12 International and global security in the post-cold war era

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READER'S GUIDE

This chapter focuses on two central arguments about the effects of the end of the cold war on international security. The first argument suggests that very little of substance has changed: international relations is likely to be as violent in the future as it has been in the past. The second argument suggests that co-operation as well as competition has been a feature of international politics in the past and the post-cold war era has opened up an opportunity for an even more benign system of international and global security to develop. In the context of this debate the chapter begins by looking at traditional realist and more contemporary neo-realist perspectives on international security. Refinements of the neo-realist perspective (which reflect a more optimistic view of future international security) are then considered under the headings of 'contingent realism', 'mature anarchy', 'liberal institutionalism', and 'democratic peace'. Other perspectives are developed under the headings of 'collective security', 'constructivist' theory, critical security theory, feminist approaches, 'post-modernist' approaches, and 'globalist views'. The chapter ends by considering the continuing tension between national and international security and suggests that, despite the important changes associated with the processes of globalization, it

remains too early to make a definitive judgement about whether a fundamentally different paradigm of international politics is emerging, or whether it is possible for such a transformation to occur. Globalization is affecting security in a number of important ways, but there are also many traditional issues and concerns.

Introduction

Students of international politics deal with some of the most profound questions it is possible to consider. Amongst the most important of these is whether international security is possible to achieve in the kind of world in which we live. For much of the intellectual history of the subject a debate has raged between realists and idealists, who have been respectively pessimistic and optimistic in their response to this central question in the international politics field (see Ch. 7). In the post-World War I period idealism claimed widespread support as the League of Nations seemed to offer some hope for greater international order. In contrast, during the cold war which developed after 1945, realism became the dominant school of thought. War and violent conflict were seen as perennial features of inter-state relations stretching back through human history. With the end of the cold war, however, the debate has been renewed and intensified. For some, the end of the intense ideological confrontation between East and West was a major turning point in international history, ushering in a new paradigm in which inter-state violence would gradually become a thing of the past and new communitarian values would bring greater co-operation between individuals and human collectivities of various kinds (including states). This reflected more optimistic views about the development of a peaceful global society. For others, however, realism remained the best approach to thinking about international security. In their view, very little of substance had changed as a result of the events of 1989. The end of the cold war had brought a new, more co-operative era between the superpowers into existence, but it was likely to be temporary as states continued to compete and force remained the ultimate arbiter of international disputes.

This chapter focuses on this debate, highlighting the different strands of thinking within these two optimistic and pessimistic schools of thought. Before this can be done, however, it is necessary to consider what is meant by 'security' and to probe the relationship between **national security** and **international security**. Attention will then shift to traditional ways of thinking about national security and the influence which these ideas have had on contemporary thinking. This will be followed by a survey of alternative ideas and approaches which have emerged in the literature in recent years. The conclusion will then provide an assessment of these ideas before returning to the central question of whether or not greater international security is more, or less, likely in the new century.

What is meant by the concept of security?

Most writers agree that security is a 'contested concept'. There is a consensus that it implies freedom from threats to core values (for both individuals and groups) but there is a major disagreement about whether the main focus of enquiry should be on 'individual', 'national', or 'international' security. For much of the cold war period most writing on the subject was dominated by the idea of national security, which was largely defined in militarized terms. The main area of interest for both academics and statesmen tended to be on the military capabilities that their own states should develop to deal with the threats that faced them. More recently, however, this idea of security has been criticized for being **ethnocentric** (culturally biased) and too narrowly defined. Instead a number of contemporary writers have argued for an expanded conception of security outward from the limits of parochial national security to include a range of other considerations. Barry Buzan, in his study, *People, States and Fear*, argues for a view of security which includes political, economic, societal, environmental as well as military aspects and which is also defined in broader international terms (see Box 12.2). This involves states overcoming 'excessively self-referenced security policies' and thinking instead about the security interests of their neighbours (Buzan 1983: 214–42). Buzan's work raises interesting and important questions about whether national and international security considerations can be compatible and whether states, given the nature of the international system, are capable of thinking in more co-operative international and global terms.

This focus on the tension between national and international security is not accepted by all writers on security. There are those who argue that the emphasis on the state and inter-state relations ignores the fundamental changes which have been taking place in world politics especially in the aftermath of the cold war. For some, the dual processes of integration and fragmentation which characterize the contemporary world mean that much more attention should be given to 'societal security'. According to this view, growing integration in regions like Europe is undermining the classical political order based on nation-states, leaving nations exposed within larger political frameworks (like the EU). At the same time the fragmentation of various states, like the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, has created new problems of boundaries, minorities, and organizing ideologies which are causing increasing regional instability (Waever et al. 1993: 196). This has led to the argument that ethno-national groups, rather than states, should become the centre of attention for security analysts.

At the same time, there are other commentators who argue that the stress on national and international security is less appropriate because of the emergence of an embryonic global society in the 1990s. Like the 'societal security' theorists they point to the fragmentation of the nation-state but they argue that more attention should be given, not to society at the ethno-national level, but to global society. These writers argue that one of the most important trends at the end of the twentieth century is the broad process of globalization which is taking place. They accept that this process brings new risks and dangers. These include the risks associated with such things as a breakdown of the global monetary system, global warming, and the dangers of nuclear accidents. These threats to security, on a planetary level, are viewed as being largely outside the control of nation-states. Only the development of a global community, they believe, can deal with this adequately. At the same time, there are other writers on globalization who stress the transformation of the state (rather than its demise) and the new security agenda facing the state in the early years of the new century.

Box 12.2 Different dimensions of international security

At the political level there has been a growing recognition that systems of government and ideologies have a powerful influence not only on domestic stability but also on international security. Authoritarian governments often seek to divert attention away from problems at home by pursuing foreign adventures. This appears to have been one of the major reasons for the Malvinas/Falklands war in 1982 between Argentina and Britain. The contemporary trend towards the fragmentation of states also poses wider security problems. This has been evident with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1990s and could become a major problem if the Chinese Communist party began to lose effective control in the years ahead.

Population growth and problems over access to resources and markets has also led to greater attention being given to economic security issues. Deprivation and poverty are not only a source of internal conflict but can also spill over into tension between states. An example of this can be seen in the late 1980s in relations between Senegal and Mauritania. Disputes over agricultural land, together with population pressures gave rise to the expulsion of minority groups and ethnic violence in the Senegal River Valley bordering on Mauritania. The dispute did not lead to war between the two states but considerable diplomatic tensions were generated, demonstrating the

growing importance of economic interdependence and the potential for conflict which can be created as a result.

Economic pressures can also encourage social tensions within states which can have implications for international security. In recent years large migration movements between states has produced group-identity conflicts. One of the most serious has been the migration from Bangladesh to north-east India. In the last twenty years the population of Assam has risen from 7 million to 22 million people causing major social changes which have altered the balance of political power between religious and ethnic groups in the state. This resulted in intergroup conflict which has caused difficulties between India and Bangladesh.

Many of the economic and social sources of insecurity in the contemporary world are linked to environmental scarcity. As Thomas Homer-Dixon has shown, scarcities of cropland, water, forests and fish, together with atmospheric changes such as global warming have an important impact on international security. Control over oil was a major cause of the Gulf War in 1991 and tension over the control of water resources in the occupied West Bank has helped heighten tension between Arabs and Jews in Israel complicating the efforts to achieve a durable peace settlement in the region.

(Homer-Dixon 1994: 18)

The traditional approach to national security

As Chapter 2 has shown, from the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 onwards states have been regarded as by far the most powerful actors in the international system. They have been 'the universal standard of political legitimacy' with no higher authority to regulate their relations with each other. This has meant that security has been seen as the priority obligation of state governments. They have taken the view that there is no alternative but to seek their own protection in what has been described as a self-help world.

In the historical debate about how best to achieve national security writers like Hobbes, Machiavelli,

and Rousseau tended to paint a rather pessimistic picture of the implications of state sovereignty. The international system was viewed as a rather brutal arena in which states would seek to achieve their own security at the expense of their neighbours. Interstate relations were seen as a struggle for power as states constantly attempted to take advantage of each other. According to this view **permanent peace** was unlikely to be achieved. All that states could do was to try and balance the power of other states to prevent any one from achieving overall hegemony. This was a view which was shared by writers, like E. H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau, who developed

what became known as the realist school of thought in the aftermath of World War II.

