



The International Collaboratory on Critical Methods in Security Studies

Edinburgh workshop, 12-13 September 2011
Meeting room 1.11, Main Library, George Square

Format:

All papers (except keynotes) will be circulated and read in advance. There will be no formal presentation of papers. Instead each session will begin with the discussant's comments, followed by comments and discussion from all workshop participants.

Programme:

Time	Cluster	Authors/Speakers	Title	Discussant	Chair
Day 1					
9.30		Andrew Neal Claudia Aradau Jef Huysmans Nadine Voelkner	<i>Welcome</i>		
10.00	n/a	Jef Huysmans Claudia Aradau	<i>Critical Methodology in International Relations: Contradictory, paradoxical, unthinkable?</i>	Martin Coward	Andrew Neal
10.50	Coffee				
11.10	n/a	Xavier Guillaume	<i>Collaboratory: collaboration as methodology</i>	Darcy Leigh	Nadine Voelkner
12.00	Keynote	Robin Williams	<i>The Biography of Artefacts: Beyond the single site ethnography</i>		Andrew Neal
13.00	Lunch				
14.00	Genealogies, histories, time	Philippe Bonditti Andrew Neal Sven Opitz	<i>Collaborative genealogy</i>	Rens Van Munster	Jef Huysmans

15.0	Situated knowledge	Manuel Mireanu	<i>The value of</i>	Maria	Claudia
0		Christian Buger	<i>participant</i>	Stern	Aradau
			<i>observation within</i>		
			<i>critical security</i>		
			<i>studies</i>		
15.5	Coffee				
0					
16.1	Situated knowledge	Lara Coleman	<i>Embodying the field:</i>	Peer	Martin
0		Hannah Hughes	<i>a conversation on</i>	Shouten	Coward
			<i>situated knowledge</i>		
			<i>in security studies</i>		
17.0	Mapping	Victoria	<i>Re-routing Maps:</i>	Anna	Rens
0		Loughlan*	<i>On Bourdieu's and</i>	Maria	Van
		Christopher	<i>Latour's mapping</i>	Johansson	Munster
		Alderson*	<i>method(ologie)s in</i>		
		Christian Olson	<i>Critical Security</i>		
			<i>Studies</i>		
18.0	End of day 1				
0					
19.3	Dinner for all participants at B'est, 16 Drummond Street				
0					
Day 2					
9.30	Keynote	Sofie Hellberg	<i>Studying the Agency</i>		Jef
		Stina Hansson	<i>of being Governed</i>		Huysma
		Maria Stern			ns
10.3	Coffee				
0					
10.4	Materiality	Claudia Aradau	<i>The matter of</i>	Sofie	Andrew
0		Martin Coward	<i>method: analysing</i>	Hellberg,	Neal
		Eva Herschinger Owen	<i>discourses and</i>	Stina	
		Thomas	<i>materialities of</i>	Hansson	
		Nadine Voelkner	<i>(in)security</i>		
11.3	Visuality	Can Mutlu	<i>A critical</i>	Helen	Maria
0		Rune Andersen	<i>reappropriation of</i>	Arfvidsson	Stern
		Juha Vuori*	<i>the Delphi Method</i>	n	
12.2	Closing		<i>Where are we at?</i>		

0 discussion

*Where are we
going?*

13.3 **End of day 2**

0

* absent from workshop.



Abstracts:

1. Jef Huysmans, Claudia Aradau

Critical Methodology in International Relations: Contradictory, paradoxical, unthinkable?

What does it mean to approach the discipline of international relations through methodology? What effects does methodology have on the critical and political questions asked by the discipline, how does it shape the modes of inquiry undertaken by students of IR and what relation does it bear with criticality and politicality? Methods have increasingly been placed at the heart of theoretical and empirical research in IR and social sciences more generally. On the one hand, methods are seen to drive research, creativity in social sciences and substantive research projects. On the other, methods appear to have a disciplining or 'hygienising' function, to use John Law's terminology. It is perhaps therefore not surprising that the critical debates in international relations have shifted either towards ontology or towards epistemology. Usually methodology remains at best a background reflection of methods of organising empirical material with ontology, epistemology and theoretical arranging of concepts structuring the discussions. More recently, however, IR scholars have turned a more attentive and critical eye to methodology and have integrated reflections on methods within critical projects. Lene Hansen (2006), for instance, places methodology firmly at the heart of debates in critical security studies. Intervening in the debates about the role of science in IR, Patrick Jackson foregrounds methodology as the main site of reflection. Taking our cue from some of these recent reflections on method and the status of methodology, we argue that methodology can be the key site of bringing ontology, epistemology, theories and data into play with one another. In a sense, we propose to reverse the 'usual' order of discussion. What happens to international relations and our research if we start our theoretical and empirical projects from questions of methodology rather than, say, ontology?

