

THE FIFTY YEARS' RIFT: INTELLECTUAL HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DAVID ARMITAGE

Department of History, Columbia University

Georg Cavallar, *The Rights of Strangers: Theories of International Hospitality, the Global Community, and Political Justice since Vitoria* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002)

Jonathan Haslam, *No Virtue Like Necessity: Realist Thought in International Relations since Machiavelli* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002)

Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)

Any assessment of modern intellectual history would surely include the renaissance in the history of political thought among its most enduring achievements. The origins of that revival can be traced back to the contextualist revolution in the history of political thought which is associated particularly with the Cambridge historians Peter Laslett, John Pocock, Quentin Skinner and John Dunn. In retrospect, it appears that a crucial impetus for the revolution soon to come was Laslett's notorious verdict, delivered in 1956, that "[f]or the moment, anyway, political theory is dead".¹ That this judgement offered both a premature epitaph and a salutary provocation became eminently clear in the generation that followed. Those years, marked at one end by Isaiah Berlin's inaugural lecture, "Two Concepts of Liberty" (1958), and at the other by the publication of John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (1971), heralded an unparalleled efflorescence of political theory which continues to this day. Likewise, almost the same period, running from Pocock's *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (1957) to Skinner's *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (1978), witnessed the beginnings of a persistently fertile vein of inquiry into the history of political theory.

The contextualist historians of political thought understandably concentrated their attention on the history of the theory of the state in its domestic or municipal capacities. This fact reflected the central concerns of political theory itself during

1 Peter Laslett, ed., *Philosophy, Politics, and Society*, 1st ser. (Oxford, 1956), vii.

the period in which they wrote and helped to facilitate an ongoing dialogue between historians and political theorists. However, concentration on the internal capacities of the state seemingly encouraged neglect of the external relations of states, as the revival of the history of political thought was not accompanied by a parallel resurgence of interest in what might be called the history of international thought.² In part this may have been because students of international relations themselves were so discouraging about the prospects that such a history might be undertaken.³ Only three years after Laslett delivered his epitaph for political theory, Martin Wight, one of the founders of the so-called “English School” of International Relations, pronounced an equally notorious judgement on the historical tradition of international theory “as marked not only by paucity but also by intellectual and moral poverty”.⁴ Wight’s provocation, unlike Laslett’s, did not immediately inspire any attempts to historicise International Relations theory because, at the time, the concerns of political theory were inhospitable to the central questions of International Relations.

For much of the past half-century, history and International Relations have been two fields divided by a common language. As diplomatic history—in the strict sense of history written from diplomatic archives—gradually moved from the centre to the margins of historical concerns, so International Relations became both more theoretical (in its elaboration of ideal-typical models of state behaviour) and more positivistic (in its ambition to stand alongside the other social sciences). The methods and aspirations of the two disciplines grew ever further apart, with seemingly more damaging results for International Relations than for history. International Relations scholars remained consumers of history even when they did not follow contemporary trends in historiography. However, the number of historians who engaged with International Relations became vanishingly small.⁵

2 The term “international thought” has not enjoyed a currency comparable to that of “political thought”. It had some prominence in the internationalist, League of Nations, moment of the 1920s, as in John Galsworthy, *International Thought* (Cambridge, 1923) and F. Melian Stawell, *The Growth of International Thought* (London, 1929), but has only recently reappeared as a term of art: e.g. Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, *The Republican Legacy in International Thought* (Cambridge, 1998).

3 Throughout, I distinguish between the academic subject (“International Relations”) and its object of inquiry (“international relations”).

4 Martin Wight, “Why Is There No International Theory?” (1959), in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (London, 1966), 20.

5 The most distinguished example is Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford, 1994); Schroeder, “History and International Relations Theory: Not Use or Abuse, but Fit or Misfit”, *International Security* 22 (1997), 64–74.

