The popularization of the human security model in the 1990s marked a signal triumph for the proponents of a broad understanding of security. The debate has tended to center around four key questions: Who or what should be the focus—the referent object—of security?

- Who or what threatens security?
- Who has the prerogative to provide security?
- What methods are appropriate, or inappropriate, in providing security?\(^1\)

The rich ferment in ideas about security among scholars and practitioners has led to a proliferation of different approaches and models, ranging from the defense of traditional thinking to advocacy of approaches as novel as the "feminist" and "post-positivist." The human security paradigm borrows from a number of the different new approaches, particularly those whose referent object is the individual citizen and which acknowledge security only in the absence of a wide assortment of different kinds of threats.\(^2\) The following table explains various approaches to human security based on central object, key values, nature of threats and agents for implementation.

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1. Dan Henk, Human Security: Relevance and Implications, [www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05summer/henk](http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05summer/henk)
2. Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinker</th>
<th>Referent Object</th>
<th>Key Values</th>
<th>Nature of Threats</th>
<th>Agents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kofi Annan</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Economic development, social justice, environmental protection, democratization, disarmament</td>
<td>Internal violence, nuclear weapons, mass destruction, repression</td>
<td>States, individual, nature, environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sadako Ogata     | Individual      | 1. "Capacity of states and citizens to prevent and resolve conflicts through peaceful and non-violent means, and, after the conflict is over, the ability to effectively carry out reconciliation efforts."
2. "People should enjoy without discrimination all rights and obligations — including human, political, social, economic and cultural rights — that belonging to a State implies."
3. "Social inclusion — or having equal access to the political, social and economic policy making processes, as well as to draw equal benefits from them."
4. Establishment of rule of law and the independence of the justice system. | Political, Military, Social, Economic Environmental Landmines Proliferation of Small Arms Drug Trafficking Spread of HIV | Nature, environment, states, individuals, rebels, international criminals |
| Rakesh Thakur, United Nations University | Community | Human security refers to the quality of life of the people of a society or polity."
"The core element of human security is human rights.” | Anything that degrades one's "quality of life."
Examples: demographic pressures, diminished access to or stock of resources.....“ | State, individuals, societal groups (dominant social structure), administrative, judicial, police, paramilitary and military structures, "nature", environment, migration, globalization, institutional structures, international crime |
| UNDP             | Individual      | Freedom from fear, Freedom from want                        | Seven Categories: Economic: poverty, homelessness Food: hunger Health: inadequate health care, diseases Environment: degradation, pollution, natural | State, individuals, nature, societal groups |
| Government of Canada | Individual | Freedom from pervasive threats to people’s rights, their safety or their lives | Trafficking in Small arms, income gap between rich and poor countries, internal conflict, state failure, transnational crime, the proliferation of weapon of mass destruction, religious and ethnic discord, environmental degradation, population growth, ethnic conflict and migration, state repression, the widespread use of anti-personnel landmines, child abuse, economic underdevelopment, and an unstable, protectionist international trading system, violent crime, drug trade, terrorism, etc. | State, rebels, drug and weapon traffickers, individuals |
| Human Security Network | Individuals | Freedom from pervasive threats to safety and human rights. | Addresses non-traditional threats to people’s security related to economic, food, health, and environmental factors as well as issues such as drugs, terrorism, organized crime, landmines and gender-based violence. | States, rebels |
| Government of Japan | Individual | Human Dignity includes freedom from fear and freedom | All threats to human lives, livelihoods and dignity including poverty, | Governments, rebels, Drug and weapons |
environmental degradation, illicit drugs, transnational organized crime in factious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, the outflow of refugees and antipersonnel land mines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kanti Bajpai</th>
<th>Individual safety and freedom</th>
<th>Direct violence: violent death/disability, dehumanization, drugs, discrimination and domination, international disputes, most destructive weapons. Indirect violence: deprivation, disease, natural and man-made disasters, underdevelopment, population displacement, environmental degradations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>States, non-state actors Structural sources from ---- From relations of power at various levels—from the family upwards to the global economy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.gdrc.org/sustdev/husec/Comparisons.pdf

The above comparison gives a clear picture that there is no universally applicable definition to human security. But it is primarily an analytical tool that focuses on ensuring security to individual not for the state. Exploring options aimed at mitigating threats to the insecurity of individual thus becomes a central theme of policy recommendations and actions.³ To sum up we can broadly agree with UNDP that Human Security is

- Centric
- Multidimensional
- Interconnected
- Universal

In principle human security reflects the aggregate gains after the mitigation of these threats. So it is advisable for each country to measure the pervasive threats and prepare policy in order to mitigate it. Here certain factors which are unique to a particular country, region or culture should be given importance rather accepting universal standards. For example realizing human security in Post war Iraq should include process towards democratization, ethnic cohesion, control of transnational terrorism, gender security etc. In Ethiopia and Sudan priority should be given to securing basic needs of the people, protection from regional conflicts, public health and civil unrest.

**Security Referent**

In the human security conception, the primary referent of security is the individual. Human security does not ignore state security, but it treats it as no more than co-equal to individual security. The key argument is that ultimately state security is for individual security. In the end, the state is the prodder of security for the citizenry; it is a means to security, and its security cannot be the end of security. Only the security of the individual can be the rightful and meaningful objective of security. A second argument for the coeval nature of individual and state security is that there are threats to individual security that go beyond the capacity of the state to manage. These threats may be transnational or internal. Thus, the state may be safe from other states, but may be gradually "hollowed out" from within as individual security declines. Transnational or subnational forces or actors may so threaten individuals that the state

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gradually weakens from within. A time may come when the state is no longer able to resist its external enemies because it has lost internal strength. Thirdly, a state may lose legitimacy for various reasons and turn against its own citizens: state security and individual security may come to be inversely related. A dysfunctional state that threatens the personal safety and freedom of its citizens will eventually lose the right to rule. Its security can no longer be the primary concern in this situation; rather its restructuring or even its destruction is necessitated — so that another state is brought into being, one that better protects the individuals within its boundaries.

To say that the individual and state are coeval is to imply that state security also is vital, for the reason given earlier, namely, that the state is an instrument, a key instrument, in the protection of individuals. Historically, states have come to be regarded as the most effective way of ensuring the safety and freedom of individuals. Some states are better at this task than others, but few states are altogether useless. In the human security view, therefore, the security of the state is not a negligible issue.

**Security Values**

*Two values* are paramount in the human security conception: the bodily safety of the individual; and his or her personal freedom. Bodily safety implies two things: protection of the body from pain and destruction; and some at least minimal level of physical well being. Personal freedom can also be thought about in terms of two components: the *basic freedom* of the individual in relation to one's most intimate and meaningful life choices (e.g. marriage, personal law, sexual orientation,

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employment); and freedom of the individual to associate with others. The latter may be called civic freedom and refers to the liberty to organize for cultural, social, economic, and political purposes.

Human security entails both values. Human security is not simply about the bodily safety and well being of the individual. Nor can it be simply about personal freedom. Clearly, bodily safety is at the core of human security. Well-being, a somewhat more expansive notion, is closely related. A body that is not in great pain or that another state is brought into being, one that better protects the individuals within its boundaries.

To say that the individual and state are coeval is to imply that state security also is vital, for the reason given earlier, namely, that the state is an instrument, a key instrument, in the protection of individuals. Historically, states have come to be regarded as the most effective way of ensuring the safety and freedom of individuals. Some states are better at this task than others, but few states are altogether useless. In the human security view, therefore, the security of the state is not a negligible issue.

A body that is not in great pain or has not been destroyed but is wasting away because it is unable to fulfill its basic needs or cannot access basic entitlements is not far away from great pain and premature destruction. Bodily safety and well being are related to personal freedom. Pain and destruction of bodies, or extreme deprivation of basic needs and entitlements, imply lack of freedom. Few would choose pain, self-destruction, or extreme deprivation. If they face these threats, it is because someone or some social condition is forcing the body.

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Why not then simply equate human security with bodily safety? The reason is a normative one. Imagine that government agents or a set of well-established social practices in a society are able to guarantee safety from pain, destruction, and deprivation. They do so in part by curtailing personal freedoms: by imposing minute limits to ensure that individuals do not hurt each other; and by destroying the social conditions that permit deprivations to exist. A totalitarian form of government may promise and to some extent construct such a protected society. A highly-regulated social order – a caste system, even slavery, perhaps – could also, by means of various strictures, rights, and obligations, ensure that each person knew his or her station and was protected from pain, destruction, or deprivation as long as they respected the codes and prohibitions of the system. Surely however these forms of human security are unacceptable normatively. Bodies secure from pain, destruction, and deprivation at the expense of basic personal freedoms cannot be equated with human security. Human security therefore describes some balance between the need for safety and the necessity of freedom. Absolutism in respect of either safety or freedom would be repugnant and self-defeating.

