The Concept of Security in Political Violence

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During the last 100 years, the concept of security has been used to justify war, revolution, torture, assassinations and invasions. The post-9/11 US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq were justified partly by reference to the need to protect national security, and the threat of terrorism to domestic and international security was invoked to justify radical counterterrorism measures such as extended police and intelligence powers, as well as torture, extraordinary rendition and detention without charge (see Michaelsen 2005; Waldron 2006).

Yet despite the frequency with which the concept of security is invoked in debates about political violence, there is little agreement about the meaning of security. Should the term 'security' refer to a state's military power, as traditional security studies have claimed (Buzan 1983)? Or should security be understood as human security – the security of individual persons (Duffield and Waddell 2006)? If so, how does national security relate to human security and how are we to assess threats to these different forms of security? Without answers to these questions, the idea of security could easily become a meaningless concept that could be used to justify almost any policy that a state wishes to pursue.[1]

A definition of security must fulfil several requirements if appeals to security are to justify political violence. The definition must clarify what constitutes security as a political goal for states and individuals, what constitutes threats to security, how security is to be weighed against other political ideals, and which measures will increase security for states and individuals. Only then can we be in a position

1 Steve Smith has argued that the concept of security is 'essentially contested'; that any definition of security 'depends upon and in turn supports a specific view of politics', and so a neutral definition of security is impossible (2005: 27–8). As will become apparent, I disagree with this view. The fact that it may be impossible for states and international actors to agree on a definition does not mean that no neutral definition is possible. It is possible, I believe, to develop a definition of security that is independent from a particular political theory and that captures the moral importance of security.

to assess how security is to be weighed against other political goals and what measures might increase security.

In this chapter I aim to provide such a definition.[2] In the first section, I propose a definition of individual security as the security of the conditions of identity – a multi-faceted definition of security that captures the physical, psychological and moral aspects of security that form the basis of our common-sense intuitions about when we are and are not secure. In the second section, I consider what constitutes threats to security, as I have defined it, and what a state's duties are in relation to the security of its citizens. In the third section, I analyse the connection between security, national security and state legitimacy. I argue that any plausible definition of national security must be grounded in the protection of the security of citizens, where security is understood as the security of the conditions of identity. In this view, protecting national security may justify the resort to violence *only* in order to protect the fundamental security of citizens. In addition, it is now widely believed that a state's legitimacy and its right to non-interference are connected to the duty of the state to protect the fundamental human rights of citizens, including the right to security. Thus, if a state fails to protect or itself threatens citizens' security, external intervention to protect citizens may be justified.

In the final section of this chapter, I consider the possibility that the appeal to security may justify the resort to violence by non-state actors if those actors genuinely promote or protect citizens' security. We cannot ignore the possibility that non-state actors might be justified in resorting to violence to protect the security of groups of citizens, particularly if the state is failing to provide protection or is itself threatening the security of those groups.

What is Security?

Security as a political goal could have several different aims. Following the human security approach adopted by many contemporary critical security studies theorists and international organizations (see Commission on Human Security 2003; Duffield and Waddell 2006), any plausible definition of security must refer to the security of individual citizens. Understood in this sense, security policies are those policies that aim to protect or promote the security of a state's citizens, however security is understood. Security policies could also refer to the security of sub-state communal groups, such as religious, ethnic or political communities. At the state level, national security could refer to the security of a state's political apparatus or institutions of government. But the referent of the term 'security' is only one part of the question. As David Baldwin (1997: 17) argues, any definition of security must

2 My aim in this chapter is to offer a definition of security that explores the implications of that definition for questions about the moral justification of political violence at the state and non-state levels. Empirical questions about the current security policies of different nations are beyond the scope of this chapter.

clarify 'the actor whose values are to be secured, the values concerned, the degree of security, the kinds of threats, the means for coping with such threats, the costs of doing so, and the relevant time period'. It is also worth noting that total security of any kind is not a realistic political goal. Security is a relative state: individuals and states may be more or less secure in different areas of public and private life (secure from crime, not secure from terrorism), but absolute security is impossible.

Individual Security

What is individual security and what conception of individual security should be the appropriate aim of state security policies? As Jeremy Waldron (2006: 463) argues, any serious candidate for a definition of security as a political goal must at least refer to basic physical safety – security from threats to physical well-being. A state that systematically and deliberately failed to protect citizens from the threat of physical attack from other citizens and from external enemies would arguably fail to meet the basic requirements for state legitimacy.[3]

However, this conception of security (which Waldron (2006: 461) terms the 'pure safety' account) is deficient as an account of security for human beings. Being safe from physical attack is a necessary but not sufficient condition of security. As Ken Booth (2006: 22) notes, 'security is not synonymous with survival. One can survive without being secure'. The conception of security as physical survival does not account for other important aspects of our common-sense notion of security. Merely being currently free from the threat of violent attack while one's future well-being is far from assured is certainly not sufficient to enable one to feel secure.

