

On Security

Ronnie D. Lipschutz, editor

New York
Columbia University Press

1998

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Acknowledgements

Even in the common affairs of life, in love, friendship, and marriage, how little security have we when we trust our happiness in the hands of others!

--William Hazlitt, *On Living to One's Self*

This book had its origins in 1990, when John Ruggie suggested that I assemble a group of people to consider the problem of "redefining security." After consultations with various colleagues, Beverly Crawford and I decided to take on the challenge. At the time, John was director of the UC-Systemwide Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC), and he was kind enough to provide some funds to get the project started.

From the very beginning of the project, however, it was not at all clear that its focus ought to be on new definitions of security. We wanted a book that did more than define the "new" security challenges of the 1990s, or the 21st century. And we wanted to examine the constructions and discourses that underlie the definitions of security that, ultimately, result in force postures, weapons deployments, and so on. Consequently, in casting the net for contributors, we went beyond the "usual suspects," and tried to bring together a diverse group of individuals whose approaches to security policy and practice ranged from realist to "interdependista" to post-modern. The volume you hold in your hand is, thus, the result of several meetings by this group over the course of 1991-1992, during which the concepts, constructions, and conundrums of security were the focus of discussion, as well as subsequent reworkings and revisions of the manuscript as a whole.

In addition to the contributors to this volume, a number of other people attended various meetings, made comments and suggestions, and played a vital role in the project. Among them are Timothy Luke, Emanuel Adler, Jutta Weldes, Gene Rochlin, Bonnie Gold, Mark Nechodom, Elaine Thomas, Lisa Ellis, Steve Del Rosso, John Leslie, Albert Fishlow, Kate Wittenberg, Chad Kia, Leslie Bialler and several anonymous reviewers for Columbia University Press. The meetings could not have taken place without the assistance of Tanya DeCell, Judy Newman, Lani Blanc, and Peggy Tippet and the support of the staff of Stevenson College and the Adlai Stevenson Program on Global Security at UC-Santa Cruz. Additional funding for the project was provided, in a statement of faith, by Professor Susan Shirk, John Ruggie's successor as the IGCC's Director and through the good offices of Professor Richard Buxbaum, the Director of the Center for German and European Studies at UC-Berkeley. To all, our heartfelt thanks. This book is dedicated to Gene Rochlin--adviser, mentor, and friend.

Note: In addition to the contributors whose articles are published here, Timothy Luke was also a member of this group, but his contribution is not included here. It is, however, available from the volume editor at the address listed in the Contributors section, directly following.

RDL

March 1995

Santa Cruz, California

On Security

1. On Security

Ronnie D. Lipschutz

This is a book about security. Unlike many books on the subject, however, this one is not about potential enemies or redefined strategies in an uncertain world or the future of NATO or U.S. defense postures in the 1990s or emerging threats by refugees or ethnic conflict or environmental degradation. Rather, this is a book that addresses the *concept* of security by asking a number of questions about it.

First, *what* is it that is being secured? More than half a decade after the opening of the Berlin Wall, more than four years after the end of the Cold War and, as this book was being written, with crises in Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and imminently, perhaps, in Cuba, the answer to this question is by no means clear (if it ever really was). Is the international system being secured? The nation-state? The "West?" Societies? Cultures? No one seems sure.

Second, what constitutes the *condition* of security? Protection against enemies? External or internal ones? Protection against neighbors? Suppression of individuals of a particular color or religion? Insulation against economic pressures and competitors? Environmental sustainability? All of these have been proposed; none is easy to accomplish.

And, third, how do *ideas* about security develop, enter the realm of public policy debate and discourse and, eventually, become institutionalized in hardware, organizations, roles, and practices? Do they arise, as the conventional wisdom might suggest, from objective threats and conditions inherent to an anarchic world? Are they generated within, a consequence of notions about multiple selves and feared others? Or, are they socially constructed, the worst-case result of a dialectic between what is observed and what is imagined? This process is the least-understood of all, yet it is this third question that may be the most important one to be asked.¹

In a much-cited and often-criticized article published several years ago, John J. Mearsheimer told us why we would "soon miss the Cold War."² Presciently, he seems to have been correct, although not for the reasons he enumerated in the article. It is not the relative stability of the bipolar world that we seem to miss as much as having an enemy whose capacities and intentions were, if not confirmable, at least comprehensible. The missiles were, after all, clearly pointed in our direction. Today, in a time when minor warlords and rogue police chiefs seem able to frustrate the best the guardians of U.S. security have to offer, the relative clarity of the Cold War, and the "right" to weigh in on the "right" side, do begin to have their attractions. This book represents, therefore, an attempt to come to grips with some of the ontological and other dilemmas, such as those mentioned above, associated with security that have emerged in the aftermath of the Cold War. In a series of three meetings, held between August 1991 and September 1992, the contributors to this book met as a group to consider whether the concepts and practices of security, as they had emerged in academia and policymaking, could still be analyzed and applied as they had been between 1947 and 1991.

Epistemologically speaking, the members of the group ranged from a point somewhere in the neighborhood of contemporary realism (in its English variant)³ to the postmodernist and constructivist end of international relations theory.⁴ For the most part, no one was moved by the arguments presented during the meetings to change her or his initial positions. But members of the group did force each other to think through more carefully their understanding of "security," as will be evident from the essays found here; certainly, none of the authors or their essays take for granted as givens the assumptions that today inform most public debates over security postures and "redefining security."⁵

None of the contributors assumed automatically that the shape of threats to come have the character often attributed to them by specialists on terrorism, fundamentalism, ethnicity, or Third World politics. And none of these essays should be seen as the product of solitary inductive or deductive efforts; they are the result of an ongoing process of discussion and mutual criticism among the authors. Thus, while some of the essays hew more closely than others to more "traditional" positions on security, all of the authors find themselves looking more closely at the conventional claims about security and the epistemologies underlying them. It seems safe to say that all of the participants have come away from this project with a much broader understanding of what we might call, for convenience, the "security problematique" of the late twentieth century, and we hope that you, the reader, will fare similarly.

This book is not, however, merely about seven authors in search of a topic; it also participates in the ongoing debate between neorealists, neoliberals, neoinstitutionalists, constructivists and postmodernists about the nature of political reality and its expression in international relations. Security practices are only one of a number of behaviors, ordinarily associated with states rather than other actors in the global system (except for those non-state actors in violent conflict with states). Whereas much of the intellectual debate takes the state more-or-less for granted as the subject of practice and the object of study, it seems to us that there are ontologically-prior questions that must be addressed first. Precisely *what* is the state? What is the nature of *relations* between states? And how do we account for behavior within the *system* of states? The contributors to this volume take a number of different tacks in trying to answer these questions and a set of shared hypotheses (suppositions might be a better word) does inform this introductory chapter and the ones that follow.

First, the structural features of international politics that constrained and directed security policies and practices between 1947 and 1991 have, for the most part vanished. Most of the institutions associated with the Cold War remain in place, to be sure, but they are now casting about for new ontologies of their own, not to mention policies, that can fit the hardware and procedures left behind. Thus, we have the members of NATO trying on a variety of new missions without being quite sure of their purpose. Is NATO to be a security "blanket," on standby against the eventuality of a newly aggressive and imperial Russia? Is it to become a security "regime," encompassing all of Europe, as well as North America and the ex-Soviet republics? Or can it best function as a security "maker," intervening in ethnic and other conflicts that appear to threaten European stability? The absence of what seemed to be clear and definable threats thus leads to the "hammer-nail" conundrum.⁶

Second, the disappearance of the constraints associated with nuclear bipolarity have allowed other "historical structures" (to use Robert Cox's term⁷) to resurface, thereby introducing high levels of uncertainty into parts of the world that, for decades, seemed quite fixed and stable. Thus, speculate some analysts, the conflicts in Iraq, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda, et. al. would not have taken place had the Cold War not come to an end. But the working assumption of most such analyses is that these re-emergent structures are, somehow, premodern or primordial, and that they have emerged only in

places not fully-socialized into twentieth-century modernity. It is, of course, also possible that they are fully reflective of such modernity, and that it is not only within the European Union, but in these places, as well, that we behold the future of world politics. If so, we may be starting to see the emergence of a "security dilemma" at the social, rather than interstate, level.

Third, the anchors that previously allowed self-reflective collectivities to identify themselves and others, friend and foe, and threats to the self and other, have come loose, making it ever more difficult to specify the self that is to be made secure. Moreover, a proliferation of new identities--as states, as cultures, as *ethnies*--are making it increasingly difficult to find new anchorages on which to base stable political relations, inasmuch as the fundamental units of international political interaction seem to be changing. This is not an argument that the state is obsolete, or that interdependence confounds sovereignty but, rather, that the boundaries that, for forty-odd years, disciplined states and polities, can no longer contain them. To rephrase Yeats's oft-cited line, it is not that the center cannot hold; rather, it is that the margins cannot be contained. And new margins are emerging everywhere, even in the center.

To be sure, amidst all of this change, war remains the defining limit of security, especially for those in the midst of one (although, as Kenneth Boulding once pointed out, at any given time, most of the world is not at war).⁸ But even where wars *are* taking place, they are increasingly difficult to describe and define. Among and against whom are they fought? In Somalia, clans war against each other and the forces of the UN system. In the Caucasus, interstate wars, wars of secession and civil wars go on simultaneously, sometimes in the same place. In Afghanistan, multiple versions of Islam fight each other. In Rwanda and Burundi, social systems tear themselves apart through mutual genocide. Even the Gulf War, arraying international coalition against renegade state, now is seen to have been somewhat inconclusive. In the midst of such conceptual and practical confusion, against whom or what is anyone to be made secure?

Defining, "Redefining," or (Re)constructing Security?

The authors of a book entitled *Defending America's Security* tell us that:

In the most basic sense, what the American people have to deal with when they adjust to the world outside U.S. frontiers is 170 [sic] assorted nation-states, each in control of a certain amount of the earth's territory. These 170 nations, being sovereign, are able to reach decisions on the use of armed forces under their government's control. They can decide to attack other nations.⁹

Despite the political and economic changes of the past decade, such sentiments still represent the basic premise of national security policy: There exist threats to the territory of one state posed by the activities of other states. In this neorealist world, with each state in command of a discrete territory and population, and with each capable of monopolizing the legitimate use of force within that territory, the essential security function remains, as the authors of the book quoted above and others suggest, self-defense and, if necessary, war. Other threats may exist and be of concern to governments but, according to the traditional line of thinking, they are not security threats.

Why, then, should we bother to revise security? In an essay published in *Foreign Affairs* in 1989, entitled "Redefining Security," Jessica Tuchman Mathews argued that the concept of security needed to be rethought. As she put it, "Global developments now suggest the need for . . . national security to include resource, environmental and demographic issues."¹⁰ According to this view, the global expenditure of \$1 trillion per year could no longer be justified when there were so many other problems

that promised to undermine "national security" much more effectively than the Soviet Union. What Mathews and others left unexamined was the meaning of her use of the term "security." The concept seemed, at the time, self-evident: To secure the state against those objective threats that could undermine its stability and threaten its survival. In choosing as her audience the readers of *Foreign Affairs*, Mathews, who had been a member of the National Security Council during the Carter Administration, took aim at White House policymakers, the Cabinet agencies, the Pentagon, the U.S. Congress, and relevant interest groups and think tanks, all of whom played some role in assessing threats to the United States and formulating what they thought were appropriate responses. In retrospect, however, some basic problems with this formulation are evident.

Mathews, and others arguing along similar lines (myself included), understood security policy to be largely the result of the rational assessment, by knowledgeable analysts, of a universe of potential threats, of varying risk, to which a country might be subjected. These clearly defined and bounded threats could be countered by appropriate means, including the development and deployment of new weapons systems, shifts in military doctrine, and payoffs to allies. It seemed, in this scheme of things, a relatively easy proposition to shift the allocation of resources from one threat to another, so long as the new threat was conceptualized in terms of the state and couched in the language of "national security." The end of the Cold War seemed only to sharpen this argument; indeed, it was not long before President Bush, recognizing the ontological dilemmas inherent in the collapse of the Soviet Union, assigned to the CIA the task of searching for and analyzing new security problems. As one newspaper editorialized at the time, "Indeed, the major threats to security today are probably found in such disparate sources as the world's overcrowded classrooms, understaffed health facilities, shrinking oil fields, diverted rivers and holes in the ozone layer."¹¹

On closer inspection, however, it is evident that most of the threats posited by those who have argued for a redefinition of security have primarily to do with human health and welfare, social problems, internal sources of instability, and the costs imposed upon societies by the disruption of customary ways of doing things. While such threats certainly could affect the safety, cohesion, and stability of individuals, families, communities, societies, and even countries, it was and is by no means clear that these constitute "security threats" or problems of "national security" in the Cold War or neorealist sense of the term. (To be entirely fair, many things were done in the name of national security during the Cold War that were also more about social welfare and political stability than military threats, but this still did not make them objective threats or risks.) Nor, for that matter, was it obvious how the reconfiguration of security policy might make it possible to address such issues with the tools in hand. This dilemma was illuminated with great clarity in Somalia, where it has been not so much the survival of the Somali people(s) that has seemed to be at stake as the very concept and existence of the Somali *state*. That entity's dissolution into perpetually warring clans was closer to the Hobbesian state of Nature than even the so-called anarchic international system seemed able to tolerate at the time.

What the Somali case tells us is that *defining* security, or even *redefining* it, becomes problematic when the *referent object* of security itself is ill-defined or changing. What, under the circumstances described above, might security mean? Security is a word with multiple and contested meanings; as Barry Buzan points out in *People, States & Fear*, security is an "essentially contested concept."¹² Analysts and policymakers contest the definition of the term because at its core, claims Buzan, there are moral, ideological, and normative elements that render empirical data irrelevant and prevent reasonable people from agreeing with one another on a fixed definition.¹³ Buzan brings to the fore the difficulty of

specifying the referent of security and, in a search for a more precise meaning, argues that the state consists of three components: the idea of the state (nationalism); the physical base of the state (population, resources, technology); and the institutional expression of the state (administrative and political systems).¹⁴ Having defined the state in this way, it becomes possible to imagine threats to each of these three components. But what happens when all three elements disappear?

In a cruel irony, the result is that the zero-sum geopolitics of realism and the Cold War come to be reproduced at the micro-level of household and society, with the complete and deliberate elimination of family and social group as official policy of whatever monopolizers of violence remain in existence. Often, there is no monopoly, as when control of violence has devolved to the level of household and social group as well. In Somalia, consequently, the security of one clan could be purchased only at the cost of another--with the United States and the UN playing the role of one clan among many--even if this meant wiping out entire extended families so as to deny the right of a clan to exist as a collective entity. What, under these conditions, could it mean to be *Somali* in the national sense, a concept that was, in any event, largely imagined into being by the British and Italian colonial authorities? If there were no Somalis in the nation-state sense, then there was no Somalia, and the national security of the Somali state would become, *ipso facto*, an empty set. Although Somalia is of marginal interest to most, an empty set where Somalia was once to be found does constitute something of a threat to the international system. The same sort of analysis could be applied to any of dozens of other so-called nation-states around the world that have collapsed, or are threatening to collapse, into a similar condition.

We could argue, of course, that these are simply zones of confusion and chaos, with little practical significance for states such as the United States or Germany or Israel. Countries and peoples with a strong sense of identity and social cohesion know who they *are* and who they are *not* (this being the essence of successful nationalism). Consequently, they presume to know what threatens them and they can take appropriate steps in response. The problem in the zones of chaos, one could argue, is that such identities crumbled, to be replaced by others, because their states became too weak to sustain them. But one might also argue that it was the crumbling of identities that weakened the states and made moot all notions of national security.

