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# Renaissance in Security Studies? Caveat Lector!

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This article critiques Stephen Walt's survey of security studies, published last year in *ISQ*. It identifies serious flaws in the essay's understanding of security studies—viewed from analytic, normative, and methodological perspectives—and, conversely, argues for a richer conceptual, broader interdisciplinary, theoretically more inclusive, and, not ironically, a more policy-relevant understanding of security studies than the survey presents.

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## Introduction

The publication by *International Studies Quarterly* of Stephen M. Walt's essay, "The Renaissance of Security Studies," opens a much needed debate about what scholars and practitioners mean by security and about what precisely they think they are studying and why.<sup>1</sup> This critique answers the essay's welcome call for "cooperative collaboration" and "diversity" to widen and deepen the discussion.

The article, while helpful, errs on several critical counts. Analytically, it limits the objects of study and, *ipso facto*, constricts the scope of relevant theory needed to understand and explain what security is and what security problems are. Normatively, it focuses almost exclusively on American national security rather than on international security or security *per se*; and, in the name of relevance, delegates too much of the agenda of security studies to policymakers. Methodologically, it restricts security studies to a highly selective and largely traditional array of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. As a consequence of these flaws, the essay is inevitably incomplete in its survey of security studies, in its assignation of worth and priority to different theoretical approaches and specific works, and in its sketch of a research agenda.

The essay's avowedly neo-realist position, if permitted by default to guide the field, puts at risk several important aims shared by many accomplished scholars and scientists concerned with security studies: the legitimate pursuit of significant lines of research at odds with realist strictures; the field's potential growth within the academy; the interdisciplinary examination of security problems hitherto shunned or slighted by Cold War concerns; the flow of challenging ideas from the academy to policymakers; and the search for more varied disciplinary approaches

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen M. Walt, "The Renaissance of Security Studies," *International Studies Quarterly* 35 (1991): 211–239.

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and innovative methods to teach security studies. This critique also attempts to outline a richer conceptual, broader interdisciplinary, theoretically more inclusive, and, not ironically, a more policy-relevant understanding of security studies than the survey presents. Its aims are primarily analytical and normative. Citations are illustrative, not exhaustive, since space limitations unavoidably restrict yet another literature review. In any event, objections to the survey are conceptual and valuational, not bibliographic.

### **Flaws in Definition: Implications for Social Science Theory**

The essay defines “security studies . . . as *the study of the threat, use, and control of military force.*”<sup>2</sup> To be included, as central, in the definition of security studies, a work must essentially “fit comfortably within the familiar realist paradigm” and “address phenomena that can be controlled by national leaders.” These conditions—theoretical significance as realism and national relevance, as defined by factors under the purported control of policymakers—are key parameters of the essay’s notion of the scope of security studies and of what are contributions to the literature. Alternative definitions of security are not posed, much less explored, nor is a case made for so narrow a conception of the field. Security is simply stipulated as the study of war and diplomacy and confined essentially to state-centric analysis.

These issues are crucial. Definitional and level-of-analysis choices elicit questions that drive empirical and normative theory and problem solving. The questions asked, as any scientist or normative theorist knows, are more important than provisional answers. The task, then, is to ask the right questions, or—if one is charged with surveying a field—to ask, at least, how published scholars, statesmen, and national populations have posed the problem of security rather than preemptively to advance a particular answer to a question never fully raised, much less satisfactorily explored.

If the essay’s circumscribed idea of security studies were logically and systematically applied, important security problems, even on neo-realist exclusionary grounds, could not be reached, and, if addressed, then only indirectly and obliquely as tributaries of interstate conflict and war. If the essay rules in first-image international threats to the state, it rules out by omission those security threats posed by states to groups and individuals. The rationale, manipulative techniques, and coercive measures and institutionalized forms of repression of authoritarian regimes are proper and primary objects of study for security analysts and practitioners. Death squads in Central and Latin America, the totalitarian regimes of Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, and Pol Pot’s Cambodia, as well as the causes of the Holocaust, the Gulag, and killing fields are security issues of the first magnitude. They need study by security scholars and policymakers whether they fall within the essay’s conceptual horizon or not.

Also worthy of study are the armed pursuits, strategies, and claims of non-state actors, like Kurds, Serbs, or Tamil Tigers. Guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and low-intensity warfare, as the arm of the weak and disenfranchised, are no less central to security studies. These forms of armed conflict (about which, incidentally, much has been written although this literature not reviewed in the survey) are likely to become increasingly more important as ethnic and nationality wars, within nation-states, and so-called internationalized civil wars that spill over national boundaries, such as Lebanon, become more frequent. Certainly the state is threatened by these movements (and they merit study from a state-centric perspective), but the emer-

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<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 212. Emphasis in the original.

gence of these social movements also suggests that the state is often a major source of international insecurity.

In this vein, given the criteria directing the essay's conception of security studies, the threats posed by military and police bureaucracies, military-industrial complexes, and standing armies to open societies are addressed primarily as incidental to interstate conflicts. Disciplining organized and institutionalized violence to civil purposes is tolerated in the survey, as a subfield of study, but only as a function of violent national conflicts, and not as an independent security issue in its own right. This exclusionary approach to theory and policy would then have to dismiss the normative and empirical questions posed by the *Federalist* writers in defining their security problems. Their problems began, but did not end, with threats of foreign invasion and intervention. An effective and legitimate central government had to be strong enough to deter and defend against external depredations, yet be limited in its power to preclude the tyranny of its own people. Security studies are not likely to progress very far if we do not pose the right questions or if we simplify our problems by ignoring the dilemmas and trade-offs inherent in constructing security regimes.

Second-image analysis of security problems fares no better. *Coups d'état* and civil wars, as the struggle between groups for the control of the state's monopoly of legitimate violence, are slighted as key security issues. These armed conflicts—arising, as often as not, from clashing atavistic urges and prompted by profound ideological, communal, national, ethnic, racial, class, and elite differences—are indiscriminately stuffed into a nation-state sack. Hiding this seeming clutter of qualitative distinctions for the sake of a forced simplicity merely begs both the security questions that need answering and relevant theory to confront them.

