The Empire of Security and the Safety of the People

Edited by William Bain

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This new volume explores the meaning of security in relation to, and in the context of, ideas that are fundamental to both international and domestic political order.

William Bain argues that the word 'security' is devoid of substantive content when divorced from ideas such as sovereignty, war, diplomacy, great power responsibility, self-determination, globalization, cultural diversity, intervention, and trusteeship. In other words, 'security' cannot be made to yield a real core or an intrinsic content because it discloses no essence that awaits discovery. This clear and accessible book draws on an impressive range of history, philosophy, and law to investigate these and other questions:

- How do norms of sovereignty inform an ethics of international security?
- Is security something that can be achieved through the recognition of identity?
- Are all states, great and small, of equal moral importance?
- Does the enjoyment of security demand cultural homogeneity?
- Is the body of international law that addresses questions of intervention still relevant in a post-11 September world?
- How might security be understood in light of wars that are fought in order to kill rather than to win?

This book will be of particular interest to those conducting empirical and normative research on questions of security. It is also an excellent resource for students wanting to develop an understanding of security in contemporary world affairs.

William Bain is a lecturer in International Relations Theory in the Department of International Politics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, UK.

Routledge advances in international relations and global politics

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1 Introduction

William Bain

Among political theorists, especially those who have given considerable intellectual weight to the study of security in international relations, Thomas Hobbes provides what is surely one of the most succinct and penetrating accounts of the politics of security: '*the safety of the people is the supreme law*' (emphasis in original).[1] From this single phrase Hobbes derives the duties of sovereigns, including the absolute sovereign that is subject to no (true) law and beholden to no (human) will. The sovereign, though 'uncompellable' by any authority on earth, has as his guide the rule of right reason, which dictates that governments are formed for the sake of peace and that peace is sought for the sake of safety. But this condition of safety is not to be confused with the microtheoretical assumption – 'states seek to ensure their survival'[2] – that provides the starting point for neo-realist or structural realist accounts of national security and international insecurity; it is an explicitly normative safety that is tied no less explicitly to the felicity or happiness of persons joined (willingly) in a relationship of civil association. For the word 'safety', Hobbes explains, should be understood to mean, not a base condition of mere survival, but 'a happy life so far as that is possible'.[3] Thus, the Hobbesian sovereign is obliged to attend to the safety of the people by enacting laws – civil association being an order of laws – that are directed to external defence, domestic peace, acquisition of wealth, and enjoyment of liberty. Indeed, it is for the sake of these things, that is, things 'necessary not just for life but for the enjoyment of life', that men institute commonwealths and submit to sovereign power.[4]

The supremacy that Hobbes ascribes to the 'safety of the people' is almost certain to gain the approval of most contemporary theorists of security, despite the fact that he is probably best known in international relations circles for his portrayal (as told by some realists) of a ferocious state of nature in which there is no law, no justice, and no morality. Few would dispute the view that civil association should be ordered to the benefit of citizens; that laws should attend to the welfare of the many; or that the safety of the majority should prevail over the interests of selfish or seditious factions.[5] But the arrangements prescribed by Hobbes for

achieving these things are unlikely to appeal to most observers of contemporary world affairs. Moreover, they may not be entirely appropriate in a vastly changed world, for the relative simplicity and prescriptive clarity imparted by Hobbes is all but lost when we turn to more recent thinking about security. The study of security in contemporary world affairs discloses a considerable degree of disarray – some would say confusion – that makes it near well impossible to speak of a coherent field of study that is organized around a clear set of problems, settled methods of inquiry, and an established sense of purpose. There is no agreement on the questions that merit scholarly attention and there is no reliable way of separating authentic security issues from non-security issues. Just as troublesome is the difficulty in obtaining agreement on the proper referent object of security, be it states, classes, systems, societies, identities, groups, individuals, or some combination thereof. Thus, the question 'whose security?' is sure to elicit several seemingly unrelated answers that are often mutually unintelligible to those who offer them.

