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Abstract

This paper introduces the concept of security cultures as a theoretical framework to enable scholars to make sense of the competing ideas and practices that currently characterise the field of security. Security is an ambiguous term that can mean both an objective, say safety from violence, and an apparatus ranging from military forces to locking doors. A security culture combines both objectives and practices. The paper shows how security cultures differ from the widely used term ‘strategic culture’ in that it involves a shift from strategic to security (with less emphasis on the military), from national to global in that it defines cultures in terms of ways of doing things rather than in national terms, and investigates the various mechanisms for the construction of culture. It defines four ideal types as analytical tools to delineate the borders between cultures: Geo-Politics, New Wars, Liberal Peace and the War on Terror. It relates the concept to other theoretical frameworks both in sociology and political science and in Science and Technology Studies. And it concludes by arguing that whereas the Cold War was characterised by a single global geo-Political culture, to-day’s security landscape is characterised by competing cultures.

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Introduction

Millions of people live in conditions of deep insecurity – in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Ukraine, large parts of Africa. Yet the international repertoire of response is not only inadequate it often makes things worse. On the one hand, a knee jerk reaction to problems of insecurity, especially terrorist attacks, is air strikes or drone campaigns. We know that air strikes are never as accurate as claimed and that there is always so-called ‘collateral damage’ and we also know that air strikes do not do end insecurity. On the contrary, whether we are talking about Hamas in Gaza, the Taliban in Afghanistan, or ISIS in Syria and Iraq, air strikes are used to legitimise further attacks and as an argument for recruitment. On the other hand, it is also suggested that the only alternative to air strikes is talks with the fighting groups and brutal regimes responsible for inflicting insecurity. Yet we know that it is very difficult to bring such groups together and, moreover, any agreement that follows from talks can only succeed by entrenching their positions of power thereby permitting continued insecurity. We also know that state building and peacebuilding agendas associated with such agreements, despite extensive resources, rarely if ever succeed in establishing every day security. A growing critical social science literature has drawn attention to the limitations of standard responses. Yet the same mistakes are repeated time and time again.

This paper introduces the concept of security culture as a theoretical framework to help us make sense of the persistence of particular ways of doing ‘security’, and to analyse the pathways through which different ways of doing security evolve so as to identify openings and closures that might allow or prevent different approaches. The starting point is the notion of transition or change. Whether it is because of the end of the Cold War or because of dramatic changes in technology or because of violence, we are in the midst of a profound transition in both the way security policy is conducted and experienced. But there is no clear trajectory or pathway which can be defined to help us navigate this transition. Instead we are faced with a plethora of concepts, paradigms, practices, norms and ideas. The term ‘culture’ is adopted as a method of analysing the transition through which we are living and to help us to identify different pathways or trajectories. By security culture I refer to a style or a pattern of doing security that brings together a range of interlinked components (narratives, rules, tools, practices, etc.) and that are embedded in a specific set of power relations.

The paper starts with a discussion of the complex and ambiguous term ‘security’. It then introduces the concept of security culture and elaborates the concept through a description of four ideal types that are analytical tools rather than empirical categories. It then discusses the analytical implications of this approach and it ends with a preliminary conclusion about the changing nature of security culture in the post-Cold War transition period.

*Ambiguities and Complexities of ‘Security’*

As Buzan and Hansen point out in their history of International Security Studies, it was only after 1945 that the term ‘security’ came to supplant terms like ‘war’, ‘defence’ or ‘strategy’ both among policy-making and academic circles. This conceptual shift, they argue, has ‘opened up the study of a broader set of political issues, including the importance of societal cohesion and the relationship between military and non-military threats and vulnerabilities.’

Yet the term ‘security’ is very difficult to pin down. When we use the term in everyday language it can refer to an objective, what we might call safety or to stability and
predictability (as in repressive societies). And at one and the same time, it tends to refer to a security apparatus or set of practices from locking doors, to airport scanners, to pensions, to surveillance, police, intelligence and military forces and even nuclear weapons. And both these different meanings can be interpreted in a myriad of ways. Whose safety are we talking about – the individual, the nation, the state, the world? And are we talking about what Wolfers defined as ‘objective’ security (security from actual threats) as opposed to ‘subjective’ security (perceptions of threats)? (Wolfers 1952) And what threats (or risks?) are we talking about – an attack by a foreign state, a terrorist threat, or the dangers of hunger, poverty, disease or crime? And what constitutes a security apparatus or practice – the existence of a state or some other form of political authority, the security sector (military, police, intelligence agencies, etc), or wider forms of social insurance?

This ambiguity is reflected in the security studies literature. Broadly speaking, it is possible to identify two strands of enquiry. One has to do with security as an objective that has spawned a debate about the referent of security and the kinds of threats or risks that are faced by the referent. In the Cold War period, security tended to mean national or bloc security and the main threat was assumed to be an armed attack from an enemy nation or bloc. Even at that time it was unclear how the nation or bloc was defined; did it relate to the state or the alliance or did it relate to ways of organising society (democracy or socialism) or did it relate to the inhabitants of the nation or state? Karl Deutsch famously developed the concept of ‘security community’, which he defined as a group of people who have become integrated to the point that there is ‘a real assurance that the members of that community will not fight each other physically but will settle their disputes some other way’ (quoted in Adler p.253). In the aftermath of the Cold War, scholars began to consider alternative referents – human, regional or planetary security, for example- as well as security from non-military threats. In its well-known introduction of human security, UNDP defined seven types of security that referred to different types of threats or risks - economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political (UNDP 1994).