A plausible conception of security for human persons must therefore take into account the characteristics of persons. Unlike other animal species, typical human persons are characterized by the ability to develop and form a coherent self-conception over time, as well as the ability to rationally assess goals and life plans (Griffin 2001: 310–311). As David Velleman (2000: 363) argues, the motivation to see ourselves as unified agents – as 'explicable and predictable' – is necessary in

3 It is true that a state may sometimes deliberately place citizens in threatening situations, for example, when a state sends troops to war, without undermining state legitimacy. The difference between these cases and cases where a state fails to protect citizens from unjust attacks from other citizens or external enemies lies in the reason for exposing citizens to risk. A state fighting a just war is protecting the survival of the community, and so arguably the state is justified in risking the safety of individual soldiers in order to protect the survival of nation as a whole (although there are limits on the level of risk that soldiers may legitimately be exposed to – most military forces go to some lengths to protect soldiers from harm). In addition, most military forces today are volunteer forces, and so soldiers in those armies have consented to accept the risks associated with war. This would not apply to conscript military forces, however, and in that case I would argue that a state that uses a conscript army would only be justified in threatening the safety of troops if doing so was necessary to protect to overall security or survival of the state. I thank an anonymous reviewer for encouraging me to clarify this point.

order to make sense of our ordinary concept of an agent. Agents, as we ordinarily conceive of them, are more than creatures who use reason; they are 'causes rather than the mere vehicles of behaviour; they would be guided by the normative force of reasons for acting; and they would find such force in principles requiring them to be moral' (Velleman 2000: 363). In other words, moral agents are those who are able to understand and act on moral reasons, and who are capable of seeing themselves as unified selves existing over time.

So a plausible definition of security for human beings must take into account what it means for beings *such as ourselves* to be secure. For creatures such as ourselves, whose lives revolve around future-oriented preferences and goals, security has a temporal as well as a physical component.[4] We are unlikely to feel secure unless we believe that we can plan for the future with some assurance that the basic structure of our lives will remain intact over time – that our homes, our freedom and our families – what Waldron (2006: 466) calls 'our mode of life' – will not suddenly be taken from us. But what is important for our mode of life? As noted above, being secure must involve being free from the threat of physical harm. But economic and material security is also important to our sense of security (Waldron 2006: 462). Being secure from the threats of poverty, starvation and homelessness is essential if we are to feel confident in planning for our future.[5]

However, our security is not just a matter of objectively assessing the relative safety of the basic goods that we need in order to pursue our life plans. Security also has a subjective component (Booth 2006: 22). Security involves both an objective assessment of the probability of a specific threat occurring and also an individual's emotional or mental state relative to that threat, a state that may or may not accurately reflect the objective assessment. We may *feel* more insecure in relation to one kind of threat, such as the threat of a terrorist attack, even if that threat is much less likely to occur than many other threats to our physical safety, such as the threat posed by, for example, driving a car. So how we *perceive* our security may bear little relation to how physically secure we are, objectively speaking. Why is there this discrepancy between objective and subjective security?

One way of explaining the discrepancy between objective and subjective security is in terms of the nature of the threats that we face. As Waldron (2006: 462) correctly notes, we tend to fear violent death or injury (particularly when due to intentional human action) to a greater extent than we fear death by water or fire or other natural events. One plausible explanation for this difference in

4 In his definition of security as 'an instrumental value that enables people(s) some opportunity to choose how to live' (Booth 2006: 23), Ken Booth recognizes the importance of the capacity to choose and to plan for human flourishing. However, Booth does not explain what degree or kind of choice is necessary for security to be achieved. Unless we have some understanding of what *kinds* of life choices are necessary for human security, this definition remains too vague. Nor does his definition capture the moral aspect of human security.

5 Thus, the Commission on Human Security (2003) identifies economic security, health, and education as central goods that are necessary to promote human security.

our fear responses is that we fear malevolent harm more than we fear accidental harm. Karen Jones (2004: 10) describes this feature of human psychology. In her discussion of the impact of terrorism, she notes that our emotional reactions to harm caused by someone's deliberate actions are very different from our responses to harm caused by accidents, natural disasters or unintentional human actions. As she says: 'We are more likely to be psychologically devastated by harms caused by the active ill will on the part of other agents than by other kinds of harms … There is also suggestive empirical evidence that post-traumatic stress is more likely to follow from sudden man-made violence than natural disaster' (2004: 11).