2. Xavier Guillaume

Collaboratory: collaboration as methodology

This contribution seeks to address two related questions: i) how does collaboration work as a methodology to produce knowledge? and ii) how does it constitute a form of critical production of knowledge? First, the paper will distinguish between collaboration and the concept of the collective individual; taking as an example the author's participation to both a collaborative and a collective undertakings, a distinction will be drawn between the two in terms of their differing primary function as either, respectively, a tool of knowledge production or as a tool of disciplinary positioning. Both, however, privilege a form of production and output that counteracts the dominant model of individual production of knowledge. We can thus understand a collaboratory as a form of empowerment, that is, in Isabelle Stengers' understanding, as an "ensemble of processes and recipes through which all members of a collective acquire, thanks to and with the others, its own capability to think, to feel, to decide which it did not possess individually". Starting from a discussion of Paul Rabinow and the members of the Anthropology of the contemporary research collaboratory's reflections on what collaboration and a collaboratory mean, then moving to the author's own experience in collaborative and collective knowledge production, the paper will explore concretely what constitute collaboration as a knowledge production pathway, as a methodology, by considering how it favours the production of questions, the production of a problématique as Belgian philosopher Michel Meyer will put, rather than offering a platform for answering them.

3. Genealogy - Philippe Bonditti, Andrew Neal, Sven Opitz, Chris Zebrowski

Collaborative genealogy

For Foucault, genealogy was a historical activity shaped by the idea of intellectual if not physical warfare, but generally conducted alone in dusty archives. While Foucault cultivated this image of himself, we also know that he found his exalted and solitary position on the lectern at the Collège de France frustrating, dreaming of a time when he could work more collaboratively with colleagues and students (Elden, 2008).

Many have followed genealogy as a methodology, but today, technological developments allow us to respond to Foucault's frustrations in a new way. First, the archive is now online. Second, technology offers unprecedented opportunities for research collaboration. Technology enables researchers to bridge the gap between these two things: what we research and what we write, because the tools are interlinked.

In this chapter we argue that these technologies offer an opportunity for a profound rethink of genealogy as a methodology. Skype, social networking, search engines, Wikipedia and its offspring are built on models of collective use of information and collaborative interaction. They offer an opportunity for a new kind of collaborative work and rapid mobilization on pressing political problems: a force multiplier for intellectual warfare.

A recent example of the power of collective mobilization was the collaborative documentation of plagiarism in the doctoral dissertation of German defence minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, who was subsequently forced to resign. The wiki page GuttenPlag went from nothing to two million page views in two days in February 2011, with many thousands of people contributing to the project.

In reflections on our own wiki-based work on the police containment tactic popularly known as 'kettling', we argue that we have used these tools on a smaller but more intellectual scale. Wikis in particular are designed for online collaboration. They not only create a common platform for multiple contributors, but being online they encourage users to pool their research from multiple online sources, which can then be hyperlinked.

Our aim is not 'crowd sourcing' but a move from the dusty archive to the online archive, an effacement of the individual author in collaboration, a force multiplication of the intellectual skills and knowledge of each, and the possibility for rapid mobilization on an area of critical concern. It is a new way to follow Nietzsche's description of genealogy: 'acting against time, and thus on time, for the sake of a time one hopes will come' (as quoted in Deleuze, 1992, pp. 164-165).

