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Security

Security is a vital subject of study in the twenty-first century and a central theme in many social science disciplines. This volume provides a comparative analysis of the ways in which the concept of security is theorized and studied across different disciplines. The book has two objectives: first, to explore the growing diversity of theories, paradigms, and methods developed to study security; and, second, to initiate a multidisciplinary dialogue about the ontological, epistemological, paradigmatic, and normative aspects of security studies in social sciences. Readers across nine fields are invited to reflect on their conceptualizations of security and to consider how an interdisciplinary dialogue can stimulate and enrich the understanding of security in our contemporary world. Analytically sharp yet easy to read, this is a cutting-edge volume exploring what security is and what it means in today's world.

PHILIPPE BOURBEAU is Temporary University Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge.

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Acknowledgments

My largest debt of thanks is to the scholars who agreed to participate in this project. In conceiving of the project, I sought to gather together some of the best recent work on security undertaken by researchers in several disciplines.

When I invited the authors to participate in this multidisciplinary book on security, I threw four challenges at them. First, I asked them each to act as the sole representative of his or her respective discipline. Everyone will agree that in and of itself this is daunting task for any scholar. Second, I asked them to write their chapters with an interdisciplinary audience in mind, laying out clearly how their particular discipline approaches security, while considering how a multidisciplinary dialogue could stimulate and enrich the understanding of security that prevails in their field. Third, I strongly invited each scholar to produce a chapter that served as both a state-of-the-art overview and a thought-provoking piece of argumentation that would push other disciplines to reflect on his or her conceptualizations of security. Fourth, to ensure the book's coherency and to induce interdisciplinary dialogue, I asked each author to engage, directly and without detour, with four questions concerning security: (1) What are the questions orienting the research on security in your discipline? (2) Are there dominant theories of security in your discipline? (3) How is the concept of security studies in your discipline? and (4) What are the biggest strengths and limits of your discipline in the way security is studied and theorized? As the reader will soon realize, each of this volume's contributors has risen to these challenges with undisputable brio, professionalism, and command.

A workshop was held with the contributors in Namur, Belgium, in the spring of 2014. I am indebted to the Department of Political Science, Sociology, and Communication at the University of Namur, the Tocqueville Chair in Security Policies at the University of Namur, to the Department of Political Science at the Free University of

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