This explains why the random nature of terrorist attacks (from the victims' perspective) contributes to the fear such attacks cause, as well as the sense of powerless and lack of control that victims experience. There is nothing a potential victim can do to avoid a terrorist attack, as he or she cannot know where and when an attack might occur.

Jones argues that random acts of violence can undermine what she calls 'basal security' – the unarticulated affective sense of safety and trust through which we (sometimes unconsciously) judge and assess risks. An individual's level of basal security 'shapes the agent's perception of those reasons that she has that concern risk and vulnerability where such risk and vulnerability arise from the actions of others' (Jones 2004: 15). Jones' account describes this phenomenon clearly, but it is less clear *why* malevolent harm undermines our basal security so severely. I suggest that malevolent attacks undermine our basal security because such attacks undermine what I shall call our *moral security* – our belief that we matter, morally speaking; our belief that we have intrinsic moral value that limits what others may legitimately do to us. I am not suggesting that we consciously hold this belief as we go about our everyday activities. Instead, our reactions to malevolent harm suggest that we implicitly hold such a belief in relation to our interactions with and expectations of other people.

We typically go about our everyday lives assuming that we have some degree of control over what happens to us, that other people are not intending to harm us, that other people will respect us in the sense of recognizing that it would be seriously wrong to hurt us, and that our interests and our desires matter. So if we are victims of a violent attack from another person, this radically shakes our belief in our own moral worth – the belief that others may not use us as a mere means to their ends. The wrongdoer has demonstrated to us in the most vivid way that they do not see us as morally important; that our pain and our suffering are less important than their desires.

This loss of faith in our basic moral worth can have profound consequences. Once attacked, we may believe that we can no longer trust other people – the basic security of our everyday lives can seem like an illusion. Victims of serious physical attacks often report such a loss of faith in others and an ongoing inability to trust other people (see Brison 2002). Where once we felt secure in our self-worth, now we can no longer be sure that other people will treat us with the respect that we once took for granted. The basic fabric of our moral security has been destroyed.

This analysis of moral security suggests that security for human persons is a multi-faceted state involving objective facts about our relative physical, economic and material safety, our subjective interpretations of those threats and the strength of our belief that we matter, morally speaking. I am secure, in this sense, if I am able to go about my life without fearing the loss of my life, property, economic and material goods, and without fearing that I will be treated in ways that ignore or undermine my basic moral standing. Only when I am secure in this sense will I be able to develop and express my identity as a person. For this reason, I refer to this conception of security as the *security of the conditions of identity*. The term 'identity' captures the relevance of these different aspects of security to our capacity to develop our self-conception as persons. Security of the conditions of identity therefore refers to those basic goods – both objective and subjective – that individuals require in order to develop and sustain a coherent self-conception over time.[6]

This conception of security does not imply that individuals are only secure if they are able to express every possible aspect of their identity or actively pursue any life-plan they wish. Nor does it imply that security policies must actively support or encourage specific expressions of identity. Instead, security of the conditions of identity refers to the security of a set of basic conditions that, combined, allow individuals the physical safety and basic moral standing they require in order to develop as persons, regardless of the content of their individual self-conceptions.[7]

The importance of the conditions of identity to human persons is recognized by many theorists. Most liberal political philosophers, for example, recognize the importance of allowing individuals to exercise their autonomy and cultivate new ways of living (see Mill (1912) 2002). However, by incorporating the conditions of identity in the meaning of security, my account offers a new perspective on security that has several significant advantages over more simplistic accounts of security.

First, my account enables us to explain why a state that subjected its citizens to a campaign of psychological fear, yet fed and clothed them and provided them with police and military protection, would be undermining its citizens' security even though their basic physical security was assured. In the next section, I clarify the connection between my account of security and a state's duties to its citizens, but for now it is sufficient to note that my account permits a broader understanding of how state (and non-state) actions may violate and threaten human security. This, as I will explain in the final section of this chapter, has important implications for conceptions of state legitimacy and justifications for the resort to political violence.

Second, my account provides a starting point from which to begin analysing the connection between security and liberty – two values that have often been portrayed in conflict with each other in debates about the fight against terrorism (see Waldron 2006). Liberty is neither identical nor reducible to security, as I have defined it.

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6 Thus, my account is consistent with but more conservative than that of Booth (2006) in that I define security by reference to the protection of the basic goods necessary for security of identity, rather than (as Booth does) defining security in an open-ended fashion as 'the possibility to explore human becoming' (2006: 22).

