



Q Symposium: The Space-Time of War and Diplomacy
26 – 28 March 2015
 Participant Overview

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Friday 27 March | | |
| The Space-Time of War and Diplomacy | | |
| Mod. | James Der Derian, CISS/USYD | N/A |
| | Christopher Fuchs, UMASS/Boston | <p><i>What If There Were QBism before the Quantum of War?</i></p> <p>It has famously been argued by the historian of science Paul Forman that following World War I there was a great social pressure on German physicists to find an ineliminable element of indeterminism or causality within physics itself. The idea that any cosmos sanctioned by physics might march in lockstep like soldiers became abhorrent. But all this culminated in 1925-27, when physics finally <i>did seem</i> to yield to a true indeterminism through the discovery of quantum theory and its "Copenhagen interpretation." Since that time, and particularly since the revolution of quantum information theory in the 1990s, the structure of quantum theory has been scrutinized to the greatest degree to see if there is really no way around this. But the structure says there is none, and the modern incarnation of this reading of quantum theory (wherein every <i>i</i> is dotted and every <i>t</i> crossed) has become known as QBism. Achieving such consistency is not easy though, for it requires a rewiring of the mind to an extent even the founding Copenhagenists might not have been comfortable with. This is because QBism shares many elements with the late 19th and early 20th century thoughts of William James, John Dewey, and F. C. S. Schiller---a philosophy now called "American pragmatism," but at the time sometimes simply called "humanism." In this philosophy and in QBism, the world is not only indeterministic, but even malleable. It is as a student said recently, "a conception that the universe can be moved---that it is not a masterfully crafted mechanical automaton, but instead an unfinished book, brimming with creation and possibility, of which every agent is an author." In this talk, I will give a 15 minute sketch of QBism and ask the questions, "What if QBism had been discovered before the current of events that became WWI? Could a vast adoption of QBist thinking be something so powerful as to change the course of history at a crucial juncture?"</p> |
| | Stephen Kern, Ohio State University | <p><i>The Temporality and Spatiality of Diplomacy and War in 1914</i></p> <p>A survey of the way new communication and transportation technologies transformed how nations experienced themselves in space and time, interfered with the conduct of diplomacy in July 1914, and shaped the "Cubist War" that followed. This talk will conclude with some suggestions about how that tragic failure of diplomacy might be relevant to understanding global tensions today.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>Arthur Miller, University College London</p> | <p>How the Avant-Garde of the Early 20th Century Affects International Security in the 21st</p> <p>I believe that the theme of this gathering – “The Space-Time of War and Diplomacy” – is traceable to the intellectual tsunami that swept across Europe at the onset of the 20th century: the avant-garde. Its principal problem was the nature of space and time. Out of the box avant-garde thinking sparked dramatic new ideas that led to the development of airplanes, the discovery of relativity theory and quantum theory, and the creation of Cubism and of bold new music. But this did not apply to war making. Why was WW1 an essentially classical war fought against the backdrop of an increasingly shattered classical world? As one would expect, this scenario of the colliding worlds of art, science and technology is highly complex. Especially so because most major figures in the arts and sciences imagined themselves to be extending the classical world-picture (Weltbild), while pushing lines of thought in parallel that would eventually subvert it, to their chagrin. All this was already clear when WW1 commenced. But not to the military establishment locked into traditional and rigid mutual defence pacts. What might have happened had the military been cognizant of these complex developments in the avant-garde? In the 21st century the once colliding worlds of art, science and technology are merging into a third culture - the new avant-garde, whose principal problem is data visualisation with ramifications for international security. After all, is this is not the age of information, of data with a big “D”? I will discuss all this and more.</p> |
| Com. | <p>Glenda Sluga, Department of History/USYD</p> | N/A |
| <p>Space: Geopolitical, Galactic, and Virtual</p> | | |
| Mod. | <p>Colin Wight, CISS/USYD</p> | N/A |
| | <p>Andrea Loehr, Harvard University</p> | <p>Space: Perspective and Limits</p> <p>The entirety of the space that we live in and that we have observed, we call it the universe, or the cosmos. <i>Universus</i> is Latin meaning 'altogether' or 'whole'. Cosmos is Greek meaning 'order'. (It is literally the opposite of 'chaos'.)</p> <p>The history of the observation of this space, our space, is long and complex. It has lead to the discovery of higher and higher forms of order. Order on scales barely imaginable. The cosmological principle summarizes the quality of this order: the distribution of mass in the universe is homogeneous and isotrope. In other words, no matter which position and observer occupies or who she is, the universe looks the same. The cosmological principle implies that there is 'no preferred observer'; all observers are equal. What evidence do we have for or against the existence of a preferred observer in WW1? What might (not) have happened, if there was no preferred observer in WW1?</p> <p>From recent observations we know that our universe is expanding. Objects of mass are moving away from us, and the further away the object, the faster it is moving away from us. The observation of any</p> |

