

## BOOK REVIEW

*INTERNATIONAL LAW'S OBJECTS* EDITED BY JESSIE HOHMANN AND DANIEL JOYCE (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2018) 592 PAGES. PRICE GBP34.99 (PAPERBACK) ISBN 9780198798217.

*By drawing from a wide array of sources, both methodologically and substantively, this edited volume invites the reader to engage with materiality in, through and as international law. It offers a groundbreaking collection of artefacts, which (in their own ways) interrogate the complex relationship between the normative and the material, the discursive and the tangible. By weaving their analysis of the objects with vivid images and pictures, the contributors provide snapshots of diverging 'ways of seeing' international law in theory and in practice. This 'visualisation of international law' quickly turns readers into spectators and calls for an inquiry into the politics of the gaze. Hence, the book is nothing less than an invitation to self-reflexivity in the exercise of seeing — or of avoiding seeing — the performances of international law. By collecting a series of objects that are held together by international law's claim to authority, it offers a mirror in which a careful spectator can reflect on how the discipline exercises procedures of 'legibility' to make the world through its gaze.*

Throughout September 2019, Melbourne's No Vacancy Gallery hosted the *Museum of Broken Relationships*.<sup>1</sup> This exhibition, founded and curated by two Croatian artists, travels around the world showcasing material testaments of human love, grief and loss.<sup>2</sup> Upon entering, the spectator is confronted with a daunting collection of things that failed to create, sustain or renovate ties of social bonding, no longer worthy of being named 'gifts'.<sup>3</sup> While art is no stranger to the exploration of love and loss, this exhibition's charm lies in its use of seemingly ordinary 'stuff' to delve deep into the folds of the human experience. This exhibition, while truly extraordinary, is merely part of a wider trend that is growing exponentially in the arts, the social sciences and the humanities. It resonates, for example, with the British Museum and the BBC's seminal *A History of the World in 100 Objects* project,<sup>4</sup> the Tate Modern's *Materials and*

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<sup>1</sup> 'Museum of Broken Relationships', *No Vacancy* (Web Page) <<https://www.no-vacancy.com.au/new-page-57>>, archived at <<https://perma.cc/AQ4N-9DNQ>>.

<sup>2</sup> 'About the Museum', *Museum of Broken Relationships* (Web Page) <<https://brokenships.com/explore?open=about-museum>>, archived at <<https://perma.cc/442Q-5KM8>>. See also Olinka Vištica and Dražen Grubišić, *The Museum of Broken Relationships: Modern Love in 203 Everyday Objects* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> On the importance of gift-giving in the making of both personal and collective horizons of meaning, see Grégoire Mallard, *Gift Exchange: The Transnational History of a Political Idea* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) 4.

<sup>4</sup> Neil MacGregor, *A History of the World in 100 Objects* (Allen Lane, 2011); *The 100 British Museum Objects* (BBC Radio 4, January 2010) <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/about/british-museum-objects/>>, archived at <<https://perma.cc/K5H8-2TL5>>.

*Objects* 2016 display,<sup>5</sup> or the ‘material turn’<sup>6</sup> in history and the rise of the ‘new materialisms’ in contemporary social theory.<sup>7</sup>

Law (let alone international law), however, has been a relative latecomer to this discussion. As Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos noted,

[m]ateriality has been touched mostly superficially by current legal analyses whether in the metaphorical ‘material considerations’ for the law, or the concrete architectural qualities of courts, or criminological and anthropological studies of legal objects. We are now catching up with the rise of new materialism, object-oriented ontologies and speculative realism that have put in a solid appearance in other areas of humanities and social sciences.<sup>8</sup>

