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Introduction

> For every complex problem there is a simple solution. And it's always wrong.
>
> – H. L. Mencken

Security is a complex and contested notion – heavily laden with emotion and deeply held values. Most people would agree that a security problem arises when someone – a person, gang or group, or state – threatens another's life, limb, or livelihood say, a gunman in a dark, dead-end alley demanding your wallet or your life. Consider the dread that the inhabitants of London and Berlin must have felt during World War II when bombed by enemy planes or missiles. Think also about the Japanese survivors of Hiroshima, the first city to be destroyed by an atomic bomb. Put yourself in the place of New Yorkers on September 11, 2001, who witnessed first-hand the destruction of the World Trade Center, not to mention millions more on television around the world in real time. Imagine, too, the terror of the Tutsi and Hutu peoples of Rwanda in 1994 when thousands were killed in three months – estimates run to 800,000 – by a genocide launched by Hutu extremists using primitive machetes and garden hoes.[1]

While few would likely dispute these examples of a security threat, many would extend the meaning of security to other values and interests. They would apply the term to environmental damage caused by global warming or to the struggle for subsistence of billions of peoples in the developing world or to human rights protections from capricious incarceration, torture, or genocide. For these observers, their competing images of security are very real, urgent, and threatening for some even more so than notions of security associated with violence and coercive threats.[2]

[1] Kolodziej (2000a).
[2] Croft and Terriff (2000). See also the symposium on the meaning of security in *Arms Control*, 1992: 13.

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Where do we draw the line in studying security? What should be included or excluded? If a broad and inclusive understanding of security is taken as the starting point, coterminous with whatever is in the mind of the observer, then it would be tantamount to saying that almost every human value and interest, if perceived by the affected party to be threatened, is a security issue. We may be including so much in our definition of security that we have posed the problem in ways that impede or preclude our quest for knowledge about this vitally important human concern. Conversely, if a narrower conception of security were adopted, identified solely with force and coercive threats, we may be excluding actors and factors bearing crucially on security.

Agreeing on a common definition for security will not be easy. Unless we can find common ground, we will be talking about different things designated as security. We will be unwittingly relying on conceptual filters that project widely contrasting and refracted images of what security is and how to address it. This volume will try to help you think about security and to view security as an autonomous domain of human behavior. It will equip you with basic conceptual tools to pursue the study of security as a discipline and to use these tools in making knowledgeable evaluations and informed choices about security policy. I would like to challenge you, the reader, to judge the success of this volume by the degree to which it enables you to explain and understand international security and its entangling connection to international politics and to use this knowledge for your benefit as a citizen of an open society and as a member of an ever more expanding and globalizing world.

Roadmap: organization and rationale of the volume

My task is to convince you that my understanding of security makes sense. More pointedly, I wish to show that it can be a useful tool of analysis by which you can assess the claims of what this volume identifies as the leading schools of thought about security contesting today for our attention and allegiance. Once you get a hang of how to evaluate these rival positions, you will be able to fashion your own theory and approach to security studies.

The volume is divided into three sections. The first, composed of three chapters, lays the foundation for the evaluation of seven schools of security thinking and practice. Chapter 1 presents a broad understanding of security and distinguishes this human concern from international relations. For the purposes of this volume, security as a humanly created phenomenon embraces *both* the use of force and coercive threats by humans

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and their agents *and* the transformation of these exchanges, charged with real or potential violence, into non-lethal, consensual exchanges. These twin and contesting incentives capture the implicit choice posed by interdependent social transactions between humans, their agents, and human societies: viz., whether to use *or* not to use force to ensure their preferred outcomes of these exchanges.

An inclusive and reliable theory of security must include those nonviolent means and strategies devised and relied upon by actors to reduce and potentially surmount the incentives to employ force and threats to resolve conicts and to foster cooperation. In other words, from the perspective of international politics, students of security studies are obliged, simultaneously, to develop a theory of war *and* peace. Short of this ambitious aim, what knowledge we acquire about security will be a wed in one of three ways.

First, there is the serious conceptual (and normative) problem of determining whose notion of security should count. Should it be the actors whose behavior is being described, explained, predicted, and understood or the perspectives of the theorist, policy analyst, or decision-maker in security? This volume privileges actors – humans and their agents, like states, Intergovernmental Organizations (UN), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), etc. – and how and why they address security issues. What do they mean by security? How do they respond and solve these problems? It is their thinking, decisions, and actions that matter most. This priority is often neglected or marginalized in the debates between rival schools of security thought. They tend to have a bias of presenting their selected notion of security as if it were coterminous with what actors think and do about security, as the latter perceive this multifaceted issue. This volume will try to keep actors at the center and evaluate contending schools of thought by how close they come to capturing the actors themselves.

