowledge production thus spanned generations and was self-reinforcing. Her father had secured Toynbee's appointment at Chatham House two decades earlier, and Agnes Headlam-Morley began her own career carrying testimonials from both Toynbee and Alfred Zimmern.<sup>8.96</sup> Thus, from the outset, she was a member of this

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<sup>8.93</sup>Ernest Llewellyn Woodward, *The Congress of Berlin, 1878*, Handbooks Prepared Under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, no.154 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920)

Peter J. Beck, 'Locked in a Dusty Cupboard, Neither Accessible on the Policy-Makers' Desks nor Cleared for Early Publication: Llewellyn Woodward's Official Diplomatic History of the Second World War', *English Historical Review*, 127.529 (2012), 1435-70. doi:doi:10.1093/ehr/ces269

<sup>8.94</sup>Jan Stöckmann, 'Women, Wars, and World Affairs: Recovering Feminist International Relations, 1915-39', *Review of International Studies*, 44.2 (2017), 215-35 (p.225). doi:10.1017/S026021051700050X

<sup>8.95</sup>Patricia Owens, *Erased: A History of International Thought Without Men* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2025), p.32

<sup>8.96</sup>Roger Morgan, "'To Advance the Sciences of International Politics...': Chatham House's Early

interconnected network in her own right.

However, the other candidates considered for the post were no less connected to this same network.<sup>8.97</sup> They included her late father's old friend E.H. Carr, who had recently vacated the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth, though his ongoing divorce all but disqualified him from consideration. Also considered were John Wheeler-Bennett, who had undertaken a world tour to promote the LNU in the US and beyond as a volunteer for its publicity department in the 1920s before establishing his own *Bulletin of International News* in 1924, which relocated to Chatham House in June 1927.<sup>8.98</sup> Subsequently, Wheeler-Bennett worked as the RIIA's Honorary Information Secretary, alongside names like James Headlam-Morley and G.M. Gathorne-Hardy, and produced the supplement to Toynbee's annual 'Survey of International Affairs' between 1929 and 1937, ahead of his own wartime secondment to the PID (and its associated clandestine bodies).<sup>8.99</sup> Lewis Namier, another candidate considered for the post, had been Wheeler-Bennett's historical mentor, James Headlam-Morley and Arnold Toynbee's close colleague at the PID from its founding, and tutor to a young Agnes Headlam-Morley and her brother. A final candidate, Carlile Aylmer Macartney

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Research', *International Affairs*, 55.2 (1979), 240–51 (p.242). doi:10.2307/2616320

Robert H. Keyserlingk, 'Arnold Toynbee's Foreign Research and Press Service, 1939-43 and Its Post-War Plans for South-East Europe', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 21.4 (1986), 539-58 (p.542). doi:10.1177/002200948602100403

Jan Stöckmann, 'Women, Wars, and World Affairs', p.225

<sup>8.97</sup>Martin Ceadel, 'The Academic Normalization of International Relations at Oxford, 1920-2012: Structures Transcended' in: *Forging a Discipline: A Critical Assessment of Oxford's Development of the Study of Politics and International Relations in Comparative Perspective*, ed. by Christopher Hood, Desmond King, and Gillian Peele (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 184-203 (p.193)

<sup>8.98</sup>'The League: Notes', *Time*, 3 September 1923, p.7

J.W. Wheeler-Bennett, 'Untitled editorial', *Bulletin of International News*, 1.1 (1925), n.p.

<sup>8.99</sup>'Information Service on International Affairs (Founded 1924), Committee of Management', *Bulletin of International News*, 6.1 (1929), 2

John W. Wheeler-Bennett (ed.), *Documents on International Affairs, 1929* (London: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press, 1930)

was also formerly of both the LNU and the FRPS, demonstrating that there was no shortage of names connected personally and professionally to the initial circle of individuals and overlapping organisations who had contributed to formalising elite disciplinary structures. The interconnectivity of these names, which overlap over the course of several decades, demonstrates how insular the dominant institutions in IR were, especially in the British Empire.

