

Metaphors in International Security

Monday, 21 June 2021 11:00 (1h 30m)

This panel explores the role of metaphorical illustrations in constructing, legitimising, and producing discourses and practices of security in International Relations. Practitioners as well as scholars of IR draw extensively on metaphors to describe and justify security measures and violent actions, ranging from nuclear armament to anti-immigration policies and specific forms of warfare. At the same time, metaphors may be used to render international interactions as violent, threatening, or harmful. These metaphors mediate how the international and its workings are constructed, perceived, and discussed. Whether employed by foreign policy decision-makers, international organisations, or scholars of International Relations, metaphors are not neutral but convey specific representations, problem constructions, and prescribed solutions for issues of international politics. This panel examines various types of metaphors in International Security, the role these metaphors play in representing world views, how they condition violent practices, and how different metaphors produce different effects. The presentations will engage with various methodological approaches in Interpretive IR and multiple facets of metaphorical constructions in the interpretation of International Relations while focusing on empirical material from the intersections of international politics with medicine, sports, and cybernetics.

Track Classification: Interpretivism in International Relations Working Group