7 As such, my account does not presuppose a racially or culturally homogeneous state.

However, some forms of liberty, such as freedom of association and freedom of speech, are connected to the development and expression of personal identity. Arguably, the value of freedom of association and freedom of speech derives from the connection of these freedoms to the security of persons, and so may not be straightforwardly traded off against the security of persons. Thus, freedom and security do not stand in clear opposition to each other and may not be balanced against or traded off against each other in a simplistic fashion. Under my definition of security, some restrictions of liberties (for example, restrictions on freedom of religion or freedom of association) might count as undermining security if those restrictions seriously undermined the ability of individuals to form and develop a sustained self-conception or undermined their basic moral standing. So a further advantage of my account is that it provides a theoretical basis for understanding which liberties are central to security and when restrictions of liberties would undermine security. This can then provide a framework for examining the validity of counter-terrorism legislation and policies that are claimed to be justified by the need to balance liberty against security.

Third, my account illuminates the connection between individual security and the security of sub-state groups such as religious and ethnic communities. Security of the conditions of identity is connected to communal security in two ways. First, our assessment of our moral standing depends to some extent on how integrated or secure we believe our community to be – where 'community' could refer to anything from a geographically bounded community such as a small village or a large metropolis to what Benedict Anderson (2006) calls an 'imagined community' such as a nation.[8] We often identify ourselves by reference to our membership of communities that are defined by shared values (such as religious or political values), as well as by reference to physically located communities. We are more likely to feel morally secure when we believe that our relationships with others in our community are governed by shared moral and social norms. If we come to believe that the communities with whom we have identified do not share our moral and social norms, we may feel deeply insecure – our trust in our moral standing will have been undermined. As noted earlier, one of the reasons why violent attack is so disruptive on the victim's sense of trust and security is that it throws into stark relief how easily our belief in our moral standing can be shattered and how fragile is our faith in the commitment of others to shared moral norms.

Second, our self-conception is intimately connected to our relationships with our close friends and family, and the communities (religious, political, social) with which we identify. Even if we do not endorse the communitarian belief that

8 According to Anderson (2006: 6), our identification with the nation is 'imagined' because 'members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'. The same could also apply to religious communities and political communities (for example, one might identify as a member of the Catholic community or as part of the Communist community without ever meeting the vast majority of Catholics or Communists).

the self is formed primarily through identification with communities (see Sandel 1981; Taylor 1985), it is certainly true that our identities are closely linked with those communities that we are part of. We experience ourselves not as atomistic individuals but as embedded in a web of relationships that contribute to (without being reducible to) our self-conception and, to an extent, colour how we express our identities through our everyday activities. So, in order for us to form a coherent self-conception, we must be able to be part of communities. Community security, while clearly distinct from the security of the individuals within a community, therefore has moral value that is derived from the moral value of individual security. As such, ensuring the security of communities is an important moral good and a legitimate focus of a state's security policies.[9] Such security protects the ability of communities to form and sustain shared moral, religious or other values believed to be important by community members, subject to the constraint that a community's activities do not seriously harm community members and/or other citizens.

However, the connection between individual security and community security does not entail that all sub-state communities have an equal claim to protection from threats to their cohesion and integrity. First, as noted above, a community's moral value is connected to how well it treats members of the community. Arguably, a community that mistreated its members would not be justified in claiming state protection from threats to its existence and might be a legitimate subject of state interference and restrictions (Chambers 2002). Second, communities that pose a serious threat to non-members (for example, White supremacist groups in the US who attack African-American citizens) could legitimately be subject to restrictions even if they treat their own members well. But there is an important distinction between individuals *within* a community who pose a danger to others and dangerous communities. Muslim terrorists are dangerous *individuals*, but the existence of such individuals does not provide a sufficient reason to conclude that the Muslim *community* is therefore a dangerous community. White supremacist communities, on the other hand, encourage violence towards others through cultivating shared norms and beliefs that support such violence (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006). Thus, they are dangerous communities even if they do not threaten the security of their own members and even if not all individual members of the community are dangerous.

In summary, the connection between individual security and community provides a strong *prima facie* reason for states to protect the integrity of communities within their boundaries when those communities form an important part of the self-conception of their members and when those communities do not pose a threat to the security of members and/or non-members. The security of communities should therefore be an important goal of the security policies of states.

9 Conversely, the security of communities can be harmed by state policies that attack citizens on the basis of community membership. For example, the security of Muslim communities in the UK was arguably undermined by counter-terrorism measures that treated the community as a 'suspect community' (Hillyard 1993; Pantazis and Pemberton 2009). Banning religious practices, banning specific cultural practices and banning the use of specific languages would also be attacks on community security.

Threats to Security and Duties of the State

What Counts as a Threat to Security?

We are now in a position to consider threats to security. Given the importance of basic physical safety, it is uncontroversial that individual security will be threatened by external attacks such as invasions or terrorist attacks, as well as by internal criminal violence. However, security of the conditions of identity also incorporates subjective security (how secure we feel ourselves to be) and moral security (the security of our belief in our moral standing). What would threaten these aspects of security?