Barry Buzan's (1991) landmark study *People, States, and Fear* was among the first to systematically probe the conceptual inadequacies of a 'simpleminded' notion of security, state-centric in focus, often indistinguishable from power, and too closely wedded to the policy imperatives of a Cold War rivalry that very suddenly disappeared. For Buzan, rethinking security involved an exploration of different referent objects of security, whereby individuals took a place alongside states, in order to illuminate the 'connections and contradictions' of a ubiquitous and often vilified state as both a source of and threat to personal security. It involved distinguishing between discrete though linked elements of the state – idea, physical base, and institutional expression – in order to make further distinctions between states that are more or less weak or strong. And it involved abandoning the overriding concern with military security that dominated the Cold War mindset in favour of a broadened notion of security which encompassed five distinct 'issue sectors': military, political, economic, societal, and environmental. Taken together, different referent objects and different levels of analysis pointed to a conception of security that acknowledged the obvious intersection of political and military questions, but which embraced as well a broader 'integrative perspective' that sees the idea of security as incomprehensible without also 'bringing in the actors and dynamics from the societal, economic, and environmental sectors'.[6]

With the concept of security broadened to include a vastly expanded list of threats, the staples of 'national security' and 'strategic studies' seemed to be excessively narrow, if not entirely out of place. Talk of missile throw-weights imparted intelligibility as little more than a quaint throwback to an absurdly dangerous Stranglovian world that had receded into the background. Indeed, the insecurity conveyed by the anonymous face of grinding poverty, transmitted instantly throughout the world by satellite television, displaced the chilling assurance of absolute insecurity

given in Peter George's novel: 'That's right, *nuclear com-*bat! Toe-to-toe with the Russkies' (emphasis in original).[7] The conceptual nomenclature of the superpower nuclear stand-off, which indulged the mind in the intricacies of first- and second-strike capabilities, counterforce and counter-value strategies, horizontal and vertical proliferation, strategic triads, massive retaliation, tacit bargaining, and internal balancing, gave place to several contending approaches to security that endeavoured to escape the closed world of interstate military relations by redefining security to mean something else. Each of the temples erected to an expanded security agenda embraced as its talisman the cardinal belief that the Cold War enterprise of strategic studies, as Steve Smith explains, 'began to look like one story about the world, not the only, let alone the true, story'.[8] And new stories, embroidered with new questions, prompted new and often unexpected answers so that infectious disease and violence against women were stitched into the narrative along with more traditional issues, such as the revolution in military affairs (RMA) and ballistic missile defence.

The multi-sectoral approach pioneered by Buzan opened the way for the so-called Copenhagen School, which conceives 'security' as being constructed in 'securitizing' speech acts that designate issues as existential threats, call for emergency action, and legitimize the use of extraordinary means. A socially constructed security made it possible to think about different security orders, especially a 'post-sovereign' European security order that breaks free of the 'sovereignty-bound political lexicon' that dominates both realist and liberal theories of security.[9] Feminists approached the security problematique by asking a deceptively simple but searching question: 'where are the women?'. Here, answers are sought, not in the masculinized world of states, power, and anarchy, but in the invisible yet illuminating lives of Filipina prostitutes and diplomatic wives.[10] Adherents to the critical security studies approach critiqued this 'traditional' order of things, saying that it reified a realist world that is not terrible real, while gathering around the view that '[e]mancipation, not power or order, produces true security'.[11] The impossibility of an 'essentialistic' danger led post-structuralists to travel a different path, one which emphasized the centrality of disciplinary strategies, their representations, and silences and omissions. Hence, understanding security called for a textual enterprise that involves 'denaturalizing' and 'unsettling' purportedly stable identities in a penultimate step to a celebration of different perspectives.[12] And there are others – human security, constructivist security studies, and a venerable realism married to a 'robust' rational choice theory.[13]

The proliferation of several different approaches to the study of security is probably a positive development and thus should be greeted with cautious approval. In fact, '[i]t may be necessary', as Keith Krause and Michael Williams have argued, 'to broaden the agenda of security studies (theoretically and methodologically) in order to narrow the agenda of

security' (emphasis in original).[14] But the schisms represented by several incommensurable schools and approaches leaves a deeply fractured academic field of 'security studies' that is bereft of any common understanding of an idea, condition, or practice called 'security'. It is a field fraught with an ambiguity which, far from being anchored by a carefully defined research programme, imparts a sense of coherence only in the form of an unruly collective anxiety. Indeed, it is an anxiety that reduces the field of 'security studies' to not much more than a pedagogically useful name around which a set of loosely related perspectives coalesce around an improbably elusive word 'security'. For security is one of those essentially contested concepts, as W. B. Gallie calls them, which cannot be made to yield a real core or an intrinsic content. There is no essence of security that awaits discovery. There are rival conceptions of security, each of which is authentic in its own right and on its own terms, just as there are rival conceptions of order, justice, equality, freedom, and happiness.