This largely pessimistic view of international relations is shared by many contemporary writers like Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer. The pessimism of these neo-realists rests on a number of key assumptions they make about the way the international system works (see Ch. 7).

Key neo-realist assumptions

- The international system is anarchic. They do not mean by this that it is necessarily chaotic. Rather, anarchy implies that there is no central authority capable of controlling state behaviour.

- States claiming sovereignty will inevitably develop **offensive military capabilities** to defend themselves and extend their power. As such they are potentially dangerous to each other.

- **Uncertainty**, leading to a lack of trust, is inherent in the international system. States can never be sure of the intentions of their neighbours and, therefore, they must always be on their guard.

- States will want to maintain their independence and sovereignty, and, as a result, survival will be the most basic driving force influencing their behaviour.

- Although states are rational, there will always be room for miscalculation. In a world of imperfect information, potential antagonists will always have an incentive to misrepresent their own capabilities to keep their opponents guessing. This may lead to mistakes about 'real' state interests.

Taken together, neo-realists argue that these assumptions produce a tendency for states to act aggressively towards each other.

According to this view, national security, or insecurity, is largely the result of the structure of the international system (this is why these writers are sometimes called 'structural realists'). The structure of anarchy is seen as being highly durable. The implication of this is that international politics in the future is likely to be as violent as international politics in the past. In an important article entitled 'Back to the Future' written in 1990 John Mearsheimer argued that the end of the cold war was likely to

usher in a return to the traditional multilateral balance of power politics of the past in which extreme nationalism and ethnic rivalries would lead to widespread instability and conflict. Mearsheimer viewed the cold war as a period of peace and stability brought about by the bipolar structure of power which prevailed. With the collapse of this system, he argued there would be a return to the kind of great power rivalries which had blighted international relations since the seventeenth century.

For neo-realist writers, like Mearsheimer, international politics may not be characterized by constant wars but there is nevertheless a relentless security competition which takes place, with war, like rain, always a possibility. It is accepted that co-operation among states can and does occur, but such co-operation has its limits. It is 'constrained by the dominating logic of security competition, which no amount of co-operation can eliminate' (Mearsheimer 1994/5: 9). Genuine long-lasting peace, or a world where states do not compete for power, therefore, is very unlikely to be achieved.

The 'security dilemma'

This view that war is a constant historical feature of international politics and is unlikely to disappear is based on the notion that states face what has been described as a security dilemma from which it is largely impossible to escape. The idea of a security dilemma was first clearly articulated in the 1950s by John Herz. It was, he said: 'a structural notion in which the self-help attempts of states to look after their security needs, tend regardless of intention to lead to rising insecurity for others as each interprets its own measures as defensive and the measures of others as potentially threatening' (Herz 1950: 157).

According to this view, in a self-help environment, like the international system, states are faced with an 'unresolveable uncertainty' about the military preparations made by other states. Are they designed simply for their own defence or are they part of a more aggressive design? Because the uncertainty is unresolveable, states are likely to remain mistrustful of each other. In turn, if mistrust is mutual, 'a dynamic "action–reaction" cycle may well result,

which will take the fears of both to higher levels'. Insecurity will breed further insecurity, with the ever-present potential for war breaking out (Wheeler and Booth 1992: 29–31).

At the root of the security dilemma, therefore, are mistrust and fear. Even when states are believed to be benign in their intentions there is always the recognition that intentions can change. Being overly trusting opens up the prospects of being taken

advantage of, with potentially disastrous consequences. This constant fear, according to Butterfield, creates an awful tragedy which afflicts international relations. 'Behind the great conflicts of mankind', he argues, there 'is a terrible predicament which lies at the heart of the story'. Writing in the 1950s Butterfield argued that there was no sign that mankind was capable of overcoming this 'irreducible dilemma' (Butterfield 1951: 20).

The difficulties of co-operation between states

For most contemporary neo-realist writers there is little prospect of a significant change in the nature of security in the post-cold war world. Pointing to the Gulf War, the violent disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and parts of the former Soviet Union, it is argued that we continue to live in a world of mistrust and constant security competition. Co-operation between states occurs, but it is difficult to achieve and even more difficult to sustain. There are two main factors, it is suggested, which continue to make co-operation difficult, even after the changes of 1989. The first is the prospect of cheating; the second is the concern which states have about what are called relative-gains.

Box 12.3 A statesman's view of the 'security dilemma'

'The distinction between preparations made with the intention of going to war and precautions against attack is a true distinction, clear and definite in the minds of those who build up armaments. But it is a distinction that is not obvious or certain to others. Each Government, therefore, while resenting any suggestion that its own measures are anything more than for defence, regards similar measures of another government as preparation to attack.'

(Lord Grey)

The problem of cheating

Writers like Waltz and Mearsheimer do not deny that states often co-operate or that in the post-cold war era there are even greater opportunities than in the past for states to work together. They argue, however, that there are distinct limits to this co-operation because states have always been, and remain, fearful that others will cheat on any agreements reached and attempt to gain advantages over them. This risk is regarded as being particularly important, given the nature of modern military technology which can bring about very rapid shifts in the balance of power between states. 'Such a development', Mearsheimer has argued, 'could create a window of opportunity for the cheating side to inflict a decisive defeat on the victim state' (Mearsheimer 1994/5: 20). States realize that this is the case and although they join alliances and sign arms control agreements, they remain cautious and aware of the need to provide for their own national security in the last resort. This is one of the reasons why, despite the Strategic Arms Reduction Agreements of the early 1990s and the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995, the nuclear powers continue to maintain some of their nuclear weapons.

The problem of relative-gains

Co-operation is also inhibited, according to many neo-realist writers, because states tend to be concerned with 'relative-gains', rather than 'absolute

gains'. Instead of being interested in co-operation because it will benefit both partners, states, they suggest, always have to be aware of how much they are gaining compared with the state they are co-operating with. Because all states will be attempting to maximize their gains in a competitive, mistrustful, and uncertain international environment, co-operation will always be very difficult to achieve and hard to maintain.

Such a view of the problems of co-operation in the post-cold war world are not, however, shared by all writers, even within the neo-realist school. There is a wide body of opinion amongst scholars (and politicians) that the traditional or 'standard' neo-realist

view of international relations should be modified or even replaced. Opposition to 'standard' neo-realism takes a wide variety of different forms. To illustrate alternative ways of thinking about international security in the 1990s eight different approaches will be considered. Despite the differences which exist between writers in these fields they all share a common view that greater international security in the future is possible through co-operation. Indeed, many of them argue that international security in the latter years of the twentieth century is undergoing significant changes which could bring greater opportunities for peace.

The opportunities for co-operation between states

'Contingent realism'

Contrary to the views of those neo-realists (like Waltz and Mearsheimer) who are pessimistic about co-operation between states in the post-cold war world, there are other neo-realist writers who present a rather more optimistic assessment. According to Charles Glaser, 'contrary to the conventional wisdom, the strong general propensity of adversaries to compete is not an inevitable logical consequence of structural realism's basic assumptions' (Glaser 1994/5: 51). Glaser accepts much of the analysis and assumptions of structural realism, but he argues that there are a wide range of conditions in which adversaries can best achieve their security goals through co-operative policies, rather than competitive ones. In such circumstances states will choose to co-operate rather than to compete. Security is therefore seen to be 'contingent' on the circumstances prevailing at the time.

Contingent realists argue that standard structural realism is flawed for three main reasons.

1. They reject the competition-bias inherent in the theory. Because international relations is characterized by self-help behaviour does not necessarily mean, they argue, that states are damned to perpetual competition which will result in war.

Faced with the uncertainties associated with being involved in an arms race, like that of the 1970s and 1980s, for example, states preferred to co-operate. There were distinct advantages in working together to reduce the risks and uncertainty in this period rather than engaging in relentless competition which characterized most of the cold war years.

