International Security in a Globalized World: An Exploration of Critical Issues

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ABSTRACT

Since it took hold in the 1950s, the study of International Security (IS) has been at the heart of international relations studies. This paper emphasizes that it grapples with questions about war and peace, life and death, safety and survival. Traditionally its terrain has focused on concerns about the stability of the state system, the use of force, nuclear proliferation, military strategy, intelligence and the distribution of resources. Its content has expanded over the years. Today it covers a variety of interconnected issues in the world that affect survival. Concerns about climate change, migration, poverty, health, privatization, organized crime and international terrorism are also on the agenda. This paper introduces different ways of conceptualizing security in international relations. It points to the importance of recognizing that security is highly contested and contestable, and emphasizes the Euro - or Western – centric tendencies of security studies. It examines the effect of the end of the Cold War on international security. In particular, it looks at the question of whether international relations, especially in an era of increasing globalization, is likely to be as violent in the future as it has been in the past. This paper, further, looks at disagreements that exist about the causes of war and whether violence is always likely to be with us. It scrutinizes the traditional/classical Realist and more contemporary neo-realist perspectives on international security. It also investigates alternative approaches. And before it ends, it considers the continuing tension between national and international security and suggests that, despite the important changes associated with the processes of globalization, it remains too early to make a definitive judgment about whether a fundamentally different paradigm of international politics is emerging, or whether it is possible for such a transformation to occur.

Keywords: International security; National security; Globalization; Bipolarity; International politics; International terrorism; Realism; Cold war

INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of the Second World War [1] observed that the developments in military technology of the first half of the twentieth century were rendering the state an anachronism: it could no longer assure the military security or economic well-being of its citizens. As a solution to this dilemma, Carr suggested divorcing 'international security' from its association with national frontiers and national sovereignty: the achievement of what he called 'pooled' or 'common' security would require some kind of world security organization with a standing international force at its command. Carr proposed a system of overlapping and interlocking units appropriate for different purposes, a world organized along functional rather than national lines. National units, however, should be retained to satisfy people's need for identity which, he believed, represented the constructive side of nationalism.

Nationalism and After (Carr 1945) was written at the end of a major war, a time of heightened sensitivity to insecurity when the quest for new models for achieving international security is usually a major preoccupation. In many respects, Carr's vision was quite similar to contemporary 'common security' thinking, although Carr's world security organization involved more centralization of power than contemporary advocates of common security are willing to entertain. However, this vision was soon to be lost as the onset of a superpower Cold War seemed to demand alliance-oriented, 'realist' prescriptions. Assessing the limitations of national security was postponed; collective security, a step on the road to Carr's world security organization, was dismissed as 'unrealistic' in a world of self-interested and power-seeking states. With the ascendancy of the realist paradigm in the post-war period came realist claims that it was the failure of utopian schemes for collective security and Western policy-makers' unwillingness adequately to pursue their national security interests in the 1930s which were responsible for the Second World War [2].

Students of international politics deal with some of the most profound questions it is possible to consider. Among the most important of these is whether international security is possible to achieve in the kind of world in which we live. For much of the intellectual history of the subject, a debate has raged about the causes of war. For some writers, especially historians, the causes of war are unique to each case. Other writers believe that it is possible to provide a wider, more generalized explanation. Some analysts, for example, see the causes lying in human nature, others in the outcome of the internal organization of states, and yet others in international anarchy. In a major work on the causes of war, Kenneth Waltz considers what he calls the three 'images' of war (man, the state and the international system) in terms of what thinkers have said about the origins of conflict throughout the history of Western civilization, Waltz himself put particular emphasis on the nature of international anarchy ('wars occur because there is nothing to stop them from occurring'), but he also recognizes that a comprehensive explanation requires an understanding of all three. In his words: 'The third image describes the framework of world politics, but without the first and second images there can be no knowledge of the forces that determine policy, the first and second images describe the forces in world politics, but without the third image it is impossible to assess their importance or predict their results' [3].

In this ongoing debate, as Waltz points out, there is a fundamental disparity between political philosophers over whether conflict can be transcended or mitigated. In particular, there has been a disparity between Realist and Idealist thinkers, who have been respectively pessimistic and optimistic in their response to this central question in the international politics field. In the post-First World War period, idealism claimed widespread support as the League of Nations seemed to offer some hope for greater international order. In contrast, during the Cold War which developed after 1945, Realism became the dominant school of thought. War and violent conflict were seen as perennial features of inter-state relations stretching back through human history. With the end of the Cold War, however, the debate began again. For some, the end of the intense ideological confrontation between East and West was a major turning point in international history, ushering in a new paradigm in which inter-state violence would gradually become a thing of the past and new cosmopolitan values would bring greater cooperation between individuals and human collectivities of various kinds (including states). This reflected more optimistic views about the development of a peaceful global society. For others, however, Realism remained the best approach to thinking about international security. In their view, very little of substance had changed as a result of the events of 1989. The end of the Cold War initially brought a new, more cooperative era between the superpowers into existence. But this more harmonious phase in international relations was only temporary. With the first Gulf War (1990-1991) and then the 9/11 attacks it became increasingly clear that states and non-state actors (including international terrorist groups) continued to view force as an effective way to achieve their objectives.

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

This paper focuses on this debate, highlighting the different strands of thinking within these two optimistic and pessimistic schools of thought. Before this can be done, however, it is necessary to consider what is meant by 'security' and to probe the relationship between national security and international security. Attention will be given to traditional ways of thinking about national security and the influence which these ideas have had on contemporary thinking. There will be a survey of alternative ideas and approaches which have emerged in the literature in the recent years. There will also be an assessment of these ideas before returning to the central question of whether or not greater international security is more, or less, likely in the new century.

The concept of security

Most writers agree that security is a 'contested concept'. There is a consensus that it implies freedom from threats to core values (for both individuals and groups) but there is a major disagreement about whether the main focus of inquiry should be on 'individual', 'national', or 'international' security. For much of the Cold War period, most writing on the subject was dominated by the idea of national security, which was largely defined in militarized terms. The main area of interest for the both academics and states people tended to be on the military capabilities that their own states should develop to deal with the threats that faced them. More recently, however, this idea of security has been criticized for being **ethnocentric** (culturally biased) and too narrowly defined. Instead, a number of contemporary writers have argued for an expanded conception of security outward from the limits of parochial national security to include a range of other considerations [4]. In his study *People, States and Fear* argued for a view of security which includes political, economic, societal, environmental as well as military aspects and which is also defined in broader international terms. Buzan's work raises interesting and important questions about whether national and international security considerations can be compatible and whether states, given the nature of the international system, are capable of thinking in more cooperative international and global terms.

This focus on the tension between national and international security is not accepted by all writers on security. There are those who argue that the emphasis on the state and inter-state relations ignores the fundamental changes which have been taking place in world politics especially in the aftermath of the Cold War. For some, the dual processes of integration and fragmentation which characterize the contemporary world mean that much more attention should be given to 'societal security'. According to this view, growing integration in regions like Europe is undermining the classical political order based on **nation-states**, leaving nations exposed within larger political frameworks (like the European Union). At the same time, the fragmentation of various states, like the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, has created new problems of boundaries, minorities, and organizing ideologies which are causing increasing regional instability [5]. This has led to the argument that ethno-national groups, rather than states, should become the center of attention for security analysts.

At the same time, there are other commentators who argue that the stress on national and international security is less appropriate because of the emergence of an embryonic global society in the post-Cold War era. Like the 'societal security` theorists, they point to the fragmentation of the nation-state but they argue that more attention should be given, not to society at the ethno-national level, but to global society. These writers argue that one of the important contemporary trends is the broad process of globalization which

is taking place. They accept that this process brings new risks and dangers. These include the risks associated with such things as international terrorism, a breakdown of the global monetary system, global warming, and the dangers of nuclear accidents. These threats to security, on a planetary level, are viewed as being largely outside the control of nation-states. Only the development of a global community, they believe, can deal with this adequately.