Security Threats

On the issue of threats, human security differs significantly from the neo-realist conception. For the realist, the basic threat to security is direct organized violence from other states. In the human security conception, threats must be reckoned as both direct and indirect, from identifiable sources, such as other states or non-state actors of various kinds, as also from structural sources, that is, from relations of power at various levels — from the family upwards to the global economy. In the latter case, threats are not easily traceable to the intentions of any one or more actors and may be the unintended consequences of others' actions or
even inactions.

The Canadian and UNDP human security schemas have identified scores of direct and indirect threats. These can be reduced to the following:

Table 2.1

Direct and Indirect Threats to Human Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT VIOLENCE</th>
<th>INDIRECT VIOLENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Violent Death/Disablement: victims of violent crime, killing of women and</td>
<td>• Deprivation: Levels of basic needs and entitlements (food, safe drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>programs/genocide, killing and torture of dissidents, killing of government</td>
<td>water, primary health care, primary education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>officials/agents, war causalities</td>
<td>• Disease: Incidence of life-threatening illness (infectious, cardiovascular,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cancer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dehumanization: slavery and trafficking in women and children; use of child</td>
<td>• Disease: Incidence of life-threatening illness (infectious, cardiovascular,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soldiers; physical abuse of women and children (in households); kidnapping;</td>
<td>cancer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abduction, unlawful detention of political opponents + rigged trials</td>
<td>• Disease: Incidence of life-threatening illness (infectious, cardiovascular,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cancer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Drugs: drug addiction</td>
<td>• Natural and Man-made Disasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discrimination and Dominations: discriminatory laws/practices against</td>
<td>• Underdevelopment: low levels of GNP/capita, low GNP growth, inflation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minorities and women, banning/rigging elections; subversion of political</td>
<td>unemployment, inequality, population growth/decline, poverty, at the national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institutions and the media</td>
<td>level; and regional/global economic instability and stagnation + demographic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• International Disputes: Interstate tensions/crises (bilateral/regional) +</td>
<td>change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great power tensions/crises</td>
<td>• Population Displacement: (national, regional, global) : refugees and migration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Most Destructive Weapons: the spread of weapons of mass                    | • Environmental Degradation: (local,
The table is largely self-explanatory. However, four points may be made about threats and human security values.

First of all, the twelve types of threats obviously vary by country. The pattern of threats affecting bodily safety/well-being and basic/civic freedom in advanced industrial countries surely differs from that of most developing countries. Democracies presumably differ from non-democracies. Some countries face a multitude of threats; others confront relatively simple threat structures. In Africa, Asia, and Latin America, human security is "over-determined" and complex; in most of Europe and North America, human security is less challenging (though not necessarily unchallenging).

Second, a number of threats are global in nature and affect all human beings, though, once again, not in the same measure. Great power tensions and crises, a world war, and stockpiles of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons would derogate from everyone's safety. Global war, conventional or nuclear, will cause environmental damage on such a scale as to endanger virtually all life on the planet. Instabilities in the global economy will hurt everyone, if differentially.

Third, the table is suggestive of some differentiation amongst the various threats in terms of their importance. Clearly, ranking violent death/disablement and deprivation at the top of the two columns is a gesture towards the primacy of these threats to safety/well-being and

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basic/civic freedom. It is not hard to see that the first three or four sets of threats in both columns comprise the core threats to human security: violent death/disablement, dehumanization, and drugs, amongst the direct threats; and deprivation, disease, and disasters, amongst the indirect threats. These are perhaps the most visible and immediate forms of direct and indirect violence. By contrast, discrimination and domination, international disputes, the spread of WMDs and other highly destructive weaponry, underdevelopment, population displacement, and environmental degradation are more remote and long term in their consequences for bodily safety/well-being and basic/civic freedom.

Fourth, the threats listed in the bottom half of both columns are more ambiguous in terms of their effects on bodily safety/well-being and basic/civic freedom. Few would have difficulty in admitting that violent death, various forms of dehumanization and drug addiction are unequivocally bad for safety and freedom. Similarly, surely there are few doubts that deprivation, disease, and disasters are fairly directly related to the chances of personal safety and freedom. On the other hand, there may be real differences of opinion over the threats listed in the bottom half of the table and the extent to which they can be linked to safety and freedom.

Discriminatory laws and practices as well as naked forms of political domination, such as the banning and rigging of elections and the subversion of political institutions and the media, would plainly hurt bodily safety should someone choose to challenge those laws and practices. Clearly, such laws and practices curtail civic freedoms, even if they do not necessarily affect basic freedoms. However, some discriminatory laws and practices may be defensible. For instance, a disadvantaged community may benefit from "reverse discrimination" or "affirmative action". In Sri Lanka, after independence, the majority
Sinhala community not only came to dominate the democratic political system but it also gave itself certain advantages in the education system in order to correct for what it regarded as a historic wrong perpetrated by the British colonial government.

Historically, due to British policy, Sinhala representation in higher education was nowhere near proportionate to its share of the population, and after independence the Sinhala-dominated government instituted a policy of reverse discrimination to benefit Sinhala students. A similar policy was begun, much earlier, by Indonesia and Malaysia in respect of the majority Malay communities.

There is little doubt, with hindsight, that the Sri Lankan policy was disastrous in terms of its effects in fuelling Tamil discontent. The question is: how should the policy be judged from the point of view of human security? Was it a deliberate attack on the Tamil minority or was it a rather crude policy which turned out badly? The point is not that it is impossible to make a judgment. The policy may have been insensitively implemented rather than malign in intent, and a discerning observer should be able to judge whether or not the policy represents poor political management or the start of a repressive campaign against a minority. The point rather is that, in assessing cases such as these from the point of view of human security, contextual factors will matter a great deal and mechanical judgements could be seriously misleading.

How do international disputes short of war – tensions, crises – affect bodily safety/well-being and basic/civic freedom? Clearly, not all international tensions and crises directly affect individual safety and freedom. However, the expectation of and preparation for war – what Jean-Jacques Rousseau called the "state of war" – can have social effects
with consequences for individual safety. Broadly, those effects can be encapsulated in the term *militarism* which may be defined as the propagation and privileging of symbols, values, and practices associated with organized violence. A militaristic state may become, to use Harold Lasswell’s term, a garrison state where the specialists in violence and their social preferences come to dominate. A garrison state would surely be a dangerous place from the point of view of individual safety and freedom.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, it could be argued, is not necessarily a threat to safety and freedom; indeed, it is the opposite. So, while everyone is agreed that nuclear proliferation beyond a point is dangerous and useless, there are those who would argue that nuclear weapons serve an essential deterrent function and will continue to do so for a long time to come. The stock of nuclear weapons should be reduced, perhaps even eventually abolished, but for now and the foreseeable future, in certain kinds of strategic environments, they are regarded by a dozen or so countries as good rather than bad for security.

Underdevelopment as a threat to personal safety and freedom will also be contested by some. Whether and how low per capita incomes, low economic growth rates, inflation, unemployment, economic inequality, demographic change, and poverty affect the prospects of safety and freedom is a matter of debate. Obviously, economic stagnation (low per capita incomes, low growth rates) below some threshold level and poverty levels that go beyond some level imply deprivation of basic needs and entitlements for large numbers of people which imply, in turn,

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diminishment of safety if not freedom as well. Beyond a minimum threshold though, the link to safety and freedom is more difficult to specify. What about other development factors such as unemployment and inequality? Or the general state of the regional and global economy?

How do these affect safety and freedom? Economic backwardness and dislocation, whether at the national or transnational level, influence the social and political climate in which individuals live and work and therefore help determine the prospects of safety and freedom. Beyond this, it is hard to say. Prime facie there is a case for the inclusion of such "threats," but clearly investigations into human security will have to delineate these links more convincingly.  

So also there is genuine debate over whether population displacements — refugees and migration — should be classified as human security threats. Displaced people, according to Astri Suhrke, could as well be seen as "victims or assets."  Suhrke clarifies that "this does not necessarily mean that the security paradigm is inappropriate for migration and environment issues; only that its application in relation to the empirical material must be assessed with great care." In other words, it all depends. Put differently: context and interpretation matter.

Environmental degradation and its relationship to bodily

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11 Ibid.
safety/well-being and freedom are also ambiguous or controversial. In the first place, environmental decay must reach some threshold before it significantly affects human health and survival. That threshold will vary by any number of factors, including location, climate, general health of the population, among others. This is yet another way of saying that context matters in determining the salience of a putative threat for human security. Secondly, the causes of many bodily ailments are "over-determined," that is, any number of factors individually may be responsible for illness and infirmity. To link environmental decay to human disease is therefore not always an easy task. Environmental degradation is often caused by human agency and to that extent it can be linked to the issue of freedom as well. Building dams and nuclear reactors may damage the ecology in costly and possibly irreparable ways. However, it may also damage and disrupt local human habitations and cultures, which must make way for the dam or reactor. The forcible eviction and relocation of people to sites that may or may not be as congenial to them is, it can be argued, a violation of a basic freedom. Having said that, clearly, there is the counter-argument, namely, that there is no absolute freedom, there are always trade-offs and, unfortunate as it is, some people sometimes must have their choices abridged for the greater good.