| | | |
|------|---|--|
| | | <p>object is this objects' photons traveling to a receiver (e.g. our eyeballs) and being detected. The speed at which the image of a resting object travels from the object to our eyes is the speed of light. Detection is almost instantaneous. When an observed object such as a distant galaxy is moving away from the observer, the image travels at the speed of light minus the speed of the object. The image is now slower to reach us and it will take some time for us to see the object. When an object is traveling away from an observer at the speed of light, its image is traveling away from us at the same speed that it travels towards us - in other words: the image is stationary, it does not move, we will never receive it, we will never see the object. There is a distance in the universe where it expands at the speed of light, and we cannot ever observe beyond this distance. This is the cosmological horizon. It is the limit of what we can observe. How did we create an observational horizon in WW1? What might (not) have happened, if there was no observational to observations in WW1?</p> |
| | <p>Mark B. Salter, University of Ottawa</p> | <p><i>Moving in mysterious ways: the global mobility regime reimagined</i></p> <p>At the end of WW1, the contemporary global mobility regime is assembled through new norms concerning passports, visas, frontier formalities, nationality, and refugees. With the hardening of borders, the integration of the passport photo into travel documents, and the inversion of the hospitality norm, populations relate to space, flows, territory, and themselves in a fundamentally novel way. The passport was a way to model Heisenberg's uncertainty principle regarding populations: states could detect when populations were moving and in what direction, if not where populations were placed. The mass passport was a temporary solution for a temporary problem: it was not intended to last more than five years, and the goal of the international regime was its own dismantling – a return to the free Brownian motion of peoples of the 19th century. A relativistic modality of time-space-population horizon challenges the frontiers of a Newtonian political imagination.</p> |
| | <p>McKenzie Wark, The New School</p> | <p><i>Impure War</i></p> <p>In the century since the great war, science advanced along four 'fronts': physics, chemistry, biology and information science. Sometimes out of curiosity, sometimes out of military or business design, science expanded control over space and time across a deepening series of scales and a rising level of complexity. Those developments also intensified the capacity of organized labor to attack nature, or to attack itself, in the form of intra-human wars. But this expanding knowledge and control leads to a shift in perspective. Where once the attack on nature was subordinated to the intrahuman attack on the sovereignty or business of others, it is now clear that the main axis of insecurity lies along the axis of social labor's attack on nature, and its unintended consequences. This is the era of global metabolic rift, where the main challenge is redesigning the total environment within which circulate flows of matter, energy and information. Contra Virilio, it is an era of impure war, of tactics, strategies and logistics than can never escape their territories, now that the 'enemy' is us.</p> |
| Com. | <p>Charlotte Epstein, CISS/USYD</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Saturday 28 March | | |
| Time: Historical, Representational, and Relative | | |
| Mod. | Iain McCalman, CISS/USYD | N/A |
| | Mark Levinson, Filmmaker, 'Particle Fever' | <i>Sex, Lies and Particle Physics</i> How a doctoral degree in theoretical particle physics ended up being the perfect preparation for a career in feature filmmaking. |
| | Dean Rickles Department of Physics, USYD | <i>Warring-at-a-distance: Mathematicians and the Moral Argument</i> The union of state, industry, and science has always been a part of the history of warfare. However, I think a good case can be made for treating the first world war as "the mathematicians' war" (much as the second world war was "the physicists' war"). In particular, by allowing for the computation of ballistic trajectories to distant (in space and time) targets, anonymity crept into the way wars are fought: war-at-a-distance (analogous to quantum action-at-a distance). It is precisely in the universality of mathematical laws (expressing physical behaviour) that enables the results to apply across space and time (as with the symmetry principles of physics). In facilitating wars that do not require direct contact between the warring factions, the enemy becomes faceless and turns into mere data. What if mathematicians had 'the moral argument' before the war? Asking this question will expose the role (and consequences) of deploying mathematics for wartime purposes. |
| | Barderine Arfi, University of Florida | <i>Inheriting from and Translating Quantum Logic(s) in (Re)Presenting Politics and Security</i> What does it mean to speak of the 'quantum' in thinking about war and diplomacy and, more generally, politics and security? And what are some ethical implications of doing so? I begin to answer these questions with the observation that in seeking to make sense of the world of politics and security we often stumble into many antinomies, contradictions, paradoxes, dilemmas, and inconsistencies. Timeless efforts are spent through persistent, yet unquestioned, quests by countless many to develop strategies to eliminate or reduce these seemingly intractable difficulties. I argue that we can rethink these difficulties otherwise by zooming in on the logic underpinning our processes of thinking and reasoning. However, doing so forces us to question taken-for-granted presuppositions of Aristotelian logic – specifically the laws of non-contradiction and identity – as well as the linearity of time; presuppositions which underpin our thinking about/in and practice of politics and security. Therefore, instead of seeking to adhere to the 'quantum' as a metaphor through more or less conceptual deployments of notions such as 'superposition', 'entanglement', and 'complementarity', or as a heuristic strategy of thinking and rhetoric, I suggest that we draw on 'the quantum' by inheriting from and