

## Postmodern discourses of (in)security

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The article analyses the security discourse that pervades the contemporary "risk society", and is an efficient generator of a hegemonic culture, an efficient tool of political power and a stimulator of feelings of belonging to a particular community. Security is, at the same time, one of today's most abused terms, to "think security" has become a mantra, even though we have perhaps never been as secure and safe, though as scared and certain of the dangers lurking just around the corner, as we are today.

Security is an industry, a business which feeds on the individual's fears, a part of mainstream discourse, an illusion, a legal good, protected by numerous laws, and also a human need. The latter, in particular, enables the advocates of law and order to abuse some undesirable social incident, blow it out of proportion and use the particular emotional social momentum to further their own repressive agenda. As safety/security is an extremely emotive word, capable of cutting short the logical mental reasoning process, it is a jewel in the thesaurus of security rhetoric, which inter alia proudly holds other entries, such as: risk, (dis)order, efficiency and threat. Security brings people together and, at the same time, pushes them apart, distances and isolates them. The article further emphasizes the multidimensionality of security - security is usually represented as security from crime, while forgetting legal, social and economic security - and the "either liberty or security" false dilemma. Security, namely, lies in liberty, since the more content and free people are and the more choices they have, the less internal conflict, social strain and discontent is being generated in their midst, which consequently means less reason to revolt, to take to alternative (criminal) means of achieving ends and, finally, more security. The article concludes with the observation that security can be something positive but also negative, when it is used to justify hateful, intolerant and exclusive behaviour towards strangers, immigrants or other "others". The contemporary, typically post-modern enemy (organized crime, terrorism, corruption and state crime) is dispersed, disembodied and hard to pinpoint, which might explain why the individual has never before been as anxious as he is today. In his desire to regain control over his life and reduce anxiety, however, he often wrongly focuses on the "old", more easily identifiable, individual culprits, over-invests in his own "securing" and sees in everything that is different, a source of risk, source of his fear and anxiety.

Key words: security, safety, criminal law, criminalisation, law and order, risk, danger, threat, rhetoric, emotions, fear, anxieties, stranger, organised crime, terrorism, state crime

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