



Introduction

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Barry's chapter (2024) serves as an excellent introduction in its own right to the topic addressed in this volume, and as such this official introduction will be brief.

The title of this volume, the first in a two-volume set, reflects a paradox that classical liberals and libertarians (henceforth libertarians¹) must confront if they are to remain relevant in the coming centuries.

The paradox is this: Westphalian sovereignty is the cause of many security problems in today's world, as deftly illustrated in this volume and elsewhere by Oyerinde (2022, 2024), Van Staden (2024), Van Staden and Woode-Smith (2022), Palmer (2024), and Carret (2024). However, Westphalian sovereignty has also been, and continues to be, a useful tool for keeping the imperial temptation that large polities inevitably

¹ See Van de Haar (2015) for important distinctions between libertarians and classical liberals.

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succumb to at a minimum, as masterfully shown by Duncan (2024), Burns (2022, 2024), Lottieri (2024), Masala (2024), and Spliet (2024).

This paradox *is* because Westphalian sovereignty arose in rebellion to empires, and empires are oppressive but also cosmopolitan. The liberal nationalism that arose to challenge imperial governance in some places, as well as the anti-colonial nationalism that arose in other places, makes it difficult for Westphalian nation-states to adopt a cosmopolitanism that is necessary for a free and open world. The nationalisms, whether liberal or otherwise, that cropped up in the ashes of the Austro-Hungarian, British, French, Russian, Ottoman, Mughal, Qing, and Persian empires have led to the crushing or even the outright elimination of factions that may be perceived to be enemies of the people who populate these Westphalian states.

If libertarians were to adopt this simple anti-national framework for their own work on liberty and security in an anarchical world, they would see that it explains well the wars and the poverty that have wracked much of the world since the end of World War II. In order to confront the paradox they face, libertarians must find a way to replace the nationalisms of the world with a cosmopolitanism that is both anti-imperial and anti-national. This was a central concern for Mises and Hayek up until 1947, when they presumably realized that the United States would not be withdrawing from Europe anytime soon. While they ceased writing explicitly about international federation as the ideal type for a libertarian world order, preferring instead to accept the free riding of security that European states and Japan engaged in, neither giant disavowed their calls for libertarian world government and neither of them suggested that a geographically larger polity, often conflated in libertarian circles to be a sign of imperial advocacy, would necessarily be less liberal.²

To date, very few libertarians have taken up the challenge of international federation that was championed by Mises and Hayek (Christensen 2022). However, now that a nationalist populism has crept back into

² Ludwig von Mises echoed, in 1962 (pg. 93), the same sentiments he had in 1927 (2002 pg. 148) when he called for a world state and also argued that, were it practical, secession could be done all the way down to the very individual (1927 [2002]: 109–110).

the American domestic political scene, world liberty and security, underwritten for nearly eighty years by the United States and its collective memory of dead sons' graves in Europe and the Pacific, cannot be taken for granted any longer.

This volume hones in on the problems of Westphalian sovereignty and its nationalist shortcomings, but it also celebrates this type of sovereignty's achievements in regards to keeping imperialism at bay.

Volume II will confront the sovereignty gaps of the Westphalian world order by offering up alternatives to the status quo.

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