

International, Political, Sociology



IPS-COST Conference

Sciences Po Paris, France
26-27 October 2007

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

The Conference

The joint IPS/COST conference that will take place next October 26-27 at CERI-Sciences Po (Paris) is organized in the broader scope of the launching of the journal *International Political Sociology (IPS)*. IPS is the Journal of the section with the same name at the International Studies Association (ISA). Its newness lies in the combined initiative of researchers from Europe, Canada, the USA and Australia actually interested in making this journal a new venue for theoretical and empirical innovation in International Relations. Our attempt is to encourage a transdisciplinary general perspective in the analysis of contemporary world phenomena by offering a space in which will be articulated contributions from internationally distributed researchers. The journal of high academic standard aims at offering incredible publications opportunities for the international relations' research community.

The geographical distribution of the members of the journal, of the COST network and of the associated research programs such as Challenge, far from being a hurdle, opens up for new grounds of research and exchange. We believe the conference will be an excellent opportunity to launch this international research dynamic, and will be the occasion to discuss the editorial orientations the journal may take and cross visions it will propose. The conference thus aims at deepening this innovative research dynamic among international researchers interested in the transversal approach which the IPS journal intends to encourage. It is the occasion for the ones who have not the opportunity to join the ISA annual conferences to "physically" participate to the process and to reinforce the involvement of the European members of the journal in the editorial directions and decisions. On this occasion the first three issues of the journal will be presented to a large public of researchers coming from all Europe. It will illustrate the Journal specificities and the benefits of a transversal approach drawing from diverse backgrounds such as IR, political science, sociology or political geography...

This conference is co-organized with COST Action A24 'The evolving social construction of threats'. The Action consists of a number of overlapping research networks working in critical social constructivist analysis of insecurities. The research networks supported through this Action will be represented at the conference. For more information on the COST Action A24: www.cost-a24.info. For specific information on the Critical Approaches to Security collective that the COST Action is supporting and who will be represented at the conference: www.casecollective.org. The Challenge programme is supportive of this action. It deals with the relation between liberty and security in Europe focusing on the illiberal practices of the liberal regimes. www.libertysecurity.org. CERI in Sciences Po is hosting IPS and the Challenge programme: www.ceri-sciences-po.org, Sciences Po is the major leading institution for political science in France <http://www.sciences-po.fr/english/index.html>.

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The Journal

Aims and Scope:

International Political Sociology was added to the group of International Studies Association journals published by Blackwell last January 2007. Responding to the diversification of both scholarly interests and regional concerns in contemporary international studies, it especially draws on traditions of historical, legal, economic and political sociology, as well as on the burgeoning literatures on socio-political theory. Recognizing that so many of the primary forms of scholarship informing contemporary international studies have built upon narrowly Anglo-American forms of social science in general and the discipline of political science in particular, it especially seeks to address the kind of sociological analysis that has characterized thinking about international studies in so many other parts of the world.

Even though its traditions are just as distinctive and diversified as those of international political economy, sociology as so far had relatively little impact on international studies. Similarly, even though some of the most influential debates about the future of international studies have drawn on canonical traditions of sociopolitical theory, these traditions have received very little informed analysis in international studies. In the first instance, therefore, the journal seeks to create a bridge between political sociologists, international relations specialists and sociopolitical theorists. In its initial phase, it is especially seeking to invigorate ties between European and North American researchers. In seeking to enable a more serious debate between academics on both sides of the Atlantic in

political sociology and international relations, the journal aims to encourage theoretical innovation and open new routes for empirical research, thereby bringing together the very different interdisciplinary cultures that have developed in each setting. It is especially worth noting in this context the role this journal might play in overcoming many of the delays in the circulation of ideas that have done so much to distort relations between intellectual communities in Europe and North America over the past generation. This might in turn help dispel some of the misunderstanding that has so often led to unproductive accounts of "mainstream" and "marginal" research traditions in international studies.

In many respects, however, the most exciting possibilities opened by this journal might well arise from beyond the usual circuits of European and North American scholarship. All forms of international studies still face many difficulties responding to the concerns arising from so many other regions, and we are under no illusions about the hurdles involved in this respect. We do, however, believe that the broadening of the intellectual agenda signalled by the substantive interests of the journal will have positive effects in overcoming some of the parochialism of the existing literature.

In order to help broaden the community engaging in international studies, the journal will facilitate the submission of articles in languages other than English. The possibilities currently under consideration are French, Spanish, Italian and German; a limited range perhaps, but sufficiently challenging in practical terms, and one that might be expanded over the longer term. Although many academics are able to write in English, this is often a slow and laborious process. Even outstanding thinkers are put off submitting journal articles in a foreign language when this precedes the decision of whether to publish or not. Consequently, articles will be initially reviewed in the language in which they are written. Only once a positive decision to publish has been taken will authors be requested to translate the article, or to arrange for its translation into English.

Primary responsibility for setting up the operating principles and procedures for the journal rests with Didier Bigo (with the institutional support of Sciences-Po in Paris) and R.B.J. Walker (of the University of Victoria in Canada). Bigo is taking overall responsibility for the coordination of the editorial process in Paris and serves as the central point of contact with the publisher, the Association and the authors for publication decisions. Walker is taking a central role in shaping the strategic direction of the journal, publication decisions, and the regional diversification of the journal.

These two editors are complemented by eight Associate Editors, many of whom are expected to respond to work coming from different language communities. One is also taking responsibility for a forum section. In addition, there is an Editorial Board of internationally recognized academics from across the spectrum of disciplines: international relations, sociology, political science, sociopolitical theory, law and anthropology.

Topics and Running Themes for the first years

The journal encourages contributions on specific themes, running for several issues and chosen so as to stimulate debate on the character and future direction of the discipline.

One such topic might be an historical sociology of the discipline of IR, one concerned to better understand, for example, its development in some part of

the world and not in others, or the link between subjective ideas, values, behaviours and objective professional positions within academic institutions, or the relation between academics and political professionals, or why the self-understanding of the discipline seems to be in perpetual debate and crisis. This might help researchers to be more self-conscious of and self-critical about their way of understanding their material.

Another might involve discussion of the major works of various sociologists and their impact to the study of IR; for example, reflections upon the works of Bauman, Beck, Bourdieu, Foucault, Luhmann, Tilly, and so on would be welcome in this context. Other possibilities include work on global patterns of urbanization, international policing, military sociology, political opinion and communication, the sociology of culture, the sociology of political movements, and the transnational effects of the reshaping of national, cultural and religious identities.

In addition to these main three themes, we are currently considering papers dealing with:

1. the critical discussion of the notions of frontiers, boundaries and limits;
2. the analysis of the contemporary status of claims about states of emergency and states of exception, derogatory measures, and routinised technologies of surveillance and control;
3. the analysis of resistance through law; and
4. the analysis of airports as sites at which to assess freedom of movement, capitalist economies, security technologies and the detention of foreigners.

Papers dealing with these issues or clearly related to international political sociology have to be sent to didier.bigo@libertysecurity.org or ips@ceri-sciences-po.org

