

THE PERIPHERY AS THE CORE: THE THIRD WORLD AND SECURITY STUDIES

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In recent years, international security studies scholars have engaged in an intense debate on the meanings of “security”. The primary concern of this debate, as Krause and Williams put it, is to examine how the “discourses and practices of ‘security’ might have changed or be changing” from the “dominant” understanding of the concept.¹ What constitutes this “dominant” understanding is perhaps easily recognised. It is a notion of security rooted firmly within the Realist tradition, or what Ken Booth has termed as the “intellectual hegemony” of Realism.² During the Cold War era, its main referent point was the concept of “national security”. Though marked by considerable ambiguities and fuzziness,³ the concept of national security did provide a dominating strand of security analysis, one that tended to equate “security with the absence of a military threat or with the protection of the nation [state] from external overthrow or attack.”⁴

Many recent critics of the national security paradigm have found the intellectual lens of Realism too restrictive, and advocated a redefinition and broadening of security studies. As a result, a debate continues over which phenomena should be included within the purview of the new security studies agenda and which should not. While the advocates of a broader notion of security call for the inclusion, among other things, of economic, ecological, demographic (refugees and illegal migration) and gender issues⁵, others warn against too much broadening, citing the danger of security becoming

¹Keith Krause and Michael Williams, “The Subject of Security: Foundations of Rethinking Security”, paper presented to the conference on “Strategies in Conflict: Critical Approaches to Security Studies”, Toronto, York University, Centre for International and Strategic Studies, 12-14 May 1994, p.1.

²Ken Booth, “Security and Emancipation”, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 17 (1991), p.318.

³The conceptual underdevelopment of “national security” and the ambiguities surrounding the concept are explored in Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

⁴Helga Halftendorn, “The Security Puzzle: Theory-Building and Discipline-Building in International Security”, *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.35, no. 1 (March 1991), pp.3-18.

⁵See: Richard Ullman, “Redefining Security”, *International Security*, vol.8, no.1 (Summer 1983), pp.129-153; Michael Renner, *National Security: The Economic and Environmental Dimensions*, Worldwatch Paper, no. 89 (Washington, D.C.: The Worldwatch Institute, 1989); Arthur H. Westing, “An Expanded Concept of International Security”, in Arthur H. Westing, ed., *Global Resources and International Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp.183-200; Jessica Tuchman Mathews, “Redefining Security”, *Foreign Affairs*, vol.68, no.2 (1989), pp.162-177; Gro Harlem Brundtland, “The Environment, Security and Development”, with Appendix, *SIPRI Yearbook 1993* (Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.15-36; Norman Meyers, “Environmental Security”, *Foreign Policy*, no. 74 (1989), pp.23-41; Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, *Environmental Change and Human Conflict*, Working Paper (Cambridge, MA: American Academy of the Arts and Sciences, 1990); Dennis Pirages, “Environmental Security and Social Evolution”, *International Studies Notes*, vol. 16, no. 1 (Winter 1991), pp.8-12; Neville Brown, “Climate, Ecology and International Security”, *Survival*, vol 31, no. 6 (November/December 1989), pp.484-499; *Environmental Security: A Report Contributing to the Concept of Comprehensive International Security* (Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1989); *Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Hans W. Maull, “Energy and Resources: The Strategic Dimensions”, *Survival*, vol 31, no. 6 (November/December 1989), pp. 500-518; Edward N. Krapels, *Oil And Security: Problems and Prospects of Importing Countries*, Adelphi Papers no. 136 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1977); F.A.M. Alting von Geusau and J. Pelkmans, ed., *National Economic Security: Perceptions: Threats and Policies*, (Tilburg, the Netherlands: John F. Kennedy Institute, 1982), pp.47-61; Raimo Vayrynen, “Towards a Comprehensive Definition of Security: Pitfalls and Promises”, Paper prepared for the 31st Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C. April 10-14, 1990; Klaus Knorr and Frank Trager, *Economic Issues and National*

a catch-all concept, and urging the retention of the original state-centric and war-centric focus of security studies.⁶

This paper looks at another, less pronounced but ultimately more significant, reason why a redefinition of security is called for. The Cold War period was marked by a preoccupation of security studies scholars with issues and problems of a particular segment of the international system. As with other key concepts of international relations, national security assumed a Westphalian universe of nation-states and dwelled primarily on the responses of Western governments and societies, particularly the US, to the problem of war. The issues and experiences within the other segment, collectively labelled as the Third World, were not fully incorporated into the discourse of security studies. Because the international system as a whole was seen as a “transplantation of the European territorial state”, the concept of national security was taken to be a general model, “reflecting the universalisation of the competitive European style of anarchic international relations.”⁷

This “exclusion” of the Third World from the Cold War security studies agenda was evident in both policy and academic arenas.⁸ Superpower diplomacy carefully distinguished the “central

Security (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1977); Stephen D. Krasner, “National Security and Economics”, in B. Thomas Trout and James E. Harf, ed. *National Security Affairs* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1982), pp.313-328; Giacomo Luciani, “The Economic Content of Security”, *Journal of Public Policy*, vol. 8, no. 2 (April-June 1989), pp. 151-173; Al Gedicks, “The New Resource Wars”, *Raw Materials Reports*, vol.1, no.2 (1982), pp.8-13; Joseph J. Romm, *Defining National Security: The Non-Military Aspects*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993), pp.51-80; J. Ann Tickner, “Redefining Security: A Feminist Perspective”, Paper Presented to the Annual Meeting of the Northwestern Political Science and Northeast International Studies Association, November 1989; Brad Roberts, “Human Rights and International Security”, *The Washington Quarterly*, (Spring 1990), pp.65-75.

⁶For important contributions to the debate on the broadening of security, see: Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, R.B.J. Walker, *The Concept of Security and International Relations Theory*, Working paper no. 3, (First Annual Conference on Discourse, Peace, Security and International Society, Ballyvaughn, Ireland, August 9-16, 1987); Stephen M. Walt, “The Renaissance of Security Studies” *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1991), pp. 211-239; Edward A. Kolodziej, “Renaissance in Security Studies: Caveat Lector”, *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.36, no.4 (December 1992), pp.421-438; Sean M. Lynn-Jones, “International Security Studies”, *International Studies Notes*, vol.16, no.3 (Fall and Winter 1992), pp.53-63; Deudney, D. (1990) The Case Against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 19(3), pp.461-476; “Forum: ‘What is Security and Security Studies?’ Revisited”, Special Section of *Arms Control*, vol.13, no.3 (December 1992), pp.463-544; Joseph S. Nye, “The Contribution of Strategic Studies: Future Challenges”, in *The Changing Strategic Landscape*, Part I, Adelphi Paper no. 235 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989), pp.20-34; Halftendorn, “The Security Puzzle”, op.cit.; Simon Dalby, “Security, Modernity and Ecology: The Dilemmas of Post-Cold War Security Discourse”, *Alternatives*, vol.17 (1992), pp.95-134.