2. A second, and related argument is that standard structural realism is flawed because of its emphasis on 'relative-gains'. States often pursue co-operation, it is argued, precisely because of the dangers of seeking relative advantages. As the security dilemma literature suggests, it is often best in security terms to accept rough parity rather than seek maximum gains which will spark off another round of the arms race leading to less security for all in the longer term.

3. The third flaw in the standard argument, according to contingent realists, is that the emphasis on cheating is overdone. Cheating is a problem which poses risks, but so does arms racing. Schelling and Halperin have argued that 'it cannot be assumed that an agreement that leaves some possibility of cheating is unacceptable or that cheating would necessarily result in strategically

Box 12.4 Key concepts

'A security community is a group of people which has become "integrated". By integration we mean the attainment, within a territory, of a "sense of community" and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure ... dependable expectations of "peaceful change" among its population. By a "sense of community" we mean a belief ... that common social problems must and can be resolved by processes of "peaceful change".'

(Karl Deutsch)

'Security regimes occur when a group of states co-operate to manage their disputes and avoid war by seeking to mute the security dilemma both by their own actions and by their assumptions about the behaviour of others.'

(Robert Jervis)

'A security complex involves a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.'

(Barry Buzan)

'Acceptance of common security as the organizing principle for efforts to reduce the risk of war, limit arms, and move towards disarmament, means, in principle, that co-operation will replace confrontation in resolving conflicts of interest. This is not to say that differences among nations should be expected to disappear ... The task is only to ensure that these conflicts do not come to be expressed in acts of war, or in preparations for war. It means that nations must come to understand that the maintenance of world peace must be given a higher priority than the assertion of their own ideological or political positions.'

(Palme Report 1992)

important gains'. The risks involved in arms control may be preferable to the risks involved in arms racing. Contingent realists argue that this is often ignored by writers like Waltz and Mearsheimer. This was clearly the view of the superpowers in the late 1980s and early 1990s when a wide range of agreements were signed including the INF Treaty and the START I and II Treaties (see Ch. 19). The main thrust of the argument is that there is no need to be overly pessimistic about international security in the aftermath of the cold war.

Key points

- 'Contingent realists' regard themselves as 'structural realists' or 'neo-realists'.

- They believe standard 'neo-realism' is flawed for three main reasons: they reject the competition bias in the theory; they do not accept that states are only motivated by 'relative gains'; they believe the emphasis on cheating is exaggerated.

- 'Contingent realists' tend to be more optimistic about co-operation between states than traditional 'neo-realists'.

Mature anarchy

The view that it is possible to ameliorate (if not necessarily to transcend) the security dilemma through greater co-operation between states is also shared by other writers who would describe themselves as 'neo-realists' or 'structural realists'. Barry Buzan has argued that one of the interesting and important features of the 1980s and 1990s is the gradual emergence of a rather more 'mature anarchy' in which states recognize the intense dangers of continuing to compete aggressively in a nuclear world. While accepting the tendency of states to focus on their own narrow parochial security interests, Buzan argues that there is a growing recognition amongst the more 'mature' states in the international system that there are good (security) reasons for taking into account the interests of their neighbours when making their own policies. States, he suggests, are increasingly internalizing 'the understanding that national securities are interdependent and that excessively self-referenced security policies, whatever their jingoistic attractions, are ultimately self-defeating' (Buzan 1983: 208). He cites the Nordic countries as providing an example of a group of states that have moved, through 'a maturing

process', from fierce military rivalry to a security community. Buzan accepts that such an evolutionary process for international society as a whole is likely to be slow and uneven in its achievements. A change away from the preoccupation with national security towards a greater emphasis on international security, however, is, in his view, at least possible, and certainly desirable.

It could be argued that this is exactly what has happened in Western Europe over the past fifty years. After centuries of hostile relations between France and Germany, as well as between other Western European states, a new sense of 'community' was established with the Treaty of Rome which turned former enemies into close allies. Unlike the past these states no longer consider using violence or coercion to resolve their differences. Disagreements still occur but there is a consensus within the European Union that these will always be resolved peacefully by political means. Supporters of the concept of 'mature anarchy' argue that this ongoing 'civilizing' process in Europe can be extended further to achieve a wider security community by embracing other regions with whom economic and political co-operation is increasingly taking place.

Key points

- Supporters of the concept of 'mature anarchy' also accept that **structure** is a key element in determining state behaviour.

- There is, however, a trend towards 'mature anarchy', especially in Europe, which focuses on the growing importance of international security considerations.

- This is occurring because more states in the contemporary world are recognizing that their own security is interdependent with the security of other states.

- The more this happens the greater the chances of dampening down the security dilemma.

Liberal institutionalism

One of the main characteristics of the standard neo-realist approach to international security is the belief that international institutions do not have a very important part to play in the prevention of war. Institutions are seen as being the product of state interests and the constraints which are imposed by the international system itself. It is these interests and constraints which shape the decisions on whether to co-operate or compete rather than the institutions to which they belong.

Such views have been challenged by both statesmen and a number of international relations specialists, particularly following the end of the cold war. The British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, for example made the case in June 1992 that institutions themselves had played, and continued to play, a crucial role in enhancing security, particularly in Europe. He argued that the West had developed 'a set of international institutions which have proved their worth for one set of problems'. He went on to argue that the great challenge of the post-cold war era was to adapt these institutions to deal with the new circumstances which prevailed. (Hurd, quoted in Mearsheimer 1994/5).

This view reflected a belief, widely shared among Western statesmen that a framework of complementary, mutually reinforcing institutions—the EU, NATO, WEU, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)—could be developed to promote a more durable and stable European security system for the post-cold war era. For many observers such an approach has considerable potential in achieving peace in other regions of the world as well. ASEAN is often cited as an institution which has an important role to play in helping to maintain stability in South-East Asia. Similarly the Organization of African States plays a part in helping to resolve differences between African states.

This is a view which is also shared by a distinctive group of academic writers which developed during the 1980s and early 1990s. These writers all share a conviction that the developing pattern of institutionalized co-operation between states opens up unprecedented opportunities to achieve greater international security in the years ahead. Although

the past may have been characterized by constant wars and conflict, important changes are taking place in international relations at the beginning of the twenty-first century which create the opportunity to dampen down the traditional security competition between states.

This approach, known as liberal institutionalism, operates largely within the realist framework, but argues that international institutions are much more important in helping to achieve co-operation and stability than 'structural realists' realize (see Ch. 9). According to Keohane and Martin (1995: 42) 'institutions can provide information, reduce transaction costs, make commitments more credible, establish focal points for coordination and, in general, facilitate the operation of reciprocity'. Supporters of these ideas point to the importance of European economic and political institutions in overcoming the traditional hostility of European states. They also point to the developments within the European Union and NATO in the post-cold war era to demonstrate that by investing major resources states themselves clearly believe in the importance of institutions. According to this line of argument, if states were influenced only by narrow calculations of power, the EU and NATO would have withered away at the end of the cold war. In fact, the reverse has happened. Both retain their vitality at the beginning of the new century and are engaged in a process of expansion. This is not to say that institutions can prevent wars from occurring, but they can help to mitigate the fears of cheating and alleviate fears which sometimes arise from unequal gains from co-operation.

As such, it is suggested that in a world constrained by state power and divergent interests, international institutions operating on the basis of reciprocity at least will be a component of any lasting peace. In other words, international institutions themselves are unlikely to eradicate war from the international system but they can play a part in helping to achieve greater co-operation between states. This was reflected in Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's call in 1990 to 'bring the new democracies of Eastern Europe into closer association with the institutions of Western Europe'. Despite some scepticism about the European Community, she argued that the EC had reconciled antagonisms within Western Europe in the post-Second World War period and it could be

used to overcome divisions between East and West in Europe in the post-cold war period.

Key points

- Neo-realists reject the significance of international institutions in helping many to achieve peace and security.

- Contemporary politicians and academics, who write under the label of liberal institutionalism, however, see institutions as an important mechanism for achieving international security.

- Liberal institutionalists accept many of the assumptions of realism about the continuing importance of military power in international relations but argue that institutions can provide a framework for co-operation which can help to overcome the dangers of security competition between states.