Given the values at stake and the global reach of the British, French, American, Russian, and Chinese civil wars, it may well be argued that the primary level of analysis to focus security studies on is internal wars, not the interstate wars they spawned. Civil strife and conflict, arguably, raise more fundamental security problems about the legitimacy of coercion and the role of the state in regulating civil conflict than a state-centric focus. Indeed, such conflicts are now far more frequent and deadly than interstate wars (Lindgren, 1991). As the society of states moves gradually toward a world society of peoples, the issue of the legitimacy of a particular regime's rule becomes increasingly difficult to ignore as a critical security issue (Kothari, 1974; Bull, 1977). Explaining why the Soviet experiment proved defunct urges the question of legitimacy upon the consciousness of peoples and elites everywhere. From an even wider analytic perspective, as a global society of peoples and states gropes toward a provisional world order, what historians and social scientists have until now characterized as interstate wars may well be viewed as a long chain of civil strifes within what may progressively be viewed as a slowly emerging global system.

Why else are we concerned, as a security issue, whether the ongoing Chinese and Russian revolutions will evolve toward open democratic forms and market economies, or whether they will revert to past forms of oppressive rule, if we are not ultimately concerned that the fate of these titanic struggles holds potentially catastrophic implications for the security interests of the world society and its diverse and divergent populations? The security issues raised by armed civil strife and by the violent efforts of groups to seize the monopoly power of the state to impose their will are only partially raised by the conflicts inherent in the nation-state system. A state-centric focus is only one of the provisional solutions to the global security dilemma, and then only in a fashion that prejudices the analysis in favor of the state at the expense of a satisfactory empirical and normative theory of international relations (Wight, 1966).

The essay's strict constructionist conception of security studies narrows access of scholars and practitioners to needed theory to explain what they are studying and

why. Giants of realist thought, like Hobbes, rooted the problem of security in the insatiable and incompatible needs of individuals and groups. In its purist form, security arises, paradoxically, from human freedom. Competing security regimes and the principles of authority and legitimacy relied upon to arbitrate between rival personal and group claims project the dilemma of freedom to the level of society and the state. Not without significance, Hobbes's universal characterization of the security problem arose from the upheaval of the English civil war, and not from its later manifestation in the nation-state system, only just beginning to emerge with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.

In truncating Hobbes's grasp of the security dilemma and the problem of political legitimacy, the essay overlooks, not surprisingly, some of today's outstanding theorists, such as Robert Axelrod, and the new methods they employ in their insistence on posing the problem of security in the most theoretically inclusive terms that imply an integration of the several levels of security concerns sketched above. Axelrod succinctly states, in its most comprehensive sweep, the compelling problem confronting security theorists: "Under what conditions will cooperation emerge in a world of egoists without central authority?" (Axelrod, 1984:3). The Walt essay would reduce the search for a solution to the security equation by searching for the value of a coefficient of only one of its terms, and not necessarily the most important element, *viz.*, war between states. Never asked are the fundamental questions of whence and whither "states." Nor does there seem to be much interest in the survey in the theoretically demanding question of discovering how egoist actors at individual, societal, and state levels coordinate and integrate their conflicting preferences to get what they want. Do strategies of force and threats or those of consensus on rules and norms explain security outcomes and regimes? Axelrod leaves the answers to these questions open to empirical research. He does not load on force and threats, as Walt's review does, as the anticipated choice. Nor does Axelrod preclude the possibility of surmounting the security problem of cooperating egoists. Left open, too, is the Hobbesian question itself. Why not begin with the converse: why and how does egoism emerge under conditions of cooperation? The Walt review thus misses the mark on two counts. It is not true to its realist roots nor sensitive to a fundamental reformulation of the security problematic.

The debate can perhaps best be joined, most clearly and concretely, on the very conceptual battleground chosen by Walt in his review. The beguiling assumption is made that "most theories about the causes of war are also causes of peace."<sup>3</sup> The logical implication of this reductionist position is that the rise and the demise of the Cold War can be explained only by ignoring the behavior of the participants to that struggle and by dismissing *their* conception of their security aims and interests that on inspection certainly include but also transcend interstate conflict and war. Let's begin at the end of the Cold War to show that its collapse and subsequent systemic change cannot be explained by collapsing theories of war and peace. As a bonus, a case will also be made for a broader conception of security and for a wider multidisciplinary approach to security studies than the survey will allow.<sup>4</sup>

When Soviet leaders commenced the dissolution of the Cold War system, they unwittingly unravelled, not one, but three analytically separable but mutually interdependent security structures: the bipolar balance in Europe and its sprawling and irregular extension to the developing world; the coercive undergirding of the Soviet Union's economic production and distribution system; and the Soviet state. The collapse of these three structures, as even casual observation readily reveals,

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<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>4</sup>This line of analysis is developed more extensively than space permits here in Kolodziej, 1992.

has had a profound, if still dimly perceived, effect on the global security system. These revolutionary changes arise from the central roles that the Soviet Union's security structures played in influencing and shaping regional and global structures in preferred ways. By focusing primarily on the first structure, East–West bipolarity, defined by the U.S.–Soviet balance of terror and the confrontation of two massed armies in central Europe, security analysts and political leaders overlooked the decay and brittleness of the other two security structures on which the outcome of the East–West conflict critically depended. Fixed on one leg of a three-legged stool, the functioning of the other legs and their roles in maintaining Cold War institutions were ignored or neglected by security analysts, but not by the participants in the Cold War conflict.