As this discussion proceeds, it will become clearer that to capture what actors conceive to be a security issue, we need a definition of the phenomenon of security that maps as closely as possible with the wide range of conicting perceptions and perspectives of actors about security. We need a definition of sufficient scope that includes all possible choices and behavior by actors in responding to security imperatives. Such a definition would stipulate that security arises as a human experience and phenomenon when interdependent actors decide to use or not to use force to get what they want from each other. This understanding of security is sufficiently capacious to include, in principle, within a set marked security all relevant human choices and actions through time and space. A less inclusive test of security – say limited to using force or searching

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for peace – would leave out critical observations or, worse, load on the interests and biases of the observer rather than privilege the actor.

Second, if an inclusive definition is not adopted for the study of security, we risk falsifying the historical record where security issues are in play. Certainly history abundantly shows continuing actor reliance on force and threats. This is particularly true of states, since their inception as central international actors of the modern era. No adequate reckoning of the twentieth century's security problems would pass muster if World Wars I and II, the Cold War, and the armed struggles for self-determination of former colonial peoples were excluded. Conversely, we also know that bitter enemies have learned to make peace with each other. Witness France and Germany after World War II or the United States and Britain in the wake of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Actors display impressive wit, imagination, and resourcefulness in creating social incentives and institutions to manage and even surmount their profound differences over fundamental interests and values. As one widely cited observer of state behavior suggests, states have been able to live under conditions of anarchy for a long time peace, not war, largely characterizes their relations.[3] Another internationally respected historian also suggests that the long peace in Europe between 1815 and 1914 can be explained by the shared view of leading statesmen who, in light of the Napoleonic Wars, were agreed, however much they remained adversaries, that war itself was a threat to the stability of their regimes and the survival of their nations and empires.[4]

Finally, the policy analyst and decision-maker should be mindful of the potential efficacy of soft and hard forms of power to get one's way.[5] In the face of a determined adversary bent on using violence to impose his will on another state or people – say Nazi Germany or imperial Japan – it makes sense for threatened policy-makers to narrow their search to combat these aggressors with countervailing force. Similarly, few would expect terrorists to be credible partners in negotiating peacefully to spare the lives of innocent citizens they kidnapped.

In other instances, a one-sided approach to security as the use of force would be wrong and wrong-headed when there is some basis for optimism that competing high-stake interests can be optimally achieved through non-coercive solutions even under the continuing threat that one or more of the actors might defect and invoke force or war. If states and their populations, for example, mutually understand that armed conict might preclude sustainable economic growth, an assumption that can be readily predicated of the states comprising the European Union and

[3] Bull (1977). [4] Schroeder (1989, 1994b, 2004). [5] Nye (2002).

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American–Chinese relations today, they can consensually agree to rules for market operations and competition even while deeply split by other policy concerns. Even seemingly implacable enemies – the United States and the Soviet Union – were able to reach arms control and disarmament agreements to limit their global rivalry and arms race and to restrain their clients and allies to preclude the expansion of local conicts to a global conag ration.[6] These examples meet a test of cases where powerful incentives are working on all sides to use force, yet actors choose non-violent means to manage or resolve their security differences.

Chapter 1 next identifies four levels of exchanges between human actors and their agents at which the incentives to use force or coercive threats are at work. These levels of exchange are important to distinguish the principal actors and the factors driving actor behavior at each level. The schools of security that will be discussed can be distinguished by the degree of significance and salience attached by each to one or more of these levels of analysis. Chapter 1 closes with a discussion of relevant criteria by which to assess the rival claims of the schools of thought contending for the crown of hegemon in security studies. These rely principally on the methodological tests devised by Imre Lakatos. These are widely used in the natural and social sciences to evaluate the explanatory and predictive power of opposing theories.

Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the three theorists who have had the most profound impact on security studies: Thomas Hobbes, Carl von Clausewitz, and Thucydides. More than any other thinkers, they established security studies as an autonomous sphere of human thinking, decision, and action. They laid the foundations for a science of security of potentially universal applicability over time, space, and social conditions. They are a useful starting (if scarcely stopping) point in learning how to think about security.

