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Exploring the contours of threat: Competing security discourses

There are very few people who are going to look into the mirror and say, 'That person I see is a savage monster;' instead, they make up some construction that justifies what they do.

Noam Chomsky

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the analytical eclecticism approach deployed in this book requires one to be cognisant of the diversity of theoretical positions in the area of security, their strengths and their weaknesses, and how they might inform one's formulation and application of relevant concepts in a constantly changing world. Disentangling the continually morphing and increasingly turbulent security sphere is a herculean task in its own right due to the multiplicity of factors involved and the range of discourses used to frame security across disciplines. This is made even more complex by the ever-changing nature of global and local security situations, the diverse responses to these and how these responses are understood and framed by states, international institutions, local communities, political organisations, scholars and other groups in society. The ensuing security debates revolve around a number of interrelated questions: What does security entail? Whose security is at stake? What or who is the source of insecurity or threat? Which factors contribute to, enhance and shape insecurity? The notions of security and insecurity belong to opposite sides of the same coin because, as the adage goes, the

security of one is the insecurity of another. Certainly, in the Pacific, these questions need to be asked much more overtly as the local, regional and global security environments change.

With this in mind, this chapter attempts to critically examine five discursive narratives of security, which have been chosen because of their prominence in recent years. This is far from being an exhaustive foray into this multifaceted area of debate but is, rather, an attempt to draw out selected strands of arguments to inform our understanding of global, regional and national dynamics of current thinking and practices related to security. This will provide a theoretical backdrop to the study of Pacific regional security in Chapter 3 as well as the case studies on Fiji, Tonga and Solomon Islands in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. It should be noted at the outset that some aspects of the security discourses might be applicable, directly or indirectly, to situations in the Pacific and some might not, as this depends very much on how the concepts are defined, interpreted and applied in varying circumstances. Security has a multidisciplinary flavour, and this is because of the growing interest in the subject by scholars in different academic discourses. This is increasingly so given the consciousness about the interconnectedness of contemporary issues such as terrorism, racism, political instability, crime, wars, refugees, inequality, militarisation, poverty and climate change, which have influenced people's sense of anxiety. The framing and experience of security have become inescapable parts of our being as a global community. Thus, as the world becomes more globalised, security also becomes a globally shared concern at a time when local threats readily become globalised and global threats readily become localised in a complex symphony of symbiotic relationships.

Security is more than just a political concept. It can be construed to cover virtually every aspect of life, including the economic, cultural, psychological and spiritual domains, as long as there is realisation of an element of risk and threat that could affect people's lives and well-being. However, it is often constructed in relation to specific contexts. Thus, as we will see later, particular definitions of security that claim to possess universal appeal and validity are in danger of being irrelevant in particular historical, cultural and political contexts. This is why it is important to have an open mind and to attempt to understand a particular security discourse using relativist, contextual, eclectic and even arbitrary lenses. In other words, what might be a security situation in a particular conceptual sphere, time and space might not be so in another. Security

has to be located within the ambit of 'habitus', or contextual configuration of human activities, norms and interests, as Pierre Bourdieu (1990) reminds us.

The chapter begins by looking at the multidisciplinary nature of security and critically examines some classical theories of security as well as some theoretical implications and some of the dilemmas posed in relation to policy-making. While security has been traditionally associated with some mainstream 'political' disciplines such as political science, international relations and political sociology, in recent years it has become a convergence zone for a whole range of disciplines, including economics, psychology, management, law and even mathematics. The chapter then examines the notion of securitisation, especially the way it has been framed by postconstructivists as a means of moving the argument away from the realist and formal statist position. Central to this is the work of the Copenhagen School, which has been instrumental in redefining the post–Cold War security debate.

The chapter next examines the idea of human security, a concept that was popularised by the United Nations from the early 1990s and has become dominant in development and policy discourse since then. Human security extended the traditional boundaries of security thinking and incorporated virtually every aspect of human life—whether political, economic, social, cultural, environmental or psychological—as security-related. Following this is a critical analysis of human security as a conceptual schema as well as an applied developmental tool. The chapter then explores gender, an area of security that is often ignored. Historically, security has been largely defined using masculine lenses and ideological constructions. Changing this trend by incorporating a more inclusive gender lens provides us with a more nuanced reality of how security plays out in society.

The last part of the chapter examines some of the salient features of the critical security paradigm, in particular the postcolonial discourse and how it critiques and deconstructs the dominant theories of politics, society and security. In a way, a significant portion of the book's analysis will be drawn from the critical security approach, especially its analysis of the political economy of security, the power dynamics involved and how PICs find themselves in a subaltern position amid the hegemonic machinations of the big powers.

The challenge of security: An interdisciplinary and contested term

There is no consensus on the core existential features of 'security' because the term is often defined contextually and situationally, often in arbitrary ways. The diversity of the 'security' experiences of groups in different historical, cultural, political and psychological settings makes the concept a fertile ground for different disciplines to pick and choose aspects that are relevant to their particular areas of study. Security pervades all levels of human society from the private world of an individual experiencing psychological apprehension to global disputes over strategic interest and power, and including other issues pertaining to threat and risk in between. Throughout history, the perception and experience of security has influenced the conceptualisation, construction and operationalisation of human thinking and world views, cultural norms, political institutions, technological change and economic systems (Wallerstein, 1989). At the macro-global level, security is one of the largest industries in the world today. For instance, the US military–industrial complex connects a whole range of players such as large corporations, which manufacture weapons, universities, which carry out research, the state, which facilitates and legitimises the militarisation process, and the military in the United States and other parts of the world, which use the weapons (Giroux, 2007). This network is linked to wars, political instability and associated problems, such as displacement, poverty and human rights abuses in other parts of the world. Thus, not only are the different aspects and levels of security interconnected but also different conceptual approaches to the subject have brought together different disciplines to focus on security, conflict and peace studies (Webel & Johansen, 2012). Despite the different disciplinary foci, there are commonalities in terms of the need to carry out research using multiple methodologies with the ultimate purpose of creating a secure society for the future.

