

EISS 2024 - Annual Conference



INSTITUTE
OF POLITICAL STUDIES
Faculty of Social Sciences
Charles University

Thursday 27 June 2024 - Friday 28 June 2024

Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Scientific Programme

The Annual Conference is structured around two categories of panels. 'Closed panels' are recurring year-over-year and are pre-established by the EISS. 'Open panels' are proposed by participants.

Closed Panels

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Defence Cooperation and Military Assistance

For nearly all states, various forms of defense cooperation and military assistance are central to their national security policies. This can take the form of bilateral and multilateral arrangements, or of more structured and institutional cooperation through organizations such as the African Union, the EU, NATO or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of various forms of defense cooperation or military assistance, often on a regional or sub-regional level. It can also take a variety of forms, from joint military training and exercises to operational planning, procurement and defense-industrial research. This panel invites papers on defense cooperation and military assistance in a broad and inclusive sense, from a variety of disciplines (history, political science, sociology, etc.) and of analytical, theoretical and empirical perspectives. Papers may cover: responses to traditional security threats (Russia's military assertiveness or China's rise, etc.), or more diffuse risks and challenges (terrorism, proliferation, migration, human smuggling and the impact of global climate change). Papers may also cover the creation and evolution of defense institutions, cooperation arrangements whether in bi-, tri-, or 'minilateral' ways and, last but not least, the organizational and operational aspects of innovation within the context of defense cooperation.

Military Interventions

With the winding down of large-scale boots-on-the-ground multinational missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, it has become apparent in both policy and academic circles that large-scale military interventions are but one option among others. Many other kinds of military interventions have been and are being launched and implemented, ranging from military assistance, to more 'agile' counterinsurgency, drone fighting, peacekeeping, and aerial interventions, among others. Recent work has investigated the politics of forming multinational coalitions for launching military interventions. Other contributions have explored the politics of implementation, looking at caveats and actual behavior of troops on the ground. A third strand has explored the implication of military interventions for the civil-military relations of the home country when those soldiers return home. Notwithstanding recent advances, within the field of security studies, there is little clarity about the conceptual, theoretical and empirical underpinnings of different kinds of military interventions with important implications for both scholarship and policy. This panel welcomes contributions on different types of military interventions and potential comparisons. Contributions are welcome from a variety of disciplines (history, political science, sociology, etc.) and may shed light on conceptual, theoretical and empirical aspects of the ongoing debate on military interventions within the security studies debate in dialogue with other neighboring fields such as peace and conflict research, war studies and military sociology.

Private Actors, Armed Conflict and the State

Private and extra-legal actors are at the center of politics today. A proliferation of these actors — including mercenaries, private security companies, cartels, gangs, local militias, and rebels, among others — has been identified as the central source of the state's loss of monopoly over the use of violence and influence over its territories and communities. Throughout the world, these actors have been fulfilling political functions through the use and threat of violence and by cultivating complex and overlapping relationships with each other, local communities, and the state. The behaviors of these actors and interactions between them, local communities, and the state have significant political and social consequences that we are only beginning to understand. The panel

aims to explore these complex links and interactions at the local, national and transnational levels. It aims to bring scholars seeking to understand the history, dynamics, and policy implications of this increasingly complicated landscape. It intends to address the following questions: How and why do extra-legal actors use violence, and what are the consequences of this violence? How and why do these same actors seek to provide goods and services to communities and create social and political orders? How have states responded to these actors, and why have they sometimes chosen to collaborate with and support them and others to combat them fiercely? How have citizens and local communities responded to these actors? What moral and legal challenges do these interactions imply? The panel welcomes diverse theoretical and methodological approaches to the connections between private and public spheres in international security.

Military Technology

This panel addresses the interaction between global security, conflict and technology. Recent technological advances in diverse domains ranging from uninhabited and autonomous systems, robotics to cyber malware, and artificial intelligence and quantum computing are on the verge of transforming the use of force. Technology has also empowered a novel set of actors with an influential role in global security. The dynamics of military innovation, its causes and consequences, are changing. Hence this panel encourages submissions that conceptualize military technologies either as explanandum or as explanans. Preference will be given to those papers that link a systematic understanding of technologies with fundamental questions in International Relations, such as cooperation and conflict, balance of power and hegemony, or continuity and change. This call is explicitly open to diverse disciplines (political science, sociology, history) and welcomes different theoretical orientations, since the panel primarily aims to encourage dialogue between scholars with a substantive interest in the interaction between politics and technologies.

