



Seminar

ARYO MAKKO

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*Informal Empire and the Small State:
Sweden-Norway and the New Imperialism, 1875-1914*

Tuesday, 10 April, 11:15 a.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
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S W E D I S H
C O L L E G I U M
for ADVANCED STUDY

ABOUT ARYO MAKKO

Aryo Makko graduated with degrees in History and Political Science from the University of Gothenburg and received his Ph.D. in History from Stockholm University in 2012. He has held visiting posts at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, the University of Oxford and Harvard University. He was appointed Associate Professor (docent) at Stockholm University in 2016.

Makko's main fields of research include nineteenth- and twentieth-century international history as well as nationalism, migration and diaspora among Middle Eastern minorities. His first monograph, *Ambassadors of Realpolitik: Sweden, the CSCE, and the Cold War*, was published in 2016. He has also co-edited *The Assyrian Heritage: Threads of Continuity and Influence* (with Önver Cetrez and Sargon Donabed, 2012); *I främmande hamn: den svenska och svensk-norska konsulstjänsten 1700–1985* [In Foreign Ports: The Swedish and Swedish–Norwegian Consular Service, 1700–1985] (with Leos Müller, 2015); and *Neutrality and Nonalignment in World Politics during the Cold War* (with Juhana Aunesluoma and Thomas Fischer, 2016).

As a Pro Futura Scientia XI Fellow, Makko will embark on a new research project entitled 'Neutrality and the Kremlin: A Transnational History' and complete an edited volume on European neutrality and the Soviet Union for the Harvard Cold War Studies Book Series (with Mark Kramer and Peter Ruggenthaler, expected in 2017-18).

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the role of the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway in the European imperialist expansion during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, an era often described as 'Age of Empire'. Its main purpose is to offer a fresh perspective on the relevance of economic aspects in general and shipping in particular to the foreign policy of smaller European states like Sweden-Norway. The paper is based on the first examination of the Swedish-Norwegian consular service in Africa, the West Indies and Southern and Eastern Asia. It departs chronologically and thematically from the order established by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and the subsequent expansion of European imperialism, and theoretically from theories of free trade imperialism and informal empire.

Sweden-Norway could not keep up with the military build-up of great powers such as Great Britain, France and Germany. At the same time, the Nordic union had one of the world's largest merchant fleets at its command. Its king and government also shared the belief of other Europeans about 'the white man's burden' to spread civilization. A growing number of consulates all over the world helped Swedish and Norwegian manufacturers, merchants and missionaries to establish a presence that enabled them to participate in and profit from the globalizing economy and the exploration of colonized territories. At its peak in 1914, the Foreign Service of Sweden-Norway commanded over 160 consulates with a large number of increasingly professional staff. With growing significance came greater prestige and an increasingly intimate relationship between the diplomatic corps and the consular service.

The paper suggests that the military superiority of the European great powers forced their smaller neighbors into the role of second or third rank powers but also enabled them to participate in the New Imperialism and employ practices that have been defined as informal empire and colonialism without colonies.