

Security in a Time of ‘Polycrisis’?

University of Leeds

18th-19th May 2023

The term ‘polycrisis’ has gained prominence over recent years as a way of articulating the sum of the multiple, intersecting crises of our contemporary world. Interlocking environmental disasters, a global pandemic, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the potential for nuclear conflict are happening within entrenched and often entrenching structures of militarisation, exploitation and inequality. We live, according to this discourse, in an age of potential plural catastrophe. This age of polycrisis emphasises the importance of understanding how these multiple crises intersect and affect each other.

‘Security’ as a logic through which to comprehend and respond to this circumstance has been increasingly stretched while also becoming inescapable. As a concept, security rests on the drawing of lines between security/not security and security/insecurity. These lines have been critiqued for producing and reproducing imperial, gendered, racist, violent and exclusionary structures. But does an age of polycrisis dissolve even the ability to make the distinctions on which security as an organising logic relies?

The Centre for Global Security Challenges (University of Leeds) and the European Journal of International Security (British International Studies Association and Cambridge University Press) are pleased to announce a joint conference on the theme of ‘Security in a time of Polycrisis’. The conference will take place on 18-19th May 2023 at the University of Leeds.

Finding us in Leeds...

The conference will take place in the Newlyn Building, University of Leeds (24 Mount Preston Street, Woodhouse, Leeds, LS2 9ND). Details about getting to the University are available [here](#).

For those travelling to Leeds from elsewhere, there are several accommodation options available in the city centre.

Any questions?

Please email Didar with any questions at pr16mdi@leeds.ac.uk

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Conference Programme

Thursday 18th May – Day one Location: Newlyn Building SR1.07	
10am	Registration and Coffee (room LG.02)
10.15am	Welcome
10.30am-12.15pm	Panel 1: Security in a time of 'polycrisis'
12.15-1.15pm	Lunch (will be provided)
1.15-3pm	Panel 2: Everyday security
3-3.15pm	Coffee break
3.15-5pm	Panel 3: Quantitative approaches to polycrisis
5pm	Drinks reception

Friday 19th May – Day two Location: Newlyn Building SR1.07	
9.30-11.15am	Panel 4: Transnational inequalities
11.15-11.30am	Coffee break
11.30am-1.15pm	Panel 5a: CVE and policing
11.30am-1.15pm	Panel 5b: Critical security *
1.15-2pm	Lunch (will be provided)
2-3.45pm	Panel 6: Environmental security

*Panel 5b will take place in Newlyn Building LG.02

To reduce plastic waste, we will not be providing bottled water. Please bring your own bottle or reusable cup to fill at the water fountains on campus. We will also not print programmes. A QR code to access the final programme will be available in all conference rooms.

Panel details

Panel 1	Security in a time of ‘polycrisis’ Chair: Laura Considine
Time: Date: Location:	10.30-12.15pm 18/05/2023 Newlyn Building SR1.07
Panel 1 papers:	
Security in a Time of Polycrisis: The Sovereign Meets the Wicked Problems, Super Wicked Problems, and Social Messes Christopher Ankerson (New York University)	
Existential Silos: In Search of Blind Spots in the Scholarship on the Future of Climate Change and the Nuclear Threat Benoît Pelopidas, Thomas Fraise, Sterre van Buuren and Caroline Sasaki-Pericou (SciencesPo)	
Integrating the polycrisis away: the EU and the conflict in the Sahel Katharine Pye (London School of Economics)	
Risk politics in the ‘Polycrisis’ – can risk-risk analysis enhance security? Duncan McLaren (Lancaster University)	
Grand Strategy as an antidote to polycrisis? Rob Pinfold (Durham University)	

Panel 2	Everyday security Chair: Edward Newman
Time: Date: Location:	1.15-3pm 18/05/2023 Newlyn Building SR1.07
Panel 2 papers:	
How does a crisis mean? A participatory approach to studying polycrisis in the everyday Ann-Kathrin Benner and Holger Niemann (University of Hamburg)	
Crisis and Connectivity in Somalia: Translocal war in 2023 Jethro Norman (Danish Institute for International Studies)	
Finding power in pop culture: Youth politics and everyday violence in film Alba Griffin (University of Leeds)	

Information insecurity on social media at the time of polycrisis

Seher Kurt (University of Glasgow)

Beyond crisis: the everyday politics of nuclear weapons

Laura Considine (University of Leeds)