⁷The words used here are those of Barry Buzan. While Buzan himself is a strong advocate of the broadening of the focus of security studies to non-military threats and to the Third World, he assumes the larger international system to be based on the universal European model. Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, op.cit., p.204.

⁸The most important exceptions to the general neglect of Third World security issues are: Mohammed Ayoub, “Security in the Third World: The Worm About to Turn”, *International Affairs*, vol.60, no.1 (1984), pp. 41-51; Mohammed Ayoub, “Regional Security and the Third World”, in Mohammed Ayoub, ed., *Regional Security in the Third World* (London: Croom Helm), pp.3-23; Bahgat Korany, “Strategic Studies and the Third World: A Critical Appraisal”, *International Social Science Journal* 38, no. 4 (1986), pp. 547-562; Udo Steinbach, “Sources of Third

strategic balance” (involving superpower nuclear deterrence and their European alliances) from regional conflict and regional security (conflict and conflict-management issues arising primarily in the Third World). In the academic literature, what was considered “mainstream” focussed on “the centrality of the East-West divide to the rest of global politics”.⁹ Attention to problems of regional instability in the Third World was given only to the extent that it had the potential to affect the superpower relationship. Not surprisingly therefore, in surveying the state of the field of international security studies in 1988, Nye and Lynn-Jones found that, “regional security issues (apart from Western Europe)...received inadequate attention, a fact attributable to “ethnocentric biases” resulting from “the development of security studies in the United States more than in other countries”.¹⁰

The tendency of security studies to focus on a particular segment of the international system to the exclusion of another is ironic given the fact that it is in the neglected arena that the vast majority

World Conflict”, in *Third World Conflict and International Security*, Adelphi Papers no.166 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981),pp. 21-28; Soedjatmoko, “Patterns of Armed Conflict in the Third World”, *Alternatives*, vol.10, no.4 (1985), pp.477-493; Edward Azar and Chung-in Moon, “Third World National Security: Towards a New Conceptual Framework”, *International Interactions*, vol.11, no.2 (1984),pp. 103-135; Barry Buzan, “The Concept of National Security for Developing Countries With Special Reference to Southeast Asia”, Paper presented to the Workshop on “Leadership and Security in Southeast Asia”, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 10-12 December 1987; Barry Buzan, “People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in the Third World”, in Edward Azar and Chung-in Moon, eds., *National Security in the Third World* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1988),pp. 14-43; Caroline Thomas, *In Search of Security: The Third World in International Relations* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books), p.1; Yezid Sayigh, *Confronting the 1990s: Security in the Developing Countries*, Adelphi Papers no.251 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1990); Brian L. Job, ed., *The (In)Security Dilemma: The National Security of Third World States* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1992); Mohammed Ayoob, “The Security Problematic of the Third World”, *World Politics* 43, no.2 (January 1991),pp. 257-283. Steven R. David, “Explaining Third World Alignment”, *World Politics*, vol.43, no.2 (January 1991),pp. 232-256. Caroline Thomas provides a succinct overview of the place of Third World issues in international security studies in her “New Directions in Thinking About Security in the Third World”, in Ken Booth ed., *New Thinking About Strategy and International Security* (London: HarperCollins, 1991), pp.267-289.

⁹Hugh Macdonald, “Strategic Studies”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol.16, no.2 (1987), pp.333-336.

¹⁰Joseph S. Nye and Sean M. Lynn-Jones, “International Security Studies: Report of a Conference on the State of the Field”, *International Security*, vol.12, no.4 (1988), p.27. Major theoretical attempts to develop a theoretical understanding of Third World regional conflict and security issues during the Cold War period include Ayoob's work on regional security in the Third World and Buzan's work on “regional security complexes”. Contending that “issues of regional security in the developed world are defined primarily in Cold War terms (NATO versus Warsaw Pact, etc.) and are, therefore, largely indivisible from issues of systemic security”, Ayoob convincingly demonstrated that “the salient regional security issues in the Third World have a life of their own independent of superpower rivalry...” Buzan similarly urged greater attention to the “set of security dynamics at the regional level” in order to “develop the concepts and language for systematic comparative studies, still an area of conspicuous weakness in Third World studies.” His work focussed on “how the regional level mediates the interplay between states and the international system as a whole”.

See: Ayoob, “Regional Security and the Third World”, op.cit; Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, op.cit. p.186 and Buzan, “Third World Regional Security in Structural and Historical Perspective”, in Brian L. Job, ed., *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1992), pp. 167-189.

of conflicts have taken place.¹¹ Moreover, the security predicament of the Third World states challenges several key elements of the national security paradigm, especially its state-centric and war-centric universe. The Third World's problems of insecurity and their relationship with the larger issues of international order have been quite different from what was envisaged under the dominant notion.

Against this backdrop, this paper has two main goals. The first is to provide a broad outline of the security experience of Third World states during the Cold War period with a view to suggesting the problems of applying the “dominant” understanding of security in the Third World milieu. The second is to examine ways in which the Cold War experience will benefit our analysis of the prospects for regional conflict and international order in the post-Cold War era.

National Security, Regional Conflicts and the Emergence of the Third World

The emergence of the Third World challenged the dominant understanding of security in three important respects: (1) its focus on the inter-state level as the point of origin of security threats; (2) its exclusion of “non-military phenomena” from the security studies agenda and (3) its belief in the global balance of power as a legitimate and effective instrument of international order.

As noted earlier, during the Cold War, the vast majority of the world's conflicts occurred in the Third World. Most of these conflicts were intra-state in nature (anti-regime insurrections, civil wars, tribal conflicts etc). A study by Istvan Kende estimates that of the 120 wars during the 1945-76 period, 102 were internal wars (including anti-regime wars and tribal conflicts); while another study by Kidron and Segal covering the 1973-86 period found a mix of 66 internal wars and 30 border wars.¹²

Thus, the so-called “regional conflicts” in the Cold War period were essentially domestic in origin. Many of them were aggravation of tensions emerging from the process of state formation and regime maintenance. The proliferation of such conflicts reflected the limited internal socio-political cohesion of the newly-independent states, rather than the workings of the globally competitive relationship between the two superpowers.

The roots of Third World instability during the Cold War period were to be found in “weak” state structures that emerged from the process of decolonisation, i.e. structures that lacked a close fit between the state's territorial dimensions and its ethnic and societal composition. The concept of “national” security is of limited utility in explaining this security predicament. As Steinbach suggests, “The concept of ‘nation’, introduced by colonial powers or by small elites who saw in it

¹¹Evan Luard estimates that between 1945 and 1986, there were some 127 “significant wars”. Out of these, only 2 took occurred in Europe, while Latin America accounted for 26, Africa 31, the Middle East, 24, and Asia 44. According to this estimate, the Third World was the scene of more than 98 percent of all international conflicts. Evan Luard, *War in International Society* (London: I.B. Tauris), Appendix 5.

