(Bohr argued) measurement 'does' to a particle; they too enact particular 'cuts' that separate security out from its radically entangled state and begin to endow it with particular properties.

To take seriously, then, the proposition that security is entangled at an ontological level is to acknowledge that our knowledge of security will always remain imperfect at best, and that the study of security will necessarily form an ongoing quest. Furthermore, it means that security scholars are ultimately part of, and therefore also have responsibility for, the phenomena they try to understand. Exercising that scholarly responsibility around security, and persisting with this unfinished analytical work, will require an open and welcoming space for critically reflecting upon exactly how it is that security comes to matter. Perhaps a small part of *Security Dialogue* moving forward could be to provide some of that vital, valuable and much-needed space.

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Critique and post-critique

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Critique is changing. Democratizing, in fact. Whether we like it or not.

Social critique was once perceived as an intellectual endeavour. This was true despite the many actors who have always engaged in critique of a kind: citizens, journalists, terrorists, militias. Today, however, such 'ordinary critique' can no longer be ignored. Instead, it forces itself upon us in ways that amaze and alarm. Deleuze is gleefully employed by militaries, the new right embraces Gramsci, while media conglomerates control us via Jameson (Austin et al., 2019; Austin, forthcoming). These forces engage critique *and* transform our worlds in doing so. Their emergence represents a dramatic shift, analogous to the 19th-century rise of a reading public: the growth of a new critical *writing* public (Yancey, 2004). If, as Derrida (2016) suggests, the original idea of science and critique emerged during a specific epoch of writing, then a new epoch of writing has produced new critical publics – publics that draft their own manifestos, philosophize in their own words and worlds, and take their ideas towards the streets with furious anger.

The question that must now preoccupy those who believe critique should represent something other than the instrumental use of reason for parochial ends is thus less why we need critique and more how we can make a different critique matter today. Whomever you start with – Kant, al-Haytham, Marx, etc. – critique has been associated with change: with enlightenment, denaturalization, social (re)ordering and beyond. Critique possesses authority because its procedures can produce change. But how this occurs is mysterious. Critique is a source of possibility, but one we are unsure how to harness. Marxists remember the revolutionary days, unable to relive them. Liberals hold high enlightenment 'progress', as the world runs aground. The postcolonial majority seek different futures, knowing their colonization continues. Critique holds the hopes of many. But how to make it matter? That's always the question.

In the face of these challenges, critique *within* the walls of academia must be reimagined. It has already changed elsewhere. It is our duty to change it for different purposes. In this, critique must become kinder in its engagements and sharper in its targets (Austin et al., 2019). It must renounce the spectre of totalities and their futile denunciation – those old images of neoliberalism, fascism and nationalism – and instead subvert from within. It must engage with those it sees as enemies, earnestly: there can be no blanks (Austin, forthcoming). But it must also regain the future. It must build different futures over regretting present states in reactionary terms. We must criticize the present only to reach a different future (Bloch, 1996). Call that future emancipation, fully automated luxury communism, feminist ecology or whatever you like, the demand of the day is to take a position. We must take that risk, sincerely. The intellectualism of critique must again be enjoined with the older ethos of being critical (i.e. political).

And all this, of course, is the message of contemporary events. The year 2019 hardly represents a uniformly 'better' or more 'secure' world. Instead, with the Syrian writer Sadallah Wannous, we are 'condemned to hope' that 'what's happening' in the world at the moment 'cannot be the end of history'.[1]

Critique of the status quo is needed now more than ever before. But the disasters of today demand a different kind of critique – something 'post' critique as we now know it.

Note

1. These remarks from Wannous are widely cited to have been made at the March 1996 World Theatre Day address.

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For the primacy of politics and the social over security

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There are a lot of insecurities circulating in contemporary world politics. That is an ambiguous blessing for critical security studies. This situation sustains the research field by providing a very expansive range of political and policy concerns that can be approached from a security angle: security and aid, security and global warming, security and dataveillance, security and migration, security and borders, security and squatting, security and anxiety, security and insurances, security and weapons proliferation, to name only a few. However, it also implies that critical security studies mirrors the societal diffusion of insecurities and sustains the dispersal of securitizations through its teaching and societal impact despite its critical intentions. This situation is not new but continues to invite the question of how critical security studies can focus on security without building into its security analytics a security colonization of myriad areas of life.

Criticality has taken on different modes, including opposing and normatively hierarchizing the enactment of different security rationales (e.g. human security versus state security), exploring the discriminatory and violent consequences of security practices, and questioning the depoliticizing nature of security practice (e.g. the dominance of technology- and expert-driven knowledge, the enactment of logics of necessity or emergency). However, it has not really addressed how to know security without centring life and matter onto security. This question is particularly challenging since it asks for a security studies that gives (re)conceptualizations of politics and the social primacy over security; or, more bluntly, it asks for a security studies that focuses neither on securitizations nor on the subjects of security. Such a revisiting seems particularly pertinent in a context where the expanding security agenda that partly drove and has been a condition for the success of critical security studies has been heavily institutionalized in world politics.

Two possible pathways spring to mind through which critical security studies can revisit this old question of how to critically account for the processes through which security becomes politically meaningful. The first is to explore ways of understanding security practices, concerns and logics within a social and political situation that is not just or primarily driven by security but made up of entanglings between multiple and heterogeneous practices and concerns. This can be done, for example, by multiplying the actors and/or discourses beyond security-focused ones or by giving primacy to complex analytical categories through which conceptions of politics or the social are mobilized, such as citizenship, freedom, democracy, public, welfare, without reducing or hierarchically subordinating them to security.