



ESIL IG History of International Law

2025 ESIL Annual Conference *Reconstructing International Law*

Pre-Conference Workshop:

(De-/re-)constructions of International Law over Time and Space

Wednesday 10th September 2025, 15:00 to 18:00, Berlin

There has been no agreed definition as to when ‘international law’ exactly began, but it is generally agreed that (de-/re-)construction has been a common theme in the history of international law at various moments in time. This workshop aims to better understand the theme of ‘reconstructing international law’ from a historical perspective: (1) What have been the causes and reasons for (re-)constructions of international law in its history? (2) How has international law fared after past major systemic crises? (3) What can we learn from institutional and normative projects of (re-)constructing ‘new’ international law in the past?

Programme

15:00 – 15:05 Introduction and words of welcome (Sze Hong Lam)

15:05 – 16:15 Panel 1: De-/reconstruction through historical archives

Dr. Ralph Janik (Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna): *Totalitarian International Law Now and Then: Lessons from the 1940s*

Dr. Alina Cherviatsova (Ghent University): *The Unrecognized Republic: Ukraine's Struggle for Independence in the Shadow of the Versailles Treaty*

César Targowla (Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne University): *Construction and Deconstruction of Sovereign Legitimacy During the French Revolution: The Emergence of a New Concept in International Law, the*

Government-in-Exile

Moderator: Jaanika Erne (University of Tartu)

16:15-16:20

Break

16:20-17:10

Panel 2: De-/reconstruction of the history of colonialism and international law

Professor. dr. Henri de Waele (Radboud University): *“Lie There, My Art.” The (Re)construction of International Law in the Dutch Colonial Empire, 1919-1940*

Marcel Modest-Massner (University of Vienna): *Rethinking the Colonial Imprint: A Dual Lens on the History of International Law*

Moderator: Anastasia Hammerschmied (University of Vienna)

17:10-18:00

Panel 3: The spatial de-/reconstruction of international law

Dr. Milena Mottola (University of Padova): *From roads to borders, and back again? International law’s (time)lines*

Miguel Rodríguez Vidosá (Tilburg University): *The Place of Territory in Public International Law. An Intellectual History of Legal Space*

Moderator: Dr. Florenz Volkaert (Ghent University)

18:00-18:10

Final remarks (Sze Hong Lam)

Conveners

Anastasia Hammerschmied – Florenz Volkaert - Jaanika Erne – Sze Hong Lam