

**The Emergence of Globalism: Visions of World Order in Britain and the United States, 1939-1950.** By Or Rosenboim. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017. 352p. \$37.50 cloth.

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*The Emergence of Globalism* is a formidable work of intellectual history that shines light on the debates that flared up in the 1940s over the prospects of the postwar world order. As the book's title makes clear, Or Rosenboim trains her attention on the distinctly "globalist" outlook that united a coterie of Anglo-American and émigré public intellectuals who otherwise diverged in their fields of expertise and in their proposals for reordering the world after the war. Nor is it surprising that such a globalist outlook should have taken shape in the period under study. The 1940s witnessed the convergence, in the most brutal manner possible, of the tremors of the Great Depression, the ideological waves of fascism and communism, and total war crowned by the atomic bomb. The cataclysms of the decade revealed that the economic, technological, and political forces of modernity had escaped the control of territorial nation-states, and that matters of inequality, poverty, industry, trade, and even monetary policy could not be conceived, let alone managed, within the confines of sovereign statehood.

Rosenboim maintains that "the global" as a novel "political space" emerged from the efforts to radically rethink the scale of political organization of transboundary connections. Unlike our somewhat flat vernacular understanding of globalization today, "the global" in these debates signified much more than a techno-economic space of connections and flows of commodities, information, and human beings, though it certainly incorporated these. Instead, the global served above all as a space for reimagining the scope of cardinal political concepts such as authority, democracy, pluralism, inclusion, liberty, and equality. Concomitantly, it invited visions of "new forms of political associations beyond the state: regional and world federations, religious networks, transnational liberal communities, functional agencies, and constitutional unions" (272). That these globalist visions led an almost exclusively theoretical

life is beside the book's main objective, which is to recover this formative yet lost episode in the genealogy of global political theory that contemporary scholars (especially scholars of global constitutionalism) claim to have recently invented.

The book is organized around seven "conversations" involving more than two dozen interlocutors hailing from the fields of economics, sociology, journalism, literature, geopolitics, and theology, among others. The debates examined in the chapters progressively ascend in the scale of political space that they concern, beginning with the state, proceeding to region, empire, and federation, and culminating with the world. Rosenboim meticulously reconstructs Raymond Aron and David Mitrany's alternative arguments for repurposing the social and institutional functions of statehood (Chapter 2), Owen Lattimore and Nicholas Spykman's contending geopolitical theories of "great spaces" and "tripolarity" (Chapter 3), the rearguard battle waged by Lionel Curtis's imperial federationism (Chapter 4), the fierce disagreement between Friedrich Hayek and Barbara Wootton over the role of social planning and free markets on a global scale (Chapter 5), the clash of Richard McKeon's minimalist and Antonio Borgese's maximalist vision of political universalism and world constitution (Chapter 6), H. G. Wells's proposal to vest key powers of global governance in scientists as well as Lewis Mumford's moral terror at such a possibility (Chapter 7), and finally a Catholic "pluralism of fear" that bifurcated into Luigi Sturzo's liberal and Jacques Maritain's conservative responses to totalitarianism and communism (Chapter 8).

Beyond the problematic of political space, three thematic threads suture these multifaceted controversies. The first is the expressly anti-imperial orientation of Rosenboim's globalists, who ruled out empire as a viable governmental framework for securing global peace, cooperation, and welfare, and wished to see its violence and exploitation banished. The second and arguably more fraught leitmotif is a shared concern with a "democratic" postwar order, defined much less by a positive political agenda than by its opposition to totalitarianism in its

fascist and communist variants. The third thematic is the unresolved tension between the ideals of universalism and pluralism that instantiated time and again as globalist intellectuals acknowledged the diversity of social, economic, and political conditions that characterized the world yet averred, with varying degrees of zeal, that these differences could and should be reconciled under globe-spanning institutional arrangements animated by Enlightenment values. Rosenboim is at pains to emphasize that, for all their democratic, anti-imperialist, and pluralist fidelities, globalist arguments were almost always hamstrung by their reliance on classificatory grids that derived their universal values from the particularity of Western experience and its privileged position within the imperial constitution of the world. The entrapment of globalism, to borrow from Duncan Bell (*Reordering the World*, 2016), in an “imperial imaginary” was manifested in the paucity of reflection on the condition of the colonies, absence of any considered plan for their integration into a globalist world order, and the haughty (if unselfconscious) assumption that the civilized nations would set the terms of admission to federal structures. If postwar anti-colonial movements embraced the doctrine of national self-determination instead of answering the call of globalism, Rosenboim concludes, the latter’s parochialism stood as much to blame as the contingent historical impediments like the Cold War.

*The Emergence of Globalism* makes an important contribution to the study of twentieth-century international political thought by reclaiming a debate that has either been overlooked in the International Relations discipline or anachronistically conscripted into origin stories about realism and idealism. In this regard, the book successfully achieves the first objective that it sets for itself. One hesitates to say the same with respect to the second avowed aim of the book, namely, to construct a “genealogy” of globalism (2), if genealogy is understood – as originally formulated by Michel Foucault – to signify a history of the present rather than a baroque synonym for historical inquiry in general. Rosenboim claims that it is important to

revisit the globalist debates of the 1940s to illuminate the contemporary globalization talk that has been raging since 1989. She does not clearly elaborate, however, what specifically is to be gained by doing so, except for reminding the reader that we fail to contemplate globalization in explicitly political terms as the intellectuals examined here once did. The project appears to be animated more than anything by a mission to mount an erudite corrective to the disciplinary bromides of International Relations. In carrying out this mission, it represents the best of what contextualist intellectual history has to offer. It also harbors some of the attendant infelicities of the same approach, whereby the main argument and its stakes occasionally disappear into the mass of historical detail. Scholars of International Relations and anyone who is interested in the historical figures or debates investigated here will undoubtedly find a great resource in Rosenboim's book. Others who pick up this book from a general interest in globalization and its twentieth-century ideologies would be advised not to lose sight of the forest for the trees.