At the same time, there are other writers on globalization who stress the transformation of the state (rather than its demise) and the new security agenda in the early years of the new century. In the aftermath of what has become known as '9/11' in September 2001 and the new era of violence which followed it, Jonathan Friedman argued that we are living in a world 'where polarization, both vertical and horizontal, both class and ethnic, has become rampant, and where violence has become more globalized and fragmented at the same time, and is no longer a question of wars between states but of sub-state conflicts, globally networked and financed, in which states have become one actor, increasingly privatized, amongst others (Friedman 2003). For many of those who feel like this, the post-September 11 era is a new and extremely dangerous period in world history. Whether the world is so different today from in the past is a matter of much contemporary discussion. In order to consider this issue we need to begin by looking at the way 'security` has been traditionally conceived.

The traditional approach to national security

From the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 onwards states have been regarded as by far the most powerful actors in the international system. They have been 'the universal standard of political legitimacy` with no higher authority to regulate their relations with each other. This has meant that security has been seen as the priority obligation of state governments. They have taken the view that there is no alternative but to seek their own protection in what has been described as a self-help world.

In the historical debate about how best to achieve national security, writers like Thomas Hobbes, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Jean - Jacques Rousseau tended to paint a rather pessimistic picture of the implications of state sovereignty. The international system was viewed as a rather brutal arena in which states would seek to achieve their own security at the expense of their neighbors. Inter-state relations were seen as a struggle for power as states constantly attempted to take advantage of each other. According to this view, permanent peace was unlikely to be achieved. All that states could do was to try to balance the power of other states to prevent anyone from achieving overall hegemony. This was a view which was shared by writers like E.H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau, who developed what became known as the realist (or 'classical' realist) school of thought in the aftermath of the Second World War. More recent attempts to up-date these ideas can be seen in the works of Alastair. Their work is sometimes referred to as neo-classical realism [6-11].

Realist perspectives

For several decades, the predominance of the realist paradigm largely silenced the post-national security views expressed in Nationalism and after: ironically, Carr's earlier and polemical work, Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939, has been cited frequently to reinforce realism's world view. For realists, the meaning of security was subsumed under the rubric of power. Conceptually, it was synonymous with the security of the state against external dangers, which was to be achieved by increasing military capabilities. This focus on a state-centric definition of security grew out of realist assumptions of a sharp boundary between domestic 'order' and international 'anarchy', a 'state of nature' where war is an ever present possibility (Waltz 1979:102). Given the lack of an international authority with the power to curb others' aggressive ambitions, states must rely on their own capabilities for the achievement of security. As realists have acknowledged, this self-help system often results in what they describe as a 'security dilemma'; what are justified by one state as legitimate security-enhancing measures are likely to be perceived by others as a threatening military buildup [12]. Such behavior can lead to destabilizing arms races which may decrease the overall security of the system and its member states. For realists, what stability does exist in such a world can be attributed to the balance of power.

These assumptions about the nature of the international system and the security-seeking behavior of states fit with realist analysis of the behavior of the great powers in the post-Second World War period. The escalation of the arms race between the US and the Soviet Union could be characterized as a classic case of the security dilemma, yet the tight bipolarity produced a balance which, for Kenneth Waltz and other realists, assured a considerable measure of security. However, the stress of the Cold War epitomized by the 'emergence of a fabulous new technology of violence'. Led to a new specialization in international relations, the field of national security which further cemented the meaning of security into a statist, military framework. Adopting a realist worldview and heavily dominated by US strategic thinking about nuclear weapons and the security problems of the US and its NATO allies, the field of national security was based on the assumption that, since nuclear wars were too dangerous to fight, security was synonymous with nuclear deterrence and nuclear power-balancing [13,14].

While the ideology of the Cold War corresponded with realism, the equating of international security with the strategic relationship between the great powers was not without its critics even during the Cold War period [15,16]. pointed to the ethnocentrism in security thinking as the focus in national security studies on the US-Soviet relationship meant that their security became equated with the security of the international system as a whole. With this emphasis on political/military issues, the work of scholars who raised issues about economic relations between states was consigned to the realm of 'low politics'.

Although bipolarity began to break down well before the end of the Cold War and economic issues moved onto the security agenda after the oil shocks of the 1970s, a fully-fledged debate about the meaning of security did not begin until the early 1980s. The re-intensification of the Cold War, which fuelled fears about the possibility of nuclear war, raised concerns as to whether the escalation of the arms race was compatible with the enhancement of security. Debates about extended deterrence centred on the credibility of the US promise to guarantee the security of Western Europe. By the 1980s nuclear weapons, deployed in the name of national security, were making certain people feel very insecure: paradoxically, national security thinking had reached its height at a time when, as the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) made clear, the state could no longer assure the security of citizens within its own boundaries. To those critical of realist strategic thinking, the military security of the state seemed

synonymous with the insecurity of individuals held hostage to nuclear deterrence.

As the conflict between the great powers de-escalated rapidly at the end of the 1980s and the world seemed poised on the verge of another new international order, space opened up for broadening the security agenda to include issues that Carr so prophetically raised in 1945. Today, however, unlike half a century ago, the field of international relations is in disarray: a multiplicity of theoretical challenges to the realist paradigm assures that new definitions of security and prescriptions for its achievement will be more contested than the old. This emerging dialogue on security issues has already produced some fundamental rethinking, not only of the conceptual foundations upon which the traditional understanding of security was constructed but also of the epistemological foundations of the field more generally.

Contemporary re-analyses of security come from a variety of sources – policy-makers and academics in the West, 'new thinking' in the former Soviet Union, as well as scholars concerned with security issues in the South. Earlier realist thinking on security is being re-examined by realist themselves as well as by scholars critical of the realist tradition. Confronted with the sudden abdication of one of the superpowers from the nuclear arms race, even the strategic community has begun to debate the adequacy and morality of nuclear deterrence, the focus on great power relationships, and the utility of war itself (Booth, 1993). The focus on the military dimension of the security of the great powers, typical of the Cold War period, is being re-examined as the definition of security is being widened to include economics and ecological dimensions. Motivated both by the precarious economic position of the South and the extent to which Northern states now see their own security in terms of economic vulnerabilities, debates about a new international order have centred on a variety of issues ranging from the trade-offs between economic, military and ecological security to the likelihood of instability in the world economy associated with US hegemonic decline.

It is probably not coincidental that this re-analysis of security is taking place at the same time as a 'third debate' in international relations which is questioning the theoretical foundations of the field more generally [17]. These critical perspectives are claiming that an understanding of security more appropriate for the contemporary world requires a fundamental rethinking of the framing assumptions of realist analysis: in a highly interdependent world facing multiple security threats, critics of realism claim that state-centric analysis, which focuses exclusively on the political/military dimensions of security, is no longer adequate.

Neo-realist perspectives

The realist pessimistic view of international relations is shared by other contemporary writers like Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer. The pessimism of these **neo-realists** rests on a number of key assumptions they make about the way the international system works.

Key neo-realist assumptions

- The international system is anarchic. They do not mean by this that it is necessarily chaotic. Rather, anarchy implies that there is no central authority capable of controlling state behaviour.

- States claiming sovereignty will inevitably develop offensive military capabilities to defend themselves and extend their power. As such they are potentially dangerous to each other.

- Uncertainty, leading to a lack of trust, is inherent in the international system. States can never be sure of the intentions of their neighbors and, therefore, they must always be on their guard.

- States will want to maintain their independence and sovereignty, and, as a result, survival will be the most basic driving force influencing their behaviour.

- Although states are rational, there will always be room for miscalculations. In a world of imperfect information, potential antagonists will always have an incentive to misrepresent their own capabilities to keep their opponents guessing. This may lead to mistakes about 'real' state interests.

Taken together, neo-realists argue that these assumptions produce tendency for states to act aggressively towards each other.

