

Editorial and mission statement

We are delighted to welcome you to the *European Journal of International Security* (EJIS), a journal of the British International Studies Association (BISA). We launch at what is an exciting and challenging time for international security studies. It is exciting because the discipline is vibrant, diverse and growing. Theoretically, the past two decades have seen consolidation and innovation. Established traditions of realism and liberalism have proved resilient and adaptive in the face of global change. Constructivism has emerged as an increasingly persuasive and powerful voice in the field. So too have the range of new approaches that fall loosely under the rubric of Critical Security Studies; from critical theory, to feminist and gender theory, postcolonial perspectives, poststructuralism, international political sociology, and securitization theory. Similarly, strategic studies, long unfashionable, is undergoing a renaissance. Promising new innovations, evolutions and perspectives, from practice theory to science and technology studies, also continue to emerge. It is no exaggeration to consider contemporary international security studies to be one of the most powerful engines of theoretical innovation in the discipline of international relations.

Empirically, the field addresses a range of contemporary themes, issues and problems. These include established concerns of inter-state violence and military confrontation, but they also incorporate a range of new (or at least newly emphasized) challenges, including identity-based violence, terrorism, climate change, the spread of potentially transformative technologies, development and security, and everyday experiences of insecurity. These issues are defined both by their pressing importance at the level of policy and experience – to states, international organisations and to ordinary people and communities – as well as by their often inherent uncertainty and dynamic nature. Such an environment presents, demands even, theoretical innovation.

Such diversity speaks to the field's vibrancy but it also poses challenges for the discipline and for a journal such as the EJIS. If security studies becomes about everything, then it risks becoming nothing at all, or at least becoming so broad that it loses its disciplinary coherence and sense of purpose. Such dilemmas have been alive in the field since the late 1980s, when Joseph S. Nye and Sean M. Lynn-Jones argued for a focus on 'basic questions' of war, peace, and strategic decision making.¹

Since then, international security studies *has* diversified, massively – and in our view – productively. Even so, debate rages over whether we can, and should, fix the boundaries of the field. We believe that such debate is healthy. If security research is to understand, explain and address the new challenges of an uncertain and rapidly changing world, then it needs to do so in the context of challenge and counter-challenge. A settled discipline risks becoming a stagnant and introspective one. For these reasons, we have not set hard borders on the security research we will publish. Our view is that the boundaries of the discipline are necessarily dynamic, and can only emerge from dialogue between its different traditions, even when those traditions may oppose each other. Indeed, there is considerable diversity of approach within our own editorial team. The EJIS aspires to play a key role in fostering these debates, in connecting different types of security studies, and in providing a

¹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and Sean M. Lynne-Jones, 'International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field', *International Security*, 12: 4 (Spring 1988), p. 21.

forum for new issues, methods and theoretical vocabularies. Our remit is explicitly pluralistic, and we welcome contributions from all corners of the discipline, within the broad intellectual parameters we discuss below.

We will also work to develop cross-disciplinary engagement around the unifying theme of international security scholarship. We recognise that the problematic of international security remains grounded in the wider discipline of international relations, and it is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. However, we also believe that the study of international security lends itself to inter-disciplinary research. International history for example, can tell us much about the wider context for contemporary security debates. Sociology offers insight into how elites and other communities of security actors engage with each other, and how particular ideas, norms and practices become prevalent. Anthropology can illuminate the experience of security and insecurity. Our remit will thus include the various sub-branches of security studies and peace research, but also relevant research from other disciplines, including science and technology studies, political economy, law, philosophy, cultural studies and international history and the humanities. We intend to attract the best manuscripts from our and cognate disciplines and to attract authors from a global community of scholars.

There are strong historical reasons why North American, Western European, and Australasian scholars dominate international security research. The study of international relations, and the evolution of international security studies, has taken place within the context of the concerns, debates, and intellectual traditions of these regions. Yet, in a world in which security challenges are increasingly global and diverse, we do not believe it is desirable, nor ultimately sustainable, for this to remain the case. Indeed, it risks another form of the disciplinary stagnation and introspection, as well as, potentially, geographical and cultural myopia. We recognize that, as a journal that is geographically based in Europe, and draws on European and North American scholars for our editorial team, we too work within this context. However, as the editorial team, we will foster, encourage and support contributions from across the world, including, we hope, from East and South Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Our intellectual remit is explicitly global in scope. Though we are the *European Journal of International Security*, our focus is the contemporary challenge of international security, in all its global manifestations. We thus welcome contributions from scholars across the world, on issues of international security that are internationally diverse in nature. We do not aspire to be a publication that focuses exclusively on European security concerns or that privileges European scholarship and debates. What will define the work we publish will be a commitment to intellectual rigour in all its many forms; theoretical, empirical and methodological.