Tracing the institutional genealogies of these interconnected individuals should not be taken as an attempt to merge them all together as an academic monolith. There were genuine ideological, theoretical, and methodological differences between them, as epitomised by Agnes Headlam-Morley's later role as a key figure in existential debates over IR's absorption by political science into the mid-twentieth century, against the foil of Charles Manning.<sup>8.100</sup> Nonetheless, these individuals operated within historically contingent structures which cannot be separated from the historical processes that shaped them. This same insularity is part of the reason lists of canonical IR thinkers from the early twentieth century are so narrow in terms of race, class, and gender. It is not that scholars who were not white, upper class, male, or from Western Europe were not thinking about the subjects under IR's broad disciplinary remit, but rather that this was largely happening outside the authoritative disciplinary structures, which remained heavily dominated by the same circle. There are notable exceptions, in scholars like Merze Tate, a student of Zimmern and Agnes Headlam-Morley at Oxford whose contribution to the discipline as an African American woman overlooked by disciplinary historians seeking white, upper class founding fathers is championed by Owens and Robert Vitalis alike.

In seeking to recover some of the discipline's overlooked female scholars,

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<sup>8.100</sup>Patricia Owens, *Erased*, pp.103-11

Owens highlights that part of the problem is that even those who did find a place within the dominant disciplinary structures are dismissed on account of their gender. Specifically, she notes that, by disciplinary historians, Headlam-Morley 'is read first and foremost as a daughter, as offspring', which forms the basis of Carroll Quigley's misogynist dismissal.<sup>8.101</sup> In any event, Quigley's suggestion that the appointment of Headlam-Morley brought 'the great idealistic adventure which began with Toynbee and Milner in 1875... to a finish of bitterness and ashes' is poorly founded.<sup>8.102</sup> The next appointment to the Montague Burton Chair was Alastair Buchan in 1972. If Agnes Headlam-Morley is treated foremost as offspring, Alastair Buchan should not escape the same fate as the son of John Buchan (Lord Tweedsmuir). Buchan senior was a former student of Gilbert Murray, close associate of Milner's Kindergarten, and a prominent supporter of the Round Table, whose colonial administration career began when Leo Amery secured him a job in South Africa as a personal secretary to Milner in 1901 and ended with a tenure as Governor General of Canada (1935-40).<sup>8.103</sup>

By the time the younger Buchan took up his post in the 1970s, disciplinary discourse had evolved, but its structures were still indelibly shaped by legacies of older imperialist networks. He could lament in the pages of *The Round Table* that 'the use of analogies drawn from the physical sciences sometimes bedevils the study of international relations', but the scientific-imperial épistémè of IR was his inheritance, both literally and figuratively.<sup>8.104</sup> The interconnected web of personal ties, common allegiances, and affiliations endured that had bound groups like the

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<sup>8.101</sup> Patricia Owens, *Erased*, pp.162-3

<sup>8.102</sup> Carroll Quigley, *The Anglo-American Establishment: From Rhodes to Cliveden* (New York, NY: Books in Focus), p.310

<sup>8.103</sup> L.S. Amery, *My Political Life*, vol. 1 (London: Hutchinson, 1953), p.150-1

<sup>8.104</sup> Alastair Buchan, 'A Sea of Troubles: The Mediterranean and the Defence of Europe', *Round Table* 61.243 (1971), 347-55 (p.347). doi:10.1080/00358537108452964

Round Table, Milner's Kindergarten, and Chatham House together in the first two decades of the twentieth century endured well into the century's latter half.