Unlike analysts, the Soviet elite were compelled to address the rot at the core of the institutions created to resolve their security dilemmas. They could not escape their self-created crises. They had to confront not simply the geo-political demands of the Cold War struggle, but also primordial national and ethnic demands for independence that could no longer be quelled by the coercive measures employed by the Kremlin to keep itself in power. Moreover, the disenchantment of the Soviet elite and enlarging segments of the Soviet peoples with the abject failure of a centralized economy to meet the nation's welfare needs fatally weakened political support for Cold War institutions. A bloated military establishment, a costly foreign empire, and a burdensome Warsaw Pact were viewed increasingly as barriers to economic growth and development (Valkenier, 1983, 1986). Also exposed to internal view was the suppression by the organs of the Soviet state of demands, made by an ever-widening number of groups and individuals, for human rights and for a greater say in governing their affairs. As the effectiveness of Soviet security structures to address these economic and political imperatives gradually eroded, delegitimation inevitably spread, first among the very elites entrusted with the power and responsibility to make them work and gradually to the Soviet peoples.

Let's parse the three interdependent security systems undone by the Soviet reform movement to expose some of the shortcomings of a cramped conception of security. This brief exposition may be sufficient to make the point that we, as analysts, should stress how far we have to go rather than how far we've come in explaining security.

Academic realists, focused on interstate behavior, should have been among the first to anticipate the eventual dissolution of the Cold War regime. National self-determination is certainly the most powerful political force and the primary legitimating principle of the global governance system. These are first principles of classical realism (Morgenthau, 1985). Leading Western statesmen, such as Charles de Gaulle, who challenged Washington's leadership of the Cold War on these grounds (and who incidentally enjoyed little sympathy in American policy debates), predicted the eventual demise of the superpower bipolar system precisely because it could not prevail against powerful historical currents, driven by demands of national groups for self-determination and, accordingly, by the extension of the nation-state as the principal unit of organization of the world society (de Gaulle, 1970, vol. 5:104–105).

On the other hand, if neo-realist assumptions are adopted—*viz.*, that the state and the anarchical system can be distinguished as separate levels of causation—we should not have expected the Cold War ever to have ceased, especially under conditions of bipolarity (Waltz, 1979). But hard facts confound the expectations of a flawed theory. The criticism directed at renaissance writers, therefore, is not simply that they were unable to anticipate the end of the Cold War (few did), but that they also abandoned the insights of classical realism for the dubious theoretical benefits of a purported scientifically founded neo-realism. At least classical

realism of the Gaullist and Morgenthau persuasion would have led to a presumption of Cold War instability because of the inability of this bipolar system ultimately to accommodate the aspirations of national groups for their own states. Nor does classical realism conceptualize the nation-state independently of the society of states of which each state is a part. Neither the anarchical structure of the system nor the irresistible demands of its member units for autonomy can be causally isolated one from the other since they depend on each other as imperatives of logic and observed behavior (Bull, 1977; Buzan, 1991).

But even if security analysts had been loyal to classical realism, they would still have been only clever by a third. It is not enough to demonstrate the obvious, that nation-states make anarchical systems and that some are war-prone. Even if these critical parameters are conceded, it does not follow that this condition dictates that differences among members of the system must inevitably be resolved through violence and threats. Anarchy and disorder are not necessarily synonymous, nor need an anarchy of states assume a single historical form in order to conform to the limits of the theorist's imagination. The more intriguing and taxing problem for security analysts is to explain why some state systems have been able to relax and even surmount this geo-political constraint and why others have failed. And the Cold War is as good a laboratory to explore this problem as any.

Left out of Walt's review is reference to functionalist (Mitrany, 1966) and integrationist theory (Haas, 1968) that provide a plausible basis for the proposition that geo-political security problems can be partially resolved or relaxed by non-coercive approaches. The spillover effects posited by Haas over a generation ago have begun to work again within the European Community and partly explain the recent progress made toward full market integration by 1993. Also excluded from view are the efforts of a half-century of resourceful European statesmen devoted to surmounting national differences, especially the Franco-German rivalry that led to three continental wars in less than a century. The European Coal and Steel Community was designed to integrate the French and German coal and steel industries to preclude their use for war against each other, to address common economic interests, and to moderate underlying mutual suspicions and conflicting national defense concerns. The European Community enlarged this integration process to twelve member states, which, while acutely conscious of their national differences, are joined in overcoming their bloody past through multinational cooperation and multilateral decisionmaking.

In contrast, the Soviet Union's solution for the national divisions in Eastern Europe and within its own territory proved fatal. Whether the Western Europe solution will be more lasting remains to be seen. What is clear, however, is that the Western solution to national self-determination has been sensitive to national differences, yet more broadly and consensually based. Whereas both the Soviet and Western solutions may be compared along anarchical structures, there is a world of difference between the mature anarchy of the Western model and its immature and self-destructive Soviet counterpart. Explaining those differences and also identifying the policies that produced them is a challenge to security analysts. We want to know why cooperation under one anarchical form was based primarily on coercion and why under another on consent. Reducing them both to anarchies explains too much and too little, and is potentially mischievous as a guide for policymakers if both are seen to reside exclusively on coercion. Pineapples and lemons are both fruits, but both cannot equally satisfy a craving for something sweet, and the consuming public and policymakers should be well aware of the difference before they choose.

If Walt's favored security analysts are unable to adequately explain the contrasting Western and Soviet responses to national rivalries in constructing the Cold War

regime, they are rendered impotent when the scope of the security problematic is enlarged. Excluded are the welfare and democratic regime dimensions of security that were acutely understood by those who were *Present at the Creation* (Acheson, 1969). The statesmen who fashioned the Marshall Plan for Europe and imposed a generous peace on a vanquished Germany and Japan were also of a mind that an international system relying solely on threats would repeat the dismal cycle of defiance, counter armament, and war unless counterbalancing forces to the nation-state struggle could be set in motion. Many of the architects of the postwar system trusted to the positive incentives of economic growth and to the psychological and political assurances of open institutions to promote peace and security (Baldwin, 1985), partly to meet the anticipated demands of Western populations for greater welfare and partly to overcome the destructive tendencies of the geo-political system within which they were compelled to act.

Security analysts, if limited to the guidelines and assumptions of the survey, would then be able to make little sense of Marshall's argument that "it is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace" (quoted in Dennet and Turner, 1949). They are placed in the awkward position of dismissing what Marshall has to say as either self-deceiving or disingenuous—he could not have meant what he said and was really animated by *macht* considerations to fight the Cold War—or they must assume the uncomfortable position, if they concede his point but still wish to remain true to their realist loyalties, that his argument might have the force of a theory of peace, but not of war.