Of course, security is often said to be a contested concept. Buzan argued in *People, States, and Fear* that the contested concept of security gives rise to 'unsolvable' debates; and, more recently, Steve Smith has suggested that the contested character of security admits no possibility of neutral definition.[15] But these views somehow miss the value of engaging essentially contested concepts at all, which, from a scholarly standpoint, involves recognition of genuine disputes and the value they impart. Scholars who seek to answer questions that probe the meaning and value of security must, if they are true to their vocation, remain open to the possibility that such questions beg several fully rational and, at the same time, wholly incommensurable answers. Particular answers advance or defend particular claims but the veracity of these claims cannot be adjudicated with a view to separating those that are true from those that are false. No appeal to a general method or a universal principle can resolve once and for all disputes about security; and, in that respect, emancipation provides no better sight of 'true' security than power or the long barrel of a gun. Indeed, the first step toward understanding an essentially contested concept like security involves 'recognition of rival uses of it (such as oneself repudiates) as not only logically possible and humanly "likely", but as of permanent potential critical value to one's own use or interpretation of the concept in question'.[16] Unfortunately, though, the many temples that have been erected to the new security studies tend to be homes to closed and self-referential debates that are rather suspiciously like the debates they seek to displace.

Understanding the many logical and likely possibilities of security, that is, interpreting meaning and ascribing value, requires a careful and painstaking navigation through the world of human experience. It requires an excavation of the historical, legal, and philosophical inheritance of security in world affairs. So where security is a fundamental human value in an abstract sense, it is something that all human beings

desire in some degree and in some situation, the good it imparts is intelligible in the context of time, place, and circumstance. In other words, security is a problem of human relations, the range and character of which are necessarily historical. For outside the world of human experience – the world of desire, thought, circumstance, sensation, deliberation, judgement, emotion, and all else that goes with human consciousness – there is no way of discriminating between contending claims short of anointing a frontrunner while suppressing the field. And while a speedy adjudication of rival claims – recognizing prophets, counting converts, and dismissing heretics – may be ideologically and, indeed, emotionally pleasing, it is in the same proportion intellectually unsatisfying. The activity of understanding security, as with any other essentially contested concept, is a matter, not of application, but of cultivation.

The empire of security

The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September 2001 issued yet another invitation to think about what security might mean in a world made exceedingly uncertain by the deadly convergence of failed states, terrorist groups, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. So great are the challenges of this changed world – a world in which the heady optimism that heralded the 'end of history' has dissipated into a pervasive climate of fear – that the tried practices of old are said to be obsolete. A world that is home to fanatical enemies, undeterred by fear of death, demands new ideas and new doctrines in order to ensure the safety of the people. But beyond viscerally personal debates concerning the wisdom and efficacy of the Bush administration's 'war against terror', its (misnamed) doctrine of pre-emptive self-defence, and especially its controversial invasion of Iraq, lies a still greater debate concerning what Henry Kissinger describes as the 'systemic crisis' of the Westphalian order. The fundamental principles of the Westphalian settlement, he suggests, 'are being challenged, though an agreed alternative has yet to emerge'.[17]

Classical theories of international relations tell us that security is something that comes with the independence afforded by sovereignty. Particular arrangements of security are effected through the institutions and practices of diplomacy, the conditions of which are usually instituted in understandings, minutes, notes, declarations, treaties, covenants, and charters. When the craft of diplomacy is insufficient to the task, when a threat of some sort becomes intolerable and a negotiated settlement seems impossible, security is pursued through the activity of war. Great powers, more so than any other political, economic, social, religious, or cultural association, are burdened with the responsibility of defining their interests and, furthermore, adjusting their policies for the sake of 'international peace and security' – something which must be counted among the most fundamental global goods. And for groups who do not live in a

state to call their own, especially minorities that suffer under the boot of an oppressive majority, self-determination, and thus membership in the society of states, holds out the possibility of security.

But many of the institutions and practices of contemporary international life, sovereignty and war foremost among them, are more closely associated with pervasive insecurity than with security. Too often the political independence that comes with sovereign statehood results, not in refuges of safety, but in places of shocking violence and misery; and it is the apparatus of the state, more often than external enemies, which poses the greatest danger to the safety of the people. Ours is a world in which governments are often deeply complicit in internal wars that have claimed the greater proportion of five million lives since the end of the Cold War.[18] War too is something that regularly involves, not an activity conducted according to settled rules in pursuit of limited aims, but the infliction of wanton destruction that disproportionately affects civilian populations. Indeed, K. J. Holsti argues in this volume that war in much of the world is unintelligible in its classical Clausewitzian sense: '[w]ar is no longer a continuation of politics by other means, but an end in itself' (p. 47). The profound insecurity associated with these cardinal institutions of international society informs a now well-rehearsed indictment that condemns the entire states system and most, if not nearly all, of its attendant institutions and practices. The state, and by extension the states system, so this critique goes, is neither benign nor neutral in providing security for man or citizen. What is needed, then, as Ken Booth puts it, is a 'reassessment of the relationships that do and should exist between nations, states, classes, economic structures, international organizations, groups of one sort or another (of nations and people) and individuals'.[19] That sentiment, expressed at the end of the Cold War, is no less true today than it was then.