The division between different approaches is also ideological in nature, largely because of the influence of the Cold War when, by and large, global security was defined around two contending ideological camps: the Soviet Union, representing socialism, and the United States, representing capitalism. This established the fundamental ideological divide between the 'Left' and the 'Right', which influenced security studies. For instance, peace studies as an area of university research and teaching was often linked to academics on the Left, who saw global capitalism and US

hegemony as a threat to peace. Even within the Left, there were those who saw the Soviet Union as equally as hegemonic as US imperialism. In the 'Third World', peace activism was a response to the neocolonial excesses of the major powers as well as to internal dynamics, and many of its proponents were aligned to peace groups in Western countries. Many social scientists and natural scientists were part of the peace movement and used their transdisciplinary research skills in the collective fight for 'peace', however they defined it. In the Pacific, as will be shown in Chapter 3, the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (NFIP) movement included a range of issues such as the environment, decolonisation, land rights, economic development, racism and militarism. These multiple issues were framed using multiple lenses, which resulted in debates even among peace activists and within academic disciplines.

At the end of the Cold War, there was renewed hope that the world had seen the worst in terms of conflict, and many security scholars shifted their focus from the 'East' versus 'West' contestation to localised intranational conflicts in the form of ethnic, religious and communal wars. This hope was exemplified in the rather over-optimistic declaration by Francis Fukuyama (1992) that the end of the Cold War heralded the triumph of liberal democracy and the 'end of history'. However, this provocative position failed to grasp the reality that, despite the end of the Cold War, liberal democracy and capitalism were facing even more menacing challenges, which saw the rise of people protests, terrorism, cyber-wars, intrastate wars, transnational crime, ethnic conflict and increasing poverty and marginalisation (Dorling, 2015). The increase in 'new wars', as Kaldor (2013) calls them, was characterised by the shift from interstate conflict to multiple levels of conflict involving a range of non-state actors, terrorism, cyber-technology and non-conventional means.

Moreover, the withering away of the Cold War bipolarity saw a reconfiguration of ideological positions and the emergence of 'non-aligned' security discourses. Among these was the 'greed and grievance' approach popularised by Oxford economists Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler (2002). Based on particular interpretations of selected African experiences, Collier and Hoeffler argued that civil wars were caused by 'grievances' over such issues as identity, social class, religion and culture and 'greed' over economic resources such as diamonds. Institutions such as the World Bank enthusiastically adopted these ideas and used them to frame their conflict and development policies. This was a significant foray by economists into the realm of conflict and security, and many

economists, even some in the Pacific, used the greed and grievance theory as a basis for understanding resource-based conflict in such places as Solomon Islands and Bougainville (Allen, 2007).

The greed and grievance theory has come under intense criticism because of its tendency to use single factors like greed to oversimplify complex situations shaped by a number of intervening and interrelated factors (Keen, 2000). The use of quantitative econometrics methods tends to undervalue the significance of subjective human feelings and perceptions, culture and politics in the conflict equation. The seemingly 'scientific' approach by the greed and grievance school is largely based on attempts at numerical quantification of incidents of conflict, and this overshadows the complex nature of society, social relations and the individual or collective propensity for conflict. The notion of greed itself tends to both moralise and psychologise the issue of competition of resources with the assumption that individual pursuit of wealth is a natural state of being, an argument that finds resonance in the biological determinist theory advocated by many psychologists (Thayer, 2004).

Another argument that makes a similar assumption is the rational choice theory, which economists have used to explain conflict over resources and power as individuals and groups attempt to maximise their gains at minimal cost and through displacement of others (Amadae, 2003). Like the greed model, the rational choice theory operates on the fallacious assumption that human behaviour is always predictable and quantifiable, as if it is predetermined by certain natural laws of human behaviour and social action.

The historical, socioeconomic and sociocultural conditions in Africa during the diamond wars of the 1990s that gave rise to the theory in the first place are hardly prominent in the PICs. The colonial histories of Africa (which were largely exploitative and turbulent) and that of the PICs (which were relatively benign) are very different indeed and cannot be connected simplistically using the same historical paintbrush (Fraenkel, 2004).

In the field of global politics and international relations, debates about the nature of security have revolved around a number of competing narratives of interstate relations. The notion of realism focuses on the Hobbesian idea of a human natural propensity for competition and violence, which is extended to self-serving interstate competition for power using aggressive means such as militarism (Snyder, 2004). The neoconservative and hawkish

elements within the US political system are often seen as belonging to this school, which was probably at its height during the Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) policies of the Cold War (Mearsheimer, 2014). Those who were critical of the realist school saw this propensity for aggression as containable within international structures and norms, whose role was to rein in pariah states as a means of maintaining global peace and order (Lamy, 2008).

In almost direct contrast to the realist school was the liberal approach, which took a much more flexible stance by arguing for the goodness of humanity and the potential for collective peaceful engagement (Copeland, 1996). In a way this approach was also linked to the 'liberal peace' movement, which assumes the possibility of creating stability through the global 'norm diffusion' of Western liberal democracy. A more radical departure was expounded by the constructivist school, which, based on the post-structuralist schema, examined security in relation to the significance of persuasive ideas, collective values, culture and social identities (Barnett, 2008). In a way, except for constructivism, these 'classical' international relations theories, while dominant in geopolitical debates, tended to be too state-centric and failed to address the dramatically changing situations where competing forces such as 'terrorist' organisations have taken 'dispersed' forms.

The critical theories (so named because of their propensity to question and offer alternatives to mainstream ideas) provided different lenses to the classical approaches mentioned earlier. For instance, the dependency and neo-Gramscian theories focused on how global politics and conflict were shaped by power dynamics and economic exploitation by dominant powers over subaltern countries and groups of people (Cox, 1996). This position was further bolstered by the rise of feminism, which added the gender dimension as resistance to the largely masculine-dominated world of politics, militarism and power (Grant & Newland, 1991). The critical approaches were transdisciplinary and were linked to scholars arguing from the standpoint of exploitation, domination and power. They were, by and large, derivatives of the more generic conflict theory in sociology, which had its genesis in Marx's philosophy of dialectical materialism. Some notable examples of the critical school were Noam Chomsky and Edward Said, whose ideas, as we shall see later, were diametrically opposed to those of Samuel Huntington, a modern-day intellectual beacon for 'conservative' thinkers and regarded as a 'prophet for the Trump era' (Lozada, 2017).