The other line of enquiry that tended to be taken up by critical scholars was an emphasis on the political loadedness of the concept of security. The provision of security is intrinsically bound up with political authority, whether we are talking about the state, the blocs, international institutions or emerging hybrid forms of authority. The concept of ‘securitisation’ developed by the Copenhagen School defined security as a ‘speech act’ designed to emphasise, the importance or indeed exceptionalism of something defined as security thereby underpinning political authority. By a ‘speech act’ they did not merely mean calling something a security issue; they also referred to a set of practices that give meaning to the concept of security (see Buzan and Hansen 2009). Thus, for example during the Cold War period, military exercises, spy stories, hostile propaganda all drew attention to the possibility of war between the West and the Soviet Union, thereby emphasising the threat each posed to the other, and by the same token, framing the dominance of the two superpowers in world affairs as the primary source of protection (see Kaldor 1991).

The problem with those who are preoccupied with the objective of security, is the implicit assumption that the relevant political authority is a unitary rational actor that will adjust its behaviour to meet the objective, once the objective is defined. That is to say, once a government or international institution has agreed that the goal is human security, say, rather than national security, it is assumed that this will lead to the adoption of appropriate policies –yet we know that, despite the rhetoric of human security by various governments or the United Nations, the goal is far from being fulfilled. The problem with the alternative line of
enquiry linked to notions of ‘securitisation’ is that while it opens up our understanding of the power relations that underpin and shape security provision, it does not address the problem of insecurity experienced by people who live in difficult places. Those critical scholars who analyse the way in which Western security practices are designed to legitimise Western power or to ‘police’ a hierarchical world order, rarely offer specific ideas about how to address the problem of terrorism or conflict in Africa and the Middle East.

A useful way around this problem has been developed by Kirk and Luckham who talk about the ‘two faces’ of security (Kirk and Luckham 2013). They argue that security has a supply side and a demand side. They define the supply side as ‘a process of political and social ordering established and maintained through authoritative discourses and practises of power, including but not confined to organised force.’ And they define the demand side as ‘an entitlement of human beings to protection from violence and other existential risks including their capacity in practice to exercise this entitlement. As such it is dependent upon the social contexts, cultural repertoires and vernacular understandings of those who are secured.’ Their demand side definition has something in common with ideas of human or citizen security but it differs from ‘existing formulations . . . in focussing on the vernacular understandings of the people and groups who are secured –how they experience, understand and respond to their own security and insecurity’ (Kirk and Luckham 2013). They suggest that research should focus on empirical investigations of the tensions that inevitably exist between these two faces of security.

The concept of security cultures is in line with this dual approach but it draws attention to the enmeshment of supply and demand. The demand for security –the objective of security- is framed through practises of security and vice versa. There are different ways of defining security and different ways of framing and practising security. Thus vernacular understandings of security may be influenced by fears of the Soviet threat, by moral panics about witches or vampires, or by ethnicized or xenophobic constructions of insecurity and all of these feed into specific security discourses and practises; what Wolfers called the subjective version of security is shaped by public discourses of security. To be sure there is always a tension between different ways of practising security and different objectives, however framed, but in some cases they are more closely aligned than in others. The concept of a security culture is a way to bring together the objectives and the practices of security and by investigating the relationship in specific contexts, the aim is to analyse blockages and openings that might or might not allow for shifts in both objectives and practices as is expounded in the subsequent sections.

The Term ‘Culture’

The term ‘culture’ has been used in relation to strategic studies since the 1940’s when the US government employed cultural anthropologists to study the ‘national character’ of the Germany and Japan (Haglund 2011). More importantly, the term ‘strategic culture’ was developed in the 1970’s as a way of critiquing the dominant rationalist approach of defence planners. Analysts at the Rand Corporation developed the concept in order to explain why the Soviet Union did not respond to American strategy in a way that might have been expected from the game theorising that was prevalent among defence planners during that period (see, for example Snyder 1977). Writers like Colin Gray or Alastair Johnston sought to ‘challenge the ahistorical, non-cultural neorealist framework for analysing strategic choices’ (Johnston 1995 p.35). These thinkers shared a common understanding of ‘strategic’ as relating to ‘the threat or use of force for political purposes’ (Gray 1999 p.50) or to the role of war in human
affairs and of culture as something that applies to nations or territorially based security communities.

Where they differed was in their conception of ‘culture’. Some scholars talk about three generations of strategic culture theory (Johnston 1995, Harris 2009). For first generation scholars like Colin Gray, culture is understood both as surroundings (context) and as enmeshment (weaving in) in which ideas and behaviour cannot be separated. ‘Culture or cultures consist of the persisting (though not eternal) socially transmitted ideas, ideas, attitudes, traditions, habits of mind, and preferred methods of operation that are more or less specific to a particular geographically based security community that has had a necessarily unique historical experience’ (Gray 1999, p.51). Culture explains, for example, why the British persisted in maritime conceptions of strategy despite the experience of two world wars where naval operations played a lesser role. ‘Strategic culture is the world of mind, feeling and habit in behaviour’ (Gray, op.cit p.58, emphasis in original).

This definition of culture has something in common with what Raymond Williams called the ‘social’ meaning of culture. In his classic essay ‘The Analysis of Culture’, Williams sets out three categories of culture; the ‘ideal, in which ‘ culture is a state or process of human perfection , in terms of certain absolute or universal values’; the ‘documentary’ which referred to the body of ‘intellectual and imaginative work, in which , in a detailed way, human thought and experience are variously recorded’ (literature, scholarship, art, music, etc.); and finally ‘the ‘social’ definition in ‘which culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour’ (Williams 1961, p.57). A study of the social category of culture necessarily has to encompass the other two categories as well. Williams was concerned with popular culture, the culture of the working classes, as opposed to, say, national culture. Strategic culture could be said to offer a social analysis of a particular field or activity rather than a class or a nation, the field of strategy or the use of force, even though for those who espoused the concept strategic culture was embedded in national differentiation.

