Building on Ruins or Patching up the Possible? Reinscribing Fieldwork Failure in IR as a Productive Rupture

https://www.e-ir.info/2020/04/05/building-on-ruins-or-patching-up-the-possible-reinscribing-fieldwork-failure-in-ir-as-a-productive-rupture/

BERIT BLIESEMANN DE GUEVARA AND XYMENA KUROWSKA, APR 5 2020

This is an excerpt from *Fieldwork as Failure: Living and Knowing in the Field of International Relations*. Get your free copy from E-International Relations.

Fieldwork research hardly ever goes as planned. Struggles around issues such as getting access to research participants or what participants are willing to share are often frustrating to the extent that they generate feelings of failure in the researcher. Sometimes fieldwork realities make it impossible to carry out projects as originally proposed. We have certainly been there; indeed, most fieldworkers have. Fieldwork failure in IR should thus be business as usual or even an opportunity for research breakthroughs. It should be somewhat akin to Karl Popper's idea of falsification (Popper 1959), narrative scholarship's notion of surprise as opportunity to enrich analysis (Ravecca and Dauphinée 2018), or the interpretivist idea of blunders as a way to reconstruct social meaning in the field (Shehata 2006). But we rarely experience failure as part of experimentation or productive opening. If something goes wrong, it is not an occasion to learn but a reason to despair.

This is a logical response to the fact that failure, including fieldwork failure, is an academic taboo. The discourse of the neoliberal university presupposes control and glorifies success and its quantification. Openly admitting or embracing fieldwork failure in this context would mark a breach – with tangible reputational damage for the researcher and her university. Fieldworkers are caught in a web of structural, epistemological, and situational contradictions. Though fieldwork was an unorthodox research strategy for IR scholars as the discipline came of age, it is now in high demand. Despite this, training remains scarce. An exciting new opportunity to widen the methodological, ethical and analytical horizons of IR, fieldwork is often circumscribed by the discipline's overriding empiricism (Vrasti 2008). Its instrumental approach, based on the logic of data extraction, blends well with neoliberal demands for entrepreneurship. Fieldwork supplies evidence as the researcher leaves the proverbial ivory tower to get her hands dirty in an effort to generate not only data but also impact. It has thus become a staple of grant applications. The double quality of a greater engagement with those who 'do' everyday international politics, on the one hand, and the danger of having this engagement hijacked by neoliberal logics, on the other, is also visible in the process of institutional ethics clearances which aim to ensure both the safe treatment of human subjects and the researcher, but which also aim to safeguard the university from liability. This process is based on a 'duty of care' principle which is often inadequate when research takes place in violent and/or illiberal contexts (Russo and Strazzari, forthcoming).

In short, both a political economy and an academic cottage industry have consolidated around fieldwork. Although a thoughtful, immersive, hands-on literature on fieldwork as practice of knowledge production is growing (Glasius et al. 2018, De Goede, Bosma, and Pallister-Wilkins 2019, Daigle 2017, Bliesemann de Guevara and Bøås forthcoming), there is less sustained reflection on what the demand for fieldwork means for academic subjectivity. Looking fieldwork failure in the eye is a productive locus from which to start such reflection. Afterall, failure is not a correctable obstacle but shows certain ideology at work (Straehler-Pohl and Pais 2014). It marks a moment of dislocation and a

sense of displacement, which exposes a set of relations that are usually hidden or subdued. When recognised as such, it confronts us with the darker corners of IR life.

In this concluding chapter, we contextualise fieldwork failure sociologically and reinscribe its meaning. This is not a consolatory tale, and we do not excuse the researcher from the responsibility to exercise craft and due care in their fieldwork. Examining the status of failure helps, however, to integrate the politics of the discipline with the politics of the field beyond merely blaming the researcher. We suggest in particular replacing failure with 'productive rupture' as a useful overall denominator and consider specific ways of reinscribing failure in different dimensions of fieldwork. We do not aim to haughtily transform failure into success. We rather want to put failure in its place by understanding how it structures IR life. In order to do so, we first provide a vignette from one of our projects, and second bring to bear four socio-political facets of fieldwork failure in IR: structural and epistemological conditions, contingency, the anxiety generated to a large extent by the overlap of the first two, and the privilege to fail which manifests stratification within the academy.