¹²Cited in Caroline Thomas, “New Directions in Thinking about Security in the Third World”, in Ken Booth, ed., *New Thinking about Strategy and International Security* (London: HarperCollins Academic, 1991), p.269.

the prerequisite for the fulfilment of their own political aspirations, materialized in a way which went against territorial, ethnic, religious, geographical or culto-historical traditions".¹³ As a result, to quote Mohammed Ayoob, most Third World states emerged without a "capacity to ensure the habitual identification of their inhabitants with the post-colonial structures that have emerged within colonially-dictated boundaries".¹⁴ The most common outcome of this was, and continues to be, conflict about national identity.

The relatively brief time available to Third World governments for creating viable political structures out of anti-colonial struggles as well as conditions of poverty, underdevelopment and resource scarcity limit their capacity for pursuing developmental objectives in order to ensure domestic stability. Moreover, domestic conflicts in the Third World are often responsible for a wider regional instability. Revolutions, insurgencies and ethnic separatist movements frequently spill over across national boundaries to fuel discord with neighbours. Ethnic minorities fighting the dominant elite rarely honour state boundaries, often seeking sanctuary in neighbouring states where the regime and population might be more sympathetic to their cause. Weak states were more vulnerable to foreign intervention, as outside powers, including the superpowers, could take advantage of their domestic strife to advance their economic and ideological interests.

These general patterns of regional instability were compounded by the particular insecurities of the ruling elite in Third World states.¹⁵ Most Third World societies exhibited a lack of consensus on the basic rules of political accommodation, power-sharing and governance. Regime-creation and regime-maintenance were often a product of violent societal struggles, governed by no stable constitutional framework. The narrow base of Third World regimes and the various challenges to their survival affected the way in which "national security" policy was articulated and pursued. In such a milieu, the regime's instinct for self-preservation often took precedence over the security interests of the society or the nation. As Buzan argues, "it is tempting to identify national security with the governmental institutions that express the state, but...governments and institutions have security interests of their own which are separate from those of the state, and which are often opposed to broader national interests as aligned with them".¹⁶

As a result, the nature of national security as an "ambiguous symbol" is more pronounced in Third World societies than in the industrial North. In his critique of the national security paradigm, Rob Walker observes that "the state itself, far from being the provider of security as in the conventional view, has in many ways been a primary source of insecurity...it is difficult to see how any useful concept of security can ignore the participation of states in 'disappearances' and abuse

¹³Udo Steinbach, "Sources of Third World Conflict", p. 21.

¹⁴Ayoob, "Regional Security and the Third World", pp. 9-10.

¹⁵Brain L. Job, "The Insecurity Dilemma", in Brian L. Job, ed., *The (In)Security Dilemma: The National Security of Third World States* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

¹⁶ Buzan, "The Concept of National Security for Developing Countries", p.6.

of human rights in so many societies.”¹⁷ The Third World experience is particularly relevant in challenging the Realist image of the state as a provider of security.

Another way in which the emergence of the Third World challenged the dominant understanding of security relates to the place of “non-military” issues in the latter. As mentioned earlier, national security as articulated by Western policy-makers in the immediate post-World War II period was primarily concerned with war-prevention. The role of non-military threats did not constitute part of the agenda of national security. To date, the dominant understanding of security resists the inclusion of “non-military” phenomena in the security studies agenda. A good example is Stephen Walt's survey of the field, which clearly rejects the inclusion of such phenomena as “pollution, disease, child abuse, or economic recessions” into security studies, because this would “destroy its intellectual coherence”. Walt also argues that “the fact that other hazards exist does not mean that the danger of war has been eliminated.”¹⁸ On the more specific case of ecological issues, some have argued that conflict and violence in the international system had little to do with ecological degradation.¹⁹ This perspective “disentangles resource conflicts from those leading to war and delinks security-from-violence from security from environmental degradation.”²⁰

But the logic of accepting a broader notion of security becomes less contestable when one looks at the Third World experience. From the very outset, resource scarcity, overpopulation, underdevelopment, and environmental degradation were at the heart of insecurity in the Third World. These essentially “non-military” threats were much more intimately linked to the security predicament of the Third World than that of the developed countries. Economic development and well-being were closely linked not only because, “a semblance of security and stability is a prerequisite for successful economic development”, but also because “It is also generally understood within the Third World that economic development can contribute to national security; an economically weak nation can be exploited or defeated more easily by foreign powers and may be exposed periodically to the violent wrath of dissatisfied citizens.”²¹ While problems such as lack of sufficient food, water, housing are not part of the national security agenda of developed states, they very much hold the balance between conflict and order in the Third World. Thus, as Caroline Thomas puts it, “security in the context of the Third World does not simply refer to the military dimension, as is often assumed in the Western discussions of the concept, but to the *whole range of*

¹⁷Walker, *The Concept of Security and International Relations Theory*, op.cit., p.11.

¹⁸Stephen M. Walt, “The Renaissance of Security Studies” *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1991),pp. 211-239.

¹⁹Daniel Deudney, “The Case Against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol.19, no.3 (1990),pp. 464-465.

²⁰Marc Williams, “Re-articulating the Third World Coalition: the Role of the Environmental Agenda”, *Third World Quarterly*, vol.14, no.1 (1993),p.27.

²¹H. John Rosenbaum and William G. Tyler, “South-South Relations: the Economic and Political Content of Interactions among Developing Countries”, *International Organization*, vol.29, no.1 (1975), pp.243-274.

dimensions of a state's existence which has been taken care of in the more developed states, especially those in the West.” (emphasis added)²²

The vulnerability of Third World states to resource, ecological and other transnational threats is compounded by their lack of material, human and institutional capacity to deal with these problems. In addition, Third World states enjoy little influence over the international context within which these problems arise. In Vayrynen's view, “Because of the fragility of social system, the marginal costs of economic vulnerability, ecological degradation and ethnic fragmentation are greater problems in developing countries than in industrialized countries (where the absolute damage may be greater, however)”. Therefore, “In developing countries, the notion of national security cannot be separated from the non-military threats to security.”²³

Finally, the Third World's emergence challenged the legitimacy of the dominant instrument of the Cold War international order. The principal anchor of that order, the global superpower rivalry, was viewed with profound mistrust throughout the Third World. This is evident from the “dissident” role of the Third World in the system of states. Hedley Bull saw the collective aim of the Third World to lie in its desire “to destroy the old international order and establish a new one, to shake off the rules and institutions devised by the old established forces (in Sukarno's phrase) and create new rules and institutions that will express the aspirations of the new emerging forces.”²⁴ The role of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in demanding a speedy completion of the decolonisation process, opposing superpower non-interference in the Third World, advocating global disarmament and the strengthening of global and regional mechanisms for conflict-resolution, testified to the collective resistance of Third World states to the system of international order resulting from superpower rivalry.²⁵ While NAM's record in realising these objectives has attracted much criticism, it was able to provide a collective psychological framework for Third World states to strengthen their independence and to play an active role in international affairs.²⁶

²²Thomas, *In Search of Security*, op.cit., p.1.