According to this view, national security, or insecurity, is largely the result of the structure of the international system (this is why these writers are sometimes called 'structural realists'). The structure of anarchy is seen as being highly durable. The implication of this is that international politics in the future is likely to be as violent as international politics in the past [18]. In an important article entitled 'Black to the Future` written in 1990, John Mearsheimer argued that the end of the Cold War was likely to usher in a return to the traditional multilateral balance of power politics of the past in which extreme nationalism and ethnic rivalries would lead to widespread instability and conflict. Mearsheimer viewed the Cold War as a period of peace and stability brought about by the bipolar structure of power which prevailed. With the collapse of this system, he argued that there would be a return to the kind of great power rivalries which had blighted international relations since the seventeenth century.

For neo-realist writers like Mearsheimer, international politics may not be characterized by constant wars but there is nevertheless a relentless security competition which takes place, with war, like rain, always a possibility. It is accepted that cooperation among states can and does occur, but such cooperation has its limits. It is 'constrained by the dominating logic of security competition, which no amount of co-operation can eliminate' [19]. Genuine long-lasting peace, or a world where states do not compete for power, therefore, is very unlikely to be achieved. For neo-realists, the contemporary unipolar structure of power, with US pre-eminence, is likely to give way to a new international structure, with the rise of states like China.

Expanding the definitional boundaries of national security

The realist preoccupation with cross-border conflict and military power defined in terms of the interests and security of the great powers has come under a great deal of criticism from those who argue that its worldview is a poor fit with contemporary reality. notes the declining likelihood of war between the great powers as well as the erosion of the usefulness of military power as a factor in national security enhancement. Yet as Luard's study confirms, proponents of new security thinking who focus on the decline of military conflict run the risk of perpetuating the ethnocentrism

that has long plagued the field of security studies. To applaud the absence of war among the great powers at the core of the system is to ignore approximately 127 significant wars that have occurred since 1945, all but two of them in the South [20,21].

Perspectives from the South

Where conventional national security thinking has analyzed Southern security it has generally done so from the perspective of great power security interests: one irony of the removal of military conflict to the peripheries of the system during the Cold War may have been that the quest for systemic security actually increased Southern insecurity [22]. From the perspective of the South, the Northern definition of security was seen as synonymous with the preservation of US hegemony, the security of the West, and the interests of international capitalism [23].

From a Southern perspective, military conflicts are rarely cross-border, but, rather, the result of domestic challenges to the legitimacy of political regimes frequently supported by outside intervention. Recent wars in the Middle East being the exception, security threats more often arise, not from outside aggression, but from the failure to integrate diverse social groups into the political process. Deterrence against external attack is not an adequate representation of security goals when it is internal insecurity that is the greatest threat: moreover [24]. points out, even the term 'internal security' is a misnomer since its purpose is rarely to make all citizens equally secure but, rather to enable ruling elites to remain in power, often at the expense of the majority of the population.

While military conflict has and probably will continue to be a source of insecurity in the South, many scholars claim that security should not be defined solely in terms of military threats. Going beyond Realist thinking [25]. Define insecurity more broadly, as threats to values and identities, the nature of which will vary across time, space and issue area. Many regions of the South are more preoccupied with economic than military threats and, as Nicole Ball suggests, where both exist simultaneously, they are usually highly interdependent. Ball argues for an expanded definition of security on the basis of this interdependence: internal military conflicts often arise because elites are unwilling to alter exploitative social and economic relations and political systems which work to their advantage. Ball also points to the trade-off between military and economic security when resources are diverted from development to the military. She claims that military expenditures have a negative effect on economic growth (1998:163-7): the kind of technologies necessary for military development is of little use for providing the basic material needs of most people.

Caroline Thomas also stresses the economic dimensions of national security when she defines security, not only in terms of the internal security of the state, but also in terms of secure systems of food, health, money and trade. For Thomas, basic human needs provision is a dimension of national security; like Ball, she notes the interdependence between military and economic security when the failure to meet individuals' basic needs reinforces the problems of internal security as regimes, perceived as not working in the interests of people, arm themselves to protect against domestic unrest. Thomas also emphasizes the lack of control over the external environment where weak states operate in an international economic order that favours the powerful, which are both the rule-makers and the rule-enforcers [26].

As these redefinitions indicate, an examination of security in a Southern context exposes the limitations of contemporary great-power-orientated realist analysis. The arming of the South with advanced weapons, usually provided by the great powers and used primarily for internal security purposes, reinforces the claim of critics of nuclear deterrence that it is militarization itself which is becoming the greatest threat to security. Internal conflicts raise the issue of whose security is being assured and suggest that an adequate analysis of security demands consideration of security at the individual as well as the state level. Some scholars have even suggested that the term 'state', as it is used in the Western context, is not appropriate in certain areas of the South where 'quasi-states' derive their legitimacy from the international system rather than from the support of their own people [27]. In an international system which, in parts of the South, amounts to domestic disorder and stability of international borders, often upheld by the interventions and interests of the great powers, the realist assumption about boundaries between anarchy and order is turned on its head.

Perspectives from the North

Two sharply divergent trends in contemporary definitions of security in the North are emerging. One is associated with proponents of 'common' or 'comprehensive' security, who argue that military-centred notions of national security are fundamentally flawed in a highly interdependent world facing multiple security threats that are not amenable to traditional statist solutions. The other revives the more traditional notion of national security through a new and modified Pax Americana; after the demise of the Soviet threat, the US, with its continued strong military capabilities and the help of its Cold War alliance partners, is seen as having the potential to become the guarantor of global security, a role that is now less ambiguous and dangerous than it was during the bipolar rivalry of the Cold War.

Like those writing from a Southern perspective, proponents of 'common security' have adopted a multidimensional definition of security which emphasizes security interdependence rather than the zero-sum notion of security more typical of national security thinking. The contemporary definition of 'common security' was first given political prominence in the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (1982), which claimed that the nuclear paradox, the fact that the security of states depended on the insecurity of their citizens, had stretched the traditional concept of security to its limit. Common security assumes that there are global dangers which threaten the entire system and which cannot be solved by boundary protection; by emphasizing common dangers, it bases its appeal for co-operative behavior, not on altruism, but on a larger sense of collective self-interest.

Elements of common security thinking entered into certain policy-making circles in the North in the 1980s. A 1980 Report on Comprehensive National Security to the Prime Minister of Japan defined security as protecting people's lives from various forms of threat both internal and external. According to this report, insecurity includes economic vulnerability as well as ecological threats and natural disasters [28]. In the mid-1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev proposed a comprehensive system of international security which would include disarmament as well as global economic and ecological security. Gorbachev urged an enhanced

role for the United Nations as a global security provider: this enhanced role is compatible with expanded UN peacekeeping functions as well as UN involvement in humanitarian relief efforts in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia.

Some Northern scholars have also begun to define security in similar multidimensional terms. defines national security as an attempt to protect against events that threaten to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of the state: among these threats he lists the inability to meet basic needs, environmental deterioration and natural disasters. has broadened the traditional realist focus on military security to include economic and environmental dimensions. Claims that the definition of security must be expanded to include environmental, resources and demographic issues; resource degradation and pollution together with population growth are causing damage that increasingly impacts on people's ability to meet their basic needs [29-31].

The multidimensionality of security defined in military, economic and ecological terms and the interdependence between them is at the heart of common security thinking. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) underscored the interdependence between economic and ecological dimensions of security when it called for 'sustainable development', a type of development compatible with preserving a healthy environment for future generations: it also emphasized universal basic needs satisfaction as an important aspect of sustainable development. This emphasis on individuals and the natural environment, stressed by all proponents of common security, calls into question the state as a security provider: the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues claimed in its report that, in the nuclear age, no state could find security by itself. Building on the tradition of Scandinavian peace research, proponents of common security has proposed definitions of security which challenge the boundaries and institutions within which our traditional understanding of security is framed.