There was a place for Buchan within this network, but others insufficiently connected to it were marginalised and situated outside the boundaries of the discipline. Merze Tate, for instance, left Oxford disillusioned and returned to the United States, where she worked in a series of historically black universities. Significantly, Tate was employed exclusively by History departments, working outside the disciplinary structures of IR, despite the nature and focus of her work.<sup>8.105</sup> Here the clearest distinction between IR and political science or history, as discussed at the beginning of this thesis, is encountered. In the first half of the twentieth century, the biggest factor that distinguished IR from political science and history was the people carrying it out. The development of this insular core network, connecting each of IR's dominant structures of knowledge production in Western Europe and North America to common historical origins, serves as the historical ontology that binds IR's fragile disciplinarity together. These dominant disciplinary structures and orders of knowledge production, in which the legacies of the insular circle of would-be 'discipline builders' were embedded, became the ultimate arbiters of legitimate discourse in IR. They set the boundaries of the field and, by extension, the disciplinary canon to be picked up by future generations working under the same disciplinary banner. The same power relations captured by the dominance of this network continue to enforce historical silences in IR in determining who can and cannot be considered a canonical IR scholar. It is a product of these power relations that those who fit comfortably into this network, like Alfred Zimmern or Philip Noel-Baker, can be considered discipline-builders while others are marginalised, if considered part of the discipline at all.

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<sup>8.105</sup> 'Diplomatic Historian Merze Tate Dies at 91' [Obituary], *Washington Post*, 8 July 1996, B4

This exercise of power is differential and multi-layered, as the gendered treatment of Agnes Headlam-Morley, or the antisemitism faced by Lewis Namier, suggests. Nonetheless, these scholars could still find a role within these structures, in a way that scholars like Tate could not, despite being an Oxford alumna. A critique of insularity in IR's dominant disciplinary structures must recognise the influence of narrow ties of class, race, and gender on shaping the field in general, while recognising the complexity and intersectionality inherent in the historical conditions through which orders of knowledge production developed and adapted. A generation of canonical 'discipline-builders' interwove a wide network of connected and complementary organisations, spanning across and between Victorian learned societies, Milner's 'Kindergarten', the Round Table, the LNU, Chatham House, the PID and the FOHS. A defining feature of this network was its trans-imperial entanglements, and the order of knowledge production it entrenched developed symbiotically with Transatlantic Anglo-Saxonism and race science in the United States and the development of an interdisciplinary programme of 'colonial sciences' in the German Empire and Weimar Republic.

Fragments of this network and its entanglements exist in plain sight within conventional disciplinary narratives, even where they have gone unacknowledged. The same individuals repeatedly appear across contexts and the connexions between them were a driving force in shaping key disciplinary structures in the British Empire and beyond. For instance, after Webster's resignation from the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth in 1932, despite David Davies' stated wish to 'see Aber. becoming the centre of study and research for a united Europe [...] as opposed to the conceptions of Imperialism or an Anglo-Saxon alliance', it was Lionel Curtis of the Round Table and Chatham House who selected Webster's

successor.<sup>8.106</sup> With the backing of Webster, Arthur Salter, and Gilbert Murray, Curtis put forward the name of the American Jerome Greene, a significant figure in the establishment of the Council on Foreign Relations, an associate of the Round Table, and a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation. Where recommendation was a powerful tool, these networks became self-reinforcing. Their influence was not only indirect and unofficial, with the same individuals and institutions maintaining a close formal control over the major disciplinary structures, which only expanded as the formalised field grew.

By the 1930s, for instance, the selection panel for the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth drew only three of its seven members from the senior leadership of the University (or more specifically, the College). They were accompanied by nominated representatives of the Foreign Secretary, the League of Nations Union (in Gilbert Murray), Chatham House, and the University of Oxford.<sup>8.107</sup> These institutions and the individuals interconnected across them thus had a formal as well as an informal role in setting the boundaries of the discipline. On paper, the numerical split at Aberystwyth (three to four) gave the external discipline an in-built majority over the institutional leadership. It was to David Davies' chagrin that (in his words) the 'stupid and irresponsible members' of this panel appointed E.H. Carr in 1936 over William Arnold-Foster, the candidate favoured by Davies, Ernst Jäckh, and Robert Cecil.<sup>8.108</sup> Davies expressed his frustration over the unfulfilled assumption that he and his sisters ought to have influence over who was appointed, on the basis that they had funded the Chair. In their view, it was a