²³Vayrynen, “Towards a Comprehensive Definition of Security”, op.cit., p.10.

²⁴Hedley Bull, “The Third World and International Society”, in George W. Keeton and George Schwarzenberger, eds., *The Yearbook on International Affairs 1979* (London: Stevens and Sons, 1979), p.18.

²⁵On the origins and role of NAM see: Peter Lyon, *Neutralism*, (Leicester University Press, 1963); A.W. Singham and S. Hume, *Non-Alignment in the Age of Alignments*, (London: Zed Books, 1986); Peter Willetts, *The Non-Aligned Movement* (London: Frances Pinter, 1978); Satish Kumar, “Non-Alignment: International Goals and National Interests”, *Asian Survey*, vol.xxiii, no.4 (April 1983), pp.445-61; Fred Halliday, “The Maturing of the Non-Aligned: Perspectives from New Delhi”, *Third World Affairs* (London: Third World Foundation, 1985); Bojana Tadic, “The Movement of the Non-Aligned and Its Dilemmas Today”, *Review of International Affairs*, vol.32, no. 756, 5 October 1981, pp. 19-24; A.W. Singham, ed., *The Non-Aligned Movement in World Politics* (Westport, Conn. 1977).

²⁶Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, “NAM and Security”, *Strategic Studies* (Islamabad), vol.xiv, no.3 (Spring 1991), p.15.

Membership in NAM provided many Third World states with some room to manoeuvre in their relationship with the superpowers and to resist pressures for alliances and alignment.²⁷

The Third World's collective attitude towards superpower rivalry poses a challenge to Realist international theory. A structural Realist understanding of international relations, developed by Waltz and Mearsheimer,²⁸ credits the Cold War and bipolarity for ensuring a “stable” international order. But this perspective was misleading insofar as the Third World was concerned. The Cold War “order”, instead of dampening conflicts in the Third World, actually contributed to their escalation. Although rarely a direct cause of Third World conflicts,²⁹ the Cold War opportunism and influence-seeking of superpowers contributed significantly to the ultimate severity of many cases of incipient and latent strife in the Third World. It led to the internationalization of civil war and internalization of superpower competition.³⁰ It also contributed to the prolongation of regional wars by preventing decisive results in at least some theatres, including the major regional conflicts of the 1970s and 80s: in Central America, Angola, Horn of Africa, Cambodia, Afghanistan, and in the Iran-Iraq War.³¹

Thus, superpower rivalry, while keeping the “long peace” in Europe, served to exacerbate the problems of regional conflict and instability in the Third World. The superpowers' shared interest in avoiding direct military confrontation (with its attendant risk of mutual nuclear annihilation) might have led them to enforce a degree of restraint on the behaviour of their more adventurous Third World clients and thereby avoid dangerous escalation of certain regional conflicts (in the Middle East and East Asia).³² But the Cold War also permitted a great deal of violence and disorder in the Third World. While nuclear deterrence prevented even the most minor form of warfare between the two power blocs in Europe, superpower intervention in regional conflicts elsewhere were “permitted” as a necessary “safety valve”.³³ Some writers have argued that superpower intervention in the Third World was subject to a set of “implicit rules of the game” which

²⁷Mohammed Ayoob, “The Third World in the System of States: Acute Schizophrenia or Growing Pains”, *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.33 (1989), p.75.

²⁸Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Stability of a Bipolar World”, *Daedalus*, vol.93, no.3 (Summer 1964), pp.881-909; John Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War”, *International Security*, vol. 15, no.1 (Summer 1990),pp. 5-55.

²⁹Edward A. Kolodziej and Robert Harkavy, “Developing States and the International Security System”, in *Journal of International Affairs*, vol.34, no.1 (Spring/Summer 1980), p.63.

³⁰Shahram Chubin, “The Super-powers, Regional Conflicts and World Order”, in *The Changing Strategic Landscape*, Adelphi Papers, no. 237(London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989),p. 78.

³¹In a comprehensive survey of 107 wars in the Third World between 1945 and 1990, Guy Arnold found that “...many would almost certainly have been far shorter in duration and less devastating in their effects had the big powers not intervened.” See: Arnold, *Wars in the Third World since 1945* (London: Cassell Publishers, 1991),p. xvi.

³²Mohammed Ayoob, “State Making, State Breaking and State Failure: Explaining the Roots of Third World Insecurity”, Paper prepared for the seminar on Conflict and Development: Causes, Effects and Remedies”, The Hague, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 22-24 March 1994, pp.8-9.

³³Ayoob, “Regional Security and the Third World”, p. 14.

contributed to order and stability in the Third World.³⁴ But on closer examination, it becomes apparent that a great deal of the superpowers' attempts to devise a code of conduct for Third World conflicts were ad hoc, prescriptive and limited.³⁵ It left considerable room for the escalation and prolongation of local and regional wars.³⁶

Similarly, the Third World security experience during the Cold War explains why mechanisms for international order that reflected and were shaped by superpower balancing strategies were of limited effectiveness in promoting regional security. The limitations of balance of power arrangements lay in their limited relevance. Steven David points out that for a balance of power approach to be effective, “the determinants of alignment [must] come overwhelmingly from the structure of the international system, particularly the actual and potential *external* threats that states face.”³⁷ But in the Third World, it is the “internal characteristics of the states” that usually influence alignments. Thus, no superpower-sponsored instrument of international order can be effective unless it is able to address the clients states' internal (including regime security) concerns. This factor explains the failure of outward-looking regional security alliances such as the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), and the relative success (at least initially) of more internal security oriented regional security arrangements such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).³⁸

Security in the Post-Cold War Era: The Relevance of the Third World Experience

The above-mentioned features of insecurity in the Third World constitute a highly relevant explanatory framework for analysing the major sources of instability in the post-Cold War era. To

³⁴On the superpower rules of the game see: Roger E. Kanet and Edward A. Kolodziej, *The Cold War as Cooperation: Superpower Cooperation in Regional Conflict Management* (London: Macmillan, 1991); Joanne Gowa and Nils Wessell, *Ground Rules: Soviet and American Involvement in Regional Conflicts* (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1982); Neil Matheson, *The 'Rules of the Game' of the Superpower Military Intervention in the Third World* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), Alexander George, “Factors Influencing Security Co-operation”, in Alexander George, Philip J. Farley and Alexander Dallin, eds., *U.S.-Soviet Security Cooperation: Achievements, Failures and Lessons* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 655-678; Jose T. Cintra, “Regional Conflicts: Trends in a Period of Transition”, in *The Changing Strategic Landscape*. Adelphi Paper 237 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989), pp. 94-108; Stanley Hoffmann, “Watch Out for a New World Disorder”, *International Herald Tribune*, 26 February 1991, p.6; Robert Jervis, “The Future of World Politics: Will it Resemble the Past?”, *International Security* (1992).