It was not ever thus. From Thucydides to Ranke (and beyond), the central concerns of historical writing were the topics that would also come to define the study of international relations: war and peace; diplomacy and law; sovereignty and the state. It is therefore not surprising that historians were so prominent in the disciplinary genealogies of International Relations. One story would see Thucydides as at once the father of history and the initiator of a timeless “realist” approach to the interactions of states.⁶ A more contingent account traces analysis of the “states-system” to the early nineteenth-century counter-revolutionary historians of the Göttingen school who coined the term.⁷ That account, in turn, underlies the later history of the “English School” of International Relations, among whose most prominent members were two of the century’s greatest anglophone historians, Herbert Butterfield and E. H. Carr.⁸ Butterfield and Carr are, of course, best known to historians as the authors of two of the foundational works of modern historiography, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (1931) and *What Is History?* (1961); students of International Relations know them equally well as, respectively, the author of a fundamental text for their discipline, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919–1939* (1939), and as the driving force behind the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics (the matrix of the “English School”). That Butterfield and Carr should have such distinct reputations in different fields indicates that history and International Relations have drifted apart. Yet the fact that the two fields could have been engaged on a common enterprise until barely 50 years ago is also a sign that the parting of the ways has been relatively recent.

The neglect of International Relations by adjacent disciplines like history has led two of its leading practitioners to proclaim that “International Relations has failed as an intellectual project”. A prime cause in their diagnosis of that failure was “the prevalence of a-historical, even sometimes anti-historical, attitudes in formulating the concept of an international system”; only a return to history could begin to rescue International Relations from interdisciplinary irrelevance.⁹ The internal anxieties of the discipline may be of little obvious interest to intellectual historians, but the intimation of a historicist turn in International Relations

6 For example, Laurie M. Johnson, *Thucydides, Hobbes, and the Interpretation of Realism* (DeKalb, IL, 1993).

7 James F. Marino, “Empire and Commerce: A History of the Modern States-System” (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1998), 260–65; Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge, 2002), 15–22.

8 Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society: A History of the English School* (Basingstoke, 1998), chs. 2, 4.

9 Barry Buzan and Richard Little, “Why International Relations has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to do About it”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 30 (2001), 19, 24.

should be. That turn derives from a more general “post-positivist” orientation in contemporary International Relations.¹⁰ This orientation has manifested itself in various ways: in a return to grand historical theorising about international relations;¹¹ in the rise of “constructivism”, or the study of the mutual self-constitution of international actors through rules, norms and representations;¹² in the study of the history of International Relations as a discipline, whether as a means of explaining present discontents or as a source of renewal for a failing intellectual project;¹³ and in a heightened interest in the language of international politics as International Relations undertakes its own linguistic turn.¹⁴

The somewhat belated impact on International Relations of the various linguistic turns associated with Wittgenstein, Austin, Gadamer and Foucault has drawn international theorists’ attention back to the history of international thought. This development has coincided with a redefinition of political theory itself to incorporate international, transnational and global concerns. This, in turn, has created more favourable conditions for the history of political thought to encompass the history of the relations between states;¹⁵ it has also laid the groundwork for a rapprochement between International Relations and intellectual history.

The allegedly infertile field of international thought that Martin Wight described in 1959 as being only of marginal relevance to the grand tradition of political theory included an honourable series of thinkers, among them Erasmus, Machiavelli, Grotius, Hobbes, Pufendorf, Hume, Rousseau, Burke, Kant, Hegel, J. S. Mill, Ranke and Treitschke. Wight used fragments from the

10 Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge, 1996).

11 For example, Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History* (New York, 2002).

12 Friedrich Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs* (Cambridge, 1989), Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia, SC, 1989) and Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, 1999) are usually taken as the key texts in this movement.

13 Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany, NY, 1998); Dunne, *Inventing International Society*.

14 Duncan S. A. Bell, “Language, Legitimacy, and the Project of Critique”, *Alternatives* 27 (2002), 327–50; Bell, “International Relations: The Dawn of a Historiographical Turn?”, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 3 (2001), 115–26.