We feel secure when we believe ourselves to be safe from harm, particularly malevolent harm, and we feel morally secure when we believe ourselves to have moral worth in the eyes of those around us. As I explained earlier, malevolent violent attacks threaten moral security as well as physical security, but moral security can also be threatened in more subtle ways. Discriminatory policies can undermine the moral security of those individuals who are the targets of such policies, particularly when such policies are long-standing and deeply ingrained in a community, thereby significantly altering the attitudes and behaviour of community members. Racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist policies communicate to the subjects of those policies the message that they are intrinsically inferior – morally, socially and physically – simply because they are members of a particular group. In extreme cases, discriminatory policies can lead to denial of the subjects' humanity, with devastating consequences for their self-worth and identity. Primo Levi eloquently describes the devastation of self-identity that results from being treated in an extremely dehumanizing manner: 'Imagine now a man who is deprived of everyone he loves, and at the same time of his house, his habits, his clothes, in short, of everything he possesses: he will be a hollow man, reduced to suffering and needs, forgetful of dignity and restraint, for he who loses all often easily loses himself' (1987: 33).

So moral security can be threatened by state actions and policies aimed at particular groups or individuals believed to be intrinsically inferior. Such policies, under my account, should be understood as attacks on the security of the conditions of identity.

Our sense of security is also strongly shaped by how we *perceive* threats to our well-being, even if the likelihood of those threats eventuating is statistically very small. This means that our security can be threatened if we are led to believe that we might be attacked, even if the probability of an attack occurring is actually quite small. So citizens' subjective security can be undermined if government statements, media reports and other public reports misrepresent or seriously exaggerate the likelihood of a specific threat occurring. For example, a 1987 US survey found that 68–80 per cent of those surveyed believed that terrorism was a 'serious' or 'extreme' threat, even though the probability of a terrorist attack occurring at that time was miniscule and there had been no terrorist attacks by foreigners on American soil (Jackson 2005: 95, 98–103). Since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, a similar discrepancy between the perception of the threat of terrorism and the actual likelihood of an attack has developed (Mueller 2006). After 9/11,

several US public officials made statements portraying terrorism as an ongoing and omnipresent threat that might strike at any moment with terrifying force. For example, the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell, stated that: 'Even as I speak, terrorists are planning appalling crimes and trying to get their hands on weapons of mass destruction' (Jackson 2005: 104), former US Attorney General John Ashcroft claimed that: 'Terrorism is a clear and present danger to Americans today', and former Department of State Coordinator for Counter-terrorism Cofer Black announced: 'The threat of international terrorism knows no boundaries' (Jackson 2005: 100). Combined with extensive media coverage of terrorism, statements such as these, which are not supported by clear evidence, can seriously undermine citizens' subjective security (Mueller 2006; Wolfendale 2007).

Security and the Duties of the State

I have argued that security of the conditions of identity can be threatened by physical attacks, discrimination and the belief that malevolent violent attacks are imminent. What does this analysis of threats to security imply about a state's duties in relation to the security of its citizens?

A growing number of scholars, politicians and international organizations argue that states have a 'Responsibility to Protect' their own citizens (Bellamy 2010; ICISS 2001). According to this doctrine, states that fail to protect or actively threaten the basic physical security of their citizens (for example, through the use of torture,[10] extra-judicial executions and other serious human rights abuse) have lost the right to non-interference that for many years was central to a state-based view of international relations (see Altman and Wellman 2008; Coady 2002; Waldron 2006).

The responsibility to protect doctrine was unanimously adopted by the heads of state and government at the 2005 UN World Summit and re-affirmed twice by the UN Security Council (Bellamy 2010: 143). Together with the rise in humanitarian and peacekeeping operations over the last 20 years, this points to an increasing international consensus that a state's right to sovereignty is not absolute, but rests to an important degree on whether the state is protecting the basic rights of its citizens.[11]

So the claim that states have a duty to protect the physical safety of their citizens and the integrity of the communities within their borders is now relatively uncontroversial. It is more controversial but certainly not outrageous to argue that states also have a duty to provide their citizens with basic material and economic

10 The prohibition against torture is a peremptory norm that is binding on all states regardless of whether they have signed specific treaties relating to torture (see Foot 2006).

11 Not all states accept this belief, however. According to the International Coalition for Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), at the UN General Assembly's 63rd Session in 2009: 'A handful of member states rejected the use of coercive action in any circumstance … Yet far more states were of the view that, should other measures have failed, coercive action and even the use of force is warranted by the UN Charter to save lives' (ICRtoP 2009). Exactly what forms of external interference are justified is a separate question.

security by, for example, offering some forms of welfare or other protections against life's vicissitudes (Commission on Human Security 2003). However, the question of whether states have a duty to protect or promote the subjective and moral security of their citizens is largely unexplored. I argue that such a duty exists and forms part of the state's fundamental duty to protect the basic rights of its citizens.