Theory is important. It is through theoretical development and innovation that the discipline can advance; can grapple with new questions and find new answers to old ones. Theory allows us to make sense of the empirical world, and draw wider conclusions and inferences that go beyond those of the specific issue or case at hand. It enables us to develop frames of understanding, but also to critique and engage with others. It provides the cornerstone of the disciplinary conversations we must have with each other if international security studies is to retain its vibrancy, innovation and purchase. The EJIS will publish papers of theoretical seriousness and rigour. This does not mean that we understand ourselves to be an exclusively theoretical journal; far from it, as we also wish to promote research that presents new data, new combinations of data, or new ways of looking at old data. However, we expect our contributors to frame their empirical analysis in a wider theoretical

context, and to provide analysis that goes beyond the intrinsic, and often laudable, interest that individual cases may have for specialists.

We are concerned to further open and rigorous conversations about methodology in international security studies. This is particularly so given our aspiration to disciplinary plurality, which includes positivist and post-positivist approaches, and qualitative and quantitative methodologies. If conversations between different perspectives and scholarly communities are to be productive, then they need to be based on transparent and intelligible methodological foundations. More generally, we believe that international security studies may need to pay more attention to the question of how the issues of security can be studied, how we can get closer to the problems with which we all engage. We hope that the EJIS can become a forum where such debates take place, and we will encourage our contributors to take them seriously in their submissions to the journal.

Another area in which we believe the discipline can do better relates to gender. As Denial Maliniak et.al. have observed, women remain under-represented in international relations.² This is perhaps particularly the case in international security studies. Female scholars – of all disciplinary and theoretical stripes – publish fewer articles in mainstream security journals than their male counterparts. Indeed, our experience in putting together our first volume reinforces Maliniak et.al.’s conclusions about women in the discipline: of all submissions in our first year, just 25 per cent were from female scholars, including as sole or co-authors. While our first priority must be the intellectual rigour and significance of our published output, we will also encourage female security scholars to submit their best work. We hope that our commitment to theoretical pluralism will assist us in doing so.

We will encourage and support work by new scholars through a regular ‘Junior-senior dialogue’. This is an innovation pioneered in organisation studies. It is one we believe provides an excellent opportunity to promote innovative articles by early career researchers, and offers a fabulous way to advance the discipline from the bottom up. The dialogue works in the following way: the junior scholar (usually late Phd or early career phase) submits the manuscript and flags it for consideration in the category; the senior (normally the scholar whose work is at stake in the article) acts as peer reviewer; if the manuscript is accepted, the senior’s review becomes a short response article, the junior provides a response, and the entire correspondence is published in a separate section of the journal. Through the EJIS Junior-Senior Dialogue, we hope to provide a forum where the best and brightest entrants to the profession can showcase their work.

We aim to establish a strong online presence for the EJIS at www.ejis.eu. We are developing a virtual environment for EJIS, comprising a blog section in which readers can debate key themes introduced in the journal or in specific articles. We will also use this space to showcase the non-editorial activities of the journal. We encourage you to subscribe and post to our Twitter feed @EJIntSec.

We hope that our inaugural issue provides an indication of the goals, remit and ambitions of the EJIS. We decided against assembling a ‘state of the art’ commentary on the international security studies discipline. In line with our commitment to disciplinary pluralism and innovation, we were wary of over-determining where we felt such innovation should come from. Instead, we wanted to let the discipline breathe for itself. As such, we opened submissions to all potential contributors, with the aim of attracting some of the best and most exciting international security research of the moment.

² Daniel Maliniak, Amy Oakes, Susan Peterson and Michael J. Tierny, ‘Women in International Relations’, *Politics and Gender*, 4: 1 2008, p. 122.

This issue contains contributions from scholars working in North America, Europe and Australia. They address issues including the practice of diplomacy in international security, the governance and regulation of new technologies and actors, the international consequences of domestic uprising, surveillance and international regimes of human protection. They draw on perspectives from international sociology and practice theory, international history, international law, feminist theory, organisational theory and regime theory, amongst others. Each article is accompanied by a short blog post on our website, and we encourage our readership to respond using the comment and discussion section.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who have helped make this inaugural issue possible. First and foremost this includes the BISA and the Cambridge University Press, whose commitment to the project and support throughout the first year of our existence has been valuable and rewarding. We would also like to thank the GW4 Group of institutions, incorporating the universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter, who have provided significant further support for the journal. Our international Editorial Board too have provided invaluable advice and assistance over our first year, including shouldering a significant proportion of our reviewing demands. We are grateful for their continuing support. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we would like to thank those of you who have submitted papers, offered us advice or participated in our review process. We recognize that any journal depends to a large degree on the support and largesse of the wider scholarly community of which it is a part. As editors, we have found this support to be diligent and generously provided, and for this are thankful.

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