4. Situated knowledge – Manuel Mireanu, Christian Buger

The value of participant observation within critical security studies

Interpretative research holds that in order to grasp the meaning of a situation and the practices that thrive in it we need to get close to it, ideally participate in it. In many ways, the ideal many researchers strive for is the one formulated by traditional ethnography. Yet ethnography's ideal has been challenged in several ways by ethnographers themselves. In the age of globalization spending time in a neat field doesn't suffice anymore. Multisitedness, speed, geographical spread, and the difficulties of positioning the researcher in complex environments are some of the challenges outlined. In this contribution we ask for the value of participant observation within critical security studies. We discuss several examples of attempts of conducting participant observation in a critical security studies context, (including our own). We argue that what is required is close scrutiny to what kind of proximity to our research object is appropriate and intelligible. In some cases researching from distance will be more appropriate, in others classical participation. In summary, we offer a discussion of the costs and benefits of participant observation in critical security studies. Our argument is structured in the following way. In the first substantial section we introduce arguments from different interpretative traditions for why researchers should strive for close proximity, and participate to observe. In our second section we draw on examples of actual research which reveal the practical, and conceptual challenges of conducting participant observation. We conclude in laying out a number of principles, which may assist the researcher in approximating what kind of proximity is useful in a study.

5. Situated knowledge - Lara Coleman, Hannah Hughes

Embodying the field: a conversation on situated knowledge in security studies

Key words: situated knowledge; methodology; security practices; field-habitus; embodiment

In this paper, we explore how reasoning from the standpoint of our own embodiment might offer important insights for developing situated knowledge as critical methodology. We address two questions that have animated the discussions of the Situated Knowledge cluster of the ICCM: how might we understand and theorise the practice of security within broader problematiques and power relations, and how might our own situatedness inform this situating of security? The conceptual tools of Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault animate our conversation into how the field-habitus of security studies - or the analytical categories offered by security studies as 'obligatory grid of intelligibility' - circumscribe what is visible and relevant as an object of analysis so as to engender a de-situating of security. Combining these theoretical insights with Latin American perspectives on modernity and coloniality and feminist approaches to positionality, we emphasise the centrality of embodiment to all

practices of knowledge production. We explore the methodological implications of these works by drawing on our experiences in multiple fields, from the “field” of fieldwork as Lara sought to understand the containment of resistance and Hannah the construction of climate change, to the scholarly “field” through which these practices are to be comprehended and rendered intelligible. Our inability to find an exact fit between the terrains of fieldwork, ourselves and the scholarly discipline in which we are situated, forces us to reflect on these fields and our field-habitus at its limits. This leads us to suggest that by making embodied knowledge and practice a starting point, and by tracing its relationship to and effect upon the fields of interest, new methodological routes open for situating ourselves and our knowledge production in a way that destabilizes the conventional grids of intelligibility.

6. Materiality - Claudia Aradau, Martin Coward, Eva Herschinger, Owen Thomas, Nadine Voelkner
The matter of method: analysing discourses and materialities of (in)security

‘Each one of my books is a way of dismantling an object, and of constructing a method of analysis towards this end’ (Foucault 1981). Foucault’s brief comment suggests that methods of analysis, objects and criticality need to be thought and constructed together. This paper takes seriously Foucault’s insight that methods of analysis, objects and ways of being critical do not exist in separation, but are interdependent and need to be constructed relationally. What do these insights mean for the analysis of material objects and discursivities?

This paper suggests a three-pronged approach to answer the question. First, in order to critically analyse discourses and materialities, objects and subjects of insecurity, it is important to devise methods that analyse relationality. Starting with relationality also avoids becoming engrossed in philosophy of social sciences debates as to whether there is a materiality independent of human representation or discursive construction. Instead, we wish to consider approaches in which subjects and objects are co-constitutive. The separation of humans and non-humans is inattentive to the modes in which the two emerge conjointly.

Second, the notion of relationality as a methodological principle needs to be compounded by that of a *dispositif* or *assemblage*. Adding the notion of *dispositif* to a methodological toolbox allows us to analyse the ways in which relationalities emerge, are strategised, tamed, integrated, resistant, or appropriate. Throughout the Foucauldian ‘*dispositif*’, the Agambenian ‘*apparatus*’, and the Deleuzian ‘*assemblage*’ there are commonalities: the heterogeneous nature of the ensemble; its self-sustaining nature toward a given subject or strategy; and an inherent mobility. This would also guide us methodologically: indicating that we need to identify temporally and spatially sited *dispositifs* to investigate rather than trying to make general determinations as to the political significance of ‘thingness’. There are also important differences that play out in the construction of a method of analysis. The *dispositif* as a methodological principle also needs to be analysed and deployed relationally – both with other concepts such as *apparatus* (Agamben, Barad), *assemblage* (Bennett, Deleuze), *network* (Latour) or *practices* (Laclau and Mouffe, Foucault) and with particular sites and objects of analysis.