States, to a large extent, exercise significant control over how their populations perceive threats to their safety. How a state chooses to portray the seriousness of certain threats, such as the threat of terrorism, will strongly affect how safe the state's citizens believe themselves to be. As I have argued elsewhere (Wolfendale 2007), states that depict the threat of terrorism, for example, as all-pervasive, constant and a threat to the very foundation of society can do more to spread the fear of terrorism than terrorist acts themselves. Therefore, I argue that states have a duty not to inflate or exaggerate threats to the safety of citizens, particularly if such exaggeration is then used to justify changes to civil liberties.[12] States have a duty to realistically assess threat levels and to present information to citizens in a way that is sensitive to the impact of threat assessments on the subjective security of citizens.[13]

It is less obvious that states have a duty to protect or promote citizens' moral security in the sense that I have outlined earlier. States do not have a duty to ensure that all their citizens firmly believe that they are morally valuable – such a duty would be both unrealistic and far too demanding. However, states do have a duty not to endorse or implement discriminatory policies that will seriously undermine the self-worth and identity of the subjects of those policies, and a duty to take positive steps to prevent and punish extreme discrimination. Protecting the security of the conditions of identity therefore involves three aspects: protecting citizens' physical safety; protecting citizens' subjective security; and protecting citizens' ability to see themselves as having basic moral standing in the eyes of their community.

Having established a definition of security that encompasses the different aspects of human identity, I shall now turn to the relationship between individual security and national security, before considering the question of security as a justification for political violence.

12 This does not imply that states should intentionally lie to citizens and encourage them to believe that they are safe when in fact they are under serious threat, or that states should pander to those citizens whose fears are irrational (Waldron 2006: 468). Paternalistic withholding of the truth would be a violation of autonomy and would thus be unjustified.

13 How this duty would be enforced is an important question and one that requires more attention that I can give it in this chapter. I would suggest that, like the duty of states to protect their citizens' basic physical safety, this duty would require external monitoring to encourage compliance (forcing compliance is a different matter, as is clear from the general failure to enforce the international prohibitions against torture). Organizations such as Human Rights Watch could report on the media and government publications of different states, and international pressure could be brought to bear on states that systematically deceived their populations.

National Security, State Legitimacy and Political Violence

National security is a term that is used with abandon in political discourse. Yet it is often unclear what the term 'national security' is intended to refer to or how specific security policies either enhance or threaten national security. As Arnold Wolfers (1952: 481) noted, this lack of clarity means that a statesman can easily invoke national security 'to label whatever policy he favours with an attractive and possibly deceptive name'.

In the context of debates about political violence, national security must refer to a good, the protection of which would justify the resort to force. This means that any plausible definition of national security must carry significant moral weight. We must not accept the current freewheeling use of the term in debates in international relations and politics.

What is National Security?

A good place to start when thinking about national security is the definition of a nation. As the term is typically employed in debates about political violence, 'nation' refers not to a specific ethnic or political community, but rather to one particular *form* of political community: the state, understood as the system of government over a designated geopolitical region (Luban 1980: 168). Given this conception of the nation, a possible definition of national security would refer to the safety and integrity of a state's political apparatus – the institutions that together make up the functioning of the state (Waldron 2006: 460). However, such a definition would fail to justify the use of political violence in defence of national security, since there is no necessary correlation between the security of a state's institutional apparatus and how well that apparatus protects the security of the citizens of that state. A totalitarian dictatorship may have secure institutional apparatus, and yet at the same time torture and murder its citizens. Thus, protecting national security so defined could not justify the resort to political violence since a state's institutional apparatus does not have intrinsic moral value that is independent from how effectively that apparatus functions to protect citizens' basic rights.

National security should therefore not simply refer to the relative safety of a particular political entity. The term 'national security' must retain its normative force. As William Bain argues:

> Individual security is assumed to follow from national security by virtue of our membership in a particular political community. Thus national security presupposes the assumption that states express something worth preserving: they are moral communities in their own right and, as such, they are entitled and competent to determine the nature of their security interests and how best to address them. (2001: 278)