If the latter hypothesis is even remotely plausible, then "strong" states are in trouble, too. For more than forty years, the United States knew it was *not* the Soviet Union, the FRG knew it was *not* the GDR, Israel knew it was *not* Palestine. Who or what, now, are these places? What defines them when the defining enemy is gone? The answers are not so simple as one might think, as events have, and are likely to, illustrate. Nonetheless, these are among the dilemmas that confront us in defining, or redefining, security.

Creating Discourses of Security

Conceptualizations of security--from which follow policy and practice--are to be found in *discourses of security*. These are neither strictly objective assessments nor analytical constructs of threat, but rather the products of historical structures and processes, of struggles for power within the state, of conflicts between the societal groupings that inhabit states and the interests that besiege them. Hence, there are not only struggles over security among *nations*, but also struggles over security among *notions*. Winning the right to define security provides not just access to resources but also the *authority* to articulate new definitions and discourses of security, as well. As Karen Litfin points out, "As determinants of what can and cannot be thought, discourses delimit the range of policy options, thereby functioning as precursors

to policy outcomes. . . . The supreme power is the power to delineate the boundaries of thought--an attribute not so much of specific agents as it is of discursive practices."¹⁵ These discourses of security, however clearly articulated, nonetheless remain fraught with contradictions, as the chapters in this volume make clear.

How do such discourses begin? In his investigation of the historical origins of the concept, James Der Derian (Chapter 2: "The Value of Security: Hobbes, Marx, Nietzsche and Baudrillard") points out that, in the past, *security* has been invoked not only to connote protection from threats, along the lines of the conventional definition, but also to describe hubristic overconfidence as well as a bond or pledge provided in a financial transaction. To secure oneself is, therefore, a sort of trap, for one can never leave a secure place without incurring risks. (Elsewhere, Barry Buzan has pointed out that "There is a cruel irony in [one] meaning of secure which is 'unable to escape.' "¹⁶) Security, moreover, is meaningless without an "other" to help specify the conditions of insecurity. Der Derian, citing Nietzsche, points out that this "other" is made manifest through differences that create terror and collective resentment of difference--the state of fear--rather than a preferable coming to terms with the positive potentials of difference.

As these differences become less than convincing, however, their power to create fear and terror diminish, and so it becomes necessary to create ever more menacing threats to reestablish difference. For this purpose, Der Derian argues, reality is no longer sufficient; only the creation of a "hyperreal" world of computer and media-imagined and -imagined threats will do. Or, to cite Baudrillard, as Der Derian does: "It is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (ideology), but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real." It is the imagined, unnamed party, with the clandestinely assembled and crude atomic device, and not the thousands of reliable, high-yield warheads mounted on missiles poised to launch at a moment's notice, that creates fear, terror, and calls for greater surveillance and enforcement.

Yet, according to Der Derian, describing how the solitary computer wargaming of the Iraqi and American militaries were literally joined together in battle on the deserts of the Persian Gulf littoral, hyperreal threats do sometimes have an odd way of becoming material. The Gulf War created a "real" simulation, broadcast to the watching billions, that was later found out to have been a less-than-accurate representation. This does not mean that those who died suffered simulated deaths. Simulated threats may be imagined, but their ultimate consequences are all too real.

What this process suggests is that concepts of security arise, to a great degree, out of discursive practices *within* states and, only secondarily, *among* states.¹⁷ Ole Wæver (Chapter 3: "Securitization and Desecuritization") illuminates this aspect of security, framing it not as an objective or material condition, but as a "speech act," enunciated by elites in order to securitize issues or "fields," thereby helping to reproduce the hierarchical conditions that characterize security practices. Thus, according to Wæver, much of the agenda of "redefining security" is a process of bringing *into* the field of security those things that, perhaps, should remain outside (but this struggle to redefine a concept can also be seen as an effort by heretofore-excluded elites to enter the security discourse). He warns, therefore, that redefining security in a conventional sense, either to encompass new sources of threat or specify new referent objects, risks applying the traditional logic of military behavior to nonmilitary problems. This process can also expand the jurisdiction of already-expansive states as well. As Wæver puts it, "By naming a certain development a security problem, the 'state' [claims] . . . a special right [to intervene]." In intervening, the tools applied by the state would look very much like those used during the wars the state might launch if it chose to do so. This contradiction was apparent in the initial landing of U.S. Marines in

Somalia in December, 1992. Demonstrably, there was a question of matching force to force in this case, but the ostensible goal of humanitarian assistance took on the appearance of a military invasion (with the added hyperreality of resistance offered only by the mass(ed) media waiting on shore). This does not mean that Wæver thinks that "security as a speech act" should not be applied to anything at all; only that it is necessary to consider with care what is implied or involved if we are indiscriminate in doing so.

Security is, to put Wæver's argument in other words, a *socially constructed* concept: It has a specific meaning only within a specific social context.¹⁸ It emerges and changes as a result of discourses and discursive actions intended to reproduce historical structures and subjects within states and among them.¹⁹ To be sure, policymakers define security on the basis of a set of assumptions regarding vital interests, plausible enemies, and possible scenarios, all of which grow, to a not-insignificant extent, out of the specific historical and social context of a particular country and some understanding of what is "out there."²⁰ But, while these interests, enemies, and scenarios have a material existence and, presumably, a real import for state security, they cannot be regarded simply as having some sort of "objective" reality independent of these constructions.²¹ That security is socially constructed does not mean that there are not to be found real, material conditions that help to create particular interpretations of threats, or that such conditions are irrelevant to either the creation or undermining of the assumptions underlying security policy. Enemies, in part, "create" each other, via the projections of their worst fears onto the other; in this respect, their relationship is intersubjective. To the extent that they act on these projections, threats to each other acquire a material character. In other words, nuclear-tipped ICBMs are not mere figments of our imagination, but their targeting is a function of what we imagine the possessors of other missiles might do to us with *theirs*.²²

Security Dilemmas and Dilemmas of Security

The "Long Peace," as John Lewis Gaddis has stylized it,²³ continues to puzzle historians as well as students of war, peace, and arms control. How did it come about? Why was it so long? Can it continue? What can we do to maintain it? For many, the obvious answer to the puzzle is "nuclear deterrence" and "bipolarity." These were the two conditions that maintained a stable, armed peace between the two Great Powers.²⁴ The security dilemma led to a precarious stability, whose resilience was always open to question. Could nuclear weapons be used without provoking full-scale war? No one knew. Might a small, nuclear-armed country trigger war between the superpowers? No one knew that, either. Could war begin by accident? No one wanted to find out.

The result was the curious way in which nuclear weapons were used: While not being used in a literal sense, but only as threat, they were still being used.²⁵ The notion of "use" thus began to acquire a peculiar meaning. The threat to "use" nuclear weapons, as Thomas Schelling and others pointed out, was credible only to the degree that those in a position of power could convince not only others, but also themselves, that the weapons *would* be used under appropriate circumstances.²⁶ But such circumstances could never be too well-defined, for to do so might someday require an unwanted launch for the sake of credibility. The "use" of nuclear weapons consequently took the form of speech, backed up by doctrine and deployment, but hedged all about with hypotheticals and conditionals. For example, in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1982, then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger argued that,

To deter successfully, we must be able--*and must be seen to be able*--to retaliate against any potential

aggressor in such a manner that the costs we will exact will substantially exceed any gains he might hope to achieve through aggression. We, for our part, are under no illusions about the consequences of a nuclear war: we believe there would be no winners in such a war. But this recognition on *our* part is not sufficient to ensure effective deterrence or to prevent the outbreak of war: it is essential that the Soviet leadership understands this as well. ²⁷

The inherent contradiction in such reasoning became all the more evident as the very same people who tried to define the hypothetical conditions of nuclear use also made every effort, first, to ensure "crisis stability," so that the weapons would not be used mistakenly or by accident during a periods of high international tension and, second, to convince the public at large, as Ronald Reagan tried to do, that *any* use of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic. Such arguments, as Steven Kull discovered, did little to convince policymakers themselves that they said what they meant or meant what they said.²⁸

A particularly vivid and nonfictional example of this process--only one among many--can be found in the deployment in Europe of the intermediate-range "Euromissiles"--Pershing-II and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles--in response to the Soviet SS-20s discovered in Eastern Europe during the mid-1970s. The SS-20s, it was claimed by then-West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, threatened the West by taking advantage of a "gap" in a largely hypothetical ladder of crisis escalation. This gap could be used by the Soviets, according to the argument made by Schmidt and others, to *threaten* Western Europe with certain destruction, were they to be launched. But the intent of emplacement was to intimidate, inasmuch as to launch would have unpredictable, not to mention undesirable, consequences. Facing such coercion, Western Europe could find itself "Finlandized" or forced to submit to demands made by the Soviet Union.²⁹

Such demands, of course, had not been made, and never were; they were demands that the West *imagined* might be forthcoming at some future date, and they were demands that, if met, would have changed Western Europe into something with a different identity and loyalty: a Greater Finland, perhaps? Nonetheless, imagined threats generated material responses. To remedy the hole in the whole of nuclear deterrence, policymakers determined that NATO must deploy its own equivalent missiles, thereby countering one set of imagined threats with another. Again, the Euromissiles were never intended to be *launched*; they were put into Europe only to fill an imagined gap that had not existed prior to the deployment of the SS-20s.³⁰ To underline the imaginary quality of the threats invoked on both sides, in 1987, after some six years of off-again on-again negotiation, the gap disappeared, as if by sleight of hand. Both sides were now to be allowed to remain what they had been.³¹ As is true with most magical thinking, the "gap" had never been real in any objective sense; it was created through discourses of deterrence and the projection of imagined intentions onto the "other." A whole world of the future was created out of dreams, casting its unreal shadow on the present.³² Thus was mutual deterrence assured.

In the Euromissile episode, in other words, the state and its leaders sought to secure the citizenry against escape from the traps of security through new strategies of insecurity. This was accepted practice during the Cold War. It was a particularly common practice of the "nuclear state," which held its hostages in an eternal death grip as a means of credibly confronting the enemy, as Dan Deudney's essay (Chapter 4: "Political Fission: State Structure, Civil Society, and Nuclear Weapons in the United States") makes clear. But hostages are not always passive victims. As Deudney points out, they sometimes seek the means to escape from their maximum security situations; the "Stockholm Syndrome" does not necessarily hold where Mutually Assured Destruction is concerned. Indeed, it is the very self-disciplining

security strategy of the state that may encourage resistance and "jailbreaks," as attempted by the pro-peace and anti-nuclear movements of the 1980s.

Deudney argues that it is very difficult for the state to maintain its legitimacy when its strategies of self-preservation promise to annihilate its own "secured" population in time of war as a means of preventing war.³³ Yet, it is only through such nuclear strategies that the state has any hope of maintaining its international autonomy and disciplining its citizens and borders. Ironically, perhaps, the contradiction is least problematic when the state least needs to establish its commitment to a strategy of nuclear deterrence, as is evident today. It was during the Reagan Administration, when the nuclear threat was thought most necessary to establishing state autonomy, that civil society was most resistant to the nuclear project and most concerned about creating alternative discourses of security. Only by silencing its saber-rattling--which threatened to undermine its autonomy--was the state able to dampen resistance to its nuclear policies.

The state's security strategy must, therefore, encompass not just body, but mind as well; the "delusions of deterrence" require continual self-deception.³⁴ Part of the effort to make threats to security "real" involved (and still does involve) the linking of the material interests of individual citizens to those of the state. Pearl-Alice Marsh (Chapter 5: "Grassroots Statecraft: Citizens Movements, National Security, and U.S. Foreign Policy") shows how attempts by the Reagan Administration to define security threats and capture the citizenry via this approach could, nonetheless, backfire. In southern Africa, the case discussed by Marsh, security policy was defined and pursued in such a way as to *undermine* U.S. national security policy in that part of the world. The Reagan Administration feared Communism winning the minds as well as the minerals of South Africa, and used this scenario to legitimize its ultimately unsuccessful policy of "constructive engagement."

Beginning in the 1970s (and drawing on the geopolitical theories of Admiral Thomas Mahan, Halford Mackinder, Nicholas Spykman, and Colin Gray), conservative analysts argued that Soviet activities in Africa were intended to "choke off" sources of critical strategic materials, a maneuver that would strike not just at U.S. security but also the material heart of American society.³⁵ As the President of the American Geological Institute put it during the 1980 Presidential campaign, "Without manganese, chromium, platinum and cobalt, there can be no automobiles, no airplanes, no jet engines, no satellites and no sophisticated weapons--*not even home appliances* ." ³⁶ Was he correct? No one could say, since no one had tried to build such devices without low-cost minerals from southern Africa.³⁷ A more germane question is whether the Soviet threat to mineral supplies was even a plausible one, or the one to be most feared.³⁸

Groups based in U.S. civil society argued that South African apartheid was more likely to result in embargoes of strategic materials than Soviet intervention or subversion, for two reasons. First, the South African government was already in a strong position to control the flow of minerals as a means of manipulating public policy the United States; and, second, a favorable policy toward the South African government now (in the 1980s) could result in hostile relations when, in the future, apartheid was replaced by majority rule. In making such arguments, citizens groups constructed a counter-scenario that was, in the final analysis, more convincing to the U.S. Congress and the public than the threat of "ore wars." Ultimately, civil resistance was able to undermine the plausibility of the Reagan security discourse for the region. Whose threats were "real?" Whose were not? Perhaps both, perhaps, given the recent transfer of political power in South Africa, neither.

Transforming the State, Transforming the System

The struggle to define the parameters of a concept is only one part of the security problematique; of equal importance are very real questions about the *referent* object of security. What, in the final analysis, is being secured? If ozone holes are a threat, is the enemy us? If immigrants are a threat, do police become soldiers? If the economic competitiveness of our allies is a threat, is Corporate America to be protected against leveraged buyouts by foreign capital or against those who have been fired during self-protective downsizings? If one social group threatens the mores of another, are there front lines in the "culture wars?" Perhaps it is the unemployed college graduate who is most to be feared, since he or she has much time in which to plot the overthrow of the regime deemed responsible for that insecure status.³⁹ All of these possibilities raise questions about what is to be made secure through the security practices of the state. Paradoxically, perhaps, the particular phenomena alluded to above are all material consequences of a process of economic globalization that was first set in train by the Cold War security policies of the United States.

Material processes have consequences for security, it would seem and, in today's world, the effort to (re)define security results not only from a changing world but also from changes in the state itself.⁴⁰ These changes, having primarily to do with the global economic system, affect material conditions *within* states--safety, welfare, sovereignty--in ways that serve to undermine the traditional roles of governments,⁴¹ making them less willing or able to protect their citizens from these forces or provide services that might mitigate their impacts.⁴² These transformative forces also have effects on the *capabilities* of states, by creating contradictions between the accustomed practices of governments and the responses needed to buffer against those forces, as illustrated by the demise of the Soviet Union and the endless fiscal troubles suffered by the United States.

Consider, then, the consequences of the intersection of security policy and economics during and after the Cold War. In order to establish a "secure" global system, the United States advocated, and put into place, a global system of economic liberalism. It then underwrote, with dollars and other aid, the growth of this system.⁴³ One consequence of this project was the globalization of a particular mode of production and accumulation, which relied on the re-creation, throughout the world, of the domestic political and economic environment and preferences of the United States. That such a project cannot be accomplished under conditions of really-existing capitalism is not important; the idea was that economic and political liberalism would reproduce the American self around the world.⁴⁴ This would make the world safe and secure for the United States inasmuch as it would *all* be the self, so to speak.