In sum, while the core threats identified in the top half of the table seem legitimate human security threats, those in the lower half are more problematic in their links to personal safety and freedom. Human security theorists will have to do better in specifying those links and in showing empirically that there is correlation. Contextual factors will play an important role in judging whether or not or in what circumstances these factors become "threats" to human security.
The human security conception of appropriate instruments or means is also quite different from that of the neo-realists. It differs in four key respects. First, in the human security approach, force is a secondary instrument. Force is not very effective in dealing with the multifarious threats to personal safety and freedom. Human development and humane governance are therefore preferred instruments of security.\(^\text{13}\) If coercion is necessary, then various kinds of sanctions are a first recourse. Force, in any case, is to be used not for purely national purposes but rather for the more "cosmopolitan" goal of managing human security threats. When it is used, it should be used collectively, preferably under the auspices of international institutions.

Second, in the human security view, long-term cooperation is possible, indeed vital. Growing interdependence and the increasing porousness of states make collaboration and coordination with others well-nigh inescapable. States must come together to deal with human security threats. They must also reach out to international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other agencies in civil society.

Third, in the traditional conception of security, hard or military power is central. In the human security conception, soft power or the power of persuasion is central. This soft power should be used to disseminate information and ideas on the imperatives of international cooperation and on the nature of collaboration for human security.

Fourth, states, regional and international organizations, and NGOs should combine to foster norms of conduct in various areas of human

security. Norms must be backed by national and international institutions including the UN, global economic and financial institutions, regional organizations, state institutions, and NGOs. National and international institutions can be effective only if states and other actors make them work. They will do so to the extent that they are effective participants in those institutions. This requires that international and national institutions are made more democratic and representative. Democratization and representativeness must be achieved without paralyzing decision-making and implementation processes.

The contrast between traditional national security and human security can be summarized in the following table:

**Table 2.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Security</th>
<th>Human Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security for whom</strong></td>
<td>Primarily, the state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security of what values</strong></td>
<td>Territorial integrity and national independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security from what threats</strong></td>
<td>Direct threats from other states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security by what means</strong></td>
<td>- Force as the primary instrument of security, to be used unilaterally for a state’s own safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Balance of power is important; power is equated with military capabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This table allows us to propose a succinct definition of human security:

**Human security relates to the protection of the individual’s personal safety and freedom from direct and indirect threats of violence.**

The promotion of human development and good governance, and, when necessary, the collective use of sanctions and force are central to managing human security. States, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other groups in civil society in combination are vital to the prospects of human security.

Few would dispute the fact that the values and threats identified in this paper are important. Individual safety and freedom are paramount values, at least in any liberal political philosophy. The direct and indirect threats listed here would surely appear in most lists of dangers to human well being. Critics and skeptics of the human security idea would ask, however, whether it is helpful to include these values and threats **within the conception of security.** They would argue that there are in essence two problems associated with human security: first, that it is theoretically not an elegant formulation; and secondly, that the policy implications of such a holistic, heterogeneous view of security are confounding.

The theoretical objection to human security is most stringently
raised by neorealist security analysts who argue that lumping together such a disparate set of threats causes the terms security to lose all theoretical utility.\textsuperscript{14} In a neo-realist view, the equation of threats with direct and indirect violence simply muddies the issue. Security is about war, that is, organized violence between states or between states and those who can field military formations against states. The forms of such violence, neo-realists would insist, have little in common with other forms of violence, such as domestic political repression or violence against women and children. In addition, the sources or causes of war differ from the sources or causes of these other forms of violence. By lumping together violence in its all its manifestations, the theoretical task is thereby made more difficult.

The policy objection to human security is that by positing so many different forms of violence there is little hope of framing a coherent response. In the neo-realist view, the appropriate response to a physical attack by a clearly identified adversarial agent is the deployment of a counter-attack. This makes for a relatively simple and practical world. On the other hand, if the forms of violence vary greatly, if violence is more than just a physical blow and if it is indirect (i.e. if it is difficult or infructuous to identify the agent of violence), policy must commensurately be much more complex and may not involve the use of force at all. A policy that does not involve the use of force, security specialists would argue, falls outside the scope of security altogether.

These are not trivial objections. Neo-realism and more traditional realism and the study of war must be accorded their place. However, at least two comments should be made in reply. First, working within the

theoretical and policy framework of realism is by no means a simple
endeavor. Stephen Van Evera, citing a hefty amount of research, in the
realist tradition amongst others, notes in his fine recent study of the
causes of war: "Sadly, though, scholars have made scant progress on the
problem. A vast literature on the causes of war has appeared, but this
literature says little about how war can be prevented. Most of the many
causes that it identifies cannot be manipulated.... Many hypotheses that
identify manipulable causes have not been tested, leaving skeptics free to
reject them.... In short, our stock of hypotheses on the causes of war is
large but unuseful.15 Van Evera, no enemy of realism, further admits that
"Realism has been criticized for offering few hypotheses on the causes of
war, or for proposing hypotheses of uncertain validity and strength...
Realism has been rightly criticized for failing to provide prescriptively
useful explanations for the war problem."16

Secondly, it cannot be the case that confronted by a complex and
dangerous world that confounds our theoretical and policy "comfort
zones", we climb back into those zones. The expansion of the term
security to include a larger set of threats and violence is without doubt
discomfiting. Where exactly to draw the line is unclear. What human
security proponents have suggested and what has been endorsed in this
chapter is that security is larger than conventional conceptions would
allow. How much larger is the subject of further research. The schema put
forward here should help us determine the limits. A human security audit
should reveal which components are truly important in terms of the threat
to safety and freedom.

15 Stephen Van Evera, Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict
16 Ibid., p. 8.
Realism's appropriation of the term security rests on the assumption that interstate war is the greatest threat to personal safety and freedom. This may or may not be the case, at any given time. It is not however a given. Thus, as Emma Rothschild has shown, over the past three hundred years or so, there has been a seasonality to security thinking and principles. Security paradigms have come and gone with major wars and their aftermath. A security sensibility focused on the individual existed from the mid 17th century to the French Revolution. It was succeeded by a view more concerned with the problem of organized violence between states. The debate over security after the Cold War and the proclivity to expand the definition is not surprising from the point of view of the seasonality of security weltanschauungs. With the dramatic change in international politics in 1989, something had to give in the dominant conception of security. Human security is one way of characterizing the new, insurgent conception of security.

At base, human security is a manifestation of a Kantian internationalism and cosmopolitanism that is unsatisfied – not dissatisfied but unsatisfied – with a traditional interpretation of international politics. Neo-Kantianism is not dismissive of the older international power politics, but it is not content with it. One aspect of this neo-Kantianism is the desire to explore ways of preventing physical violence which go beyond deterrence, that is, beyond the deployment of physical counterviolence. As Rothschild explains, preventive action in general is very difficult because "[o]ne of the distinctive characteristics of prevention is

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18 Ibid., pp. 60-61.
that it takes place under conditions of imperfect information.\textsuperscript{20} Without good information, anticipatory actions are always likely to be too late: "One does not know that one cares about something, or reflect on what one has it in one's power to do, until one knows about some particular injustice or crisis..."\textsuperscript{21}

Human security is a response to the urge to know better what one should care about, what it is in one's power to do, and what crises are looming. Its concerns are both consequentialist and deontological. Human security's concern with personal safety and freedom is consequentialist in that it regards inter-state war as frequently the end product of direct and indirect violence against the individual. It acknowledges that inter-state violence may arise from international anarchy, but it regards threats to individual life and liberty as equally a cause of international violence. Human security's concern with personal safety and freedom is deontological because it affirms that individual life and liberty are values which require protection not so much because of the consequences that may flow from their non-protection but rather because these are morally worthy values that must be upheld for their own sake.

Human security envisages actions that attempt to at least meliorate if not prevent the threats to safety and freedom. To prepare the ground for such actions, it must enable us to "know better what one should care about, what it is in one's power to do, and what crises are looming." That is, human security requires an estimate or audit of the threats to safety and freedom that would better inform us. Such an audit would serve two functions: it would help "draw the line" around human security by showing which of the various threats to safety and freedom are the most

\textsuperscript{20} Rothschild, "What is Security?", op. cit., p. 72.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., pp. 72-73.
important (and this may vary from society to society); and it would provide an assessment of the nature and volume of threats that one is up against as also the capabilities one possesses to meliorate or eliminate those threats.