³⁵See Alexander George et al, *Managing the U.S.-Soviet Rivalry: Problems of Crisis Prevention* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983), pp.367-79.

³⁶Amitav Acharya, *Third World Conflicts and International Order after the Cold War*, Working Paper no.135 (Australian National University, Peace Research Centre, 1993).

³⁷Steven R. David, “Explaining Third World Alignment”, *World Politics* 43, no.2 (January 1991), pp. 233-255.

³⁸Amitav Acharya, “Regionalism and Regime Security in the Third World: Comparing the Origins of ASEAN and the GCC”, in Brian L. Job, ed., *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

begin with, they help an understanding of the emergence and escalation of conflicts and instability in the new states of Europe and Central Asia, which now constitute some of the most serious threats to the post-Cold War international order. Even though one may debate whether these states should be formally recognised as forming part of the “Third World”, it is quite clear that there are striking similarities between the former's security problems and those of the existing Third World category. These include fairly low levels of socio-political cohesion and a strong element of state-nation dichotomy, with consequent problems of ethnic strife and regime insecurity. As Ayooob argues, “In terms of their colonial background, the arbitrary construction of their boundaries by external powers, the lack of societal cohesion, their recent emergence into juridical statehood, and their stage of development, the states of the Caucasus and Central Asia as well as of the Balkans demonstrate political, economic and social characteristics that are in many ways akin to Asian, African, and Latin American states that have been traditionally considered as constituting the Third World.”³⁹

In a broader context, the Third World security experience suggests the need to view the majority of the post-Cold War conflicts and their militarisation in primarily local terms, rather than as a byproduct of the changing structure of the international system from bipolarity to multipolarity. Some have suggested that the Cold War had suppressed “many potential third-world conflicts”; its end will ensure that “other conflicts will very probably arise from decompression and from a loosening of the controls and self-controls” exercised by the superpowers.⁴⁰ But, such a view obscures the unchanged role of essentially domestic and intra-regional factors related to weak national integration, economic underdevelopment and competition for political legitimacy and control in shaping regional instability. Moritan has argued that:

Many of the regional problems and or conflicts that were essentially local expressions of the rivalry are now proving soluble. But there are many other conflicts rooted in other sources, among them historical, political, colonial, ethnic, religious, or socio-economic legacies, that continue to produce international tensions. Cutting across these local issues are the major disparities of wealth and opportunity that separate the industrialized nations and the developing world. These have existed for decades. The failure to deal effectively with this gap is a source of additional tension, which itself frustrates long-term efforts to provide wider prosperity. The end of the Cold War has been irrelevant for many such conflicts.⁴¹

Such a perspective underscores the need to rethink structuralist conceptions that tend to view regional security as a function of systemic forces. During the Cold War, the theory of “regional subsystems” contributed to a system-dominant view of regional security (since a “subsystem” can

³⁹Mohammed Ayooob, “State Making, State Breaking and State Failure: Explaining the Roots of Third World Insecurity”, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁰Jose Thiago Cintra, “Regional Conflicts: Trends in a Period of Transition”, in *The Changing Strategic Landscape*, Adelphi Paper no. 237 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989),pp. 96-97.

⁴¹Roberto Garcia Moritan, “The Developing World and the New World Order”, *The Washington Quarterly*, vol.15, no.4 (Autumn 1992), p.151.

only be located in relation to a larger international system).⁴² Barry Buzan's concept of "security complex"⁴³ offers a more powerful and specific tool for regional security analysis by focussing on "local sets of states...whose major security perceptions and concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national security perceptions cannot realistically be considered apart from one another."⁴⁴ But Buzan too sees security complexes as localised sets of anarchy mirroring the international system at large and whose existence is revealed and shaped largely by structural shifts. Thus, in Buzan's view, colonialism and the Cold War constituted a structural "overlay" in which regional security complexes were shaped primarily by system-wide Great Power interactions. This overlay had suppressed many regional conflicts, which are now set to reappear.⁴⁵ Such a structuralist bias may inhibit an appreciation of the range of social, cultural and political forces that may be unique to different regions, and which may not be significantly affected by the end of the Cold War.

There is sufficient empirical evidence to support Halliday's view that "since the causes of third world upheaval [were] to a considerable extent independent of Soviet-US rivalry they will continue irrespective of relations between Washington and Moscow".⁴⁶ In Africa, which the US Defense Intelligence Agency rates to be "the most unstable region in the Third World",⁴⁷ recent outbreaks of conflict, as in Rwanda and Somalia, are rooted in old ethnic and tribal animosities.⁴⁸ In Asia, the end of the two major Cold War conflicts (Afghanistan and Cambodia) leaves a number of ethnic insurgencies and separatist movements. In South Asia, the problem of political instability and ethnic separatism continue to occupy the governments of India (Assam, Kashmir and the Punjab), Pakistan (demands for autonomy in the Sind province) and Sri Lanka (Tamil separatism).⁴⁹ The Southeast Asian governments face similar problems, especially in Indonesia (Aceh, East Timor, Irian Jaya), Myanmar (Karen and Shan guerrillas), and the Philippines (the New People's Army). In

⁴²For the theory of regional subsystems, see Louis J. Cantori and Steven L. Spiegel, *The International Politics of Regions: A Comparative Approach* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970); William R. Thompson, "The Regional Subsystem: Conceptual Explication and Propositional Inventory", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 17, no.1 (March 1973), pp. 89-118.

⁴³Barry Buzan, "A Framework for Regional Security Analysis", in Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi, eds. *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp.3-33; Buzan *Regional Security*, Arbejdspapirer, no.28 (Copenhagen: Centre for Peace and Conflict Research, 1989).

⁴⁴Buzan "A Framework for Regional Security Analysis", p. 8.

⁴⁵See Barry Buzan, "Third World Security in Historical and Structural Perspective", in Brian L. Job, ed. *The Insecurity Dilemma*, op.cit. It should be noted that Buzan's focus on overlay sets him apart from the work of Mohammed Ayoob. While both called for greater attention to the regional and local sources of conflict and cooperation, Ayoob's was specifically focussed on the Third World, while Buzan's approach placed greater emphasis on the role of systemic determinants (such as colonialism and superpower rivalry) in shaping regional security trends. This seems to undercut his earlier call for "the relative autonomy of regional security relations".

⁴⁶Fred Halliday, *Cold War, Third World*, p. 162.

⁴⁷"Regional Flashpoints Potential for Military Conflict", p. 7.