Although the brief overview of security discourses above is far from exhaustive, the point I want to make here is that the illusive, contextual and situational nature of security invokes diverse approaches. The different disciplinary approaches in their own ways offer particular insights into the vast area of security. There are strengths and weaknesses that need careful analysis, and the book will draw on some of those that might be appropriate and applicable to the Pacific. The rest of the chapter examines in more detail some influential narratives on security and how they help to inform some discussions on Pacific security in the later chapters.

The securitisation discourse

The securitisation theory has hardly been used to frame security in the Pacific in a systematic way partly because of its reputation as being too European in terms of its conceptual genesis. This is not to say that it is irrelevant to the Pacific—in fact, as we shall see later, despite some of its weaknesses, it does provide useful conceptual tools to illuminate certain aspects of security in the Pacific.

What is securitisation? In the post–Cold War era, the prevailing realist view was subjected to critical examination by those who saw human behaviour as more complex than a simple dichotomy based on the bipolar division of socialism versus capitalism. There was an emerging school of thought that security had to be seen not just in terms of structural factors but also in the context of a speech act—this was the basis of the securitisation discourse popularised by Wæver (1995) and elaborated further by Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998) of the Copenhagen School.[1] The notion of securitisation provided an alternative constructivist approach to the age-old debate as to whether a threat can be understood as an objective reality or a reflection of subjective perception, by suggesting that threats are social constructions centred on speech acts. In various strands of social theory, 'speech acts' refers to the idea that verbalisation is the basis for 'doing'. An example would relate to bringing a person into existence merely through the process of naming him or her; in the same way, the act of uttering the word 'security' makes it real and various aspects of life associated with it—including the military, political, economic

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1   The term 'Copenhagen School' is a reference to the University of Copenhagen, where the exponents of the securitisation approach were based.

and environmental issues—become threats. This intrinsic relationship between verbalisation and action was what Austin (1962) referred to as 'performative utterance' or 'perlocutionary act'.

It must be noted, however, that to ensure that the speech acts are related to securitisation, they have to be part of the rhetorical structure and process related to war and associated concepts, such as survival, urgency, threat and defence. This forms the basis of the Copenhagen School's assumptions about securitisation regarding: (a) the claim that the object in question is existentially threatened, (b) the right to take extraordinary measures to counter the threat and (c) convincing an audience that extralegal behaviour to counter the threat is justified. The idea of threat is embedded in politics itself and can be articulated in three major discursive trends: politics, action and intentionality; modern organisation of politics, spheres and sectors; politics, ethics and science (Gad & Petersen, 2011). For PICs, desecuritisation means inverting the securitisation discourse through ideas and policies that remove the threat and sense of anxiety through peace-building measures by civil society organisations or regional security initiatives such as the Biketawa Declaration (Pacific Islands Forum, 2000).

While the securitisation theory was an attempt to open possibilities of analysis beyond military affairs (Wæver, 2010), it has inspired debates, with its opponents arguing that it is too narrow and lacks universal contextual relevance. The criticisms range from constructivists, who argue for the theory's reconfiguration and fine-tuning to correspond to changing circumstances, to critical postcolonial thinkers, who declare it moribund outright. One of the flaws of the theory is that the idea of securitising any activity by a group in power can be an arbitrary act, which can be used to stifle democratic debate and which could be used as justification for suppression of alternative views. What is probably needed is not so much a focus on securitisation, which could create more harm than good, but on the reduction of threats by focusing on 'desecuritisation', which Tjalve (2011) argued should take place at the level of polity rather than policy because of the close association between power politics and threat.

Another criticism is that the securitisation theory fails to take into consideration the fact that a combination of the security speech and practice of elites may contribute to erasing the distinction between 'exceptional' and 'normal' political behaviour and security environments (Huysmans, 2006: 124–6; Williams, 2003). Furthermore, the theory

is unable to recognise the significance of normal and daily operation of security issues through bureaucracies (Aradau, 2006; Bigo, 2000; Kaliber, 2005; Neal, 2006).

A major criticism of the Copenhagen School is its failure to consider the significance of the morality of securitisation. For instance, Floyd (2011: 428) made the argument that the moral righteousness of securitisation was a core aspect of its own legitimacy, and he provided three criteria of moral framing, based on the just war theory. First, there must be an objective threat that endangers the survival of the actors; second, the referent object of security must be based on human needs; and third, the response must be appropriate to the threat. Apart from the absence of morality, there was also a strong argument about the lack of interface between science and securitisation. Berling (2011) used the Bourdieusian approach to argue that scientific arguments and 'facts' were critical aspects in understanding the way securitisation was defined, articulated and applied in real life, and he questioned the adequacy of the theory in explaining the issue of context and the importance of 'practical reflexivity' for security experts.

In addition, Salter (2007) is of the view that although there has been a growing number of case studies of successful securitisation and desecuritisation processes, there is still a strong dominant tendency by scholars to hold a statist view of securitisation, whereby the emergency powers of the executive are used in response to identification of threat and acceptance of the threat by an audience. There are, according to Salter, multiple sources of security moves and at least four different types of audience and speech contexts: popular, elite, technocratic and scientific. The relationship between threat and fear is an underlying strand of the securitisation theory, especially in terms of how fear can facilitate the process of securitisation. Williams (2011) inverted this suggestion and contended, using the notion of 'liberalism of fear', that instead of facilitating securitisation, the liberalism of fear opens a new window to enable us to visualise how fear can in fact undermine securitisation; that is, the fear of fear can be a desecuritising rather than a securitising factor.

Another major methodological flaw was that securitisation research tended to be based on casual approaches and did not have much empirical basis (Guzzini, 2011) because of the subjective interpretation of threat through speech act. Thus, the reliance on post-structuralist framing and lack of empirical identification of threat weakens securitisation's importance in applied policy. Because the notions of framing and

translation of securitisation are closely integrated, Stritzel (2011) made the argument that securitisation as conceived by Wæver was too traditional and essentialist and therefore there was a need to seriously review it. Along this line, Huysmans (2011) was of the view that the emphasis on the discursive and communicative aspects of securitising has overshadowed the significance of the concept of 'act', which in many ways defined the politicality of the speech act approach to security. Security practices were shaped more by political acts than by mere speeches.