In sharp contrast to this global thinking, proponents of a new Pax Americana see security in terms similar to post-1945 realist thinking although they applaud the resolution of the uneasy tension between US hegemony and nuclear bipolarity which so preoccupied earlier national security thinking [32]. Sees evidence of what he terms the 'unipolar moment' in which 'an ideologically pacified North seeks security and order by aligning its foreign policy behind that of the United States'. Claiming that 'the UN is a guarantor of nothing', Krauthammer maintains that we are entering an era of 'pseudo multilateralism' in which effective security can be guaranteed only by US military power. He asserts that most of the dangers are located in the South, where small and backward states are emerging as threats to both regional and global security. While they continue to focus on issues related to military security, certain proponents of this world view do acknowledge that there are trade-offs to be made between the US's military capabilities and its economic power.

Pax Americana, with its emphasis on the military policing role of the US, is an avowedly ethnocentric reformulation of earlier national security thinking, differing only in its shift from an East-West to a North-South perspective. While there are those who continue to see military dangers in a post-Cold War Europe [33]. Much of the new thinking on security has made a similar shift towards a North-South framework, which has the potential for reinforcing a disturbing trend towards an increasing North-South

polarization. In spite of the remaining problems of US-Russian de-nuclearization, the end of the Cold War has focused arms control discussions on issues of proliferation and arms sales to the South. From a Northern perspective, however, the continued development of high-technology weapons in the North for use against unacceptable Southern regimes appears, in certain areas, as at least as great a threat to security as internal conflict. Even voices sympathetic to the South may be reinforcing this new worldview which sees insecurity, whether it be in the form of war, economic deprivation, over-population, human rights abuses or environmental degradation, located only in the South. While not underestimating the severity of security threats in this region, an adequate re-analysis of security must resist new boundary distinctions which obscure global structures of inequality that contribute to making certain individuals and groups in both the North and the South more insecure. Re-analyzing security, therefore, requires that we go beyond the polarities of traditional thinking. This paper shall now examine how realism and some of its contemporary critics are undertaking this re-analysis.

Re-Visioning Security

Reformulating realism

Realist re-visions of security offer two contrasting perspectives which parallel the state-centric and common security definitions outlined above. First, there are realists who are analyzing security in terms quite similar to the post-1945 era but adapted to the post-Cold War world. Assuming the state as a unitary actor, their definition of security prioritizes international order and stability to be achieved by a modified version of Pax Americana which includes co-operative collective security arrangements among the great powers. Acknowledging that US pre-eminence cannot last and that the US can no longer act alone, associates security with the re-creation of a concert of powers in the North: Northern states should also support attempts to create regional power balances in unstable areas of the South such as the Middle East. In similar terms, propose a new version of collective security consisting of the major powers, similar to the nineteenth-century Concert of Europe. Defining security in terms of systemic stability, the Kupchans claim that universal collective security organizations are doomed to fail because they require an unacceptable loss of sovereignty and do not reflect power realities; one of the functions of the security group of the militarily powerful is to ensure that peripheral conflicts, examples of which are all taken from the South, are 'fenced off or resolved' equates security with a new Pax Americana in which US military dominance in key strategic regions keeps the peace. He urges that US military forces increase their capabilities for rapid interventions in the South [34-36].

In the tradition of realism, all of these authors equate security with order and international boundary maintenance, to be achieved by the preservation of a hierarchical international system in which the great powers act as the world's policemen. This realist re-analysis does nothing to move us beyond the ethnocentrism of earlier national security studies. The emphasis on order, defined in terms of resolution of military conflict, does not begin to address issues of economic injustice and environmental degradation; those who argue for this broader definition of security claim that increasing military capabilities may actually contribute to increasing economic and ecological insecurities by draining resources away from civilian

needs and from efforts to create a cleaner environment. They assert that modern military technology is not only expensive but carries huge environmental costs due to its high resource use and large-scale environmental pollution.

The most important and extensive re-examination of security from a neo-realist perspective which attempts to get beyond this military, state-centric focus is Barry Buzan's People, States and Fear (1991). Calling himself a 'liberal realist', Buzan includes issues raised by proponents of common security. Having broadened his definition of security to include freedom from military, political, societal, economic and environmental threats, Buzan makes a case for the need for a new field of international security studies which, in contrast to the traditional national security approach, would take as its starting point this multidimensional definition of security.

While Buzan examines security from the perspectives of the individual and the international system as well as of the state, he concludes that the most important and effective provider of security is likely to remain the sovereign state. Answering the claim raised by scholars analyzing the South, that states can be a threat to rather than a source of security, Buzan argues that the evolution toward 'strong states', more typical of the West, will result in a greater degree of security for individuals. In terms of the international system, Buzan does not feel that the elimination of anarchy is the answer to the security dilemma. Accepting, in principle at least, the realist boundary distinction between domestic order and international anarchy, he predicts that, as the system moves towards what he terms 'mature anarchy', a more stable form of international anarchy which is co-evolving along with progress towards stronger states, international security will be enhanced. Buzan also claims that the integrative features of an increasingly interdependent global market economy contribute to the movement towards mature anarchy with its promise of greater international security.

By acknowledging the distinction between strong and weak states, Buzan has moved beyond traditional realist analyses which assume that the state is a unitary unproblematic actor in matters of national security. However, his assumption that strong states, which he equates with Western democracies, can be successful security providers for all their citizens has been questioned by certain critics [37]. Buzan's claim that strong states can successfully provide security might be challenged by marginalized groups, such as women and minorities, whose economic security is often compromised when military security takes priority. The concept of the national interest, around which national security policies are framed, is usually defined by political and military elites; consequently, even strong states implement dubious policies that are not always formulated democratically.

While Buzan may be correct in basing his assumptions about mature anarchy on the fact that Western liberal democratic states seem disinclined to fight one another, there is no guarantee that they will not intervene militarily in weak states in other regions when their security interests are threatened. Peripheral states might also have trouble accepting Buzan's liberal assumption that their economic security can be improved by greater interdependence with the world economy. Moreover, environmental security, the least developed dimension of security in Buzan's work, may be at odds with the continued economic development of states and the world economy required for progress towards mature anarchy [38].

Even though Buzan has broadened his analysis of security it remains rooted in a framework in which the North is the guarantor of international security. While Buzan sees a decline in military conflict as the system progresses towards mature anarchy and an increase in economic well-being as the world economy becomes more interdependent, the South sees security threats in a Northern build-up of high-technology weapons for wars of intervention, in Northern control of a highly unequal world economy, and in Northern overconsumption of natural resources with its negative consequences for the global environment. Buzan's critics would disagree with his liberal assumption that the benefits of progress can be available to all: political hierarchies and the uneven development of the capitalist world economy are structural constraints on the achievement of security for the poorest states and individuals. Reformed realism continues to privilege the security of the state: although less explicitly than traditional realism, it continues to equate security with an international system dominated by the great powers.

Perspectives from contemporary critics of realism

Most approaches that are critical of realist and neo-realist perspectives are attempting to move security analysis towards a more comprehensive, less state-centric orientation. Critics of realism question what they see as the zero-sum, dichotomous thinking of traditional national security discourse. They also question whether the state can continue to be an adequate security provider when security is defined in terms that include economic and ecological as well as military dimensions.

Recent peace and conflict research has begun to define security from a multidimensional, multilevel perspective. Using a definition of security similar to common security, which focuses on the elimination of all types of violence both direct and indirect, peace research first introduced the concept of structural violence in the late 1960s: structural violence extends the meaning of violence beyond its association with physical violence to the indirect violence done to individuals when unjust economic and political structures reduce their life expectancy through lack of access to basic material needs. While many peace researchers continue to address issues involving military conflict, they are also making links between military operations and environmental degradation, as well as drawing attention to trade-offs between military and social spending. Certain peace researchers are advocating non-offensive defence and de-nuclearization as ways of scaling down military spending and decreasing the likelihood of global war [39-41].