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<sup>8.106</sup>Edward Lewis Ellis, *The University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1872-1972* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1972), p.240

<sup>8.107</sup>Edward Lewis Ellis, *The University College of Wales, Aberystwyth*, p.246

Brian Porter, 'Lord Davies, E.H. Carr and the Spirit Ironic: A Comedy of Errors', *International Relations*, 16.1 (2002), 77-96. doi:10.1177/0047117802016001006

<sup>8.108</sup>Copy of a letter from David Davies to Ifor L. Evans, 7 February 1936. *LIGC*, Thomas Jones Papers, J12

platform for the propagation of their internationalist and liberal imperialist ideas, and from the outset its first objective had been ‘to provide for the teaching and study of the related problems raised by the project of a League of Nations’.<sup>8.109</sup>

By 1936, however, disciplinary structures had developed and adapted beyond the Davies’ individual control. They were no longer, if ever they had been, at the centre of the field. The formalised disciplinary structures were adaptive and evolving, and just as late Victorian imperial science had developed into a new British *Kolonialwissenschaft* by the 1910s, by the late 1930s the League-centric liberal imperialism of the early interwar years was giving way for a repackaged ‘science’ of global order. The LNU movement had provided the historical conditions within which this transition could take place and catalysed the expansion of the discipline, including its further entanglement with dominant structures of knowledge production in the imperial core.

For example, though he shied away from publicly backing David Davies in the selection crisis, Gilbert Murray had sought to inaugurate the Montague Burton Chair of International Peace at Oxford in 1930 along similar lines as the Wilson Chair. Though on Noel-Baker’s suggestion ‘International Peace’ was dropped for ‘International Relations’, Murray intended it to be ‘a League of Nations Chair’ in all but name.<sup>8.110</sup> When Zimmern took up this Chair, the discipline ‘returned’ to Oxford, the locus of the interconnected network of imperialists, scholars, and colonial administrators who had shaped the historical conditions in which it was formalised. This interconnected network continued to hold formal and informal authority over disciplinary structures and remained the arbiter of legitimacy in

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<sup>8.109</sup>‘Draft Trust Deed for the Endowment of the Chair of International Politics in the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth’, Undated, 1919. *LIGC*, Thomas Jones Papers, J12

<sup>8.110</sup>Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), p.84

IR long beyond the lifespan of its individual constituent members, like Milner, or institutions, like the LNU. It served as a scientific-imperial aristocracy at the core of the discipline that continued to shape the discipline well into subsequent decades, with its afterlives enduring to the present day.

Therefore, if the institutionalisation of British Imperial IR has an origin story, it is with this network rather than solely with the Wilson Chair. Though the control of this network over the Wilson and Burton Chairs or Chatham House is present in the historical record, it is often left out of disciplinary historical narratives. In part, this is a consequence of the ‘deep structural amnesia’ inherent in these narratives, as identified in de Carvalho, Leira, and Hobson’s critique of the search for disciplinary ‘big bangs’ in the history of IR.<sup>8.111</sup> Detaching the historical conditions in which disciplinary structures were formalised from the longer history of empire and scientific discourse, the Aberystwyth myth functions to maintain ‘the discipline’s prevailing mythical self-image’ by obscuring the ‘inconvenient truth’ that the majority of work carried out under the auspices of IR has been designed to uphold and expand Western imperialism in various forms.<sup>8.112</sup> In other words, the presentation of IR as a noble pursuit of peace obscures the role its formalisation as an academic discipline played as a transitional stage between the old imperialism of the late nineteenth century and the value-free, non-normative social science that, after the mid-twentieth century, orthodox Western IR purported to be.