15 See esp. Charles R. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, 2nd edn (Princeton, NJ, 1999); Howard Williams, *International Relations in Political Theory* (Basingstoke, 1990); R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge, 1993); Brian C. Schmidt, “Together Again: Reuniting Political Theory and International Relations Theory”, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 4 (2002), 115–40.

history of international thought to construct three traditions which have proved enduringly influential among theorists of International Relations. None of those traditions was elaborated in depth or at length by any one historical thinker, but Wight identified each of them with a key historical figure: the realist, or Hobbesian, tradition of international anarchy; the rationalist, or Grotian, theory of international intercourse; and the revolutionist, or Kantian, theory of international society.¹⁶ Other international theorists have supplemented these three traditions: thus, Michael Doyle has offered a trichotomy of Realism, Liberalism and Socialism and David Boucher has suggested instead Empirical Realism, Universal Moral Order and Historical Reason.¹⁷ However, they have not entirely supplanted Wight's schema, with lasting consequences for the theoretical reputations of Grotius, Hobbes and Kant as figures in the history of international thought.

The hold of such traditions on theories of International Relations has been so tenacious that each of the three books under review can be seen as an attempt either to loosen their grip or to extend their reach. Jonathan Haslam's *No Virtue Like Necessity: Realist Thought in International Relations since Machiavelli* (2002) aims "to reassert the value of the realist approach but to do so in a way that sensitises our awareness of the context in which realist concepts emerged" (p. 1). Edward Keene's *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (2002) takes as its target the selective reading of Grotius by international theorists to propose an alternative model (also drawn from Grotius) of the roles played by sovereignty and property in the making of the modern world order within, but especially beyond, the European states-system. Georg Cavallar tackles some of the same problems as a political philosopher in his *The Rights of Strangers: Theories of International Hospitality, the Global Community, and Political Justice since Vitoria* (2002), which provides a detailed philosophical genealogy of defining elements in Kant's conception of international relations.

Haslam's *No Virtue Like Necessity* is the most traditional reassessment of tradition among these books. In a series of *explications du texte*, covering materials from the early sixteenth century to the late twentieth century, Haslam treats five concepts that, taken together, comprise his conception of the "realist approach" to international relations: reasons of state; the balance of power; the balance of trade; realpolitik; and realism in post-war American political science. Haslam

16 Martin Wight, "An Anatomy of International Thought", *Review of International Studies* 13 (1987), 221–7; Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (Leicester, 1991).

17 Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism* (New York, 1997); David Boucher, *Political Theories of International Relations: From Thucydides to the Present* (Oxford, 1998).

defines realism against universalism by its focus “on the behaviour of the state, its security and interests” (p. 12); he also defines it against moralism by “its claim that the conduct of international relations itself should be unconstrained by moral values” (p. 11). His argument is thus recognisably modernist in orientation.¹⁸ It betrays little scepticism about language’s capacity to reflect rather than to shape the world, and assumes throughout both that sovereign states are the only actors in international affairs and that “power is itself not merely a tool for higher uses, but has its own determining quality” (p. 246).

Haslam endorses Friedrich Meinecke’s identification of Machiavelli as the originator of an allegedly amoral approach to international affairs.¹⁹ He also reaffirms the opposition of illusionless realism to impractical utopianism found in the work of E. H. Carr (the subject of his last book).²⁰ Yet *No Virtue Like Necessity* is more than Meinecke’s *Die Idee der Staatsräson* (1925) or Carr’s *Twenty Years’ Crisis* updated for the post-Cold War era. It covers a broader range of concepts than Meinecke and deals more explicitly with theory than did Carr. Haslam criticises those International Relations theorists who believe that the realist tradition is a product of the twentieth century, with no antecedents; he also faults historians of political thought for failing to concern themselves with the central concepts of international relations in the past. It would be impossible to gainsay his resulting rallying call: “It is time those who teach the history of political thought interested themselves in international relations and vice versa” (p. 6).