In this trailblazing volume, editors Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (along with a diverse cohort of contributors) provide a timely contribution that aims to help international law ‘catch up’ with these developments. Building on Luis Eslava and Sundhya Pahuja’s pioneering invitation to (re)think international law as a ‘material practice’,<sup>9</sup> the *Pop-up Museum of Legal Objects* project<sup>10</sup> and the *History, Anthropology and the Archive of International Law* project,<sup>11</sup> the book raises a pressing question: ‘What might we learn about international law if we began with objects, things, and material culture?’<sup>12</sup> By doing this, the book presents a challenge to traditional approaches to the discipline, disrupting the assumption that international law is a text-based<sup>13</sup> ‘argumentative practice’<sup>14</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Materials and Objects* (Exhibition, Tate Modern, 2016) <<https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern/display/materials-and-objects>>, archived at <<https://perma.cc/H6FY-Z4KX>>. See generally Helen Rees Leahy, ‘Watch Your Step: Embodiment and Encounter at Tate Modern’ in Sandra H Dudley (ed), *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations* (Routledge, 2009) 162.

<sup>6</sup> Frank Trentmann, ‘Materiality in the Future of History: Things, Practices, and Politics’ (2009) 48(2) *Journal of British Studies* 283, 283; Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce (eds), *Material Powers: Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn* (Routledge, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Diana Coole and Samantha Frost (eds), *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics* (Duke University Press, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, ‘Introduction: The *And* of Law and Theory’ in Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (ed), *Routledge Handbook of Law and Theory* (Routledge, 2019) 1, 9.

<sup>9</sup> Luis Eslava and Sundhya Pahuja, ‘Between Resistance and Reform: TWAIL and the Universality of International Law’ (2011) 3(1) *Trade, Law and Development* 103, 109.

<sup>10</sup> Amanda Perry-Kessaris, ‘The Pop-Up Museum of Legal Objects Project: An Experiment in “Socio-Legal Design”’ (2017) 68(3) *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 225.

<sup>11</sup> Madelaine Chiam et al, ‘History, Anthropology and the Archive of International Law’ (2017) 5(1) *London Review of International Law* 3.

<sup>12</sup> Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce, ‘Introduction’ in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law’s Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 1, 1, 8; Daniel Joyce, ‘International Law’s Cabinet of Curiosities’ in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law’s Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 15, 23; Jessie Hohmann, ‘The Lives of Objects’ in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law’s Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 30, 31. Two other similar projects are worth noting: *The Legal Materiality Network* (Website) <<https://legalmateriality.wordpress.com>>, archived at <<https://perma.cc/924U-ZLAQ>>; ‘InfraReg’, *Institute for International Law and Justice* (Web Page) <<https://www.iilj.org/infraReg/>>, archived at <<https://perma.cc/E89Z-CGDG>>.

<sup>13</sup> Hohmann and Joyce (n 12) 2.

<sup>14</sup> Wouter Werner, ‘Framing Objects of International Law’ in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law’s Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 57, 57.

in which judgments, treaties and official statements are studied like ‘holy writs’.<sup>15</sup> Instead, this book provides a visual exploration of international law, encountering the discipline through a curated collection of its objects, rituals and artefacts.<sup>16</sup>

After the editors’ introduction, the book offers a general section called ‘Thinking International Law through Objects’. The five chapters of this section serve as the methodological, stylistic and theoretical roadmaps that will guide the reader through the collection of artefacts.<sup>17</sup> The second section offers 35 different artefacts that the contributors considered could be ‘owned’ by international law. If every collection is doomed to be incomplete, it can only follow that both the book and this review will always be missing at least one item.<sup>18</sup> Hence, in this brief review, I will merely summarise some of the theoretical challenges raised by the book, without providing a comprehensive analysis of each and every single chapter. I will first highlight the volume’s eclectic and comprehensive array of sources and influences, which provides a refreshing challenge to international law’s traditional doctrine of sources. Then, I will argue that the book’s invitation to ‘visualise international law’ offers an entry point to the politics of the gaze in — and beyond — international law. I conclude by arguing that the growing interest in international law’s materiality also offers further avenues for scholars along the ‘socio-critical spectrum’<sup>19</sup> to (re)imagine the relationships between pluralism, materiality and the normative.<sup>20</sup> An interesting research agenda that emerges is to turn the current conversation on its head, to explore not only international law’s materiality (ie international law’s objects) but also materiality’s international law (ie an object’s international law).