It is from the position of relative academic privilege that we examine our record of failure as part of the scholarly endeavour of fostering debate, without, we hope, precipitating a downfall. The background to this reflection is our own recent bumpy field research on Polish border guards narrated elsewhere (Kurowska 2019b) and former guerrilla fighters in Colombia described in the vignette below. Surely, we first 'failed' in fieldwork during the doctoral projects for which, back in the day, nobody trained us. Both of us look back on them in some horror for having done everything wrong from our present-day perspective and despite the validation of the doctoral thesis (Kurowska 2019a). There was no space in IR to talk about such trajectories then and it would have been reckless for early career scholars to even try. Given these hierarchies, the courageous probing of failure that the mostly early career contributors to this volume undertake stands out. They go beyond wearisome prescription or declaration towards embodied reflection. They have been there and they take the reader with them through their engaging writing. They also confront the taboo that would rather have them, as used to be and often remains the case, first, pretend that the failure did not happen; second, re-design in private projects gone awry; and third, bounce back into the posture of control. They instead take on the politics of fieldwork failure in the life of IR.

Vignette: How Things Go Wrong (and then Deliver)

Among the reasons for fieldwork failures, changing circumstances and participants' agency – exemplified by the following observations from research on the subjectivities of former Colombian armed actors in the process of reincorporating into civilian society – are very common. Field research is dependent upon contingent contextual circumstances beyond the researcher's control. A change in circumstances may create uncertainty and require adaptations. In the case of the Colombia project, fieldwork involved negotiating research access to political prisoners of the guerrilla group ELN (*Ejercito de Liberación Nacional*), which was holding peace talks with the Colombian government. Through a tedious bureaucratic process, we successfully obtained the prison management's written permission to work with ELN prisoners, most of whom were keen to participate in our biographical conversations and needlework. When our fieldwork commenced some weeks later, however, the political context had changed considerably: The ELN had claimed responsibility for a car bomb attack on a police academy in Bogotá, the peace talks had broken down, and public discourse had made a marked shift towards securitisation. We were denied access to the ELN prisoners by the very officials who had granted it before, claiming that there were 'no political prisoners' but only 'terrorists'; that only social interventions, not research, were of interest to the prison; that such interventions should target all prisoners, not just a specific section; and that as a prison the peace and reconciliation process was not of their concern. Despite all players remaining the same, the change in socio-political circumstances frustrated our research access and denied the rank-and-file political prisoners the hope of finally being listened to. After our initial project presentation, we were asked by them whether we were really committed to working with them. We affirmed truthfully but also emphasised that access ultimately depended on the prison. Why did this still feel like a major failure, like we were letting these men down?

Another common cause for failed fieldwork is participants being reluctant or refusing to partake. In view of the closed ELN route, we intensified our access negotiations with members of the demobilised guerrilla group FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionárias de Colombia)*, which had signed a peace agreement with the government in 2016 that

included government support for former fighters to settle in Territorial Spaces of Capacitation and Reincorporation (ETCR) – obvious locations for our fieldwork. We met with ETCR leaders, FARC political party representatives, FARC women's organisations, and others, but the result was always the same. Despite general interest, these gatekeepers emphasised more pressing needs. At the time of our conversations, 128 FARC leaders had been killed by paramilitary or criminal forces (the number has risen further since); many ETCRs had already dissolved due to the state's failures in implementing the peace agreement; still-existing ETCRs were struggling to become economically sustainable. The gatekeepers were thus keen to invite 'productive projects' to create socio-economic opportunities. Frustration caught hold of our team: Why couldn't our interlocutors see that our project aimed at unstitching the securitised, binary public discourse that contributed to their situation in the first place? How could we convince them to prioritise their communities' wellbeing over gatekeeper power games? Why had funding bodies in Colombia and the UK issued a research call on reconciliation, when there was little to reconcile, and why had we given in to the neoliberal pressures to apply for such funding? After six months of fruitless conversations, the project was on the verge of collapse due to a lack of participants able (ELN) or willing (FARC) to partake. Against the background of a Colombian funding body which makes the individual Principal Investigator, not their institution, financially liable for 'failed' projects, aborting the research became a real option to minimise damage.