As discussed at the outset of this thesis, conventional disciplinary narratives centre the roles of individual actors, such as David Davies (and to a lesser extent Gwendoline and Margaret Davies) as industrious pioneers, motivated

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<sup>8.111</sup> Benjamin de Carvalho, Halvard Leira, and John M. Hobson, ‘The Big Bangs of IR’, p.750

<sup>8.112</sup> Benjamin de Carvalho, Halvard Leira, and John M. Hobson, ‘The Big Bangs of IR’, p.750

by their commitment to a larger, more noble cause (the pursuit of global peace via the League). However, in doing so they obscure the wider networks of interconnected individuals and institutions with which these ‘pioneers’ were indelibly tangled. These networks had evolved, adapting to changing historical conditions, through the colonial learned societies of mid to late nineteenth century Britain and Germany, via the Milnerite circle of colonial administrators and the Round Table, to Anglo-Saxonist race science, and its twin Transatlantic offspring in Chatham House and the Council on Foreign Relations. The development of this network was not a linear progression, but instead was emergent, with connexions spanning decades and trans-imperial frontiers, interconnecting institutions, individuals, and contexts in complex ways. This broader network was both an evolution of the insular networks like the Round Table which formed constituent parts of the larger whole, and a realisation of Alfred Milner’s vision, as discussed in chapter seven, of a ‘limited class’ of men engaged in ‘scientific work’ to shape both public opinion and the future of global order.<sup>8.113</sup>

A similar process of historical deconstruction could be directed to IR in any other context and there is considerable room to expand this well beyond the British context and the selected entanglements discussed in this thesis. A similar critical Fachgeschichte endeavour recentred on the German context of disciplinary formation would be no less productive. This could trace the development of the trans-imperial science of empire from the Wilhelmine imperialism of the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft, via Kolonialwissenschaften and Nazi visions of global order, to the Institut für Auswärtige Politik and present-day organisations like the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, a counterpart of Chatham House

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<sup>8.113</sup>Alfred Milner, ‘Crown Colonies’ (An address delivered before the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce), 7 June 1910, in: *The Nation and the Empire, Being a Collection of Speeches and Addresses* (London: Constable and Company, 1913), 461-9 (pp.467-8)

and the CFR, whose literally-translated name (Science and Politics Foundation) betrays its entanglements with the scientific-imperial épistémè more clearly than the German Institute for International and Security Affairs it more commonly goes by in English. Beyond European disciplinary history, a similar process has already begun to recontextualise the development of Chinese IR.<sup>8.114</sup>

Given IR's historical development as a fundamentally imperial discipline, however, such narratives will still encounter fragments of the same scientific-imperial épistémè governing the boundaries of the discipline and the networks which shaped it. For instance, in constructing an Australian disciplinary history of IR and addressing historical narratives of its disciplinary 'birth', Alexander Davis argues that its origins should not be traced to the foundation of the IR Department at the Australian National University in 1949 (its equivalent of the Aberystwyth myth) but rather should address its longer development via Lionel Curtis' Round Table in Australia (from 1911) and the Australian Institute of International Affairs, 'a centre for the objective, scientific study of international affairs' modelled on Chatham House.<sup>8.115</sup> As this suggests, the connexions explored in this section extend beyond Oxford or any of the British institutions connected to the insular and influential network that formalised the 'new' discipline. Fragments of them can still be found wherever IR by name in its

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<sup>8.114</sup>Yih-Jye Hwang, 'The Births of International Studies in China', *Review of International Studies*, 47.5 (2021), 580-600. doi:10.1017/S0260210520000340

Lu Peng, 'Pre-1949 Chinese IR: An Occluded History', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 68.2 (2014), 133-55. doi:10.1080/10357718.2013.861385

<sup>8.115</sup>Alexander E. Davis, 'Making a Settler Colonial IR: Imagining the "International" in Early Australian International Relations', *Review of International Studies*, 47.5 (2021), 637-55. doi:10.1017/S026021052000025X

Ralph L. Harry, 'The Australian Institute of International Affairs and its Overseas Counterparts', *Australian Foreign Affairs Record*, 51.5 (1980), 136-40

Diane Stone, 'A Think Tank in Evolution or Decline?: The Australian Institute of International Affairs in Comparative Perspective', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 50.2 (1996): 117-36. doi:10.1080/10357719608445175

canonical forms is practised.