## I BEYOND THE ‘SPECTRE OF SOURCES’

In their introduction, the editors note that we are in a particularly promising time of openness and plurality in international legal theory.<sup>21</sup> True to this premise, the volume draws from an eclectic and wide array of theoretical influences to think about the connections between ‘materiality’ and ‘law’. Some of the contributors, for instance, draw from Actor-Network-Theory (‘ANT’) to rethink the relationships between humans and non-humans, especially in relation to the

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<sup>15</sup> See Andrea Bianchi, *International Law Theories: An Inquiry into Different Ways of Thinking* (Oxford University Press, 2016) 248, citing Robert Y Jennings, ‘The Role of the International Court of Justice’ (1997) 68(1) *British Year Book of International Law* 1, 41.

<sup>16</sup> On the importance of collecting and curating, see Joyce (n 12) 16–18. See also Amanda Perry-Kessaris, ‘Collecting Value / Valuing Collecting’ (2016) 4(1) *London Review of International Law* 211.

<sup>17</sup> Joyce (n 12); Hohmann, ‘The Lives of Objects’ (n 12); Fleur Johns, ‘Things to Make and Do’ in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law’s Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 47; Werner (n 14); Isobel Roele, ‘The Making of International Lawyers: Winnicott’s Transitional Objects’ in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law’s Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 72.

<sup>18</sup> See John Forrester, ‘“Mille e tre”: Freud and Collecting’ in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (eds), *The Cultures of Collecting* (Reaktion Books, 1994) 224.

<sup>19</sup> Margaret Davies, *Law Unlimited: Materialism, Pluralism, and Legal Theory* (Routledge, 2017) 14.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid* ch 1.

<sup>21</sup> Hohmann and Joyce (n 12) 7.

question of agency.<sup>22</sup> To provide just one example, in his contribution, Andrew Lang uses Michel Callon's sociology of scallops to study the interaction between dolphins, United States trade regulators, environmental movements and the World Trade Organization to see not only 'how international law is made, but also ... the world-making work which international law does'.<sup>23</sup>

Other contributors prefer to delve into psychoanalysis, to interrogate the importance of material stuff in the creation of identities and subjectivities.<sup>24</sup> Isobel Roele draws from Donald Winnicott's theory of transitional objects to help us understand the disciplinary processes through which international lawyers are made.<sup>25</sup> Along these lines, Filippo Fontanelli and Giuseppe Bianco stress that admiration for past heirlooms of international law (a 'memorabilia-inclination verging on necrophilia') serves as a 'metaphysical bridge' between particular lawyers and an envisioned collective.<sup>26</sup> The *victim*, recalls Sophie Rigney, is not only a product of the perpetrator or the human rights violation, but also of processes of interpellation and subjectification in which international criminal law (and its corresponding assembly of courts) plays an important role.<sup>27</sup>

A separate group of contributors embrace Science and Technology Studies ('STS'),<sup>28</sup> challenging the assumption that '[l]awyers frequently do not feel comfortable with science'.<sup>29</sup> Thérèse Murphy, for example, calls for a greater engagement between STS-style thinking and legal theory when she approaches acquired immunodeficiency syndrome ('AIDS').<sup>30</sup> Alessandra Arcuri departs from the notion that science implies depoliticisation and explores the high stakes of glyphosate regulation in contemporary global governance.<sup>31</sup> Surabhi Ranganathan, in turn, approaches manganese nodules as 'catalyst[s]' for oceanic utopian fantasies, technological research and development, claims of economic

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid 9. On ANT more broadly, see Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford University Press, 2005). On ANT and law, see Bruno Latour, *The Making of Law: An Ethnography of the Conseil d'Etat*, tr Marina Brilman and Alain Pottage (Polity, 2009).

<sup>23</sup> Andrew Lang, 'Purse Seine Net' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 377, 385.

