

PACS – Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies Newsletter

September 2019

From IOVIS to PACS

In November 2018, PACS, the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, was established as an inter-faculty scholarly network for research on the causes of political violence, on strategies to build peace and on the governance of conflict. PACS is the successor to iovis that was initiated in 2017 by the VU Vereniging.

PACS brings together researchers from five faculties – law, social sciences, behavioral and movement sciences, religion and theology as well as humanities. The interdisciplinary composition of PACS is also reflected in its board, which consists of the following VU scholars:



Wolfgang Wagner (chairman) is professor of international security at the department of political science and public administration of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Before coming to the VU, he worked at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) and the universities of Tübingen, Frankfurt and Konstanz. Between 2007 and 2017 he was the co-director of the interdisciplinary program “Law and Politics of International Security”. His research examines the politics of military interventions, particularly the influence of parliaments and political parties in decision-making on the use of force and the role of punitivity in international relations.



Tanja Aalberts is professor of politics of international law and vice dean for education at the faculty of law. Previously, she was co-director of the program “Law and Politics of International Security”.

	<p>Marijn Hoijtink is an assistant professor in International Relations at the Department of Political Science at VU Amsterdam. Her research interests include emerging security technologies and their relation to the politics of risk, militarism and weapons research, and the global circulation of security and military technologies. She has recently received a four-year Veni grant from The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) to study the politics of engineering lethal autonomous weapons systems. She is co-director of the LLM program Law and Politics of International Security (LPIS) at VU Amsterdam.</p>
	<p>Arno Akkermans is director of the Amsterdam Law and Behavior Institute (A-LAB) and of the Amsterdam Centre for Comprehensive Law (ACCL). Within A-LAB several faculties of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) join forces in conducting interdisciplinary research in the field of law and behavior. The ACCL is one of the research centres of A-LAB. His research focus is on the impact of law and legal procedure on the wellbeing and health of individuals, in the context of civil procedure in general and of the settlement of personal injury claims in particular.</p>
	<p>Paul van Lange is professor in Social Psychology and distinguished research fellow at the University of Oxford. His research interests include altruism, generosity, cooperation and empathy as well as competition, aggression, corruption and violence. He combines psychological, economic and ecological insights to explain a broad range of behaviors, applied to, among others, group dynamics, climate change and inter-group conflicts (e.g. in sports).</p>
	<p>Srdjan Sremac is assistant professor at the Faculty of Religion and Theology at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and co-director of the Amsterdam Center for the Study of Lived Religion at the same university. He is the co-founder of the Centre for the Study of Religion, Politics and Society in Novi Sad, Serbia. He is also the managing editor of Palgrave Studies in Lived Religion and Societal Challenges (Palgrave Macmillan). His interdisciplinary research interests include war-related trauma, religious nationalism, religion and sexuality, lived religion of marginalized groups and post-conflict reconciliation studies.</p>



Ronald Kroeze is assistant professor of history at the Faculty of Humanities. He teaches courses on the history of modern Europe, peace and conflict, democracy, corruption and global good governance. Kroeze has been involved in several Dutch and European funded research projects. Currently, he is project coordinator of the programme 'Colonial Normativity. Corruption and difference in colonial and postcolonial histories of empire and nations' that is funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). He is also a co-founder of the international network 'Politics and Corruption', funded by the French CNRS. Kroeze is a member of the Amsterdam Young Academy. He was a visiting scholar at the University of Oxford (Corpus Christi College), University of Warwick, University of Avignon and Humboldt University of Berlin.

Minor Peace and Conflict Studies: A message from the new coordinator

After a successful pilot year of the minor Peace and Conflict Studies in 2018-2019, we have recently welcomed about 100 students who are all eager to learn more about conflict, its causes and different approaches to peace-making. Not all of them enrolled in the entire program; some also take one or more of the individual courses. The fact that the number of students has doubled, indicates that the minor was received well last year and that word has spread that it is worth coming to VU to become part of our Peace and Conflict Studies community.



During our welcome session on 3 September, it turned out that our students now come from all over the world, including Australia and Canada. It is precisely the interdisciplinary character and the combined focus on theory and practice that give the programme its appeal to students whose ambition it is to work in this field. We welcome any ideas or contributions from the PACS network that could be of interest to the students in the minor.