Democratic peace theory

Another 'liberal' approach to international security has gathered momentum in the post-cold war world. This centres on the argument that democratic states tend not to fight other democratic states. Democracy, therefore, is seen as a major source of peace (see Ch. 8). As with 'liberal institutionalism', this is a notion which has received wide support in Western political and academic circles. In his State of the Union Address in 1994 President Bill Clinton went out of his way to point to the absence of war between democracies as a justification for American policies of promoting a process of democratization around the world. Support for this view can be seen in the Western policy of promoting democracy in Eastern and Central Europe following the end of the cold war and opening up the possibility of these states joining the European Union.

'Democratic peace' theory has been largely associated with the writings of Michael Doyle and Bruce Russett. In the same way that contemporary realists have been influenced by the work of Hobbes, Rousseau, and Machiavelli, Doyle points to the importance of the insights contained in Immanuel Kant's

1795 essay, *Perpetual Peace*. Doyle contends that democratic representation, an ideological commitment to human rights, and transnational interdependence provide an explanation for the 'peace-prone' tendencies of democratic states. (Doyle 1995a: 180–4) Equally, the absence of these attributes, he argues, provides a reason why non-democratic states tend to be 'war-prone'. Without these domestic values and restraints the logic of power replaces the liberal logic of accommodation.

Supporters of democratic peace ideas, as a way of promoting international security in the post-cold war era, do not only argue that wars between democracies are rare or non-existent. They also contend that democracies are more likely to settle mutual conflicts of interest short of the threat or use of any military force. It is accepted that conflicts of interest will, and do, arise between democratic states, but shared norms and institutional constraints mean that democracies rarely escalate those disputes to the point where they threaten to use military force against each other, or actually use force at all. Much more than other states, they settle their disagreement by mediation, negotiation, or other forms of peaceful diplomacy. One of the benefits of democracy, according to Doyle, is that differences will be managed long before they become violent disputes in the public arena. There is clearly a close link here with the arguments put forward by supporters of the concept of 'mature anarchy', discussed above.

These democratic peace arguments are not designed to reject realism completely but to suggest that liberal democracies do make rather more of a difference in international politics than realist writers accept. Bruce Russett has argued that there is no need to jettison the insights of realism which tell us that power and strategic considerations affect states' decisions to fight each other. But neither should one deny the limitations of those insights, and their inability to explain many of the instances when liberal states have chosen not to fight or to threaten one another. For Russett the danger resides in 'vulgar realism's' vision of war of all against all, 'in which the threat that other states pose is unaffected by their internal norms and institutions' (Russett 1995: 175).

Russett argues that democratic values are not the only influence permitting states to avoid war; power

and strategic influences undoubtedly affect the calculations of all states, including democracies. And sometimes these strategic considerations can be predominant. Shared democracy, however, he believes, is important in international affairs and should not be ignored in any attempt to dampen down the security dilemma and achieve greater security. He is not saying that shared democratic values by themselves will eliminate all wars but, like liberal institutionalists, he argues that such values will contribute to a more peaceful world.

Key points

- Democratic peace theory emerged in the 1980s. The main argument was that the spread of democracy would lead to greater international security.

- Democratic peace theory is based on a Kantian logic—emphasizing three elements—republican democratic representation, an ideological commitment to human rights, and transnational interdependence.

- Wars between democracies are seen as being rare and they are believed to settle mutual conflicts of interest without the threat or use of force more often than non-democratic states.

- Supporters of democratic peace ideas do not reject the insights of realism, but they reject 'vulgar realisms'' preoccupation with the idea of war of all against all. They argue that internal norms and institutions matter.

Ideas of collective security

There are other approaches to contemporary international security which take realpolitik and power calculations seriously but which also argue that domestic politics, beliefs, and norms must also be included as important determinants of state behaviour. One such approach is that associated with collective security ideas. Proponents of collective security argue that although military force remains an important characteristic of international life, there are nevertheless realistic opportunities to

move beyond the self-help world of realism, especially after the end of the cold war. They reject the idea that state behaviour is simply the product of the structure of the international system. Ideas, it is argued, are also important.

According to Charles and Clifford Kupchan, under collective security, states agree to abide by certain norms and rules to maintain stability, and when necessary, band together to stop aggression (C. and C. Kupchan 1995). Defined in these terms collective security involves a recognition by states that to enhance their security they must agree to three main principles in their inter-state relations.

- First, they must renounce the use of military force to alter the status quo and agree instead to settle all of their disputes peacefully. Changes will be possible in international relations, but ought to be achieved by negotiation rather than force.

- Second, they must broaden their conception of national interest to take in the interests of the international community as a whole. This means that when a troublemaker appears in the system, all of the responsible states automatically and collectively confront the aggressor with overwhelming military power.

- Third, and most importantly states must overcome the fear which dominates world politics and learn to trust each other. Such a system of security, as Inis Claude has argued, depends on states entrusting 'their destinies to collective security'.

Supporters of collective security as a way forward to achieving greater international security accept that their ideas are not a panacea for preventing war. They argue, however, that by setting up collective security institutions some of the worst excesses of the perennial competition between states can be avoided. According to this view, 'regulated, institutionalized balancing is preferable to unregulated balancing under anarchy' (C. and C. Kupchan 1995). Collective security is seen as a way of providing a more effective mechanism for balancing against an aggressor. By facing potential aggressors with preponderance, collective security arrangements are designed to provide deterrence and more effective action if deterrence breaks down.

It is also argued that collective security institutions contribute to the task of creating a more benign international system. They help create greater confidence so that states can concentrate their energies and resources on their own domestic welfare rather than on non-productive, excessive national security arrangements. Proponents argue that there are profound advantages to institutionalizing a security system that promises to deepen the accord among states rather than letting a self-help system take its course and simply hoping that great power conflict will not re-emerge. The aim, as with liberal institutionalism and democratic peace ideas, is to ameliorate security competition between states by reducing the possibility that unintended spirals of hostility will escalate into war.

Supporters of these ideas argue that although collective security arrangements, like the League of Nations, have failed in the past there is no iron law which says they must fail in the future. The post-cold war era they believe has created a more conducive international environment in which greater opportunities exist than in the past for states to share similar values and interests. This is particularly so in Europe with the spread of democratic values and the collapse of confrontation politics between East and West. These conditions provide the essential foundations for the successful functioning of a collective security system. Supporters also point to the Gulf War in 1991 as an example of effective collective security action in the post-cold war period (for a critique of collective security ideas see Box 12.6).

Key points

- Collective security theorists take power seriously but argue that it is possible to move beyond the self-help world of realism

- Collective security is based on three main conditions—that states must renounce the use of military force to alter the status quo; that they must broaden their view of national interest to take in the interests of the international community; and that states must overcome their fear and learn to trust each other.

- Collective security aims to create a more effective system of 'regulated institutionalized balancing'

rather than relying on the unregulated balancing which takes place under anarchy.

- Collective security is believed to contribute to the creation of a more benign international system.

- Despite past failures, supporters argue that there is an opportunity to try collective security again with more success in the post-cold war world.

Alternative views on international and global security

'Social constructivist' theory

The notion that international relations are not only affected by power politics but also by ideas is also shared by writers who describe themselves as 'social constructivist theorists'. According to this view, the fundamental structures of international politics are social rather than strictly material. This leads social constructivists to argue that changing the way we think about international relations can bring a fundamental shift towards greater international security (see Ch. 11).

At one level, social constructivists, like Alexander Wendt, share many of the major realist assumptions about international politics. They accept that states are the key referent in the study of international politics and international security; that international politics is anarchic; that states often have offensive capabilities; that states cannot be absolutely certain of the intentions of other states; that states have a fundamental wish to survive; and that states attempt to behave rationally. They also see themselves as structuralists; that is to say they believe that the interests of individual states are in an important sense constructed by the structure of the international system.