<sup>24</sup> Johns, 'Things to Make and Do' (n 17) 51.

<sup>25</sup> Roele (n 17) 72.

<sup>26</sup> Filippo Fontanelli and Giuseppe Bianco, 'Barcelona Traction Share' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 141, 148.

<sup>27</sup> Sophie Rigney, 'Postcard from the ICTY' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 366, 373–5. See generally René Urueña, *No Citizens Here: Global Subjects and Participation in International Law* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> On STS broadly, see Ulrike Felt et al (eds), *The Handbook of Science and Technology Studies* (MIT Press, 4<sup>th</sup> ed, 2017). See generally Alex Faulkner, Bettina Lange and Christopher Lawless, 'Introduction: Material Worlds: Intersections of Law, Science, Technology, and Society' (2012) 39(1) *Journal of Law and Society* 1, 1; Simon A Cole and Alyse Bertenthal, 'Science, Technology, Society, and Law' (2017) 13 *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 351.

<sup>29</sup> Malgosia Fitzmaurice, 'Whale' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 539, 545.

<sup>30</sup> Thérèse Murphy, 'AIDS' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 106, 106.

<sup>31</sup> Alessandra Arcuri, 'Glyphosate' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 234, 245.

redistribution, and a major exercise in international law making',<sup>32</sup> while Stephen Humphreys concludes that our contemporary fascination with data could not be fully understood without exploring the history of transoceanic submarine cables.<sup>33</sup> Along these lines, several contributions invoke the idiom of co-production to underscore the dialectic relationship between their particular objects and either international regulatory regimes or wider technological landscapes.<sup>34</sup>

Lastly, another group of contributors prefer to engage with the performative aesthetics of objects.<sup>35</sup> For example, in his contribution on the armed drone, Ioannis Kalpouzos reminds us that 'the object's significance cannot be reduced to its use'.<sup>36</sup> Rather, we must bear in mind that images and symbols play a multilayered role in international law.<sup>37</sup> For this reason, Lolita Buckner Inniss calls for scholars to open the 'black box' of material things and extract from them their invested human meanings.<sup>38</sup> Daniel Litwin follows this invitation, as he posits that the glass windows of the Peace Palace's Great Hall of Justice embody the beliefs — expressed or implied — of the movement for the peaceful settlement of international disputes.<sup>39</sup>

A profound interest in unstable relationships between humans and non-humans (a quintessential concern for the new materialism) also reverberates throughout the volume. For instance, some contributions highlight the agency of the non-human or the 'peopling of objects',<sup>40</sup> while others (like Alison Kesby in her discussion of the refugee chains) use the non-human to unveil narratives of human suffering.<sup>41</sup> This chapter engages with materiality to stress, as Robert Cover once did, that international law's 'interpretive commitments of officials are realized, indeed, in the flesh'.<sup>42</sup> As Fleur Johns recalls, it is not surprising that international law's humanist aspirations led many of the contributions to use (non-human) objects to understand (human) subjects.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Surabhi Ranganathan, 'Manganese Nodules' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 272, 283.

<sup>33</sup> Stephen Humphreys, 'Data: The Given' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 191, 197–9.

<sup>34</sup> Jessie Hohmann, 'Opium' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 319, 320; Geoff Gordon, 'Railway Clocks' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 387, 397; Sara Dehm, 'Passport' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 342, 347. On co-production in STS, see Sheila Jasanoff, 'The Idiom of Co-Production' in Sheila Jasanoff (ed), *States of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science and Social Order* (Routledge, 2004) 1.

<sup>35</sup> Tanja Aalberts, 'Sovereign Marks' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 453, 459.

<sup>36</sup> Ioannis Kalpouzos, 'Armed Drone' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 118, 120.

<sup>37</sup> Kate Miles, 'Insulae Moluccae: Map of the Spice Islands, 1594' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 247, 258.

<sup>38</sup> Lolita Buckner Inniss, 'Ships' Ballast' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 431, 432, 442.