These connexions extend well beyond the 1920s and the core institutions and groups associated with canonical narratives of discipline formation. Wherever the formal discipline of IR reaches, fragments of these structures are likely to be found. For instance, this thesis has been completed in a department whose founding Head, Philip Reynolds, is mentioned in its pages in his capacity as a close friend of Charles Webster and an occupant of Aberystwyth's Wilson Chair. Reynolds was part of a third generation connected to the initial circle of late nineteenth and early twentieth century scientific-imperial 'discipline-builders' and, after war service with a military equivalent of the Historical Section, had been offered a job at the LSE by Webster, before his appointment to the Wilson Chair on Webster's recommendation in 1950, which he left to become a founding professor at the University of Lancaster in 1964.<sup>8.116</sup> These connexions, as tenuous as they may appear out of context, are fundamental to the very fabric of the discipline.

They cannot be escaped, and if a reflexive discipline of IR with its own critical ontology is to be built, they must be acknowledged and recontextualised as the historical conditions which shape the boundaries of the field. IR scholars cannot approach the history of their own field as detached, value-free observers any more than they can approach their subject matter as such, and until this is recognised and addressed critically and introspectively, IR will remain a product of its disciplinary inheritance: a science of empire.

When this thesis focuses on IR, it does not treat it as a self-contained, timeless, body of empirical knowledge about how international politics is ordered. Nor should IR be taken as shorthand for its subject matter, the study of modes

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<sup>8.116</sup>Philip Reynolds: Single-Minded Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lancaster Whose Leadership Saw It Through the Financial Crisis of the Late 1970s' [Obituary], *The Times*, 17 September 2009, 63

of global order. Instead, the objective of this thesis is to position IR as an historically contingent order of knowledge production. Its history, like that of any order of knowledge production cannot be explained simply by describing the scholarly landscape before it existed and its subsequent contribution to changing this. Instead, it can be written only with reference to the historical conditions which shaped its development.<sup>8.117</sup> For IR between the 1860s and 1930s in the trans-imperial contexts explored in this thesis, these historical conditions were inseparably tied to an interconnected network of imperialists, aristocrats, peddlers of racial science, and colonial administrators, whether British, German, or North American. By constructing an apparatus of overlapping and closely interwoven institutions to serve as the IR's core disciplinary structures, this network demarcated the boundaries of acceptable and legitimate knowledge and discourse and left an enduring inheritance for the twenty first century discipline.

Disclaiming this disciplinary inheritance requires a new ontology capable of addressing the historical conditions that shaped it. As explored in chapter two of this thesis, this new ontology must be stratified, in that it recognises the complexity of the world IR scholarship both operates in and is directed towards and acknowledges the role historical differential exercises of power play in shaping this. It must also be introspective, in recognising that the discipline and all its institutions, theories, and traditions are historically contingent, and reflexive in addressing silences that leave entire areas, populations, and theories overlooked by what has been, for most of its institutionalised history, a deliberately Western discipline.<sup>8.118</sup>

A move towards such an ontology requires deconstructing the entire

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<sup>8.117</sup>Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p.208

<sup>8.118</sup>Kees van der Pijl, *The Discipline of Western Supremacy* (London: Pluto Press, 2014)

scientific-imperial structure of knowledge production in the discipline, and by extension, the hierarchies it produces. The first step towards this deconstructive process is not treating IR as a science that can justify these hierarchies in an objective, value-free way, but instead understanding these hierarchies in terms of the historical conditions that shape them, as embodied by the Howard School of African American IR scholars in Vitalis' assessment.<sup>8.119</sup> Until reflexive critical introspection into the history of the discipline has exposed these historical conditions and the wider histories and differential exercises of power with which they are entangled, it will remain impossible to reclaim the discipline as anything other than a science of empire.