No state or government can resist or ignore the relentless and widening demands of populations everywhere, throughout the international community, for material progress, based on self-sustaining economic growth and techno-scientific development any more than it can neglect the imperatives for a say in the governance of the geo-political global system resting on a universalized nation-state as the principal unit of organization. On the other hand, as the failed Soviet experiment has abundantly revealed, state ownership of the means of production, centralized direction of the economy, and an administrative price and marketing system—let alone crushing expenditures for arms and empire—were prescriptions for chronic and irremedial economic underdevelopment. The power of the Soviet state had to yield to societal pressures for "more now" and for a fundamental reform of the welfare system. The logical and material exigencies of reform consigned the Soviet empire to the dustbin of history. Swept along also has been the bipolar interstate structure and its protruding and unsustainable extensions around the globe.

International security problems inevitably arise over wealth and welfare because the state is indispensable as an institutional mechanism for the creation of a preexisting order within which economic development can be pursued (Gilpin, 1987). The state's use of its coercive power to promote particular economic interests (e.g., empires or global competitiveness) or its defense of established patterns and levels of wealth are security issues. Embedded, therefore, in any national or global economic system is a supporting security framework, resting on force, violence, and threats to encourage and ensure conformity to proscribed and prescribed economic aims and interests.

But state destructive power cannot itself produce the wealth and welfare on which the survival and legitimacy of the state depend. It must rely on global markets as well as on the initiative and freedom of economic actors independent of the state to furnish the resources and services needed to discharge its welfare functions. This problematic condition introduces civil economic society into security

studies as a unit of analysis. Tensions arise between the state and international civil economic society as a consequence of the need and demand of individuals and groups, including multinational corporations, to be free from state control either to pursue their own material interests or to possess and dispose of the property and factors of production under their control in open, global markets. The security threat associated with this welfare function is material deprivation, or, more generally, economic and techno-scientific underdevelopment. The capabilities needed to cope with this security threat are economic resources and techno-scientific knowledge as factors of production.

The tensions and the struggles for power that these international economic networks engender are repeated and amplified at the domestic level between the state and its civil economic society. Domestic economic structures are increasingly permeable and susceptible to exterior influence and direction. These transnational networks inevitably set limits to state coercive power and authority in the pursuit of its welfare imperative. They also widen the range of a state's security concerns. As a consequence of growing economic global interdependence, domestic conflicts over welfare and the economic and coercive structure of the internal welfare system can no longer be isolated from the struggle between states and the imperatives of global market competition that work to redistribute wealth and material capabilities among states. These imperatives are insistent enough in developed economies where an uneasy stability has been achieved between the state and civil economic society. These pressures can reach crisis levels when, as in the case of the Soviet Union, the breakdown of the state-societal relation promises rapidly sliding standards of living unless wholesale reforms are undertaken. The coercive power of the Soviet state had to be dismantled and the distribution of power between the state and civil society fundamentally altered in favor of private and group initiative, external and internal, in shaping national investment decisions, in allocating the factors of production, and in relying on the market to determine the production and distribution of wealth.

Unable to cope either with the geo-political pressures exerted by self-determination or with welfare demands generated throughout its empire, the Soviet state was equally incapable of responding to insistent aspirations for greater personal and group political freedom, limits on the regime's power, and the assurance of civil liberties and human rights. The security analyst might well have anticipated the long-term disabling effect of this freedom virus on the immune system of the Soviet state if George Kennan's early diagnosis of the Soviet state *as an international threat* had been incorporated into the Cold War thinking of security analysts. Kennan argued that the Soviet state, as functions of ideological values and of political necessity, posited an external threat to justify its foreign empire abroad and its totalitarian rule at home (Kennan, 1947). Kennan's containment strategy to meet the Soviet threat rested not on military might (although a defensive glacis would be necessary), but on the preservation and promotion of Western internal strengths, founded on free governments and markets. The Western example and restraint would eventually "mellow" the Soviet state as future generations would neither believe its claim of encirclement nor tolerate policy controls and its failure to meet their material needs. A West growing stronger and more prosperous—and freer—would undermine and delegitimize the Kremlin's self-serving security policies and power structures.

If Kennan's analysis is admitted as a plausible, if partial, explanation for the implosion of the Soviet state—and nothing succeeds like success—then an explanation for the sources, consequences, and resolution of the Cold War must be left to non-security theorists by default. Rather than trumpet success, those security analysts who insist on a nearsighted view of security might well admit, instead, their embarrassing failure to foresee the end of the Cold War about which they claimed special expertise. Are we in a renaissance or merely emerging from the dark ages?

### Flaws in Definition: Implications for Normative Theory

The shaky analytic pillars on which the essay supports its security edifice also reveal a shallow normative foundation on which these pillars rest. The problems posed by the use, threat, and control of organized violence risk being severed from their moral and legal determinants. Except on instrumental grounds—i.e., deciding whether force will work—the issue of the utility of force is isolated from the central question of its legitimation. The essay's philosophically restrictive notion of the social sciences would confine the security scholar to testing propositions largely specified by the state power brokers, policymakers, and managers of violence. The latter decide what is real, relevant, and controllable; the security scholar, using scientific methods and rigorous empirical procedures, is then relegated to the subservient task of assessing the feasibility of policy proposals generated elsewhere. He serves best who evaluates which parcels and passels of organized violence, proposed for use by the state and its agents, will achieve their stated aims. Social science is transformed into the handmaiden of Grand Strategy. What works pragmatically for using and controlling force—selected scientific tools and an insistence on verifiability—is enlisted in the strategic enterprise, but not so the uncompromising protocols and unfettered sweep of true scientific inquiry.