Intellectual historians will recognise *No Virtue Like Necessity* as a Lovejoyian history of ideas and a teleological history. Haslam “serves notice on all who pretend to timeless concepts claimed for universal validity regardless of provenance” (p. 11) but cannot avoid some such pretence as he reconstructs the elements of a realist tradition defined retrospectively by the concerns of post-war American political science.²¹ This is not to deny that political languages like reason of state or the balance of power can be isolated and examined historically: they have been, but not usually to provide the unit-ideas to comprise a separate “realist” tradition.²² The strength of Haslam’s book is its reliance on primary

18 For an early deconstruction of these oppositions, see Martti Koskenniemi, *From Apology to Utopia: The Structure of International Legal Argument* (Helsinki, 1989).

19 Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'état and Its Place in Modern History* (1925), trans. Douglas Scott, introd. Werner Stark (New Brunswick, NJ, 1998).

20 Jonathan Haslam, *The Vices of Integrity: E. H. Carr, 1892–1982* (London, 1999).

21 For an alternative genealogy, see Michael Joseph Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1986).

22 For example, Maurizio Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State: The Acquisition and Transformation of the Language of Politics, 1250–1600* (Cambridge, 1992); Michael Sheehan, *The Balance of Power: History and Theory* (London, 1996).

sources, all of which are liberally quoted and translated by the author himself;²³ however, by a self-denying ordinance, Haslam generally fails to engage with secondary works, leaving him often enslaved to defunct histories of political thought. He does appeal to the promise of contextualism but his conception of context is neither that of a Skinnerian speech–act situation nor that of a Pocockian convergence of languages; instead, it is a crude historical determinism that flattens the features of particular thinkers: for example, “Hobbes wanted order restored . . . just as had Machiavelli and Bodin, and in almost identical circumstances” (p. 55). Almost every early modern political thinker—among them Thomas More, Francisco Suárez, Francisco de Vitoria, Domingo de Soto and Juan de Molina—joins Machiavelli, Bodin and Hobbes in the realist camp; none among Pufendorf, Locke, Bolingbroke and Rousseau “lay far beyond the realist circle” (p. 59); even radical utopians of the eighteenth century, by virtue of their debts to Bolingbroke, can be classified, “in matters of international relations, as realist” (p. 78). As these examples show, blunt methodological instruments can hardly be relied upon to produce subtle discriminations.

Haslam’s conception of intellectual history is one in which theory necessarily arises out of practice and in response to external circumstance. “Reasons of state emerged to legitimise a new social formation, the state” (p. 17) in the fifteenth century, not as far back as, say, Cicero (who elaborated an influential conception of state necessity) or as late as the nineteenth century, when the long-heralded nation-state was finally born out of the matrix of the post-French Revolutionary *état-nation*. Haslam takes for granted that the sovereign state emerged in the early sixteenth century, that Machiavelli was immediately well placed to anatomise the conditions of its existence, and that such later concepts as the balance of trade, “otherwise labelled mercantilism; later, protectionism” (p. 130), geopolitics and *realpolitik* were only changing analytical approaches to this identifiable but fundamentally unchanging object. This serves well as an aetiology of the realist tradition in twentieth-century American International Relations (treated at illuminating length in the book’s final chapter, “From *Realpolitik* to Neorealism”) but is less convincing as a contextual history of conceptions of international relations before Carr tentatively named the statist tradition “realist”. In the end, *No Virtue Like Necessity* confirms the self-image of one wing of American political science, but only at the cost of partiality (for instance, by ignoring the whole “English School” of International Relations), linearity (by selecting only those conceptions of reasons of state that fit the later

23 Though not always correctly: Hans Morgenthau’s first book on the international judicial function, *Die internationale Rechtspflege, ihr Wesen und ihre Grenzen* (1929), becomes *Die internationale Rechtsfluge . . .*, “The International Law of the Air—its Essence and its Limitations” (Haslam, p. 191, n. 36)!

realist tradition) and teleology (by projecting back a conception of the sovereign state and its ineluctable interests from modernity onto early modernity).

