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EJIS

Editorial

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We are delighted to become the new editors of the *European Journal of International Security* (*EJIS*), taking it into a new decade and building upon the excellent work of Tim Edmunds and his team. Our first task is to thank the previous editors for establishing and then developing a journal that – in a relatively short period of time – already has a reputation for outstanding scholarship and for pushing the boundaries of debates about 'security'. We are committed to continuing that mission for *EJIS* as an inclusive, cutting-edge forum, and to raising its profile globally. It is not our intention in this editorial to prescribe an exclusive vision of *EJIS* in terms of subject, conceptual boundaries, or methodological approach; on the contrary, this will continue to be a pluralistic journal with an emphasis, above all, upon theoretical and empirical rigour and originality. Nevertheless, we would like to take this opportunity to reflect upon security studies and to consider how *EJIS* might continue to play an ever more defining role in this field over the next four years.

We would like *EJIS* to be **globally engaged and inclusive**, in terms of who publishes in the journal, the substance of the articles that we publish, their theoretical and geographical scope, and the ways in which we will hopefully shape debates. Recent research has demonstrated that IR journals in general have a clear gender gap, and also perform poorly when it comes to including scholars from the Global South. We share the British International Studies Association's commitment to address this imbalance. Global engagement is, for us, a part of a broader movement to reflect the post-colonial, post-Western shift in IR. Debates are (or should be) now moving beyond the time when 'Western' preoccupations and scholars defined the field, and there is growing recognition that security studies comes with ethnocentric, patriarchal, and cultural baggage that must be acknowledged and possibly challenged. Blind spots, or silences, in many areas of security studies have been identified, leading to creative thematisations and new articulations of what security can mean and where it is located. We want to be open to these debates about what constitutes 'security' and security studies, which is clearly no longer defined by conventional IR boundaries either in terms of conceptual scope or empirical challenges. Security studies scholars are looking further afield and outside of the traditional disciplinary boundaries and canons that defined twentieth-century IR and security studies.

We will therefore fully support and work with a BISA initiative in 2020 aimed at strengthening engagement with – and increasing submissions from – Global South scholars in International Studies. This will result in a BISA strategy for enhancing the level of submissions and acceptances

of papers from Global South scholars, which, beyond the inclusivity agenda, will surely also enhance the substance of debates on and about 'security'. As a flagship BISA journal we also start afresh as a new editorial team at the start of a new decade taking on the challenge for gender equality. We do not wish this to be merely a vague nod towards greater inclusivity; we will develop specific and active strategies for better representation of Global South scholars and women scholars, and we are continuously open to and actively looking for further suggestions to improve. Our team includes regional editors outside of Europe and an editorial board that includes a growing number of scholars from the Global South. This representation will allow us to attract more globally representative scholarship and position us to better guide scholarship through the editorial process.

Recent theoretical debates in security studies shake some of the foundations of the field, including its core assumptions about the providers and referents of security. Post-paradigm perspectives, feminist approaches, and interdisciplinary analysis that variously combine historical, diplomatic, strategic, and postcolonial perspectives, are at the heart of this. Some of the most important debates and empirical research agendas relating to security – such as technologies of security, the governance and practice of security, evolving security norms, and how security is subjectively experienced – take place outside the conventional 'IR space', conceived of as relations between states. Indeed, IR is no longer the (exclusive) home, or the starting point, of many of the defining contemporary empirical security debates, such as climate security and its multifaceted implications. An occasional misperception is that the 'European' in the title of this journal means that the journal publishes only subject matter pertaining to Europe. We wish to correct this perception by simply stating that Europe refers only to broadly where the journal is based, while its remit is definitely global. Our global engagement therefore reaffirms that the *European Journal of International Security* is open to submissions that engage in security studies from a broad range of theoretical perspective, as well as to submissions that are global in scope or on specific regions of the world other than Europe. Anyone familiar with this journal will be aware of this already, but it bears reiterating.

At the same time, *EJIS* is a part of the European (and BISA) theoretical security studies tradition – including the critical quadrangle of Copenhagen, Welsh, Paris, and English School approaches – which we will continue to reflect and which will distinguish us in the field. The School of Politics and International Studies at the University of Leeds – home of the Centre for Global Security Challenges, and the European Centre for the Responsibility to Protect – is a good base for the journal in this sense, with its strengths in critical human security, critical security studies, and narrative approaches. Our link – through one of the co-editors – to the Gender, Peace and Security Centre at Monash University is also a good indication of our orientation.

