



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Social and
Political Science



APeCS Conference 2025, University of Edinburgh, 2-3 June

Future-Making in Times of Conflict, Violence and Insecurity

Call for panels/workshops/roundtables

Future-making is an embodied social, cultural and political practice (Appadurai 2013). Anchored in the present, futures are the ground for struggles and debates. In contemporary contexts of violent conflict, powerful actors use narratives of security, peace and development to justify politics of the future that often not only shatter the future hopes of others but are also realized at the expense of the freedom, security and fundamental rights of less powerful actors (Hage 2016; Willow 2020). While insecurity and violence limit the possibilities of a peaceful and just future for all, they also inspire refusal and resistance, enabling marginalized and oppressed people and groups to imagine and invent new forms of belonging and living together beyond the political order of the nation-state and its violent boundaries. It is this paradoxical entanglement of “fearful anticipation” (Das 2007, 98) and hopeful striving for something new and largely unknown that makes conditions of conflict and violence an important ethnographic source to explore how alternative politics of the future emerge in the present and from positions and places of marginality and relative powerlessness.

In social movements, political activism and everyday life, people and groups engage in “prefigurative politics” (Graeber 2009) in a variety of ways. By linking present practices to imagined and desired futures, these politics provide laboratories for

future-making that turn oppressive conditions into transformative processes. This ongoing work of planting and growing alternatives takes place in the margins and cracks of the colonial, capitalist and heteropatriarchal social and political order of our times.

To explore these diverse and contested forms and possibilities of future-making in times of conflict, violence and insecurity, the APeCS conference 2025 invites proposals for panels/workshops/roundtables that explore themes such as (but not restricted to):

- Future-making “from below”, including grassroots, NGO and other civil society initiatives that engage in re-making, re-imagining and re-enacting futures from marginalized and oppressed positions and places.
- Exclusionary and violent future-making practices and their contestation.
- Prefigurative politics and other ways of practicing and embodying desired futures in political activism and everyday life.
- Creating and nurturing radical hopes in times of conflict and violence.
- Everyday practices of peace and building bridges across social and political divides and lines of conflict and (radical) disagreement.
- Power relations and the ways gender, race, class, ethnicity etc. shape practices, politics and possibilities of future-making.
- Possibilities for and practices of a future/prefigurative anthropology of peace, conflict and security.
- Temporalities and spaces of future-making.

Timetable:

- Deadline for submission of panel proposals: **12 January 2025**
- Selection of panels and notification of panel convenors by conference organizers: **15 January 2025**
- Launch of the call for papers: **20 January 2025**
- Deadline for submission of paper proposals: **10 March 2025**
- Selection of papers and notification of presenters by panel convenors: **17 March 2025**

The deadline for submission of panel/workshop proposals is **January 12, 2025**. The panel proposals should be open to paper applications and not with presenters already selected. Please note that the APeCS conference 2025 is an in-person event. There will be a limited amount of funding available to cover travel expenses for precarious scholars. Please send your proposal and/or inquiries about the conference to the APeCS network convenors, Livnat Konopny-Decleve (University of Edinburgh) and Pascale Schild (University of Bern; swisspeace/University of Basel): apecs_convenors@easaonline.org; livnat.decleve@ed.ac.uk; pascale.schild@unibe.ch

Appadurai, Arjun. 2013. *The future as cultural fact: Essays on the global condition*. London, New York: Verso.

Das, Veena. 2007. *Life and Words : Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Graeber, David. 2009. *Direct Action: An ethnography*. Edinburgh: AK Press.

Hage, Ghassan. 2016. "Questions Concerning a Future-Politics". *History and Anthropology*, 27(4): 465-467.

Willow, Anna J. 2021. "The World We (Re)Build: An Ethnography of the Future." *Anthropology and humanism* 46(1): 4–20.