Although many criticisms of the Copenhagen School by European theorists were based, as we have seen, on the need to refine securitisation theory to be more applicable, criticisms by some non-Western scholars and those from the critical security perspective were more directly dismissive, arguing that securitisation theory was not relevant to non-Western societies (Bilgin, 2011; Sheikh, 2005; Vuori, 2008). There was also a view that even desecuritisation was a conservative process that reproduced the existing liberal order (Aradau, 2004). Those using the peace studies lens made the point that securitisation had no morally defensible position on such issues as minorities and AIDS (Elbe, 2006; Roe, 2004). The theory's Eurocentric and statist nature tended to be too analytically restrictive to be of much use in unpacking the complex security situation in postcolonial societies whose historical and cultural evolution had been shaped by complex colonial and postcolonial forces.

One of the most ardent critics of the Copenhagen School and mainstream security studies generally was the Aberystwyth School, which drew from the critical lenses of neo-Marxian dialectics and the neo-Gramscian notion of hegemony, and the Frankfurt School, to make the argument that security could be meaningfully understood only in the context of social transformation and human emancipation. Two leading figures of this school, Ken Booth and Richard Jones, asserted that security was not conceptually constructed and subjectively defined, as the Copenhagen School contended, but was related to real social conditions and human needs (Booth, 1991; Jones, 2001).

European security studies generally, including the work of the Copenhagen School, since World War II, was criticised as self-serving and possessing a 'Eurocentric character' (Barkawi & Laffey, 2006: 329) because of how it misrepresented societies, cultures and security relations of the global South. One of the consequences of this misrepresentation was the characterisation of the world in the form of self-constructed

Western cultural supremacy and ignorance of historical security relations through the acknowledgement of the joint contribution of European and non-European cultures in making history (Bessis, 2003). This is a salient theoretical plank in postcolonial security discourse, which we will consider further towards the end of the chapter. While securitisation was largely Europe-focused, the rise of the human security discourse had a more global impact during the post–Cold War era, and this redefined the security debate much more fundamentally in terms of the shift from the state to society as important units of security.

Despite some of the shortcomings of the securitisation discourse, an important aspect that is useful in understanding the security environment and security psychology in the Pacific is the notion of speech act and its association with the security rhetorical structure. Let us take the case of Fiji, for instance, where, since 1987, the term 'coup' has securitised the political narrative in a psychologically influential way. Since the series of coups between 1987 and 2006, the mere mention of the term 'coup' has had the potential to invoke anxiety, fear and feelings of insecurity (Ratuva, 2011a). Although triggered largely by perception, this climate of insecurity can influence a range of behavioural and normative issues such as people's choices during elections, ethnic consciousness and relationship between cultural groups. A coup, whether real or illusory, becomes a security threat by its mere mention due to its prominence and sensitivity as part of the rhetorical structure of Fijian political discourse. The use of the terms 'riots' in Tonga (Senituli, 2006) and 'tension' in Solomon Islands (Fraenkel, Madraiwiwi & Okole, 2014) might also have a similar influence on the political rhetorical structure of the two countries.

The securitisation of the term 'climate change', through its strong association with human security, has provided a new dimension to the way we see and understand the integral connection between our environment, well-being and sense of threat (Mason, 2015). The securitisation of the term makes it political and therefore contested. For PICs, the securitisation of the climate change narrative works in their favour because it can be used strategically to access the Green Climate Fund and other facilities related to climate change. The same goes for the advent of the human security discourse in the early 1990s in the Asia-Pacific region, which saw the securitisation of almost every aspect of human life from poverty to diseases, education to religion, transportation to housing (Davies, 2017). The list goes on. As we shall see later, this universalised process of securitisation has a number of conceptual shortcomings.

In both conscious and subtle ways, securitised concepts can influence the framing of issues and policy formulation by Pacific states, civil society, policy community, regional agencies and community groups to respond to a threat, whether real or perceived. Once framed as sources of possible threats, these issues can be used to mobilise public sentiments and justification for formulation of official state narratives, policies and legislations and in the process become institutionalised security discourses (Mason, 2015).

The shift from the statal to the societal: The human security discourse

The rise of the human security discourse in the 1990s shifted the security paradigm from the centrality of the state to the centrality of society (Shinoda, 2004). In the Pacific, this has filtered into government policies on security, poverty alleviation, education, development, welfare and almost every aspect of sociocultural and economic life (Cox et al., 2017). We will see this in more detail in Chapter 3.

The significance and relevance of the traditional notion of state-based 'hard' security, often framed around the ideas of political security, national security and state security, have come under scrutiny as a result of attempts to re-evaluate the diverse conditions that threaten people's lives and well-being. This includes a multiplicity of factors—political, social, cultural, economic, environmental, spiritual and psychological—that shape, in various ways, people's sense of insecurity, fear, instability and anxiety. An array of disparate issues—including violence, exploitation, poverty, crime, climate change, education, governance, health and demographic change, to name a few—became part of the broad rubric of human security. The growing sense of insecurity and the loss of faith in the state as guardian of security contributed to this alternative analysis of security (Durodie, 2010).

The human security discourse was a response to the proliferation of new forms of security threats that could not be adequately captured within the confines of the traditional, state-centric national security paradigm. The transdisciplinary approach to human security spans a diverse range of academic and policy areas such as international relations, development studies, gender studies, environmental studies, public health, economics,

human rights, public policy, foreign policy and conflict or peace studies. This new wave of security thinking has helped to inform policy-making in many 'developed' and 'developing' countries, including the Pacific Islands, in global institutions such as the United Nations, Asian Development Bank and World Bank, and in civil society organisations and corporate sector organisations (Hampson & Penny, 2008). The extent to which human security ideas are integrated to policy, the specific contexts in which this happens and the ideological justifications used vary from situation to situation, but by and large there is some agreement that human security is an inseparable and inherent aspect of development, social life and change.

The human security narrative provides for flexibility in the way security is defined as new global and local conditions change. For instance, the threats of terrorism and the impacts of globalisation and mass migration have raised serious questions about identities, politics and world views. It has been suggested that these can be understood more critically by framing human security through legal, international relations and human rights lenses, especially when dealing with refugees, migrants and displaced and stateless persons and how, conceptually and practically, human security can sufficiently illuminate the myriad challenges they face (Edwards & Ferstman, 2010).