A month later, we finally started fieldwork in a New Reincorporation Point (NPR), a community of former fighters and associated civilians who had pooled money to buy land on which they were building a village, largely without public support. What ultimately changed the tide was persistent discussion of our failures with colleagues, and our continued search for openings in the protracted social and security situation. We were introduced to this NPR community by an academic colleague upon telling him about our problems. Likewise, upon hearing about our failures, the Peasant Association of Antioquia, with whom some team members had long-standing working relationships, contributed a 'practical' element in form of a voluntary agrarian advisor to our project. This reciprocity and kindness, emanating from trusting relationships and talk (see Danielle House's chapter in this volume), helped us gain access to an NPR community that embraces and owns our project. Were the initial fieldwork failures – as openings in our strategies and imaginations – necessary to end up here? And should we brace for further frustrations, further failures? After all, we know now that it would only take one act of violence, confrontation with state authorities, or unethical colleague to lose the hard-won access and push the project back to the brink of failure.

What Failure Manifests

Why is it so difficult to incorporate fieldwork failure into what we do (write, speak, teach) as IR researchers? Why do we even continue to use the misleading term 'failure', if ruptures may deliver more generative engagement with the social reality we study (see Lydia Cole's chapter in this volume)? To address these questions, it is useful to come back to the overarching themes of this chapter and volume: What is fieldwork failure and why is it taboo? What goes missing when we fail to examine failure? Can failure be revelatory, despite the heavy emotional labour and professional hazards that come with it, or must we rather resist the ideology of success that makes it necessary to turn failure into a productive moment? Does failure enable traversing the strictures of the academic frame, learning rather than only testing something? The following socio-political facets of fieldwork failure in IR contextualise our own and others' 'failure' to speak to these themes.

Structural conditions and epistemological script. Fieldwork failure exposes a particular academic subject position which is shaped by the discourse of mastery marked by 'the will to know' (Foucault 2013), accomplishment, and status (Bourdieu 1990). As researchers, we are socialised into, and expected to represent, such discourses, both in and out of the armchair (see Jan Daniel's and Renata Summa's chapters in this volume). We are supposed to know before we get a grip of what there is to know, and control the process of bringing such knowledge to bear. This is partly a legacy of IR adopting the natural science convention of 'writing from' a successful experiment and erasing the messy process of experimentation behind the scenes (Latour and Woolgar 1986). Such façades strengthen the perception of an easy fit between data and research, 'leaving little trace of the agony and uncertainty of construction' (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, 13). We are, as a result, caught in the 'organised hypocrisy' of the research design. To have the research design approved or stand a chance of 'grant capture', we need to demonstrate that we have already mastered the field and can therefore offer 'value for money'. This structurally-induced strategy upends the idea that a mapped-out field is an outcome, rather than a preparatory step of a research project (Amit 2000).

From within such a subject position, fieldwork failure feels like personal responsibility, and the researcher suffers the neoliberal pain and shame of perpetual inadequacy (see Johannes Gunesch and Amina Nolte's chapter in this volume). While this is a standard way of regulating conduct in the Western academy, the bureaucratic manifestations of quality assurance can take particularly punitive forms when, as in the Colombia project, the Principle Investigator is financially liable if the project does not meet its objectives as stated in advance and meticulously laid out in a detailed work plan. Some of the creative 'solutions' the Colombia project team developed in view of looming project failure – such as 'following' former inhabitants of dissolved ETCRs to their new homes, often located in Medellín's shantytowns – were turned down by the Colombian funder on the grounds that they did not meet the geographical parameters of the original call, even though it was written in a politically different situation from today's. The best strategy may in this context be to adopt contextually appropriate micro-tactics (see also Steele, Gould, and Kessler 2019) and strengthen solidarity among individual researchers on the team. The Colombia project team, for instance, secured additional, smaller but more flexible funding and made new connections which allowed them to complement their work in the NPR with fieldwork in other locations, and with other groups not covered by the rigid grant.