**State-Centric and Human-Centric Security**

Scholars and practitioners for over a decade have increasingly used the term ‘human security’ to convey a new human-centric rather than the traditional state-centric understanding of security. Notwithstanding its growing application particularly in UN policy statements, states’ foreign policies, scholarly journals and teaching curriculum the idea of human security continues to be highly contentious.\(^{22}\) Equally contentious however is the value of the traditional state-centric conceptualisation of security to address the contemporary security agenda. From the disciplinary perspective of international relations (IR) and security studies (SS) the discussions about these different approaches to security have produced many justifications for their respective position.\(^{23}\)

It is argued here that there is a security dialectic\(^{24}\) evolving between elements of the state-centric and human-centric approaches. The dialectic is between two referent objects, the state and people, between internal and external threats to these referent objects and between the various means for enhancing the security of each. The dialectic also involves causal and constitutive connections between these elements. Over time it is possible that a new synthesis in the form of a middle path

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or ‘via media’ may develop between the state-centric and human-centric approaches. The conceptual evidence for this argument can be found in several recent scholarly works. Nonetheless, in principle, a security dialectic between the paradigms and a possible new synthesis or via media does offer a way of addressing the growing number of issues that comprise the contemporary security agenda. The challenge is to establish the balance between the parts, to find both conceptually and in practice, the best via media in any given security situation.

Establishing that, the security dialectic is significant for several reasons. From a disciplinary perspective it shows that many scholars and even more actors develop security concepts and practices that take account of the different dimensions of security: that is, both state and human security, the external and internal security dimensions of security, issues of order and justice, and questions of ‘what is’ and ‘what ought-to-be’. This contrasts with the view that concepts and practices of security can be understood from one particular perspective, or one theory such as realism.

The main significance however is that formulating concepts and practice on the basis of a dialectic between different elements of security is, under the present circumstances, the most likely way of enhancing the security of people. We live in a world where dangerous inter-state, intra-state and transnational security issues relentlessly continue. The end of the Cold War did not bring peace. It is a world where the state, despite challenges, remains the dominant actor, where state-centric security

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remains dominant and indeed relevant, where sovereignty is both a minus and a plus. It is also a world where there are growing normative and utilitarian imperatives to provide better security for people. Understanding the growing interconnectedness between these issues, between the security of states and people, in terms of a security dialectic holds more promise than any single paradigmatic approach, despite the difficulties.

The analysis here is in three parts. It starts by reviewing the state-centric and human-centric approaches to the idea of security in the IR SS literature and the criticisms that each makes of the other. The conclusion drawn from this analysis is that each critique reveals serious shortcomings with the two positions and that an ideal-type approach to security would involve important elements of both. The second part examines recent work by several scholars that demonstrates an evolving approach to security that seeks to establish the connections and dialectics between the state-centric and human-centric approaches. It examines the evidence for arguing that some important agents of security, some global institutions, states and non-state actors are establishing a similar approach. To some extent these conceptual and empirical developments satisfy the ideal-type suggested by the earlier critique. The third section analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the security dialectic approach arguing that in its present form insufficient attention is given to a proper balance between the state and human-centric approaches. The issue of balance is also a problem in practice with many security agents adopting a security dialectic that is still tipped towards the state-centric approach.

**State-Centric and Human-Centric Approaches to Security: Both Necessary, But Not Sufficient**

Within the discipline of international relations and its sub-
discipline security studies, discussions about ‘security’ are often conducted within a conceptual framework that refers to the ‘referent object’ of security, ‘threats’ to that referent object/s, and the ‘means’ by which the referent object attempts to prevent and protect itself from threats. For traditionalists the referent object is the state, the main threat is other states that have the capability and intention to use force to achieve their goals. The means for countering such threats is military deterrence, and if necessary the use of force if attack seems imminent or actually takes place.

According to traditionalist scholars, the meaning of security has changed little over time and they remain unimpressed by yet another argument, this time about human security, for changing their view. The state-centric critique of the human-centric perspective has several dimensions. According to many traditional scholars there are inadequate grounds for making human security the referent object of security. Barry Buzan, for example, is unconvinced that the focus on state security as the referent object should be replaced or even supplemented by human security. Buzan argues that the referent object of human security cannot readily be either the individual or all people everywhere—humankind.

Focus on the individual brings up the problem of agency since, in practice, individual security is an attempt to bypass the state and the state is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for each person’s security. Moreover, Buzan argues that if human security is really about individual security then this is nothing new and it is already, the focus of human

rights law. If humankind is the referent of human security then it is ‘too big and too vague to have popular appeal’.\textsuperscript{30} If human security is about the middle level—or societal security—then it concerns collectivities of people that are collected together because they share a common identity of some form.

Usually such collectivities are manifested as nations and religions which, Buzan argues, ‘is a short route back to the “national security” perspective from which human security advocates are presumably trying to escape’.\textsuperscript{31}

For these reasons Buzan rejects the idea of human security as a useful component of international security. Buzan’s argument reveals a particular line of thinking about what can legitimately constitute a security referent object, given ‘what is’ the nature of states and international relations and therefore the focus of the discipline.

From this view both the context and the nature of relations between states is different to that which occurs inside the state. The international context is not founded on notions of social justice that usually operate at the domestic level but rather on anarchy and power politics and therefore on protecting national interests. Neither the international system nor the society of states assumes that order can be implemented, that justice or moral/ethical codes or any ‘ought-to-be’ norm will have a profound influence, as is most often the case within states. Apart from operating in a different context, international security has a different objective, the external security of states, and a different threat, the military power of states and finally a different means, the threat

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p. 10.
and or use of force. The nature of the state, the use of force and power inside the state is not the subject of relations between states or within the scope of the discipline. Hence for traditionalists, such as Buzan, trying to make people within states the object of security is conceptually and empirically flawed.

Whereas Buzan mounts an argument against the conceptual and empirical validity of including human security within the practice and discipline of international relations, another well known IR/SS scholar, Yuen Foong Khong, criticises the idea of securitising the individual human being because it fails to provide practical guidance, either for setting priorities or for alleviating human insecurity. His view is that ‘in making all individuals a priority none actually benefits’. Criteria to distinguish between different types of security fears that individuals experience are needed for prioritising action. Furthermore, it is not clear, Khong argues, that securitising the individual will actually alleviate ‘the plight of the repressed’. He is sceptical that outside special areas, for example NATO’s sphere of interest, securitisation will lead to any significant improvement and hence the idea generates false hopes for the victims and the international community. Khong is also sceptical that ‘taking human security seriously’ will have a positive impact on international peace and security. ‘Putting people first’ he says suffers from the same lack of criteria for distinguishing between different types of people and is therefore ‘too universalistic’ to provide policy guidance for improving international security. Khong’s state-centric bias is further revealed by his advice that it is better for people if they ‘cast their lot with

33 Ibid., p. 233.
34 Ibid., p. 234.
Their government—and their state—if they want a way out of their privation.  

Other sceptics, who are not necessarily advocates of state-centric security approaches, also have doubts about the analytical value of the idea. Roland Paris argues that human security is more useful as a rallying cry for nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), international agencies and some interested states and as a campaign slogan for political coalitions to fight for various causes, for example, the land mines convention and the establishment of the International Criminal Court. However, as Paris points out, holism, inclusiveness and collective action are not substitutes for an analytical framework that guides research and practice. Indeed, critics of the human-centric approach to security are often leaders of developing countries. They claim that the idea is merely another attempt by the West to impose its liberal values, which emphasise political rather than social and economic rights and which aim to undermine the principle of sovereignty and elevate humanitarian intervention. Although not necessarily expressed in the terms of the discipline, these arguments against the idea of human security are based on political leaders’ strong attachment to external and internal sovereignty as the basis for inter-state security and intra-state security and, although not made explicit, regime survival.

Political elites and those IR scholars who reject human security agree, for different reasons, that establishing international and domestic stability has more to do with establishing order than with applying

36 Ibid., p. 235.
universal norms.

The Human-Centric Approach and Critique of the Traditional Approach

The arguments for a human-centric approach to security in the IR/SS literature can in part be located within ‘critical security’ studies, or the school of thought that challenges some or all of the traditional views about the meaning of security. Critical security scholars embrace a much broader understanding of security, which Keith Krause and others describe as having ‘three axes’. The first axis (the horizontal push) attempts to broaden the traditionalist’s narrow definition of security to include what is perceived as other types of threats to the state: such as economic, environmental, and unregulated population movements threats. The second, and related, axis (the vertical push) goes beyond the state-centric focus above to deepen the concept of security to include other types of referents: at one end individual security (often called human security), at the other end, global security, and in between, regional and societal security. A third axis, still within the state-centric mold (and which concerns the means to enhance state security) endorses cooperation among security actors through common, cooperative, collective and comprehensive security approaches. This interpretation of the traditional approach is a useful descriptive account of the differences between the two perspectives.