The so-called second generation were more interested in the significance of power relations and used the term culture to explain the way in which states reproduced strategic policies in ways that served to construct, uphold or entrench a set of hierarchical power relations, both internal and external. They had similar preoccupations to the later ‘securitisation’ scholars and their work presupposed a social constructionist understanding of culture. They were influenced by the Gramscian turn in International Relations (Cox 1983) and envisaged strategic culture as a medium through which a Gramscian concept of hegemony can be established (see Lock 2010). Their concern, as Klein put it, in what is often regarded as the a seminal article of the second generation scholars, was with the way in which strategic culture helps to account for the way in which the West ‘under American aegis has been able to legitimize its extraordinary – and –increasing- contribution to the pathologies of the world military order’ (Klein 1988 p.135). According to Klein: ‘Strategic culture . . . . embodies the state’s war-making style, understood in terms of its military institutions and its accumulated strategic traditions of air, land and naval power. But strategic culture is more than mere military style, for it emerges from an infrastructure of technology and an armaments sector. Most importantly, it is based upon the political ideologies of public discourse that help define occasions as worthy of military involvement’ (Klein 1988 p.136). Other second generation scholars included Ken Booth who developed the argument that strategy is a product of Western ethnocentrism (Booth 1979) and Robin Luckham, whose concept of the ‘armament
culture’ showed how third world countries were drawn into a world order dominated by the great powers through acquiring the military symbols of modern statehood (Luckham 1984).

The idea of a world military order in which conventional military structures, largely on the American and Soviet model, were reproduced worldwide derived from a similar sort of culturalist explanation (Kaldor and Eide 1979). The spread of weapons and military training produced shared conceptions of military power that entrenched the dominant positions of the superpowers, establishing a hierarchy based on levels of military spending and numbers and types of weapons systems. Theo Farrell makes a similar argument about the influence of what he calls world culture on military organizations. He draws attention to the way in which ‘norms of conventional warfare prescribe military organisations that are standing, standardized, technologically structured and state-based’ (Farrell 2005 p.462).

Finally, the so-called third generation tried to develop a concept that was more consistent with positivist social science. In order to do so they sought to escape the all-embracing somewhat vague definition of culture in order to establish ‘methodological rigour’ and to develop falsifiable propositions. In particular, Johnston made a clear distinction between ideas and behaviour and defined culture in terms of ‘an integrated system of symbols (i.e. argumentation, structures, languages, analogies, metaphors, etc.) that acts to to establish pervasive and long-lasting grand strategic preferences …’ (Johnston 1995b, p.36). His concern was methodological – he wanted a basis for falsifiable propositions and need a distinct definition of culture in order to investigate its influence on behaviour as compared with rational actor models. Thus in a study of Chinese strategic culture – drawn from an analysis of strategic texts – he concluded that strategic behaviour was independent of culture or to put it another way, what he interpreted as rationality provided a better explanation than his definition of culture.

More recently, Christopher Daase has developed the term the term Sicherheitskultur or ‘security culture’ (Daase, 2011; Daase, Offermann and Rauer, 2012). Through the application of this term Daase and his colleagues put forward an alternative methodology for analysing the policy field of ‘security’ based on what they call a kulturwissenschaftlicher approach (especially Daase, 2011). As stressed in Rauer, Junk and Daase (2014: 33), it is an approach that focuses the scholar’s view simultaneously on questions about distinct definitions and practices of security held and conducted by elites, on the one hand, and fears and attitudes within the population, on the other hand. This concept of ‘security culture’ breaks with the exclusive emphasis of ‘strategic culture’ both in relation to the use of force and to the nation-state. Whereas strategic culture focuses on military aspects of security policy, security culture captures a broader range of issues and actors – and this is not because of a change in definition but ‘because the social meaning of security has changed. […] The notion of security has emancipated itself from military thinking’ (Daase 2012, p. 33). Nevertheless Daase remains within a territorial framework even though he stresses the importance of a conception of culture that goes beyond both the view that culture is a system of shared norms and values that constitutes a national identity and hence overemphasises national differences and the notion of a world culture that homogenises culture and rules. The problem, according to Daase, with the national conception of culture is that it reifies differences between countries while masking contestation within countries. The problem with the second is that assumes global convergence and it is unclear who it is that carries and transmits this shared culture [kulturträger]. Daase identifies four dimensions in which change has taken place: first, regarding whose security is to be ensured – i.e. state, society or the individual. The second dimension relates to the kind of security – i.e. military, economic, environmental or humanitarian. Third, there is a spatial aspect to security that relates to the
question for which ‘geographic’ units security is sought – the nation-state, or regional, international or even global security. The fourth dimension addresses the severity, from concrete threats to vulnerability and a more diffuse risk (Daase 2012, p. 25f). For Daase, the concept brings together discourse and practice and provides the basis for an inter-disciplinary research programme.