The contesting claims of rival normative theories of human behavior are no less dismissed in the proclamation of a dubious realism, congenial to the rationalization of violence and coercive threats. Once strapped into the essay's normative straightjacket, the security analyst is exempt from the personal and professional responsibility of questioning the limits of the theory except to perfect his or her expectations of state behavior based on realist norms. If he or she examines what the essay characterizes as peace theory, it is from the directed perspective of realist theory and practice. Analysts are advised that “[g]iven their belief that war is always a possibility, realists should be especially interested in devising ways to ensure that it does not occur. In short, well-informed research on peace is a realistic response to anarchy and should be part of security studies.”<sup>5</sup> This commendable ecumenism is, however, conditional. The security analyst is permitted to use the findings of social and life scientists regarding the conditions and factors prompting human cooperation or armed conflict, provided that the impurities of alternative behavioral paradigms on which they rest have been filtered out to ensure that realist theory will not be contaminated.

By using so fine a filter to distill pure security studies, the survey, quite logically if misguidedly, identifies the golden age and renaissance of security studies with two different phases of the Cold War. Many of the works cited as seminal are efforts at rationalizing (not always successfully, as the Vietnam War suggests) the projections of American force abroad. Ruled out of order are Cold War critics who charged that the U.S.–Soviet struggle and the bipolarity that it induced were unstable in their tendency to incite and fuel regional conflicts (leading, potentially, to a global conflagration) and fundamentally illegitimate in arrogating national and global security to the superpowers (Nehru, 1961).

Time-serving is to be conditioned, as the essay admonishes, by the norms of “collaborative,” “diverse,” and “democratic” discourse.<sup>6</sup> These are certainly estimable norms, but they are not enough to extricate us from the moral quandary into which the essay's circumscribed conception of security studies leads us. In providing a particular philosophical answer to a question yet to be definitively decided with respect to the moral basis for the use or threat of force, the essay unwittingly frustrates the normative quest to address fully the profound moral dimensions of this problem; prematurely calls closure to the debate over the legit-

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<sup>5</sup>Walt, “The Renaissance of Security Studies,” p. 225.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 231.

imacy of relying on violence or alternative means to ameliorate or avoid conflicts; and narrows the exploration of the object to be studied as well as the range of scientific methods and philosophical approaches that might help to relax, if not resolve, the dilemmas that arise when politics and violence are joined.

In raising these objections, let us also be clear about what is not at issue. Certainly most of the works cited merit serious attention. Nor are the scientific method and its application to security problems on trial. More, not less, rigor is advised. Nor is realism on trial. It stands, in principle, as an equal to other moral positions before the bars of scientific inquiry, human experience, and philosophical insight. It should also be clear that the author is not accused of any moral failing. The thrust of the argument here, rather, is to insist that empirical and normative inquiry on security problems be kept open, and not led unwittingly down a moral *cul-de-sac*. If the true Renaissance was anything, it was a moral revolution that freed the human mind to explore without limit the possibilities of transcending the political constraints to which men are born and of escaping the tyranny of force and change in designing their fates. If Machiavelli wrote *The Prince*, the quintessential realist handbook of rule by the few, he also explored how the consensual base of governance might be broadened in *The Discourses*.

For the sake of brevity and clarity, let's deploy Quincy Wright's *A Study of War*—surely among the first systematic and rigorous social science efforts to understand and explain war—to make the argument we would like to advance if we had enough time and space. Even a casual reading of this magisterial work, dispatched in a footnote,<sup>7</sup> suggests that it is a better guide for scientific discovery, interdisciplinary study, and moral guidance than the essay's partial view of security studies.

Wright defines "war" as "the *legal condition* which *equally* permits two or more *hostile groups* to carry on a *conflict* by *armed force*. . . . This suggests that in spite of their hostility they are 'members of a higher group which originates this law'" (Wright, 1942: 8–9, emphasis in the original). Note the breadth of Wright's understanding of war, which includes more than a focus on interstate war. For Wright, war follows regular patterns that could be submitted to scientific inquiry *and* to normative exegesis. The potentially legitimate agents of armed force may be any group, not just the state. Moreover, first, second, and third-image levels of analysis are comfortably accommodated within Wright's inclusive schema. Strategic thinking is squarely centered in the humanistic and social sciences, and not left to the halls of governments. If all groups provisionally stand on a level legal and moral playing field until their rival claims can be evaluated as "members of a higher group which originates this law," then a moral and legal framework is at least coterminous, arguably precedential, to the solutions that communities render in their search for a viable security order. Wright expects students and practitioners of war to explicate higher laws—behavioral and normative—that can potentially discriminate between the rival claims of contesting groups and the efficacy of their reliance on violence and coercion. Wright opens the sack marked war and in sorting out its components discovers for our edification (although he wrote a half century ago) that an explanation of war requires a bigger sack to hold its contents than the survey will allow.

What is compelling about Wright's approach to war is that it includes, not excludes, all forms of human behavior associated with violence in the study of war and, by extension, of security; that it is both scientific and normative in its claims; and that it provides the widest possible berth for human and behavioral disciplines and the hard sciences to participate in understanding and explaining war and in preventing its occurrence. Inquiry is enlarged, not diminished; the search for

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<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 213.

relevant normative and empirical theories of war and peace is widened, not narrowed to the nation-state. So singular a focus can only act as a prophylaxis to theory. Wright also invokes a broader range of disciplines and knowledge to solve security problems. The debate is extended, not crimped or closed. Yet, security studies need not be expanded, as Professor Walt prudently counsels, "to pollution, disease, child abuse, or economic recessions."<sup>8</sup> Wright, no less than Walt, addresses violence, force, and coercion in shaping human behavior but his search for their causes, consequences, and control is conducted on a vaster scale, appropriate to the vision and responsibilities of the academy, and with greater sensitivity and responsiveness to the breadth and depth of the policy problems that have to be addressed.

### Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Scope of Security Studies

As the preceding discussion and citations suggest, the essay's partial grasp of the analytic, normative, and methodological dimensions of security studies occasions serious oversights in the survey of the relevant disciplines and works that have advanced the field. Ethical, moral, and legal discourse is barred entry at the frontier of security studies (e.g., Walzer, 1977). As the Walt essay makes abundantly clear, the broad normative concerns of traditional realist thinking of such writers as Hans J. Morgenthau (1952) and Robert E. Osgood (1953) were de-emphasized as Cold War thinking evolved to place the realist perspective on a purported scientific foundation. Since then, and by conscious design, security studies were directed away from a normative evaluation of the behavior of states to an explanation for their behavior that claimed to be rigorously applicable across time and historical circumstance. The rich and historically informed realism of Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes was cast in proto-scientific propositional form. A parsimonious set of assumptions now defined the security dilemma: the distribution of military capabilities defined an anarchical structure that drove state security behavior (Waltz, 1979). The theorist was exempt from the responsibility of explaining—or even expecting—systemic change. Stability was a function of conceptual fiat rather than the product of observation. What was really a passing snapshot of the Cold War was portrayed as an explanation of the structure of the global security system. We know in retrospect that the Cold War regime was a dependent, not an independent variable, subject to the demands and pressures of national self-determination and of elite and mass demands for material welfare and of personal freedom.

A theory of state behavior based exclusively on threats and coercion was also inherently demonstrable since its assumptions could always be confirmed by selective observations that mapped with its coercive expectations. Deviations from expected norms—explained, say, by democratic constraints restricting state power maximization or by the consensual incentives of economic interdependence—were simply dismissed as of negligible or irrelevant theoretical interest. The delicate causal and sequential relation between theory and observation was subtly transformed. Theory validated observation rather than the reverse; empirical observation was subordinated to a presumptive normative interpretation of the state whose behavior was exclusively identified with the exercise of coercion and threats.

In truncating their normative concerns, the security analysts covered in Walt's review have also closed themselves off from what social scientists and historians have to say about past security behavior and how it might inform our knowledge of

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<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

the present. If security analysts are unable to explain the Cold War, it should then not be too surprising that they will be of little help in explaining the past either, unless they broaden their notions of security to fit the understanding of security of the actors whose behavior they are purportedly explaining and to include the work and insight of other disciplines into security studies. Serious historical and social science works that view security studies in units of centuries and millennia, not just decades, are dismissed as of limited relevance or ignored, although they have won international recognition for originality as advances in using case analyses in crisis behavior (Lebow, 1981) or in employing systems theory and long-cycle analyses to identify trends in war and peace (Modelska, 1987; Goldstein, 1988; Thompson and Rasler, 1988; Levy, 1991; Midlarsky, 1991). Curiously enough, even if one were to adopt the essay's short time horizon for systematic historical analysis, there would still apparently be no place for informed journalism (Halberstam, 1973; Talbott, 1985; Sheehan, 1988; Weiner, 1990).

Perhaps a concrete example may help to suggest the damaging theoretical and policy implications of historical myopia. One of the most exciting developments in historiography today is the emerging finding that post-Napoleonic statesmen, contrary to contemporary realist assumptions, sought to create a political equilibrium in Europe, and not just a balance of power. Europe's "long peace" was not undone simply because the balance of power broke down, occasioned by the rise of German and Italian nationalism and by the accompanying weakening of Austria. The unravelling of the balance of "satisfaction" among the small and great powers of Europe reduced Europe's governance by the close of the century to a raw struggle for ascendancy (Schroeder, 1986, 1989, 1992).

The implication of this new line of historical analysis for security analysts is that balances of power, which must necessarily underlie any system of governance among states, must first be informed and strengthened—and surmounted by concert if not by collective security—to avoid war as a solution to conflict. The concert itself critically hinges on the active participation of its members in its maintenance. It also requires the consensual extension of the concert to new problems as they arise. A viable international security order depends finally on members' perceptions of the legitimate and authoritative distribution of power and on the resulting equilibrium of satisfactions that that order affords. "In objective terms," as Schroeder explains, "political equilibrium [in post-Napoleonic Europe] required that (1) the rights, influence and vital interests claimed by individual states in the international system be somehow balanced against the rights, influence and vital interests claimed by other states and the general community, and (2) that a balance or harmony exists between the goals pursued by individual states, the requirements of the system, and the means used to promote one's interests. Oversimplified, political equilibrium meant a balance of satisfactions, a balance of rights and obligations and a balance of payoffs, rather than a balance of power" (1989:143).

The findings of new historiography conspire with the expectations of cooperation theorists to suggest that the evolution of international society cannot be reduced to realist assumptions about the balance of power. The human search for security simply cannot be reconstructed exclusively on realist assumptions, as individuals, groups, states, and communities, including international society today, pursue more complex strategies and fashion more varied social mechanisms to cope with their uncertainty and *angst* over security than is conveyed by the analytic and normative depiction of security in the survey. States and people balance when faced by coercive threats, as realists would expect, but they also bandwagon, hide, and strive, as Hobbes, *The Federalist*, and Axelrod suggest, for consensual, not coercive, solutions to political conflict, war, and security.

If satisfactions are a precondition of peace, then security analysts might also have to reexamine deterrence theory or at least broaden their analysis, as Patrick Morgan suggests, beyond crisis management to explore the requirements of general, not just immediate, deterrence (Morgan, 1983). Psychological theory reinforces historiographic findings that more than force and violence is needed to maintain a deterrence regime. Cognitive and affect processes fundamentally determine the kinds of deterrence regimes that will be constructed, but they are also subject no less decisively to the flaws of information processing that resist conformity to the heroic assumptions of rational actor behavior (Jervis, 1976; Simon, 1976; Kahneman and Tversky, 1979). Rivals learn to circumvent deterrence systems in ways that their opponents are often incapable of imagining because of psychological barriers in perceiving and responding to threats. Moreover, unless the deterrence regime itself serves and assures the differential needs of its members, defeat of the deterrence may well be preferred over system maintenance.

