



## **Call for Expression of Interest**

ESIL Interest Group on the History of International Law

Agora Panel Proposal for the ESIL Annual Conference 2025

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

Berlin, 10 to 13 September 2025

Submission deadline: 15 January 2025

The ESIL Interest Group on the History of International Law is preparing an Agora panel proposal on '*(De-/re-)constructions of International Law over Time and Space*' for the 2025 ESIL Annual Conference "Reconstructing International Law" in Berlin, Germany. The outcome of the Agora proposal is uncertain, but the panel speakers will be invited to present at the interest group pre-conference workshop, if the Agora proposal was not selected by the conference organizers.

#### **Themes**

This Agora 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?

Until modern times, international relations were determined by the good will of the sovereign and force played the dominant role in these relations. 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, with the Westphalian Peace of 1648 being marked as one of the most famous watershed moments. The subsequent transition from European public law to international law through colonial expansion was another important moment of territorial 'reconstruction.' Conversely, one might inquire about the extent to which decolonization and the admission of newly independent states has led to the 'reconstruction' of Eurocentric international law in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

At the same time, reconstruction can be approached from an institutional perspective or through the historical expansion of the actors or sources of international law. One could also explore the (de-/re-) construction of international law through the rise and fall of its individual sub-disciplines or by looking at reconstruction within and across sub-disciplines. Apart from successful (de-/re-) construction, the failed attempts of various actors to (de-/re-)construct international law could provide important lessons about reform. In addition to the restructuring of international law in the history, we are also interested in papers discussing the restructuring of ‘the history of international law’ as a discipline, its theories, and methodologies.

The IG particularly encourages interdisciplinary research engaging with historical methods, such as the use of archives and other historical sources. Perspectives from underrepresented regions and critical scholars are particularly welcomed.

### **Submission procedure**

Members of the HIL IG and other ESIL Members working on related topics are invited to express their interest in participating by sending to [lamsh@vuw.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:lamsh@vuw.leidenuniv.nl) prior to the deadline the following documents:

- An Abstract of no more than 400 words
- Your curriculum vitae
- Your short biography, indicating whether you are an ESIL member and whether you are applying for the ESIL Early-Career Scholar Prize

### **Timeline**

The deadline for expressing interest in the Agora panel proposal is **15 January 2025**. We expect to inform successful applicants **before 31 January 2025** if they will be part of the Proposal.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ocean: [lamsh@vuw.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:lamsh@vuw.leidenuniv.nl).

Please note that the Interest Group is prioritizing those who could present their papers **in person**. However, the Interest Group is unable to provide funding for travel and accommodation. Selected speakers will be expected to bear the costs of their own travel and accommodation. Some ESIL travel grants and ESIL carers’ grants will be available to offer partial financial support to speakers who have exhausted other potential funding sources.

Please see the ESIL [website](#) for all relevant information about the conference.

Conveners

Anastasia Hammerschmied – Florenz Volkaert - Jaanika Erne – Sze Hong Lam (Ocean)