A new academic year also meant a small number of changes in the coordination of the minor courses and of the programme in general. We greatly welcomed Marieke de Hoon who took over Maartje Weerdesteijn's role as coordinator of the course 'Political Violence and the Human Condition'. At the same time, Marijn Hoijtink, who coordinated the minor last year,

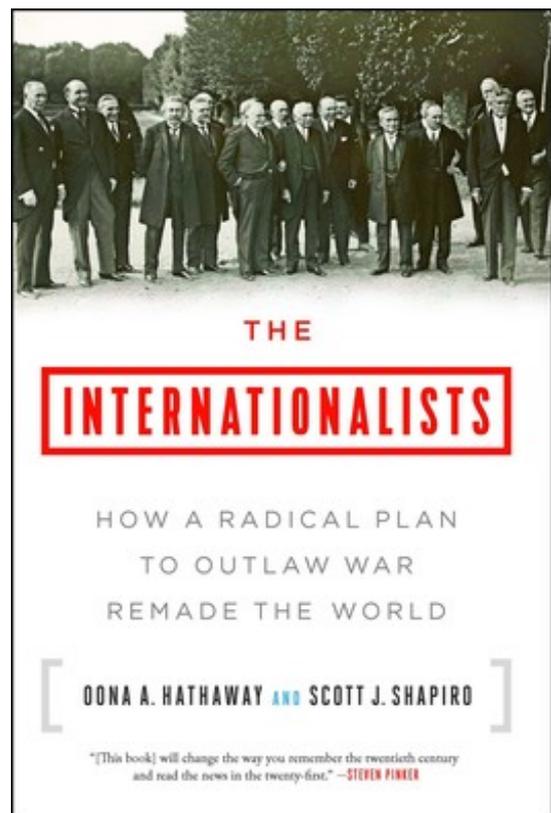
obtained a VENI grant from NWO which allows her to conduct research on lethal autonomous weapons and robotics.

As Marijn's successor as coordinator of the minor programme, I will briefly introduce myself. My name is Lenneke Sprik, and since early 2017 I have been a lecturer in the VU LLM programme Law and Politics of International Security. As of March this year, I also teach and supervise master theses in the Political Science and Public Administration (pre-)master programmes. I have a background in International Relations and Military Law, and I have conducted research on the international law on peacekeeping, and on the issue of accountability for failing to protect civilians in particular. A fun-fact about myself is that I am passionate about (South-) Eastern Europe and Slavic culture and languages.

If you would like to share an event or announcement with the minor students or if you have any questions about the minor, feel free to contact me at coordinator.pcs.fsw@vu.nl or h.m.sprik@vu.nl.

PACS launch event with lecture by Scott Shapiro

The minor peace and conflict studies has been at the beginning and still is at the heart of PACS. The PACS launch event is therefore also closely connected to the minor: On 12 December, Prof. Scott Shapiro (Yale University) will present and discuss his book "The Internationalists" that has been widely acclaimed since its publication in 2017. The book is mandatory reading in the minor because it addresses a core question in peace and conflict studies, namely how war can be overcome, from an interdisciplinary perspective. Together with his co-author Oona Hathaway, Scott Shapiro discusses the contribution that international law can make in its political and historical context. More specifically, Hathaway and Shapiro argue that the international agreement to outlaw war that was concluded in 1928 ushered in a new way of thinking about armed force. Although World War II shows that the effect was not immediate, Hathaway and Shapiro attribute the decline of warfare after 1945 to a large part to the new principles and norms of the 1928 Paris Pact.



The lecture will take place from 15.30 to 17.15 in HG-10A00 (main building).

PACS conference in 2020

On 24 and 25 September 2020, PACS organizes a conference at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam to bring together scholars from various disciplines who work on political violence, peace and conflict. We are happy and proud that Prof. **Steven Pinker (Harvard University)** accepted the invitation to give the keynote speech. The rector, Vinod Subramaniam, will also address the participants on the first day.

Next to a keynote and a plenary discussion, the conference is organized in four sections with one or two panels each that zoom in on ongoing research projects hosted by PACS:

- Norm violations and punishment in international politics (organized by Jan-Willem van Prooijen, Wolfgang Wagner, Wouter Werner, Barbora Hola, Ronald Kroeze and Linet Durmudoglu;
- Transgenerational transfer of trauma. The role of religion in the construction of narratives of polarization in post-conflict generations, organized by Theo Willigenburg, Fernando Enns and Srdjan Remac;
- The social ecology of trust and peace versus distrust and aggression, organized by Paul van Lange, hein Daanen and Wouter Botzen;
- The distributed work of warfare: technology, expertise and the legitimation of war , organized by Tanja Aalberts and Marijn Hoijtink.