<sup>39</sup> Daniel Litwin, 'Stained Glass Windows, the Great Hall of Justice of the Peace Palace' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 463, 468.

<sup>40</sup> Murphy (n 30) 108 (emphasis omitted).

<sup>41</sup> Alison Kesby, 'Refugee Chains' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 399, 402, 409.

<sup>42</sup> Robert M Cover, 'Violence and the Word' (1986) 95(8) *Yale Law Journal* 1601, 1605.

<sup>43</sup> Johns, 'Things to Make and Do' (n 17) 50–1.

These taxonomies, of course, should not be understood as a rigid categorisation. Many of the authors combine ANT inclinations with aesthetic preoccupations and STS-style inquiries.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, this may be a consequence of the polysemic intricacies of the objects themselves: railway clocks, for instance, have an aesthetic force, perform a socio-technical function and also operate in tandem with other material nodes to create networks of meaning.<sup>45</sup> Something similar occurs with the ambivalent image of the tree, which appears to be a natural object but is rather a complex object, a non-object and perhaps even a subject of international law.<sup>46</sup>

What matters, in any case, is that the volume manages to bring together a rich variety of approaches — even if contradictory, perhaps — from both leading and emerging scholars. This fresh air of methodological, stylistic and theoretical pluralism, in turn, opens the door to substantively heterodox narratives of what international law is and should be. Instead of following the traditional doctrine of sources, the book sets out to find international law in its everyday material manifestations.<sup>47</sup> Without the heavy weight of the ‘spectre of sources’, these contributions are able to identify and localise international law wherever it operates, even where it does its best to hide and cover its tracks.<sup>48</sup> While some objects appear banal and trivial at first sight, the volume presses us to *look carefully*, to trace the hidden links of the chain, to pursue international law’s trail down the rabbit hole and to follow its legacy beyond the ‘Palaces of Hope’<sup>49</sup> in Geneva or the courtrooms of the Hague into its messy, unceremonious and ghastly apparitions around the globe.

## II SEEING IN, THROUGH AND AS INTERNATIONAL LAW

By asking the contributors to ‘illustrate’ their chapters with photographs, drawings and images, the editors manage to turn the reader into a spectator.<sup>50</sup> At first sight, the inclusion of images might seem like a minor, quirky detail that merely follows the editors’ curatorial aspirations. On the contrary, I argue that the inclusion of these images is central to the volume’s potential for visual jurisprudence, as it provides for the interrogation of the space between

<sup>44</sup> Another way to classify the chapters is offered by one of the editors: symbolic, thematic, institutional, metaphorical, unique (as in non-fungible), historical, natural and artificial, inter alia. See Joyce (n 12) 26–7. On the relative usefulness — or lack thereof — of taxonomies, see Hohmann and Joyce (n 12) 4.

<sup>45</sup> Gordon (n 34) 390.

<sup>46</sup> Leslie-Anne Duvic-Paoli, ‘Trees’ in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law’s Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 504, 511.

<sup>47</sup> Hohmann and Joyce (n 12) 8. See generally Luis Eslava, *Local Space, Global Life: The Everyday Operation of International Law and Development* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>48</sup> Rose Parfitt, ‘The Spectre of Sources’ (2014) 25(1) *European Journal of International Law* 297.

<sup>49</sup> Ronald Niezen and Maria Sapignoli (eds), *Palaces of Hope: The Anthropology of Global Organizations* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

<sup>50</sup> Hohmann and Joyce (n 12) 5.