If Haslam's method is to use history to refound the realist tradition of International Relations theory, Edward Keene's is to use history to tear up the foundations of the "Grotian", rationalist tradition. Keene's immediate target in *Beyond the Anarchical Society* is Hedley Bull, one of the towering figures of the "English School" and author of *The Anarchical Society* (1977), to which Keene's title alludes. Bull portrayed the international order as a system of sovereign territorial states engaged neither in "Hobbesian" gladiatorial combat nor in "Kantian" progress towards perpetual peace.²⁴ He proposed instead a "Grotian" conception of the states-system as an international society which respected the sovereignty of its members and assumed their interaction on terms of mutually recognised equality. Keene questions every element of this formulation. He argues that Bull's reading of Grotius was selective and that it was the cause of selectivity in others; that Grotius was not the theorist of indivisible sovereignty Bull took him to be; that the idea of a states-system arose long after Grotius wrote; that this original conception of a states-system was reactionary because counter-revolutionary; that similar assumptions underlay the colonial and imperial systems Europe imposed on the wider world in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and that the reigning theory of international society, derived from Bull's work, must exorcise those assumptions if it can begin to explain or even describe "the internally contradictory world order that we live in today" (Keene, p. 11).

Keene demolishes two reigning origin-myths of International Relations. One, derived from legal history, identifies Grotius as the father of international law; the other, derived from counter-revolutionary historicism, locates the foundations of the modern states-system in the Peace of Westphalia (1648).²⁵ The near-coincidence in time of Grotius's masterwork, the *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (1625), with the Westphalian settlement little more than 20 years later encouraged the adoption of Grotius as the theorist of a new world order of sovereign states bound into a common civilisation by a network of treaties and other positive agreements. Keene argues that this interpretation of Grotius overlooked his espousal of divided sovereignty and also slighted the colonial and imperial contexts within which Grotius formulated his political and legal theory.²⁶ As Keene shows, until well into

24 Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London, 1977); Bull, "The Importance of Grotius in the Study of International Relations", in Hedley Bull, Benedict Kingsbury and Adam Roberts, eds., *Hugo Grotius and International Relations* (Oxford, 1990), 65–93.

25 Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics and the Making of Modern International Relations* (London, 2003) offers a complementary materialist demolition of this myth.

26 On which see Peter Borschberg, *Hugo Grotius, "Commentarius in Theses XI": An Early Treatise on Sovereignty, the Just War, and the Legitimacy of the Dutch Revolt* (Berne, 1994);

the nineteenth century, even the legal scholars who identified Grotius as the father of their field agreed with Sir Henry Maine, writing in 1864, that “[s]overeignty has always been regarded as divisible” (cited in Keene, p. 77). They acted on that knowledge by providing the theoretical justification for the European imperial practice of indirect rule (for example, by the Dutch in South-East Asia) and for the dispossession of non-European peoples (for example, by the United States in its process of westward expansion).²⁷

Keene's reading encompasses a far wider range of Grotius's works than is customary among students of International Relations, who usually confine their remarks to the “Prolegomena” of *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* and little more.²⁸ He is especially acute on the selective and tendentious misreadings of Grotius propagated by Wight, Bull and others. His case would have been strengthened if he could have shown that Grotius's early conceptions of divided sovereignty were ever invoked to justify indirect rule in the nineteenth century or the mandates system in the twentieth, but here the theoretical illumination afforded by his own interpretation of Grotius greatly outruns the available evidence for the transmission of Grotius's ideas. Similarly, a wider range of examples from European colonial history might have tempered his sweeping conclusion that “[t]he political structures of modern colonial and imperial systems were founded on that supposedly ‘medieval’ notion: divisible sovereignty” (p. 93). That notion hardly describes the pattern of European imperial activity in Latin America, Australia or much of Africa, for example, but then the supposed Bodinian or Hobbesian conception of unitary sovereignty hardly describes that pattern either. In the end, though, Keene's admirably economical and eclectically learned book should be of as much interest to historians of political thought and imperialism as to theorists of International Relations. He provides no comforting just-so stories for contemporary theorists and effectively questions the timeless realist assumption that state sovereignty is (and always has been) the only legal tender in the international community. It would be hard therefore to disagree with his post-modernist conclusion derived from early modern intellectual history: “The pattern of order that is challenging the idea of state sovereignty today is as old as the society of states itself, and

Martine van Ittersum, “Profit and Principle: Hugo Grotius, Natural Rights Theories and the Rise of Dutch Power in the East Indies, 1595–1615” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2002).

