EWIS workshop: Security leftovers: The afterlives of objects, sites, and expertise

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The workshop focuses on the afterlives of material manifestations of security regimes and discourses. The project speaks to debates in critical security studies and other disciplines that have shown that enunciations of security have perlocutionary effects – in brief, security *does* something and is produced through something. The products of security include not only new discourses and practices but also socio-material realities. Ranging from tools and technologies used for identification, measurement, and tackling threats and risks, to robust defence and logistics infrastructures and objects, security is practiced through a range of different physical objects.

We ask what happens to these objects when the threats they were supposed to tackle fade away, when the dominant security discourses change, and when the technologies they use are no longer fit for their intended purposes. These 'security leftovers' stay in the world and continue to have lives of their own. They may take many forms: from infrastructures of colonial domination in the Global South through never-used military arsenals and abandoned Cold War bunkers and barracks to logistical bases and protection technologies developed during the Western counterterrorism and counterinsurgency endeavours following 9/11. However, beyond armaments and built environment, there are also many less tangible security leftovers, such as institutions and corresponding bodies of expertise that were used to uphold security regimes of the past and that keep their diverse lives in the new conditions.

Through diverse empirical examples connecting the colonial, Cold War, and War on Terror leftovers, the book exposes the trajectories of technologies, infrastructures, objects, and sites, which were designed to serve specific security purposes, yet their social life continued even in the new conditions as security regimes shifted. Seeking to go beyond (but not leaving aside) the focus on security artefacts as objects of remembering, this project is interested in repurposing, adapting, and reusing particular security materialities, and their enduring social role.

Theoretically, the project is informed by and speaks to the debates on the role of the social life of materiality in International Relations and critical security studies, critical military studies, geography, heritage studies, and STS. Specifically, it is interested in discussing how past security imaginaries, discourses, and projects continue to affect our present through materiality and how these security leftovers shape the way we think of and do security nowadays.

This workshop is planned as a meeting of potential contributors of a book project under preparation, edited by the workshop convenors, but we welcome also papers that speak to the topic more broadly that do not wish to be a part of the edited volume. The edited volume aims to offer a diverse set of empirical studies, representing security leftovers from different times and spaces as well as leftovers related to different dimensions of security.