The appeal of the human security discourse has also been amplified by the failure of hard security policies in global affairs. For instance, the failure of the US-led coalition to achieve its political and strategic objectives in the period after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 was a clear manifestation of the inadequacy of the hard security paradigm and the need to broaden the analysis. Although the human security framework may be considered by some to be 'conceptually fuzzy', it still provides a more theoretically encompassing tool to examine the multiple dimensions and dynamics of the 'war on terror' (Shani, Sato & Pasha, 2007).

The war on terror was based largely on the deployment of force, consolidation of like-minded countries through the 'coalition of the willing', psychological warfare and arbitrary framing of the world in terms of the ideological binary 'West' versus 'the rest' (Scruton, 2002). The ideological fuel that inflamed and justified the wave of anti-Islamic sentiments ranged from crude propaganda through Fox News and other mainstream media to more sophisticated academic treatises such as Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' thesis. These opinions blurred the lines between empirical reality and myths and spawned irrational hysteria,

religious intolerance and racial stereotyping. The complex interplay between socioeconomic factors, religion, political ideology, culture and militarism was beyond the realm of hard security.

In situations of modern conflict, human security often becomes more complex as different participants are driven by competing interests, such as corporate entities aiming to benefit financially from conflict, states who want to use conflict as a testing ground for their military power, combatants driven by claims to a historical motherland or humanitarian groups intervening to stop the conflict. Even humanitarian aid is confronted with apparently insurmountable political, legal, social and military challenges (Cahill, 2004). Creating a humanitarian space in a conflict situation is important to protect human dignity and human rights, especially the rights of the displaced, as well as contributing to peaceful reform and consolidation in the post-conflict transition period.

Another major issue of discussion is the link between human security and democracy, especially in terms of how countries can deliver social and economic rights through the broad inclusion of all citizens in decision-making and poverty reduction. This is related to how democratic practices, separation of powers, freedom of the press and guarantees of human rights enhance human security (Large, Austin & IDEA, 2006). While the opening up of a more participatory and enlightened political space can be conducive to enhancement of human security, there are other significant factors, such as institutionalised inequality, vested economic and political interests and the hegemonic role of the dominant classes and institutions, that might undermine the democratisation of citizen participation.

Simply focusing on the formal and mechanical aspects of democracy such as elections, separation of powers, freedom of the press and guarantees of human rights has the potential to overshadow the deeper structural causes of inequality and disempowerment that cannot be addressed merely through formal institutional democratisation. Formal democracy does not necessarily equate to progressive development; in fact the opposite can also be true, as evidenced by the high level of development of some authoritarian states such as Singapore and the high level of acute inequality and poverty in India, which is a democratic state.

An emerging concern in recent years is the relationship between human security and cultural socialisation, especially in the form of formal education where certain values, norms and behavioural dispositions either

reproduce or undermine aspects of human security. The reproduction of various forms of behaviour and attitudes that encourage violence, including terrorism, through education is of particular concern (Nelles, 2003). The increasing international and local threats raise questions about the need for more political and pedagogic debates and policy formulation about how to use education as a means of reproducing peace values and eradicating violent behavioural tendencies. This debate needs to extend beyond formal pedagogy to involve parents who allow children to engage in 'killing games', such as in PlayStations and computer programs, and corporate institutions that create and make money from toys that simulate killing. This process requires a major, multipronged, approach geared to reforming the education system and the formulation of new foreign and domestic policy approaches based on conflict resolution at the local and global levels.

In the last 10 years or so, the issue of climate change has been dominant in the human security debate in many international forums, primarily because the phenomenon has a global impact on people's human security, although how countries are affected varies considerably. For small island states such as many of those in the Pacific, the issue is urgent because of the progressive erosion and sinking of low-lying islands like those that make up Tuvalu and Kiribati. The process of climate change raises important issues of vulnerability and adaptation as critical components of human security. People's vulnerability to naturally occurring or human-induced climate change is often mitigated by new modes of cultural and technological innovation to enable people to adapt to the deteriorating conditions in the short term, but the real test is the challenge of creating sustainable long-term responses. The global climate change debate has been influenced by the national and neoliberal economic interests of the major industrialised powers at the cost of the smaller and more vulnerable island states. The effects of climate change pose risks not so much to state security but to human security in the form of basic needs, human rights and core values of individuals and communities (Barnett, 2011). Effective mitigation of climate change must involve shifting the emphasis away from the neoliberal economic discourse to framing it in human security terms, and this should be part of the global human security paradigm.

A globalised human security paradigm provides a shift in emphasis from the confinements of national-security thinking. Such a shift entails redefining the principles of state sovereignty in a global world where threats to humanity are beyond the capacity of any one nation to address

through unilateral action. This redefinition requires not only a new theoretical shift but also a change in the policy direction, capacity and roles of international agencies and civil society organisations in relation to human rights and the development of an effective intervention capacity to protect individuals from state action as well as other security threats arising from conflict, poverty, disease and environmental degradation (Battersby & Siracusa, 2009).

Moreover, achieving consensus and legitimacy for a global human security paradigm could prove problematic because of the contending political, economic, strategic and ideological interests and positions of the major global actors. For instance, President Trump's climate change denial position as opposed to the rest of the world might prove to be a major stumbling block in the fight to save our planet from the impact of climate change. Corporate and ideological interests, challenges that compromise national sovereignty and international interests and differences in the power of states undermine the growth of any consensus on a global human security agenda (Bromley, Cooper & Holtom, 2012). The primacy of national interests over global human security considerations is likely to remain a major political bottleneck in the attempt to create a global human security environment.

It has also been argued that debates over the 'narrow' and 'broad' human security frameworks have undermined the emphasis on power relationships, a theme that is central to the critical theorists we will look at later (Chandler, 2012). This is why it is important to integrate preventive human security practices to enhance resilience, to facilitate the empowerment of the vulnerable and to intervene to protect victims. These measures become more imperative in a situation where hegemonic groups use their control of state institutions to project their economic and political interests at the cost of subaltern groups. For instance, using the postcolonial discourse, d'Hauteserre (2011), in her study of colonial representation in New Caledonia, demonstrated that international tourism marketing is a political statement that constructs New Caledonia as a French enclave that relegates Kanaks to a subaltern position with minimal significance. This representation reinforced French colonial hegemony and neoliberal commodification of Kanak identity and ran counter to attempts to promote the human security of Kanaks.

