

13th European Workshops in International Studies (EWIS 2026)  
İzmir University of Economics, 1-3 July 2026.

**CALL FOR PAPERS** / Deadline: 11 February 2026

Workshop title: Dark IR

This workshop explores the possibilities of critique and praxis beyond the failing promises of emancipation and political subjectivity in International Relations (IR). It invites participants to rethink the assumed equivalence between critique and emancipation, and to consider forms of thought and practice emerging from 'negative' positionalities, namely experiences of despair, hopelessness, and loss of meaning situated at the radical margins of political life. Dark IR opens an exploratory strand within IR that challenges the discipline's largely critical and post-critical affirmative assumptions about political subjectivity and emancipation. It begins from a central claim: the violence produced by modernity's exclusionary structures and relations of dispossession cannot be resolved through emancipatory frameworks or the creation of new political subjects, because such violence is not anomalous but constitutive of the modern world itself. Engaging debates on entanglement and pluriversality, amongst others, Dark IR unsettles the belief that political violence can be overcome through improved relations, recognition, inclusion, or liberation. Instead, it asks what critique might become once we abandon the assumption that social and political relations can be purified of their fractures. Drawing on thinkers such as Claire Colebrook, Denise Ferreira da Silva, and Calvin Warren, Dark IR contributes to a broader disciplinary 'negative turn' increasingly visible within IR (Chipato and Chandler, 2025; Malaviya and Torrent, 2026). Conscious of the limits of modern emancipatory promises, this turn works with concepts such as refusal, disaffiliation, withdrawal, disruption, unboundedness, and disconnection to identify critical possibilities not grounded in resolution or assimilation, but in subtraction and separation. At a time when critical frameworks appear exhausted in the face of escalating violence, humanitarian catastrophe, authoritarian international orders, ultra-conservative mobilization and the erosion of rigorous knowledge production in the face of post-truth reactionary narratives, Dark IR offers a timely and necessary intervention.

The workshop will invite participants to contribute to the consolidation of this conversation by engaging with the following themes and questions:

1. Ontological possibilities of Dark IR: How can dominant IR narratives of connectivity and modern liberal progress be critically disturbed by rethinking violence, exclusion, and asymmetry in global politics as constitutive features rather than aberrations? What kind of ontological possibilities thrive beyond the colonial reduction of reality to knowable categories? What becomes of ontology when the world's fundamental incoherence is foregrounded?
2. Methodological experiments with Dark IR: How can knowledge production be uncoupled from the modernist project of disciplining the world into discrete realities? How can concepts such as refusal, disavowal, negativity, unboundedness among others, help theorize world politics beyond the ideal of productive knowledge? What kind of creative methodologies does the foregrounding of negative positionalities make possible?
3. Praxis and politics of Dark IR: What kind of practices of resistance and refusal proliferate beyond the limits of emancipatory politics? What are some everyday and extraordinary methods of responding to the world's crises that emerge beyond the framework of political subjectivity?

Please submit abstract proposals through the EISA online submission system.

Workshop conveners:

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