Contingency, or circumstances. Technically perfect research designs attract funding but crumble in the field (see Holger Niemann's chapter in this volume). Access gets routinely denied despite purposefully cultivating relevant relationships and approaching gatekeepers with finesse. Even where it has been granted at one point, political dynamics – the very reason why the project is conducted in the first place – may slam the window of opportunity shut at any time. Defiant interlocutors do not want to give us what we envisage they owe us. In fact, even if they formally abide, 'forced' rather than negotiated access rarely generates rich data (see Desirée Poet's chapter in this volume). By exercising their right to information as specified in national and international legal provisions, the researcher risks antagonising relevant participants and may be forced to settle for redacted documentation. This is a blind ally: We end up with partial information without a chance to make sense of it within a conversation.

Secrecy in the case of security agencies is particularly frustrating as such establishments can afford to deny access without justification by invoking national security. Being denied access in such situations feels like an ethical slight too, as such institutions should, after all, be accountable. Their blatant rebuff and refusal to abide is only the most visible and ritualistically decried manifestation of the researcher's lack of control. Interlocutors may also refuse to engage because they (rightfully) decide that the researcher's concerns, which may be interesting in general, are not their most pressing problem.

If the structural conditions of neoliberal IR force failure upon the researcher, contingencies in the field ought to feel like a failure precisely because we enter the reality of the other. We encounter difference as disoriented strangers (see Ewa Maczynska's chapter in this volume). Approached in this way, fieldwork failure obviously hurts, too; but it hurts differently. Mediated by the acknowledgement that the other is not obliged to talk to us, failure is a rite of passage in the process of making sense of a new place. In the spirit of the ethnomethodological tradition, the researcher may even seek to commit what she senses are social blunders. While reactions to them are uncontrollable, much can be learned from 'purposeful' breaches of local social rules (Garfinkel 1967).

Improvisations require practice, however, methodological as much as emotional, and a disposition to bear such situations. This attitude produces its own vulnerability, but it differs from the neoliberal sense of inadequacy. In embracing contingency, the researcher consciously takes on a role of a supplicant and confronts her own epistemic hubris. The failure to get a joke by an interlocutor is an opening, rather than a closure (Rose 1997). A useful way of reinscribing this facet of fieldwork failure is to think of it as exposure (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012, 85) to a wide variety of meanings by the interlocutors, which may be both contradictory to each other as well as to the researcher's interpretive frame. This, again, is not a threat, but an opportunity for 'thickening' our interpretations.

Anxiety. The intense emotional charge to fieldwork failure transpires at the juncture of the structural pressures and pressures of contingency which bring in the neoliberal shame and angst of encountering the other, on the one hand, and the researcher's idiosyncratic disposition and the affect of the moment, on the other. In fieldwork, as the ethnographic tradition teaches us, the researcher is her own research instrument and there is no shelter from the state of anxiety. The emotional charge cannot be defused because it is inherent to fieldwork, rather than a side effect to be mediated away (see Jakub Záhora's chapter in this volume). We may seek to protect ourselves from it by

'omission, soft-pedalling, non-exploitation, misunderstanding, ambiguous description, over-exploitation or rearrangement of certain parts of [our] material' (Devereux 1967, 44). This obviously poses analytical dilemmas. Much of interpretive work materialises through emotions, but emotions enable and undercut our interpretive powers at the same time. They make us juggle the necessity to seek and make sense of discomfort and the responsibility to protect ourselves. Some constellations of anxiety will prove unbearable: We may have to leave the field and come back later, or not at all.

The emotional strain finds its own form and risk of failure in (post-)conflict environments. Shesterinina's (2019) reflection on her avoidance of some former combatants, whom she feared, involved an imposition of moral schemes and ultimately a flattening of her understanding of participation in violence (see Emma Mc Cluskey's chapter in this volume). Some researchers in the Colombia project team had a knee jerk reaction against talking with former right-wing paramilitaries known for their grave human rights violations in the 1990s and early 2000s. What would it mean, however, to work with such interlocutors despite our fear or moral aversion (see Sezer İdil Göğüş's chapter in this volume)? We may, as narrative scholarship suggests (Ravecca and Dauphinée 2018), surprise ourselves with how multi-layered the stories of such others are, and how our own expanded range of reactions enriches the analytical narratives we construct. Generative as it promises to be, reinscribing anxiety as capacity for surprise in fieldwork failure remains a challenge. The simultaneous multiplicity, tangibility and indiscernibility of emotions renders vulnerable all the parties to the fieldwork conversation and alludes prescription.