The globalisation of the neoliberal philosophy, practices and policies has raised and affirmed the relevance of global justice, which has acquired new meanings in the context of the economic, social and humanitarian crisis induced by the extreme phenomena associated with climate change (Munoz, 2010). Theorising democracy and justice in national contexts might be inadequate in transnational contexts, especially when dealing with the safety of individuals and communities such as those now being affected by climate change. This requires a new framework, revolving around the notion of human safety as a way of understanding the relationship between environmental crisis, unsustainable development and conflict. A critical process here is to link the concept of global justice and the democratic mechanisms of international governance (Munoz, 2010). Relatedly, many scholars and policy-makers are critical of the liberal institutionalist values that underpin international peace-building and their emphasis on democracy, free market economics and the liberal state. The reason for that negative stance, it is suggested, is that such values undermine the importance of basic and everyday human needs while promoting externally imposed and inappropriate models of state institutions. It is argued that effective peace-building needs to be framed within the human security discourse with greater emphasis on welfare, livelihoods and local engagement to ensure legitimacy and sustainability (Newman, 2011).

To ensure effectiveness and legitimacy, human security should be part of a collective responsibility, especially in grave humanitarian crises involving genocide or ethnic cleansing. Collective responsibility relates to conceptualising the world as a community of peoples, rather than as a society of states in which other international and transnational actors operate (Peltonen, 2013). This collective realisation of common responsibility has led to the development of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) framework. Related to this, it has been argued that the notion of shared responsibility should also extend to linking global development and human security to make sense of how countries are connected to the global economy and to defusing the social tensions and managing the security risks that can result from exposure to a turbulent international system (Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke, 2007). An instructive model for this is Sweden's Shared Responsibility Bill, which merges peace, security, opportunity, environmental conservation, human rights and democracy into an integrated system.

Along this line, we need to note that globalisation has strengthened the link between development and human security in the context of the changing contemporary sphere of international relations (Ştefanachi, 2011). This has especially been so since the Cold War, where the impact of the normative relationship between human development and human security policies on individuals has come under greater scrutiny. A more nuanced approach to this would require retheorising and employing alternative discourses of human security that encompass global transformation and local realities as well as multiple disciplines. The need for such a re-examination of theory and use of alternative discourses arises because the transnationalisation of threat and rolling back of state power can no longer be studied in a one-dimensional fashion but must be conceptualised from an interdisciplinary point of view, taking into account a range of interacting variables. Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy (2005) emphasise this point by using case studies from Afghanistan, Central Asia and South Asia to frame and illuminate the international importance of human security as a basis for policy thinking in response to an intellectual need.

Nevertheless, there are still gaps to be addressed. For instance, Von Tigerstrom (2007) makes the assertion that, despite the fact that the concept of human security has influenced discourse and practice, and has become the subject of vigorous debate regarding its relevance to central questions of international law, it has, until recently, received little attention from international lawyers. Human security, it is argued, provides a credible platform for the re-evaluation and rethinking of international law in terms of its ethical, normative and legal dimensions. This is especially so in relation to humanitarian intervention, internally displaced persons, small arms control and global health.

Critiques of human security

The initial enthusiasm relating to human security slowly withered away over the years as it became apparent that the concept was too broad and nebulous to be useful and, in certain cases, could not be neatly captured in policy framing. It has been described as too 'fuzzy', inconclusive and amorphous in the way it frames any potential threat in society, and while the term was initially used to escape the limitations of the hard security approach, its encompassing and holistic approach has turned out to be a liability because it 'is so vague that it verges on meaninglessness' (Paris, 2001: 102).

Its fluid character allows it to be readily subjected to arbitrary manipulation as a propagandistic euphemism by states and various groups to project self-serving positive and popular images. Like populist but fuzzy terms such as 'development', 'good governance', 'democracy', 'freedom', 'justice' and 'humanity', which invoke affirmative images, the term 'human security' has been used by scholars, policy-makers, states and civil society organisations as a panacea for almost all social ills. Aid agencies often use values such as democratic behaviour and good governance, associated with human security, as preconditions to dictate the terms of aid. Hence the danger here is that aid can become a tool to leverage ideological conformity rather than a means of addressing poverty. A classic example of this is the Cotonou Agreement between the European Union and the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, where conformity to certain political criteria by ACP countries was required as a condition of the aid. EU aid earmarked for the reform of Fiji's sugar industry was withheld and redirected towards civil society organisations as a result of the delay in the post-2006 coup election, which was seen as a contravention of the democratic governance conditions of the Cotonou Agreement.

The association often made between human security and democracy, as if they were symbiotic, is problematic. This is partly because the concept of democracy can be used readily in a paradoxical way as justification for the violent imposition of external rule. The US involvement in Vietnam and invasion of Iraq, for instance, were justified on the grounds that the governing regimes in those countries were threats to democracy: Vietnam because of communism and Iraq because of the mythical weapons of mass destruction. Although the justifications were flawed, the fact that protection of freedom and other democratic values were used as tools of ideological mobilisation raises questions about the reliability of democracy as a viable human security concept.

In many nations of the global South, democratisation processes can be inherently conflictual because of a constant contestation over power, which sometimes leads to instability and unregulated competition for resources. Political elites, state bureaucrats and powerful corporations are usually in a position to control power and resources, and the resulting inequality has the potential to undermine human security. Often the local aspects of human security are ignored in development thinking in favour of state-based, corporate and international narratives and polices. This sometimes leads to further conflict.

One of the paradoxical situations is the potential of the human security agenda to inadvertently undermine the international human rights regime. This is because the threat to human rights, which is driven by specific conditions, is subsumed and lost under the broad rubric of human security (Howard-Hassmann, 2012). While human security is meant to complement human rights principles, it also has the potential to undermine the primacy of civil and political rights as a strategic tool for citizens to fight for their rights. The use of the umbrella human security concept has created confusion between previously distinct policy streams of human rights and human development (Martin & Owen, 2010). The term 'human rights' itself has been relegated to a subservient position within the broader human security discourse, thus further exacerbating the ambiguity and confusion.