However, social constructivists think about international politics in a very different way to neo-realists. The latter tend to view structure as being made up only of a distribution of material capabilities. On the other hand, they think that structure is the product of social relationships. Social structures, they argue, are made up of elements, such as **shared knowledge, material resources and practices**. This means that social structures are defined, in part, by

shared understandings, expectations, or knowledge. As an example of this, Alexander Wendt argues that the security dilemma is a social structure composed of inter-subjective understandings in which states are so distrustful that they make worst-case assumptions about each other's intentions, and, as a result, define their interests in 'self-help' terms (Wendt 1992). In contrast, a security community is a rather different social structure, composed of shared knowledge in which states trust one another to resolve disputes without war.

The emphasis on the structure of shared knowledge is important in social constructivist thinking. Social structures include material things, like tanks and economic resources, but these only acquire meaning through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded. The idea of power politics, or realpolitik, has meaning to the extent that states accept the idea as a basic rule of international politics. According to social constructivist writers, power politics is an idea which does affect the way states behave, but it does not describe all interstate behaviour. States are also influenced by other ideas, such as the rule of law and the importance of institutional co-operation and restraint. In his study, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it', Wendt argues that security dilemmas and wars are the result of self-fulfilling prophecies. The 'logic of reciprocity' means that states acquire a shared knowledge about the meaning of power and act accordingly. Equally, he argues, policies of reassurance can also help to bring about a structure of shared knowledge which can help to move states towards a more peaceful security community (see Wendt 1999).

Although social constructivists argue that security

dilemmas are not acts of god, they differ over whether they can be escaped. For some, the fact that structures are socially constructed does not necessarily mean that they can be changed. This is reflected in Wendt's comment that 'sometimes social structures so constrain action that transformative strategies are impossible' (Wendt 1995: 80). Many social constructivist writers, however, are more optimistic. They point to the changes in ideas introduced by Gorbachev during the second half of the 1980s which led to a shared knowledge about the end of the cold war. Once both sides accepted the cold war was over, it really was over. According to this view, understanding the crucial role of social structure is important in developing policies and processes of interaction which will lead towards co-operation rather than conflict. For the optimists, there is sufficient 'slack' in the international system which allows states to pursue policies of peaceful social change rather than engage in a perpetual competitive struggle for power. If there are opportunities for promoting social change most social constructivists believe it would be irresponsible not to pursue such policies.

Key points

- Social constructivist thinkers base their ideas on two main assumptions; (1) that the fundamental structures of international politics are socially constructed and (2) that changing the way we think about international relations can help to bring about greater international security.

- Social constructivist thinkers accept many of the assumptions of neo-realism, but they reject the view that 'structure' consists only of material capabilities. They stress the importance of social structure defined in terms of shared knowledge and practices as well as material capabilities.

- Social constructivist argue that material things aquire meaning only through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded.

- Power politics and realpolitik emphasized by realists is seen as being derived from shared knowledge which is self-fulfilling.

- Social constructivists can be pessimistic or opti-

mistic about changing international relations and achieving international security.

'Critical security' theorists and 'feminist' approaches

Despite the differences between social constructivists and realists about the relationship between ideas and material factors they agree on the central role of the state in debates about international security. There are other theorists, however, who believe that the state has been given too much prominence. Both critical security theorists and feminist writers wish to de-emphasize the role of the state and reconceptualize security in a different way.

Robert Cox draws a distinction between problem-solving theories and critical theories. Problem-solving theorists work within the prevailing system. The take 'the existing social and political relations and institutions as starting points for analysis and then see how the problems arising from these can be solved and ameliorated' (Smith 2000). In contrast, critical theorists focus their attention on the way these existing relationships and institutions emerged and what might be done to change them (see Chs. 10 and 11). For critical security theorists states should not be the centre of analysis because they are not only extremely diverse in character but they are also often part of the problem of insecurity in the international system. They can be providers of security, but they can also be a source of threat to their own people. According to this view, therefore, attention should be focused on the individual rather than the state. With this as their main referent, writers like Booth and Wyn Jones, argue that security can best be assured through human emancipation, defined in terms of 'freeing people, as individuals and groups, from the social, physical, economic, political, and other constraints that stop them from carrying out what they would freely choose to do'. This focus on emancipation is designed to provide 'a theory of progress', 'a politics of hope' and a guide to 'a politics of resistance' (Booth 1999). Critics point to the vagueness of the concept of 'emancipation' and the difficulty of 'individual-based' theories to analyse international and global security (See Rengger, 2000).

Feminist writers also challenge the traditional

emphasis on the central role of the state in studies of international security. While there are significant differences between feminist theorists, (including critical theory and post-modernist/post-structuralist perspectives) all share the view that works on international politics in general, and international security in particular, have been written from a 'masculine' point of view (see Chs. 11 and 27). In her work Ann Tickner argues that women have 'seldom been recognised by the security literature' despite the fact that conflicts affect women, as much, if not more, than men. The vast majority of casualties and refugees in war are women and children and, as the recent war in Bosnia confirms, the rape of women is often used as a tool of war (Tickner 1995). Feminist writers argue that if gender is brought more explicitly into the study of security, not only will new issues and alternative perspectives be added to the security agenda, but the result will be a fundamentally different view of the nature of international security. According to Jill Steans: 'Rethinking security . . . involves thinking about militarism and patriarchy, mal-development and environmental degradation. It involves thinking about the relationship between poverty, debt and population growth. It involves thinking about resources and how they are distributed' (Steans 1998. See also Smith 2000).

Key points

- Critical security theorists argue that too much emphasis is given by most approaches to the state.

- Some critical security theorists wish to shift the main referent to the individual and suggest that 'emancipation' is the key to greater domestic and international security.

- Feminist writers argue that gender tends to be left out of the literature on international security, despite the impact of war on women.

- Feminist writers also argue that bringing gender issues back in, will result in a reconceptualization of the study of international security.

Post-modernist views

Recent years have seen the emergence of post-modernist approaches to international relations which has produced a somewhat distinctive perspective towards international security (see Ch. 11). Post-modernist writers share the view that ideas matter, but they also see discourse—how people talk about international politics and security—as an important driving force that shapes the way states behave. For writers like Richard Ashley realism is one of the central problems of international insecurity (Ashley 1984). This is because realism is a discourse of power and rule which has been dominant in international politics in the past and which has encouraged security competition between states. According to John Vasquez, power politics is an image of the world that encourages behaviour that helps bring about war. As such the attempt to balance power is itself part of the very behaviour that leads to war. According to Vasquez (1983), alliances do not produce peace, but lead to war. The aim, for many post-modernists, therefore, is to replace the discourse of realism with a 'communitarian discourse' that emphasizes peace and harmony. The idea is that once the 'software' program of realism that people carry around in their heads has been replaced by a new 'software' program based on communitarian norms, individuals, states, and regions will learn to co-operate with each other and global politics will become more peaceful.

One of the central differences between realism and post-modernism is their very different epistemologies (ideas about knowledge). John Mearsheimer has noted that, whereas realists see a fixed and knowable world, post-modernists see the possibility of 'endless interpretations of the world around them . . . there are no constants, no fixed meanings, no secure grounds, no profound secrets, no final structures or limits of history . . . there is only interpretation . . . History itself is grasped as a series of interpretations imposed upon interpretations— none primary, all arbitrary' (Mearsheimer 1994: 42–3). This emphasis on the basis of knowledge as subjective rather than objective leads post-modernists to emphasize the importance of normative values. Realism is viewed not only as a statist ideology, largely out of touch with the globalizing tendencies which are occurring in world politics but also as a

dangerous discourse which is the main obstacle to efforts to establish a new and more peaceful hegemonic discourse. This is because it purports to provide a universal view of how the world is organized and what states have to do if they wish to survive. Post-modernists reject what they see as the 'preposterous certainty' of realism. In their view the enormous complexity and indeterminacy of human behaviour, across all its cultural, religious, historical and linguistic variations means that there can be no single interpretation of global reality. The problem with realism according to this view, is that by reducing the complexities of world politics to a single rigidly ordered framework of understanding, alternative interpretations and approaches to international security are ruled out. If the world is thought of in terms of anarchy then 'power politics' will be seen as the solution to the problem of insecurity. On the other hand, if anarchy and power politics are not seen as being an endemic feature of global history then other more peaceful approaches to security might be tried. This has led post-modernist writers to try and reconceptualize the debate about global security by opening up new questions which have been ignored or marginalized. Jim George has argued that in the new post-cold war strategic discourse 'attention ... has been focused on the growing sense of insecurity concerning state involvement in military-industrial affairs and the perilous state of the global economy. Questioned, too, has been the fate of those around the world rendered insecure by lives lived at the margins of existence yet unaccounted for in the statistics on military spending and strategic calculation' (George 1994). George argues that such questions require a new communitarian discourse about security.