The joker in this particular deck was that efforts to reproduce some version of American society abroad, in order to make the world more secure for Americans, came to threaten the cultures and societies of the countries being transformed, making their citizens less secure. The process thereby transformed them into the very enemies we feared so greatly. In Iran, for example, the Shah's efforts to create a Westernized society engendered so much domestic resistance that not only did it bring down his empire but also, for a time, seemed to pose a mortal threat to the American Empire based on Persian Gulf oil. Islamic "fundamentalism," now characterized by some as the enemy that will replace Communism, seems to be U.S. policymakers' worst nightmares made real,⁴⁵ although without the United States to interfere in the Middle East and elsewhere, the Islamic movements might have never acquired the domestic power they now have in those countries and regions that seem so essential to American "security."

The ways in which the framing of threats is influenced by a changing global economy is seen nowhere more clearly than in recent debates over competitiveness and "economic security." What does it mean to be competitive? Is a national industrial policy consistent with global economic liberalization? How is the security component of this issue socially constructed? Beverly Crawford (Chapter 6: "Hawks, Doves, but no Owls: The New Security Dilemma Under International Economic Interdependence") shows how strategic economic interdependence--a consequence of the growing liberalization of the global economic system, the increasing availability of advanced technologies through commercial markets, and the ever-increasing velocity of the product cycle--undermines the ability of states to control those technologies that, it is often argued, are critical to economic strength and military might. Not only can others acquire these technologies, they might also seek to restrict access to them. Both contingencies could be threatening. (Note, however, that by and large the only such restrictions that *have* been imposed in recent years have all come at the behest of the United States, which is most fearful of its supposed vulnerability in this respect.) What, then, is the solution to this "new security dilemma," as Crawford has stylized it?

According to Crawford, state decisionmakers can respond in three ways. First, they can try to restore state *autonomy* through self-reliance although, in doing so, they are likely to undermine state *strength* via reduced competitiveness. Second, they can try to restrict technology transfer to potential enemies, or the trading partners of potential enemies, although this begins to include pretty much everybody. It also threatens to limit the market shares of those corporations that produce the most innovative technologies. Finally, they can enter into co-production projects or encourage strategic alliances among firms. The former approach may slow down technological development; the latter places control in the hands of actors who are driven by market, and not military, forces. They are, therefore, potentially unreliable. All else being equal, in all three cases, the state appears to be a net loser where its security is concerned. But this does not prevent the state from trying to gain.

How can a state generate the conditions for legitimating various forms of intervention into this process? Clearly, it is not enough to invoke the mantra of "competitiveness"; competition *with* someone is also critical. In Europe, notwithstanding budgetary stringencies, state sponsorship of cutting-edge technological R&D retains a certain, albeit declining, legitimacy; in the United States, absent a persuasive threat, this is much less the case (although the discourse of the Clinton Administration suggests that such ideological restraints could be broken). Thus, it is the hyperrealism of Clyde Prestowitz, Karel Van Wolferen, and Michael Crichton, imagining a Japan resurgent and bent anew on (non-)Pacific conquest, that provides the cultural materials for new economic policies. Can new industrialized enemies be conjured into existence so as to justify new cold wars and the remobilization of capital, under state direction, that must follow? Or has the world changed too much for this to happen again?

In a widely ranging survey of the "state of the state," and "the state of the system," Barry Buzan (Chapter 7: "Security, the State, the `New World Order' and Beyond) suggests that, within the industrialized core of the system, security and the state are not likely to change radically, although the fears raised by the "peddlers of prosperity," as Paul Krugmann puts it, are not likely to materialize, either.⁴⁶ No single state, by itself, argues Buzan, is likely to emerge as a challenger to the "single coalition of major capitalist powers" that includes Japan, the European Community, and the United States (plus, perhaps, Central Europe and some of the former Soviet republics). In his opinion, this coalition is more likely to consolidate than disintegrate, with the result that security relations between core and periphery will take

on greater overall importance, as evidenced by the growth in popularity of UN peacekeeping.

In Buzan's view, the central question is whether the coalition will choose to isolate itself from the periphery--in essence, trying to secure itself from external chaos in a sort of strategy of "self-containment"--or to intervene there in an effort to enlarge the zone of order--but thereby to risk being pulled into that chaos, as well. The choice will depend on how threats--and the social constructions of security--are framed. As is the case with the U.S. intervention in Somalia and, more recently, in Haiti, chaos can be framed as a threat to the core's moral legitimacy and supposed responsibilities to others. But chaos can also be framed as a threat to the limited zones of peace in the core, which continue to resist being pulled into the closer-to-home maelstrom of post-Yugoslavia and the Caucasian Republics. Neither threat can be escaped, but framing them in terms of moral burdens may ensure that the mentality of the *laager* --a self-protecting but neoisolationist zone of apparent peace amid chaos--does not come to dominate security discourses and practices.

In contrast to Buzan's political geography of core and periphery, an alternative view might see not a binary world with threats emanating from a periphery against which the core tries to protect itself.⁴⁷ Instead, we might also imagine a future in which "tame zones" and "wild zones" are scattered about the planet without any easily discernible pattern, having emerged out of the logic of capital mobility rather than territorial conquest. In such a world, some of the wildest zones might be found within tame ones, as South Central is within Los Angeles.

But even the tame zones might be further fragmented, not by territory but by modes of production, consumption, and accumulation. In this world, the Dow-Jones average becomes a representation of security: when it is up, we are strong; when it is down, we are weak. Yet, when the Dow is up, so paradoxically are interest rates on U.S. Treasury bonds. It costs U.S. citizens more to remain who they are, and this weakens them. When unemployment is up, inflation is down. This is good for finance capital, but not for labor (or the consumer markets on which many globalizing corporations depend). Who is stronger, who is weaker? In this context, does it make any sense to speak of "security" except as the need to prevent wild zones from penetrating tame ones?

In this latter scenario, almost all conventional wisdoms about security no longer hold. The orderly practices of the world of international relations embodied in neorealist discourse--the practices of power, not the absence of disorder--require constant reiteration and reification in mantra-like fashion, even as they become increasingly problematic in the hyperreality of the non-place and time bound worlds of transnational society. The place-bound concerns of neorealists, and their idealized decisionmakers, matter only insofar as they help to shore up a crumbling world view. Security, its discourses, and its modes of production thus become a means of stanching the dikes not against the external forces of chaos but the internal dynamics of state disintegration.

These two contrasting views, of separate and intermingled zones of order and chaos seem to be diametrically opposed, but perhaps they are not. The world of states continues to exist and operate along the logics of neorealism and interdependence. In that world, all states are external to one other and view each other intersubjectively. Security is defined in terms of one or more of these external actors penetrating the threatened state in some material fashion. Missiles, pollutants, and immigrants all come from the "outside" and menace the inside. The world of intermingled order and chaos, however, is already "inside," snatching bodies, as it were. If the financial world poses a threat to the state, it is because it is part and parcel of the body politic. Surviving the depredations of the robber barons of Wall

Street (and London, Tokyo, et al.) will be much like a serious heroin addiction: take too little and you become ill; take too much and you die. The zone of tolerability--and security--might, for better or worse, come to lie on the fine line, and our ability to balance, between the two.

Note 1: See, e.g., Paul A. Kovert, "The Origins of Social Identity in International Politics," Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, September 1-4, 1994. [Back.](#)

Note 2: John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (Summer 1990): 5-56. A popular version was published in *The Atlantic Monthly*. [Back.](#)

Note 3: Barry Buzan, "From International System to International Society: Structural Realism and Regime Theory Meet the English School," *International Organization* 47, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 327-52. [Back.](#)

Note 4: James Der Derian, *Antidiplomacy--Spies, Terror, Speed, and War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992). Timothy Luke was also a member of the group, but his contribution is not included here. [Back.](#)

Note 5: Among the books and articles that have recently arrived in my mail (admittedly a very small sample) are: Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The Real World Order--Zones of Peace, Zones of Turmoil* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1993); Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Steven E. Miller, eds., *America's Strategy in a Changing World* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992); Donald M. Snow, *Distant Thunder--Third World Conflict and the New International Order* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); Michael T. Klare and Daniel C. Thomas, *World Security--Challenges for a New Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); and Jeremy Brecher, John Brown Childs, and Jill Cutler, eds., *Global Visions--Beyond the New World Order* (Boston: South End Press, 1993). [Back.](#)

Note 6: Attributed, I believe, to Abraham Maslow, who was supposed to have observed that "if all you have is a hammer, everything begins to look like a nail." [Back.](#)

Note 7: Robert W. Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order--Social Forces in the Making of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987). [Back.](#)

Note 8: Kenneth E. Boulding, *Stable Peace* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), ch. 1. [Back.](#)

Note 9: Frederick H. Hartmann and Robert L. Wendzel, *Defending America's Security* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988), pp. 3-4. [Back.](#)

Note 10: Jessica Tuchman Mathews, "Redefining Security," *Foreign Affairs* 68, no. 2 (Spring 1989): 162. In 1982, *International Security* published a piece with the same title, in which Richard Ullman made much the same argument. [Back.](#)

Note 11: Editorial, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec. 28, 1991, p. A18. [Back.](#)

Note 12: The notion of an "essentially contested concept" comes from W. B. Gallie, "Essentially

contested concepts," in Max Black, ed., *The Importance of Language* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962) pp. 121-46. Cited in Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1991, 2nd ed), p. 7. [Back](#).

Note 13: Buzan, *People, States and Fear* , p. 7. [Back](#).

Note 14: Buzan, *People, States and Fear* , p. 65. [Back](#).

Note 15: Karen Litfin, "Transnational Scientific Networks and the Environment: The Limits of Epistemic Cooperation," Paper delivered at the 1991 Western Regional Conference of the ISA, November 1-2, Los Angeles, p. 18-19. [Back](#).

Note 16: Buzan, *People, States and Fear* , p. 37. [Back](#).

Note 17: See Sanjoy Banerjee, "Reproduction of Subjects in Historical Structures: Attribution, Identity, and Emotion in the Early Cold War," *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (March 1991): 19-38. For a more extended analysis of this phenomenon, see Steven Kull, "Nuclear Nonsense," *Foreign Policy* 58 (Spring 1985): 28-52; and Steven Kull *Minds at War: Nuclear Reality and the Inner Conflicts of Defense Policymakers* (New York: Basic Books, 1988). [Back](#).

Note 18: For a specific application of the notion of social construction to policymaking, see Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram, "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy," *American Political Science Review* 87, no. 2 (June 1993): 334-47. [Back](#).

Note 19: Banerjee, "Reproduction of Subjects." [Back](#).

Note 20: In other words, the enemy, and the threat it presents, possess characteristics specific to the society defining them. See, e.g., Jutta Weldes, "Constructing National Interests: The Logic of U.S. National Security in the Post-war Era," Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Political Science, University of Minnesota, 1992; Ronnie D. Lipschutz, *When Nations Clash: Raw Materials, Ideology, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Ballinger/Harper and Row, 1989); David Campbell, "Global Inscription: How Foreign Policy Constitutes the United States," *Alternatives* 15 (1990): 263-86; and David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992). [Back](#).

Note 21: To this, the realist would argue: "But states exist and the condition of anarchy means that there are no restraints on their behavior towards others! Hence, threats must be material and real." As Nicholas Onuf, Alex Wendt, and others have argued, even international anarchy is a social construction inasmuch as certain rules of behavior inevitably form the basis for such an arrangement. See Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making--Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989); Alex Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 405; Ronnie D. Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society," *Millennium* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1992): 389-420. [Back](#).

Note 22: See, e.g., R. Jeffrey Smith, "Bush Urged to Halve U.S. Nuclear Arsenal," *San Francisco Chronicle* , Jan. 6, 1992, p. A1:

"In a world with many potential enemies, the United States should draw up a plan for targeting nuclear and

nonnuclear weapons `at every reasonable adversary' around the world, [a] panel of current and former Pentagon officials said. . . ." In June 1992, Presidents Bush and Yeltsin signed an agreement to drastically reduce levels of nuclear arms held by the two countries. It is interesting to note the warnings by "conservatives" in both the U.S. and Russia not to give away strategic advantage in the pursuit of domestic political advantage or economy.

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Note 23: John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). [Back.](#)

Note 24: The most prominent claimant of this notion is, of course, Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979). Waltz continues to mount this claim; see, for example, "Nuclear Myths and Political Realities," *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 3 (September 1990): 731-45; and Scott D. Sagan & Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995) A current version is John J. Mearsheimer, "The Case for a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 50-66. [Back.](#)

Note 25: Indeed, the essential task of deterrence was to convince the other that they *would* be used, although one would never want to get to the point that they *might* be used. For a full-blown exegesis of this point, see Timothy W. Luke, "On Post-War: The Significance of Symbolic Action in War and Deterrence," *Alternatives* 14 (1989): 343-62. [Back.](#)

Note 26: Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), ch. 2. [Back.](#)

Note 27: Casper Weinberger, "United States Nuclear Deterrence Policy," Testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate, Dec. 14, 1982, pp. 2-3. First emphasis my own. [Back.](#)

Note 28: Kull, "Nuclear Nonsense"; Kull, *Minds at War* . These pronouncements did have the effect of scaring the hell out of citizens, many of whom mobilized against the nuclear arms race. See Dan Deudney's chapter in this volume. [Back.](#)

Note 29: The term "Finlandization" is worthy of an entire paper in itself. One used to hear people say that to be like Finland would not be so bad; today, no one wants to be like Finland, which is in an economic slump brought on by the collapse of trade with the ex-Soviet Union. [Back.](#)

Note 30: R. Jeffrey Smith, "Missile Deployments Roil Europe," *Science* 223 (Jan. 27, 1984): 371-76; "Missile Talks Doomed from the Start," *Science* 223 (Feb. 10, 1984): 566-70; "Missile Deployments Shake European Politics," *Science* 223 (Feb. 17, 1984): 665-67; "The Allure of High-Tech Weapons for Europe," *Science* 223 (March 23, 1984): 1269-72. [Back.](#)

Note 31: There was, at the time, some controversy over why the Soviets had put the SS-20s into Eastern Europe. While some argued that it was done to take advantage of the escalatory gap, others pointed to the deployment as simply the arcane workings of the Soviet military-industrial complex, which had taken one stage off of an unsuccessful, solid-fuelled intercontinental ballistic missile, thereby turning it into a working intermediate range one. The latter argument would, of course, have implied a state beset by bureaucratic conflict and inefficiency, rather than one bent on conquering the West. [Back.](#)

Note 32: It might be noted, in passing, that the eventual impacts of the SS-20s and Euromissiles were

greater at home than in enemy territory. The waves of protest against the missiles in the West were viewed with great alarm in many NATO capitals. In the East, the episode was the occasion of growing contacts between Western peace activists and Eastern dissidents which, in the long run, must have contributed to the revolutions of 1989 and 1991. See, e.g., David Meyer, "How the Cold War was Really Won: A View From Below," Prepared for the ISA Annual Meeting, March 19-23, 1991, Vancouver, BC. [Back](#).

Note 33: This was, of course, a central reason for arguments made during the 1980s on behalf of a precise counterforce targeting policy against the Soviet Union as well as ballistic missile defense via the Strategic Defense Initiative. [Back](#).

Note 34: Kull, "Nuclear Nonsense"; Kull, *Minds at War* . [Back](#).

Note 35: See, e.g., David Rees, "Soviet Strategic Penetration in Africa," *Conflict Studies* no. 77 (Nov. 1977); W. Kaltefleiter, "The Resource War: The Need for a Western Strategy," *Comparative Strategy* 4, no. 1 (1983): 31-49. [Back](#).