(international) law's authority and its spectacular and aesthetical appearances.<sup>51</sup> Like Franz Kafka's parable, it makes the spectator stand *before* the law, inviting her to face its abyss (and, bravely, to hold the gaze once the abyss stares back).<sup>52</sup> This implies a problematisation of the exercise of *seeing*, questioning the idea that international law has a single 'line of vision'.<sup>53</sup> By taking up the visual challenge, the volume offers a constant reminder of John Berger's claim that what we see is quite influenced by *where* and *how* we stare.<sup>54</sup> While we often think of images as wide windows 'open on to the world', Berger argues that they are a frame in which a modicum of the visible has been deposited and captured.<sup>55</sup> Charlotte Peevers, along these lines, accurately shows that for an image to be intelligible, there must always be a frame that enforces a 'proper way of seeing'.<sup>56</sup>

These snapshots (as the editors call them) offer us a vignette not only of how practitioners and scholars view the world but also of how international law itself claims authority over a normative universe by rendering it legible to its gaze.<sup>57</sup> As one traverses through the images, one realises the immense power that is exercised when — to borrow the words of the 1933 Montevideo *Convention on the Rights and Duties of States* — one stands before 'the eyes of international law'.<sup>58</sup> As a frame itself, 'international law constitutes and produces the objects it governs rather than simply regulating pre-existing objects'.<sup>59</sup> This, of course, also holds true for law's subjects, which are also created and not merely given.<sup>60</sup> Unsurprisingly, many of the contributions use images to explore international law's world-making aspirations, which shape objects and subjects in its own

<sup>51</sup> See, eg, Costas Douzinas and Lynda Nead (eds), *Law and the Image: The Authority of Art and the Aesthetics of Law* (University of Chicago Press, 1999); Leif Dahlberg (ed), *Visualizing Law and Authority: Essays on Legal Aesthetics* (De Gruyter, 2012); Peter Goodrich and Valérie Hayaert (eds), *Genealogies of Legal Vision* (Routledge, 2015); Linda Mulcahy, 'Eyes of the Law: A Visual Turn in Socio-Legal Studies?' (2017) 44(S1) *Journal of Law and Society* S111; Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 'Law Is a Stage: From Aesthetics to Affective Aestheses' in Emiliios Christodoulidis, Ruth Dukes and Marco Goldoni (eds), *Research Handbook on Critical Legal Theory* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2019) 201, 204.

<sup>52</sup> Franz Kafka, 'Before the Law', tr Willa Muir and Edwin Muir in Franz Kafka, *The Complete Stories*, ed Nahum N Glatzer (Schocken Books, 1971) 3.

<sup>53</sup> Fleur Johns, *Non-Legality in International Law: Unruly Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2013) 187 n 8.

<sup>54</sup> John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972) 8.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid* 109.

<sup>56</sup> Charlotte Peevers, 'USAID Rice — Haiti' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 515, 515. On framing in and beyond international law, see Matthew Windsor, 'Narrative Kill or Capture: Unreliable Narration in International Law' (2015) 28(4) *Leiden Journal of International Law* 743; Martin Wählich, 'Cognitive Frames of Interpretation in International Law' in Andrea Bianchi, Daniel Peat and Matthew Windsor (eds), *Interpretation in International Law* (Oxford University Press, 2015) 331.

<sup>57</sup> Hohmann and Joyce (n 12) 1.

<sup>58</sup> *Convention on Rights and Duties of States*, opened for signature 26 December 1933, 165 LNTS 19 (entered into force 26 December 1934) art 2.

<sup>59</sup> Julia Dehm, 'One Tonne of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (1tCO<sub>2</sub>e)' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 305, 305.

<sup>60</sup> Hohmann, 'The Lives of Objects' (n 12) 31. See also Alain Pottage, 'Introduction: The Fabrication of Persons and Things' in Alain Pottage and Martha Mundy (eds), *Law, Anthropology, and the Constitution of the Social: Making Persons and Things* (Cambridge University Press, 2004) 1.

image.<sup>61</sup> As Wouter Werner notes in his contribution, '[t]he objects brought together ... also open up the intangible phenomenon of international law to sensual experience; they make its presence felt through visual re-presentation'.<sup>62</sup>