Bain is correct to link national security to individual security, but he has the connection backwards. The value of individual security does not derive from the value of national security; the moral value of national security derives from the moral importance of individual security. Promoting national security only counts as a moral good if protecting national security genuinely protects the security of citizens. Thus, a state's right to self-defence, as enshrined in the UN Charter (Bain 2001: 278) can only be understood as a moral right if it is defence of the citizens of the state. If the goal of promoting national security is to justify the use of extreme violence, then it must refer to the protection of a substantive moral good. The moral good protected by states is most plausibly understood as the lives of the citizens of those states. The security of the state is therefore best thought of as the most effective way of protecting the security of the individual citizens.[14] This latter interpretation of national security reduces the likelihood that there could be a genuine moral conflict between the security of the state and the security of citizens. In addition, this interpretation is consistent with the widely accepted belief that the resort to war is only justified in order to defend a nation from external attack (subject to the constraints of the principles of proportionality and last resort)[15] where this is typically interpreted as defence of the nation's integrity as a geopolitical entity, and hence defence of the lives and basic rights of the nation's citizens.[16] In traditional just war theory, the use of military aggression to defend national interests (as opposed to national survival), such as trade interests or spheres of political influence, is not considered a just cause for war (see Walzer 2000).

So a state's right to self-defence is based on its role in protecting the security of its citizens (the state's 'Responsibility to Protect') – and thus protecting the security of citizens is one of the fundamental requirements for state legitimacy and, as I argued earlier, a state's right to non-interference.[17] Resorting to political violence in defence of national security can therefore only be justified in response to a threat to the nation's integrity that seriously threatens the security of the nation's citizens.

Thus far, I have only considered when war could be justified to protect a state from *external* threats to national security. But what if the threat to national security comes

14 This is the basic idea behind social contract theories of state authority. For contemporary discussions of social contract theories, see Waldron 2006: 493–4.

15 In traditional just war theory, war is justified in national defence only if war is the last resort (all other available means of resolving the conflict have been attempted) and the resort to war will not cause more suffering that it is aiming to prevent. Other commonly accepted criteria of a just war include legitimate authority (war must be authorized by a legitimate authority and publicly declared), right intention and probability of success. For a discussion of these principles and the concept of just war, see Luban 1980; McMahan 2006; and Rodin 2005.

16 As I noted earlier, many authors now believe that the resort to war to defend others from unjust attack is also justified (Walzer 2000: 86–109).

17 It is not the only requirement for state legitimacy, however. David Luban (1980), for instance, argues that a state is legitimate only if it governs with the consent of its citizens. As such, a benevolent dictatorship would not be legitimate even if it did not harm the security of its citizens.

from *within* a state? Ordinary criminal violence is unlikely to seriously threaten a state's integrity, but revolution, insurgencies and domestic terrorism could all pose a serious threat to national security. Yet using military force to respond to such threats would directly harm the security of the citizens who are responsible for the threats and thus, contrary to my earlier claim, it appears that a genuine conflict between the security of the state and the security of (some of) the state's citizens is possible.

A detailed analysis of how states should respond to internal threats is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, a number of factors should be taken into account when considering whether a state would be justified in using military force against its own citizens if those citizens posed a serious threat to national security. First, I argued earlier that the right of sub-state communities to state protection depends on how well those communities treat their members and whether they threaten the security of non-members. Communities that threaten the security of members and/or non-members may not be entitled to state protection. Similarly, if individual citizens or groups of citizens pose a threat of unjust harm to others, they may also be legitimately subject to restrictions and punishment – and even the use of force – by the state. Just as a state's right to non-interference depends on the state's treatment of its citizens, so an individual's right to non-interference depends on whether that individual poses a threat of serious harm to others.

Thus, I argue that if a state is upholding its responsibility to protect its citizens, then that state may defend itself against unjust internal threats to national security. But the use of force in such cases must meet the criteria discussed earlier in relation to the resort to war. The use of force must be necessary to prevent the threat (all other means of preventing the threat must have been attempted), the use of force must have some chance of success in stopping the threat and the harm caused by the use of force must be proportional to the harm being prevented.

But what if a state is failing (or actively violating) its responsibility to protect the basic rights of its citizens? What may citizens do in response? Could non-state groups legitimately use violence against the state?

Non-state Violence and Security

If a state is justified in resorting to violence in order to protect the security of its citizens, understood as the security of the conditions of identity, then could non-state actors also be justified in resorting to violence to the protect the security of citizens? It is clear from the above discussion that states do not have a moral monopoly on the justification of self-defence. If a state is failing to protect the security of its citizens or is actively undermining that security, then it is plausible that a sub-state group could legitimately act on behalf of citizens in order to protect their security (for more on this, see Victoroff and Adelman, Chapter 8, this volume). How we would know whether a sub-state group is genuinely acting on the behalf of (or with the consent of) citizens is an important question. Democratic states typically have institutional procedures that allow citizens to express consent, and so it can be relatively easy to ascertain whether or not a state genuinely acts on behalf of and

with the consent of its citizens, but this is much more difficult to ascertain in the case of sub-state groups. Yet, as Virginia Held argues (2005: 184–6), this difficulty in establishing whether a sub-state acts on behalf of and with the consent of citizens does not imply that no such group could genuinely so act.