⁴⁸"Africa's Tribal Wars", *The Economist*, 13 October 1990, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁹"Tribalism Revisited", *The Economist*, 21 December 1991-3 January 1992, p. 24.

the more economically developed parts of the Third World, the primary security concerns of the ruling regimes derive from what Chubin calls the “stresses and strains of economic development, political integration, legitimation and institutionalization.”⁵⁰ A good example is the situation in the Persian Gulf, where despite the recent attention to inter-state wars (e.g. the Iran-Iraq War and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait), the “threat from within” remains a central cause of concerns about the stability and survival of the traditional monarchies. While it is tempting to explain the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, billed to be the first Third World conflict of the post-Cold War era, as an act of opportunism in the face of declining superpower involvement in the region, the roots of this conflict can only be explained in terms of the nature and position of the Saddam Hussein regime within the Iraqi polity. The Iraqi aggression was at least partly an attempt by the regime to ensure its survival in the face of a growing economic burden imposed by the Iran-Iraq War and the consequent political challenges to its legitimacy.

There is another reason why the Third World security experience is highly relevant to post-Cold War security analysis. Conflicts in the post-Cold War are likely to become even more “regional” in their origin and scope due to the changing context of Great Power intervention. The post-Cold War era is witnessing a greater regional differentiation in Great Power interests and involvement in the Third World. In a bipolar world, as Kenneth Waltz argued, “with two powers capable of acting on a world scale, anything that happen[ed] anywhere [was] potentially of concern to both of them.”⁵¹ In a multipolar world, not all Great Powers would wield a similar capacity, and the only power capable of global power projection, the US, is likely to be quite selective in choosing its areas of engagement. This will render conflict-formation and management in these areas more “localised”, subject to regional patterns of amity and enmity, and the interventionist role of regionally-dominant powers. The diffusion of military power to the Third World is enabling some regional powers to exercise greater influence in shaping conflict and cooperation in their respective areas.

With the end of the Cold War, some parts of the Third World are likely to experience a shift from internal to external security concerns, while others will remain primarily concerned with internal stability. There are indications that territorial disputes could become more salient for a growing number of Third World states in Africa, Latin America (Ecuador and Peru) and Southeast Asia (especially among the ASEAN nations). The more developed states in the Third World such as the newly industrialising countries, are reshaping defence capabilities from counter-insurgency to conventional warfare postures. (For example, the Gulf Cooperation Council members are devoting more resources to external security after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, while in Southeast Asia, there is a distinct shift from internal security to external defence capabilities). A number of major Third World powers, such as India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Iran, are developing extended

⁵⁰Shahram Chubin, “Third World Conflicts: Trends and Prospects”, *International Social Science Journal*, vol xliii, no.1 (1991),p. 159.

⁵¹Kenneth N, Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1979),p. 171.

power projection capabilities, which is bound to alarm their neighbours into giving greater attention to external security.

In general, the end of the Cold War is not having a single or uniform effect on Third World stability. In some parts of the Third World, such as in sub-Saharan Africa, the end of the Cold War has led to greater domestic disorder, while in Southeast Asia it has led to increased domestic tranquillity and regional order (with the end of communist insurgencies and settlement of the Cambodia conflict) and in the Middle East, to greater inter-state cooperation (especially after the Israeli-Palestinian accords). In Africa, the end of the Cold War has contributed to a sharp decline in arms imports, while in East Asia, it has created fears of a vigorous arms race. The rise of domestic conflicts in Africa contrasts sharply with the settlement of its long-standing regional conflicts (especially in Southern Africa). In Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Korean Peninsula, the end of the Cold War has led to greater inter-state conflict. Regional hegemonism is a marked trend in East Asia with China's emergence, but elsewhere, it is the regional powers, India, Vietnam and Iraq which have felt the squeeze by being denied privileged access to arms and aid from their superpower patrons. In view of the above, it is not helpful to view conflict structures in the post-Cold War period as the product of a single structural or systemic realignment; a more differentiated view of the post-Cold War disorder is required.

Finally, the Third World security experience suggests the need to focus on economic and ecological changes which are giving rise to new forms of regional conflicts. The issue of economic development remains at the heart of many of these conflicts. Although economically-induced instability in the Third World has been traditionally viewed as a function of underdevelopment, such instability is becoming more associated with the strategies for, and the achievement of, developmental success. In Africa, "structural adjustment" and growth oriented economic liberalisation mandated by lending agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank has led to acute political strife and regime insecurity. On the other hand, many of the successful developing countries of East and Southeast Asia today exhibit the "performance paradox". In these cases, authoritarian regimes seeking legitimacy through the performance criteria, i.e. rapid economic development, are confronted with the paradoxical outcome of political instability caused by an erosion of traditional social values and/or demands for political participation by an expanded middle class population. As a result, the security predicament of countries with considerable developmental success (such as the NICs and near-NICs) remains essentially "Third Worldish"; i.e. for these states, the threat from within is arguably more severe than the threat from without. In this sense, the concept of a Third World, while of diminishing analytical utility in economic terms (given the accelerating economic differentiation among regions), remains a useful and relevant category for security analysis.

Numerous empirical studies have established that the Third World is the main arena of conflicts and instability linked to environmental degradation.⁵² The view of the environment as a global common should not obscure the fact that the scale of environmental degradation, its consequences in fostering intra- and inter-state conflict and the problems of addressing these issues within the framework of the nation-state, are more acute in the Third World than in the developed states. Of the three categories of conflict identified by Homer-Dixon⁵³ as being related to environmental degradation, two: “simple scarcity conflicts” (conflict over natural resources such as river, water, fish, and agriculturally-productive land), and “relative deprivation conflicts” (the impact of environmental degradation in limiting growth and thereby causing popular discontent and conflict), are most acute in the Third World. Moreover, environmental degradation originating in the Third World is increasingly a potential basis for conflict *between* the North and the South, as poorer nations demand greater share of the world's wealth and Third World environmental refugees aggravate existing “group-identity conflicts” (the problems of social assimilation of the migrant population) in the host countries.

The Third World security experience is helpful not only in understanding the sources of insecurity in the post-Cold War era, but also for judging the effectiveness of global order-maintenance mechanisms. As during the Cold War period, the management of international order today reflects the dominant role of Great Powers, albeit now operating in a multipolar setting. The sole remaining superpower, the US, has taken the lead in espousing a New World Order, whose key elements include a revival of “collective security” and the relatively newer frameworks of humanitarian intervention and non-proliferation. But as during the Cold War period, attempts by the globally-dominant actors to manage international order do not correspond with regional realities in the Third World. Moreover, these attempts have contributed to a climate of mistrust and exacerbated North-South tensions.

For example, Bush's vision of a New World Order promised a return to multilateralism and the revival of the UN's collective security framework. But the first major test of this New World Order, the US-led response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, prompted widespread misgivings in the Third World. Although the UN resolutions against Iraq were supported by most Third World states, this was accompanied by considerable resentment of the US domination of the UN decision-making process. The US's military actions against Iraq were seen as having exceeded the mandate of UN resolutions,⁵⁴ and the US claims about collective security were greeted with skepticism. Many in the

⁵²For example, much of the evidence cited by Jessica T. Mathews to support her arguments concerning redefining security are from the Third World. See Mathews, “Redefining Security”, op. cit.