However, the most strident critique of the traditional approach is that it fails to recognise the normative human-centric dimensions of security. The liberal scholar Richard Falk places the idea of human

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security within ‘visionary interpretations of human destiny’ which can be traced from earliest times to the present.\textsuperscript{40} Modernity, Falk argues, ‘situate[s] part of this visionary impetus within the secularised imagination of individuals and groups seeking to discover an autonomous pathway to a better, more secure and fulfilling, future for human societies’.\textsuperscript{41} Recent manifestations of this endeavour within the discipline include the various liberal world order studies, for example the mid-1960s World Order Models Project (WOMP), which Falk says were a reaction to the dominant realist world view and Machiavellianism.\textsuperscript{42}

The normative dimension of human security not only includes visionary interpretations of human destiny it also prescribes some empirical features for that vision. Ramesh Thakur, another well respected IR security scholar, argues the shift ‘from the state to the individual’ enhances the ‘quality of life’ of people. Human security has a negative and positive or a ‘double connotation’: Negatively it refers to freedom from—from want, hunger, attack, torture, imprisonment without a free and fair trial, discrimination on spurious grounds and so on. Positively, it means freedom to—the capacity and opportunity that allows each human being to enjoy life to the fullest without imposing constraints upon others engaged in the same pursuit. Putting the two together, human security refers to the quality of life of the people of a society or polity.

Anything that degrades their quality of life—demographic pressures, diminished access to or stocks of resources, etc—is a security concern. Conversely, anything that can upgrade their quality of life—

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 1.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
economic growth, improved access to resources, social and political empowerment etc—is an enhancement of human security.\textsuperscript{43}

These critical security and strongly normative arguments in the IR/SS literature inform much, but not all, of the current human-centric critique of the traditional state-centric approach. Two of the best known critiques, derived from the development and humanitarian literatures, include these strong normative arguments and, most often, utilitarian and consequential arguments.

The ‘Development Critique’ of the Traditional Approach

The United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) \textit{Human Development Report 1994}\textsuperscript{44} is often regarded as a major challenge to traditional views of security. Indeed, the report provides a definition of human security that is the one most commonly used not only by development scholars and practitioners, but also by IR/SS scholars.

Human security means ‘first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And, second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life—whether in homes, in jobs or in communities’.\textsuperscript{45} The threats to human security can be categorised, according to the report, under seven headings: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security.


\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 23.
Many advocates ardently defend this very broad definition of security. From an IR perspective, or more precisely from a critical security studies position, its most important features are that it corrects the state-centric view of security and adds the much needed normative dimension. Introducing ‘human’ elements of security, such as ‘hunger’ and ‘hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life’, extends the dominant security discourse well beyond the traditional, and by comparison, narrow view that security has several essential components: the protection of the state and national security; the primacy (or high-politics) of inter-relations between states; and the problem of physical threats or the use of military force by states against each other. Whereas this traditional concept stresses that the state is the referent object of security and that physical violence from outside sources is the main threat, the development concept of security stresses that human beings are the referent object and threats are often non-military and arise from many sources from within the state.

From the development perspective, presenting the problems associated with human development in terms of human security is justified in normative, utilitarian and consequential terms. The first is that poverty and inequality in developing countries requires urgent attention. According to Michel Camdessus, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), ‘poverty is the ultimate systemic threat facing humanity’. In the post-Cold War period, reduced levels of aid from

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48 Ibid.
developing countries exacerbate poverty. Second, poverty and inequality are among the ‘root causes’ of conflict within states. War within states is more common than war between states and as a result civilian deaths are higher than combatant mortalities; more women and children are dying from war. Clearly, from the development perspective, relief from the injustices of economic and social poverty is at the centre of the need to reconceptualise security.

Moreover, the imperative to protect people from the harms of underdevelopment within states is necessary for the survival of all people. A senior development official in the United Nations, Mahbub ul-Haq, emphasises the new moral and international repercussions of not acting. ‘Human security’, he points out, ‘is a powerful revolutionary idea that forces a new morality on all of us through a perception of common threats to our very survival’. From ul-Haq’s perspective, ‘[t]he consequences of poverty, disease, drugs, pollution do not stop at borders’.

In effect the development view challenges the state-centric approach to security in several ways: by downplaying the prospects of inter-state in the post-Cold War era; elevating the many injustices of underdevelopment; assuming that these injustices have moral and practical imperatives for all humans and states wherever they are; and by stressing the interconnectedness between poverty and conflict within the state for internal and external security. Furthermore, securitising the human development agenda in this way also has utilitarian effects, not

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50 Centre for Systemic Peace website for Statistical Evidence of this Development <www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/peace.htm>.
least of which is to move attention and resources away from the state-centric agenda.

The ‘Humanitarian Critique’ of the Traditional Approach

The second major critique of the traditional approach to security is based on normative and legal arguments supportive of humanitarian principles. From this perspective, for example, the traditional approach to security ignores the security of people in a variety of dire situations. In particular it fails to directly support humanitarian international law that seeks to prevent and protect people suffering harms perpetrated by the state. At the centre of this body of law is the concept of human rights and the three generations of rights: (a) civil and political rights; (b) economic, social and cultural rights; and (c) collective rights. These rights have been formalised, for example, in the 1945 United Nations Charter, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1993 Vienna Declarations and the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. These various conventions are binding on states and legitimise international scrutiny of the interaction between the state and people.

This humanitarian focus is the quintessential normative element of the human-centric approach. The close connection between human security and human rights is a corrective to the state-centric focus and a reinforcement of the normative elements of security. According to some human security advocates, establishing the link between human security

and human rights can enrich both.\textsuperscript{54} Placing human security in the human rights context attaches to it the ‘notion of correlative rights’.\textsuperscript{55} In addition, if human security is seen to be as important as national security then human rights cannot ‘so easily be neglected in the name of security’. Human security considerations might also help to resolve conflicting human rights.\textsuperscript{56} For some, however, making connections between human security and human rights is a fundamental flaw. Many critics in the developing world, who may nonetheless support some aspects of the human development dimensions of human security, object to the inclusion of human rights if it means that state rights, or the right to external and internal sovereignty, becomes conditional upon Western formulations of human rights, in particular political and civil rights. This objection seems to have increased since the 1999 statement by the UN Secretary General confirming that genocide and extensive abuses of human rights are reasons for overruling sovereignty and for justifying military intervention.

The humanitarian critique also highlights the failure of state-centric approaches to consider other areas of international law which legislate against the principle of physical harm to people in a variety of other situations. Examples of such international law include: (a) international humanitarian law (IHL) which in wartime protects people who are no longer participants in the hostilities;\textsuperscript{57} (b) the establishment of three international tribunals one of which is permanent to ‘try persons


\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.

accused of violations of international law, including humanitarian law;\textsuperscript{58} (c) the UN resolutions that establish standards for the protection of civilians during internal conflict;\textsuperscript{59} (d) a UN \textit{aide memoire} for ‘consideration of issues pertaining to the protection of civilians during the Security Council’s deliberations of peacekeeping mandates’;\textsuperscript{60} and (e) the UN resolutions against terrorism.\textsuperscript{61}

In addition to the critique of the traditional approach from normative, utilitarian and consequential viewpoints, the human-centric approach has several advantages for conceptualising security. In contrast to traditional approaches it offers insights into the cause of violence within the states, such as civil war. It provides an important focus on the nexus between the different dimensions of human security (for example, the nexus between the harms of underdevelopment and political violence). It sets formal and informal benchmarks for practical prosecution of offenders of human security and it can act as a deterrent. It also acts as a political organizing umbrella. As an organising concept it can collect many of the threats to humans under one name even if it cannot necessarily say why these particular threats were singled out as especially important for human security. Another effect of human security is that it provides political glue among its many different actors. The increasing number of non-state actors, each of which believes their particular issue is the most urgent to resolve and each of which competes for state and private funding and intellectual resources, are glued together by an open-ended concept whose vision of what ‘ought-to-be’ is one that

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} UN Security Council Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2002/6).
no one could reject.

The ‘In-Camp Critique’ of the Human-Centric Approach

Advocates of the human-centric approach would have little disagreement with the above critique of the state-centric approach. Nonetheless, there are differences within the camp. There is scepticism about the prospects of setting practical agendas when the scope of the human security agenda is as vast and wide-ranging as that set out in the Human Development Report 1994, and when there appears to be no conceptually binding link between all the different aspects of human security. There is also the concern that it is difficult to prioritise issues without some agreed criteria, adding to the problems of practice.

These concerns about the practical feasibility of researching and formulating practical agendas for human security have led some scholars towards narrower understandings of the concept, in terms of threats and means. For example, Andrew Mack, Chair of Human Security at the University of British Columbia, is head of the Human Security Report Project that maps the incidence, causes, consequences and policy responses to global violence—criminal as well as political.62 For Mack this narrower focus on political and criminal violence is justified because for the purposes of analysis, poverty and violence, for example, must be treated independently. As he explains, ‘[a]ny definition that has the consequences of conflating dependent and independent variables makes causal analysis virtually impossible’.63 A similar concern about the scope of the concept apparently led to the recent decision by the Commission of

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Human Security to divide their research agenda into two related parts: conflict and human security, and development and human security.\textsuperscript{64}

There is also a division within the human-centric camp over ends and means.\textsuperscript{65} Many advocates take a strong normative position and argue that human security is the only end, that state security is a means, never an end. Others take a more flexible position arguing that ends and means are not necessarily at odds with each other.\textsuperscript{66} While the end is human security, in some instances pursuing state security can also be an end that benefits both the state and people.