One of the most interesting and perhaps unexpected alternatives to emerge out of the reassessment inaugurated by the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington is that of empire. Indeed, the pages of leading newspapers and academic journals are now filled with talk of empire. So while John Ikenberry frets that 'America's nascent neoimperial grand strategy threatens to rend the fabric of the international community', Charles Krauthammer extols the virtues of America's preponderant power, which, he says, should be used 'unashamedly' to maintain American predominance for the good of the entire world.[20] But most surprising of all is the genuine enthusiasm expressed by various commentators for an idea that until very recently was invoked solely and unambiguously as a term of abuse. To tar something with the brush of empire was to impute hypocrisy, greed, and injustice of all sorts; and to call its name was to summon a sordid history of political domination, economic exploitation, and racial prejudice. Today, the idea of empire has gained a new found respectability, so much so, that in the pages of establishment journals like

Foreign Affairs we read self-confident pronouncements that 'a new imperial moment has arrived, and by virtue of its power America is bound to play the leading role'.[21] America, it is said with waxing conceit, is the new Rome; and to shore up this empire, as one neoconservative doyen puts it, Americans must learn 'to be more expansive in our goals and more assertive in their implementation'.[22]

There are compelling reasons to doubt that history has arrived at a 'new imperial moment' just as there are compelling reasons to doubt that America has embraced a 'neoimperial' grand strategy, not the least of which is that empire consists in something more than the possession of preponderant power and a willingness to use it to create a hegemonic world order for the good of the entire world.[23] The open world championed by a succession of American presidents, a world founded on democracy, human rights, and free market economy, discloses similarities to the liberal imperialism that once flourished during the nineteenth century, but it falls well short of even approximating something that looks like formal empire. America claims no lordship, that is, exclusive executive authority, throughout the entire world: jurisdiction over the *orbis terrarum* is not the aim of the Bush Doctrine or of American foreign policy generally. Nor does America aspire to rule an extended political association composed of various orders and sub-orders of peoples and territories, each of which enjoys limited independence, but which are subject to one legislative authority.[24]

Of course, it is certainly true that a kind of empire lies at the heart of America's founding myth. Americans have long regarded it as part of their unique place in the world to spread a set of uniquely true values that find concrete expression in a long train of historic documents and speeches – Declaration of Independence, Fourteen Points, Atlantic Charter, Truman Doctrine, and Ronald Reagan's denunciation of totalitarian evil before the British Parliament. George W. Bush's national security strategy, a declaration of values and purposes that places America firmly on the side of the 'forces of freedom', provides only the most recent proof of this deeply ingrained habit of mind. But it is very difficult indeed to distinguish this kind of informal empire – if it is to be called that – from the institution of great power responsibility or what in some quarters appears as little more than heavy-handed bullying. In fact, if George Bush's vision of the world were ever realized it would look rather more like Immanuel Kant's pacific federation of republics than an empire of any sort.

But if our world it to be understood in the idiom of empire it is a kind of *imperium* that is intelligible as a paramount knowledge which, in many respects, better illuminates the 'new imperial moment' than the political, economic, geographical relations that usually draw the name 'empire'. It is a knowledge, as Anthony Pagden explains the Roman origin of the term *imperium*, which confers on the world an identity of a particular sort. For citizens of Rome that knowledge was expressed in the form of law; and to

know and to live by that law was to be a citizen of the world, outside of which resided 'barbarians' who, while ignorant of the law, could in principle be drawn into the world through some sort of instruction. Thus, the empire of Roman law joined all human beings, or at least potentially so, in what Dante described as a single community of knowledge that rendered intelligible a single (true) human civilization.[25]

In contemporary world affairs this single community of knowledge springs from an empire of security according to which the flourishing of civilization, and not merely its survival, depends fundamentally on security of various sorts. In other words, it is with reference to security, more so than any other idea or value, that international relations is interpreted; and to be 'in' our world is to understand what a condition of security involves, however it might be conceived. For without security all that is beneficial in individual and collective life, all art, all industry, all commerce, and all science, is condemned to a precarious, if not fleeting, existence. Indeed, the collapse of the World Trade Center's twin towers vindicates better than any abstract philosophical argument that security – the safety of the people – is exactly what Hobbes says it is: the supreme law.