Value estimation cannot be assumed by the security analyst, but requires investigation of the political and psychological conditions that support a particular deterrence regime. The Israelis convinced themselves not only that Egypt would not attack unless it had air superiority but that Egypt's presumed inability to vault that hurdle was equated with a stable deterrence regime. Israeli intelligence was thus blinded by its own test for deterrence and what it wanted to see. It was neither able to detect Egyptian efforts to design around Israeli air superiority nor sensitive to President Anwar Sadat's internal political and security needs that made the defeat of deterrence, despite its risks and even certain loss in battle, a preferred choice (Stein, 1985). Failing to adequately assess the importance of psychological theory to deterrence merely illustrates the disciplinary shortsightedness of the survey. It is therefore no accident that the contributions of many other psychologists are slighted (e.g., Osgood, 1963), as are the important research findings funnelled through the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (e.g., Plous, 1988) or the *Journal of Social Issues* (Levinger, 1987).

Economics, which is especially important today in explaining the post-Cold War world environment, is relegated to a secondary role even though its disciplinary concerns are increasingly central to national and international security (Reppy, 1989; Intriligator, 1990). Curiously, there is no reference to *Defence Economics*, the key journal in the field. The essay's sparse citations to the literature of arms production and transfers, as modest concessions to the economic dimensions of security, suggest that the survey of the economic literature does not comfortably fit with the essay's bounded definition of security, an unfortunate limitation given the need to re-think the rationale for national arms industries in the post-Cold War environment, partly to adjust to the end of the East-West confrontation but more importantly to respond to welfare demands pressing on national governments throughout the global system. The implicit mercantilist assumptions underlying the survey inhibit, moreover, the exploration of alternative explanations of armed conflict and war, such as those offered by liberal and Marxist theorists (Gilpin, 1987).

Similarly, anthropologists and sociologists are expected to take a back seat in the security bus. Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier* (1971), translated into several languages and widely read by military professionals around the globe, is not cited, nor is the principal journal *Armed Forces and Society*, which Janowitz founded while a distinguished professor at the University of Chicago, even noted. (He is cited as a contributor to the golden age, but the uninformed reader is left to guess why.) Game theory loses out, too, because it appears to Walt to be of limited relevance, although that judgment hardly squares with the international interest, in academic and policy circles, in the works of Robert Axelrod (1984) or Steven Brams (e.g., 1985).

No less disconcerting is the amazing ethnocentrism of the survey, alluded to earlier in its omission of European and Third World theorists and in its survey of the Cold War literature. Security studies become *American* security studies. It would require an article at least as long as the survey to explore just some of the important thinking and works of foreign scholars and practitioners who are disregarded (and denigrated) by their absence. Those concerned with comparative security studies or with regional conflict—and with the end of the Cold War the latter is what we will have in abundance—dismiss the thinking and behavior of non-Americans only at the peril of both their scholarly credentials and policy relevance. Trees fall even if American security analysts are deaf to the event.

It is not enough, as the essay commendably allows, to be “committed to democratic discourse.” Security theory extends, arguably, to the causal analysis of the conditions that prompt, preserve, and promote democracies on which, presumably, “democratic discourse” critically depends. This widening of the security analyst’s scope of vision is advised, as Samuel P. Huntington suggests, because democracies, *grosso modo*, protect the liberty of individuals and groups from governmental and societal coercion better than other regimes, provide for long-term stability as a critical element of global order, and inhibit incentives to resort to threats or war, especially in settling differences with other democracies (Huntington, 1991).

Contrasting Walt’s and Huntington’s brands of realism is instructive. Whereas Walt cites Huntington for his contributions to civil–military relations (1957) and American defense policymaking (1961), he ignores Huntington’s other important works on the first and second-image dimensions of global security, encompassing the determinants of political development and order (1968), the implications of American values for creating stable and legitimate national and international regimes (1981), and, more recently, the conditions prescribing the transition from nondemocratic to democratic governments (1991). These oversights are not accidental, but the consequence of using conceptual filters that test only for a limited set of security questions related largely to armed interstate conflict.

For the security scholar, the theoretical issue begins, not ends, with the questions of what, how, and why individuals, groups, and communities get what they want through force, threats, or other coercive means. To confine security analysts to force and violence and to insulate security analysis from other disciplines and their tested findings about nonviolent human behavior is akin to asking the physicist to confine himself to classical mechanics when he knows quantum mechanics is more suitable. Similarly, if the security analyst must begin with perceived threats of coercion, it does not follow that threats can be distinguished finally from the values that are at risk—what people value and care about. If in the final analysis threats are the obverse of values and interests (one has to care before one is threatened), then threats can be understood, as Boulding and others persuasively argue, in ways other than counterthreats and violence as the guarantee of their realization and security (Boulding, 1963, 1989). Positive sanctions may work to overcome threat perceptions and relax tensions (Baldwin, 1979), or rewards and inducements may be alternative ways to foster cooperation or diminish conflict in getting one’s way (Milburn and Christie, 1989).

From this wider perspective, it would appear problematic in the extreme to equate “Grand Strategy” to the study of “military and diplomatic means.”<sup>9</sup> What statesmen today would risk office and the discharge of security responsibilities by confining attention and political resources purely to *macht* politics? Lagging economic and techno-scientific development and domestic political oppression, as some Russian and Chinese leaders have yet to learn, are prescriptions for weakness

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<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 218.

at home and impotence abroad. Other things also matter if national and international security is to be assured, including economic growth and welfare, international competition, and scientific development. What many cherish most—scientific knowledge—is also the source of our discontent since it is the indispensable condition for the creation of new and more powerful hostile technologies that pose entirely new, unprecedented problems that must be resolved if security planners and citizens are to cope with the potentially self-destructive violence at their disposal. So-called high politics (theorizing about the nation-state and war) simply can no longer be subordinated to these purported elements of “low politics” without damage to theory building and problem solving. Indeed, social science is obliged not only to help the soldier and diplomat but to explain their behavior, too. Delegating or discounting the importance of this latter responsibility, as the analysis below suggests, risks the scientific pursuit of security studies itself.