In reviewing the various critiques made by each approach to security, several points seem clear. From the state-centric perspective the main problems with human-centric approaches are that, from a disciplinary perspective they conflict with the dominant boundaries of the discipline of IR/SS, which focus on the external security relations between states and on establishing international order. Conceptually, bringing in other definitions of security, such as human security, will make the concept meaningless. The broad definitions of human security provide little direction for research and policy decisions. In practice focusing on the internal security issues will have the effect of undermining the principle of sovereignty which is critical for maintaining international order.

From the human-centric perspective security concerns people and

it incorporates a state’s internal issues when people are suffering serious harms, for example from underdevelopment and neglect of humanitarian principles, and when the state does not act to correct these problems. The security of people is a normative issue in its own right but it also has practical consequences for internal and international order. Hence, internal and external security issues are interrelated.

The various critiques suggest that an ideal-type approach to conceptualizing and practicing security would in principle comprise several propositions: people and the state are referent objects; threats have internal and external dimensions and involve organised political violence often associated with underdevelopment factors; the means for enhancing security involve a range of measures that deal with the various threats mentioned; and finally, many of these issues are connected and interact with each other, perhaps in a dialectic.

AN EVOLVING SECURITY DIALECTIC?

The critiques above have helped to further clarify the differences between the traditional and human security positions. Many scholars would doubt that more than this had been achieved. However, three hypotheses indicate that something more is happening. First, the discussions are also encouraging some scholars to compare the two approaches, to consider the advantages and disadvantages, the virtues and flaws and the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective. As a result it is now possible to find scholarship that appears to recognise some of the ideal type propositions mentioned above. Second, some of this scholarship not only appreciates that there are different dimensions of security but also that there is a dialectic between them. Third, there is a

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67 See the earlier discussion about the criticisms of human security.
nascent attempt to develop, often unreflectively, a middle path or via media between the state-centric and human-centric approaches.

The idea that there is considerable interaction between different approaches to international relations has a precedent within the discipline. Martin Wight, a scholar from the English School, argues that the writers of international theory follow three traditions: realists are those ‘who emphasise and concentrate upon the element of international anarchy, the Rationalists those who emphasise and concentrate on the elements of international discourses, and Revolutionists are those who emphasise and concentrate upon the element of the society of states or intellectual society.’68 He is emphatic that the traditions ‘are streams, with eddies and cross-currents, sometimes interlacing and never for long confined to their own river bed … They influence and cross-fertilise one another and they change although without, I think, losing their inner identity’.69 Wight’s metaphor is indicative of a dialectic which is continued in his claim that the great writers of international theory ‘straddle the frontiers dividing two of the traditions, and most of these writers transcend their own systems’.70 Wight also considers the idea of a via media, arguing that it is the rationalist tradition which is ‘the broad middle road’.71 A. Clare Cutler neatly sums up Wight’s apparent emphasis on movement between traditions and a middle way, or via media, in her statement that he has an ‘inability to embrace any one single formulation’.72

Although Wight’s focus is at the international level he is mindful

69 Ibid., p. 260.
70 Ibid., p. 259.
that individuals are at the core of international security. He seems to assume, erroneously in some circumstances, that not only is international society the best way to preserve state security but that states will protect their citizens not just from the external harm of military force but also from internal harms of physical violence. With these qualifications we can draw from Wight the idea that international relations theory involves interaction, or a dialectic, as well as a middle way, or via media, between different traditions.

Wight’s view that writers often ‘straddle the frontiers dividing two of the traditions, and most of these writers transcend their own systems’ is reflected in the writings of several IR/SS scholars over the last three to four years. These scholars, just as Cutler remarked of Wight, show an ‘inability to embrace any one single formulation’. Four academic works by well known scholars, Sverre Lodgaard, William Tow and Nicholas Thomas, Dewi Fortuna Anwar and Astri Suhrke, demonstrate, that there are security dialectics between the state-centric and human-centric approaches and, to a much lesser extent, via medias. In making this argument the ideal-type propositions that evolved from an examination of earlier critiques will be adopted as the basis for analysis.

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75 Ibid., p. 259.
A Security Dialectic Between States And People As Referent Objects
(Proposition One)

Interestingly all the works either explicitly or implicitly confirmed this proposition. Lodgaard argues that ‘as the dust of the conceptual debate in the early 1990s settles’ it is now clear that the concepts of state security and human security will be ‘the concepts that security policies will be organised around for a long time ahead’.77 Hence Lodgaard proposes a reconceptualisation of the idea of security as a ‘dual concept of state security and human security’.78 Security involves both. Security of states, or national security, concerns defence of ‘territorial integrity of the state and freedom to determine one’s own form of government’.79 Security of states, at the global level, is possible but not always probable, through collective security, sometimes through collective defence.

Security of the people involves a widening of the idea of security, from the exclusive reserve of security of the state, to the security of people. Furthermore, he argues, the objective of human security is the safety and survival of people, or in other words freedom from fear of physical violence.80

Thomas and Tow81 imply rather than assert that the state and people are referent objects. The authors claim, that their objective is ‘assessing how the evolution of human security might proceed in ways that co-exist with more traditional approaches, rather than advocating the

78 Ibid., p. 6.
79 Ibid., p. 1.
80 Ibid., p. 6.
former outlook’s complete revision’, implies dual referents. However, Thomas and Tow are primarily focused on analysing how internal threats arising from underdevelopment can spill-over borders and destabilise relations between states. Hence, they embrace the human-centric approach primarily as a means for preventing internal issues arising that undermine the state-centric approach to security. Nonetheless, the human-centric approach is present in the analysis of causes and in the effects of spill-over conflict on the security of people in other states.

Anwar’s argument that ‘human rights are regarded as universal values that must be protected universally’ and that ‘at the same time … the existence of states is critical for the protection of human security’ indicates that both people and the state are important referent objects. She is explicit that ‘state security and human security must not be seen as antagonistic.

Instead they should be regarded as a continuum—each reinforcing the other’. Her key argument is that ‘[t]here can be no real security for the state if its people are not secure’.

Suhrke provides a different way of examining the relationship between the state and human-centric approaches. Her theoretical focus suggests a constitutive relationship between the norm of human security and national interests and it therefore assumes connections and dialectics between the state and people referent objects. Like Thomas and Tow, she

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82 Ibid., p. 179.
84 Ibid., p. 565.
85 Ibid.
shows that state-centric approaches, or neorealist interests, can be behind a state’s endorsement of human-centric approaches.\(^\text{87}\) However, Suhrke’s main point is that this neorealist perspective cannot answer why the idea of human security, rather than state security, is selected by these countries ‘as a guarantor of human rights and humanitarian benefits’.\(^\text{88}\) For Suhrke, the introduction and now centrality of human security in Canadian and Norwegian foreign policy, shows that ‘norms shape the interests of states in at least two ways: by influencing the definition of interests, and by influencing their order of priority’.\(^\text{89}\) Humanitarian ideas, such as human security, have ‘become the principal normative reference for states and organisations to clarify their international obligations, or against which to hold others responsible’.\(^\text{90}\) Hence, if states foreign policy is partly constituted through reference to the norm of human security then it is also possible to argue that there is a security dialectic between the referent objects of state and people.

**Threats and means:** A Dialectic Between Threats Located Inside And Outside The State and Between Threats of Violence And Non-Violent Factors (Proposition Two)

**The Mixture of Means:** Force, Humanitarian Principles And Development (Proposition Three)

The second proposition, that security threats are located inside and outside the state and comprise both violent and non-violent factors, applies to all the works being examined. Likewise the third proposition, that the means for enhancing security are mixed. For Lodgaard, the

\(^{87}\) Ibid.  
\(^{88}\) Ibid., p. 265.  
\(^{89}\) Ibid.  
\(^{90}\) Ibid., p. 269
threats to people mostly concern physical violence.\textsuperscript{91} He justifies his limitation to fear of physical violence and the obvious fact that it ‘corresponds to the core of state security’.\textsuperscript{92} Without such limits, he argues, ‘the concept becomes all inclusive and therefore empty of content … [and] the issues and their solutions do not necessarily benefit from being securitised’.\textsuperscript{93} He nonetheless adds flexibility under certain conditions, saying that ‘[t]hreats and means vary with time and space and there is not uniformity in their inclusion in or exclusion from the security paradigm’.\textsuperscript{94} With regard to means, Lodgaard suggests a mixture of force and other non-violent measures. The three core elements on the policy agenda of human security are: (a) preventive actions (eliminating factors that compromise freedom from fear); (b) addressing the means of violence (small arms and light weapons); and (c) joint efforts by government and non-government actors, especially during peace operations.\textsuperscript{95}

The particular threats that Thomas and Tow examine are ‘transnational threats’ but specifically those that arise from problems of underdevelopment and which threaten both people within and in other states and which undermine international peace and stability. As mentioned above, the main focus is on threats to the state-to-state relations from human insecurities.