Third, taking agency as a method of inquiry allows us to insert questions of politics and transformation at the heart of our methods of analysis. If methods are performative and enact the social, how do we understand their transformative power? How do we analyse the agency of objects in a *dispositif* that relates objects and subjects, discourses and materialities?

To show how a method of inquiry can be constructed by reworking these elements to dismantle objects of insecurity, the paper draws on a series of empirical illustrations, drawn from the authors’ work.

7. Mapping - Victoria Loughlan, Christopher Alderson, Christian Olson
Re-routing Maps: On Bourdieu’s and Latour’s mapping method(ologie)s in Critical Security Studies

Bourdieu and Latour are both now ‘around’ more frequently within the critical security studies literature. In the context of these appearances, the two authors seem to have many commonalities: both self-identify as sociologists; are sometimes categorized under the rather vague heading of “French

theory"; are seen as "constructivists" or even "critical constructivists". Furthermore, both claim to use mapping as a methodology in their inquiry. More implicitly, they both seem to have a spatial/topological representation of social interactions or at least they frequently resort to mapping metaphors in their specific languages. These observations raise interesting questions, such as: what is it, in their spatial methods, methodologies and/ or metaphors that speak to contemporary critical security studies (CSS)? What kind of "interventions" in CSS do they make possible and how have they been used in CSS? How important or decisive should actually "the map" or a mapping be for a Bourdieuan or Latourian take on CSS? Put simply, does the language of maps make a difference?

Not only are these questions engaging in themselves, they also open up an interrogation of methodology in CSS as it pertains to the map and mapping. In other words, how can mapping be methodologically articulated in order to grapple with contemporary CSS issues? Pursuing this question seems a necessary endeavour given the spatial, topological and/ or geographical categories that are traditionally so prevalent in the mindset of security professionals, but also given their emerging prevalence within the CSS literature. Thus, the aim in this paper is to explore, pursue, and interrogate the possibility of developing mapping as a methodology for CSS.

As mentioned above Bourdieu and Latour are not only present in the CSS discourse but have already articulated mapping as a methodology. Thus, we seek to take the efforts of both as our starting point. The paper is structured into three parts: First, we will account for Bourdieu's and Latour's undeniable differences, both from ontological, epistemological and methodological points of view, with a particular focus on their understanding and uses of mapping. Our aim here is to highlight their respective specificities and contributions. Secondly, we will ascertain to what extent and under what conditions their mapping methodologies, that is their spatial metaphors and approaches to mapping, can enter into a dialogue one with another or can even be combined. Thirdly and lastly, we seek to then situate these findings within the larger debate in CSS and particularly in ICCM, on criticality and methodology. Here, we are interested in two aspects: on the one hand we hope to contribute to the continuing problematization of issues of methodology while on the other we hope to provide a sketching of an applicable mapping methodology.

8. Visuality - Can Mutlu, Rune Andersen, Juha Vuori **A critical reappropriation of the Delphi Method**

The notion that images are ambiguous is a staple in theory interested in visuality (Barthes, Mitchell etc.), yet in the critical security literature that deals with images surprisingly little attention has been directed to how to critically engage with or exploit this ambiguity (Hansen, Chouliaraki, Williams, Shapiro, Campbell (?), with the possible exemption of Möller). This paper seeks to re-appropriate the Delphi method developed by RAND in the 1940-1950s and turn it into a vehicle to produce dissenting 'critical' readings of images, i.e. to produce readings of ambiguity. This is done through shifting the underlying epistemology of the method in order to turn its gaze inwards and towards the production of its results rather than exclusively to the results themselves.

Such a move allows the method to both look at content and process. Content-wise the method is used to examine what analysts interpret the image in question to 'speak' or 'want', thereby enabling the 'second tier analysts' to work with the ambiguity generated, and map the political space produced by specific images. In terms of process, the method sheds light on how readings of images are produced and altered when contested, thus speaking to both 'criticality' and to the process of interpreting images, the process that Barthes from a semiotic viewpoint termed 'countering the terror of uncertain signs'.

In the terminology of Bleiker (2001), the aim is to take the Delphi method from its original effort to eliminate individual bias and enhance the accuracy of 'mimesis' - the ability to reproduce the objects of study - to being a method of highlighting the aestheticity of both images and analysis, i.e. foregrounding the inevitable interpretative choices and strategies of reading images. Do 'critical' approaches to security form an 'interpretative community' (Fish 1980)?