Privilege. Few can afford to fail. Even fewer are in a position to admit and explore failure as an academic project. Junior scholars who venture into those terrains normally enjoy the mentorship of established critical scholars and the support of renowned critical research programmes, which can turn failure into the next cutting-edge debate (see Katarina Kušić's chapter in this volume). We did not experience that advantage at the beginning of our careers and might not have been able to interrogate failure had we not met each other and the community in which such discussions are possible. How productive fieldwork failure will be depends therefore in part on academic hierarchies, lineage, and disciplinary geographies of eligible innovators. Scholars not based in renowned academic sites, regardless of the stage of their career and quality of their research, may tend to have their 'failures' considered as a lack of professionalism. Structurally, this reflects the fact that failure is a privilege. The academic 'class', somewhat overlapping but not identical to the class structure outside of academia, inscribes itself in the politics of fieldwork failure.

Reproduction of privilege remains entrenched in the politics of academia, but can be at least partly reinscribed through insistence on incorporating positionality into our research claims. Reflexivity through positionality considers more holistically the researcher's role in the construction of the research problem, including her social and ideological standing, and thus exposes how knowledge is marked by its origins (Lynch 2008). It finds certain limits, however, in the cognitive pressure to produce outputs in short timeframes and with tangible results, such as peer-reviewed articles in highly-ranked journals. This structure in turn fuels the failure taboo.

Conclusion: Reinscribing Failure

Failure is produced structurally but experienced personally, and is always hard to take. It thrives on and feeds the imposter syndrome, which in turn blossoms on the glorification of success in the academy. All academics, by virtue of being academics, are haunted by it. We struggle with the effects of such discourses, as we also argue that the real failure is to not problematise the academic frame of mastery and the failure taboo. We hope that the four facets of fieldwork failure that we identify, together with the associated strategies of reinscription – micro-tactics, exposure, the capacity for surprise, and reflexivity through positionality – help rupture failure and put it in its place by opening spaces for communication. This is by no means an exhaustive or authoritative categorisation, but one which results from or own experiences.

The two metaphors in the title, 'building on ruins' and 'patching up the possible' reflect our respective field research strategies as they have developed since our doctoral projects. They conjure up different, if related, imageries of failure and its implications, and relate to a larger question of resilience. Resilience has had a bad press in some critical corners as yet another manifestation of self-regulation on the part of the neoliberal subject who always

bounces back, gets back to the grind, and makes the most of it for the system. We have been resilient, even tenacious, as we have learned to rupture failure and thus subvert the limitations of the neoliberal subject. This is an idiosyncratic process where much strength and inspiration comes from talking and working with others, both co-researchers and interlocutors. Reciprocity of good relationships is what has often carried us through, emotionally and as a way of handling interpretative and logistical impasses. We find that conversation helps rupture failure, but this will not be a solution, and not a strategy for everyone. However, as an expression of camaraderie and solidarity this chapter and this volume will hopefully encourage others to break the failure taboo, too.

**Bliesemann de Guevara's contribution draws on the international collaborative research project "(Des)tejiendo miradas sobre los sujetos en proceso de reconciliación en Colombia/(Un)Stitching the subjects of Colombia's reconciliation process", supported by Colciencias (project reference FP44842-282-2018) and the British Newton Fund (project reference AH/R01373X/1), and hosted by the University of Antioquia, Colombia, and Aberystwyth University, UK (2018–2020). Xymena Kurowska's work on this chapter was funded through European Commission MSCA Individual Fellowship RefBORDER grant no. 749314.*

References

Amit, Vered, ed. 2000. *Constructing the field: ethnographic fieldwork in the contemporary world*. London and New York: Routledge

Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit, and Morten Bøås, eds. forthcoming. *Doing Fieldwork in Areas of International Intervention: A Guide to Research in Violent and Closed Contexts*. Bristol: Bristol University Press, forthcoming

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990. *Homo academicus*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Book.