For these sections, there is a call for papers that can be found on the PACS homepage (https://a-lab.vu.nl/nl/Images/CfP_tcm205-918658.pdf).

The conference is generously sponsored by the VU Vereniging.

Fellows

The PACS community has grown to ca. 30 fellows. In each newsletter, we introduce a few of them.



Joris van Wijk is a graduate in criminal law and criminology. In 2007 he published his PhD research Luanda-Holanda on irregular asylum migration from Angola to the Netherlands. Next to his academic career, Joris has been working for the International Organization for Migration and as an independent policy advisor. Joris directs the research programme Empirical and normative studies, directs the master programme International Crimes, Conflict and Criminology and co-directs the Center for International Criminal Justice (CICJ). He supervises the Escaping Justice Project and co-supervises the When Justice is Done Project and In Limbo Project. His research interests lie at the crossroads of criminology, international criminal justice and (irregular) (asylum) migration. His main expertise concerns issues related to criminology, international criminal law, human trafficking- and smuggling, asylum, terrorism and temporary migration.

	<p>Hein Daanen is a professor at the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences. There are strong indications that peace and conflict are dependent on climate. In the human performance lab at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam he studies the effect of temperature, humidity and other climatic factors on human performance, well-being, sensation and behavior. This research contributes to a better understanding of the effect of climate and weather on human behavior, aggression and the risk for conflicts. A list of publications is available at http://members.ziggo.nl/daanen</p>
	<p>Bianca Beersma is a professor in organizational behavior at the Department of Organization Sciences at VU University. She received her Ph.D. in 2002 from the University of Amsterdam, where she wrote her dissertation on small group negotiation and team performance. Her research focuses on organizational cooperation and conflict at the individual- and small-group levels of analysis. For organizations, and the individuals and groups that operate within them, finding a balance between own interests, ideas and opinions and those of the larger collective is essential for achieving effective outcomes. Bianca's research focuses on the ways in which individuals and groups deal with the challenges and opportunities this creates. Specific research topics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict management - Team functioning and performance - Negotiation and post-negotiation processes and outcomes - The social functions of gossip in teams <p>Bianca also organizes training sessions and workshops for organizations on these topics.</p>
	<p>Rosanne Anholt is a Lecturer and PhD Candidate at the VU Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration. Her research focuses on how humanitarian and development organizations interpret and use the policy buzzwords resilience, humanitarian-development nexus and local ownership in responding to the impact of the Syria crisis in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon.</p>
	<p>Sanne Groothuis is a PhD candidate and junior lecturer at the John Stuart Mill College of the VU, where she teaches politics and philosophy seminars. In her PhD project, she researches racism and religious discrimination in counter-radicalisation policies. Specifically, she investigates if, how, and because of which factors national Western European counter-radicalisation policies racialize certain (especially religious) groups, taking Swiss and Dutch policies as case studies.</p>



Wouter Botzen is professor of economics of climate change and natural disasters at the Department of Environmental Economics, Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM). His main research expertise is climate change economics with a particular focus on risk, natural disaster insurance, behavioural economics of decision making under risk, and natural disaster risk assessment and management. Within the context of PACS he analyses environmental risks which may contribute to conflict.



Barbora Hola works as Senior Researcher at the NSCR and as associate professor at the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology at Faculty of Law. She has an interdisciplinary focus and studies transitional justice after atrocities, in particular (international) criminal trials, sentencing of international crimes, rehabilitation of war criminals and life after trial at international criminal tribunals. Besides her research and teaching in the Master's programme International Crimes and Criminology, Barbora is a co-director of the Center for International Criminal Justice, a knowledge centre dedicated to interdisciplinary studies of mass atrocity crimes and international criminal justice (www.cicj.org) and a co-chair of the European Society of Criminology Group on Atrocity Crimes and Transitional Justice (<https://eactj.org>).