⁵³Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, “On the Threshold: Environmental Change as Causes of Acute Conflict”, *International Security*, vol.16, no.2 (Fall 1991),pp. 76-116.

⁵⁴During the 1990-91 Gulf Crisis, the US pressure on the UN gave the impression that the world body was being manipulated for the narrow strategic purpose of a superpower. Although the US sought to inject a degree of legitimacy to its actions by seeking UN endorsement, in the final analysis, the US would have pursued its strategic options irrespective of the UN mandate. Richard Falk observed that “...behind this formal mandate from the United Nations [to the US approach to the Gulf crisis] lie extremely serious questions about

South would perhaps agree with Zbigniew Brzezinski's remark that "...once the symbolism of collective action was stripped away...[the war against Iraq] was largely an American decision and relied primarily on American military power".⁵⁵ The Gulf War fed apprehensions in the Third World that in the "unipolar moment", the US, along with like-minded Western powers, would use the pretext of multilateralism to pursue essentially unilateral objectives in post-Cold War conflicts. Conflicts in those areas deemed to be "vital" important to the Western powers will be especially susceptible to Northern unilateralism.

As with collective security, armed intervention in support of humanitarian objectives has the potential to exacerbate North-South tensions. The concept of "humanitarian intervention" calls for military action against regimes which are too weak to provide for the well-being of their citizens (Somalia) or which are classic predatory rulers that prey upon their own citizens (Iraq). But the advent of humanitarian intervention has created some serious misgivings in the Third World. A few Third World regimes view this as a kind of recycled imperialism, while those taking a more tolerant view worry nonetheless about the effects of such a sovereignty-defying instrument. While these fears have not prevented the UN from undertaking humanitarian missions, those operations relying primarily on US power (such as Somalia) have been particularly controversial. Moreover, the Somali case suggests that humanitarian operations are unlikely to be effective unless they also address the underlying political sources of regional conflicts; the provision of humanitarian relief to a starving population will not by itself promote stability unless it is matched by a corresponding effort to bring about long-term political accommodation within Somali society. The complex interplay of ethnic rivalry (weak state) and political anarchy, hallmarks of the Third World regional conflict situations during the Cold War, continues to undermine the effectiveness of post-Cold War frameworks of international order.

Another area of disagreement in global order-maintenance concerns arms control and non-proliferation measures. While the transfer of conventional arms to the Third World⁵⁶ clearly aggravates regional instability, the arms control discourse of the "New World Order" focuses

whether the UN has been true to its own Charter, and to the larger purposes of peace and justice that it was established to serve. And beyond these concerns is the disturbing impression that the United Nations has been converted into a virtual tool of US foreign policy, thus compromising its future credibility, regardless of how the Gulf crisis turns out". Richard Falk, 'UN being made a tool of US foreign policy', *Guardian Weekly*, 27 January 1991, p.12. See also, "The Use and Abuse of the UN in the Gulf Crisis", *Middle East Report*, no.169 (March-April 1991). For a more positive assessment of the UN's role see: Sir Anthony Parsons, "The United Nations After the Gulf War", *The Round Table*, no.319 (July 1991), pp. 265-274.

⁵⁵"New World Order: An Interview with Zbigniew Brzezinski", *S.AIS Review*, vol.11, no.2 (Summer-Fall 1991), p.2.

⁵⁶In the mid-1960s, arms trade with the Third World reached three-fourths of the world total. While arms transfers to the Third World constituted 40 percent of the total arms transfers in the early 1960s, by 1977, Third World recipients accounted for about 80 percent of the total. This more or less remained the case for the 1980s. Keith Krause, "Arms Imports, Arms Production and the Quest for Security", in Brian L. Job, ed., *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), p.124.

somewhat selectively on the spread of weapons of mass destruction only.⁵⁷ The impact of small arms, more wide-spread and responsible for more casualties in Third World conflicts, has received far less attention. Moreover, the range of anti-proliferation measures developed by the North, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Australia group on chemical weapons, have their effectiveness reduced due to serious and persisting North-South differences. Southern objections to these regimes focus on their selective application and discriminatory nature. As Chubin argues, in the case of nuclear weapons, the North's anti-proliferation campaign “frankly discriminates between friendly and unfriendly states, focussing on signatories (and potential cheats) like Iran but ignoring actual proliferators like Israel. It is perforce more intelligible in the North than in the South.”⁵⁸ In a more blunt tone, the Indian scholar K. Subrahmanyam charges that “export controls divide the world into North and South, project a racist bias, and have proved to be inefficient instruments for pursuing global non-proliferation objectives.”⁵⁹

In the absence of greater understanding between the North and the South, there is a definite risk that the emerging global norms devised and enforced by the dominant actors of the international system will have a limited impact as instruments of international order. This in turn suggests the need for encouraging security arrangements that reflect the particular security needs of Third World societies and provide greater opportunity and scope for Third World participation.

⁵⁷Among the Third World countries known to possess nuclear weapons or are suspected of developing them are: Pakistan, India, Israel, Kazakhstan, Algeria, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and Taiwan. About 12 countries have operational ballistic missile capability, although some 20 Third World countries are identified as developing such a capability.

⁵⁸Shahram Chubin, “The South and the New World Disorder”, *The Washington Quarterly* (Autumn, 1993), p.98.

⁵⁹K. Subrahmanyam, “Export Controls and the North-South Controversy”, *The Washington Quarterly* (Spring 1993), p.135.

In this respect, the role of regional security organizations deserves special notice.⁶⁰ During the Cold War, many Third World states accused the superpowers of ignoring, bypassing and manipulating indigenous regional security arrangements in the Third World. Some of the more visible regional groupings, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), both reflected and contributed to Cold War divisions within Third World regions. The end of the Cold War is reinvigorating and reshaping the role of Third World regional groupings towards conflict-control, peacekeeping and preventive diplomacy functions. The role of the Contadora and Esquipulas groups in facilitating conflict-resolution in Central America, the peacekeeping role of the Economic Community of West African States in the Liberian civil war, the efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as a peacemaker in the Cambodia conflict and later in sponsoring a regional forum to deal with the changing balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region, and efforts by the Organization of African Unity to create a new mechanism for conflict resolution and peacekeeping, attest to a new sense of purpose and activism on the part of regional mechanisms.