Note 36: Quoted in R. Weston, *Strategic Materials--A World Survey* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Allenheld, 1984), p. 151. [Back](#).

Note 37: Although experiences with temporary shortages in supplies of cobalt from Zaire in the late 1970s demonstrated a remarkable price elasticity where high-technology goods were concerned. [Back](#).

Note 38: See Lipschutz, *When Nations Clash* ; Hans W. Maull, *Raw Materials, Energy and Western Security* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984). [Back](#).

Note 39: "Since the same political forces are promoting the rapid spread of education [as growth in the labor force], that unemployed person is likely to be a high school or college graduate and therefore especially dangerous to political stability." Nathan Keyfitz, "The Growing Human Population," in: *Scientific American, Managing Planet Earth* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1989), p. 52. [Back](#).

Note 40: The whole notion of "global transformation" is one that cuts two ways. Economic integration is thought to be the major effect, in that flows of capital, loci of production, and changes in the deployment of labor are happening "everywhere." What is less noted are the cultural effects of this process, which seem to involve social and political fragmentation. See, for example, Mike Featherstone, ed. *Global Culture* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1990); Stephen Gill, "Reflections on Global Order and Sociohistorical Time," *Alternatives* 16 (1991): 275-314. [Back](#).

Note 41: I have in mind here the kinds of pressures that arise when governments, in trying to make their systems of production more competitive, are urged to eliminate budget deficits and entitlements. [Back](#).

Note 42: In many cases, of course, governments are refusing to deliver services, for ideological as well as budgetary reasons, but I would argue that this refusal is not just domestically generated; see below and Herman Schwartz, "Can Orthodox Stabilization and Adjustment Work?" *International Organization* 45, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 221-56. For the Soviet case, many of these points can be found in Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "Soviet reform and the end of the Cold War: Explaining Large-Scale Historical Change," *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991): 225-50. Jeff Frieden argues, however, that industrialized country governments are not nearly so much at the mercy of international economic forces

as is often supposed; see "Invested Interests: The Politics of National Economic Policies in a World of Global Finance," *International Organization* 45, no. 4 (Autumn 1991): 425-52. [Back](#).

Note 43: John G. Ruggie, "International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order, pp. 195-232, in: Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983). [Back](#).

Note 44: The project is impossible to realize because capitalism is premised on spatial differences in the costs of various factors of production; the "level playing field" is therefore something of a delusion. [Back](#).

Note 45: William S. Lind, "Defending Western Culture," *Foreign Policy* 84 (Fall 1991): 40-50; Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 22-49. [Back](#).

Note 46: Paul Krugmann, *Peddling Prosperity* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994). [Back](#).

Note 47: These thoughts are based on a paper by Timothy Luke, "Sovereignty, States and Security: New World Order or Neo-World Orders?" prepared for this project but not included in this volume. [Back](#).

[On Security](#)

2. The Value of Security: Hobbes, Marx, Nietzsche, and Baudrillard*

James Der Derian

Decentering Security

The rapidity of change in the international system, as well as the inability of international theory to make sense of that change, raises this question: Of what value is security? More specifically, just how secure is this preeminent concept of international relations? This evaluation of security invokes interpretive strategies to ask epistemological, ontological, and political questions--questions that all too often are ignored, subordinated, or displaced by the technically biased, narrowly framed question of *what* it takes to achieve security. The goal, then, of this inquiry is to make philosophically problematic that which has been practically axiomatic in international relations. The first step is to ask whether the paramount value of security lies in its abnegation of the insecurity of all values.

No other concept in international relations packs the metaphysical punch, nor commands the disciplinary power of "security." In its name, peoples have alienated their fears, rights and powers to gods, emperors, and most recently, sovereign states, all to protect themselves from the vicissitudes of nature--as well as from other gods, emperors, and sovereign states. In its name, weapons of mass destruction have been developed which have transfigured national interest into a security dilemma based on a suicide pact. And, less often noted in international relations, in its name billions have been made and millions killed while scientific knowledge has been furthered and intellectual dissent muted.

We have inherited an *ontotheology* of security, that is, an *a priori* argument that proves the existence and necessity of only one form of security because there currently happens to be a widespread, metaphysical belief in it. Indeed, within the concept of security lurks the entire history of western metaphysics, which was best described by Derrida "as a series of substitutions of center for center" in a perpetual search for the "transcendental signified."¹ From God to Rational Man, from Empire to Republic, from King to the People--and on occasion in the reverse direction as well, for history is never so linear, never so neat as we would write it--the security of the center has been the shifting site from which the forces of authority, order, and identity philosophically defined and physically kept at bay anarchy, chaos, and difference.

Yet the center, as modern poets and postmodern critics tell us, no longer holds. The demise of a bipolar system, the diffusion of power into new political, national, and economic constellations, the decline of civil society and the rise of the shopping mall, the acceleration of *everything* --transportation, capital and information flows, change itself--have induced a new anxiety. As George Bush repeatedly said--that is, until the 1992 Presidential election went into full swing--"The enemy is unpredictability. The enemy is instability."²

One immediate response, the unthinking reaction, is to master this anxiety and to resecure the center by remapping the peripheral threats. In this vein, the Pentagon prepares seven military scenarios for future conflict, ranging from *latino* small-fry to an IdentiKit super-enemy that goes by the generic acronym of REGT ("Reemergent Global Threat"). In the heartlands of America, Toyota sledge-hammering returns as a popular know-nothing distraction. And within the Washington beltway, rogue powers such as North Korea, Iraq, and Libya take on the status of pariah-state and potential video bomb-site for a permanently electioneering elite.

There are also prodromal efforts to shore up the center of the International Relations discipline. In a newly instituted series in the *International Studies Quarterly*, the state of security studies is surveyed so as to refortify its borders.³ After acknowledging that "the boundaries of intellectual disciplines are permeable," the author proceeds not only to raise the drawbridge but also to caulk every chink in the moat.⁴ Recent attempts to broaden the concept of "security" to include such issues as global environmental dangers, disease, and economic and natural disasters endanger the field by threatening "to destroy its intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to devise solutions to any of these important problems."⁵ The field is surveyed in the most narrow and parochial way: out of 200-plus works cited, esteemed Third World scholars of strategic studies receive no mention, British and French scholars receive short shrift, and Soviet writers do not make it into the Pantheon at all.

The author of the essay, Stephen Walt, has written one of the better books on alliance systems;⁶ here he seems intent on constructing a new alliance within the discipline against "foreign" others, with the "postmodernist" as arch-alien. The tactic is familiar: like many of the neoconservatives who have launched the recent attacks on "political correctness," the "liberals" of international relations make it a habit to base their criticisms on secondary accounts of a category of thinking rather than on a primary engagement with the specific (and often differing) views of the thinkers themselves.⁷ In this case, Walt cites IR scholar Robert Keohane on the hazards of "reflectivism," to warn off anyone who by inclination or error might wander into the foreign camp: "As Robert Keohane has noted, until these writers `have delineated . . . a research program and shown . . . that it can illuminate important issues in world politics, they will remain on the margins of the field.'"⁸ By the end of the essay, one is left with the suspicion that the rapid changes in world politics have triggered a "security crisis" in security studies that requires extensive theoretical damage control.

What if we leave the desire for mastery to the insecure and instead imagine a new dialogue of security, not in the pursuit of a utopian end but in recognition of the world as it is, *other than us*? What might such a dialogue sound like? Any attempt at an answer requires a genealogy: to understand the discursive power of the concept, to remember its forgotten meanings, to assess its economy of use in the present, to reinterpret--and possibly construct through the reinterpretation--a late modern security comfortable with a plurality of centers, multiple meanings, and fluid identities.

The steps I take here in this direction are tentative and preliminary. I first undertake a brief history of the concept itself. Second, I present the "originary" form of security that has so dominated our conception of international relations, the Hobbesian episteme of realism. Third, I consider the impact of two major challenges to the Hobbesian episteme, that of Marx and Nietzsche. And finally, I suggest that Baudrillard provides the best, if most nullifying, analysis of security in late modernity. In short, I retell the story of realism as an historic encounter of fear and danger with power and order that produced four realist forms of security: epistemic, social, interpretive, and hyperreal. To preempt a predictable criticism, I wish to

make it clear that I am not in search of an "alternative security." An easy defense is to invoke Heidegger, who declared that "questioning is the piety of thought."⁹ Foucault, however, gives the more powerful reason for a genealogy of security:

I am not looking for an alternative; you can't find the solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people. You see, what I want to do is not the history of solutions, and that's the reason why I don't accept the word *alternative*. My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do.¹⁰

The hope is that in the interpretation of the most pressing dangers of late modernity we might be able to construct a form of security based on the appreciation and articulation rather than the normalization or extirpation of difference.

A Genealogy of the Concept

In traditional realist representations of world politics as the struggle for power among states, the will to security is born out of a primal fear, a natural estrangement and a condition of anarchy which diplomacy, international law and the balance of power seek, yet ultimately fail, to mediate.¹¹ By considering some historical meanings of security that exceed this prevailing view, I wish to suggest "new" possibilities and intelligibilities for security. Admittedly, this brief genealogy is thin on analysis and thick on description. But my intention is to provoke discussion, and to suggest that there is more than a speculative basis for the acceptance of a concept of security that is less coherent and dogmatic, and more open to the historical complexity and contingent nature of international relations.

In its earlier use, "security" traveled down a double-track and, then, somewhere at the turn of the nineteenth century, one track went underground. Conventionally understood, security refers to a condition of being protected, free from danger, safety. This meaning prevailed in the great power diplomacy of the modern states-system. In 1704, the *Act of Security* was passed by the Scottish Parliament, which forbade the ascension of Queen Anne's successor to the throne of Scotland unless the independence of the Scottish kingdom was "secured."¹² In 1781, Gibbon conveyed a specifically geopolitical meaning when he wrote in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* that "the emperor and his court enjoyed . . . the security of the marshes and fortifications of Ravenna."¹³ Coeval, however, with the evolution of security as a preferred condition of safety was a different connotation, of security as a condition of false or misplaced confidence in one's position. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare wrote that "Security is Mortals cheefest Enemy."¹⁴ In a 1774 letter, Edmund Burke impugned "The supineness, neglect, and blind security of my friend, in that, and every thing that concerns him."¹⁵ And, as late as 1858, the *Saturday Review* reported that "Every government knew exactly when there was reason for alarm, and when there was excuse for security."¹⁶

Clearly, the unproblematical essence that is often attached to the term today does not stand up to even a cursory investigation. From its origins, security has had contested meanings, indeed, even contradictory ones. Certainly, the tension of definition is inherent in the elusiveness of the phenomenon it seeks to describe, as well as in the efforts of various users to fix and attach meanings for their own ends. Yet there is something else operating at the discursive level: I believe there is a talismanic *sign* to security that seeks to provide what the *property* of security cannot. The clue is in the numerous citations from sermons found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. They all use security to convey the second sense, that is, a careless, hubristic, even damnable overconfidence. The excerpts range in dates from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century: "They . . . were drowned in sinneful security" (1575); "This is a Reflection which

... should strike Terror and Amazement into the securest Sinner" (1729); one, claiming that "It is an imaginary immortality which encloses him in sevenfold security, even while he stands upon its very last edge"(1876).¹⁷

Mediating between these two senses of security lies a third. In the face of a danger, a debt, or an obligation of some kind, one seeks a security, in the form of a pledge, a bond, a surety. From the 1828 *Webster*: "Violent and dangerous men are obliged to give security for their good behavior, or for keeping the peace."¹⁸ In Markby's *Elementary Law* (1874), the word is given a precise financial meaning: "I shall also use the word security to express any transaction between the debtor and creditor by which the performance of such a service (one capable of being represented in money) is secured."¹⁹ A security could also be "represented" in person. Shakespeare again, from *Henry IV*: "He said, sir, you should procure him better Assurance, the Bardole: he wold not take his Bond and yours, he lik'd not the Security."²⁰

Hobbes and Epistemic Realism

Nor is it enough for the security, which men desire should last all the time of their life, that they be governed, and directed by one judgement, for a limited time; as in one Battell, or one Warre. For though they obtain a Victory by their unanimous endeavour against a forraign enemy; yet afterwards when either they have no common enemy, or he that by one part is held for an enemy, is by another part held for a friend, they must needs by the difference of their interests dissolve, and fall again into a Warre amongst themselves.

--Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*¹

For his representation of security, Hobbes preferred the axiomatic style of Euclid and the historical reasoning of Thucydides to the poetic excess of Shakespeare. Both Hobbes and Shakespeare contributed interpretations that exceeded and outlived their contemporary political contexts and historical emulations.²¹ However (and unfortunately), since Hobbes rather than Shakespeare enjoys a paradigmatic status in international relations, a short overview of his foundational ideas on realism and security is needed.

In chapter 10 of the *Leviathan*, Hobbes opens with the proposition that "The Power of a Man . . . is his present means, to obtain some future apparent Good."²² Harmless enough, it would seem, until this power is put into relation with other men seeking future goods. Conflict inevitably follows, "because the power of one man resisteth and hindereth the effects of the power of another: power simply is no more, but the excess of the power of one above that of another."²³ A man's power comes to rest on his *eminence*, the margin of power that he is able to exercise over others. The classic formulation follows in chapter 11: "So that in the first place, I put a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death."²⁴

The implications for interpersonal and interstate relations are obvious. Without a common power to constrain this perpetual struggle there can be no common law: "And Convenants, without the Sword, are but Words, and of no strength to secure a man at all."²⁵ In the state of nature there exists a fundamental imbalance between man's needs and his capacity to satisfy them--with the most basic need being security from a violent and sudden death. To avoid injury from one another and from foreign invasion, men "conferre all their power and strength upon one Man, or upon one Assembly of men, that man reduce all their Wills, by plurality of voices, into one Will."²⁶ The constitution of the Leviathan, the sovereign

state, provides for a domestic peace, but at a price. Hobbes's solution for civil war displaces the disposition for a "warre of every man against every man" to the international arena.²⁷ Out of fear, for gain, or in the pursuit of glory, states will go to war because they can. Like men in the precontractual state of nature, they seek the margin of power that will secure their right of self-preservation--and run up against states acting out of similar needs and desires.

In these passages we can discern the ontotheological foundations of an epistemic realism, in the sense of an ethico-political imperative embedded in the nature of things.²⁸ The sovereign state and territoriality become the necessary effects of anarchy, contingency, disorder that are assumed to exist *independent* of and *prior* to any rational or linguistic conception of them. In epistemic realism, the search for security through sovereignty is not a political choice but the necessary reaction to an anarchical condition: Order is man-made and good; chaos is natural and evil. Out of self-interest, men must pursue this good and constrain the evil of excessive will through an alienation of individual powers to a superior, indeed supreme, collective power. In short, the security of epistemic realism is ontological, theological and teleological: that is, metaphysical. We shall see, from Marx's and Nietzsche's critiques, the extent to which Hobbesian security and epistemic realism rely on social constructions posing as apodictic truths for their power effects. There is not and never was a "state of nature" or a purely "self-interested man"; there is, however, clearly an abiding fear of violent and premature death that compels men to seek the security found in solidarity. The irony, perhaps even tragedy, is that by constituting the first science of security, Hobbes made a singular contribution to the eventual subversion of the metaphysical foundations of solidarity.

Marx and Social Realism

Of course, the measure of the power that I gain for my object over yours needs your recognition in order to become a real power. But our mutual recognition of the mutual power of our objects is a battle in which he conquers who has the more energy, strength, insight and dexterity. If I have enough physical strength I plunder you directly. If the kingdom of physical strength no longer holds sway then we seek to deceive each other, the more dextrous beats the less.