Jan-Willem van Prooijen received his PhD from Leiden University in 2002. He currently works as an associate professor at the department of Experimental and Applied Psychology at the Faculty of Behavioral and Movement Sciences, and as a senior researcher at the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR). He is interested in the dark side of human beings, and his research has three main thematic pillars: (1) conspiracy theories, (2) unethical behavior, and (3) radical ideologies. Jan-Willem van Prooijen published his work in journals such as Perspectives on Psychological Science, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, and Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, and published various books including The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories (Routledge, 2018) and The Moral Punishment Instinct (Oxford University Press, 2018). He received research funding from various sources, and was in 2006 awarded the Early Career Contribution Award by the International Society for Justice Research (ISJR). He is currently associate editor for Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, has been Associate Editor for European Journal of Social Psychology and Social Justice Research, and has been on the Editorial Board of various prestigious journals, including JPSP-IRGP and Psychological Science. He served as president of ISJR from 2016 to 2018.



Prof. dr. R. Ruard Ganzevoort is professor of practical theology and dean of the Faculty of Religion and Theology at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He published extensively on subjects like religion and trauma, sexuality, pastoral and spiritual care, and public theology. He served as board member and president of the International Academy of Practical Theology and the International Society for Empirical Research in Theology. He is the founder of the Amsterdam Centre for the Study of Lived Religion and the founding co-editor of the Palgrave Studies in Lived Religion and Societal Challenges. He traveled and taught in (post)-conflict areas like Ambon, Myanmar, South Africa, and the Democratic Republic Congo. Concurrent with his academic work he has run a hotel for eight years and has been a member of the Senate in the Dutch Parliament since 2011. See www.ruardganzevoort.nl for a full CV.



Lianne Boer is assistant professor of Public International Law at the Faculty of Law, and a Research Fellow of the Centre for the Politics of Transnational Law. She obtained her PhD cum laude in April 2017, and previously was a visiting PhD scholar at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law in Cambridge (UK), and at the Law Faculty of Lund University, Sweden. Her teaching portfolio includes Public International Law (LL.B., B.A. and LL.M.) and Politics of International Law (LL.M.), and she is the Program Coordinator for the Law in Society LLB at the Faculty of Law. Ongoing research projects include an edited volume together with Sofia Stolk, titled *Backstage Practices of Transnational Law* (Routledge, 2019), as well as a piece on the grammatical positioning of international law as an acting subject.



Maartje Weerdesteijn is assistant professor at the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology at the Faculty of Law and researcher at the Center for International Criminal Justice. Maartje obtained a PhD from Tilburg University, Department of Criminal Law, a Master in International Crimes and Criminology from VU University Amsterdam (cum laude), and a Bachelor in European Studies (cum laude). She used to work as a lecturer at the History of International Relations Department of Utrecht University and was a visiting scholar with Griffith University Australia at the Griffith Asia Institute in 2014. She is an interdisciplinary scholar and focuses on the causes of, and the potential response to, genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. She focuses mostly on perpetrators, dictators in particular, and the role of the international community in stopping them from perpetrating the crimes.

	<p>Marieke Oprel is a PhD candidate in political history at the Faculty of Humanities. She is also lecturer at the Radboud Universiteit in Nijmegen. Her research focuses on Dutch citizenship policies towards German nationals declared 'enemy citizens' in the aftermath of World War II. She analyses how notions of citizenship and belonging function as mechanisms of in- and exclusion in times of post-conflict and transition. Furthermore, she investigates the moral, political and financial considerations at stake in Dutch policies of 'Rechtsherstel' (Legal Redress). Her fields of interest are the 'long' Twentieth Century, in particular, European history post-1945; history and memory of WWII; citizenship studies, transitional justice; Dutch-German bilateral relations. A list of publications and additional activities is available at https://research.vu.nl/en/persons/marieke-oprel</p>
	<p>Eddy van der Borcht is Desmond Tutu Chair Reconciliation since 2009 and have done research on issues of the contribution of the theological concept of reconciliation in conflicts. He has especially focused on the role the narratives by religious actors in an era of identity politics.</p>

Homepage

PACS now has its own homepage, hosted by A-Lab: <https://a-lab.vu.nl/nl/PACS>.

Among other things, the homepage also includes links to the videos of four lectures by PACS scholars that were recorded in spring 2018:

Wolfgang Wagner on Democratic Politics and Military Missions

Bianca Beersma on The Psychology of Negotiation and Conflict Management

Fernando Enns on New Wars, Terrorism and Peace-building in the 21st Century

Marit Sijbrandij on Psychosocial Consequences of War-related Trauma