In parallel with Daase’s work, there has been a growing literature during the last decade concerning the emergence of a European strategic culture. The main interest of scholars working in this field has to do with the idea of Europe (more particularly the European Union) as a Deutschian security community (see Cornish and Edwards, 2001; Martinsen 2003; Rynning 2003; Meyer 2006). Thus the debates are about the degree to which a convergence or harmonisation of national security policies are possible. What is interesting, however, is the looser definition of ‘strategic’ in this body of work. Thus Martinsen defines strategy as ‘civil and military means employed . . . to reach particular ends as “crisis management”’ (quoted in Meyer 2003, p.4 Italics added) while both Howarth and Gnesotto seem to use the terms ‘strategic’ and ‘security’ interchangeably (Howarth 2002; Gnesotto 2000).

The concept of security cultures developed in this paper has considerable overlap with Daase’s concept and with his aim to challenge established approaches to the study of ‘security’. There are three aspects of the concept that are critical – aspects which are both distinct and have something in common with earlier definitions.

First, the concept of security culture breaks with the Deutschian idea of territorial security communities, whether these are nations or blocs or regions. The term culture is used to refer to ways of doing things embedded in a set of social relations rather than being tied to an ethnic or geographical identity. It has similarities with notions of social psychological notions of ‘cognitive schema’ . . . . ‘packages of both ideas and behavioural patterns inextricably linked together and co-constituting each other (quoted in Bloomfield 2012). Or to put another way, a security culture is based on functional rather than spatial security communities; that is to say, in so far as those who participate in a security culture can be described as a community, it is one that is characterised by groups of shared ideas and practices, a common style of doing security, a degree of mutual interdependence although not necessarily a common security policy. Thus membership in the culture has to do with ideas and practices of security; the ‘other’ is defined in terms of different ‘unnatural’ ways of doing things. As outlined below, I have distinguished four broad categories –geo-politics, new wars, the war on terror, and the liberal peace though these are overlapping, constantly changing, and include a variety of sub cultures. The point is that the inhabitants of each culture share more in common and may even need the existence of each other to reproduce themselves, than the inhabitants of different cultures even though they may share the same territorial space. Thus, for example, the realists, who people the ‘geo-political’ model of security culture, whether in the Pentagon or the Russian Ministry of Defence share more in common in terms of ideas and ways of doing things than the peace-keeper or humanitarian aid worker who people the ‘liberal peace’ version. The realists engage with each other through studying and watching and sometimes even meeting their opposite numbers in equivalent positions in different countries or in collective security arrangements; what they do in terms of acquiring arms or military exercises profoundly affects what others do within the same culture. They contrast themselves with the ‘idealists’ who people the liberal peace or the ‘terrorists’ who participate in ‘new wars’. Those involved in the liberal peace, for example, actually work together in multinational agencies or NGOs and have developed a common body of knowledge and understanding of how they understand best practice. And
the same is true of the militia groups or warlords who people the ‘new wars’ culture; they learn from each others’ practices and they need each other to justify their very existence.

Secondly, the concept embodies the ambiguous character of the term ‘security’. I agree with Colin Gray that the practice of security cannot be disentangled from ideas about security. The term culture thus embraces both a set of specific ideas about who or what is to be protected – the objective of security – and a set of related and relevant practices (organisation, funding, equipment, tactics, infrastructure) that shape ideas and are shaped by them. At the same time, like the second generation strategic culture theorists, the notion of security culture is infused with power relations, or, perhaps more accurately can be described as an expression of power relations. A parallel could be drawn with Michel’s Foucault’s concept of dispositif, which can be understood as a specific way of exercising power: ‘a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. [It is] the system of relations that can be established between these elements’ (Foucault, M 1980 pp. 194–228). In other words, a security culture can be understood as a form of ‘disciplinary technology’ or a specific way of exercising power. The various components or elements of security cultures combine together not necessarily harmoniously to produce and reproduce certain types of behaviour; whether such behaviour is good or bad is a normative judgment that can be made on the basis of an empirical study of what constitutes a culture. Moreover any specific set of components is associated with a specific form of power. Thus nation-states, international institutions, or local and/or hybrid forms of public authority all derive their power from their role as security providers but, in each case the type of security provided (the security culture) and consequently the way of exercising power is very different.

Thirdly and perhaps most importantly, a security culture is not a static concept. It is constructed. It has to be continually reproduced and diffused; depending on the mechanisms for reproduction and diffusion, it is possible to identify nodal points where change is possible. One of the salient debates among first and third generation scholars of strategic culture is about the deterministic nature of the term culture. Those who restrict the meaning of culture to a set of historically transmitted ideas suggest that it is possible to assess the relative influence of culture in relation to other factors in explaining behaviour. Thus Michael Desch argues that realist (rational actor) explanations are better at predicting strategic choices than cultural explanations (Desch 1998). But those same scholars do not study the reverse; how strategic behaviour shapes culture or how realist conceptions of strategic choices are embedded in culture. Gray rightly points out that the realist is itself a social construction. ‘Let us point out the methodologically appalling truth that there can be no such conceptual space [independent of culture] because strategic behaviour is affected by human beings who cannot help but be cultural agents’ (Gray 1999 p.59). But the criticism that is made of Gray’s conception is that if strategic culture covers everything, there is no space for agency and change and that too much weight is placed on the early history of state formation. Despite his constructivist understanding, Gray’s conception of strategic culture does appear to be essentialist and relativist - ‘Germans cannot help but be Germans’ for example! (quoted in Lock 2010 p.692). Indeed those who espouse notions of strategic culture, particularly the first generation, often tend to be conservative and to emphasise tradition, habit and persistence. To do Gray justice, he does, in more recent work, emphasise the constructed character of culture even though he is sceptical about change. ‘A cultural paradigm is a construction and as such it can be deconstructed and reconstructed, at least in theory. In practice, even a cultural paradigm that is having a dysfunctional influence on decision-making and critical strategic behaviour may not be changeable. One might not recognise the problem with one’s
organising assumption, and even if one does, the requirements and implications of change may be formidable’ (Gray 2007, p.11-12).