--Karl Marx, Notes on James Mill's
Elements of Political Economy

Marx took probably the most devastating--and certainly the most politically influential--shot at the metaphysics of Hobbesian security. I will avoid the obvious gesture of recounting how Marx put Hegel--and with him the state--back on material footing, and instead focus on Marx's early polemic against the universalist guise of the state, "On the Jewish Question."²⁹

In the essay, Marx traces the split between civil society and the state to the spread of secularized traditions of Judaism and Christianity. In an essentialist if not racialist manner, Marx locates the earliest "spirit of capitalism" in the Judaic practices of usury and the "chimerical nationality of the Jew . . . of the trader and above all the financier."³⁰ He attributes to it a powerfully corrosive effect that sunders Christianity's universalist spirit into the "spirit of *civil society* , of the sphere of egoism, of the *bellum omnium contra omnes* ." The "war of all against all" is not the residue of an imagined state of nature, but the universalization of the "capitalist spirit" of Judaism "under the reign of Christianity," which "dissolves the human world into a world of atomistic, mutually hostile individuals." Like Hobbes, Marx is a realist in that he acknowledges a universal struggle for power; and he is clearly indebted to Hobbes for his nominalist demythologization of power.

But Marx goes one step further, identifying the source of the Leviathan's power not in a free association of alienated power, but in "the separation of man from man . . . the practical application of the right of liberty is the right of private property." The desire for security, then, does not emerge from some external state of nature: "rather, security is the guarantee of the egoism of civil society." It is not a Hobbesian fear or self-interest that gives rise to security; it is money, as "the alienated essence of man's labour and life, this alien essence dominates him as he worships it." This elevation of the egoistic partiality to a metaphysical universality conceals the real divisions created by alienated labor. Not the Leviathan but Mammon binds together society: "The god of the Jews has been secularized and has become the god of the world." The state takes on this universalist identity, becoming the "mediator to which man transfers all his unholiness and all his *human freedom* ."

In Marx, alienation gives rise to a struggle for power which necessitates the security of a state, whereas, in Hobbes, alienation is a consequence of the struggle for power. Moreover, in Marx the power struggle is not a permanent condition: it is historically and class specific, and once the contradiction between a social production of wealth and the private exercise of power comes to its dialectical resolution, the state would become obsolescent--and with it the security dilemma. For Hobbes, the struggle for power is permanent and universal; hence the state is unlikely to wither away. Moreover, it is improbable that a supra-state Leviathan could be constructed: "In states and commonwealths not dependent on one another, every commonwealth has an absolute liberty to do what it shall judge most conducive to their benefits."³¹ Marx sees this extra-territorial liberty to be as chimerical as Hobbes's domestic version. Just as the power of partial economic interests dominates the whole of civil society through the abstract universality of the state, Marx considered interstate politics to be the "serf" of a "universal" financial power hiding a narrow class interest.³²

Nietzsche and Interpretive Realism

In the last analysis, "love of the neighbor" is always something secondary, partly conventional and arbitrary--illusory in relation to *fear of the neighbor* . After the structure of society is fixed on the whole and seems secure against external dangers, it is this fear of the neighbor that again creates new perspectives of moral valuation.

--Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

Nietzsche transvalues both Hobbes's and Marx's interpretations of security through a genealogy of modes of being. His method is not to uncover some deep meaning or value for security, but to destabilize the intolerable fictional identities of the past which have been created out of fear, and to affirm the creative differences which might yield new values for the future.³³ Originating in the paradoxical relationship of a contingent life and a certain death, the history of security reads for Nietzsche as an abnegation, a resentment and, finally, a transcendence of this paradox. In brief, the history is one of individuals seeking an impossible security from the most radical "other" of life, the terror of death which, once generalized and nationalized, triggers a futile cycle of collective identities seeking security from alien others--who are seeking similarly impossible guarantees. It is a story of differences taking on the otherness of death, and identities calcifying into a fearful sameness. Since Nietzsche has suffered the greatest neglect in international theory, his reinterpretation of security will receive a more extensive treatment here.

One must begin with Nietzsche's idea of the will to power, which he clearly believed to be prior to and generative of all considerations of security. In *Beyond Good and Evil* , he emphatically establishes the primacy of the will to power: "Physiologists should think before putting down the instinct of

self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strength--life itself is will to power; self-preservation is only one of the most frequent results."³⁴

The will to power, then, should not be confused with a Hobbesian perpetual *desire* for power. It can, in its negative form, produce a reactive and resentful longing for *only* power, leading, in Nietzsche's view, to a triumph of nihilism. But Nietzsche refers to a *positive* will to power, an active and affective force of becoming, from which values and meanings--including self-preservation--are produced which affirm life. Conventions of security act to suppress rather than confront the fears endemic to life, for ". . . life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one's own forms, incorporation and at least, at its mildest, exploitation--but why should one always use those words in which slanderous intent has been imprinted for ages."³⁵ Elsewhere Nietzsche establishes the pervasiveness of agonism in life: "life is a consequence of war, society itself a means to war."³⁶ But the denial of this permanent condition, the effort to disguise it with a consensual rationality or to hide from it with a fictional sovereignty, are all effects of this suppression of fear.

The desire for security is manifested as a collective resentment of difference--that which is not us, not certain, not predictable. Complicit with a negative will to power is the fear-driven desire for protection from the unknown. Unlike the positive will to power, which produces an aesthetic affirmation of difference, the search for truth produces a truncated life which conforms to the rationally knowable, to the causally sustainable. In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche asks of the reader: "Look, isn't our need for knowledge precisely this need for the familiar, the will to uncover everything strange, unusual, and questionable, something that no longer disturbs us? Is it not the *instinct of fear* that bids us to know? And is the jubilation of those who obtain knowledge not the jubilation over the restoration of a sense of security?"³⁷

The fear of the unknown and the desire for certainty combine to produce a domesticated life, in which causality and rationality become the highest sign of a sovereign self, the surest protection against contingent forces. The fear of fate assures a belief that everything reasonable is true, and everything true, reasonable. In short, the security imperative produces, and is sustained by, the strategies of knowledge which seek to explain it. Nietzsche elucidates the nature of this generative relationship in *The Twilight of the Idols*:

The causal instinct is thus conditional upon, and excited by, the feeling of fear. The "why?" shall, if at all possible, not give the cause for its own sake so much as for a *particular kind of cause* --a cause that is comforting, liberating and relieving. . . . That which is new and strange and has not been experienced before, is excluded as a cause. Thus one not only searches for some kind of explanation, to serve as a cause, but for a particularly selected and preferred kind of explanation--that which most quickly and frequently abolished the feeling of the strange, new and hitherto unexperienced: the most *habitual* explanations.³⁸

A safe life requires safe truths. The strange and the alien remain unexamined, the unknown becomes identified as evil, and evil provokes hostility--recycling the desire for security. The "influence of timidity," as Nietzsche puts it, creates a people who are willing to subordinate affirmative values to the "necessities" of security: "they fear change, transitoriness: this expresses a straitened soul, full of mistrust and evil experiences."³⁹

The unknowable which cannot be contained by force or explained by reason is relegated to the off-world. "Trust," the "good," and other common values come to rely upon an "artificial strength": "the feeling of *security* such as the Christian possesses; he feels strong in being able to trust, to be patient and composed: he owes this artificial strength to the illusion of being protected by a god."⁴⁰ For Nietzsche, of

course, only a false sense of security can come from false gods: "Morality and religion belong altogether to the *psychology of error* : in every single case, cause and effect are confused; or truth is confused with the effects of *believing* something to be true; or a state of consciousness is confused with its causes."⁴¹

Nietzsche's interpretation of the origins of religion can shed some light on this paradoxical origin and transvaluation of security. In *The Genealogy of Morals* , Nietzsche sees religion arising from a sense of fear and indebtedness to one's ancestors:

The conviction reigns that it is only through the sacrifices and accomplishments of the ancestors that the tribe *exists* --and that one has to *pay them back* with sacrifices and accomplishments: one thus recognizes a *debt* that constantly grows greater, since these forebears never cease, in their continued existence as powerful spirits, to accord the tribe new advantages and new strength.⁴²

Sacrifices, honors, obedience are given but it is never enough, for

The ancestors of the *most powerful* tribes are bound eventually to grow to monstrous dimensions through the imagination of growing fear and to recede into the darkness of the divinely uncanny and unimaginable: in the end the ancestor must necessarily be transfigured into a *god* .⁴³

As the ancestor's debt becomes embedded in institutions, the community takes on the role of creditor. Nietzsche mocks this ordinary, Hobbesian moment: to rely upon an "artificial strength": "the feeling

One lives in a community, one enjoys the advantages of communality (oh what advantages! we sometimes underrate them today), one dwells protected, cared for, in peace and trustfulness, without fear of certain injuries and hostile acts to which the man *outside* , the "man without peace," is exposed . . . since one has bound and pledged oneself to the community precisely with a view to injury and hostile acts.⁴⁴

The establishment of the community is dependent upon, indeed it feeds upon, this fear of being left outside. As the castle wall is replaced by written treaty, however, and distant gods by temporal sovereigns, the martial skills and spiritual virtues of the noble warrior are slowly debased and dissimulated. The subject of the individual will to power becomes the object of a collective resentment. The result? The fear of the external other is transvalued into the "love of the neighbor" quoted in the opening of this section, and the perpetuation of community is assured through the internalization and legitimation of a fear that lost its original source long ago.

This powerful nexus of fear, of external and internal otherness, generates the values which uphold the security imperative. Indeed, Nietzsche locates the genealogy of even individual rights, such as freedom, in the calculus of maintaining security:

- My rights - are that part of my power which others not merely conceded me, but which they wish me to preserve. How do these others arrive at that? First: through their prudence and fear and caution: whether in that they expect something similar from us in return (protection of their rights); or in that they consider that a struggle with us would be perilous or to no purpose; or in that they see in any diminution of our force a disadvantage to themselves, since we would then be unsuited to forming an alliance with them in opposition to a hostile third power. *Then* : by donation and cession.⁴⁵

The point of Nietzsche's critical genealogy is to show that the perilous conditions that created the security imperative--and the western metaphysics that perpetuate it--have diminished if not disappeared; yet, the fear of life persists: "Our century denies this perilousness, and does so with a good conscience: and yet it continues to drag along with it the old habits of Christian security, Christian enjoyment, recreation and

evaluation."⁴⁶ Nietzsche's worry is that the collective reaction against older, more primal fears has created an even worse danger: the tyranny of the herd, the lowering of man, the apathy of the last man which controls through conformity and rules through passivity. The security of the sovereign, rational self and state comes at the cost of ambiguity, uncertainty, paradox--all that makes a free life worthwhile. Nietzsche's lament for this lost life is captured at the end of *Daybreak* in a series of rhetorical questions:

Of future virtues--How comes it that the more comprehensible the world has grown the more solemnities of every kind have decreased? Is it that fear was so much the basic element of that reverence which overcame us in the presence of everything unknown and mysterious and taught us to fall down before the incomprehensible and plead for mercy? And has the world not lost some of its charm for us because we have grown less fearful? With the diminution of our fearfulness has our own dignity and solemnity, our own *fearsomeness* , not also diminished?⁴⁷

It is of course in Nietzsche's lament, in his deepest pessimism for the last man, that one finds the celebration of the overman as both symptom and harbinger of a more free-spirited yet fearsome age. Dismissive of utopian engineering, Nietzsche never suggests how he would restructure society; he looks forward only so far as to sight the emergence of "new philosophers" (such as himself?) who would restore a reverence for fear and reevaluate the security imperative. Nietzsche does, however, go back to a pre-Christian, pre-Socratic era to find the exemplars for a new kind of security. In *The Genealogy of Morals* , he holds up Pericles as an example, for lauding the Athenians for their "*rhathymia* " --a term that incorporates the notion of "indifference to and contempt for security."⁴⁸

It is perhaps too much to expect Nietzsche's message to resonate in late modern times, to expect, at the very time when conditions seem most uncertain and unpredictable, that people would treat fear as a stimulus for improvement rather than cause for retrenchment. Yet Nietzsche would clearly see these as opportune times, when fear could be willfully asserted as a force for the affirmation of difference, rather than canalized into a cautious identity constructed from the calculation of risks and benefits.

Baudrillard and Hyperrealism

Like the real, warfare will no longer have any place--except precisely if the nuclear powers are successful in de-escalation and manage to define new spaces for warfare. If military power, at the cost of de-escalating this marvelously practical madness to the second power, reestablishes a setting for warfare, a confined space that is in fact human, then weapons will regain their use value and their exchange value: it will again be possible *to exchange warfare*

--Jean Baudrillard, *Fatal Strategies*

Fine allegories, Baudrillard would say of Marx and Nietzsche. Nietzsche's efforts to represent the deeper impulses behind the will to security, as well as Marx's effort to chart the origins of the struggle for power, to pierce the veil of false consciousness that has postponed revolution, to scientifically represent the world-to-be, are just examples of a representational mirroring, a doubling of late-modernity's cartography of the world-as-it-is. "For it is with the same Imperialism," says Baudrillard, "that present-day simulators try to make the real, all the real coincide with their simulation models."⁴⁹

Baudrillard goes beyond Nietzsche in his interpretation of the death of god and the inability of rational man or the proletariat to fill the resulting value-void with stable distinctions between the real and the apparent, idea and referent, good and evil. In the hyperbolic, often nihilistic, vision of Baudrillard, the task of modernity is no longer to demystify or disenchant illusion--as Nietzsche realized, "*with the real*

world we have also abolished the apparent ⁵⁰--but to save the reality principle, which in this case means, above all else, the sovereign state acting in an anarchical order to maintain and if possible expand its security and power in the face of penetrating, de-centering forces, like the ICBM, global capital, military (and now civilian) surveillance satellites, the international or domestic terrorist, the telecommunications web, environmental movements and transnational human rights conventions, to name a few of the more obvious forces. In his now familiar words: "It is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (ideology), but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real."⁵¹

The idea that reality is blurring, or has already disappeared into its representational form, has a long lineage. It can be traced from Siegfried Kracauer's chronicling of the emergence of a "cult of distraction" in the Weimar Republic,⁵² to Walter Benjamin's incisive warning of the loss of authenticity, aura, and uniqueness in the technical reproduction of reality,⁵³ to Guy Debord's claim that, in modern conditions, spectacles accumulate and representations proliferate⁵⁴ and, finally, to Jean Baudrillard's own notification that the simulated now precedes and engenders a hyperreality where origins are forgotten and historical references lost.⁵⁵ In his post-Marxist work, Baudrillard describes how the class struggle and the commodity form dissolved into a universal play of signs, simulacra, and the inertia of mass culture--and the revolution went missing along with the rest of reality. We are at end-times: but where Marx saw a relentless, dialectical linearity in capitalism leading to social revolution, Baudrillard sees only a passive population depending on the virtuality of technology to save a defunct reality principle.

War serves as the *ultima ratio* of all four thinkers. The Gulf War, and the postwar attempt to set up a "new world order," provide rich material for Baudrillard's thesis that security has now entered the realm of hyperreality. Back in 1983, when Baudrillard wrote of the renewed possibility of an "exchange of warfare," he had already spotted the dark side to a possible end of the ultimate simulation of the Cold War, nuclear deterrence. And if ever a war was "engendered and preceded by simulation," it was the Gulf War. We were primed for this war. Simulations had infiltrated every area of our lives, in the form of news (re)creations, video games, flight simulators, police interrogations, crime reenactments and, of course, media war games.⁵⁶ From the initial deployment of troops to the daily order of battle, from the highest reaches of policymaking to the lowest levels of field tactics and supply, a series of simulations made the killing more efficient, more unreal, more acceptable.⁵⁷ Computer-simulated by private contractors, flight-tested at the Nellis Air Force Base, field-exercised at Fort Irwin in the Mojave Desert, and re-played and fine-tuned everyday in the Persian Gulf, real-time war games took on a life of their own as the real war took the lives of more than 100,000 Iraqis.

