



EWIS Krakow 2019 | Call for Papers | Workshop, 26-29 June 2019

Rethinking the Sea in IR: Space, Time, Politics & Change

Convenors:

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Rationale and Background | While the world's oceans cover more than 70% of its surface, the space of the sea has today largely vanished as an object worthy of enquiry in IR, being treated either as a corollary of landed politics or as time. Few theoretical statements take the sea into account, and if sea power figures into the equation it is either treated as land power, its extension, or, seen as operating along the same logic. For the most part, the sea is ignored or obliterated as a transport leg, or a neutral conduit for imperial expansion; counted as time rather than analyzed as space. The space of the sea has collapsed into time. Yet this was not always so – nor does it necessarily hold true today. The aim of the workshop is to bring the sea back into International Relations (IR) – not only as travel time, but as a social, political, economic and military space (or variable) which affects the workings of world politics.

Save for a few exceptions (e.g. Steinberg 2001), on the whole the sea is seen as an extension of land, and sea power and auxiliary of or conduit for land power. But ocean space is not homogenous and far from neutral, as different ocean spaces are constructed as distinct spaces allowing different practices (*ibid.*). Recent scholarship has also moved towards historicizing the sea (e.g. Paine 2013). Some of this builds on Michel Foucault's (1965) argument that modern knowledge is overly *landed*; having done away with the sea as a lived experience, the impact of the sea on land has also been erased from knowledge and our accounts of history. Yet modalities of sea power have fluctuated over time, as have their legal boundaries. Following recent calls to rethink the role of the sea the workshop seeks papers which set out to critically analyze seas and oceans as deeply political and historical spaces "whose transformative power," as Klein and Mackethun (2004) have reminded us, is "material and very real."

Practical information | We welcome papers dealing with all aspects of the sea in/for International Relations – in historical and contemporary perspective – and from a plurality of methods and theoretical outlooks. | Based on the workshop, our aim is the publication of an edited volume on the sea and IR in 2020. | The workshop is organized by the [EMPRISE Project](#). The project is able to cover some costs associated with meals in Krakow, as well as funding limited upwards to EUR 200 per participant in order to alleviate the cost of travel and accommodation.

Possible topics | • The sea as limit and opportunity • Oceanic regions • Oceans and resources • Violence at sea • Imaginings of the sea • Theorizing maritime spaces • The sea in political theorizing • The sea as the other of political life • The law of the sea, or no law at sea? • Mapping maritime spaces • The maritime dimensions of states and empires • Combatting piracy • The rise of navies • Life at sea • A world of ports • Maritime networks and connectivities • Maritime trade • Privateering • From sail to steam and beyond • The sea in popular culture

