Hierarchies in World Politics

Globalising processes are gathering increased attention for complicating the nature of political boundaries, authority and sovereignty. Recent examples of global financial and political turmoil have also created a sense of unease about the durability of the modern international order and the ability of our existing theoretical frameworks to explain system dynamics. In light of the inadequacies of traditional International Relations (IR) theories in explaining the contemporary global context, a growing range of scholars have been seeking to make sense of world politics through an analytical focus on hierarchies instead. Until now, the explanatory potential of such research agendas and their implications for the discipline went unrecognised, partly due to the fragmented nature of the IR field. To address this gap, this ground-breaking book brings leading IR scholars together in a conversation on hierarchy and thus moves the discipline in a direction better equipped to deal with the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Ayşe Zarakol is a University Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow at Emmanuel College. She is the author of *After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West* (Cambridge, 2011).

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Contributors

- REBECCA ADLER-NISSEN is a Professor of International Relations at the University of Copenhagen. Her research focuses on International Relations (IR) theory (especially international political sociology, stigma, status, norms and the practice turn), diplomacy, sovereignty and European integration, as well as fieldwork, participant observation and anthropological methods in IR. She has been a visiting research fellow at the Centre for International Security Studies (University of Sydney), Centre for International Peace and Security Studies (McGill University/Université de Montréal) and the European University Institute in Florence. In 2015, she received the Nils Klim Prize. Her most recent book is *Opting Out of the European Union: Diplomacy, Sovereignty and European Integration* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- MICHAEL BARNETT is University Professor of International Affairs and Political Science at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs. Currently, he is an associate editor of International Organization. He has published extensively on IR theory, global governance, humanitarian action and the Middle East. Dr Barnett is the author of many books, including a history of humanitarianism, *The Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*, and, most recently, *The Stars and the Stripes: A History of the Foreign Policies of American Jews*.
- ALEX COOLEY is a Professor of Political Science at Barnard College and the current director of Columbia University's Harriman Institute. His research examines how external actors – including international organizations, multinational companies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and foreign military bases – have influenced the development and sovereignty of the former Soviet states, with a focus on Central Asia and the Caucasus. His research has been supported by the Open Society Foundations, Carnegie Corporation, the Smith Richardson Foundation and the German Marshall Fund of the United States,

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among others. Dr Cooley is the author of many books, including Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest for Central Asia.

- JACK DONNELLY is the Andrew Mellon Professor and John Evans Professor at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver. His principal research interests are in IR theory, especially structural theories of international politics and the comparative analysis of historical international systems and the theory and practice of human rights. Dr Donnelly is the author of more than 100 refereed articles and book chapters and several books, the best known of which is Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice.
- DAVID A. LAKE is the Jerri-Ann and Gary E. Jacobs Professor of Social Sciences and Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the University of California, San Diego. He currently serves as president of the American Political Science Association (2016–17). Dr Lake has published widely in IR theory and international political economy. In addition to nearly 100 scholarly articles and chapters and several books, he is most recently the author of *The Statebuilder's Dilemma: On the Limits of External Intervention.* He is co-author of a comprehensive textbook entitled *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions.* Dr Lake has served as the co-editor of the journal *International Organization* (1997–2001), founding chair of the International Political Economy Society (2005–12) and president of the International Studies Association (2010–11).
- ANDREW PHILLIPS is an associate professor of International Relations and Strategy at the University of Queensland. During 2013–15, he was an Australian Research Council DECRA fellow. His research interests centre on the question of international orders – both how they have historically developed from the sixteenth century onwards and how today's global order is adapting to challenges ranging from the rise of non-Western Great Powers (especially China and India) through to unconventional security threats including religiously motivated terrorism and state failure. His most recent book is *International Order in Diversity: War, Trade and Rule in the Indian Ocean* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), co-authored with Jason C. Sharman.
- VINCENT POULIOT is an associate professor and William Dawson Scholar at McGill University, where he is also the director of the Centre for International Peace and Security Studies (CIPSS). His research interests are political sociology of international organisations, global governance of international security and multilateral diplomacy. Dr Pouliot is the author of several books and many research articles,