If security is a science in the sense of a body of acquired and accumulating knowledge, an implicit point on which these three thinkers agree, then we need to submit the seven contending schools of thought about security to a common test to see which has the greatest explanatory power. Chapter 3 develops a Cold War labora tory for testing and evaluating these schools. What is their relative capacity to explain the rise and demise of the Cold War from 1945 to 1991 and the passing of the bipolar system? Parts 2 and 3 apply Lakatosian criteria to each school of thought in responding to this question.

If an approach or theory of security is a wed in explaining the beginning, evolution, and end of the Cold War, we can scarcely be confident

[6] Kolodziej and Kanet (1991).

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about its reliability to understand and explain the post-Cold War world in which we live today. Several considerations support this claim. First, the Cold War was global. It enveloped all of the peoples and states of the world in some measure, whether they wished to be implicated in this struggle for hegemony or not. Second, it posed the highest stakes for all of the peoples of the world. An all-out superpower nuclear war would have effectively destroyed these states and most of their populations. It would have killed or injured countless hundreds of millions more, as the deadly radioactive clouds created by triggering the nuclear Doomsda y Machines of the superpowers would have hovered over the globe for decades.[7] Any armed conict that risks the extinction of human life on earth intuitively meets a test of relevance as a security problem of the first order.

Third, while the Cold War was a deadly contest, it surprisingly did not end that way. Since the dawn of the modern nation-state a half-millennium ago, the competition for dominance between implacable state rivals typically ended in war to decide who was on top. This had pretty much been the pattern of nation-state competition until the end of World War II. Yet despite this long record of big power clashes, which claimed by most estimates over 100 million lives and produced untold misery for hundreds of millions more in the course of the twentieth century, the Cold War ended abruptly and unexpectedly with hardly a shot being fired. What happened? Any security theory worth its salt should be able to explain this unexpected outcome as well as the transition and workings of the post-Cold War.

The second part of the volume is straightforward. Chapter 4 reviews realist, neorealist, and liberal institutionalist thinking and submits them to a Cold War test. Chapter 5 develops a similar critique for neoclassical economic and neo-Marxist theories of conict and security. The third part of the discussion departs from these paradigms, as *theories* of security and international relations, and presents two broadly defined, rival *approaches* to the development, testing, and validation of prevailing paradigms. However much scholars in these two camps may otherwise clash, they are allies in problematizing the theories of security discussed in part 2. They are especially useful as critical methodological, epistemological, and ontological tools (terms to be defined along the way) to assess the claims of disputing security positions.

Chapter 6 focuses on behaviorism or what some would prefer to call rational or empirically based and driven approaches to theory-building about security. Behaviorism concentrates, by and large, on what can be observed, counted, measured, and replicated by other researchers using

[7] Herman Kahn (1960) first used the term Doomsday Machine.

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the same methods and data. Scholars working in this tradition rely on methods drawn principally from the physical and biological sciences. Chapter 7 introduces the reader to constructivism. This is a complex and contentious school of thought. Its partisans are as much in fundamental disagreement among themselves over the question of how to study international politics as they are united in their rejection of prevailing paradigms and behavioral approaches as sufficient to explain or understand security. Constructivists of all stripes try to explain how actors construct their identities and the social structures these actors author to enable them to define and pursue their interests, aims, and values. They contend that understanding how this ceaseless process of actor reaffirmation, mutation, and transformation of their identities and social constructions is the key to explaining the creation and surmounting of security concerns.

The volume argues that each of these schools of thought has something to offer. This said, the user of these bodies of thought must still be alert to their strengths and weaknesses to effectively exploit their knowledge about international security for social and personal benefit. These theories, if applied with care and discrimination, can provide some foresight, however dim or slim.[8] Each will be found to explain part of the unfolding, evolutionary process of international security. Each will be found wanting, too. Much like the parable of the blind men and the elephant, partisans of each paradigm or approach explain security (the elephant) by way of selective observation of what they see. Some seize on the tail and proclaim the beast a snake or rope. Others fall against its shoulders and call it a wall. Still others, feeling the elephant's curling trunk or drenched by water issuing from its end, conclude that the object is a fountain. In evaluating these several paradigms of security we can conceivably rise above them to see the whole elephant – an integrated understanding of the relation of security and international relations.

Let's try.