27 Compare Paul Keal, *European Conquest and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: The Moral Backwardness of International Society* (Cambridge, 2003).

28 Compare the selections from Grotius in *International Relations in Political Thought: Texts from the Ancient Greeks to the First World War*, ed. Chris Brown, Terry Nardin and Nicholas Rengger (Cambridge, 2002), 325–34.

there is nothing new about the notion that the sovereignty of states should be compromised by a higher structure of international organisation that facilitates the promotion of economic progress, good government and individuals' rights" (p. 148).

One might call Keene's conclusion Kantian if that term did not conjure up yet another selectively constructed tradition in International Relations theory. The "Kantian", or revolutionist, strain of international thought is not the explicit target of Georg Cavallar's argument in *The Rights of Strangers*, but it would be hard for international theorists to cling to their conception of Kant after reading his account of the philosophical antecedents of Kant's third definitive article of perpetual peace: "Cosmopolitan right shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality". In that article, Kant derived a right of universal resort from an assumption of original community from which a residual universal right for individuals to enter into peaceful relations with one another remains. Travel and commerce, though not the European conquests in the Americas, Africa, South-East Asia and India, gave evidence of progress towards perpetual peace: "The peoples of the earth have . . . entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*."²⁹

Cavallar breaks down Kant's idea into three constituent parts: political justice, global community and international hospitality. "The question that binds hospitality, global commonwealth and political justice together can be formulated as: can we find normative principles that bind us all alike and together even if we do not agree on a substantive highest good?" (Cavallar, p. 14). This is primarily a philosophical, rather than a historical, question, as Cavallar admits. His avowed object of study is belief rather than argument, and his history of ideas is diachronic rather than synchronic. He also propounds a methodological holism that assumes the internal coherence of any single author's body of writings and seeks to uncover the project behind that coherence (pp. 27–45). Accordingly, his book consists of generous and acute analyses of, among other thinkers, Vitoria, Grotius, Hobbes, Pufendorf, Wolff, Hume, Rousseau and Vattel, and concludes with an account of Kant's "Perpetual Peace" as an exemplification of his conception of "thin" justice.

Cavallar's treatments of his subjects' arguments are too philosophically scrupulous and too well informed historically to provide any easy solutions for present problems. For example, he does not fail to show that Grotius

29 Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" (1795), in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1991), 105–8; compare Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment Against Empire* (Princeton, NJ, 2003), 186–200.

favoured broader criteria for intervention than would now be generally acceptable to the international community, nor that Pufendorf's "theory of *ius gentium* tends to become deeply positivistic, conservative and pragmatic, sanctioning the endorsement of reasons of state in the name of public welfare" (p. 199). Similarly, though he expresses a postmodernist scepticism about grand narratives, his argument does depend on broad conceptual shifts (like that from naturalism to positivism in international law) and identifiable turning points (such as Hobbes's separation of the foreign from the domestic). However, like Keene, he does reject the modernist (meaning largely nineteenth-century) interpretation of international law, defined by "the replacement of the individual by sovereign states as the main and principal subjects of international law, by substituting the community of humankind for the community of sovereign states, and by the monopolization of military power, diplomatic activity and the right to make treaties in the hands of the state" (pp. 165–6). His philosophical history is therefore consciously post-positivist and finds much common ground (but also telling incommensurabilities) between early modern and post-modern norms for the relations between peoples.