'Re-presentation', as Nicholas Davey and Desmond Manderson remind us, is not merely a 'second version' of the original.<sup>63</sup> It is a re-enactment, a bringing forth, a first contact that once again becomes direct.<sup>64</sup> This can be seen clearly in Ruth Buchanan and Jeffrey G Hewitt's contribution, in which they use the 'Treaty Canoe' created by artist Alex McKay to explore the theatrics of legality.<sup>65</sup> By installing this object at the lobby of the Osgoode Hall Law Library, the authors invite the passer-by to become a spectator and encounter the object's tale of law, history and empire.<sup>66</sup> Along these lines, James EK Parker uses the gavel to remind us that listening is also a way of looking.<sup>67</sup> Law and its objects cannot be merely invoked; they must be performed, framed and displayed so that law's authority might emerge.

Like the family who visits the local zoo to look at animals, the spectator might think she has opened this book to merely stroll through its images. However, just as Berger recalls, what might appear to be a simple operation (looking at the animal) is rather a complex exercise of *seeing* animals through the institutional framework of a 19<sup>th</sup> century public institution with deep connections to empire, enlightenment and aspirations of civilisation.<sup>68</sup> By using images to interrogate international law's visuality and material culture, this volume offers a prime opportunity to reflect on what it means to see *in, through* and *as* international law. It renders visible that which international law prefers to keep hidden: 'a mode of legibility structured by international law', which is 'both the *effect of* and the *enabling condition for* ... international legal regulation'.<sup>69</sup>

### III FROM INTERNATIONAL LAW'S MATERIALITY TO MATERIALITY'S INTERNATIONAL LAW

Bearing all of this in mind, it is clear that this volume is enmeshed in (and perhaps even co-produces) an openness for plurality and heterodox international legal theory. Despite any possible shortcomings, the book does in fact fulfil its

<sup>61</sup> Julia Dehm (n 59) 305, 307; Sara Dehm (n 34) 350; Lang (n 23) 385. See generally Luis Eslava, 'Istanbul Vignettes: Observing the Everyday Operation of International Law' (2014) 2(1) *London Review of International Law* 3.

<sup>62</sup> Werner (n 14) 67.

<sup>63</sup> Desmond Manderson, *Danse Macabre: Temporalities of Law in the Visual Arts* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) 9–10, quoting Nicholas Davey, 'Gadamer and the Ambiguity of Appearance' in Francis Halsall, Julia Jansen and Tony O'Connor (eds), *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices from Art History, Philosophy, and Art Practice* (Stanford University Press, 2009) 147, 150–2.

<sup>64</sup> Manderson (n 63).

<sup>65</sup> Ruth Buchanan and Jeffrey G Hewitt, 'Treaty Canoe' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 491, 493, quoting Peter Goodrich, 'Screening Law' (2009) 21(1) *Law and Literature* 1, 3; Alex McKay, 'Treaty Canoe' (Sculpture, 1999) <<http://treatycanoe.ca/>>, archived at <<https://perma.cc/TV4T-43E9>>.

<sup>66</sup> Buchanan and Hewitt (n 65) 491–3.

<sup>67</sup> James EK Parker, 'Gavel' in Jessie Hohmann and Daniel Joyce (eds), *International Law's Objects* (Oxford University Press, 2018) 214, 215.

<sup>68</sup> John Berger, *About Looking* (Writers and Readers Publishing, 1980) 19–20.

<sup>69</sup> Julia Dehm (n 59) 307 (emphasis in original).

goal of contributing ‘to the international legal theoretical landscape whilst offering inspiration for further research and ongoing debate on the questions it raises’.<sup>70</sup> In my view, one promising avenue for further scholarship is to turn this book’s premise on its head: to interrogate the normative dimensions of objects, artefacts and infrastructures. What would happen if instead of having international law as a possessive noun with objects under its ownership (international law’s objects), we ask what forms of governance ‘things’ exercise (objects’ international law)? By shifting the object of study from the embodiment of legal form to the normative push and pull of the material artefacts, critical scholars could delve further into the different ways in which power is exercised beyond the confines of the written text.

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<sup>70</sup> Hohmann and Joyce (n 12) 3.

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