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978-0-521-80707-4 - Foundations of Modern International Thought

David Armitage

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FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN INTERNATIONAL THOUGHT

Between the early seventeenth and mid nineteenth centuries, major European political thinkers first began to look outside their national borders and envisage a world of competitive, equal sovereign states inhabiting an international sphere that ultimately encompassed the whole globe. In this insightful and wide-ranging work, David Armitage – one of the world’s leading historians of political thought – traces the genesis of this international turn in intellectual history. *Foundations of Modern International Thought* combines important methodological essays, which consider the genealogy of globalisation and the parallel histories of empires and oceans, with fresh considerations of leading figures such as Hobbes, Locke, Burke and Bentham in the history of international thought. The culmination of more than a decade’s reflection and research on these issues, this book restores the often overlooked international dimensions to intellectual history and recovers the intellectual dimensions of international history.

DAVID ARMITAGE is the Lloyd C. Blankfein Professor of History at Harvard University where he teaches intellectual history and international history. His many publications include *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History* (2007) and, as editor, *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (2nd edn, 2009), *British Political Thought in History, Literature and Theory, 1500–1800* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), *Shakespeare and Early Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2009) and *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760–1840* (2010).

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© The British Library Board. Justus Lipsius, *Saturnalia sermonum libri duo, qui de gladiatoribus* (Antwerp, 1604), f. 70 (BL 1476. c. 26).

[I]n all times, Kings, and Persons of Sovereign authority, because of their Independency, are in continuall jealousies, and in the state and posture of Gladiators; having their weapons pointing, and their eyes fixed on one another . . .

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651)

Power or weakness does not in this respect produce any difference. A dwarf is as much a man as a giant; a small republic is no less a sovereign state than the most powerful kingdom.

Emer de Vattel, *Le Droit des gens* (1758)

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Preface

I have accumulated a great many debts over the dozen years in which I have been working on the history of international thought. The most fundamental is to Knud Haakonssen for his generous invitation to deliver the 2003 Robert P. Benedict Lectures in the History of Political Philosophy at Boston University; he and Jim Schmidt were exemplary hosts for that stimulating series. My only regret is that a published version of the lectures was so long in coming and that it has not arrived in the form Knud, or indeed I, had originally anticipated. To deliver the Benedict Lectures, I took a semester's leave from my duties at Columbia University: belated but heartfelt thanks to David Johnston and Jim Zetzel for shouldering the extra burdens my absence created.

Three other opportunities allowed me to pursue my themes. The first was a fellowship at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University in 2000–1, where Akira Iriye, Jim Kloppenberg and the late Ernest May led a year of unforgettable discussions with a remarkable group of fellow Warren Fellows. The second was the chance to lead a seminar under the auspices of the Center for the History of British Political Thought at the Folger Shakespeare Library in 2002. I am deeply grateful to John Pocock for that invitation and for his penetrating contributions to the seminar, as well as to all the participants for the light they shed on the early modern foundations of international thought. And the third was Barry Hindess's kind suggestion to spend some weeks in 2004 as a Visiting Fellow in the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University, where I enjoyed many memorable exchanges with Barry and his collaborators.

Over the years, parts of my original project took on lives of their own,¹ but I never stopped thinking about the larger whole of which they were part.

¹ Grotius (2004); Armitage (2007a); Armitage and Subrahmanyam (2010); Armitage (in press); Locke (in press).

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Apart from the Introduction, all the chapters of this book have appeared in earlier versions, though two are published here for the first time in English. In revising them, I have tried to eliminate repetitions and excessively local references, corrected errors and updated references where necessary. I am grateful to the editors and publishers for permission to reprint and rework the following material:

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Abbreviations

BL	British Library, London
Bod.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
HRO	Hampshire Record Office, Winchester
HUA	University Archives, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
LC	Library of Congress, Washington, DC
NYPL	New York Public Library, New York
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
SCDA	South Carolina Department of Archives, Columbia, SC
SRO	Somerset Record Office, Taunton
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
UCL	University College London