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The Global Transformation: history, modernity and the making of international relations – a public discussion

Blog editor

On Tuesday 17 March 2015 the Department of International Relations held a public discussion to launch a new book: *The Global Transformation: history, modernity and the making of international relations*, co-authored by Barry Buzan and George Lawson.



The speakers were:

Barry Buzan is Emeritus Professor in the Department of International Relations at LSE and a Fellow of the British Academy.

Craig Calhoun is Director and President of LSE.

George Lawson is an Associate Professor in the Department of International Relations at LSE.

Jurgen Osterhammel is Professor of Modern History at the University of Konstanz and a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy.

Ayse Zarakol is a University Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow at Emmanuel College.

Chair: Heather Jones is Associate Professor in the Department of International History at LSE.



Barry Buzan

Report by Jacob Kripp, MSc IRT student

On 17 March 2015 students and faculty from LSE and beyond gathered together in Clement House to celebrate and discuss the launching of *The Global Transformation: History, Modernity and the Making of International Relations* by LSE International Relations scholars Professor Barry Buzan and Dr. George Lawson. In what promises to be an important *tour de force* not only in IR but in history, sociology and other fields as well, Buzan and Lawson take the 'long nineteenth century' (1776-1914), or 'modernity', as the essential starting point for the inquiry into contemporary questions of international relations. Buzan and Lawson presented their work by arguing that the three interrelated strands of industrialization, ideologies of progress and rational state building constituted the 'global transformation'. Through processes of uneven and combined development between the European and non-European world, Buzan and Lawson argue that these assemblages of modernity resulted in a shift from a polycentric world order to the hierarchical international structure whose consequences still inform contemporary international relations.



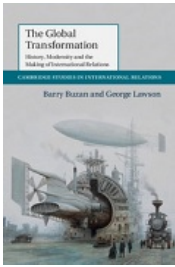
George Lawson

In a nod to the diverse, cross-disciplinary nature of the book, Buzan and Lawson were joined by Historian Professor Juergen Osterhammel of the University of Konstanz, sociologist and Director and President of LSE, Professor Craig Calhoun, and International Relations scholar, Dr Ayse Zarakol from the University of Cambridge. The event was chaired by LSE International Historian, Dr. Heather Jones. Each provided incisive insights into the book from a range of perspectives that sparked a number of discussions on the nature of post-modernity, ideology, the relationship between history and international relations, and the future of the global world. While the critiques and discussions about the book varied, all taking part in the panel agreed that *The Global Transformation* will have an important impact not only in the field of International Relations, for which it begins to fill an important lacuna, but also beyond IR into sociology, history and to the very question of the way the modern world is understood.

Watch the discussion here:



Buy the book here:



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