Sub-state groups could act to protect the physical safety of all or a sub-set of citizens, as in the case of a resistance movement or an insurgency that aims to protect citizens from government violence, but they could also act to protect citizens from threats to their moral security. As I argued above, certain kinds of policies undermine moral security by communicating to their targets the message that they are intrinsically inferior, and so may be treated in ways that would otherwise be wrong. If a state supported or endorsed severe forms of discrimination – even while protecting the physical safety of citizens – those discriminated against could justly complain that their security is being undermined by the state. Given the importance of moral security to the conditions of identity, I argue that those so discriminated against would be justified in taking action to protect their moral security from further attack. But whether *violent* action would be justified would depend on whether non-violent forms of protest (for example, mass demonstrations, lobbying, strikes and civil disobedience) had been attempted and proved unsuccessful, and whether violent protest would have a chance of success and be proportional to the harm being averted. Given the potential harm to innocent people caused by violent protest, genuine attempts to remedy the situation through non-violent means must have occurred before violence could be justified.[18] That said, the importance of moral security to the basic conditions of identity would justify the use of violence to protect moral security if the threat to moral security was profound and such violence was necessary, proportionate and a last resort.

Such violence need not take the form of terrorism. While some definitions of terrorism, notably those of the US Department of State and the US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC 2008), rule out the possibility of state terrorism, any consistent and non–arbitrary definition of terrorism cannot make a distinction between state and non-state actors. Terrorism is, I suggest, best understood as a *tactic* that can and has been used by both state and non-state actors, a tactic that many define as the use or threat of violence against civilians or innocents with the intention of spreading fear in order to influence a wider group (see Primoratz 2002). However, as Held (2005: 178) notes, terrorists attack military and police targets as well – the attacks on the Pentagon in 2001 and the *USS Cole* in Yemen in 2000, for example, were widely described as terrorist attacks even though the targets were military. To incorporate this usage of the term, Held defines terrorism as 'political violence that usually involves sudden attacks to spread fear to a wider group than those attacked, often doing so by targeting civilians'. Thus defined, terrorism may be used by both state and non-state actors, although it should be remembered that state terrorism has been by far the most deadly form of terrorism during the last 200 years (Held 2005: 178).

18 This parallels the requirements of last resort, necessity, and proportionality in just war theory, discussed earlier.

Terrorism bears a particularly high burden of justification not only because it often deliberately targets civilians, but also because it attacks the victims' moral and subjective security by seeming (from the victims' point of view) arbitrary and random, and because the direct victims of the attack are treated as means to the terrorists' end – the victims' deaths and injuries are used to influence a different group (for instance, the government) to take a particular course of action (Primoratz 2002). Terrorism is thus a paradigmatic case of treating individuals as mere means and it thus radically undermines the victims' moral security (for more on the use of individuals as mere means, see Blakely, Chapter 4, this volume). Hence, without taking a firm stand on the issue here, it is a consequence of my view that terrorism would rarely, if ever, be justified.

That said, my account leaves open the possibility that non-state groups may legitimately resort to other forms of political violence to protect the security of citizens. By emphasizing the importance of moral security to the conditions of identity, my account allows for the possibility that political violence may be justified not only to protect citizens' physical security but also their moral security in cases where a state's policies are so discriminatory that they seriously undermine the victims' moral well-being. In order to justify a resort to violence, such threats to moral security would have to be extremely severe, but need not be threats to physical safety. Therefore, a state that routinely subjected a sub-set of its citizens to ongoing and extreme discrimination, leaving those citizens unable to develop their capacity for self-conception and their belief in their basic moral worth, without actually physically harming them, would still be failing in its positive duty to its citizens and could, other things being equal, be a legitimate target for political violence aimed at protecting the security of those citizens.

Conclusion

In this chapter I offered an account of security based on an assessment of the nature of persons – typical human beings – in order to clarify what security for human persons means. I argued that security for human persons involves not only physical safety, but also subjective security and, importantly, moral security. These three aspects combine to form the security of the conditions of identity – a definition of security that captures the basic physical, psychological and moral components necessary for human identity and self-conception. Applying this conception of security to the relationship between security and national security illuminated how a state's duty to protect its citizens goes beyond ensuring their physical safety and how state actions may undermine security in a number of different ways. Thus, I argued that national security as a moral value is intimately connected to individual security, and so protecting national security may in some cases justify the resort to political violence. However, the importance of the security of the conditions of identity also left room for the possibility that the use of violence by sub-state groups to protect the security of citizens may also be justified.

The implications of my account of security for debates in political violence go beyond what I was able to discuss in this chapter. However, the conception of security of the conditions of identity that I have argued for in this chapter provides an important starting point for further investigation.

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