Post-modernist writers believe that it is not only essential to replace realism with a communitarian discourse but it is an achievable objective. Because experts, and especially academic writers, have an important role to play in influencing 'the flow of ideas about world politics' it is vital for them to play their part in the process of transforming language and discourse about international politics. The whole nature of global politics can be transformed, and the traditional security dilemma can be overcome, if post-modern **epistemic communities** play their part in spreading communitarian ideals (see Box 12.5).

Box 12.5 Pursuing the 'politics of resistance'

As people around the planet have illustrated in recent times, given the opportunities to understand the processes by which they are constituted (as, for example, subjects in an objective world of anarchical power politics) it is possible to change power relations and overturn irreducible 'realities'. In these circumstances it becomes possible also to say no, to ask why, to understand how. A range of resistances can flow from this. People can, for example, resist the damages of extreme nationalism, the illusory certainty of nuclear deterrence theory, the transformation of global life into the construction of otherness; they can help prevent their social and environmental structures being destroyed in the name of, for example, economic rationalism; they can oppose racism and sexism and the exploitation of the marginalized and 'different'; and they can insist on participating in decisions that define and determine their life opportunities and the fate of those brutalized by dominant regimes of stability and order 'out there' in the real world. In this way, a politics of resistance is possible that 'extend(s) processes of democratization into realms where it has never been tried: into the home, into the workplace, into processes of cultural production'

(Jim George)

Key points

- Post-modernists emphasize the importance of ideas and discourse in thinking about international security.

- Post-modernists aim to replace the 'discourse of realism' with a 'communitarian discourse'.

- Realist and post-modernist approaches have very different epistemologies.

- Post-modernists try to reconceptualize the debate about global security by looking at new questions which have been ignored by traditional approaches.

- There is a belief amongst post-modernist writers that the nature of international politics can be changed if 'epistemic communities' help to spread communitarian ideals.

Globalist views of international security

The opportunity to pursue changes in the international system is shared by scholars who point to new trends which are already taking place in world politics. In the past the state has been the centre of thinking about international relations. This state-centric view, however, is now increasingly challenged. Writers from the **global society** school of thought argue that at the begining of the twenty-first century the process of globalization (which has been developing for centuries) has accelerated to the point 'where the clear outlines of a global society' are now evident. The emergence of a global economic system, global communications, and the elements of a global culture have helped to provide a wide network of social relationships which transcend state frontiers and encompass people all over the world. This has led to the growing obsolescence of territorial wars between the great powers. At the same time, so the argument goes, new risks associated with the environment, poverty, and weapons of mass destruction are facing humanity, just at a time when the nation-state is in crisis.

Supporters of the 'global society' school accept that globalization, is an uneven and contradictory process. The end of the cold war has been characterized not only by an increasing global awareness and the creation of a range of global social movements but also by the fragmentation of nation-states. This has been most obvious amongst the former communist states, especially the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. Much the same pressures, however, have been felt in Western democratic societies with key institutions like the monarchy, the churches, and the family under increasing pressure. This has created what Martin Shaw has described as 'a crisis of Western civil society'. With the end of East–West confrontation, Shaw (1994: 170) argues that 'the ideological cement of Western civil society has dissolved'. As a result, whole communities, including 'villages and towns, ethnic groupings, their ways of life, traditions and forms of social organization—are threatened, along with the lives and well-being of individuals' (Shaw 1994: 172).

The result of this 'fracture of statehood' has been a movement away from conflicts between the great powers to new forms of insecurity caused by nationalistic, ethnic, and religious rivalries within states and across state boundaries. This has been reflected in the brutal civil wars that have been fought in Bosnia, Russia, Somalia, Rwanda, Yemen, and Kosovo during the 1990s. Mary Kaldor has described these conflicts as **'new wars'** which can only be understood in the context of globalization. The intensification of interconnectedness, she argues, has meant that ideological and/or territorial cleavages of an earlier era have increasingly been supplanted by an emerging political cleavage between ... cosmopolitanism, based on inclusive, multicultural values and the politics of particularist identities' (Kaldor 1999: 6). The cleavage between those who are part of the global processes and those who are excluded, give rise to wars which are characterized by 'population expulsion through various means such as mass killing, forcible resettlement, as well as a range of political, psychological and economic techniques of intimidation' (Kaldor 1999: 8).

Such conflicts pose a critical problem for the international community of whether to intervene in the domestic affairs of sovereign states to safeguard minority rights and individual human rights (see Chs. 22 and 28). This dilemma, according to global society theorists, reflects the historic transformation of human society which is taking place at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Although states continue to limp along, many global theorists argue, it is now increasingly necessary to think of the security of individuals and of groups within the emergent global society. The traditional focus on national or state security (and sovereignty) no longer reflects the radical changes which are taking place. What is needed, according to this school of thought, is a new politics of global responsibility, designed to address issues of global inequality, poverty, and environmental stress, as well as of human rights, minority rights, democracy, and individual and group security, which cut hugely across dominant interests on a world scale as well as within just about every state (see Chs. 18 and 26). Thinking in such globalist, rather than national or international terms, supporters argue, will lead to more effective action (including intervention where necessary) to deal with the risks to security which exist in the world community at present.

The globalist society approach to security is based on what Anthony Giddens (1990: 154–8) calls utopian realism. According to this view it is 'realistic' to envisage the radical transformation of international politics as we have known it in the past. Indeed such a transformation, it is argued, is already taking place. Given the trends towards globalization it is realistic to envisage the expansion of the regional 'security communities' which are already in existence into a broader security community. Shaw (1994) in his book *Global Society and International Relations* argues that it is possible to see emerging a gigantic northern security community. He sees this as stretching from North America and Western Europe to the major states of the former USSR and Eastern Europe and to Japan, the newly industrializing states of East Asia, and Australia. He also sees other powers, including China, India, Egypt, and South Africa, being involved in regional extensions of this community. At the root of such a vision is a process of **global communications** which can help to create a new consensus on norms and beliefs which, in turn, can help to create a new cosmopolitan global security order.

Not all writers on globalization, however, accept the analysis of the global society school. There are those who argue that while the state is being transformed (both from within and without) by the processes of globalization, it remains a key referent in the contemporary debate about security. This is one of the central arguments in Ian Clark's study of *Globalization and International Relations Theory*. Clark argues that : 'What globalization can bring to bear on the topic of security is an awareness of widespread systemic developments without any resulting need to downplay the role of the state, or assume its obsolescence. The question that has to be addressed by the student of contemporary security is not whether security should be reconceptualised around individuals or societies as alternatives to the state, but how the practice of states is being reconfigured to take account of new concerns with human rights and societal identity' (Clark 1999: 125). What is interesting for Clark is the way that security is being reshaped by globalization and the changes that this is creating for the security agenda of states. In particular, as states become less able to provide what they have traditionally provided, he argues that domestic bargains, about what citizens are prepared

to sacrifice for the state, are being renegotiated. This is reflected in the type of security activities in which states are prepared to engage, and in the extent to which they are prepared to pursue them unilaterally. According to this view of globalization states are not withering away but are being transformed as they struggle to deal with the range of new challenges (including those of security) that face them (see Ch. 30). Such a view also casts doubts about how likely it is that the diffusion of gobal norms will create the kind of consensus necessary for the creation of a global society capable of bringing greater peace and security in the world. (See Box 12.6)

Box 12.6 Reflections on war in the twenty-first century

'The end of the cold war in 1989 did not, and will not, in and of itself, result in an end to conflict. We see evidence of the truth of that statement on all sides. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, the turmoil in northern Iraq, the tension between India and Pakistan, the unstable relations between North and South Korea, and the conflicts across the face of Sub-Saharan Africa in Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. These all make clear that the world of the future will not be without conflict, conflict between disparate groups within nations and conflicts extending across national borders. Racial, religious, and ethnic tensions will remain. Nationalism will be a powerful force across the globe. Political revolutions will erupt as societies advance. Historic disputes over political boundaries will endure. And economic disparities among and within nations will increase as technology and education spread unevenly around the world. The underlying causes of Third World conflict that existed long before the cold war began remain now that it has ended. They will be compounded by potential strife among states of the former Soviet Union and by continuing tensions in the Middle East. It is just such tensions that in the past fifty years have contributed to 125 wars causing forty million deaths.'