Despite its shortcomings, human security has become mainstreamed in the Pacific security discourse through policies and activities of international aid agencies, media campaigns, international conferences attended by Pacific people, academic research, civil society campaigns and state officials visiting communities (Bryar, Bello & Corendea, 2015). Human security has been associated with the work of UN agencies, development aid, the rise in environmental consciousness in the region as a result of climate change and the general recognition of the importance of social, political and economic rights that are closely associated with human security. Coincidently, the human security concept with its interconnected dimensions seems to fit in well with the Pacific cultural world views, which conceive of society as an interrelated whole. Human security has taken root in policies, laws and institutions and has more or less become part of societal normative systems (Corendea, 2012).

Critical security paradigm: The postcolonial discourse

Framing Pacific security through the postcolonial lens is uncommon, although postcoloniality itself has been a feature in some historical, literary, educational and sociological Pacific texts (Keown, 2005; Tawake, 2000; Mishra, 2011). The postcolonial approach to security frames threat not in the form of interpretive abstraction and subjectivity, as the Copenhagen School does, nor as diffused and multiple facets of risks,

as the human security approach contends, but in the context of power relations, inequality and domination arising from historically defined relationships in politically and culturally defined spaces.

Edward Said, an icon of postcolonial discourse, popularised the term 'orientalism', which was a critical deconstruction of the colonial gaze that represented the colonised in a patronisingly hegemonic manner, and helped to frame a new paradigm for postcolonial critique (Said, 1978). Said's orientalism was a critique of the way the West (which he refers to as Occidental) deployed simplistic racial stereotypes to frame colonised peoples. The distorted images, articulated in novels, paintings, films and the media, became the basis on which the colonial world was understood in the European popular imagination. This provided the basis for imperial hegemony, which posed an imminent threat to the status and survival of subaltern cultures. The same orientalist logic, as Tariq Ali argued, was used to cast Muslims and Arabs as terrorists posing a major of threat to the West, especially since 9/11 (Ali, 2003).

Said expanded a considerable part of his intellectual energy critiquing Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' thesis, which portrayed post–Cold War conflict as the inevitable struggle between the West and 'other' cultures, especially Islam. In confirmatory response to Francis Fukuyama's now moribund Hegelian narrative about the universal triumph of liberal democracy over communism (*The End of History: The Last Man*), Huntington asserted:

> It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilisations. The clash of civilisations will dominate global politics and the fault lines between civilisations will be the battle lines of the future. (Huntington, 1965: 22)

Said's response to Huntington was in the form of his polemically bombastic article, 'The clash of ignorance', in which he rebutted Huntington's attempt to construct static cultural boundaries in a world where cultural cross-fertilisation has been part of the dynamic human history and where politics and ideology, rather than culture, have created conditions for conflict (Said, 2001). The use of rather simplistic and generalised labels

like the 'West' and 'Islam' by Huntington tended to 'mislead and confuse the mind, which is trying to make sense of a disorderly reality' (Said, 2001: 11). Said's alternative discourse in these 'tense times' was to critically examine how the dialectics of relationships shaped the world, unhindered by cultural preconceptions and ignorance:

> These are tense times, but it is better to think in terms of powerful and powerless communities, the secular politics of reason and ignorance, and universal principles of justice and injustice, than to wander off in search of vast abstractions that may give momentary satisfaction but little self-knowledge or informed analysis. 'The Clash of Civilisations' thesis is a gimmick like 'the War of the Worlds', better for reinforcing defensive self-pride than for critical understanding of the bewildering interdependence of our time. (Said, 2001: 14)

The ambiguity of the term 'West' is critically explored by Stuart Hall (1996), who saw it as an ideological construct based on a racialised discursive hierarchy where 'the West' = developed = good = desirable, while 'the non-West' = under-developed = bad = undesirable (Hall, 1996: 186). This binary of 'West and the rest' has in some ways framed the dominant contemporary security discourse, where the values of the advanced and 'civilised' West were constantly being threatened by the primordial non-West and its unrefined values.

Said's argument parallels Franz Fanon's work on the coloniser–colonised relationship. The dialectics between the powerful and the weak resonated with Franz Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks*, a study of the social psychology of racism and the dehumanisation created by colonial hegemony (Fanon, 1952). In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon (1963) examined the psychological struggle between the weak and strong, coloniser and colonised, master and slave, and how the coloniser used violence to maintain dominance, thus legitimising the use of counter-violence as a means of emancipation.

The quest for answers to critical questions regarding security post 9/11, and the rise of racism and Islamophobia, provided new opportunities to revisit Said's orientalism. A core strand in this situation was the notion of power, which was explored in a phenomenological way by Michel Foucault's conception of surveillance, discipline, regulation, the biopolitics of population, and discourses of security and governmentality (Foucault, 1991). While traditionally the state was seen as the focal point of power,

Foucault recognised the diffusion, relativism and dispersal of power in society. His notion that power was universally accessible and everywhere helped to examine the way in which the media, ideas and perceptions shaped the security climate in the post-9/11 period.

Security discourse has become a dominant feature of policy thinking, military strategies, governance structures and development framing, and this, according to Foucault, contributes to the way in which power is produced and reproduced:

> Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it … We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby a discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart. (Foucault, 1998: 100–1)

The relationship between discourse and power is also explored in Stuart Hall's work on the synergy between meaning and power, encoding and decoding, where, despite multiple meanings, the overriding meaning provides a hegemonic leverage for influence by dominant interests (Hall, 1973). In the context of applied security, this means that the meaning of security, the source of insecurity and the nature of threats are framed and reproduced by hegemonic interests. One way of understanding the contours of security is through what Cynthia Enloe (1980) referred to as 'security mapping', or the classification of relative degrees of threat and the reliability of various groups *vis-à-vis* the dominant group or state.