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including most recently International Pecking Orders: The Politics and Practice of Multilateral Diplomacy (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

- J. C. SHARMAN is the Sir Patrick Sheehy Professor of International Relations at the University of Cambridge. In 2012, Dr Sharman was awarded an Australian Research Council Future Fellowship, and since 2014, he has been a member of the ARC College of Experts. Dr Sharman's research is currently focused on corruption, money laundering and tax havens, as well as the international relations of the early modern Indian Ocean. He is the author of many books, including most recently *International Order in Diversity: War, Trade and Rule in the Indian Ocean* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), co-authored with Andrew Phillips.
- LAURA SJOBERG is an associate professor of Political Science at the University of Florida. Her research interests are in the area of genderbased and feminist approaches to the study of IR generally and international security specifically. Her research has addressed gender and just-war theory, women's violence in global politics and feminist interpretations of the theory and practice of security policy. Dr Sjoberg is currently the editor of *International Studies Review*. She is also the author of many books, including most recently *Beyond Mothers Monsters Whores* (with Caron Gentry) and *Women as Wartime Rapists*.
- SARAH S. STROUP is an associate professor of Political Science at Middlebury College. Her research focuses on the politics of humanitarianism, international political economy and non-state actors in world politics. Her first book, *Borders among Activists*, explored how the national roots of international NGOs shape their strategies and structures, using case studies of humanitarian and human rights INGOs in the United States, Britain and France. Her coauthored book with Wendy H. Wong, *The Authority Trap*, is forthcoming.
- SHOGO SUZUKI is a senior lecturer in International Relations at the University of Manchester. His research focuses on IR theory with reference to East Asia, Sino-Japanese relations, Chinese foreign policy, Japanese foreign policy and Sino-Japanese reconciliation. Suzuki has held visiting appointments at the University of Cambridge, University of Copenhagen, Peking University and Tokyo University, among others. In addition to many research articles, he is the author of

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Civilisation and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with the European International Society.

- WENDY H. WONG is the director of the Trudeau Centre for Peace Conflict and Justice and an associate professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto. Her main research interests lie at the crossroads of IR and comparative politics. She is interested in the politics of organisation, why human beings choose to act collectively, their choices to go about doing it and the effects of those choices. Other research interests include human rights, humanitarianism, international law, social movements, indigenous politics, the rights of ethnic minorities and the role of networks. Her co-authored book with Sarah S. Stroup, *The Authority Trap*, is forthcoming.
- AYSE ZARAKOL is University Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow at Emmanuel College. Her research is at the intersection of historical sociology and IR, focusing on East-West relations in the international system, problems of modernity and sovereignty, stigma and social hierarchies, rising and declining powers and Turkish politics in a comparative perspective. In addition to many articles, she is also the author of *After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), which deals with international stigmatisation and the integration of defeated non-Western powers (Turkey after World War I, Japan after World War II and Russia after the Cold War) into the international system. Zarakol has held fellowships with Council on Foreign Relations, the Norwegian Nobel Institute and the Centre for the Research in Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities at Cambridge.

Editor's Preface and Acknowledgements

This book is the product of many conversations among IR scholars who have not (entirely) given up the dream of overcoming the fragmentation of the discipline. It is our hope that thinking about hierarchies in world politics opens up underexplored avenues of research and thus helps bring the discipline into the twenty-first century. Reorienting the IR conversation to the concept of hierarchy also links previously disconnected clusters of scholarship around common questions, as opposed to various '-isms'. What first had started out as an ISA working group around this idea led to two more workshops. I would like to thank the International Studies Association (ISA), the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, the Jacobs Chair of Social Sciences at the University of California San Diego (UCSD), the Cambridge Humanities Grant Scheme and the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge for funding and hosting these meetings.

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