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<sup>8.119</sup>Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics*, pp.20-1

## **Chapter 9: Conclusion: Reframing IR as a ‘science of empire’**

In repositioning the emergence of IR as a distinct discipline between the 1860s and 1930s as the story of a trans-imperial science of empire, this thesis is a fundamentally historical endeavour, but its focus on events of decades past should not be taken as an admission of detachment from the present. All history is present-centric, through the positionality of the historian if nothing else, and this history is no exception. It has been constructed as a ‘history of the present’ in the Foucauldian sense and has sought to remain critically aware of the role the present it has been written in has played in shaping it. Though this is inherently a constraint, it should bear no negative connotations. Despite the frequency of accusations of presentism as the marker of ‘bad’ history, the greatest strength of historical narratives is that they are present-centric. It is only through this that a history of the character constructed in this thesis could ever become possible. Such a history would have been impossible a century ago, when the discourses that it has explored occupied a markedly different context. It is the product both of historical interactions within these contexts and the circumstances in which it was written and is thus a broad and complex history.

The discipline of IR that emerges from this historical endeavour is a fundamentally different one than that which was first approached with the proposal for this thesis. Yet, without the process of historical introspection into the discipline and its underlying structures necessitated by the shift to undertaking a *Fachgeschichte* of IR, the initial research project would have been largely meaningless, or at least absent of a contribution to the future of the discipline. It would contribute to insular and inward-looking discourses of IR

without challenging the historical silences on which it is built. In this reworked project, elements of some of IR's disciplinary mythologies are retained, but these are reorientated through being situated in their surrounding historical context. The year 1919, the 'great debate' between realism and idealism, and the dominance of British Imperial and US discourses of international order in the interwar years and beyond are not abandoned but are instead reframed as key moments in the history of Western European and North American IR for different reasons. Once deconstructed and resituated into a broader narrative, these become integral interactions in the historical development of a 'science of empire' in the first half of the twentieth century.

Designating the discipline as such draws not only on present-day analysis applied in retrospect, but directly on themes in the discourses of the era on which this thesis has focussed. Through different historical processes, the same discourses, and subsequently the discipline they were packaged into, might have come to be known by a different name. As this thesis has discussed, a range of alternative names did arise that perhaps spoke better to the combination of imperial and 'scientific' discourses that the discipline of IR evolved in relation to, from 'science diplomatic' to 'Kolonialwissenschaften'. That the discipline came to be known as International Relations should not be taken to mean that these discourses faded away or were supplanted by a value-free, neutral alternative. Discourses of imperial science, empire, and its corollaries are as much a part of the historical, conceptual, and methodological fabric of the present-day discipline as power politics and conflict resolution.

Reframing the discipline as a positional science of empire allows for a reincorporation of the role discourses of imperialism, science, and history played in shaping its early twentieth century development. Enacting this requires

the whole-scale abandonment of the 'origin myth' of an apolitical academic endeavour that was formalised out of the noble pursuit of lasting peace arising from the calamity of the Great War, but this is by no means the most important contribution of a *Fachgeschichte* of this nature. Instead, it is intended to both reframe the historical role of interactions along the science-IR-history nexus at the heart of the discipline in shaping its discourses and structures, and as a methodological contribution on the role of history, and critical, introspective histories in particular, for the discipline of IR. Historical engagement in IR has been limited with a rigid disciplinary narrowness, but in order to move beyond this and take a more holistic and complex view of IR, it is necessary to move beyond the traditional frontiers of the discipline. By drawing on the relational intersection between discourses of imperialism and science, this *Fachgeschichte* has attempted to broaden the scope of disciplinary histories of IR. In this sense, it has been a history of ideas, but also a wider exploration of the methodological role of concepts of history and complexity in an IR context.