### Agenda for the Future: Guidelines

This cursory critique brings us finally to the essay’s agenda for the future. Rather than list additional lines of analysis *ad nauseam*, a more fruitful approach might be to identify several guidelines to facilitate the cooperative construction of a research and teaching agenda for the field. First, the security analyst, as scholar, should neither delegate the decision about what is “real,” “relevant,” and “controllable” nor claim a monopoly over this question. Neither should the analyst expect nor strive for comfortable relations with policymakers; nor, conversely, should he or she strain to pick fights to gratify professional or personal conceits. The proper aims should be the promotion of mutual respect and understanding in the discharge of their various and sometimes competing responsibilities and roles. The cultivation of a shared sense of self-limitation would also help the security enterprise and discourage the personalization of policy issues. A wide and wide-ranging net should be constantly cast to test “reality.” Security and security studies are too important to be left entirely either to scholars or to policymakers—or to both—or to any single survey of the field.

Second, the behavioral and normative assumptions on which research is conducted should be explicitly stated to associate a work with others of a similar kind, in the interests of scientific and normative discovery as well as to expose hidden, deeply embedded valuational biases that might distort or corrupt the objectivity of this creative effort. On this score, the essay’s unabashed championing of realism deserves praise for rare candor, although security studies are likely to be advanced more by multidisciplinary cooperation than by philosophical declamations.

Third, broaden the disciplinary and interdisciplinary scope of what we mean by security studies rather than risk the field being captured by “a clique of like-minded cronies,” as Professor Walt sensibly warns.<sup>10</sup> Neither scientific inquiry nor human self-knowledge is promoted by blind commitment to a singular philosophical view, or to group-think canons that substitute assertion for reflection and discerning judgment in deciding what security is, what security problems are, and how they should be studied and resolved.

Fourth, broaden the historical and empirical bases for generalization to include not only the Western experience but also that of other cultures. Above all, do not confine the search for *disconfirming* evidence—the proper scientific test—to a selected number of case studies occurring within a limited time frame and con-

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<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 231.

fined almost exclusively to a Western, much less to an American, frame of reference of purported policy relevance. Area study scholars have much to offer on this score, especially in the context of regional security studies. In a fundamental analytic and philosophical sense, anarchy may, indeed, underlie the human condition, but that insight does not get one very far unless one closely examines the special circumstances and particular historical evolution of regional security systems to identify how they work. Anarchy and order are not the same thing, nor are they necessarily counterpoised. What is important to recognize is that anarchy may be ordered in many ways. What forms it assumes as security systems may perhaps be neither obvious nor logical, but still coherent and compelling in driving behavior (Bull, 1977; Buzan, 1991).

Fifth, let the limits of the problem to be solved determine the scope and parameters of empirical and normative theory rather than impose a particular theory of politics and security that defines what has to be described, explained, and rationalized. The latter approach is tantamount to looking for house keys under a street lamp because the light is better there rather than in the dark of where they were lost. We simplify to progress especially in scientific analysis, which demands that we ask questions in ways that can be tested by disconfirming evidence and data. In meeting these stringent requirements, we are provided with powerful illumination to find our way. Nevertheless, the limitations of our tools and our value systems need also to be recognized.

International relations theorists are acutely aware of the new forces that now simultaneously bind and repel the world's populations, yet many security theorists and policymakers still flinch from exploring the implications of these revolutionary conditions for the survival and well-being of the human species. These include the ability of states and groups to project powerful means of destruction anywhere on the globe; the exposure of all particularistic politics—national, communal, and ideological—to almost instantaneous scrutiny and therefore to doubt and challenge, thanks to global communications and transportation; and the mutual dependency of states and peoples within a global eco-economic system. In the extreme, the emergence of a truly global politics—overlaying the legacy of diffuse and decentralized centers of decision that command formidable arrays of organized violence to get their way, when their assertions of authority no longer command automatic allegiance—urges the perspective of a truly universal and integrated notion of security.

To suggest so broad a scope for the problem does not imply that we know what the beast is or what its dimensions are. Critical to the task of the security scholar and practitioner is the challenge of defining those dimensions as inclusively as possible. Posing the issue this way does not immediately make us Kantians or Grotians or advocates of collective security and world government. Our knowledge of the complex ways in which the biological and historical evolutionary processes proceed is insufficient to admit to easy simplification. What is clear, however, is that the security problem is greater than the sum of the parts of first, second, and third-image analysis. It potentially encompasses, for the first time in history, all humans inhabiting the earth. It should not be hard for security analysts to follow Clausewitz a little further and posit the notions of "pure and real security" as helpmates to the concepts of pure and real war. As a practical matter, and as the Iraq-Kuwait crisis (not to mention two world wars and the Cold War) suggests, the security problematic is truly global and inescapable. Correspondingly, real security regimes—say, for Europe or the Middle East—are fundamentally provisional approximations of defining and solving this problem.

Finally, and following from the preceding guidelines, resist the temptation to consign security studies to a ghetto within the academy. Since prehistoric time, as man emerged from the slime of the sea, getting one's way and using violence to achieve it have been coterminous and causally contingent throughout human

experience. We need all the tools as well as all the scientific and interpretive knowledge we can muster to understand and master the ever more powerful instruments of violence at our disposal if we are to persist, prosper, and progress as a species. Whereas there can be no doubt that we have security problems, it is presumptuous to allege that we have a theory of security. Rather, we have a problem. The survey's blurred vision merges the study of security with its armed pursuit; it confounds the question of security with provisional answers for its realization, which crystallize as the structures and assertions of power that we daily observe. On these scores, Wright is right when he appeals to the marketplace of ideas to explain war and what's real rather than rely primarily on policymakers for answers.

Paradoxically, what progress has been made in security studies, somewhat hastily acclaimed as a renaissance in the survey, would not have been possible without generous foundation support, which broadened and deepened the interdisciplinary base of the field at many colleges and universities in the United States and abroad. It was now quite proper and, indeed, urgent to study war, violence, and threats with the same dispassionate care and rigor with which we study molecular biology and child development. The future of that success would be rendered problematic if we relied on the essay's tenuous and tendentious rationalization for the incorporation of security studies within or outside the academy. Security studies can thrive only if they are integrated into the professional concerns and canons of as inclusive a spectrum of disciplinary units as possible within the academy. If we approach security problems in this catholic and questioning spirit, we can do better, and more—and have—than this useful but partial survey of security studies admits.

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