Panel 3	Quantitative approaches to polycrisis Chair: Marius Mehrl
Time: Date: Location:	3.15-5pm 18/05/2023 Newlyn Building SR1.07
Panel 3 papers:	
A Just Transition? Fossil Fuel Reforms and Civil Unrest Edward Newman and Margherita Belgioioso (University of Leeds)	
Fighting Back or Charging Forward? The Role of Geographic Revisionism in Conflict Luis De La Calle (University of Sheffield)	
Switching Sides and Saving Skin: Military Effectiveness and Defection during Conflict Marco Binetti (University of the Bundeswehr Munich) and Christoph Dworschak (University of York)	
Learning from Failure: Tackling War Recurrence in Protracted Peace Processes Giuditta Fontana, Argyro Kartsonaki, Natascha Neudorfer & Stefan Wolff (University of Birmingham)	
Choosing Mass Atrocities: Explaining Tactical Shifts by Armed Groups Helena Hinkkainen (University of Leeds)	

Panel 4	Transnational inequalities Chair: Sahla Aroussi
Time: Date: Location:	9.30-11.15am 19/05/2023 Newlyn Building SR1.07
Panel 4 papers:	
Centring non-western approach to security: human security in China Chi Zhang (University of St Andrews)	
Africa, Polycrisis and International Law: Assessing Africa's Commitment to International Law Negotiations on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems Ishmael Bhila (University of Portsmouth)	
Localisation amidst the global food crisis: Consumption and the resilience of food sovereignty as alternative to neoliberal food security Mel Yan (University of Leeds)	
COVID, Cartels and Collusion: Rigging inclusion and exclusions and the Political Economy of Pharma Owain Williams (University of Leeds)	
Displacement Without Migration': Towards a Normative Framework James Souter (University of Leeds)	

Panel 5a	Policing and CVE Chair: James Worrall
Time: Date: Location:	11.30-1.00pm 19/05/2023 Newlyn Building SR1.07
Panel 5a papers:	
The Prevent Duty: The Extra-Ordinary in the Everyday Natalie James & Jack Holland (University of Leeds)	
How is CVE framed as a solution to extremism? A case study on Bangladesh Md. Didarul Islam (University of Leeds)	
Securitization of Foreigners in Wartime Finland Mika Suonpaa (The University of Turku, Finland)	
Normalizing the exception: why democracies use soldiers as cops Matteo di Celso (University of Genova)	

Panel 5b	Critical security Chair: Kingsley Edney
Time: Date: Location:	11.30-1.00pm 19/05/2023 Newlyn Building LG.02
Panel 5b papers:	
A linguistic approach to investigate the media construction of risks to life Rakan Alibri (University of Lancaster)	
Peacekeeping in Crisis: A feminist ecological framework for understanding why peacekeepers commit sexual exploitation and abuse. Emily Gee (University of Leeds)	
#Critical Security Studies: understanding the impact of social media on critical security studies Louise Pears (University of Leeds)	
Do Nukes go “POP”? Making the case for engagement with popular culture in nuclear weapons politics. Emily Faux (Newcastle University)	

Panel 6	Environmental security Chair: Viktoria Spaier
Time: Date: Location:	2-3.45pm 19/05/2023 Newlyn Building SR1.07
Panel 6 papers:	
Who can govern from a house on fire? International order, state responsibility and the problem of solar geoengineering Danielle Young (University of Leeds)	
Temporality, Crises and Energy Security: Theorising Resilience in International Relations Pauline Heinrichs (Royal Holloway, University of London)	
“Our Way of Life is not up for Negotiation”: Societal security and the question of climate engineering Olaf Corry (University of Leeds)	
In the shadow of security: Disaster risk reduction, slow emergencies and the implicated processes of spatio-temporal production Sebastien Nobert (University of Leeds)	

How can one lead on the climate emergency in an age of polycrisis?

Richard Beardsworth (University of Leeds)

About

The Centre for Global Security Challenges is a large, interdisciplinary research centre, hosted in the School of Politics and International Studies at the University of Leeds. We possess multi-method expertise in the study of security, covering a range of substantive areas. Our research is structured in six themes, covering health, climate, gender, conflict, terrorism, and order. The Centre was founded in 2018. We rebranded in 2019 as the Centre for Global Security Challenges, tying in with a School vision premised on understanding and addressing the politics of global challenges. CGSC has quickly grown to become an intellectual home for 50+ researchers, spanning multiple disciplines (e.g., Media, Law, and History, as well as Politics, IR, and Development). The Centre is directed by Jack Holland and Laura Considine.

CGSC is home to three leading journals, one of which is the *European Journal of International Security* (EJIS). EJIS publishes theoretical, methodological and empirical papers at the cutting-edge of security research. Welcoming high-quality research from around the world, EJIS covers all areas of international security. The journal is particularly concerned to make connections and build bridges, both between different disciplinary and theoretical perspectives, but also across regional boundaries. The journal is edited by Edward Newman, Jason Ralph, and Jacqui True (Monash), and has seven associate editors from CGSC.

Thanks

As well as CGSC and EJIS, we would like to thank Mohammed (Didar) Islam, Laura Rose Brown, and Izzy Jenkinson for their help organising and marketing the conference.