Security in the web of language

It is in the context of the empire of security that the chapters in this volume interrogate the meaning of security as it is intelligible in some of the most important institutions and practices in contemporary world affairs. Thus, the chapters do not aim, individually or collectively, at bridging or, more ambitiously, at healing the schisms that leaven the academic field of security studies. No finding is advanced in the hope of distinguishing between the prolix and self-indulgent, as Stephen Walt once described postmodern approaches to security,[26] and the narrow and obsolete, as, for the lack of a more precise adjective, 'traditional' security studies are often described. Nor is any effort exerted in defining a word that is incurably resistant to definition, at least one that has pretensions of providing universal or objective meaning. Essentially contested concepts like security are not 'solved' in a way that suddenly renders them unproblematic. They are disentangled and then clarified in recognition of particular situations, the limits of which are defined, not by rules of logic or principles of reason, but by the peculiarities of a world that is home to both the collected wisdom of experience and the fitful course of fortune. And, finally, these chapters disclose no interest in erecting yet another temple to the study of security that will stand alongside Copenhagen, feminist, and several other 'security studies' neighbours. Indeed, they issue no manifesto for action, no programme for reform, and no call to pull down other temples, no matter what their limitations might be.

The underlying premise running through this volume holds that the meaning of security is substantively intelligible in relation to other ideas.

For the word 'security' is but an empty name when divorced from other ideas that are distinctive of international life. It is in this sense that the rather ambiguous relationship between security and self-determination, as James Mayall explains in Chapter 6, must be interpreted and thus made less so in light of limits imposed by human experience (p. 100). But this approach should not be taken to mean that security is anything we wish it to be; that ascribing meaning is merely a matter of private judgement that in some way or other merely reflects the interests of power disguised by a mask of race, gender, class, or some other attribute. Language is surely central in constituting the meaning of security and issues are certainly 'securitized' through the use of language, but giving meaning in speech acts must amount to something more than what J. R. Lucas describes as a doctrine of linguistic 'squatters' rights'. Language, he argues, 'is as much a web as a lot of labels, and the words "free" and "responsible" gain their meaning as much from their relation to other words and phrases as from the occasions of their use'.[27] The meaning of 'security', like that of 'free' and 'responsible', is also intelligible in relation to other words and phrases; it is intelligible in relation to other ideas that are distinctive of international life, such as sovereignty, diplomacy, war, great powers, and, more recently, globalization. In other words, each of these ideas proposes a peculiar understanding of how human beings might attain a contingent but nonetheless tangible condition called 'security'.

An approach that treats security as a relational idea, the substantive meaning of which is given in the unfathomable genius as well as the sobering limits of human experience, looks beyond the limitations of a 'security studies' that in so many ways is fixed on and therefore confounded by the 'whose security?' question. Several 'new' or 'alternative' perspectives have attempted to answer this question by stressing the importance of individuals as the ultimate referents of security; and they in turn are served with periodic reminders, underwritten by events like September 11, which rehearse a well-known refrain: 'when it comes to the safety of the people it is still states and coercive power that matter most'. The chapters in this volume take no definitive position in either the 'state' or the 'individual' camp, or, for that matter, anything in between. Of course, they evince an interest in many of the same issues that animate the academic field of security studies but the insights they offer are not derived from security studies debates. Instead, these chapters offer a series of different ways of thinking about security with a view to taking some preliminary steps toward separating what is new from what is presented as new. They look to where past meets present and present meets future in reflecting on how we might think about security in a world that is often portrayed as being unable to bear the increasing weight of change. In other words, this collection of chapters probes the extent to which some of the most important institutions and practices of the so-called Westphalian international political order still have anything useful to tell us about the meaning of security in contemporary world affairs.

