

The 10<sup>th</sup> European Workshops in International Studies, Amsterdam, 12-14 July 2023  
'Are we doomed? Rethinking war and peace in world politics'

Call for Papers  
EWIS WORKSHOP 2022

**Rethinking speculative security:  
The politics of anticipation in an age of uncertainty**

Workshop conveners: Marijn Hoijtink ([marijn.Hoijtink@uantwerpen.be](mailto:marijn.Hoijtink@uantwerpen.be)) and Delf Rothe ([rothe@ifsh.de](mailto:rothe@ifsh.de))

In 2013, a major workshop organized at the University of Amsterdam brought together a group of international scholars in International Relations (IR) and related disciplines to critically discuss the rise of speculative forms of security in the aftermath of 9/11. The 2000s saw a proliferation of speculative security practices and technologies to cope with a range of uncertain future threats: from major terrorist attacks and the global impact of climate change to the threat of a global pandemic. Scholars in IR and critical security studies examined these speculative practices, including worst-case scenarios, risk matrixes, role plays or computer models to understand how these imagined or enacted the future in a certain way. A common trope of critique in this literature was related to the neoliberal rationality that underpinned these future-oriented security practices, which could be traced back to a common genealogy of speculation in both finance and security.

Ten years (and one pandemic and a major European war) later, we live in a different world – or so it seems. Proclaiming the 'death of the future' (Berardi 2011), prominent thinkers have argued that in the context of climate change and the Anthropocene the future as an open horizon of possibility has vanished. Security, in this reading, has become increasingly presentist – in the sense that contemporary security practices are seeking real-time adaptation to a rapidly changing world rather than prevention of future harms. Other scholars, however, have stressed the progressive and transformative potential of speculation and imagination. Research on speculative fiction, speculative realism, or indigenous forms of speculation, for example, all revolve around alternative, affirmative accounts of speculation that crucially depart from the speculative practices flourishing in the 2000s (see e.g. *The Uncertain Commons* 2013). Finally, technological, and political developments have changed speculative security on the ground. Advances in technologies including AI, satellite remote sensing, computer modeling, or cloud platforms, transform practices of speculative security – promising prediction and mitigation of future risks with greater precision and accuracy.

The workshop will bring together 20 international scholars to rethink speculative security and discuss how speculative security has been *transformed* as well as *transvalued* over the past decade. We invite contributions that address changing discourses and practices of speculative security from a diversity of perspectives, including (but not limited to) poststructuralist, feminist, post-/decolonial, new materialist or constructivist approaches. We furthermore welcome creative or arts-based methodologies that approach speculative security, for example, through fictional writing, film, or design. To overcome the Western bias of earlier works on speculative security, we especially invite scholars from the global South to apply and will work with EISA and the local organizers to provide travel as well as visa assistance.