Intelligence

Intelligence is deeply embedded within national and transnational security policies and practices. The panel's aim is to understand the various roles intelligence plays at the strategic and tactical level. How do intelligence actors reduce uncertainty and provide a knowledge advantage? What are the problems and pitfalls of intel analysis and organizations? With intensified global great power rivalry, the focus of Western intelligence services is increasingly on closed authoritarian regimes. How do intelligence services work with the collection of intelligence and analysis of such targets? Do authoritarian regimes have an information advantage as they can take advantage of vulnerabilities inherent in the openness of Western democratic societies? By comparing systems and practices from a range of historical and contemporary cases, as well as state and non-state contexts, the panel aims to provide a rich picture of the current status of Intelligence Studies. We are particularly keen to bring together panelists from various disciplinary backgrounds and with diverse theoretical approaches and methodologies.

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

The topics of terrorism and counter/anti-terrorism have in recent years received a huge amount of scholarly attention. The increase in scholarship led to deeper knowledge of and insights into the causes, processes, activities, and ends of terrorism of as well as responses to terrorist struggles. There is a certain temptation to write studies that summarize existing knowledge, rather than producing innovative, original and/or empirical contributions. There are challenges both regarding the consistency of the scholarly base and the content of contributions. First, there is a lack of a solid and consistent base of scholarship, due to lack of long-term funding, and difficulty to access primary, empirical data. Second, the field is somewhat obsessed with fashions and topical studies. There is a deep-rooted lack of appreciation of the history of (counter/anti)-terrorism and of case studies that are not in the constant spotlight of media and political attention. At the same time, scholarship has devoted much time and effort to a few main lines of inquiry (e.g. definitions, the 'root causes' discussion, radicalisation and de-radicalisation, WMD and terrorism, AQ/ISIL). Meanwhile, on the theoretical level, the establishment of Critical Terrorism Studies has created a welcome diversity. However, rather than encouraging exchange, scholars have often resorted to

entrenchment in response to this development. This panel is explicitly open to diverse disciplines, such as history, political science, legal studies or sociology. We invite contributions which address any, or possibly all, of the above challenges and which discuss a variety of issues and cases around terrorism and counter/anti-terrorism. This panel intends to offer a multidisciplinary perspective and contribute towards joint research projects.

Political Economy, Technology and the Defence Industry

This panel aims to explore how economic, industrial, and technological dynamics influence defence issues. The war in Ukraine, the strategic competition between China and the United States, and the European quest for strategic autonomy or technological sovereignty (among other factors) highlight how issues related to technological innovation, industrial policy and economic competitiveness are increasingly important for understanding geopolitical competition, and how the traditional distinction between high politics (security) and low politics (economics) is increasingly blurred. Understanding the links between economics, industry and technology is important because we are seeing partly contradictory trends. On the one hand, the return of war to the European continent and the numerous global crises and wars has refocused attention on the productive and innovative capacity of the defence industry and on the fundamental role of the state in directing economic, technological and industrial efforts for security and defence purposes. On the other hand, technological innovation in areas such as artificial intelligence, biotechnologies, cloud computing, machine learning and quantum computing is being driven by a mix of private actors - big tech and start-ups - and in value chains far removed from the traditional defence-industrial pipeline. This panel invites diverse papers that explore the links between political economy, technology, and defence, and welcomes contributions from all theoretical approaches and disciplines. Papers may focus on national, multilateral, or comparative dimensions and may be either empirically rich case studies and/or more theoretical explorations. Contributions may relate to, but are not limited to, the three areas: (1) The role of technological innovation in the security and defence sector; (2) The reconfiguration of the role of private actors (big tech and start-ups) and defence industries and their impact on defence procurement, the defence market and arms transfers; and (3) The role of the state and industrial policy in steering technological innovation and economic competitiveness in the security and defence sector.

Weapons of Mass Destruction: Non-Proliferation and Arms Control

This panel serves as a platform to present and discuss new research on arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). In light of Russia's nuclear threats and Iran's growing nuclear program, the panel especially encourages submissions that focus on strategies and institutions to prevent the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons. The panel aims to bring into conversation scholars from different disciplines, such as political science, history, international law, and science and technology studies (STS), and seeks to facilitate a multidisciplinary dialog on non-proliferation and arms control. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, the tension between nuclear disarmament and deterrence; the role of civil society in managing nuclear risks; and international verification. Preference will be given to submissions that have a clear European angle and address both past patterns and current challenges.

Open Panels

Open Panels are meant to broaden the range of existing themes in the EISS and to provide greater latitude to the participants to contribute to the definition of the EISS program.

Open Panel

Poster Session

Roundtables

Keynotes