Editorial

Following our Special Issue on Narratives of Human Rights, we are very happy to present three graduate papers, which bring together methods and perspectives from law, political science, economics, and history to analyse questions of transitional justice, grand strategy, and the making of 'universal' norms.

Alyna Reading addresses the asymmetrical conditions under which legal norms were globalised through the lens of a 19th-century land purchase by European missionaries in British colonial West Africa. She explores how conflicting conceptions of property rights, land use, and metaphysics clashed and remained effectively unresolved as land passed from the community of Begoro to the Basel Mission. Swiss and South German pietism, British legal norms, and Akan customs of land tenure were negotiated and brought into unequal conversation.

Aurélie Salamin studies the treatment of former child soldiers. Even though a plethora of international treaties proscribe the recruitment and deployment of children in armed conflicts, this remains an ongoing practice with long-term consequences. The paper problematizes the standard narratives on children used in armed conflicts, which tend to typologize them as helpless victims, heroic survivors, or violent perpetrators. But these stereotypical typologies can hinder the reintegration of former child soldiers into society. International law demands that the 'best interest' of children be promoted, but what is in the 'best interest' of former child soldiers?

Finally, *Emanuel Sebastian De Seta* discusses the strategic options of small countries in an increasingly adverse geopolitical and economic climate. His paper outlines a conceptual framework for grand strategies open to small states facing an eroding global liberal order and intensifying great power competition. To apply these ideas to the practice of statecraft, De Seta analyses Switzerland's Free Trade Agreement with China in the context of global Sino-American competition and interprets it as an insurance policy aimed at ensuring access to the Chinese market without compromising relations with the United States and the European Union.

These papers explore a variety of subjects across different locations and time periods, but they share an interest in how norms and the 'normal' are constructed and maintained. By highlighting the agency of children involved in armed conflicts, by questioning the default strategic alignments of small states in a dangerous world, and by denaturalizing conceptions of property, these papers showcase the application of interdisciplinary approaches to grapple with the complexities of a fraying international order.

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