Edward Lock suggests that the second generation scholars, by contrast, did presuppose a constructionist understanding of culture. Klein’s understanding of culture as an ‘inter-subjective system of symbols’ allows for an investigation into the way in which practices shape ‘natural’ assumptions about culture and vice versa (Lock 2010). A constructionist approach starts from the premise that cultures have to be reproduced. Yet oddly, none of the strategic culture scholars appear to investigate the mechanisms through which reproduction takes place, that is to say through which change is or is not introduced apart from an insistence on human agency. But the humans who are responsible for change are themselves embedded in specific communities or institutions so what opens up or blocks the possibilities for human agency? This is where an investigation of the mechanisms through which security cultures are reproduced could be useful. These mechanisms might include: the market or public finance, which affects the supply of equipment or people; war and violent events, which affect both understandings and interpretations of security as well as practices; politics involving elections, public debates or social movements; or professional career and training structures. Each mechanism is likely to vary in the pace at which they introduce or do not introduce change. Conservatism is perhaps better explained by the difficulty of and vested interest against bringing about institutional change, in for example armies or navies, in the absence of major political or military upheavals and the way in which these institutions reproduce tradition. Thus understanding the mechanisms through which cultures are constructed enables us to identify openings and closures –points at which policy innovations are possible and where they are stuck. Thus the idea of culture is associated with ideas of path dependence and the point is to identify moments when pathways diverge or reach cul de sacs. The aim is to substantiate specific security cultures and the ways in which they are constructed so as to understand and interpret their differing internal logics.

To develop this argument, I introduce four ideal types of security culture in the next section.

**Ideal Types of Security Culture**

In this section, I illustrate this conception of security culture by describing four ideal types of security culture that could be said to occupy the current global landscape of security cultures. These ideal types are not empirical categories; they are analytical tools to help us understand differences among cultures and to delineate the boundaries between them. Each culture involves a specific set of components –these are defined as narratives, indicators, rules, tools, tactics, forms of finance, and infrastructure. Of course they are not an exclusive set of components and of course they overlap; they have been chosen for illustration purposes –this is sketched in Table 1. They are heuristic devices often based on self-definition with borders between and inside the cultures that are much more porous and fragmented than the relevant actors assume. By studying the relationships among the components and the way that they are reproduced, it should be possible to analyse the different logics of each culture and their tendencies for escalation and persistence. Each culture is also associated with specific types of political authority with specific spatial arrangements; this is outlined in Table 2.
Table 1: Components of Security Cultures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narratives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Rules</th>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geo-Politics</td>
<td>Deter major war</td>
<td>Levels of Armament and Defence Spending</td>
<td>Self-defence and IHL</td>
<td>Regular military forces,</td>
<td>Deterrence</td>
<td>Arms industry, military bases</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>advanced weapons systems</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Wars</td>
<td>Establish identity based political authority</td>
<td>Discrimination against particular identity based groups</td>
<td>None, occasionally warped version of Shari’ia</td>
<td>Networks of state non-state actors, IEDs, suicide bombers, small arms</td>
<td>Violence against civilians</td>
<td>Outside sponsors or war-related and/or criminal activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal peace</td>
<td>Global Stability</td>
<td>Numbers of conflicts</td>
<td>Emergence of post-bellum law, peace agreement</td>
<td>International agencies, peace-keeping forces, NGOs, private security contractors</td>
<td>Peace agreements, peace-keeping, state-building</td>
<td>International public funding plus voluntary contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War on Terror</td>
<td>Defeat terrorists militarily</td>
<td>Terrorist incidents</td>
<td>Stretching of IHL and notion of self-defence</td>
<td>Intelligence agencies, private security contractors, drones</td>
<td>Extensive surveillance and targeted killing</td>
<td>US government, public borrowing</td>
</tr>
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**Ideal type 1: Geopolitics**

The first ideal type ‘security culture’ can be called ‘geopolitics’. This is the legacy of the Cold War. The dominant narrative is about great power contestation and the dominant tools are deployment and use of regular military forces, economic sanctions and state-to-state diplomacy. The objective is national security, the protection of national territory and spheres of influence or the preservation of the access to the global commons, the Arctic or energy transportation routes. This is thought to require the deployment of military forces and the acquisition of sophisticated weapons so as to deter a future war against a ‘peer competitor’ – Russia, China, or NATO depending on the perspective or threats from a ‘rogue state’ like Iran or North Korea. Geo-politics depends on public financing and an infrastructure of military industry and bases. Geo-politics remains the dominant way of thinking and way of structuring capabilities among the major states and accounts for most defence spending as
can be seen from a study of defence reviews. Geo-politics as a culture is what explains why support for nuclear weapons or expensive aircraft like the F-22 or F-35 seems natural or normal.

Geo-politics is associated with the nation-state and is based on a clear distinction between the inside and the outside. During the Cold war period, paradoxically, the international arena was characterised by a single security culture, geo-politics while internal security cultures varied among different countries and indeed the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention, dating back to the post-Westphalian period, meant that each nation-state had the independence to pursue its own forms of domestic security without outside interference at least in theory. So while external nations and blocs shared a common geo-political security culture, domestically the way security was assured varied from rights-based law governed systems, in the West, to authoritarian or totalitarian systems. Civil Wars were clearly distinguished from international wars on the geo-political model, and, generally took the form of wars between the regime and rebels where rebels were organised on classic revolutionary lines and these wars were framed in left-right terms on the Cold War model. Thus organisations like the PKK or the IRA, even if they were ethnic movements, clothed themselves in Marxist-Leninist discourse and revolutionary practice and often obtained support from the opposing sides in the Cold War contest.