To be sure, many of the indigenous regional groupings are yet to develop the necessary institutional structures required for conflict-resolution or the collective military capacity needed for complex peacekeeping operations. Moreover, wide disparities of power within many existing Third World regional groupings create the risk that collective regional action will be hostage to the narrow interests of a dominant member state. The Third World's continued adherence to the principle of non-interference undermines the prospect for effective regional action with respect to internal conflicts.⁶¹ In addition, regional security arrangements in areas that are deemed to engage the "vital interests" of the Great Powers have limited autonomy in managing local conflicts. In these areas, the dependence of local states on external security guarantees, hence frequent Great Power intervention in local conflicts, will continue to thwart prospects for regional solutions to regional

⁶⁰Regional security organizations may perform a variety of roles, and may be based on different models such as collective security systems, alliances or common security forums. Collective security systems should not be confused with alliance-type regional security arrangements such as the Bush administration's idea of a "regional security structure" in the wake of Iraq's expulsion from Kuwait. Collective security refers to the role of a global or regional system in protecting any member state from aggression by another member state. The inward-looking security role of a collective security system is to be contrasted with the outer-directed nature of an alliance which is geared to protect its members from a common external threat. See: Ernst B. Haas, *Tangle of Hopes* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall).p. 94. For an appraisal of the strengths and limitations of regional security arrangements in the post-Cold War era see: S. Neil MacFarlane and Thomas G. Weiss, "Regional Organizations and Regional Security", *Security Studies*, vol.2, no.1 (Autumn 1992); Tom J. Farer, "The Role of Regional Collective Security Arrangements", in Thomas G. Weiss, ed., *Collective Security in a Changing World* (Boulder, Co: Lynne Rienner, 1993), pp.153-186; Amitav Acharya, "Regional Approaches to Security in the Third World: Lessons and Prospects", in Larry A. Swatuk and Timothy M. Shaw, eds., *The South at the End of the Twentieth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1994), pp.79-94; Paul F. Diehl, "Institutional Alternatives to Traditional U.N. Peacekeeping: An Assessment of Regional and Multinational Options", *Armed Forces and Society*, vol.19, no.2 (Winter 1993); Benjamin Rivlin, "Regional Arrangements and the UN System for Collective Security and Conflict Resolution: A New Road Ahead", *International Relations*, vol.11 (1992), pp.95-110.

⁶¹S. Neil MacFarlane and Thomas G. Weiss, "Regional Organizations and Regional Security", *Security Studies*, vol.2, no.1 (Autumn 1992), p.31.

problems.⁶² In the Gulf, for example, Kuwaiti security agreements with the US came into conflict with regional security arrangements involving the GCC after the Iraqi defeat. Similarly, most developing nations of East Asia prefer bilateral arrangements with the US as a more realistic security option than indigenous multilateral approaches.

Nonetheless, regional approaches to peace and security in the post-Cold War era face fewer systemic constraints in the post-Cold War era. They provide a way of ensuring a greater decentralisation of the global peace and security regime, which has assumed greater urgency in view of the limited resources of the UN in the face of an ever expanding agenda of peacekeeping operations. They are also a means for achieving greater democratisation of the global security regime, an important challenge in view of the Third World's resentment of the dominant role of Great Powers at the UN Security Council. Thus, the post-Cold War era contains an opportunity for a more meaningful division of labour between universal and regional frameworks of security in promoting conflict resolution in the Third World.

Conclusion

The end of the Cold War has dramatically shifted the empirical focus of security studies. Today, “regional conflict”—i.e. conflicts (including intra-as well as inter-state conflicts) in the world's less developed areas, including the new states that emerged out of the break up of the Soviet empire—is widely recognised as a more serious threat to international order. This contrasts sharply with the greatly enhanced stability of the “central” strategic relationship among the Great Powers (China excluded).⁶³ Judging from the attention given to recent conflicts in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Bosnia, South Asia, the Korean Peninsula and other places, “regional conflicts” in the world's “periphery” have become the core issues of concern for international security studies.

But the understanding of regional conflicts and security in the post-Cold War period also requires conceptual tools and methodology beyond what is provided by orthodox notions of security developed during the Cold War period. The primary argument of this paper has been that the very notions of security and international order developed during the Cold War must be contested if they are to help us to understand the sources of today's regional conflicts and the prospects for their control. A notion of security rooted firmly within the Realist tradition, and developed as an abstraction from the European states-system which emerged from the Peace of

⁶²See: Amitav Acharya, “Regional Military-Security Cooperation in the Third World: A Conceptual Analysis of the Relevance and Limitations of ASEAN”, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 29, no.1 (February 1992), pp.7-21; Amitav Acharya, “The Gulf Cooperation Council and Security: Dilemmas of Dependence”, *Middle East Strategic Studies Quarterly*, vol.1, no.3 (1990), pp.88-136.

⁶³In one formulation, the post-Cold War international system consists of a “core” sector of major powers within which interdependence and shared norms minimise the risk of armed conflict, and a “periphery” sector (e.g. Third World) featuring fragile regional security systems marked by a high degree of conflict and disorder. James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, “Core and Periphery in the Post-Cold War Era”, *International Organization*, vol.46, no.2 (Spring 1992),pp. 467-492.

Westphalia, does not provide an adequate conceptual framework for understanding the security problematic of those states who entered the system at a later stage. While it is fashionable to view the contemporary international system, despite being geographically and culturally more varied, as an extension of the original Westphalian model, the experience of the latecomers constitutes a different set of “reality” that challenges the fundamental assumptions of Realism.

During the Cold War, the exclusion of the Third World's security problems from the “mainstream” security studies agenda contributed to its narrow and ethnocentric conceptual framework and empirical terrain. The analysis of regional conflict in the contemporary security discourse can benefit from a framework that captures the significantly broader range of issues—involving state and non-state actors, military and non-military challenges—that lie at the heart of insecurity and disorder in the Third World. In this respect, a greater integration of Third World security issues to international security studies will facilitate the latter's attempt to move beyond its now-discredited Realist orthodoxy.

The incorporation of the Third World security predicament into the security studies agenda also creates the basis for rethinking the requirements of international order. The construction of international order, including its norms, principles and institutions, cannot solely depend on global frameworks devised by the Great Powers. To be effective, global norms must correspond to local and regional realities. As conflicts in the international system become more regionalised as a result of the end of the Cold War, there is a need for more decentralised system of order-maintenance. In this context, the role of regional security arrangements, including region-specific approaches to security, arms control and disarmament, deserve greater encouragement. The containment of regional conflict requires a certain amount of deference to the principle of regional autonomy and a mutually beneficial division of labour between global and regional security arrangements. Frameworks of security and order devised by major powers usually mask the latter's narrow self-interest. In many ways, mechanisms for international order such as collective security, humanitarian intervention and non-proliferation cannot cope with disorder if they serve to exacerbate existing North-South divisions.

For the above reasons, the end of the Cold War should serve as a catalyst for the “coming of age” of Third World security studies. The true “globalisation” of security studies should be built upon a greater “regionalization” of our understanding of the sources of conflict and the requirements of international order, with the Third World serving as a central conceptual and empirical focus. Moreover, regional insecurity in the post-Cold War era cannot be viewed simply as a microcosm of global security/insecurity structures. Attempts to build a theory of regional security for the post-Cold War era must allow for significant regional variations in both sources of conflict and instruments of order.