Like E. H. Carr, certain peace researchers are questioning whether the state system as presently constituted can continue to be an effective security provider; in an increasingly interdependent world, where weapons of mass destruction threaten both victors and vanquished alike, self-help is not considered a viable method of security provision. Many peace researchers have, therefore, postulated a new or dramatically reformed world order as a necessary step towards greater security; within this reconstructed global framework, the security of the individual takes precedence over the security of the state.

In the introduction to their volume on world security [42]. Define security, not in statist terms, but as the attempt to enhance the long-term health and welfare of the human family and minimize human suffering. In the same volume, Richard Falk distinguishes

his 'world order' approach to security from that of realism. He claims that new threats to security, which defy boundary protection and which cannot be solved by one state alone, complicate realist assumptions of self-help and demand new frameworks that analyze security from a more comprehensive perspective. Attention must be paid to democratic transnational social forces which are intensifying the interplay between domestic and international factors and which offer a strong challenge to the realist worldview. While this conceptual move from national security to international security is at the heart of the world order perspective, its proponents also claim that this human vision of security must start with the individual. Echoing Carr, proponents of the world order values of peace, economic well-being, human rights and environmental balance believe that they can best be achieved, not by state institutions, but by international or transnational functional institutions appropriate to the task.

Like proponents of this 'world order' approach [43]. Claims that individuals not states must be the fundamental referents of security. Arguing for an emancipatory vision of security, Booth criticizes 'unhelpful dichotomies' which have characterized the way we study international politics. According to Booth, the language in which security has been framed is one of division and exclusion; unless we cast off these old images and begin to think more interdependently, our images of the future will tend to replicate the past. Booth argues for a position that sees security from a holistic perspective rather than one that privileges the state and its military power. Labeling himself a 'utopian realist', he attempts to integrate what is best about the realist tradition with a politics of emancipation that looks to a democratic form of human security not achieved at others' expense.

Most critics of realism would agree with Booth that a politics of emancipation that can assure human security requires fundamental rethinking of the boundaries and identities within which our traditional understanding of security has been framed. Like Booth [44]. is critical of the language of division associated with realist thinking: he claims that assumptions that security can be provided only within states works in the interest of elites and reinforces boundary distinctions between self and other, friend and foe, citizen and foreigner, which set up barriers that inhibit the achievement of world security. These dichotomies, which reflect conventional understandings of political space, are necessary for the legitimation of the concept of national security but are incompatible with the search for world security and the security of individuals.

When national security is defined negatively, as protection against outside military threats, the sense of threat is reinforced by the doctrine of state sovereignty, which strengthens the boundary between a secure community and a dangerous external environment. For this reason, many critics of realism claim that, if security is to start with the individual, its ties to state sovereignty must be severed. While E. H. Carr argued for the retention of the nation-state to satisfy people's need for identity, those who are critical of state-centric analysis point to the dangers of a political identity constructed out of exclusionary practices. In the present international system, security is tied to a nationalist political identity which depends on the construction of those outside as 'other' and therefore dangerous [45,46]. suggests that securing the boundaries of this statist identity demands the construction of 'danger' on the outside: thus, threats to security in conventional thinking are all in the external realm. Campbell claims that the state requires this

discourse of danger to secure its identity and legitimation which depend on the promise of security for its citizens. Citizenship becomes synonymous with loyalty and the elimination of all that is foreign. Underscoring this distinction between citizens and people reinforced by these boundary distinctions, Walker argues that not until people, rather than citizens, are the primary subjects of security can a truly comprehensive security be achieved.

Yet, never before has the state system been so strong. Uneven development, fostered by a hierarchical international system of states and a global capitalist economy, is contributing to what Falk (1992a) and others are beginning to call 'global apartheid' – an analogy drawn from the interplay of racial domination and economic inequality in South Africa [47]. Falk claims that, whereas apartheid in South Africa was regarded as intolerable, the situation wherein the rich and powerful are located in states in the North with predominantly white populations and the poor and weak in Southern states comprised largely of people of colour is tolerated and accepted. Globalization of capital, along with policies that prevent the migration of people to the North, exacerbates this phenomenon, which appears to be increasing the security of the rich as it diminishes the security of the poor [48].

Yet Falk and others see forces at work that challenge these boundaries between the strong and the weak and the rich and the poor created by the state system and global capitalism. They claim that the creative energy for reformulating security in less exclusionary terms is coming from social movements which operate across national boundaries and which grow out of a concern for human security defined in economic and ecological as well as political/military terms [49]. These authors suggest that social movements defy traditional concepts of political space which threaten to undermine the security of the least privileged; by rearticulating security in terms of those who are most vulnerable, security becomes a process which begins at the bottom. Social movements from below, which are concerned with peace, the environment, democracy, human rights and feminism, have the potential to disrupt the prevailing system and provide a vision of international security which assures the security of all individuals. Falk claims that feminism is one such approach which is attempting to articulate this humanist vision of security: although they are rarely cited in the security literature, feminist perspectives are making an important contribution to these new visions of security.

Feminists from a variety of theoretical and disciplinary perspectives share a common concern for broadening knowledge to include the experiences of women and introducing **gender** as a category of analysis. Exposing relations of gender inequality and including women's experiences in security analysis can help to construct the more comprehensive definition of security that many contemporary critics of realism are searching for Since the military and national security functions of the state have always been considered 'masculine' issues, women have seldom been recognized by the security literature; yet women have been writing about security since at least the beginning of the century, when Jane Addams spoke out in favour of a new internationalism to replace the self-destructive nationalism which she believed contributed to the outbreak of the First World War. Women have generally favoured defining security in multidimensional terms, which include freedom from both physical and structural violence [50-52].

The National Organization for Women estimated, in its 1990 Resolution on Women in Combat, that 80–90 per cent casualties

due to conflict since the Second World War have been civilians, the majority of them women and children. The strategy of rape in the war in Bosnia has alerted the world to an atrocity that has always existed in wartime, although it is usually unreported. Women and children constitute 80 per cent of the global refugee population, a phenomenon usually attributable to military conflict: women are also the most frequent victims of domestic violence in all societies, a crime which is always under-reported, but one which ranges across regions, cultures and classes (United Nations 1991). Violence against women is higher in militarized societies and in military families. Evidence such as this suggests that women are particularly vulnerable to militarism and war: it also suggests that the myth that women and children are protected by male soldiers, a myth that has persisted throughout history, must be re-examined [53].

Extending the definition of security to economic and environmental dimensions also highlights women's vulnerabilities. A 1981 report to the UN Committee on the Status of Women claims that while women represent half the global population and one-third of the paid labour force and are responsible for two-thirds of all working hours, they receive only a tenth of world income and own less than 1 per cent of world property [54]. Data such as these suggest that women are at greater economic risk in all societies. Women's work is undervalued because it is often performed outside the market, in the agricultural subsistence sector in the South or in households more generally. When women enter the labour market they earn less than men in all societies, either because they are disproportionately clustered in low-paying jobs or because they are paid less for performing similar work (United Nations 1991:81–114). Women in the South provide low-paid wage labour for Northern multinational corporations and domestic servants for Northern households. In times of economic recession, when state welfare services contract, it is usually women who take up the burdens of caring for the elderly and the sick. In the South structural adjustment policies have impacted heavily on women, who must assume additional care-giving tasks when states are forced to cut back on social spending. Women are also particularly vulnerable to environmental degradation: in areas of Africa and Asia they are walking up to 10 kilometers a day to search for shrinking supplies of fuel-wood and water. Women's reproductive systems are particularly susceptible to the hazards of toxic wastes and industrial accidents.

This evidence of women's multiple insecurities worldwide can help to conceptualize a definition of security that is people-centred and transcends state and regional boundaries. Such evidence also reinforces the claim of theorists critical of realism that the state as presently constituted is not an adequate security provider for all its citizens. The unitary state actor model favoured by realist conceals the extent to which individuals' insecurities are dependent on race, class and gender, categories that also cross state and regional boundaries.