Ideal Type 2: New Wars

New Wars have evolved from the civil wars of the Cold War period (for an account of the evolution see Kaldor 2000). In new wars, the distinction between inside and outside is dissolved as is the distinction between public and private. Thus new wars are about the capture of power and resources, in particular state-type power, for identity based groups. The means are networks of state and non-state actors that are both global and local (militias, warlords, criminal groups, mercenaries, etc and bits of regular armed forces) using captured or imported equipment, especially relatively low level armaments such as IEDS or small arms. The tactics are political control through violence where violence is primarily directed against civilians including forced displacement, sexual violence, and destruction of historic and cultural buildings and artefacts. Finance depends on external aid or a variety of criminal activities associated with violence (loot, pillage, kidnapping and hostage-taking, smuggling); though of course finance is both a goal and a means. And the infrastructure is globally integrated networks based on shared involvement in criminal and /or identity based enterprise (see Kaldor 2012).

New wars are associated with fragmented, decentralised and often exclusive forms of political authority, which may be informal or hybrid as is the case, for example, with the Islamic State, or which may be internationally recognised as is the case for the Entities in Bosnia or for the newly established government of South Sudan. Because new wars are both global and local and have a tendency to spread through the networked vectors of the new wars infrastructure, they could be described as bringing the ‘outside’ of war and violence ‘inside’.

Ideal type 3: Liberal Peace

The third stylised type of security culture can be termed ‘Liberal peace’, which is associated with the dramatic increase in multilateral interventions since the end of the Cold War. The opening that made possible the emergence of this culture was the combination of post-cold
war international co-operation and public outcry about the humanitarian crises resulting from new wars, especially Bosnia and Rwanda. The difference between the Liberal Peace-culture and the previous two cultures is the preoccupation with stability as opposed to (the defeat of) enemies. In principle, security is achieved through stability rather than defeating an enemy where stability tends to refer to collective rather than individual stability. The objective in this case can be national, regional or global security. As in the other cultures, there are of course variants ranging the more muscular Responsibility to Protect or humanitarian intervention, which involves using military forces to protect civilians from massive human rights abuses, often from the air (the classic examples are Kosovo and Libya, though interventions in Northern Iraq (1991), Somalia (1992), Sierra Leone (2001), Mali (2012) could count as well) through the deployment of peace-keeping troops usually under a UN mandate to uphold ceasefires and stabilise conflicts (probably the most extensive and numerous form of intervention) to human security, that focusses on human rights including economic and social rights and justice. The liberal peace culture also involves a new set of practices: a range of international agencies, peace-keeping troops, private contractors, NGOs, what Duffield calls a ‘strategic complex’ (Duffield 2006): a degree of integration between military and civil personnel; and a variety of actions including reconstruction and state-building efforts. In so far as the liberal peace is associated with neo-liberal economic practices, one might also include the kind of security complexes involving a strange mixture of police and private contractors established to guard major economic facilities like oil drilling or mining (see Abrahamson and Williams 2009) in particular top-down peace agreements are a critical component of the Liberal peace- a basis for international involvement and contributing to a new body of post-bellum law.

The Liberal peace is associated with the emergence of what could be described as global governance – a layering of political authority and a shift from ‘ruling’ to ‘steering’. The Liberal peace security culture is linked to specific international or regional institutions (the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union, or the OSCE) but implemented through the involvement of both states and private actors. If new wars, could be described as the outside coming inside, then perhaps the Liberal peace, for all its shortcomings and there are many, can be described as the inside going outside- the idea that the sort of security in any part of the world depends on the spread of stability (where stability tends to mean collective rather individual security). This Didier Bigo describes how the military responsible for naval operations in the Mediterranean aimed at countering illegal immigration refuse the description of their role as war and insist that their role is to protect ‘legal rules’ and the ‘global political order’; likewise border control police see their role as protecting legal migrants from criminals rather than a war on migrants. This EU based border security approach, even if it has some of the same consequences and is rapidly shifting in a similar direction, is contrasted with more militaristic Australian and American border controls (Bigo 2014).

Ideal type 4: War on Terror

The fourth stylised ‘security culture’ can be called ‘War on Terror’. Even though President Obama has abandoned the term, it is useful because it emphasises the language of enemies and the idea of war-based security –the focus is the defeat of enemies but, unlike the geopolitical model, the enemies are non-state actors. 9/11 plays a foundational role in the concept, often compared to the role played by Pearl Harbor in the geo-political model. The War on Terror has arisen in response to what has been constructed ‘asymmetric threats’ (terrorism, insurgencies, and various types of contemporary largely non-state violence, i.e.
new wars). These are not necessarily new; they were obscured during the Cold war period by the primacy of the Cold War. There is, of course, a blurring of Geo-politics and the War on Terror since classic military means are used to defeat ‘terrorists’, for example in counter-insurgency operations. As I delineate the difference, the War on Terror is what Americans call Counter-terror, as opposed to COIN. The focus is on defeating terrorists through intelligence and targeted killings usually from the air (the drone campaign). This emerging version of the ‘War on Terror’ security culture involves a new set of practices; a shift from the military to a combination of intelligence agencies and private security contractors and the widespread use of new technologies for mass surveillance, cyber warfare and robotics.