(Robert S. McNamara, 'Reflecting on War in the Twenty-First Century: The Context for Nuclear Abolition', in John Baylis and Robert O'Neill (eds.), *Alternative Nuclear Futures: The Role of Nuclear Weapons in the Post-Cold War World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 167–82).

Key points

- Supporters of the 'global society school' argue that the end of the twentieth century witnessed an accelerating process of globalization.

- Globalization can be seen in the fields of economic development, communications, and culture. Global social movements are also a response to new risks associated with the environment, poverty, and weapons of mass destruction.

- Globalization is occurring at a time when the fragmentation of the nation-state is taking place, encouraged in particular by the end of the cold war.

- The 'fracture of statehood' is giving rise to new kinds of conflict within states rather than between states which the state system cannot deal with. This has helped encourage an emerging politics of global responsibility.

- Globalism is also encouraged by the spread of regional security communities and the development of a growing consensus on norms and beliefs.

- There are disputes about whether globalization will contribute to the weakening of the state or simply to its transformation, and over whether a global society can be created which will usher in a new period of peace and security.

The continuing tensions between national, international, and global security

At the centre of the contemporary debate about global and international security dealt with above is the issue of continuity and change. This involves questions about how the past is to be interpreted and whether international politics is in fact undergoing a dramatic change as a result of the processes of globalization. There are also questions about how far these changes represent a fundamental transformation of world politics and whether it is possible to create a global system characterized by long-term peace and security. For realists, the empirical historical record is interpreted as providing a justification for their views that international politics always has been characterized by security competition and frequent wars, and the chances are that this pattern will continue into the future. For them there was no paradigmatic shift in 1989; nothing really has changed. East–West relations may be more peaceful, at present, but the potential for a resumption of great power conflict remains and conflicts, like the ones in the former Yugoslavia and the Gulf War in the early 1990s, demonstrate the continuing importance of security competition between states as well as non-state groups. This reflects the tendency by realists to

reject the argument that it is possible to change the practice of power politics by achieving a universal consensus in favour of 'new thinking' or a communitarian discourse based on more peaceful norms and beliefs. The chances of ideas like collective security being widely adopted, according to this view, are almost negligible (see Box 12.7).

Realists also reject the contention raised by some of their critics that the state is becoming less central as regional and global considerations loom larger. The continuing primacy of the state is seen as a firm reality for the foreseeable future. Even in Europe where a large group of states are steadily integrating their political economies, it is argued that this will simply result in a larger entity forced to play a state-like role in the international system. This leads many realists to argue that, whatever the attraction of trying to develop an international or global security strategy, states are still likely in the future to define their security interests largely in national terms.

There is, however, a growing awareness, even amongst realists, that the twin processes of globalization and fragmentation do mean that more

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Box 12.7 The problems with collective security

John Mearsheimer has argued that collective security is inescapably flawed. There are nine main reasons, he suggests, why it is likely to fail:

1. States often find it difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between the 'aggressor' and the 'victim' in international conflicts.

2. Collective security assumes that all aggression is wrong, whereas there may be circumstances where conquest is warranted against a threatening neighbour.

3. Because some states are especially friendly for historical or ideological reasons they will be unlikely to join a coalition against their friends.

4. Historical enmity between states may complicate the effective working of a collective security system.

5. Because sovereign states have a tendency to pass the

buck in paying the price of dealing with aggression there is often difficulty in distributing the burden equitably.

6. Difficulties arise in securing a rapid response to aggression because of the unwillingness to engage in pre-crisis contingency planning.

7. States are often reluctant to join a coalition because collective action is likely to transform a local conflict into an international conflict.

8. Democracies are reluctant to make an automatic commitment to join collective action because of state sovereignty.

9. Collective security implies a contradiction in the way military force is viewed. It is seen as abhorrent and yet states must be willing to use it against an aggressor.

(Mearsheimer 1994/5)

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attention has to be given to the security agenda within and beyond the state. This has given rise to increasing interest in the concept of societal security mentioned earlier. Writers like Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup, and Pierre Lemaitre have argued that giving more attention to 'society' (defined in ethno-national terms) does not diminish the importance of national security. It puts 'more of the "national" back into "national security". It also opens up that area between the state and full regional integration which is neglected by traditional analysis' (Waever *et al.* 1993: 196).

There is no doubt, however, that national security is being challenged by the forces of globalization, some of which have a positive effect, bringing states into greater contact with each other. As Bretherton has argued the intensification of global connectedness associated with economic globalization, eco-

logical interdependence, and the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, means that 'co-operation between states is more than ever necessary' (Bretherton and Ponton 1996: 100–1). It has also been argued that increased multilateralism caused by globalization helps 'to facilitate dialogue at the elite level between states, providing significant gains for global security' (Lawler 1995: 56–7). At the same time, however, globalization also appears to be having negative effects on international security. It is often associated with rapid social change, increased economic inequality and challenges to cultural identity which contribute to conflicts within, and between, states. This ambivalent effect of globalization, in turn, reinforces the search for national security, and at the same time leads states to seek greater multilateral and global solutions as they are less able to provide security for their citizens.

Conclusions

What conclusions can we come to from this analysis of different views about international and global security in the late 1990s? In the twenty-first century strategic calculations and power are likely to remain a vitally important ingredient of state behaviour. The structure of the international system, whether defined in material or social terms, continues to be a major influence on inter-state relations particularly in the way that they regard their security interests. This does not mean, however, that states always have to define their national security interests in narrow terms. Neither does it preclude important changes in international security as ideas, discourse, and global developments modify the processes of interaction which characterize world politics.

The spread of democratic states and democratic values, together with a justifiable conviction, by Western statesmen in particular, that liberal institutions have an important role to play in moderating the traditional security dilemma, are helping to develop a more mature anarchy in the 1990s. Ideas of co-operative or common security (in which states take account of the security interests of their neighbours) are beginning to have a significant impact on security policies in Europe and in other parts of the world. Under the umbrella of co-operative security thinking, security communities and security regimes are being developed (see Box 12.4). This can be seen in the developments which have taken place in the European Union, the OSCE and NATO, as well as the relations between Nordic countries and between ASEAN states in South East Asia. Security regimes like the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 (which was extended indefinitely in 1995) reflect the way that states facing global dangers often do accept norms and rules of behaviour that help to overcome the dangers of competition.

These developments in both the **theory and practice of security** involve, in some respects, something of a shift from the traditional preoccupation with national security to a growing recognition of the importance of international and global security considerations as well as the humanitarian implications

of intra-state conflicts (see Ch. 22). In part, this may be the result of a shift in the discourse about security in the 1980s and 1990s (as critical theorists contend) but of equal, if not greater, significance is the changing geopolitical, economic and technological circumstances of the period and an acceptance that many national security objectives can only be achieved through broader co-operative action. Strategic calculations (which have a symbiotic relationship with the discourse on security) in some important respects are pushing states increasingly towards greater co-operation.

It must be said, however, that despite this trend, it is not universal and there remains a continuing tension between national, international, and global security interests which cannot be ignored. As Buzan (1983: 214–42) has argued 'the national security imperative of minimising vulnerabilities sits unhappily with the risks of international agreement, and the prospects for international agreement are weakened by the power–security dilemma effects of a national security strategy'.

