

## ON TYRANNY AND THE GLOBAL LEGAL ORDER

Since classical antiquity, debates about tyranny, tyrannicide and preventing tyranny's re-emergence have permeated governance discourse. Yet within the literature on the global legal order, tyranny is missing. This book creates a taxonomy of tyranny and poses the question: Could the global legal order be tyrannical? This taxonomy examines the benefits attached to tyrannical governance for the tyrant, considers how illegitimacy and fear establish tyranny, and asks how rule by law, silence and beneficence aid in governing a tyranny. It outlines the modalities of tyranny: scale, imperialism, gender and bureaucracy. Where it is determined that a tyranny exists, the book examines the extent of the right and duty to effect tyrannicide. As the global legal order gathers ever more power to itself, it becomes imperative to ask whether tyranny lurks at the global scale.

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To Aoibhlínn and Méalla

“I die, I die!” the Mother said,  
“My children die for lack of bread.  
What more has the merciless Tyrant said?”  
The Monk sat down on the stony bed.  
The blood red ran from the Grey Monk’s side,  
His hands and feet were wounded wide,  
His body bent, his arms and knees  
Like to the roots of ancient trees.  
His eye was dry; no tear could flow:  
A hollow groan first spoke his woe.  
He trembled and shudder’d upon the bed;  
At length with a feeble cry he said:  
“When God commanded this hand to write  
In the studious hours of deep midnight,  
He told me the writing I wrote should prove  
The bane of all that on Earth I lov’d.  
My Brother starv’d between two walls,  
His Children’s cry my soul appalls;  
I mock’d at the rack and griding chain,  
My bent body mocks their torturing pain.  
Thy father drew his sword in the North,  
With his thousands strong he marched forth;  
Thy Brother has arm’d himself in steel  
To avenge the wrongs thy Children feel.  
But vain the Sword and vain the Bow,  
They never can work War’s overthrow.  
The Hermit’s prayer and the Widow’s tear  
Alone can free the World from fear.  
For a Tear is an intellectual thing,  
And a Sigh is the sword of an Angel King,  
And the bitter groan of the Martyr’s woe  
Is an arrow from the Almighty’s bow.  
The hand of Vengeance found the bed  
To which the Purple Tyrant fled;  
The iron hand crush’d the Tyrant’s head  
And became a Tyrant in his stead.”

William Blake, *The Grey Monk* (1801/03)

## CONTENTS

	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
	<b>Introduction</b>	1
	Tyranny	3
	Tyranny and International Law	5
	Structure	7
	Method	8
	Tyranny's Bedfellows	11
	Why Tyranny?	15
<b>1</b>	<b>A History of Tyranny</b>	17
	Classical Tyranny	18
	Medieval Europe	27
	Early Modern Constitutionalism and Tyranny	36
	The Constitutionals and Modern Tyranny	61
	Tyranny and the Twentieth Century	69
	Conclusion	81
<b>2</b>	<b>A Taxonomy of Tyranny</b>	83
	Introduction	83
	Why Be a Tyrant?	84
	How Tyranny Is Established	88
	How Are Tyrannies Ruled?	93
	Tyrannical Modes	101
	Prevention	112
	The Taxonomy	115
<b>3</b>	<b>Tyrannicide, Tyrannophobia and Tyrannophilia</b>	117
	A History of Tyrannicide	118
	Tyrannophobia	134
	'The Philotyrannical Intellectual' or Tyrannophilia	137
	Conclusion: Tyrannicide and Tyrannophobia and Philos	142

<b>4</b>	<b>Scale, Tyranny and the Global Legal Order</b>	<b>145</b>
	Introduction	145
	Scale	146
	Scale and Tyranny	153
	Scale, Tyranny and the Global Legal Order	162
	The UN Security Council, Scale and Counterterrorism	168
	Conclusion: Tyranny, Scale and International Law	180
<b>5</b>	<b>Imperialism, Tyranny and the Global Legal Order</b>	<b>182</b>
	Imperialism	182
	Imperialism and Tyranny	184
	Global Legal Order and Imperialism	193
	Tyranny, Imperialism and International Economic Law	203
	Conclusion: International Economic Law and Tyranny	215
	<b>Conclusion: Tyranny and the Global Legal Order</b>	<b>217</b>
	<i>Bibliography</i>	223
	<i>Index</i>	251



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