The War on Terror is statist but associated with American global hegemony. Many critics have pointed to the way in which 9/11 provided the opportunity for the US to declare a Schmittian state of exception and a new ‘friend-enemy’ rhetoric to underpin the American leading role. The US also stresses a rules based international system but these rules have been stretched to permit activities like the detention and torture of suspected terrorists or long distance assassination as in the case of the drone campaign. Even through this version of the American led world order was initiated by President Bush, the idea has somehow been ‘naturalised’ into American rhetoric. Thus Obama’s latest National Security Strategy includes the statement that : ‘Any successful strategy to ensure the safety of the American people and advance our national security interests must begin with an undeniable truth—America must lead. Strong and sustained American leadership is essential to a rules-based international order that promotes global security and prosperity as well as the dignity and human rights of all peoples. The question is never whether America should lead, but how we lead.’ (National Security Strategy)

Table 2: The Dimensions of Security Cultures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political Authority</th>
<th>Inside/Outside</th>
<th>Public/private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geo-Politics</td>
<td>Nation-state</td>
<td>Clear distinction</td>
<td>Security under public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>between inside and</td>
<td>control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Wars</td>
<td>Fragmented and</td>
<td>Merging of outside</td>
<td>Merging of public and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decentralised</td>
<td>with inside – war and</td>
<td>private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>violence moving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>inside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Peace</td>
<td>Global Governance</td>
<td>Spread of inside to</td>
<td>Use of private sub-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>outside. More police</td>
<td>contracting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>type use of military</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>War on Terror</td>
<td>US hegemony</td>
<td>Spread of outside to</td>
<td>Merging of public and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>inside – more</td>
<td>private</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>militarized policing</td>
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Analytical Implications

The term ‘security culture’ has some parallels with related sociological or political science concepts that are being developed to understand contemporary change. Saskia Sassen uses the term ‘assemblage’ to capture ‘the new frameworks through which globalization is furthered’ (quoted in Abrahamson and Williams, p. 3). Similarly Anne Marie Slaughter talks about globalisation as the disaggregation of states and reaggregation around a set of functional global networks (Slaughter 2009). Undoubtedly, the newly emerging security cultures could be described as assemblages in this sense or even networks but the word ‘culture’ suggests something that is more than dismantling and putting together a new set or of organisations and institutions. The various components come together around a purposive set of norms and ideas, a specific narrative about doing security, to the extent that these components are more or less aligned with each other, they can present a relatively stable configuration that can emerge as a fully-fledged culture. That is to say, a successful or persistent culture requires a degree of harmonisation among objectives and practices.

Moreover there is a specificity to the notion of security cultures that is lacking in more general terms such as assemblages or networks even though these general terms might encompass what is meant by security cultures. Particularly interesting in this respect is the concept of ‘assemblages of war: police’ a term that is used ‘to signal an equal concern for discourses (political, legal ethical) practices and materialisms of the war/police intersection.’ (Bachman, Bell and Holmqvist, 2015, p.3). In this conception of assemblages, the term police is used in a Foucauldian sense to be broader than specialist enforcement of criminal laws but to refer more generally to the establishment of order. The conception is used to analyse the military interventions of recent decades and their role as policing interventions. The difference between this approach and that of security cultures is that security cultures categorise different forms of assemblages, they distinguish different ways in which policing might be undertaken. The focus of those critical scholars who have developed the concept is with power relations and the emergence of a kind of neo-imperialism. But the term security cultures encompasses what Luckham calls the ‘Janus-faced’ nature of security. It is both about ‘a process of political ordering, structured around the control of violence’ and, about ‘an entitlement to protection from direct and structural violence’ (Luckham 2015, p.8). Different security cultures align these two faces of security differently –some perform better in protecting individual entitlements than others. Policing, in the broad Foucauldian, sense is a necessary condition for meeting such entitlements but, of course, it is not sufficient; it depends on the specificities of any given security culture.

A term that is closer to the notion of security cultures is Pierre Bourdieu’s conception of a field (‘champ’, see Bourdieu 1986). A field is a social or arena (say security) in which a range of relationships are determined both by ‘habitus’ (constructed and persistent assumptions and ways of doing things) and by the capital (both social and material) possessed by the various actors who inhabit a field. Fields like security cultures are mechanisms for the distribution of power. Security fields might have been an alternative term but it would have committed the analysis to fit a Bourdieusian framework rather than starting from first principles.
A second set of related concepts can be found in the literature concerning technical change (Perez 2003, C; Freeman and Louca 2001; Grin, Rotmans and Schot 2010) Scholars of technical change use terms like socio-technical regimes or techno-economic paradigms. Socio-technical regimes refer to particular combinations of ‘artefacts, regulations, markets, infrastructure, etc’ that come together to form relative stable technological pathways (see Grin, Rotmans and Schot 2010). Techno-economic paradigms refer to technological shifts that affect the entire economy and characterise long-term phases of economic development, for example, the factory system, mass production or micro-electronics (see Perez 2003, Dosi 1982, Freeman and Louca 2001). Security Cultures are also associated with specific technologies – oil based weapons platforms for Geo-Politics, for example, or drones and surveillance for the War on Terror. Thus a security culture could be understood as the equivalent in the security realm to a techno-economic paradigm in the economic realm though, of course, the methods of reproduction are different in each case and indeed the different pace of evolution in each case could help to explain broader tendencies for stability or upheaval.

