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/ Conference: "Exemplarity: Performance, Influence, and Friction in Political Innovation"

Conference: "Exemplarity: Performance, Influence, and Friction in Political Innovation"

- February 28 - February 29, 2020
- 8:30AM - 5:00PM
- Room 120, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Avenue

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Co-sponsored by the [Research Center](#) "The Formation of Normative Orders," Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main, with additional support from Ohio State's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Office of International Affairs, and Center for Slavic and East European Studies.

Organized by [Dorothy Noyes](#), The Ohio State University, and [Tobias Wille](#), Columbia University and Goethe University Frankfurt.

What is the form of innovation within an established political order? How is progress claimed and recognized? This conference explores a mechanism that is celebrated in liberal discourse but trickier in practice: the power of example. Innovations in social norms, institutional design, or political conduct succeed if they are acknowledged and emulated by relevant others. An ensuing process of cumulative uptake and revision may be understood as progress, but also as dangerous contagion. The ideational dimension is inescapable. Political utterances, performances, and decisions are read against historical patterns and seek in turn to frame the horizon of expectations for the future. Their import takes shape within a field of prior, neighboring, and future acts that serve as both interpretants and points of alignment.

The durable exemplar is rare, however. Actions judged exemplary may freeze into formal precedent or subside into heroic failures; would-be exemplary gestures may be dismissed as "empty" or fail to draw attention; exemplary traditions may be discredited altogether. The political field is, by definition, a field of power relations, and thus the exemplary framework is mobilized both to inspire and to repress autonomous action. The affective force of exemplary performance can also trump more complex accounts of agency and structure in the assessment of political causality and the construction of political narratives.

Liberalism's limits of inclusion mean that metropolitan audiences frequently misrecognize, fail to take up, or even actively dismiss examples set at the periphery. Beyond these limits, autonomous and more horizontal exemplary networks may take shape. Anticolonial and social movements are built from reciprocal observations and the sharing of models. So too, of course, are extremist networks and antiliberal innovations in political leadership. The role of social media in spreading examples without the check of interpersonal responsibility has unsettled the narrative of progress and revived a founding tension within liberal exemplarity: faith in benevolent influences and public role models versus the fear of contagion and mimesis in mass society.

Tracing political exemplarity through a range of cases, this conference seeks to make sense of the interplay among rhetorics and ideologies of performance, empirical processes of influence, and the frictions of interaction among differentially positioned actors in changing contexts. The friction that inevitably results from contact between various disciplinary perspectives will, we

hope, generate exemplary insight into a phenomenon more often taken for granted than critically examined.

Schedule:

Please register for **EACH** of the mornings and afternoons you will be attending.

The Keynote speaker for this conference will be **Ramachandra Guha** on Thursday, February 27 at 4:30 p.m. in the Round Meeting Room of the Ohio Union.

Friday morning, February 28: [Register Here](#)

8:00 - 8:30 Coffee, registration

8:30 - 9:00 Welcome and introduction. Chris Gelpi, Director, Mershon Center; Dorothy Noyes and Tobias Wille, conference organizers

9:00-10:30 Exemplarity and hierarchy

Chair: *Morgan Liu, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Ohio State University*

Discussant: *Sebastian Schindler, Political Science, Munich*

The Paradigm and Structure of Confucian Exemplarity.
Ying Zhang, History, Ohio State University

Exemplarity within Hierarchy. *Ayşe Zarakol, International Relations, Cambridge University*

11:00 - 12:00 Contesting Exemplars

Chair:

Discussant: *Srdjan Vucetic, International Affairs, Ottawa*

The Napoleonic Monopoly and its Challengers: Liberal and Anticolonial Appropriations. *Dorothy Noyes, Folklore, Ohio State University*

Ethiopianism and Black Worldmaking. *Robbie Shilliam, International Relations, Johns Hopkins University*

LUNCH

Friday afternoon, February 28: **Register Here**

1:30 - 3:00 Exemplary Rhetorics

Chair: *Ayşe Zarakol, International Relations, Cambridge University*

Discussant: *Christopher Daase, Political Science, Goethe University of Frankfurt*

Emperors, Orators, and Tyrannicides: The Use of Examples in Greek and Roman Politics.. *Fritz Graf, Classics, Ohio State University*

Greta Thunberg, "the child" and the polyphonic Vorbild. *Kyrre Kverndokk, Cultural Studies, University of Bergen*

3:30 - 5:00 Mobile Models for Disaster

Chair: *Rick Herrmann, Mershon Center*

Discussant: *Neta Crawford, Political Science, Boston University*

Violent Exceptions: Humanitarian Recognition and the Child Refugee. *Wendy Hesford, Rhetoric, Ohio State University*

Modelling an Event: How Child-Oriented Methods of Disaster Preparedness Education Travel. *Chika Watanabe, Social Anthropology, Manchester*

Saturday morning, February 29: **Register Here**

8:30 - 9:00 Coffee

9:00 - 10:30 The European Exemplary Order after Nazism

Chair: *Theodora Dragostinova, History, Ohio State University*

Discussant: *Robin de Bruin, European Studies, University of Amsterdam*

Exemplary revisionism: Holocaust remembrance and political identity in postcommunist Eastern Europe. *Jelena Subotic, International Relations, Georgia State University.*

The value of a fighting spirit: exemplarity and the populist challenge. *Sebastian Schindler, Political Science, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich.*

10:45 - 12:15 Exemplarity and Global Governance

Chair:

Discussant: *Wendy Hesford, Rhetoric, Ohio State University*

The Congress of Vienna: Returning to an Exemplary Event. *Jennifer Mitzen, International Relations, Ohio State University*

Human rights shaming. *Jack Snyder, International Relations, Columbia University*

LUNCH

Saturday Afternoon, February 29: [Register Here](#)

1:15 - 2:45 Precedents and Residues in Norm Evolution

Chair: *Alexander Wendt, Mershon Center, Ohio State University*

Discussant: *Hye Yun Kang, Mershon Center, Ohio State University*

Precedents in world politics. *Christopher Daase, Political Science, Frankfurt, and Tobias Wille, Political Science, Frankfurt.*

How Fighting 'Indians' Shaped U.S. Warfare from the Colonial Era to the Present. *Neta Crawford, Political Science, Boston.*

3:00 - 4:30 Claiming Western Exceptionalism

Chair: *Dorry Noyes, Mershon Center, Ohio State University*

Discussant: *Robbie Shilliam, Johns Hopkins University*

Imperial Exemplarity: The Anglo-American Outlawry of War. *Srdjan Vucetic, International Affairs, University of Ottawa.*

The soft power of a small country. Self-perceptions of the Netherlands as a model for Europe, 1914-1957.

Robin de Bruin, European Studies, University of Amsterdam.

4:30 - 5:00 Concluding Discussion

2020 Exemplarity Schedule

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Photo of Greta Thunberg taken by Swedish photographer Anders Hellberg of Effekt magazine

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