translating the logic(s) of the 'quantum' in (re)presenting the thinking and practice of politics and security. I specifically propose that we engage into two tasks. First, I suggest that we dig deep into the |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | | <p>world of politics and security by looking at it through the gaze of quantum logic(s). Doing so raises two 'what if' questions: (a) What if seeking to inherit from and translate 'quantum logics' meant going beyond the strictures of Aristotelian logic to espouse instead logics which admit as axiom a law of contradiction? What if seeking to inherit from and translate 'quantum logics' meant accepting that the experience of time is always out of joint, an experience which jeopardizes the law of identity? How would then the ensuing thinking about politics and security present and represent itself? Second, I raise the issue of the ethical responsibility that such a move entails, that is: Are we ready to face the ethical implications that thinking about politics and security through quantum logic(s) does entail?</p> |
| Com. | Simon Reay Atkinson CISS/USYD | N/A |
| <p>War: Memorial, Transformational, and Gendered</p> | | |
| Mod. | Graeme Gill Department of Government and IR/USYD | N/A |
| | Antoine Bousquet, Birkbeck College/ University of London | <p><i>Ernst Jünger and the Age of Total Mobilisation</i></p> <p>The First World War broke out in the midst of a deep cultural malaise within Western civilisation as accelerating modernisation saw the progressive jettisoning of metaphysical certainties and undermining of the presumed unified rational humanistic subject. The sciences fully participated in this sense of crisis, revealing an increasingly alien universe remote from common phenomenological experience or even logical postulates of thought, all the while it unlocked unprecedented magnitudes of power. A singular and controversial actor and witness of his times, the German war veteran Ernst Jünger felt this social and cultural anomie as acutely as anyone, struggling throughout his post-war reflections to find purpose and meaning in the apparently senseless slaughter of mechanised killing. Jünger intuited the advent of a world of "total mobilisation" in which "not a single atom is not in motion", brought about by the fissile release of pent-up energies set in motion by the social galvanisation of the Great War and whose chain reaction only amplified in the inter-war years. Drawing on his sharp observations of the intense space-time compression and technological domination taking place across the globe, he came to prophesise the emergence of a new hyper-technicised order that would decisively sweep away bourgeois liberal societies and restore an organic totality to the nihilistic chaos of his times. While Jünger's broadest predictions would ultimately not come to pass, he remains a valuable interlocutor in the interrogation of our own times in which technique governs more than ever our prospects of war and peace.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>Jairus Grove, University of Hawaii</p> | <p><i>Touched by Fire: World War I and the Rise of an Aleatoric Cosmology in the thought of Max Planck, Alfred North Whitehead, Marcel Duchamp, and J.F.C. Fuller</i> In the cauldron of the first total war each of the thinkers engaged here came to search for principles of continuity amidst an undeniable chaos. Duchamp in his musical experiments Erratum Musical, Whitehead in his mathematical crisis and break with rationalism, Planck in effort to overcome the Newtonian order of discontinuity, and Fuller in a similar effort to capture war as a set of principles. In an exploration of each thinker's encounter with chaos I hope to show that what we often discuss as a quantum event radiating out from international conferences on physics was a much larger metaphysical crisis in the conception of chance, causality, scale, and order. Using World War I as a resonance point for music, philosophy, physics, and martial thought, I make the argument that what was unleashed in the collapse of the concert of Europe reverberated much further than the field of International Relations and in fact set the stage for a transformation in humanity's self-appraised cosmic significance. The results of this cosmological revolution cannot be underestimated in global politics. The consequences of confronting chaos provoked a vicious new rationality that would come dominate security politics for another hundreds years as war planners and state leaders searched for a new science of order that could predict and control the nature of things</p> |
| | <p>Laura Shepherd, University of New South Wales</p> | <p><i>Trompe l'Oeil: Interrupting the Logics of Security Studies with Women's Peace Activism</i> This intervention takes seriously the prompt by the symposium convenors to think through the 'histories of the present that project justifications for future wars from past ones'. I examine the ways in which contemporary security politics and practices are organised through a 'fooling of the eye' (trompe l'oeil) that renders women's peace activism largely invisible in the war stories that we tell. I recount the story of the formation of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and relate it to the stories that are commonly told about the end of World War 1. I imagine what stories we might tell of security today if women's activism and political participation were made visible both in our historical imaginaries and our contemporary theorising.</p> |
| <p>Com.</p> | <p>Megan MacKenzie CISS/USYD</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>Diplomacy: Spatio-temporal, Multilateral, and Adaptive</p> | | |
| <p>Mod.</p> | <p>Jonathan Bogais CISS/USYD</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| | <p>Anthony Burke, University of New South Wales</p> | <p><i>The Silence of Kyoto</i> The guns of August 1914 began two decades of total war and global upheaval that saw the death of tens of millions, vastly accelerated military and technical modernisation, and made visible humanity's capacity for self-extinction in the form of genocide and nuclear war. I wish to suggest that December 1997 is our guns of August, when a four global accord to begin to address global warming instead precipitated a politics of national retrenchment and</p> |