Daigle, Megan. 2017. 'Learning from the Field'. In *Routledge Handbook of International Political Sociology*, edited by Xavier Guillaume and Pinar Bilgin, 281–289. London: Routledge.

De Goede, Marieke, Esmé Bosma, and Polly Pallister-Wilkins, eds. 2019. *Secrecy and Methods in Security Research: A Guide to Qualitative Fieldwork*. London: Routledge.

Devereux, George. 1967. *From anxiety to method in the behavioral sciences*. Den Haag and Paris: Mouton & Co.

Foucault, Michel. 2013. *Lectures on the will to know*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Garfinkel, Harold. 1967. *Studies in ethnomethodology*. London and Englewood Cliffs,N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Glasius, Maries, Meta de Lange, Jos Bartman, Emanuela Dalmasso, Aofei Lv, Adele Del Sordi, Marcus Michaelsen, and Kris Ruijgrok. 2018. *Research, Ethics and Risk in the Authoritarian Field.* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing social inquiry: scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Kurowska, Xymena. 2019a. 'When home is part of the field: experiencing uncanniness of home in field conversations'. In *Tactical Constructivism: Expressing Method in International Relations*, edited by Brent Steele, Harry Gould and Oliver Kessler. London and New York: Routledge.

———. 2019b. 'When one door closes, another one opens?: The ways and byways of denied access, or a Central European liberal in fieldwork failure'. *Journal of Narrative Politics* 5 (2): 71–85.

Latour, Bruno, and Steve Woolgar. 1986. *Laboratory life: the construction of scientific facts*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Lynch, Cecelia. 2008. 'Reflexivity in Research on Civil Society: Constructivist Perspectives'. *International Studies Review* 10 (4): 708–721.

Popper, Karl R. 1959. *The logic of scientific discovery*. London: Hutchinson.

Ravecca, Paulo, and Elizabeth Dauphinée. 2018. 'Narrative and the Possibilities for Scholarship'. *International Political Sociology* 12 (2): 125–138.

Rose, Gillian. 1997. 'Situating Knowledges: Positionality, Refexivities and other Tactics'. *Progress in Human Geography* 21 (3): 305–320.

Russo, Alessandra, and Francesco Strazzari. Forthcoming. 'The politics of safe research in violent and illiberal contexts'. In *Doing Fieldwork in Areas of International Intervention: A Guide to Research in Violent and Closed Contexts*, edited by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara and Morten Bøås. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive research design: concepts and processes* New York and London: Routledge.

Shehata, Samer. 2006. 'Ethnography, Identity, and the Production of Knowledge'. In *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*, edited by Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, 244–63. Armonk, NY and London: M.E. Sharpe.

Shesterinina, Anastasia. 2019. 'Ethics, empathy, and fear in research on violent conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 56 (2): 190–202.

Steele, Brent, Harry Gould, and Oliver Kessler, eds. 2019. *Tactical Constructivism: Expressing Method in International Relations*. London and New York: Routledge.

Straehler-Pohl, Hauke, and Alexandre Pais. 2014. 'Learning to fail and learning from failure – ideology at work in a mathematics classroom'. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society* 22 (1): 79–96.

Vrasti, Wanda. 2008. 'The Strange Case of Ethnography and International Relations' 37 (2): 279–301.

About the author:

Berit Bliesemann de Guevara is a Reader in International Politics and the Director of the Centre for the International Politics of Knowledge at the Department of International Politics, Aberystwyth University. Her current research explores ways and problems of knowing in international politics. She has failed in fieldwork in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Berlin, New York, Washington, Myanmar and most recently Colombia, but is today grateful for the productive ruptures that these failures have enabled.

Xymena Kurowska is an Associate Professor of International Relations at Central European University (CEU). She received her doctorate in political and social sciences from European University Institute in Florence, Italy. She has been a grantee of the European Foreign and Security Policy Studies Programme, CEU principal investigator in Global Norm Evolution and Responsibility to Protect project, Marie Skłodowska-Curie senior research fellow at the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University, and serves as academic rapporteur for EU Cyber Direct.