Feminist perspectives are also raising new questions about political identities and political boundaries that certain critics of realism claim are barriers to a comprehensive, non-exclusionary definition of security. As David Campbell notes, the discourse that is used to secure the identity of those on the inside, through the association of danger with those on the outside, is frequently framed in gendered terms. For example, representation by US nineteenth-century authors of Japanese people and people of Latin America

as treacherous, child-like, emotionally disturbed and effeminate are gendered, and vestiges of them are still part of US foreign policy discourse today. During the early Cold War, the labeling of communist or socialist thought as 'pink' stands in contrast to the imperatives of national security, which depended on the ability and propensity of strong men to stand up to the threats of communism. In the most states, citizenship has been associated with a militarized version of patriotism and the ultimate sacrifice of giving one's life for one's country. Excluded from military combat in almost all societies, women have, therefore, been perceived as second-class citizens or victims who lack agency in matters of their own protection. By questioning this protector/protected relationship and by seeing how these political identities are constructed in terms of gender inequalities, we can begin to understand how they, and other social relations of domination and subordination, can be obstacles to a comprehensive definition of security [55].

Feminist perspectives can also contribute to the reconsideration of boundaries that have locked traditional security analysis into its statist framework. By emphasizing the interrelationship of physical violence across all levels of society from military combat to family violence, which, like international conflicts, also takes place in a space that is under-protected by the law, feminist perspectives question the identification of security with state boundaries. The global feminization of poverty provides evidence which raises questions about economic boundary distinctions between North and South, increasingly prevalent in the new security literature. Just as poverty and homelessness inside Northern states demonstrate the existence of the South in the North, the North's negative presence is felt in the South when political and economic elites align with Northern states and global capital to the detriment of their own people. Since women have been disproportionately providing the free or under-remunerated labor upon which these inequalities are built, examining women's lives offers a new entry point into understanding how these phenomena are structurally linked [56].

Feminists believe, therefore, that evidence of women's insecurities demonstrates that the activities of the state and the global market are not neutral with regard to security provision for all individuals. However, looking at security from these feminist perspectives is not intended only to address women's insecurities; rather, its goal is to point out how unequal social relations can make all individuals more insecure. Understanding the shared experiences of women worldwide helps to overcome divisions between citizens and people and insiders and outsiders that some critics of realism have identified as detrimental to the achievement of comprehensive security. Many feminists claim that true security cannot be achieved until these hierarchical social relations and divisive boundary distinctions are recognized and substantially altered and until all individuals participate in providing for their own security.

The difficulties of cooperation between states

For most contemporary neo-realist writers there is little prospect of a significant change in the nature of security in the post-Cold War world. Pointing to the Gulf War in 1991, the violent disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and parts of the former Soviet Union, continuing violence in the Middle East, and the Iraq War in 2003, it is argued that we continue to live in a world of mistrust and constant security competition. Cooperation between states occurs, but it is difficult to achieve and even more difficult to sustain.

There are two main factors, it is suggested, which continue to make cooperation difficult, even after the changes of 1989. The first is the prospect of cheating; the second is the concern which states have about what are called relative gains.

The problem of cheating

Writers like Waltz and Mearsheimer do not deny that states often cooperate in the post-Cold War era there are even greater opportunities than in the past for states to work together. They argue, however, that there are distinct limits to this cooperation because states have always been, and remain, fearful that others will cheat on any agreements reached and attempt to gain advantages over them. This risk is regarded as being particularly important, given the nature of modern military technology which can bring about very rapid shifts in the balance of power between states. 'Such a development', Mearsheimer has argued, 'could create a window of opportunity for the cheating side to inflict a decisive defeat on the victim state (1994/5:20). States realize that this is the case and although they join alliances and sign arms control agreements, they remain cautious and aware of the need to provide for their own national security in the last resort.

The problem of relative gains

Cooperation is also inhibited, according to many neo-realist writers, because states tend to be concerned with 'relative gains', rather than absolute gains. Instead of being interested in cooperation because it will benefit both partners, states always have to be aware of how much they are gaining compared with the state they are cooperating with. Because all states will be attempting to maximize their gains in a competitive, mistrustful, and uncertain international environment, cooperation will always be very difficult to achieve and hard to maintain.

Such a view of the problems of cooperation in the post-Cold War world is not, however, shared by all writers. There is a wide body of opinion among scholars (and politicians) that the neo-realist view of international relations should be modified or even replaced. Opposition to neo-realism takes a wide variety of different forms. To illustrate alternative ways of thinking about contemporary international security, a number of different approaches will be considered. Despites the differences which exist between writers in these fields many of them share a common view that greater international security in the future is possible.

The opportunities for cooperation between states

Liberal Institutionalism

One of the main characteristics of the neo-realist approach to international security is the belief that international institutions do not have a very important part to play in the prevention of war. Institutions are seen as being the product of state interests and the constraints which are imposed by the international system itself. It is these interests and constraints which shape the decisions on whether to cooperate or compete rather than the institutions to which they belong.

Such views have been challenged by both states people and a number of international relations specialists, particularly following the end of the Cold War. The British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, for example, made the case in June 1992 that institutions

themselves had played, and continued to play, a crucial role in enhancing security, particularly in Europe. He argued that the west had developed 'a set of international institutions which have proved their worth for one set of problems'. He went on to argue that the great challenge of the post-Cold War era was to adapt these institutions to deal with the new circumstances which prevailed (Hurd, quoted in Mearsheimer 1994/5).

This view reflected a belief, widely shared among Western states people, that a framework of complementary, mutually reinforcing institutions - the EU, NATO, WEU (Western European Union), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) — could be developed to promote a more durable and stable European security system for the post-Cold War era. It is a view which is also shared by a distinctive group of academic writers which developed since the 1980s and early 1990s. These writers share a conviction that the developing pattern of institutionalized cooperation between states opens up unprecedented opportunities to achieve greater international security in the years ahead. Although the past may have been characterized by constant wars and conflict, important changes are taking place in international relations at the beginning of the twenty-first century which creates the opportunity to dampen down the traditional security competition between states.

This approach, known as Liberal Institutionalism, operates largely within the Realist framework, but argues that international institutions are much more important in helping to achieve cooperation and stability than 'structural realists' realize [57]. 'Institutions can provide information, reduce transaction costs, make commitments more credible, establish focal points for coordination and, in general, facilitate the operation of reciprocity'. Supporters of these ideas point to the importance of European economic and political institutions in overcoming the traditional hostility of European states. They also point to the developments within the European Union and NATO in the post-Cold War era to demonstrate that by investing major resources states themselves clearly believe in the importance of institutions.

As such, it is suggested that in a world constrained by state power and divergent interests, international institutions operating on the basis of reciprocity at least will be a component of any lasting peace. In other words, international institutions themselves are unlikely to eradicate war from the international system but they can play a part in helping to achieve greater cooperation between states. This was reflected in Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher`s call in 1990 to 'bring the new democracies of Eastern Europe into closer association with the institutions of Western Europe'. Despite some scepticism about the European Community, she argued that EC had reconciled antagonisms within Western Europe in the post-Second World War period and it could be used to overcome divisions between East and West in Europe in the post-Cold War period. This has been very much at the heart of the campaign to expand the EU in the early years of this century.

Alternative views on international security

Constructivist theory

The notion that international relations are not only affected by power politics but also by ideas is also shared by writers who describe themselves as 'Constructivist` theorists. According to this view, the fundamental structures of international politics are

social rather than strictly material. This leads Social Constructivists to argue that changes in the nature of social interaction between states can bring a fundamental shift towards greater international security.

At one level, many Constructivists, like Alexander Wendt, share a number of the major realist assumptions about international politics. For example, some accept that states are the key referent in the study of international politics and international security; that international politics is anarchic; that states often have offensive capabilities; that states cannot be absolutely certain of the intentions of other states; that states have a fundamental wish to survive; and that states attempt to behave rationally. Some, such as Wendt, also see themselves as structuralists; that is to say they believe that the interests of individual states are in an important sense constructed by the structure of the international system.