Taken together, the chapters presented in this volume return what can only be described as an open verdict. Robert Jackson's chapter on sovereignty takes as its point of departure the proposition that the safety of the people begins with safety from other people, the most important historical arrangement of which – at least for several centuries – is the sovereign state. Thus, against Hobbesian scepticism and Kantian universalism, he defends an intermediate course that sees security as something of a joint enterprise in which states undertake legal and moral obligations pertaining to the preservation of political independence and the limitation of the use of force. In this family of nations, or 'anarchical society' to put it in international relations theory terminology, sovereignty attends to the safety of the people by providing the basis for national as well as international security. In other words, the sovereign state is one of the most important historical responses to the reality that 'people must live among each other, but not everybody can be counted on to live in peace' (p. 17).

Holsti raises some difficult questions for this relation of sovereignty and security in a chapter that paints two opposing 'portraits' of contemporary war. Whereas the first conveys an image of war as a regulated engagement in which protagonists kill in order to win, the second conveys an image of war as an indiscriminate enterprise in which the pursuit of (limited) political objectives is cast aside in favour of a different doctrine: winning in order to kill. The human destruction wrought by this second kind of war – a new kind of war that is rather better described as organized thuggery than war properly so-called – leads Holsti to conclude that the classical (international) vocabulary of war, which is intelligible in the discourse of state sovereignty, may be somewhat out of date. Thus, it may be necessary, he continues, to resuscitate or restore states afflicted by 'wars of national debilitation' by resorting to armed force 'in a manner quite distinct from the ethics of traditional peacekeeping operations (p. 58).'

Sasson Sofer tells a similarly conflicted story about the search for security and the institution of diplomacy. The diplomat must chart a course through the perilous shoals where obligation and interest meet, and without ever losing sight that it is an ethics of responsibility, rather than one of conviction, which must carry the day. Absolutism of all sorts is alien to the diplomatic craft, which eschews the glory of triumph for the durability of a negotiated peace that reflects an accommodation of interests. Less clear, though, is how far the virtues of classical diplomacy can be adapted, as it has been in the past, to address questions of security in contemporary world affairs. Sofer laments the mixed blessing of an expanded definition of security, for the long list of threats that are a part of the human security agenda may well be the greasy stuff that loosens the diplomat's grip on the pole of peace. More worrying still is the implication that the *dignitas* of the diplomatic craft – tolerance, self-limitation, and prudence – may have no place at all in at least some parts of the world.

Indeed, where winning in order to kill is the objective of war there is no need for the moderating hand of diplomacy: there is no peace to make.

Cathal J. Nolan examines the relation of security and the great powers, which, in spite of a doctrine of 'radical state equality' that emerged in the rush to decolonization, still form 'the axis around which world history and international relations turns' (p. 71). Consequently, questions of security are answered with reference to the interests and values of these firsts among equals for no other reason than power is still the paramount currency of international relations. Nolan argues that a new international security ethic inaugurated by the United States has evolved into a 'rough consensus around a modified liberal-internationalist view, a more prudent Wilsonianism, which sees long-term national and international security as best achieved by progress toward a confederation of interdependent, free societies' (p. 85). However, the greatest threat to this consensus stems, not from an America invigorated by a muscular foreign policy of 'regime change', but from an autocratic Russia and an enigmatic China. Nolan concludes by arguing that it is the primary obligation of these Asian giants, as it is of all great powers, to put their houses in order and thereby spare the world the calamities that usually accompany the decay and eventual collapse of 'terminally illegitimate regimes' (p. 89).

James Mayall takes up the relation of security and what has been the seductive and often pyrrhic midwife of small states: self-determination. These most potent of ideas, he argues, suggest that the safety of the people is intelligible in a contest between an ever-present 'fear of danger and desire for freedom' (p. 94). However, neither realist nor liberal theories provide a lasting, much less satisfactory, answer to the insecurity experienced by many of the world's nations, peoples, and minorities. Both proceed from common assumption that the search for security runs through the moral and material autonomy that comes with statehood. Indeed, Mayall argues that the necessarily indeterminate meaning of security, as well as that of self-determination, rules out any possibility of resolving such an answer, 'even in principle' (p. 95). For the elixir of insecurity that is self-determination – security guaranteed through the recognition of collective identity – is something more like an alchemist's formula for participatory government as well as pathological nationalism. In other words, self-determination has been no less a source of insecurity than security. Whichever the case, though, Mayall argues that we would do well to remember that 'the nation state, nationalism and the principle of national self-determination describe the political architecture of the modern world and its social and legal justification' (p. 106).

Cornelia Navari considers the challenge that globalization presents to traditional 'statist' approaches to thinking about security. In a borderless world, where people, ideas, and capital move freely about the globe, there is no 'us and them' when it comes to security. The safety of the people means the safety of all the world's people as indivisible threats demand an