The main means for addressing what amounts to multiple threats to people and state, is the state. In their view ‘in order for human security to be advanced, at least in the short term, it must be embodied by states that

\textsuperscript{91} Lodgaard, S., “Human- Security: Concept and Operationalisation in International Relations”, op. cit., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., pp. 15-24.
overwhelmingly remain the predominant agents of international relations in our time’.96 However the authors caution that the state can be ‘a critical determinant of human security or human insecurity’.97 Thus the means for addressing transnational threats to people and states also involves international intervention involving other states but also non-state actors from international civil society. International intervention consists of peacekeeping, involving the use of force, and peacebuilding involving non-state actors. As they say, ‘in this context, human security politics dovetails with more traditional (state-centric) responses to crises’.98

For Anwar there are threats to both people and the state. The Human Development Report 1994, she argues shows that ‘to focus only on the security of the state, particularly on the military threat to state security is to miss the whole range of threats that make human existence unbearable’.99 At the same time she recognises that the state, especially Asian states during the post-colonial period, confronts ‘external enemies’ and transnational threats. Anwar is most concerned about human security as an ‘intractable problem’ in Asia and her suggested means involve establishing democracy to address internal political violence and greater involvement by regional institutions with transnational issues.100

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97 Ibid., p. 380.
100 Suhrke’s argument about interests and norms is not focused on issues of threats and means and therefore will not be discussed.
A Security Dialectic Between Internal And External Security (Proposition Four)

All the works examined confirm the proposition that internal and external security issues are interrelated and there are dialectics between them. For Lodgaard, human, state and international security are interconnected and states’ legitimacy increasingly depends on adherence to international law and attention to domestic conflicts, since most have external consequences. Thomas and Tow emphasise that ‘security politics as a whole should be seen as a mix of domestic and international issues’. Anwar argues that human security ‘links the various domains of security’ in ways that show it is ‘no longer possible to draw a rigid line between internal and external matters’.

In sum the scholarly works discussed above demonstrate, that some scholars are adopting a conceptualisation of security that is similar to the ideal-type proposition that was constructed from the two security critiques of the state-centric and human-centric approaches. There are dual referent objects, the state and people, and dialectics between them. Interestingly then, there is a widening of referent objects in comparison to traditional approaches but a narrowing in comparison to some nontraditional and human-centric approaches that do not limit referents. If there are dual referent objects it follows that there is also a widening of means to enhance the security. The use of force is a critical means for countering external military threats and violent internal threats to people, either from communal groups or the state. Non-military means are equally

important in situations where physical violence is caused by the conditions associated with underdevelopment. Interestingly although there are dual referent objects, the nature of threats in the works discussed is usually limited to political violence to people or the state. This political violence, as Tow and Thomas suggest, is often in a causal dialectic with problems of underdevelopment.

Internal violence, as Tow and Thomas also suggest, has destabilising transnational effects. These interconnections demonstrate a security dialectic between the referent objects, internal and external threats, and the means for enhancing security.

THE AGENTS OF SECURITY

The discussion above is largely a conceptual elaboration. The question it raises is, to what extent are the ideal-type propositions regarding security dialectics and referent objects, threats and means applicable to the practices of security agents, such as global institutions, states and non-state actors?

Several global institutions and states endorse the proposition that the state and people are referent objects. The UN, particularly its current Secretary General, Kofi Annan, is one of the strongest advocates of human-centric approaches. In several speeches and major policy statements, Annan appears to link the various levels of global, state and people security and argues for ‘Two concepts of sovereignty’—state and human sovereignty. ‘Two concepts of sovereignty’ was the title of Annan’s speech to the General Assembly on 18 September 1999, in

which he attempted to redress the balance favouring state security, particularly when states fail to uphold human security. He argues that: States are now widely understood to be instruments at the service of their peoples, and not vice versa. At the same time individual sovereignty—by which I mean the fundamental freedom of each individual, enshrined in the charter of the UN and subsequent treaties—has been enhanced by a renewed and spreading consciousness of individual rights ... Nothing in the UN charter precludes a recognition that there are rights beyond borders ... Humanity, after all is indivisible ... In the context of many of the challenges facing humanity today, the collective interest is the national interest.105

A year later when the Secretary General presented the UN’s Millennium Report, which significantly he titled ‘We the peoples’, he again advised member states of the General Assembly to redress the balance and to ‘think of security less in terms of merely defending territory, and more in terms of protecting people’.106 In the text of the report, Annan argued that ‘a new concept of security is evolving ... [which has] come to embrace protection of communities and individuals from internal violence’.107 Protection may involve ‘armed action’. It is this possibility that the Secretary General states, is ‘a real dilemma’, since ‘both the defence of humanitarian and the defence of sovereignty are principles that must be supported’ and there is nothing that tells us ‘which principle should prevail when they are in conflict’.

Nonetheless, Annan is sure that ‘no legal principle—not even sovereignty—can ever shield crimes against humanity’ and hence under

105 The Economist, 18 September 1999, pp. 49–50.
these conditions he makes human security the primary referent object.

Notwithstanding Annan’s attempts to elevate human-centric conceptualizations of security, in practice the UN is made up of sovereign states all endorsing state-centric approaches. Indeed, James Gow argues that UN actions are driven by concerns about international order. For Gow, when ‘an internal matter affects other states in the international community then neither the UNSC, on behalf of the system as a whole, nor the relevant affected states can afford to have their own vested interest in a viable, stable order undermined, whether this is in terms of material or ideational interests’.108

The UN’s support for both the security of the state and people is also similar to the approach adopted by two other major global institutions, the World Bank and the IMF. The World Bank President, James Wolfensohn, while still supporting the state, argues that prevention of conflict between and within states depends on alleviating the conditions of underdevelopment, especially poverty. An indication of the Bank’s concern about conflict and poverty was that the President for the first time addressed the UN Security Council on 10 January 2000 and emphasised that ‘to prevent violent conflict we need a comprehensive, equitable and inclusive approach to development’.109 The IMF approaches security mainly in economic terms110 by addressing the connections between low growth, poverty and violence, but also considers the states

responsibility to support human rights as critical elements towards that end.\textsuperscript{111}

Like the UN, an increasing number of countries are making human centric approaches part of their traditional state-centric foreign policies. Perhaps the best known position is Canada’s which was developed and widely presented by the former Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy. The most comprehensive official account,\textit{Freedom from fear: Canada’s foreign policy for human security} was published by Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in 2000.\textsuperscript{112} Here it is argued that ‘the concept of peace and security—national, regional and global—makes sense only if it derived from individual security … This is what we mean by human security’.\textsuperscript{113} From the Canadian perspective, national and human security are ‘complementary’.\textsuperscript{114} But when states are not ‘guarantors of human security … when [they] are internally repressive or too weak to govern effectively, people suffer. In the face of massive state-sponsored murder, the calculated brutalization of people and appalling violations of human rights, the humanitarian imperative to act cannot be ignored and can, in some cases, outweigh concerns about sovereignty’.\textsuperscript{115} Like the UN, Canada makes human security the primary referent under certain conditions.

There is growing interest in human-centric approaches among

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{113}] Freedom From Fear: Canada’s Foreign Policy for Human Security (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade), 2000.
\item[\textsuperscript{114}] Ibid., p. 1.
\item[\textsuperscript{115}] Ibid., p. 3.
\end{itemize}
many other states. Norway,\textsuperscript{116} Japan,\textsuperscript{117} and states in the OECD\textsuperscript{118} all incorporate, albeit in different ways, various elements. In addition at least some 13 countries have become members of the Human Security Network.\textsuperscript{119} The chair for 2002–03, Austria, has set an agenda during this period on human rights education and addressing the plight of children in armed conflicts.\textsuperscript{120}

Even though over the last decade more and more governments have become committed to the idea of human security in its various formulations there is little evidence that these states put less emphasis on their own traditional state-centric approaches, either conceptually or in practice.