An example of the practical importance of the contradiction which this tension causes can be seen from the debates which have taken place about nuclear deterrence since the end of the cold war. On one level, it has been recognized that as a 'threat-based' strategy, nuclear deterrence is a major impediment to the development of a 'co-operative security' system between East and West. This, together with the growing recognition of the global threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, has led to a wide range of policies designed to play down the significance of nuclear weapons and to reverse the arms race. The whole process of denuclearization inherent in the START I and II Treaties, the INF Treaty, the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Agreement, ongoing negotiations on a cut-off of fissile material production, the decision by the US and Russia to stop targeting each other, and the new NATO strategic concept, all reflect a determination by national governments to try and enhance international security by establishing and reinforcing global norms

which de-emphasize the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies.

At another level, however, the nuclear powers continue to enhance qualitatively their nuclear capabilities (through computer simulation and other techniques) and following the 1998 nuclear tests by India and Pakistan fears re-emerged about the prospects of further nuclear proliferation. US interest in deploying a National Missile Defense (NMD) system against 'rogue' states and opposition by both the Russians and the Chinese also indicates that national security interests remain of critical importance at the beginning of the new century. Even though nuclear weapons have been pushed more into the background, they continue to exist and the nuclear states continue to maintain nuclear deterrent strategies. What this means is that states possessing nuclear weapons (both declared and undeclared) continue to pose an implicit threat to existing or potential adversaries simply through their continuing possession of nuclear weapons. The result is that states pursue the objective of greater co-operation which requires trust, while at the same time hedging their bets by maintaining national military capabilities which reflect a lack of trust and an uncertainty that co-operative security can ultimately succeed in overcoming the security dilemma completely. This reflects the contemporary lack of consensus generally about fully accepting co-operative security ideas as the foundation of national security.

In the early years of the twenty-first century, therefore, despite important changes which are taking place in world politics, the traditional ambiguity about international security remains. In many ways the world is a much safer place to live in as a result of the end of the cold war and the removal of nuclear confrontation as a central element in East–West relations. The spread of democratic and communitarian values, some of the processes of globalization and the generally co-operative effects of international institutions have played an important part in dampening down the competitive aspects of the security dilemma between states. These significant trends, however, are offset to a certain extent by evidence of the continuing importance of military force as an arbiter of disputes both between and particularly within states. Conventional arms races continue in

different regions of the world, nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons still provide a powerful influence on the security calculations of many states, crazy and ambitious politicians remain at the head of some governments, and cultural differences, as well as diverse values and the tensions inherent in globalization itself prevent the emergence of global agreement on a wide range of important issues (see Ch. 21). Societal insecurity is also increasingly evident as the forces of fragmentation and integration destabilize traditional identities and thereby complicate relationships within and between states.

As a result, it remains much too soon to conclude that a paradigmatic shift is taking place in international politics and global security in the aftermath of the cold war or that such a permanent shift is possible. Undoubtedly, as many other chapters in this book indicate, new and positive developments are taking place in the world in which we live which suggest that the future of world politics does not have to be like the past. At the same time, the empirical historical evidence suggests caution. Periods of more co-operative inter-state (and inter-group) relations have often led to a false dawn and an unwarranted euphoria that 'perpetual peace' was about to break out. The structure of the international system provides an important constraint on the way that individuals, states, or international institutions behave. So does the predominance of realist attitudes towards international and global security amongst many of the world's political leaders (see Ch. 7). This is not to argue that there is no room for peaceful change or that new ideas and discourses about international relations are unimportant in helping to shape choices that have to be made. Opportunities to develop greater international and global security will always exist. In a world of continuing diversity, mistrust, and uncertainly, however, it is likely that the search for a more co-operative global society is likely to remain in conflict with the powerful pressures which exist for states, and wider communities, to look after their own national and regional security against threats from without and within. Whether and how international and global security can be achieved still remains, as Herbert Butterfield once argued, 'the hardest nut of all' for students and practitioners of international politics to crack.

QUESTIONS

1 Why is security a 'contested concept'?

2 Why do traditional realist writers focus on national security?

3 What do neo-realist writers mean by 'structure'?

4 What is meant by the 'security dilemma'?

5 Why do states find it difficult to co-operate?

6 What do you understand by the terms 'contingent realism' and 'mature anarchy'?

7 Do you find 'liberal institutionalism' convincing?

8 Why might democratic states be more peaceful?

9 Why do you think collective security arrangements failed in the past?

10 How do 'constructivist', 'critical security' theory, and 'feminist' views about international security differ from those of 'neo-realists'?

11 Do you think ideas and discourse influence the way states behave?

12 Is the tension between national and global security resolvable?

GUIDE TO FURTHER READING

B. Buzan's *People, States and Fear* (London: Harvester, 1983) provides an excellent starting point for the study of national and international security. The book is written largely from a neo-realist perspective.

Michael Joseph Smith's study of *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986) covers the development of what has been described as classical realism and discusses some of the major thinkers in the field. Kenneth Waltz provides an overview of neo-realism in his article 'Realist Thinking and Neorealist Theory', in the *Journal of International Affairs*, 44:1 (1990).

For a very interesting alternative view see Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics', in *International Organization*, 46:2 (1992). This article gives a very useful analysis of the 'Constructivist' perspective. See also Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). A very useful broader evaluation of different theoretical positions is contained in N. J. Rengger, *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order: Beyond International Relations Theory?* (London: Routledge, 2000).

In their study *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (London: Pinter, 1993) Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup, and Pierre Lemaitre develop the new concept of 'Societal Security'. This provides an original perspective for studying the kind of non-state aspects of security which have affected Europe in the post-cold war period.

Very useful discussions about the changing nature of security can be found in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), C. Bretherton and G. Ponton (eds.), *Global Politics: An Introduction* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1996); T. Terriff, S. Croft, L. James, and P. Morgan, *Security Studies Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999); K. Krause and M. C. Williams, (eds.), *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (London: UCL Press, 1997);

and S. Lawson (ed.), *The New Agenda for Global Security: Cooperating for Peace and Beyond* (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin,1995).

For a discussion of different theoretical approaches to security and some of the contemporary debates about security studies see Steve Smith, 'The Increasing Insecurity of Security Studies: Conceptualising Security in the Last Twenty years', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 20:3 (Dec. 1999).

WEB LINKS

The Internet provides a wide range of information on international security. The best guide to the use of the Internet on this subject is William M. Arkin, *The Internet and Strategic Studies* (The Center for Strategic Education, the Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 1998). Arkin has also produced *The US Military Online: A Directory for Internet Access to the Department of Defense* (Brassey's, 1998) and a nuclear homepage for the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), 'The Internet and the Bomb: A Research Guide to Policy and Information about Nuclear Weapons' (1997, www.nrdc.org/nrcdpro/nuclear). The CNN documentary site www.cnn.com/specials/cold war covers every aspect of the cold war conflict and its eventual ending. www.islandnet.com/~emerald/vpc/readings/nukeuse.htm#list covers the sixteen main nuclear crises during the cold war. www.the-times.co.uk/onlinespecials/wordonline provides a very useful archive for students interested in issues relating to international and global conflict. Also go to www.sosig.ac.uk/roads/subject-listing/World-cat/conflictsec.html for the international conflict and security page of the Social Science Information Gateway, an invaluable resource for on-line information.

13 International political economy in an age of globalization

Ngaire Woods

READER'S GUIDE

This chapter examines what drives actors and explains events in the international economy. The first section outlines the history of the post-war economy. The history helps to explain why and how international political economy (IPE) has become so central to the study of international relations (section two). Amidst the many actors, processes and events in the recent history of the world economy, it is not obvious where one might begin to analyse IPE. This task is made easier by three traditional approaches to IPE which outline for us specific actors, processes, and levels of analysis. These are the liberal, mercantilist, and Marxist traditions which are outlined in section three. More recently, IPE has become divided by an argument about the uses (and abuses) of 'rational choice' analysis. What 'rational choice' means and the argument about how it should be used are both explored in section four. These perspectives and tools for studying IPE are then applied to help us to make sense of globalization and its impact on the world economy. Section five defines globalization and examines two core questions it poses for IPE. Is globalization diminishing