But there is also evidence that simulations played a critical role in the decision to go to war. In an interview, General Norman Schwarzkopf revealed that, two years before the war, U.S. intelligence discovered, in his words, that Iraq "had run computer simulations and war games for the invasion of Kuwait."⁵⁸ In my own research, I learned that Iraq had previously purchased a wargame from the Washington military-consulting firm BDM International to use in its war against Iran; and almost as an aside, it was reported in September 1990, on *ABC Nightline*, that the software for the Kuwait invasion simulation was also purchased from a U.S. firm.⁵⁹ Moreover, Schwarzkopf stated that he programmed "possible conflicts with Iraq on computers almost daily." Having previously served in Tampa, Florida as head of the U.S. Central Command--at the time a "paper" army without troops, tanks, or aircraft of its own--his affinity for simulations was and is unsurprising.

In fact, Schwarzkopf sponsored a highly significant computer-simulated command-post exercise that was

played, in late July 1990, under the code-name of "Exercise Internal Look `90." According to a Central Command news release issued at the time, "command and control elements from all branches of the military will be responding to real-world scenarios similar to those they might be expected to confront within the Central Command AOR consisting of the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and Southwest Asia." The war game specialist who put Exercise Internal Look together, Lt. General Yeosock, moved from fighting "real-world scenarios" in Florida to command of all ground troops--except for the special forces under Schwarzkopf--in Saudi Arabia.

Perhaps it is too absurd to believe that the Gulf War was the product of one U.S. wargame designed to fight another wargame bought by Iraq from an American company. Perhaps not. My purpose is not to conduct an internal critique of the simulation industry, nor to claim some privileged grounds for ascertaining the causes of the war.⁶⁰ Rather, my intent is to ask whether, in the construction of a realm of meaning that had minimal contact with historically specific events or actors, simulations demonstrated the power to construct the reality they purport to represent-- and international security suffered for it. The question is whether simulations can create a new world order where actors act, things happen, and the consequences have no origins except the artificial cyberspace of the simulations themselves.⁶¹

Indeed, over the last decade there has been a profusion of signs that a *simulation syndrome* has taken hold in international politics. According to Oleg Gordievsky, former KGB station chief in London, the Soviet leadership became convinced in November 1983 that a NATO command-post simulation called "Able Archer `83" was, in fact, the first step toward a nuclear surprise attack.⁶² Relations were already tense after the September shootdown of KAL 007--a flight that the Soviets considered part of an intelligence-gathering mission--and since the Warsaw Pact had its own wargame, which used a training exercise as cover for a surprise attack, the Soviets assumed the West to have one as well. No NATO nuclear forces went on actual alert, yet the KGB reported the opposite to Moscow. On November 8 or 9, flash messages were sent to all Soviet embassies in Europe, warning them of NATO preparations for a nuclear first strike. Things calmed down when the Able Archer exercise ended without the feared nuclear strike, but Gordievsky still maintains that only the Cuban missile crisis brought the world closer to the brink of nuclear war.

On a smaller, more conventional scale, the mistaking of war for its simulation was repeated in July 1988, when the radar operator and the tactical information coordinator of the *U.S.S. Vincennes* misidentified an Iranian Airbus as an attacking Iranian F-14, even though the ship's highly sophisticated Aegis radar system registered an unknown airplane flying level at 12,000 feet. The nine months of simulation training with computer tapes that preceded the encounter proved more real than the reality of the moment. In effect, the Airbus disappeared before the surface-to-air missile struck, transmuted from an airplane with 290 civilians into an electronic representation on a radar screen and, then, into a simulated target.

The Gulf War is the preeminent, but probably not the last, case of a simulation syndrome manifesting itself in the discourse of national security. Baudrillard was right, in the sense that simulations would rule not only in the war without warring of nuclear deterrence, but also in the postwar warring of the present.⁶³ It was never in question that the coalition forces would win the military conflict. But they did not win a "war," in the conventional sense of a destroying a reciprocating enemy. What "war," then, did the U.S. win? A cyberwar of simulations. First, the prewar simulation, Operation Internal Look `90, which defeated the "Made in America" Iraqi simulation for the invasion of Kuwait. Second, the war game of AirLand Battle, which defeated an Iraqi army that resembled the game's intended enemy, the

Warsaw Pact, in hyperreality only. Third, the war of spectacle, which defeated the spectacle of war on the battlefield of videographic reproduction. And fourth, the postwar after-simulation of Vietnam, which defeated an earlier defeat by assimilating Vietnam's history and lessons into the victory of the Gulf War.

Perhaps Baudrillard's *and* Marx's worst scenarios have come true: the post-Cold War security state now has the technology of simulation as well as the ideological advantage of unipolarity to regenerate, at relatively low cost to itself, an ailing national economy and identity through foreign adventures. We should expect, then, endo- as well as exo-colonial wars, trade wars and simulated wars to figure in the new world order. Iraq served its purpose well as the enemy "other" that helped to redefine the Western identity: but it was the *other* enemy, the more pervasive and elusive threat posed by the de-territorialization of the state and the disintegration of a bipolar order that has left us with a "Gulf War Syndrome," in which the construction and destruction of the enemy other is measured in time, not territory; prosecuted in the field of perception, not politics; authenticated by technical reproduction, not material referents; and played out in the method and metaphor of gaming, not the history and horror of warring.

Not a conclusion but a provocation

People in the newly sovereign republics of the former Soviet Union report greater fear and insecurity than they felt before they became independent. . . . Indeed, the data show that the greatest perceived threats are closest to home, with most of those asked more fearful of their neighbors than anyone else, reflecting the lingering unease among ethnic groups living side by side in the former republics."

--"Many in the Former Soviet Lands Say They Feel Even More Insecure Now,"
Bruce Weber, *New York Times* , April 23, 1992.

If security is to have any significance for the future, it must find a home in the new disorder through a commensurate deterritorialization of theory. We can no longer reconstitute a single Hobbesian site of meaning or reconstruct some Marxist or even neo-Kantian cosmopolitan community; that would require a moment of enlightened universal certainty that crumbled long before the Berlin Wall fell. Nor can we depend on or believe in some spiritual, dialectical or scientific process to overcome or transcend the domestic and international divisions, ambiguities, and uncertainties that mark the age of speed, surveillance and simulation.

This is why I believe the philosophical depth of Nietzsche has more to offer than the hyperbolic flash of Baudrillard. Can we not interpret our own foreign policy in the light of Nietzsche's critique of security? As was the case with the origins of an ontotheological security, did not our debt to the Founding Fathers grow "to monstrous dimensions" with our "sacrifices"--many noble, some not--in two World Wars? Did not our collective identity, once isolationist, neutralist and patriotic, become transfigured into a new god, that was born and fearful of a nuclear, internationalist, interventionist power? The evidence is in the reconceptualization: as distance, oceans and borders became less of a protective barrier to alien identities, and a new international economy required penetration into other worlds, *national interest* became too weak a semantic guide. We found a stronger one in *national security* , as embodied and institutionalized in the National Security Act of 1947, as protected by the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952, and as reconstructed by the first, and subsequent National Security Council meetings of the second, cold war.

Nietzsche speaks a credible truth to increasingly incredible regimes. He points toward a way in which we might live with and recognize the very necessity of difference. He recognizes the need to assert

heterogeneity against the homogenizing and often brutalizing forces of progress. And he eschews all utopian schemes to take us out of the "real" world for a practical strategy to celebrate, rather than exacerbate, the anxiety, insecurity and fear of a new world order where radical otherness is ubiquitous and indomitable.

Note *: This essay is a revision of a paper presented at the 1991 British International Studies Association Meeting in Warwick, England, and at the 1991-92 series of workshops on "Security and the Nation-State" held in Santa Cruz, California. An earlier version was published in Mick Dillon & David Campbell, eds., *The Political Subject of Violence* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993). I would like to thank Ronnie Lipschutz, Beverly Crawford, Mick Dillon, David Campbell and all of the participants who offered comments at those occasions, and Bret Brown who provided valuable research assistance. [Back](#).

Note 1: J. Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science," A. Bass, trans., *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 279. [Back](#).

Note 2: The same mantra has since been repeated by President Clinton. [Back](#).

Note 3: Stephen M. Walt, 'The Renaissance of Security Studies', *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (June 1991): 211-239. [Back](#).

Note 4: Walt, "Renaissance," p. 212. [Back](#).

Note 5: Walt, "Renaissance," p. 213. [Back](#).

Note 6: Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987). [Back](#).

Note 7: The political theorist William Connolly has also noted this tendency among international relations theorists, and refers to it as the "strategy of condemnation through refraction." See William E. Connolly, *Identity/Difference--Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 49-63. [Back](#).

Note 8: Walt, "Renaissance," p. 223. [Back](#).

Note 9: M. Heidegger, "The Question concerning Technology" (David Krell, ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 317. [Back](#).

Note 10: M. Foucault, "On the genealogy of ethics," interview by P. Rabinow and H. Dreyfus, *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1984), p. 343. [Back](#).

Note 11: See J. Der Derian, chapter 4 on "Mytho-diplomacy," pp. 47-68 and chapter 7 on "Anti-diplomacy," pp. 134-67, in: *On Diplomacy--A Geneology of Western Estrangement* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987). [Back](#).

Note 12: See *Oxford English Dictionary* , vol. 9, p. 370. [Back](#).

Note 13: Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1781), xxxi, III, p. 229, quoted in *OED* , vol. 9, p. 370. [Back](#).

Note 14: William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (1605), III, v. 32, quoted in *OED* , vol. 9, p. 370. [Back.](#)

Note 15: E. Burke, *Letter to Marq. Rockingh.* , quoted in *OED* , vol. 9, p. 370. [Back.](#)

Note 16: *Saturday Review* (17 July 1858), p. 51, quoted in *OED* , vol. 9, p. 370. [Back.](#)

Note 17: *OED* , vol. 9, p. 370. [Back.](#)

Note 18: Ibid. [Back.](#)

Note 19: Ibid. [Back.](#)

Note 20: Ibid. [Back.](#)

Note 21: See S. Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). [Back.](#)

Note 22: Thomas Hobbes (C. B. Macpherson, ed.), *Leviathan* (Harmonsworth: Penguin, 1968). [Back.](#)

Note 23: Thomas Hobbes (F. Tonnies, ed.), *Elements of Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928), p. 26. [Back.](#)

Note 24: Hobbes, *Leviathan* . [Back.](#)

Note 25: Ibid., p. 223. [Back.](#)

Note 26: Ibid., p. 227. [Back.](#)

Note 27: Ibid., p. 188. [Back.](#)

Note 28: For a theoretical exposition of the ontotheological character of "epistemic realism," see Connolly, *Identity\Difference* , pp. 70-71; and William Connolly, "Democracy and Territoriality," *Millennium* (Winter 1991): 474 and 483n . See also David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992). [Back.](#)

Note 29: A fuller account of this essay can be found in Der Derian, *On Diplomacy* , pp. 138-141. [Back.](#)

Note 30: K. Marx, "On the Jewish Question" (L. Easton & K. Guddat, eds.), *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 216-248. [Back.](#)

Note 31: Hobbes, *Leviathan* , p. 64. [Back.](#)

Note 32: Marx, "On the Jewish Question," p. 245. [Back.](#)

Note 33: This echoes an interpretation first presented by Gilles Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), which inspires much of my analysis of Nietzsche on fear and security. [Back.](#)

Note 34: . Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* , no. 13. [Back.](#)

Note 35: *Beyond Good and Evil* , no. 259. [Back](#).

Note 36: *Will to Power* , no. 53. In an equally significant passage, which links social valuation and biology, Nietzsche warns against interpreting particular legal institutions as anything more than temporary, life-restricting constructs. That is, to the extent that the legal order is "thought of as sovereign and universal, not as a means in the struggle between power complexes, but as a means of *preventing* all struggle in general" it must be seen as hostile to life. (*On the Genealogy of Morals* , II, no. 11) [Back](#).

Note 37: F. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* , no. 355. [Back](#).

Note 38: Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* , no. 5. [Back](#).

Note 39: Nietzsche, *Will to Power* , no. 576. On the flip side of this influence of timidity, as man has over time overcome particular fears, the now rational, causal object or instance now gives pleasure precisely because it used to inspire fear. Therefore Nietzsche contends that the "feeling for nature" is possible now due to our previous invocation of mystical meaning and intention. See also *Daybreak* , no. 142. [Back](#).

Note 40: *Will to Power* , no. 917 [Back](#).

Note 41: *Twilight of the Idols* , "The Four Great Errors," no. 6 [Back](#).

Note 42: F. Nietzsche (W. Kaufmann, ed. and trans.), *On the Genealogy of Morals* (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 88-89. See also Der Derian, *On Diplomacy* , pp. 53-56, for a fuller account of how the reciprocity of this relationship between the living and the dead is projected as a mytho-diplomatic mediation between alien peoples. [Back](#).

Note 43: Ibid. [Back](#).

Note 44: *Genealogy of Morals* , II, no. 9 [Back](#).

Note 45: *Daybreak* , no. 112. Bret Brown pointed out to me the connection that Nancy Love makes between Nietzsche and Marx on the relationship of rights to security in *Marx, Nietzsche, and Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986): "Marx says, `security is the supreme social concept of civil society, the concept of *police* , the concept that the whole of society is there only to guarantee each of its members the conservation of his person, his rights and his property.' Nietzsche says, `How much or how little is dangerous to the community, dangerous to equality...now constitutes the moral perspective.' They agree that freedom is oppression and equality is inequality, so security is insecurity. Again from different perspectives, they argue that liberal democracy secures an alienated existence." (p.157) [Back](#).

Note 46: *Daybreak* no. 57. [Back](#).

Note 47: Ibid., no. 551. [Back](#).

Note 48: *Genealogy of Morals* , I, 11. [Back](#).

Note 49: J. Baudrillard, *Simulations* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), p. 2. [Back](#).

Note 50: See F. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* , pp. 40-41; and Der Derian, "Techno-diplomacy,"

Chapter 9, of *On Diplomacy* , pp. 199-200. [Back](#).

Note 51: Baudrillard, *Simulations* , p. 48. [Back](#).

Note 52: See F. Kracauer, "Cult of Distraction: On Berlin's Picture Palaces," (T. Y. Levin, trans.), *New German Critique* , 40 (Winter 1987): 95; and S. Kracauer, *Das Ornament der Masse* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1963); S. Kracauer (T. Y. Levin, trans. and ed.), *The Mass Ornament* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995). [Back](#).

Note 53: See Walter Benjamin (H. Arendt, ed.), "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken, 1969), pp. 241-42. [Back](#).

Note 54: See Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black and Red, 1983), no. 1, 45pp. 1 and 23. In a more recent work, Debord persuasively--and somewhat despairingly--argues that the society of the spectacle retains its representational power in current times: see *Commentaires sur la Société du Spectacle* (Paris: Editions Gerard Lebovici, 1988). [Back](#).

Note 55: Baudrillard, *Simulations* , p. 2. [Back](#).