Apparently many policy makers in these states are uncertain about what is actually meant by human security and exactly what guidance it provides for practical approaches and setting priorities. Harvard academic, Gary King points out that when he and a colleague were preparing a study on human security they ‘conducted informal and off-the-record interviews with politicians and officials responsible for the foreign policy in several countries that describe their policy as in some way based on human security’.\textsuperscript{121} And as King discovered, ‘[v]irtually every person we spoke with was concerned that there existed no widely

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\textsuperscript{116} Suhrke, A., “Human Security And The Interests Of States”, op. cit.,
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., p. 2.
\textsuperscript{121} King, Gary and Christopher Murray, “Rethinking Human Security”, 4 May 2000, gking.harvard.edufiles/h
\end{flushleft}
accepted or coherent definition of human security and that there were considerable conceptual problems in relating human security, human development, and the development focus on poverty together in the articulation of their foreign policy.\textsuperscript{122}

Apart from some confusion about the meaning of human security the most obvious point is that countries endorsing human security continue to endorse traditional state-centric approaches to security, especially in defence policy. Canada, which appears to have the strongest commitment and the most developed human security policy of all countries, did not under its most ardent proponent, Lloyd Axworthy, ‘reflect or even acknowledge the new doctrines of human security and peace-building’ in its defence policies.\textsuperscript{123} While the level of combat capability required for the pursuit of human security beyond Canada’s borders is a matter of debate, according to Project Ploughshares, the current multipurpose combat capable air, land and maritime force structure is not necessarily equipped to conduct ‘the imperatives of human security articulated and advanced by DFAIT’.\textsuperscript{124}

Military capital spending during 1999–2000 to 2001–02 remains steady whereas non-military spending has fallen.\textsuperscript{125} Again according to the Ploughshares Project, ‘[i]ronically precisely when peace-building and human security concerns have been most forcefully articulated in Canada as key to advancing international peace and security, funding for

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., p. 5.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
development and for non-military approaches to human security has been in precipitous decline.\textsuperscript{126} Moreover, according to the North-South Institute,\textsuperscript{127} notwithstanding Canada's leadership in eliminating landmines it continues to use the command-detonated Claymore antipersonnel mine and, notwithstanding strict controls on small arms, it continues to 'export military goods to countries where armed conflict persists or whose governments have been cited for human rights violations'.\textsuperscript{128} Equally telling is that from the perspective of the Canadian Chief of Land Staff, LtGen W. Leach, peace has not broken out in the post-Cold War period, indeed, 'for the military, nothing has disappeared but the list has just got longer!'.\textsuperscript{129}

Japan's endorsement of human security now coincides with the Japanese Self Defence Force (JSDF) playing unprecedented operations on foreign soil under the auspices of UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs).\textsuperscript{130} The JSDF participated in UNPKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, Mozambique, East Timor and most recently, under recent anti-terrorist legislation, the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force was deployed in the Indian Ocean to support the US-led war on terrorism in

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{121} Ibid.
\bibitem{122} Ibid.
\bibitem{124} Newsroom, D. Net, "Lgen W. Leach, "CF Perspectives on Human Security".".
\bibitem{125} In 1992 Japan passed the Law Concerning Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (the International Peace Cooperation Law) which allowed it to participate in three main forms of International Peace Cooperation: UN Peacekeeping Operations, International Humanitarian Relief Operations, And International Election Monitoring Activities.
\end{thebibliography}
Afghanistan.  

Like Canada there appears to be no clear rationale provided by the JSDF that military capability spending takes account of Japan’s human security policy. Japan’s defence budget around the time that it introduced a policy of human security was US$37.66 billion and three years later, by 2002, it had risen to US$40.4 billion.  

There was no clear reference by the JSDF that planning for human security roles was partly the reason. Indeed, the state centric nature of security could be increasing in Japan. According to at least two strategic analysts, Japan’s combat capability with regard to naval acquisitions is expanding so rapidly, along with those of China, Taiwan and South Korea, that these ‘programs have overtones of arms racing which were not present in acquisitions prior to the economic downturn in 1997–98’.  

Apart from global institutions and states, other important agents of security are non-state actors (NSAs). Most humanitarian NSAs have critical views about the state-centric approach and, in their view, its neglect of human security. Nonetheless, NSAs and donor states are increasingly forming partnerships and becoming mutually dependent in many human security crises, especially when humanitarian intervention requires the use of force. NSAs and states that are concerned with human security issues are also increasingly coming together over some of the

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131 Beth Greener-Barcham, PhD candidate, Department of International Relations, The Australian National University, provided helpful ideas about Japan’s contemporary security position. Discussions 30 October 2002.


133 Ibid.

conceptual issues regarding the contentious issues of sovereignty and humanitarian intervention for human protection, as shown by the Responsibility to Protect Report. In many of these endeavours NSAs are implicitly taking a position on security that involves seeking human-centric approaches by working with states to establish better states, which among other things adhere to internationally agreed norms of behaviour.

Reviewing the security approaches taken in the four scholarly works and by several security agents confirms that there are attempts to understand and practice security as a dialectic between the state-centric and human-centric paradigms. It is more difficult to argue from this analysis however that there is a synthesis or via media developing. However, Lodgaard’s ‘dual concept’ is suggestive.

**STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF SECURITY DIALECTICS**

The argument that security is beginning to involve a dialectic between the state-centric and human-centric approaches is still evolving and requires further conceptualising and empirical research. Its strength is that it grapples with the serious problem that the earlier critiques revealed, that the state-centric and human-centric approaches are each necessary but not sufficient to address the many dangerous issues on the contemporary security agenda. Recognising the value of both approaches and the security dialectic between referent objects, threats and means involves stepping across disciplinary boundaries. This will be considered a weakness by some IR scholars, such as Buzan.

Showing that there are dialectics between the elements will also be

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135 International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), The Responsibility to Protect (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre), December 2001, p. 75.
considered a weakness from a strong or purely normative perspective. From this viewpoint, people suffering the injustices of severe underdevelopment and abuse of humanitarian principles, is morally wrong regardless of the consequences for external or internal order.

The human-centric approach adopted in the works examined is based on a weaker normative and more pragmatic stance than the one above. For example, Thomas and Tow describe a causal dialectic between internal problems and external order, arguing that it is necessary to prevent and address serious problems of underdevelopment inside states because this can lead to transnational threats to state-to-state relations, which in turn affects the security of people within that state and others. All the other works emphasise causal and constitutive connections and dialectics. This is not going to be acceptable to the strong normative position above and hence a weakness of security dialectics is its inability to accommodate this position.

On the other hand, the weaker normative and more pragmatic position is likely to be politically more acceptable to security agents. Having two referent objects helps to overcome some of the political-cultural resistance to the concept of human security which is seen as a replacement to the state referent object which is being imposed by the West on developing countries.

At the same time, because people are the other referent object, it puts conditions on the state-centric approach, for example on the right of sovereignty. An illustration of this can be seen in the *Responsibility to Protect Report*.\textsuperscript{136} In effect the report takes sovereignty and people to be equally important, but re-conceptualises sovereignty as a responsibility.

\textsuperscript{136} ICISS, The Responsibility to Protect Report.
not an unequivocal right.

An empirical weakness of security dialectics is that even those states that put it into practice are at this stage still tipped towards the state-centric approach. Many other states hardly consider security dialectics as an approach or if they do it is focused on the development rather than the humanitarian agenda.

The final problem is that the security dialectics proposed in the earlier ideal-type and in the works examined fail to grapple with the issue of balance, or establish what could be and should be a proper via media between the state and human-centric approaches.

**Advancing The Ideal-Type Security Dialectic**

Clearly more conceptual and empirical research is needed to advance the earlier ideal-type security dialectic. On the issue of balance a useful starting point for discussion is Robert Jackson’s argument.\(^\text{137}\) Jackson points to the interconnectedness of security: ‘In Kantian terms [it is not possible] to separate national security and human security, or international security and human security’.\(^\text{138}\) Indeed, ‘[i]f human insecurity were tolerated in some states it would threaten the entire edifice of security because of the interconnectedness of the parts that form the whole’.\(^\text{139}\) On the other hand, Jackson argues that making an international response to gross violations of human security a ‘requirement’, rather than a ‘discretionary right’\(^\text{140}\) would be ‘nothing less than a normative revolution in world politics: away from national and international security

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\(^\text{138}\) Ibid., p. 201.

\(^\text{139}\) Ibid., p. 200

\(^\text{140}\) Ibid., p. 212.
and toward human security’. It would, he argues, destroy the normative standing of sovereignty that makes possible the pluralistic society of states which in turn allows for international security. Making ‘sovereignty universally conditional on respect for human rights’ is problematic because this ‘prospect of justifying the use of force to protect civilians in foreign countries raises fundamental normative issues which human security advocates and activists fail to consider’. For Jackson, ‘anyone who takes up Kant’s theory in order to promote the doctrine of human security would be led astray by it’. Because, he argues, ‘[i]f Kant’s doctrine of human security were instituted it would reverse the historic trend to limit the right of war. That would be nothing less than a revolutionary change’. Jackson’s discussion raises some of the conceptual issues that need to be considered when trying to find a balance between the norms of sovereignty and human security.

Jackson’s argument provides a point of entry for conceptually advancing the ideal-type security dialectic. There are also empirical issues that need to be researched: for example, (a) the conditions and context under which states pursue security dialectics; (b) how in practice there can be greater coordination between the state-centric and human-centric actors, for example, between government departments such as defence, foreign affairs and trade, international aid, and non-state actors on the one hand and on the other, the recipient actors, which may or may not involve state actors in the first instance; (c) an examination of how financial resources can be more equitably distributed among these actors; and (d) how to construct a defence force structure that can support both state-centric and human-centric approaches.

141 Ibid., pp. 212–13.
142 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
We live in a world where the idea of security is changing. Terrorism is one of the major causes for this change in recent times. Counter-terrorism approaches should involve a particular formulation of the security dialectic between the state and human-centric approaches. In reality the ‘war on terrorism’ is too skewed towards the state-centric position and needs to be more balanced towards the human-centric approach.