However, Constructivists think about international politics in a very different way from neo-realists. The latter tend to view structure as being made up only of a distribution of material capabilities. On the other hand, Constructivists view structure as the product of social relationships. Social structures are made possible by shared knowledge, material resources and practices. This means that social structures are defined, in part, by shared understandings, expectations, or knowledge. As an example of this, Wendt argues that the security dilemma is a social structure composed of inter-subjective understandings in which states are so distrustful that they make worst-case assumptions about each other's intentions, and, as a result, define their interests in 'self-help' terms. In contrast, a security community is a rather different social structure, composed of shared knowledge in which states trust one another to resolve disputes without war.

The emphasis on the structure of shared knowledge is important in Constructivist thinking. Social Structures include material things, like tanks and economic resources, but these only acquire meaning through the shared knowledge in which they are embedded. The idea of power politics, or realpolitik, has meaning to the extent that states accept the idea as a basic rule of international politics. According to Social Constructivists writers, power politics is an idea which does affect the way states behave, but it does not describe all inter-state behavior. States are also influenced by other ideas and norms, such as the rule of law and the importance of institutional cooperation and restraint. In his study, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it (1992), Wendt argued that security dilemmas and wars can be seen, in part, as the outcome of self-fulfilling prophecies. The 'logic of reciprocity' means that states acquire a shared knowledge about the meaning of power and act accordingly. Equally, he argues, policies of reassurance can also help to bring about a structure of shared knowledge which can help to move states towards a more peaceful security community [58].

Although Constructivists argue that security dilemmas are not acts of God, they differ over whether they can be escaped. For some, the fact that structures are socially constructed does not necessarily mean that they can be changed. This is reflected in Wendt's comment that 'sometimes social structures so constrain action that transformative strategies are impossible' (1995:80). Many Constructivist writers, however, are more optimistic. They point to the changes in ideas introduced by Gorbachev during the second half of the 1980s, which led to a shared knowledge about the end of the Cold War. Once both sides accepted the Cold War was over, it really was over. According to this view, understanding the crucial role of social structure is important in developing policies and processes of interaction which will lead towards cooperation rather than conflict. For the optimists, there is sufficient 'slack' in the international system which allows states to pursue policies of peaceful social change rather than engage in a perpetual competitive struggle for power. If there are opportunities for promoting social change, most Constructivists believe it would be irresponsible not to pursue such policies.

Critical security studies

Despite the differences between Constructivists and Realists about the relationship between ideas and material factors, they tend to agree on the central role of the state in debates about international security. There are other theorists, however, who believe that the state has been given too much prominence. Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams have defined critical security studies in the following terms: 'Contemporary debates over the nature of security often float on a sea of unvoiced assumptions and deeper theoretical issues concerning to what and to whom the term *security* refers. What most contributions to the debate thus share are two inter-related concerns: what security is and how we study it' (1997:34). What they also share is a wish to de-emphasize the role of the state and the need to re-conceptualize security in a different way. Critical security studies, however, includes a number of different approaches. These include critical theory, 'feminist' approaches and 'post-modernist' approaches.

Robert Cox draws a distinction between problem solving theories and critical theories. Problem-solving theorists work within the prevailing system. They take the existing social and political relations and institutions as starting points for analysis and then see how the problems arising from these can be solved and ameliorated. In contrast, critical theorists focus their attention on the way these existing relationships and institutions emerged and what might be done to change them. For critical security theorists, states should not be the centre of analysis because they are also often part of the problem of insecurity in the international system. They can be providers of security, but they can also be a source of threat to their own people. According to this view, therefore, attention should be focused on the individual rather that the state.

As emphasized earlier in this paper, feminist writers also challenge the traditional emphasis on the central role of the state in studies of international security. While there are significant differences between feminist theorists, all share the view that works on international politics in general, and international security in particular, have been written from a 'masculine` point of view. In her work, Ann Tickner (1992:191) argues that women have 'seldom been recognized by the security literature' despite the fact that conflicts affect women, as much, if not more, than men. The vast majority of casualties and refugees in war are women and children and, as the recent war in Bosnia confirms, the rape of women is often used as a tool of war.

In a major feminist study of security, *Bananas,* Cynthia Enloe points to the patriarchal structure of privilege and control at all levels which, in her view, effectively legitimizes all forms of violence. Like Tickner, she highlights the traditional exclusion of women from international relations, suggesting 'that they are in fact crucial to it in practice and that nowhere is the state more gendered in the sense

of how power is dispersed than in the security apparatus` [59,60]. She also challenges the concept of 'national security`, arguing that the use of such terms is often designed to preserve the prevailing male-dominated order rather than protect the state from external attack.

Feminist writers argue that if gender is brought more explicitly into the study of security, not only will new issues and alternative perspectives be added to the security agenda, but the result will be a fundamentally different view of the nature of international security. According to Jill Steans, 'Rethinking security involves thinking about militarism and patriarchy, mal-development and environmental degradation. It involves thinking about the relationship between poverty, debt and population growth. It involves thinking about resources and how they are distributed [61].

Recent years have seen the emergence of post-modernist approaches to international relations which has produced a somewhat distinctive perspective towards international security. Post-modernist writers share the view that ideas, discourse, and 'the logic of interpretation' are crucial in understanding international politics and security. Like other writers who adopt a 'critical` approach, post-modernists see 'Realism' as one of the central problems of international insecurity. This is because Realism is a discourse of power and rule which has been dominant in international politics in the past and which has encouraged security competition between states. Power politics is seen as an image of the world that encourages behavior that helps bring about war. As such, the attempt to balance power is itself part of the very behavior that leads to war. According to this view, alliances do not produce peace, but lead to war. The aim, for many post-modernists, therefore, is to replace the discourse of Realism or power with a different discourse and alternative interpretations of threats to 'national security`. The idea is that once the 'software` programme of Realism that people carry around in their heads has been replaced by a new 'software` programme based on cooperative norms, individuals, states, and regions will learn to work with each other and global politics will become more peaceful.

Global society and international security

The opportunity to pursue changes in the international system is shared by scholars who point to new trends that are already taking place in world politics. In the past, the state has been the centre of thinking about international relations. This state-centric view, however, is now increasingly challenged. Writers from the global society school of thought argue that at the beginning of the twenty-first century the process of globalization (which has been developing for centuries) has accelerated to the point where the clear outlines of a global society are now evident. The emergence of a global economic system, global communications, and the elements of a global culture have helped to provide a wide network of social relationships which transcend state frontiers and encompass people all over the world. This has to the growing obsolescence of territorial wars between the great powers. At the same time, so the argument goes, new risks associated with the environment, poverty, and weapons of mass destruction are facing humanity, just at a time when the nation-state is in crisis.

Supporters of the 'global society` school accepts that globalization is an uneven and contradictory process. The end of the Cold War has been characterized not only by an increasing global awareness and the creation of a range of global social movements, but also by the fragmentation of nation-states. This has been most obvious among the former communist states, especially the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. The result of this 'fracture of statehood` has been a movement away from conflicts between the great powers to new forms of insecurity caused by nationalistic, ethnic, and religious rivalries within states and across state boundaries. This has been reflected in the brutal civil wars that have been fought in Bosnia, Russia, Somalia, Rwanda, Yemen, and Kosovo during the 1990s. Mary Kaldor (2009) had described these conflicts as new wars, which can only be understood in the context of globalization. The intensification of interconnectedness, she argues, 'has meant that ideological and/or territorial cleavages of an earlier era have increasingly been supplanted by an emerging political cleavage between .cosmopolitanism, based on inclusive, multicultural values and the politics of particularist identities. The cleavage between those who are part of the global processes and those who are excluded give rise to wars which are characterized by 'population expulsion through various means such as mass killing, forcible resettlement, as well as a range of political, psychological and economic techniques of intimidation' [62].