| | | |
|------|--|---|
| | | avoidance, science denialism, big carbon lobbying, and looming ecological genocide. As global earth systems scientists warn of catastrophic unchecked climate change and mass marine extinctions, the Anthropocene opens us to the imperative of a new, global scale, warning us of our rush to extinguish our very world through the failure of our worldliness. I speculate on the change in ontological and political perspectives - cosmopolitan, post-Marxist, post-human - that will be needed to rethink our collective path. |
| | Rebecca Adler-Nissen, University of Copenhagen | <i>From 'New Diplomacy' to Twiplomacy: Diplomatic Face-Work between Confidential Negotiations and Public Display</i> What is the relationship between confidential diplomacy and public representation? And how have diplomats and scholars made sense of it over time? By the end of World War I, new communications technologies helped sustain the belief that more openness could prevent a new war. In 1918, cables and wireless provided Woodrow Wilson with technologies that were to help revolutionize the conduct of international affairs through what he called 'new diplomacy'. This involved a farewell to secret treaties, like the ones that had pulled the world into war in 1914. Yet confidential and secret negotiations continued to be the preferred way of conducting international diplomacy. Today, the rise of social media, coupled with intensifying demands for more transparency and democracy in world politics, brings new hopes and challenges to diplomacy. State leaders and diplomats continue to react to traditional media, but now also attempt to present themselves proactively through tweets and public diplomacy. However, these efforts often take place simultaneously and sometimes interfere directly with closed-door negotiations and its codes of restraint, discretion and secrecy. The intensity of a 24/7 live media coverage and the ease of information transmission coupled with request for more transparency in world politics brings new challenges to an old problem in diplomacy: how to achieve effective international negotiations and public accountability at the same time. |
| | Vincent Pouliot, McGill University | <i>The Invention of Permanent Representation to International Organizations, One Hundred Years Later</i> This presentation assesses a key diplomatic legacy of the First World War settlement: the creation and staffing of national missions attached to International Organizations (IOs) headquarters. Developing incrementally during the 1920s around the League of Nations (in parallel to quantum theory as well as welfare state bureaucratization), and later culminating after decolonization in New York City and various other cities, this global trend helps understand both the pervasiveness and the political significance of multilateral diplomacy in today's world politics. As administrative practices of states, IOs and other actors with long reach adapt to the diffusion of permanent representation, however, alternative modes of global governance get sidelined. After a brief look at how the world of multilateral diplomacy actually works, I explore its merits and limits. By comparing the First World War legacy to other "roads not taken," I conclude that permanent representation to IOs is ill-equipped to confront both the emerging challenges and the new political demands of 21st century global governance. |
| Com. | Frank Smith USYD/CISS | N/A |

THE FINAL Q2 ROUNDTABLE

James Der Derian
CISS/USYD

Jonathan Bogais
CISS/USYD

Graeme Gill
Department of Government and IR/USYD

Sebastian Kaempf
University of Queensland

Iain McCalman
CISS/USYD

Aim Sinpeng
School of Government and IR/USYD

Colin Wight
CISS/USYD