

# IPS Belgium Forum Workshop(s): Parallel Inquiries into Scandal, Violence and the Anthropocene

**Panel 1: Scandal and  
international (dis)order**  
Rapporteur: Jamie Johnson  
(University of Leicester)

**Panel 2: (Re)scaling violence**  
Rapporteur: Maria Martin de  
Almagro (Ghent University)

**Panel 3 : Questioning the  
Anthropocene**  
Rapporteur: tba

## Plenary session

Chair: Jef Huysmans (Queen Mary University)

- Call for expression of interest:  
Summary of research and how it connects to the theme of the panel  
(200 to 500 words)
- Short biography
- Apply to the workshop with the QR code

**Deadline: June 30th, 2023**



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## Panel 1: Scandal and international (dis)order

International politics is characterized by scandals of war (Abu Ghraib, Bucha), finance (Panama Papers, Libor), governance (Congo Papers, Qatargate), labour (Rana Plaza, Foxconn), sexual exploitation (#MeToo, Oxfam), race (Windrush, the US' travel ban), civil liberties (Snowden, Cambridge Analytica), and the environment (Deepwater Horizon, Dieselgate). Scandal is not just the label that is used to denote the events that surround norm transgression.

These are moments of disorder that reveal the unmaking and remaking of international order. More specifically, scandals expose the generation, stabilisation, and foreclosure of political trajectories through 'circulations and distributions of power, community, identity, ethics, norms, affect, representation, violence, and inequality' (Johnson et al, 2022, 624).

Regardless of the ubiquity and significance of scandal in international politics, only a handful of works in the field of International Relations have been dedicated to this topic (Hozic and True, 2016; Crosbie and Sass, 2017; Johnson 2017). The goal of this panel is to stimulate young researchers that work on relevant research topics in international political sociology to interact with the notion of scandal in international politics. Preferably, they ought to be familiar or interact with concepts such as atrocity, crisis, naming and shaming, memory, truth, reconciliation, transitional justice, silence, secrecy, impunity, and harm.

No previous experience with the notion of scandal is required.

The following questions will structure the debate in this panel:

- What are the functions of scandal? How do they work?
- Which political trajectories are made (im)possible through scandal?
- Where do responsibility and accountability figure with scandal?

Rapporteur: Jamie Johnson (University of Leicester, UK)  
Junior rapporteurs: Zeger Verley (University of Antwerp),  
Morgane Ghys (Université Libre de Bruxelles)

## Panel 2: (Re)scaling violence

The use of mass rape as a weapon of war in Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the racialised politics of migrant exclusion and exposure to death at the borders of the European Union, the January 6 insurrection in the United States Capitol, and the lasting effects of colonial exploitation are but a few examples of how violence permeates relationships at the micro level of the individual, meso level of groups and organizations, as well as macro level of societies and the international.

Academic research in IPS has drawn upon a variety of disciplines to make sense of systems of violence, including gendered and economic violence, security, conflict and militarism, (post-)colonialism and neoliberal capitalism, and their interconnectedness across multiple scales. This has also involved a meta- reflection on epistemic violence as historically embedded in the dynamics of knowledge production about international politics. Concomitantly, the rising field of sociology of violence has aimed to analyze violence as a deeply ingrained, socially constructed phenomenon, with the objective of understanding its causes and effects. The problem of what violence 'is' - how it is named, defined, recognised, understood and explained, and by whom - remains a key question across the social, the political and the international realms.

We welcome contributions centered around the following themes:

- Conceptualisations of multi-scalar 'continuum of violence' as inspired by feminist IR or feminist security studies perspectives
- Critical, postcolonial and decolonial engagements with epistemic and structural violence in IR and IPS
- Epistemological and methodological reflections on studying violence as a productive and contested 'object' in IPS
- Empirical explorations of sites and regimes of violence in IPS, including (but not limited to) migration and border regimes, militarism and warfares

Rapporteur: Maria Martin de Almagro (Université Libre de Bruxelles)  
Junior rapporteurs : Cindy Regnier (Université de Liège/  
Université Libre de Bruxelles), Laura Luciani (Université de Gand)

## Panel 3 : Questioning the Anthropocene

The Anthropocene has become a major concept in the current environmental movement. From the rise of oceans threatening small island states to droughts and floods in Europe, from the collapse of biodiversity to the lack of recognition of environmental refugees, the Anthropocene seems to be an all-encompassing term representing a multitude of realities – all tied to an ever worsening disaster. On one hand, this concept is perceived as crucial to understand the link between human societies and the destruction of ecosystems. On the other, it has been viewed as a limited representation, flattening the dynamics of systemic domination and inequalities exacerbated by the ecologic crisis.

Studies on the topic have mobilized all domains of research. IPS has both contributed to knowledge on the Anthropocene as well as questioned the relevance of this concept. Through works on decolonial ecology, actor network theory, critical theory, feminist technoscience those studying the intricacies of the international have contributed to a growing body of research.

The goal of this panel is to foster encounters between the different contributions of IPS in regard with the Anthropocene/Capitalocene/Plantationocene, understanding the social, political, ecological and ontological crisis at hand. From the micro-level to the large-scale violence of wars, deforestation and industrialization, this panel aims to foster understanding on the multiple ways to study the politics of nature in IPS and beyond.

We welcome contributions and papers addressing the following questions:

- How does IPS question the concept of Anthropocene? How does the study of the Anthropocene/ Capitalocene/ Plantationocene challenge the boundaries of IPS?
- What does it mean to study the Anthropocene/Capitalocene/Plantationocene in IPS? Through what methods?
- How does studying the Anthropocene challenge classical ontological conceptualizations of international politics?
- How can different conceptions of the ecological crisis meet?

Rapporteur: tbc  
Junior rapporteurs: Anne Nguyen (Université Libre de Bruxelles), Chloé Thomas (Université Saint-Louis)

## Plenary session

The day will end with a plenary session chaired by Jef Huysmans (Queen Mary University).

This will provide an opportunity to take stock of the research lines and contributions identified, as well as potential synergies and future publications.

## Scientific committee :

**Morgane Ghys (Université Libre de Bruxelles), Julien Jeandesboz (Université Libre de Bruxelles), Laura Luciani (Ghent University), Anne Nguyen (Université Libre de Bruxelles), Cindy Regnier (University of Liège / Université Libre de Bruxelles), Chloé Thomas (Université Saint-Louis Bruxelles), Zeger Verleye (University of Antwerp).**