It is possible to draw on these related concepts to develop methods for analysing the logics associated with specific security cultures. First of all, what matters is the different mechanisms of reproduction for the different components of security cultures; this enables us to assess the relationship between objectives and practices. Each component has its own mechanism for reproduction even though the mechanisms are deeply interrelated; inevitably the pace of change for each component is bound to vary. Thus, for example, narratives are constructed through expert reports, commissions and reviews, public debates, bureaucratic interests, politicians’ spin, and so on, while tools, depending on the specific culture, are reproduced through the relationship among arms companies, traders, relevant ministries, or the different branches of the armed forces. The evolution of a specific culture depends on the co-evolution of these different components and they extent to which this process is relatively harmonious. By definition, the components can never fit perfectly because otherwise there would be no insecurity. This is the paradox that security practices in and of themselves create insecurity. But they can be more or less aligned with each other.

Take for example, the evolution of the War on Terror. The initial (predictable from a security cultures standpoint) response to the events of 9/11 was to frame the response in a geopolitical way. The terrorist attacks were treated as an attack on the United States and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were framed as self-defence. In both countries, the United States undertook conventional military invasions, albeit incorporating new technologies and, in the case of Afghanistan, relying on local proxies. It was difficult however to claim that the practices (conventional military force) achieved the objective (American national security) since resistance developed in both countries. The conventional approach, thereby, evolved into the counter-insurgency approach that was adopted in the surges in Iraq and Afghanistan and that placed the emphasis on population security. At least in Iraq, this approach was (temporarily) rather successful in dampening down violence; however it was extremely costly in terms of money, the lives of American soldiers, and therefore domestic American support. Therefore, it produced a mismatch between the practice of security and the political requirements for reproduction that appeared to be unsustainable and represented, if you like, a cul de sac in the evolution of the War on Terror. It was the Obama Administration that introduced a focus on what it called counter-terror (to distinguish it from counter-insurgency) –the current version of the War on Terror. Air strikes and drone attacks are used to kill individual terrorists at long distance. This does not eliminate the terrorist threat; on the
contrary it may be the cause of new mobilisations. But any renewed mobilisation justifies further attacks. As long as there are rather few attacks on the American mainland, it does not matter if the terrorists multiply; what matters is that an American President is seen to be responding to terrorist attacks and thereby believed to be acting in the interest of American national security. It is a belief that is embedded and reproduced within the framework of the War on Terror. Thus in this latest version of the War on Terror, the practices and the objective are rather well aligned and this allows for escalation (as the terrorists multiply) and persistence as the terrorists justify the budgets of those carrying out the air strikes and drone attacks.

Secondly change might come about because of the impact of external factors – successful experiments, significant events or new developments in other sectors (politics or the economy). Scholars of technical change use the term ‘niches’ to describe enterprises or innovators who are out of step with the dominant regime or paradigm. In the security field there are what we might call security experiments that tend to be resisted by the dominant security culture. History is replete with inventions that were resisted for long periods by the dominant security culture – gunpowder was invented in China long before Europe but never applied; machine guns were only used in the colonies up until the First World war, more recently armed drones were developed by a maverick Israeli defence company but resisted by the air force and the aerospace industry prior to 9/11. And experiments are not merely technological. Petreaus’s approach in Baghdad was initiated as an experiment in Anbar province long before it was adopted in Baghdad. Likewise, local ceasefires in Syria today represent another type of security experiment.

Openings in which experiments might be regarded favourably could result from disharmony among the various components (as in the case of Petreaus in Baghdad), or from external factors such as events like 9/11, funding crises, or dramatic political change. In the case of armed drones, for example, Vincent has shown how, in the aftermath of 9/11, the shift of responsibility from the air force to a combination of intelligence agencies and private security contractors created new openings for the assimilation of armed drones (Vincent, forthcoming).

In other words, a research agenda for analysing the logics of specific security cultures requires an investigation of the mechanisms for reproduction of different components and how they combine together or contradict each other as well as a study of experimentation and the ways in which security cultures interact with the broader external context.

**Conclusion**

This paper has introduced the concept of security cultures as a theoretical framework to help us understand pathways in the security field. A security culture is defined in terms of ideas and ways of doing things rather than tied to an identity based or territorial community. It involves a combination of objectives (norms and ideas about security) and practices (tools, tactics, infrastructure, for example) that are co-constitutive and tied to a specific form of political authority. It is a socially constructed concept that has to be continually reproduced. By analysing the methods of reproduction, we can investigate specific security pathways and possible openings or closures to alternative approaches. In elaborating the concept, I have described four ideal types: geo-Politics, New Wars, Liberal peace and the War on Terror.
The concept of security culture offers a different lens through which to view the global security landscape. During the Cold War period, geo-politics was the dominant security paradigm. While International relations scholars talk of anarchy in the international arena, the opposite is the case if seen through the lens of security cultures. There was a single international security culture which allowed for an agreed hierarchical set of relations, an agreement about what constitutes power, which means an agreement about the distribution of power, in other words a kind of world military order. Indeed anarchy was the realist construction of world military order. Paradoxically, it was the competing domestic security cultures that could be said to have represented anarchy in that there was no single model of domestic security culture.

The post- Cold war era is characterised by competing cultures. In contrast to the geo-political culture, all the emerging models involve a blurring of the distinctions between inside and outside, and public and private. They are all both global and local, bringing the global into the local and vice versa. All are linked to different forms of political authority and also different economic models and legal frameworks. How we navigate the competition among these cultures and find ways to reorientate the direction of change will have profound consequences for all aspects of social life.
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Politique Europeene 8


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