Note 56: Whether it took the form of representing criminality on "America's Most Wanted," where alleged crimes are re-enacted for the public benefit, or docu-dramatizing espionage on ABC primetime news, with a stand-in for the alleged spy Felix Bloch handing over a briefcase to a KGB stand-in, a genre of truthful simulations had already been established. There are as well the many commercially available war simulations. To name a few: from Navy simulations there is *Harpoon* , *Das Boot Submarine* , *Wolf Pack* , and *Silent Service II* ; from the Air Force, *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* , *F-19 Stealth Fighter* , *A-10 Tank Killer* , and *F-15 Strike Eagle* ; and for those seeking more serious global simulations, *Populous* , *Balance of Power* , *SimCity* , and *Global Dilemma* . On the heels of the Gulf War, wargames like *Arabian Nightmare* (in which the player has the option to kill American reporters like Ted Koppel) and the *Butcher of Baghdad* were added to the list. [Back](#).

Note 57: Simulations in this context could be broadly defined here as *the continuation of war by means of verisimilitude* , which range from analytical games that use broad descriptions and a minimum of mathematical abstraction to make generalizations about the behavior of actors, to computerized models that use algorithms and high resolution graphics to analyze and represent the amount of technical detail considered necessary to predict events and the behavior of actors. [Back](#).

Note 58: See J. Albright, "Army mastermind stays ahead of the `game'," *Atlanta Constitution* , October 25, 1990, p. 1. [Back](#).

Note 59: See T. Allen, *War Games* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1987), p 4; and "ABC Nightline" transcript, September 26, 1990, p. 3. [Back](#).

Note 60: Two excellent criticisms of the internal assumptions of gaming can be found in a review of the literature by R. Ashley, "The eye of power: the politics of world modeling," *International Organization* 37, no. 3 (Summer 1983); and R. Hurwitz, "Strategic and Social Fictions in the Prisoner's Dilemma," pp. 113-34, in: Michael Shapiro and James Der Derian, eds., *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1989). [Back](#).

Note 61: This is not to suggest that the 500,000+ troops in Kuwait were not real; rather, to point out that their being there might well have been a consequence of a "reality" constructed out of the imagined scenarios created within the computer war games. [Back](#).

Note 62: C. Andrews and O. Gordievsky, *KGB: The Inside Story* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), pp. 583-605; and conversation with Gordievsky, 7-9 November 1991, Toronto, Canada. [Back](#).

Note 63: The art of deterrence, prohibiting political war, favors the upsurge, not of conflicts, but of "*acts of war without war* ." Paul Virilio and Sylvère Lotringer (Mark Polizotti, trans.), *Pure War* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), p. 27. See also Timothy Luke, "What's Wrong with Deterrence? A Semiotic Interpretation of National Security Policy," pp. 207-230, in: Shapiro and Der Derian, *International/Intertextual Relations* . [Back](#).

[On Security](#)

3. Securitization and Desecuritization

Ole Wæver

During the mid-1980s, observers frequently noticed that the concept of security had been subjected to little reflection in comparison with how much and how strongly it had been used. Only a few years later, conceptual reflections on the concept of security have become so common that it is almost embarrassing to, once again, discuss or re-conceptualize *security*. Nonetheless, in this chapter I present one possible perspective on security, and assess its implications in terms of four different security agendas. My primary aim here is not to provide a detailed discussion of this new approach--a more detailed exposition can be found elsewhere¹--but to illustrate the contrast between this perspective and more traditional approaches, which I intend to bring out via conceptual discussion and by addressing selected "security debates."

I could begin by expressing a certain discontent with the "traditional progressive" or "established radical" ways of dealing with the concept and agenda of security. The traditional progressive approach is: 1) to accept two basic premises of the established discourse, first that security is a reality prior to language, is out there (irrespective of whether the conception is "objective" or "subjective," is measured in terms of threat or fear), and second the more security, the better; and 2) to argue why security should encompass *more* than is currently the case, including not only "xx" but also "yy," where the latter is environment, welfare, immigration and refugees, etc. With this approach, one accepts the core meaning of "security" as uncontested, pushing instead in the direction of securitizing still larger areas of social life.

Still, in the final analysis, is it all to the good that problems such as environmental degradation be addressed in terms of security? After all, in spite of all the changes of the last few years, security, as with any other concept, carries with it a history and a set of connotations that it cannot escape. At the heart of the concept we still find something to do with defense and the state. As a result, addressing an issue in security terms still evokes an image of threat-defense, allocating to the state an important role in addressing it. This is not always an improvement.

Why not turn this procedure upside down? In place of accepting implicitly the meaning of "security" as given and then attempting to broaden its coverage, why not try instead to put a mark on the concept *itself*, by entering into and through its core? This means changing the tradition by taking it seriously rather than criticizing it from the outside.² I begin by considering security as a concept and a word. Next, I discuss security as a *speech act*. In the third part of the essay, I describe four cases of *securitization* and *de-securitization*. Finally, I ask whether we might not want to use "security" as it is classically understood, after all.

Security: The Concept and the Word

During the 1980s we witnessed a general move to broaden the security agenda.³ One approach was to

move from a strict focus on the security of the *state* (national security) toward a broader or alternative focus on the security of *people*, either as individuals or as a global or international collectivity. The security of individuals can be affected in numerous ways; indeed, economic welfare, environmental concerns, cultural identity, and political rights are germane more often than military issues in this respect. The major problem with such an approach is deciding where to stop, since the concept of security otherwise becomes a synonym for everything that is politically good or desirable. How, then, can we get any clear sense of the specific character of *security* issues, as distinct from other problems that beset the human condition? To what extent can we apply any of the methods and lessons of security studies to this broadened agenda?

Johan Galtung and Jan Øberg have formulated an alternative concept of security, based on four sets of positive goals related to human needs: survival, development, freedom, and identity. Within this framework, security becomes "the combined defence policy for each need category, the totality of defence endeavours of the entire human-societal organization."⁴ The result is a holistic program for world society and its development, welfare, and so on. This is a wholly legitimate approach, of course, but does it impinge at all on *security* debates? Certainly, the central actors and theorists in the field do not feel affected or threatened by this framework.⁵ Moreover, there is no basic logic to this wider conception of security except for the corrective/mirror image of the traditional concept. And, in addition, the baseline in the Galtung/Øberg conception is the individual level. Security is then linked to all other goals, since they are all generated from the individual level: the individual has various needs and can be hurt by threats to these needs, and this makes everything a potential security problem. At least three, interrelated problems follow: First, the concept of security becomes all-inclusive and is thereby emptied of content; second, the lack of explicit attention to the connotative core of classical security makes the Galtung/Øberg approach an innocent contributor to the reproduction--and even expansion--of securitization; and, third, there is a lack of political effect on "security," as traditionally defined.

Widening along the *referent object* axis--that is, saying that "security is not only military defense of the state, it is also x and y and z"--has the unfortunate effect of expanding the security realm endlessly, until it encompasses the whole social and political agenda. This is not, however, just an unhappy coincidence or a temporary lack of clear thinking. The problem is that, as concepts, *neither individual security nor international security exist*. National security, that is, the security of the state, is the name of an ongoing debate, a tradition, an established set of practices and, as such, the concept has a rather formalized referent; conversely, the "security" of whomever/whatever is a very unclear idea. There is no literature, no philosophy, no tradition of "security" in non-state terms; it is only as a critical idea, played out against the concept and practices of state security, that other threats and referents have any meaning. An abstract idea of "security" is a nonanalytical term bearing little relation to the *concept* of security implied by national or state security.

To the extent that we have an idea of a specific modality labelled "security" it is *because* we think of national security and its modifications and limitations, and not because we think of the everyday word "security." The discourse on "alternative security" makes meaningful statements not by drawing primarily on the register of everyday security but through its contrast with national security. Books and articles such as Jan Øberg's *At Sikre Udvikling og Udvikle Sikkerhed*, Richard H. Ullman's "Redefining Security," and Jessica Tuchman Mathews's "Redefining Security" are, consequently, abundant with "not only," "also" and "more than" arguments.⁶ This reveals that they have no generic concept of the meaning of security--only the one uncritically borrowed from the traditional view, and multiplied and extended to

new fields. Thus, it seems reasonable to be conservative along this axis, accepting that "security" is influenced in important ways by *dynamics* at the level of individuals and the global system, but not by propagating unclear terms such as individual security and global security. The *concept* of security refers to the state.

The first edition of Barry Buzan's *People, States and Fear* (1983) failed to make clear how this problem might be handled. There was an obvious tension between the title of the book and its subtitle, *The National Security Problem in International Relations*. The three levels of analysis--individual, state and international system--were central to Buzan's argument, although national security remained, in some sense, privileged. Still, was it Buzan's intention to make a "triple-decker" out of the concept of security, or was he simply providing a contextualization of national security? This point has been clarified in the second edition of the book (1991), where Buzan argues that the state level *is* privileged even as national security cannot be comprehended at the state level alone. What national security links to at the other levels is not primarily individual security and international security, but dynamics and political processes of various kinds at these other levels.⁷

Buzan has shown powerfully that national security can neither be sufficiently understood nor realistically achieved from a perspective limited to one's own state. National security is fundamentally dependent on international dynamics (especially *regional* ones), but this is not the same as a relationship between national security and international *security*. Therefore, as indicated in Figure 3.1, I do not locate security at three levels but at the *center* of the hourglass image.

"Security," in other words, has to be read through the lens of *national* security.

Of course, "security" has an everyday meaning (being secure, safe, not threatened). Quite separate from this, though, the term "security" has acquired a number of connotations, assumptions, and images derived from the "international" discussion of national security, security policy, and the like. But, in these discussions, the conceptualization of security has little to do with application of the everyday meaning to an object (nation or state), followed by an examination as to when the state is secure (as if "security" possessed an independent, stable, context-free meaning that could be added to another stable, independently defined object, the state).

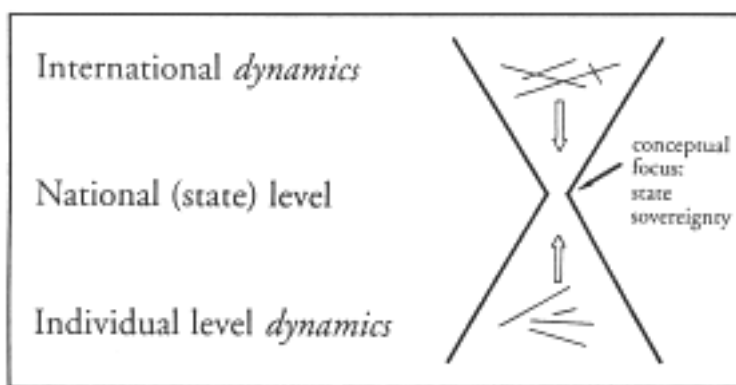


Figure 3.1 Hourglass model of security.

Rather, the label "security" has become the indicator of a specific problematique, a specific *field of practice*. Security is, in historical terms, the field where states threaten each other, challenge each other's sovereignty, try to impose their will on each other, defend their independence, and so on. Security,

moreover, has not been a constant field; it has evolved and, since World War II, has been transformed into a rather coherent and recognizable field. In this process of continuous, gradual transformation, the strong military identification of earlier times has been diminished--it is, in a sense, always there, but more and more often in metaphorical form, as other wars, other challenges--while the images of "challenges to sovereignty" and defense have remained central.

If we want to rethink or reconstruct the concept of security, therefore, it is necessary that we keep an eye on the entire field of practice. This is contrary to the now-standard debates on "redefining security," inasmuch as those who want radically to rethink the concept generally tend to cancel out the specific field. The concept is thus reduced to its everyday sense, which is only a semantic *identity*, not the *concept* of security. Of course, both choices are completely legitimate, but this question of language politics depends ultimately on what we wish to accomplish. If our intent is to determine when we are secure, the investigation can address many levels. If, however, we want to add something new to ongoing debates on "security" (in strategic studies) and national interests, we must begin with *those* debates, taking on that problematique, so that we can get at the specific dynamics of that field, and show how these old elements operate in new ways and new places.

The specificity, in other words, is to be found in the *field* and in certain typical *operations* within the field (speech acts--"security"--and modalities--threat-defense sequences), not in a clearly definable objective ("security") or a specific state of affairs ("security"). Beginning from the modality of specific types of interactions in a specific social arena, we can rethink the concept "security" in a way that is true to the classical discussion. By working from the inside of the classical discussion, we can take the concepts of national security, threat, and sovereignty, and show how, on the collective level, they take on new forms under new conditions. We can then strip the classical discussion of its preoccupation with military matters by applying the *same* logic to other sectors, and we can de-link the discussion from the state by applying similar moves to *society* (as I shall show, below). With this, we maintain a mode of thinking, a set of rules and codes from the field of "security" as it has evolved and continues to evolve.

To start instead from being secure in the everyday sense means that we to the now-standard depend up approaching security policy from the *outside*, that is, via another language game. My premise here is, therefore, that we can identify a specific field of social interaction, with a specific set of actions and codes, known by a set of agents as the security field. In international society, for example, a number of codes, rules, and understandings have been established that make international relations an intersubjectively defined social reality possessing its own specific laws and issues.⁸ National security is similarly social in the sense of being constituted intersubjectively in a specific field,⁹ and it should not be measured against some real or true yardstick of "security" derived from (contemporary) domestic society.

An alternative route to a wider concept of security is to broaden the security agenda to include threats other than military ones. When widening takes place along this axis, it is possible to retain the specific quality characterizing security problems: Urgency; state power claiming the legitimate use of extraordinary means; a threat seen as potentially undercutting sovereignty, thereby preventing the political "we" from dealing with any other questions. With this approach, it is possible that any sector, at any particular time, might be the most important focus for concerns about threats, vulnerabilities, and defense. Historically, of course, the military sector has been most important.¹⁰

Strategic studies often focused on the military aspects of security, whereas the realists and neorealists of International Relations seldom a priori defined military threats as primary. Indeed, Morgenthau, Aron,

and many others took the position that, to ensure its security, a state would make its own choices according to expediency and effectiveness, and these might not always involve military means. A state would make threats in the sector in which the best options were available. A response (security policy, defense) would often, but not always, have to be made in the same sector, depending on whether one sector might overpower another, and military means simply were often the strongest available. Logically speaking, the means to security should be secondary to the ends--that is, a conflict and the political decisions involved, as Clausewitz pointed out--and, thus, it has seemed a viable strategy to expand security in terms of *sectors* while keeping the state focus. Indeed, this is not only an academic option, it is also, to a large degree, what has taken place in political discourse, as the name of the field has through this century changed from war to defense to "security."