Interdisciplinarity also surely plays a key role in the future of security studies, especially as policy engagement will define that future to some extent, and 'real world' problems are inherently interdisciplinary. This is a challenge for an international studies association journal that is a part of the political science and international relations tradition. Thus, though the journal will certainly retain the core of this tradition, it intends to explore new avenues for theoretical innovation in the merging or synthesis of traditions and disciplines. Such syncretism has in fact been a defining feature of IR since its foundation a century ago. Interdisciplinarity opens up new opportunities in methodology and research design, and it is transforming our understanding of security referents and threats. It has also brought a far wider range of empirical subjects into the security studies subject area and helped to dissolve the problematic distinction between 'domestic' and 'international' security challenges that has hampered IR debates until relatively recently.

Data science and new technologies – including artificial intelligence, algorithms and 'big data', communication tools and social media – are also transforming security studies in its subject matter and its methodologies. Data analytics can reveal systematic patterns and help

predict real-world security events, but it may also mask the politics of security in its multifarious dimensions. Thus, while we welcome submissions with innovative uses of data analytics tools and big data, we encourage theory-driven approaches to such empirical analyses. This also has implications for the 'role' of international studies in society, at a time when policy impact is valued and expected. Governments and civil servants engaged with security challenges are not knocking at the doors of International Relations scholars as much as those of computer scientists, engineers, urban planners, and other technology-driven disciplines. STEM methods may seem more appealing to policymakers because they provide tools for solutions to vexing problems. However, such tools are not helpful without a careful diagnosis of problems in their historical, social, and political contexts. Security dilemmas remain, as is obvious when confronting the implications of seemingly 'fit for purpose' solutions. We must ensure that the social sciences are at the heart of impact-oriented debates about the evolving security agenda.

Security studies is increasingly now also reflecting a **shift away from universalist claims and meta-theories**, towards greater interest in everyday experiences and practices of security and insecurity, and their ramifications. Critical approaches have long argued that security is not an objective, material state that we arrive at, but something that needs to be seen in a social and cultural context, yet those same critical approaches were often sweeping and unconcerned with the local, empirical condition. The focus on security as experienced involves a shift away from the negative/positive security binary and the universal logic of security, toward judging the ethics of security/securitisation in context and in practice. The interplay of everyday practice, discourse, and normative theory can therefore showcase and better capture the range of empirical experiences and practices in the field, arguably a much-needed agenda in IR security studies. In turn, this agenda is inseparable from the complex relationship between (in)justice, emotions, and security.

The **impact agenda** raises the question of the relationship between security studies and society, as well as our social responsibility. The expectation for research to be policy-oriented or aimed at social change raises questions for 'critical' scholarship, academic freedom, and the need to develop intellectual frameworks that are lasting and that transcend current politics. At the same time, scholarly engagement with key international security agendas such as the 'Responsibility to Protect' agenda and the 'Women, Peace and Security' agenda has generated new communities of theory and practice and expanded the field in ways previously unimagined. They have also sought to generate critical scholarship precisely to promote transformation in global politics and security. With this in mind, we will be exploring ways to encourage engagement between academics and practitioners in order to bridge the gap between scholarship and practice, especially where this can bring new knowledge (and action). We will also continue the explicit focus on 'real world' issues, so that *EJIS* provides a forum for theoretically informed work on pressing global challenges. Climate change, forced migration, armed conflict, human security challenges, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, cyber security – among many other topics – are driving a resurgence of interest in security studies, so this must be at the heart of our vision.

The impact agenda is closely related to a shift from **states to markets** in the provision of security, which has implications in terms of public goods, equitable access to security, and incentives to securitise. The governance of security is no longer the prerogative of states alone, and states are increasingly outsourcing their security provision. Who has command over the Internet and telecommunications is as important today as who commands the air force, for instance. The thriving legal and covert weapons and arms trade is a driving force of the global economy in which the interests of many actors are served by the continuation of war and insecurity. The global political economy of security – and 'whose security' and 'what type of security' – therefore must be a key focus of security studies scholarship in this decade.

Finally, **beyond critique**, what are the exciting new security studies agendas and programmes? Is the idea of security studies 'schools' something that has any traction or value, or should the field move beyond that? Are schools helpful, or essentialising, meta-theorising, and exclusive? As we indicated in the beginning of this statement, we do not wish to define the boundaries of these debates, but to provide an inclusive and robust forum for the very best scholarship that addresses such questions in a theoretically informed, empirically rigorous manner. We encourage submissions that seek to innovate and test the boundaries of our knowledge in this way as we enter a new decade.

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