Through the discussion of three interrelated and intersecting contexts, in the British Empire, United States, and German context, this *Fachgeschichte* has traced one thread running along the science-IR-history nexus. This thread, of 'scientific' discourses of empire, connects each of these contexts together in one historical narrative. It is by no means a complete history, even of these three limited case studies, not least because it began from a position of accepting that singular universal historical narratives are an unobtainable, and even undesirable, goal. Other contexts and time periods could have been incorporated, and there is rich vein of future work yet to be tapped in the emergence and formalisation of IR in the South Asian, Chinese, and French contexts in the same period, for example. Nonetheless, constraints of format, language, and source availability have required that this thesis be bounded, lest it appear like Borges' 1:1 scale map.

All history must be selective and must generalise, and this history has been no exception.

It has remained a history of (Western) European ideas of ordering the world and this is a limitation that it must remain consciously aware of. The reason for this is that the European discourses of empire central to the evolution of IR must be deconstructed before the discipline can be separated from its ties to European power. Historical IR discourses extend well beyond Europe and well beyond the twentieth century 'origins' of the discipline, but the major structures of the formalised academic discipline remain rooted in an imperial historical context. The *Fachgeschichte* undertaken here is intended to highlight this, and challenge some of the historical mythologies surrounding these structures, as the first step towards allowing for a wider historical reassessment of IR that is better able to address major silences in historical narratives surrounding IR. The 'science of empire' that developed in this period deployed the 'scientific' discourses drawn to legitimise theories of imperial order and control and in doing so was shaped and emboldened by European contexts, institutions, individuals, and power relations, and so the focus of this thesis has necessarily borne the markings of this.

The purpose of resituating the discipline as a science of empire is not to dismiss all IR scholarship as an archaic and unnecessary endeavour or to dismiss all those who work within its confines as imperialists better suited to a bygone age. Instead, it is intended to highlight that there is no possibility of a value-free, objective, neutral IR, isolated from its historical circumstances. It is imperative that those who position themselves in the discipline of IR are aware of its historical lineage and of the interactions that have shaped the development of the discipline, and especially the orthodox Eurocentric historical narratives surrounding this. Equally, the foremost implication of this *Fachgeschichte* is that

present-day scholars of IR must remain conscious that they are engaging with fragments of empire, directly or indirectly, in their day-to-day work.

It is also intended as the first element of a wider project. The history of IR and its relationship with the science-IR-history nexus identified at the outset does not end in the mid-twentieth century. Much work remains for the critical disciplinary historian of IR in tracing the legacies of this nexus and the complex, relational, and interconnected histories that intersect with it through to the present-day discipline. In particular, the streamlining of an ostensibly value-free science of IR that came with the emergence of computational approaches to the discipline in the latter half of the twentieth century presents a further evolution of the networked relationship between science, history, and IR that is due further critical exploration. Legacies of empire run through the period that this thesis centres on but can equally be traced through to later interactions that continue to shape the discipline to this day. It is possible to expand critical analysis of core discourses in IR beyond the imperial core after this period, with the emergence of counter-traditions across Latin America, Africa, and Asia expanding significantly in the decades that followed IR's canonical birth.

Nonetheless, the central purpose of this thesis has been to identify a thread running through the disciplinary mythology of IR and, through challenging established historical narratives, to reframe the discipline as a 'science of empire'. Though the focus of this thesis has centred around the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, with some crossover into the historical eras directly before and after in a chronological sense, this is not a history that can be bound neatly into so narrow a frame. This science of empire did not fade away in the aftermath of the Second World War, nor after the waves of formal decolonisation that followed. Instead, it evolved and was reshaped through further interactions across

contextual boundaries.

The discipline that emerged, and continues to emerge, from these interactions with its claims to scientificity contains fragments of historical silences that allow the legacy of earlier historical interactions to be identified. Tracing out these interconnected legacies of science and empire and following them through to the present-day allows for a similar process of historical reframing, positioning IR as a discipline shaped by interaction and evolution in ways that are neither static nor linear. It is only through engagement with the historical sociology of IR in this way that the discipline can be broadened beyond the narrow and dated boundaries that have come to define its orthodox theoretical and methodological approaches.

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