



ESIL IG History of International Law

2026 ESIL Annual Conference *International Law and Conflict: An Enduring Tension?*

Pre-Conference Workshop:

Conflict, Crisis and Continuity – Historical Perspectives

Thursday 3rd September 2026, 9:00 to 12:00

Blvr. Louis Pasteur, 26, Teatinos-Universidad, 29010 Málaga

Contemporary debates frequently describe international law as being in crisis, particularly in light of escalating global conflicts and challenges to normative authority. This year's pre-conference workshop consisted of two panels convened to examine the resilience of international law amid shifting political conditions during periods of historical upheaval.

The first panel explores how territorial conflicts, imperial collapse, and the emergence of nation-states shaped the development of international law in the “semi-periphery” in the aftermath of the Treaty of Versailles. Together, they highlight how post-imperial uncertainty, territorial contestation, and geopolitical realignment not only challenged classical international law in Central and Eastern Europe but also led to the emergence of country-specific or regional approaches toward international law. The second panel examines the relationship between warfare and the evolution of international law from the early modern period to the twentieth century. Through studies of maritime neutrality during the recurrent European wars of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and the shifting legal treatment of pillage in the aftermath of the Boxer Intervention of 1900, the papers demonstrate how “conflict” often served as a catalyst for adaptation and reinterpretation of classical international legal doctrines.

Programme

09:00 – 09:15 **Introduction and words of welcome (Dr Florenz Volkaert)**

09:15 – 10:10 **Panel 1: Laws of War or Law on War? History of International Law in Asymmetric Conflicts**

Dr Stefano Cattelan (Vrije Universiteit Brussel/Brussels School of Governance): *Neutrality as Crisis Management: Small Powers and the Law of the Sea in Recurrent European Wars (c. 1688–1714)*

Professor Danny Orbach (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) & Dr Ziv Bohrer (Bar-Ilan University): *A Pendulum of Legal Bandwagoning: The International Law of War on Pillage During and Following the Boxer War*

Moderator: Dr Sze Hong Lam, National University of Singapore

10:10-10:30 Break

10:30-11:50 **Panel 2: The Paris Peace Conference as a Moment of Crisis? Debates on International Law from a Regional Perspective**

Dr Artur Simonyan (University of Regensburg): *Between Empires and After Empire: Armenia in the History of International Law*

Ágoston Frank (University of Vienna): *Conflict and Crisis as the Origin and Driving Force of Hungarian International Law Between the Two World Wars*

Peter Odrich (Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory, Frankfurt/College of Europe): *A Conflictual Affair: Internationalising Upper Silesia*

Moderator: Dr Anastasia Hammerschmied, Käte Hamburger Kolleg, Münster

11:50:12:00 **Concluding Remarks (Dr Florenz Volkaert)**

Conveners

Mónica García-Salmones Rovira – Anastasia Hammerschmied – Florenz Volkaert – Sze Hong Lam