Still, what ties all of this together as security? When Buzan moves from his discussion of security in military terms to security in the political, economic, ecological, and societal sectors, the logic clearly says that security begins as a military field that is increasingly challenged by these new sectors. The question remains, however: What made the military sector conspicuous, and what now qualifies the others to almost equal status? While Buzan does not squarely address this question, he does hint at an answer. Military threats have been primary in the past because they emerged "very swiftly" and with "a sense of outrage at unfair play"; if defeated, a state would find itself laid bare to imposition of the conqueror's will.¹¹ Such outcomes used to characterize the military sector. But, if the same overturning of the political order can be accomplished by economic or political methods, these, too, will constitute security problems.¹²

From the discussion above, it follows that the basic definition of a security problem is something that can undercut the political order within a state and thereby "alter the premises for all other questions." As Buzan shows, the literature largely treats security as "freedom from threat," both objectively and subjectively.¹³ Threats seen as relevant are, for the most part, those that effect the self-determination and sovereignty of the unit. *Survival*¹⁴ might sound overly dramatic but it is, in fact, the survival of the unit *as* a basic political unit--a sovereign state--that is the key. Those issues with this undercutting potential must therefore be addressed prior to all others because, if they are not, the state will cease to exist as a sovereign unit and all other questions will become irrelevant. This, then, provides us with a test point, and shows what is lost if we "de-compose" the state by individualizing security. With the approach I have suggested here, even if challenges can operate on the different components of the state, they must still pass through one focus: Do the challenges determine whether the state is to be or not to be?¹⁵

When a specific issue is turned into a test case, everything becomes concentrated at one point, since the outcome of the test will frame all future questions. This logic is spelled out most clearly, perhaps, by Clausewitz, who shows that, although politics has to be prior to military, the logic of war--the *ziel* of war, victory--replaces the logic of politics--the specific *zweck*. To enter a war is a political decision, but once in, one has to play according to the grammar of *war*, not politics, which would mean playing less well and losing the political aim, as well. Rousseau put it thus: "War is not, therefore, a relation of man to man but a relation of state to state, in which individuals are enemies only by accident, not as men or even as citizens, but as soldiers, not as members of the homeland, but as its defenders."¹⁶ Rousseau's argument is presented here in terms of literal war, but the observation applies to "metaphorical war" that is, to other "tests of will and strength."¹⁷

The inner logic of war follows from its basic character as an *unconstrained* situation, in which the

combatants each try to function at maximum efficiency in relation to a clearly defined aim. During war, a state is confronted with a test of *will* --testing whether it is still a sovereign unit--in which the ability to fend off a challenge is *the* criterion for forcing the others to acknowledge its sovereignty and identity as a state.¹⁸ It is, in fact, not the particular means (military) that define a situation as war, it is the structure of the "game." Logically speaking, therefore, it is a coincidence that military means have traditionally been the *ultimo ratio* .

The basic logic of Clausewitz's argument thus follows from the situation of an ultimate test: what then is logically to be done? "War is an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds; as one side dictates the law to the other, there arises a sort of reciprocal action, which logically must lead to an extreme."¹⁹ The loser is forced to submit, and the outcome is defined in polar terms: victory-defeat. From this, it follows that the first logic for each party is: "Throw forward all forces" (therefore the inherent tendency for escalation in war); subsequently, various specific mechanisms intervene to modify this injunction.

War, then, is "an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will"²⁰ and, therefore, "War, insofar as it is a social act, presupposes the conflicting wills of politically organized collectivities."²¹ It is in this struggle for recognition (Hegel) that states establish their identity as states. Nonetheless, this struggle can take place in spheres other than the military one; the priority of military means is a contingent, technical feature. Consequently, the logic of war--of challenge-resistance(defense)-escalation-recognition/defeat--could be replayed metaphorically and extended to other sectors. When this happens, however, the structure of the game is still derived from the most classical of classical cases: war.

From *Alternative Security* to *Security, the Speech Act*

Reading the theoretical literature on security, one is often left without a good answer to a simple question: What really makes something a security problem? As I have suggested above, security problems are developments that threaten the sovereignty or independence of a state in a particularly rapid or dramatic fashion, and deprive it of the capacity to manage by itself. This, in turn, undercuts the political order. Such a threat must therefore be met with the mobilization of the maximum effort.

Operationally, however, this means: *In naming a certain development a security problem, the "state" can claim a special right* , one that will, in the final instance, always be defined by the state and its elites. Trying to press the kind of unwanted fundamental political change on a ruling elite is similar to playing a game in which one's opponent can change the rules at any time s/he likes. Power holders can always try to use the instrument of *securitization* of an issue to gain control over it. By definition, something is a security problem when the elites declare it to be so:

And because the End of this Institution [the Leviathan, the Sovereign], is the Peace and Defense of them all; and whosoever has right to the End, has right to the Means; it belongeth of Right, to whatsoever Man, or Assembly that hath the Sovereignty, to be Judge both of the meanes of Peace and Defense; and also of the hindrances, and disturbances of the same; and to do whatsoever he shall think necessary to be done, both before hand, for the preserving of Peace and Security, by prevention of Discord at home and Hostility from abroad; and, when Peace and Security are lost, for the recovery of the same.²²

Thus, that those who administer this order can easily use it for specific, self-serving purposes is something that cannot easily be avoided.

What then *is* security? With the help of language theory, we can regard "security" as a *speech act* . In

this usage, security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance *itself* is the act. By saying it, something is done (as in betting, giving a promise, naming a ship).²³ By uttering "security," a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it.²⁴

The clearest illustration of this phenomenon--on which I will elaborate below--occurred in Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War, where "order" was clearly, systematically, and institutionally linked to the survival of the system and its elites. Thinking about change in East-West relations and/or in Eastern Europe throughout this period meant, therefore, trying to bring about change without generating a "securitization" response by elites, which would have provided the pretext for acting against those who had overstepped the boundaries of the permitted.

Consequently, to ensure that this mechanism would not be triggered, actors had to keep their challenges below a certain threshold and/or through the political process--whether national or international--have the threshold negotiated upward. As Egbert Jahn put it, the task was to turn threats into challenges; to move developments from the sphere of existential fear to one where they could be handled by ordinary means, as politics, economy, culture, and so on. As part of this exercise, a crucial political and theoretical issue became the definition of "intervention" or "interference in domestic affairs," whereby change-oriented agents tried, through international law, diplomacy, and various kinds of politics, to raise the threshold and make more interaction possible.

Through this process, two things became very clear. First, the *word* "security" is the *act*; the utterance is the primary reality. Second, the most radical and transformational perspective--which nonetheless remained realist--was one of minimizing "security" by narrowing the field to which the security act was applied (as with the European *détente* policies of the 1970s and 1980s). After a certain point, the process took a different form and the aim became to create a speech act *failure* (as in Eastern Europe in 1989). Thus, the trick was and is to move from a positive to a negative meaning: Security *is* the conservative mechanism--but we want less security!

Under the circumstances then existing in Eastern Europe, the power holders had among their instruments the speech act "security." The use of this speech act had the effect of raising a specific challenge to a principled level, thereby implying that all necessary means would be used to block that challenge. And, because such a threat would be defined as existential and a challenge to sovereignty, the state would not be limited in what it could or might do. Under these circumstances, a problem would become a *security* issue whenever so defined by the power holders. Unless or until this operation were to be brought to the point of failure--which nuclear conditions made rather difficult to imagine²⁵--available avenues of change would take the form of *negotiated limitations* on the use of the "speech act security." Improved conditions would, consequently, hinge on a process implying "less security, more politics!"

To put this point another way, *security* and *insecurity* do not constitute a binary opposition. "Security" signifies a situation marked by the presence of a security problem *and* some measure taken in response. Insecurity is a situation with a security problem and *no* response. Both conditions share the security problematique. When there is no security problem, we do not conceptualize our situation in terms of security; instead, security is simply an irrelevant concern. The statement, then, that security is always relative, and one never lives in complete security, has the additional meaning that, if one has such complete security, one does not label it "security." It therefore never appears. Consequently, transcending a security problem by politicizing it cannot happen *through* thematization in security terms, only *away*

from such terms.

An agenda of *minimizing* security in this sense cannot be based on a classical critical approach to security, whereby the concept is critiqued and then thrown away or redefined according to the wishes of the analyst. The essential operation can only be touched by faithfully working *with* the classical meaning of the concept and what is already inherent in it. The language game of security is, in other words, a *jus necessitatis* for threatened elites, and this it must remain.

Such an affirmative reading, not at all aimed at rejecting the concept, may be a more serious challenge to the established discourse than a critical one, for it recognizes that a conservative approach to security is an intrinsic element in the logic of both our national and international political organizing principles. By taking seriously this "unfounded" concept of security, it is possible to raise a new agenda of security and politics. This further implies moving from a positive to a negative agenda, in the sense that the dynamics of securitization and desecuritization can never be captured so long as we proceed along the normal critical track that assumes security to be a positive value to be maximized.

That elites frequently present their interests in "national security" dress is, of course, often pointed out by observers, usually accompanied by a denial of elites' right to do so. Their actions are then labelled something else, for example, "class interests," which seems to imply that authentic security is, somehow, definable independent of elites, by direct reference to the "people." This is, in a word, wrong. All such attempts to define people's "objective interests" have failed. Security is articulated only from a specific place, in an institutional voice, by elites. All of this can be analyzed, if we simply give up the assumption that security is, necessarily, a *positive* phenomenon.

Critics normally address the *what* or *who* that threatens, or the *whom* to be secured; they never ask whether a phenomenon *should* be treated in terms of security because they do not look into "securityness" as such, asking what is particular to security, in contrast to non-security, modes of dealing with particular issues. By working with the assumption that security is a goal to be maximized, critics eliminate other, potentially more useful ways of conceptualizing the problems being addressed. This is, as I suggested above, because security:insecurity are not binary opposites. As soon as a more nominalist approach is adapted, the absurdity of working toward maximizing "security" becomes clear.

Viewing the security debate at present, one often gets the impression of the object playing around with the subjects, the field toying with the researchers. The problematique itself locks people into talking in terms of "security," and this reinforces the hold of security on our thinking, even if our approach is a critical one. We do not find much work aimed at *de-securitizing* politics which, I suspect, would be more effective than securitizing problems.

Securitization and De-securitization: Four Cases

From the discussion above, it follows that a major focus of "security studies" should be the *processes* of securitization and de-securitization: When, why and how elites label issues and developments as "security" problems; when, why and how they succeed and fail in such endeavors; what attempts are made by other groups to put securitization on the agenda; and whether we can point to efforts to keep issues *off* the security agenda, or even to de-securitize issues that have become securitized?

Below, I explore these questions in the context of four different security agendas. First, I look at European security between 1960 and 1990, the period of change and *détente*, which provided the

framework for developing the speech act interpretation of security. During this period, the main issue was whether political and social change could be de-securitized even as the basic political structure of the region was kept frozen with major help of the security instrument. How much could be de-securitized and how was a major question, as is why and how change suddenly took on a new and different character in 1989. In the second part, I deal with a very different case: Environmental security. Here we see not an instance of de-securitizing an essentially securitized field but, rather, the potential advantages and disadvantages of securitizing a new area that, perhaps, should be addressed via other thematizations. In the third part, I take up the issue of societal security. This topic is presented in a fashion somewhat parallel to the preceding one, but I also ask the following: *If* we start using the concept of societal security in order to understand certain new dynamics, especially in post-Cold War Europe, what differences are there between a traditional, alternative security approach as opposed to a speech act approach to security? In the final part, I analyze the major new attempts to apply the concept of "security" in Europe, with particular reference to the notion of "European security."

Change and Détente: European Security 1960-1990

A peculiar feature of the Cold War system in Europe was the almost total exclusion of unwanted change, a guaranteed stability of the status quo. Raymond Aron once described it as a "slowdown of history" (but then went on to discuss the iron law of change that would ultimately upset this strange situation).²⁶ Security became the means whereby this slowdown was effected. The speech act "security" is, of course, more than just a word, since one must have in hand the means to block a development deemed threatening. For example, if a foreign army walks across the border or tries to intimidate a country, it is necessary (but not sufficient) to have adequate military strength to resist; or if social unrest, caused from within or without, is the problem, one must have a sufficiently repressive apparatus, ideological cohesion in the core group that allows the apparatus to be mobilized, and the legitimacy to use it that avoids the escalation of public opposition.

For a long time the situation in Central and Eastern Europe was such that, where nonmilitary issues were concerned, it was always possible for the regime to control things--*in extremis*, with the help of friends with tanks. In Cold War Europe, moreover, military threats could also be fenced off because of the general nuclear condition. As the late Franz Josef Strauss once put it: "In the present European situation there is no possibility of changes through war, but neither through revolution or civil war."²⁷ Change seemed impossible without some consent by the power-holders; it had to take place through a negotiated process of pressure and acceptance, stabilization and destabilization. And so it happened.

The central issue of the debates on European détente--and the mechanism that actually worked in them--was the *logic of change through stabilization*. In particular, as Willy Brandt explained, German *Ostpolitik* and *Deutschlandpolitik* were very explicit about the necessity of "stabilizing the status quo in order to overcome the status quo." Only by removing some threats to, and thereby some excuses for, the regimes in the East, would it then become possible to push back the securitization of East-West relations and change domestic conditions in Eastern Europe.

At the same time, the field of human rights evolved into an attempt to develop new *rules of the game* in the nonmilitary arena. "Human rights" became the label for a specific political struggle/negotiation over the border between security and politics, intervention and interaction. This theme generated a great deal of controversy in the mid-1980s, especially where efforts by West German Social Democrats (SPD) to revive détente were concerned.²⁸

Through all of this, East-West relations were marked by a basic asymmetry, because internal legitimacy made Western society much more stable. In Buzan's terms, states in the West were strong, in the East, weak.²⁹ This contrast generated a specific and clearly discernible constellation of security concepts and practices: Since the West could not be destabilized from within--especially as the decline of Eurocommunism eliminated this fear--security concerns became focused on the "high politics" of military threats and, possibly, skillful diplomatic maneuvering by the Soviets.³⁰ The states of the East, in contrast, were fearful of "threats" from below; they regarded almost all societal interaction with the West as potentially dangerous and destabilizing. Accordingly, the concept of security became highly militarized in the West, while in the East it was broadened to incorporate economic security and various types of interference in domestic affairs.

A key political question thus became the definition of "normal" transnational politics, as opposed to intervention, which was deemed to be a security problem. A great deal of the East-West dialogue of the 1970s and 1980s, especially that on "non-military aspects of security," human rights, and the whole Third basket of the Helsinki Accords, could be regarded as a discussion of where to place boundaries on a concept of security: To what degree were Eastern regimes "permitted" to use extraordinary instruments to limit societal East-West exchange and interaction?

By turning threats into challenges and security into politics, the détente-oriented actors of the West tried to get elites in the East to avoid applying the term "security" to issues and to open up domestic space for more open political struggle. Even though this strategy did not ultimately prove instrumental to the change in East-West relations in 1989, it is certainly arguable that it did play an important role in a process of softening that allowed another form of change to take place. Détente, as negotiated desecuritization and limitation of the use of the security speech act, contributed to the modification of the Eastern societies and systems that eventually made possible, via sudden desecuritization through a speech-act failure, the radical changes of 1989.

Many observers noted that the 1989 revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe came about not as regimes slowly gave way to forces gaining more and more control from the periphery but, rather, as a collapse from the center. Some have tried to attribute this sudden loss of legitimacy to the dismal economic performances of the 1980s. This was a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the collapse, inasmuch as the regimes had been lacking in legitimacy for a very long time. The new feature in 1989 was the loss of support *within* the elites, which some characterized as a sudden loss of self-confidence by the regimes themselves.³¹ In other words, to explain the change, we must look *within* elites, and the ways in which the question of legitimacy among elites translated into the capacity to act.³² An important part of an order-maintaining action occurs by sustaining a shared worldview within some minimum inner-circle. In earlier cases of adjusting course, when it was necessary to overcome a crisis or repress a revolt, the question of worldview did not arise. The old leader was sacrificed and the new one regained elite support by calling for the restoration of order. Something was said in this act, of course, but the decisive question was not the truth of the act, per se. Rather, the truth was given by the act being said from a specific position, thereby regenerating a loyal elite following, (re)installing the truth, and reimposing the center's will on the majority.³³ In this system of myth-making, there was an almost infinite capacity for reappraisal through auxiliary hypotheses. That capacity was not, however, infinite and it ultimately became more and more difficult to regenerate the truth, especially in the face of continued economic failures.³⁴ When the final crisis came, no one wanted to take on the task of "calling to order" and no one wanted to take the place at the center from which the call to order would come.

