‘Treason’ is a ubiquitous concept in human history, stretching from the ancient world through to the present day. While often thought of as an anachronistic term associated with past despotic governments, it is in fact very much alive in our contemporary world, not least through violent political rhetoric employed by populist leaders around the globe. It is also the ultimate political crime in any state, requiring always the most severe penalties due to the threat to the state community. Yet despite this importance, treason has been surprisingly ignored in the academic scholarship of any discipline. For some periods of history there are indeed some case studies, for others there are none; conceptual or theoretical studies are few.

This online international conference aims to bridge these gaps by aiming ambitiously to create a global history of treason across the centuries. Our themes cover the cultural representation of treason; treason in law; the practice and prosecution of the crime; and the impact and heritage of the subject. While our case studies hail from the ancient and modern eras and from all parts of the world, our purpose will be to make links and to assess ‘treason’ conceptually, teasing out the similarities or differences which have been created by a variety of regimes and political contexts.
TREASON: A CONCEPTUAL AND COMPARATIVE HISTORY

ONLINE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, 23-24 SEPTEMBER

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Thursday, 23 September
09.00–09.30 | Welcome and introduction
André Krischer / Mark Cornwall

09.30–11.00 | Panel 1: Ancient history
Chair: Bernadette Descharmes, Braunschweig
Lycurgus and the Religious Dimension of Treason in Ancient Athens
Christoph Michels (Münster)
The Arbitrariness of Treason Accusations in Democratic Athens
Dorothea Rohde (Bielefeld)
Are there any Traitors (»proditores«) in Rome?
Cynthia Couhade-Beyneix (Bordeaux)

11.15–12.45 | Panel 2: Medieval history
Chair: Rémy Ambühl (Southampton)
The Concept of Treason in Einhard’s Vita Karoli
Philipp Frey (Kiel)
Traditores in Tradition: Betrayal and Treason in late Medieval England
Matthias Büttnner (Göttingen)
In League with Sultans. Discourses of Conspiracy and Treason in the later Middle Ages
Marcel Bubert (Münster)

12.45–13.45 | Lunch break

13.45–14.45 | Panel 3: Imperial transitions
Chair: Tanja Bührer (Bern)
Hanjian in the Qing Empire during the Opium War (1839–1842)
Gary Luk (Hong Kong)
Ottoman Arab Agents and the Collapse of Trust at the End of Empire
Chloe Bordewich (Harvard)
Walking the line in Ottoman Diplomacy: On Treason, Extravagance, and Confiscation in early modern Istanbul
Marloes Cornelissen (Istanbul)

15.00-16.30 | Panel 4: Treason and citizenship
Chair: Hanna Pulpanek (Münster)
Neither friend nor foe. A Political Theory of Treason and Democracy
Martin Oppelt (Munich)
The Politics of Liminality – Treason as a Site for the Formation of Stratified Citizenship
Hadas Cohen (Jerusalem)
Christianity and the Concept of Betrayal in Modern Hebrew Literature: The Case of Judas Iscariot
Yitzhak Mor (Jerusalem)

16.45 | Keynote talk: Treason and the Tower of London
Anthony Musson (London)

Friday, 24 September
09.00–10.30 | Panel 5: Early modern history
Chair: Tom Hamilton (Durham)
Early Modern Ballads about Executions for Treason
Una Mclvenna (Melbourne)
«Leur trahison & trop desloyalle felonnie». Concepts of Treason, State Building and Political Conflict in 16th and 17th Century France
Tilman Haug (Münster)
Betraying the King? The Hungarian-Croatian Aristocracy and their Treason against Emperor Leopold I (1670–1671)
Sabrina Rospert (Paris)

10.45–12.15 | Panel 6: Fascism and Cold War
Chair: Malte Zierenberg (Berlin)
Treason as the cause of the fall of Fascism. 25 July and 8 September in Neo-fascist Rhetoric
Carlo de Nuzzo (Paris)
Cold War Home Fronts, Third Reich Legacies, and Building Democracy: Treason in Cold War West Germany
Sebastian Gehrig (Roehampton)

12.15–13.15 | Lunch break

13.15–14.15 | Panel 7: Treason Trials in 1920s
Chair: Mark Cornwall (Southampton)
Treason and the rule of law: Reflections on the Irish Civil War 1922–23
Seán Enright (Peterborough)
How Treason Makes the Traitor: Show Trials from Stalin’s to Putin’s Russia
Julie Cassidy (Williamstown)

14.30–16.00 | Panel 8: Revolutionary periods
Chair: Beatrice de Graaf (Leiden)
The Enlightenment State and Treason: Britain and France in the Age of Revolution
Emma Macleod (Stirling) / Mike Rapport (Glasgow)
Treason and the American Revolution: Directions for Comparative Approaches
Carlton F.W. Larson (Davis, CA)
Targowica – an Evil Site of Polish Memory. The Role of Treason in Forging Identity
Artur Kula (Warsaw)

16.00 | Conclusions

Technological Competition and the Reassessment of the Espionage Act in Early Cold War America
Mario Daniels (Amsterdam)

12.15–13.15 | Lunch break

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