Such conflicts pose a critical problem for the international community of whether to intervene in the domestic affairs of sovereign states to safeguard minority rights and individual human rights. This dilemma, according to global society theorists, reflects the historic transformation of human society. Although states continue to limp along, many global theorists argue that it is now increasingly necessary to think of the security of individuals and of groups within the emergent global society.

Not all writers on globalization, however, agree with this view. There are those who argue that while the state is being transformed (both from within and without) by the processes of globalization, it remains a key referent in the contemporary debate about security. This is one of the central arguments in Ian Clark`s study of Globalization and International Relations Theory (2009). Clark argues that: 'What globalization can bring to bear on the topic of security is an awareness of widespread systemic developments without any resulting need to downplay the role of the state, or assume its obsolescence (2009:125). What is interesting for Clark is the way that security is being reshaped by globalization and the changes that this is creating for the security agenda of states. In particular, as states become less able to provide what they have traditionally provided, he argues that domestic bargains about what citizens are prepared to sacrifice for the state are being renegotiated. This is reflected in the type of security activities in which states are prepared to engage, and in the extent to which they are prepared to pursue them unilaterally. According to this view of globalization, states are not withering away but are being transformed as they struggle to deal with the range of new challenges (including those of security) that face them.

The continuing tensions between national and international security

At the centre of the contemporary debate about international security dealt with above is the issue of continuity and change. This involves questions about how the past is to be interpreted and whether international politics is in fact undergoing a dramatic change as a result of the processes of globalization, especially after 9/11. There is no doubt that national security is being

challenged by the forces of globalization, some of which have a positive effect, bringing states into greater contact with each other. As Bretherton and Ponton have argued, the intensification of global connectedness associated with economic globalization, ecological interdependence, and the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, means that 'co-operation between states is more than ever necessary (2006:100-101). It has also been argued that the increased need for interdependence caused by globalization will help 'to facilitate dialogue at the elite level between states, providing significant gains for international security [63]. At the same time, however, globalization also appears to be having negative effects on international security. It is often associated with fragmentation, rapid social change, increased economic inequality, and challenges to cultural identity which contribute to conflicts within, and between, states. This ambivalent effect of globalization, in turn, reinforces the search for national security, unilateralism, and pre-emptive strategies, and at the same time often leads other less powerful states to seek greater multilateral and global solutions as they are less able to provide security for their citizens.

In the early years of the twenty-first century, therefore, despite important changes which are taking place in world politics, the traditional ambiguity about international security remains In some ways the world is a much safer place to live in as a result of the end of the Cold War and the removal of nuclear confrontation as a central element in East-West relations. It can be argued that some of the processes of globalization and the generally cooperative effects of international institutions have played an important part in dampening down the competitive aspects of the security dilemma between states. These trends, however, are offset to a significant extent as the continuing turmoil in the Middle East, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the subsequent war on terror, demonstrate. It is evident that military force continues to be an important arbiter of disputes both between and particularly within states, as well as a weapon used by terrorist movements who reject the status quo. This was reflected especially in the conflict in Dafur, the war in the Lebanon in 2006, and the violence in Iraq in 2003. Also conventional arms races continue in different regions of the world. Nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons still provide a potent influence on the security calculations of many states, crazy and ambitious politicians remain at the head of some governments, and cultural differences, as well as diverse values and the tensions inherent in globalization itself, prevent the emergence of global agreement on a wide range of important issues. Water resources and energy also remain a potential source of conflict in the years ahead. In an age of increasing globalization, individual and societal insecurity are increasingly evident as the forces of fragmentation and integration destabilize traditional identities and thereby complicate relationships within and between states.

As a result, it remains much too soon to conclude that a paradigmatic shift towards a more peaceful world is taking place in international politics and international security in the aftermath of the Cold War, or indeed that such a permanent shift is possible. The empirical historical evidence as well as contemporary events suggests caution. Periods of more cooperative inter-state (and inter-group) relations have often in the past led to a false dawn and an unwarranted euphoria that 'perpetual peace` was about to break out. The structure of the international system, particular kinds of political system and human nature provide important constraints on the way that individuals, states, or international institutions behave. So does the predominance of realist attitudes towards international security among many of the world`s political leaders.

The end of the Cold War has certainly brought new patterns of international security and insecurity. The major confrontations of the previous fifty years gave way initially to a period of cooperative security (albeit of a tentative nature) between the Cold War great power antagonists. The expansion of NATO and EU opened up the possibility of the development of a major new security community in Europe. The spread of democracy appeared to be the basis of a dynamic new emerging international order. At the same time, however, with the discipline of the Cold War gone, new security problems associated with clashes over identity (as in the former Yugoslavia), the search for regional dominance (as with the Gulf War in the early 1990s), and the disintegration of failed states (especially in Africa) all helped to undermine the prospects for a more peaceful world. The international system was increasingly unipolar, with America leading 'coalitions of the willing' in a number of campaigns to bring about a Western-inspired international order. The aim of bringing Western democracy to areas like the Middle East, however, has itself been a source of conflict. Nuclear proliferation is an increasing problem and US pre-eminence seems likely to be challenged in the years ahead by the rise of powers like China.

This is not to argue that there is no room for peaceful change or that new ideas and discourses about international relations are unimportant in helping to shape choices that have to be made. Opportunities to develop greater international security will always exist.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The end of the Cold War, marked by the sudden collapse of one of the two superpowers and the continuing conflict in the peripheries of the international system, demands new frameworks for thinking about international security. Multiple threats that defy military solutions have caused some neo-realists, as well as many of their critics, to search for a broader definition of security that encompasses not only freedom from physical violence but also the material well-being of individuals and the environmental health of the entire planet. While recognizing that the end of the Cold War does not necessarily signify a more peaceful world or a world where military issues will not continue to occupy the security agenda, those who argue for this broader definition do so on the grounds of heightened interdependence between these various security issues. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the growing militarization of certain regions of the South have highlighted the trade-off between the cost of sophisticated weapons of war, whose use is circumscribed by their potential for mass destruction, and the economic welfare of individuals. The Gulf War of 1991 demonstrated that modern warfare is also a serious threat to the ecosystem. For these reasons there is a growing sense among many contemporary scholars, and even some policy-makers, that preparing for war is becoming too costly and may actually detract from the achievement of national security: even those who continue to prioritize military issues often advocate collective rather than unilateral security arrangements.

If we believe that the various insecurities outlined in this paper are interrelated, we must begin to take steps towards constructing a vision of security that can promote a viable ecosystem, while at the same time working towards the elimination of both physical

and structural violence. To do this we must begin to recognize that all these forms of violence are interrelated and that their diminution requires dismantling hierarchical boundaries between women and men, rich and poor, and insiders and outsiders which have contributed to an exclusionary divisive definition of security. Genuine security for all individuals requires a less militarized model of citizenship that valorizes different types of activities and allows women and men to participate equally in building the type of state institutions that are responsive to the security needs of their own people as well as to those on the outside. Such reformulated states could satisfy people's need for identity that E. H. Carr felt was so important, while providing a type of security that is not achieved at the expense of the security of others. Although still in the distant future, the realization of this humanist vision of security that Carr alluded to several years ago requires a willingness to move beyond the exclusionary boundaries and identities within which our traditional understanding of security has been framed.

In a world of continuing diversity, mistrust, and uncertainty, however, it is likely that the search for a more cooperative global society is likely to remain in conflict with the powerful pressures which exist for states, and other political communities, to look after what they perceive to be their own sectional, national, or regional security against threats from without and within. This seems particularly apparent given the level of violence which has occurred since September 11. Whether and how greater international security can be achieved, still remains, as Herbert Butterfield once argued, 'the hardest nut of all' for students and practitioners of international politics to crack. This is what makes the study of international security such a fascinating and important activity.

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