Edward A. Kolodziej
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign,
October, 2004

[8] While I remain critical of the impoverished state of security theory, my reservations should not be taken as an attack or dismissal of the utility of different approaches to security. The critique of this volume is more a call for better theory and more empirical work to improve our knowledge and practice of security than a rejection of currently competing security theories or approaches. See Kolodziej (1992a, b, c). In this quest, the study of history is absolutely vital for theory-building and practice in security, but history is not self-revealing along these dimensions, as some historians believe. See Gaddis (1992–3) and especially Schroeder (1994b), who is especially sensitive to this point.

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Part I

Introduction to international security and security studies

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1 International relations and international security: boundaries, levels of analysis, and falsifying theories

Why another book on security?

Security as a Tower of Babel

The shelves of any city or college library are stacked with books about security. A closer look would also reveal that most of the books are out of date – stale reminders of past security issues now overtaken by events rather than compelling volumes speaking to real and urgent security issues. Part of the explanation for these piles of tired texts arises from the rapid changes besetting the world's peoples and states. It's hard for practiced observers and scholars, much more so for an informed, but otherwise preoccupied, public to keep pace with rapidly changing events, notably those impacting security.

Only a decade ago, it seemed a lot easier to make sense of the world. Many believed the globe to be permanently divided between two military blocs led by two superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union. Few believed that either would be challenged anytime soon.[1] The Soviet Union's unexpected implosion changed all that overnight. With the collapse of the Cold War and bipolar superpower competition, the world today appears much more complex – and decidedly more confusing. The seeming simplicity of the Cold War period, stretching roughly from the end of World War II in 1945 to the sudden demise of the Soviet Union in December 1991, has been replaced by what appears to be a new world that defies easy explanation or understanding. This is a world beset by unprecedented security threats, dramatized by global terrorism and the diffusion of weapons of mass destruction.

The frustration about what to believe or expect is highlighted by the fundamental discord and debate among practiced and accomplished scholars, analysts, commentators, and political leaders about what the future holds for us as members of an emerging global society. The

[1] Waltz (1964).

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superpower bipolar system, built disquietingly on two nuclear Doomsday Machines, appeared to provide a precarious but seemingly unchallengeable and stable global order. No other state could contest the nuclear capabilities of either superpower. By that token neither superpower had incentive to attack its rival and risk almost certain annihilation, even as both ceaselessly prepared for a nuclear showdown. Both also had reason to cooperate, implicitly and explicitly, to restrain their allies and clients to prevent local conicts from escalating to an all-out nuclear war. Unlike the volatile balance of power shifts of the interwar era before World War II, the Cold War nuclear bipolar balance of power appeared to offer an uneasy peace, orchestrated under the directing batons of two rational, prudent superpowers.[2] If each prepared for a nuclear Armageddon, each no less strove to cooperate with its rival to prevent accidental, unintended, or unwitting nuclear war.[3]

Some respected scholars and informed observers see things today in a darker light. They predict that we will envy the stability and seemingly predictable safety of the Cold War and the superpower nuclear balance of terror.[4] They project a grim future of an enlarging profusion of power centers – state and non-state – emerging with no one in charge to order the world's affairs. Even empowered individuals, like determined and demented terrorists, can attack a superpower and provoke a global war on terrorism with no clear end in sight. Once close allies within the Atlantic Alliance are increasingly at odds over global security policy – a split already apparent in conicting European and American reactions to the Balkan Wars of the 1990s and to the Iraq War of 2003. The divisions among the Western democracies are viewed as even more profound and fissiparous than between the American and European components of the Western coalition that emerged victorious in the Cold War, as some suggest.[5] For many American security policy-makers, Europe itself is divided between new – the East European states freed from Soviet rule during the Cold War – and the old Europe, principally France and Germany, which opposed the Iraq War.[6] This disorder even among the victors provides evidence for those who view not only a *World Out of Order* but also one in which a potentially rogue superpower threatens to deepen and widen disorder through a vain play for global domination.[7]

[2] The leading theorist holding this position is Kenneth N. Waltz. See Mearsheimer (1990, 1994) and Waltz (1964, 1979, 1993).
[3] Kolodziej and Kanet (1991).
[4] This portrayal of the Cold War and its aftermath are pursued at length in Mearsheimer (1990, 1994).
[5] Kagan (2002). [6] United States (September 2002).
[7] Brzezinski (1993, 2004).

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