Kant is for Cavallar the culmination and transformation of a series of early modern narratives rather than the beginning of any modern project: "If Kant marks the climax of natural law philosophy, it is also the end of an era" (p. 368). Kant propounded his idea of cosmopolitan right at almost precisely the moment when a positivist conception of international law began its 150-year reign. Soon thereafter, the counter-revolutionary historians and political theorists began to promote the supremacy of a "states-system" grounded on a conception of European "civilisation" that would characterise international law in its positivist phase and inflect International Relations from its origins.³⁰ This conception facilitated, if it did not actually encourage, European imperialism by affirming the separation of spheres between the realm of the *jus publicum Europaeum* and the rest of the world. The dissolution of that jurisprudential barrier in the twentieth century may have been a cause of anxiety to a legal theorist like Carl Schmitt,³¹ but it was only one of the factors that have made thinkable the recent rise to theoretical prominence of Kant's international thought. In recent years, Kant has become variously the theorist of democratic peace, the avatar of institutional

30 Gerrit Gong, *The Standard of "Civilization" in International Society* (Oxford, 1984); Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law, 1870–1960* (Cambridge, 2002).

31 Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* (1950), trans. G. L. Ulmen (New York, 2003).

internationalism and the grandfather of globalisation.³² Cavallar's book, if read carefully (as it demands), should prevent the overenthusiastic adoption of Kant as a standard-bearer for any position in contemporary international affairs, whether regarding the sociology of international politics, global governance or the world economy.

Haslam was surely right when he wrote that "[t]he study of thought in international relations stands somewhere close to that of political thought in the English-speaking world in the 1960s" (p. 8). As the contextualist historians of political thought protested then, the study of political thought was unhistorical, plagued by outdated mythologies, procrustean in its schemas and insensitive to the rhetorical subtlety of its subjects. Much of International Relations theory has been open to the same charges, though intellectual historians have understandably been as incurious as other historians in uncovering the state of conceptual disarray in the field. Yet Haslam's assessment may have been obsolete even as he made it. One major historical study of the international dimensions of political thought, Richard Tuck's *The Rights of War and Peace*, had already appeared in 1999.³³ Though Tuck did not engage directly with International Relations theory, his account of the humanist and scholastic traditions in political thought assimilated Grotius and Hobbes to a common natural jurisprudential project and then placed Kant as their ambivalent heir, thereby effectively rendering redundant the unhistorical trichotomy of "Grotian", "Hobbesian" and "Kantian" traditions.³⁴

Taken together, these books are harbingers of a renaissance in the history of international thought. Haslam's may be the most insistent that the methods of the history of political thought should be applied to theories of international relations, but it is also the least sceptical of the modernist assumptions of International Relations as a discipline, particularly as practised in the United States. Keene's is the boldest and most methodologically ruthless of the three, using the scalpel of history to anatomise and then excise the vestigial remains of that modernism. Cavallar's, in contrast, brings the history of political thought

32 See, for example, Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12 (1983), 205–35, 323–53; James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann, eds., *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal* (Cambridge, MA, 1997); Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York, 2003). For an earlier critique, see Georg Cavallar, *Kant and the Theory and Practice of International Right* (Cardiff, 1999).

33 Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford, 1999).

34 Compare Noel Malcolm, "Hobbes's Theory of International Relations", in Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, 2002), 432–56, with Howard H. Williams, *Kant's Critique of Hobbes: Sovereignty and Cosmopolitanism* (Cardiff, 2003).

and philosophy to bear fruitfully on the concerns of contemporary political theory. Future studies of international thought that combine Haslam's range of evidence with Cavallar's philosophical subtlety in the spirit of Keene's assault on disciplinary mythologies could help to bridge the 50 years' rift between International Relations and history. They might also mark the maturity of the history of international thought as a subfield of intellectual history. They could then open new conversations between historians, political theorists, International Relations scholars and international lawyers which would be continuous with those before the modern contest of the faculties drove them so forcefully, though not irreversibly, apart.