Today, the relationship between security, power and hegemony is manifested more markedly in the form of US global dominance. Although the United States portrays itself as a model for democracy and a global 'sheriff' for freedom, its strategic and corporate interests are largely self-serving in fulfilment of some universal truth at the cost of the 'evil' other. This prompted Noam Chomsky to refer to it as a 'failed state' operating on a 'single standard' based on the premise that '*their* terror against us and our clients is the ultimate evil, while *our* terror against them does not exist—or, if it does, is entirely appropriate' (Chomsky, 2006: 3). The propensity of the United States to demonise and eventually punish countries and groups who do not behave in accordance with its grand scheme of things is seen as part of destiny, a righteous cause and a natural American right, as Chomsky argued:

> By now, the world's hegemonic power accords itself the right to wage war at will, under a doctrine of 'anticipatory self-defence' with unstated bounds. International law, treaties, and rules of world order are sternly imposed on others with much self-righteous posturing, but dismissed as irrelevant for the United States—a longstanding practice, driven to new depths by the Reagan and Bush II administrations. (Chomsky, 2006: 3)

Influenced by Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony and manufacturing consent (Gramsci, 2012), Herman and Chomsky make the assertion that induced adherence to the idea of US and Western moral righteousness to wage war is part of a system of ideological, intellectual and cultural control through education, media and other forms of public discourse (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Consent is manufactured through a complex system of corporate, media and state manipulation of ideas and propaganda rather than being simply voluntary and rationalised. The 2003 invasion of Iraq was a classic case of hegemonic control of mainstream media, which acted as cheerleaders and consent-manufacturing machines for Bush's warmongering adventure.

Tariq Ali further argues that the reaction to US hegemony has been equally mischievous on the part of Islamists, who have been as 'fundamentalist' as US warmongering adventurism. Hence what we have experienced has been the return of history in a horrific form, with religious symbols playing a part on both sides, represented in politico-religious rhetoric such as 'Allah's revenge', 'God is on Our Side' and 'God Bless America'. The violence of 11 September 2001 was an Islamic fundamentalist response to the Western fundamentalist violence inflicted on the people of Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and Yemen and other parts of the world. The United States had been involved either directly or indirectly in almost all of these violent situations. Ali's *Clash of Fundamentalisms*, written in response to 9/11, like Said's 'Clash of ignorance', was a repudiation of Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' thesis, which portrayed non-Western cultures as deviant and threatening. Ali proposed that rival ideological fundamentalisms—Islamism on one side and Western imperialism on the other—were to be equally blamed for threatening global security and that both must be opposed (Ali, 2003). While many of the values proclaimed by the Enlightenment (from the late 17th to the early 19th centuries) have retained their relevance, portrayals of the American empire as a new emancipatory project are misguided.

The framing of postcolonial societies as a threat to the West, represented by capitalism and liberal democracy, is not merely a theoretical proposition, it is also encapsulated in policy thinking. When former British Prime Minister Tony Blair labelled Africa as a 'scar on the conscience of the world', he was reflecting New Labour's policy shift from 'development–humanitarianism' to the 'risk–fear–threat' category in the broader context of the 'war on terror'. While the securitisation of Africa helped to legitimise the 'war on terror', it, unfortunately, effectively undermined development initiatives (Abrahamsen, 2005).

There are some important conceptual lessons we can learn from the critical analysis of contemporary security. The view that dichotomises the world along the lines of the 'West' and the 'rest' creates a hierarchy whereby the non-West is seen not only as inferior but also as a source of threat. Although the militant Islamic fundamentalists responsible for 9/11 and other acts of terror constitute a small minority of Muslims, their actions have been used as 'evidence' of the primordial barbarism of non-Western peoples generally. This orientalist state of mind, as Said reminds us, is pervasive and takes various manifest and latent forms. Post–Cold War conflict is not so much a 'clash of civilisations', as Huntington suggests, but has more to do with contestation over entrenched political, economic and ideological interests, underpinned by either side's inability to understand the situation of the other, or a 'clash of ignorance', as Said put it.

One of the prominent aspects of the critical and postcolonial discourse is the feminist security discourse. As Blanchard argues, 'national security discourses are part of the elite world of masculine high politics' (Blanchard, 2003: 1289). The masculine-based realist conception of security, which puts the state and military at the centre of analysis, obscures the way the role of women has been reduced to subaltern status. Recently, feminist scholars have raised fundamental questions about the meaning of security: just who is being secured by security policies, and who is the threat? Security policies are often designed by men and security institutions such as the military, and are therefore imbued with patriarchal ideology and culture. Often the masculine personality is seen as the 'protector' just as much as it is seen as a threat, while women are the 'protected' weak and vulnerable. Yet women struggle every day against patriarchal hegemony, and this process, as Christine Sylvester states, 'is always elusive and mundane' (Sylvester, 1987: 183).

The rise of the feminist security theory has redefined the terrain of security studies as well as opened new opportunities for creating a new engendered security discourse. Part of this intellectual and political project is to privilege women's role in politics and unveil the shroud of invisibility that has rendered women hidden. The exclusion of women is linked to cultural framing and power relations and is therefore ideological in nature. Of significance here is our understanding of the power of the state in institutionalising and reproducing security discourse, and questions have been raised about whether the state actually protects women in times of war and peace. Women are often victims of violence, rape and abuse during wars and other conflicts, and sometimes these are perpetrated by soldiers themselves.

The fact that women are often victims of war has more to do with their social role as bearers of children and sources of the well-being of the family and has nothing to do with their natural inferiority. The notion of inferiority is sometimes used as the basis for constructing stereotypes that women are natural peacemakers, thereby fuelling the assumption that women are weak, docile and incapable of conspiracy, power play and war-mongering. As we have seen in the cases of Joan of Arc, Margaret Thatcher, who ordered the British invasion of the Falkland Islands, and Golda Meir, who was Prime Minister of Israel during the Yom Kippur War of 1973, circumstances can dictate realities and disprove these myths. Women are imbued with diverse qualities such as peacefulness and aggression just like men, and denying them these fundamentally human characteristics is tantamount to denying them an equal place in society.

The role of women in peace activism, peace-building and conflict resolution in the Pacific has a long history, and in many cases—whether it be Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga or any other community— women have been at the forefront of political action and resistance to violence and conflict. The proliferation of gender-based organisations in the Pacific is part of the global wave of consciousness sweeping across civil society as well as states. Many of them draw inspiration from the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on gender, peace and development as well as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly (United Nations, 1979).

Recent research on the Fiji military using the gender intersectionality framework has shown the deeply embedded masculine culture within the military's structure, ideology and institutional behaviour (Tagicakibau, 2018). This has been a psychological and cultural driving force behind the coups in Fiji since 1987. Militarist masculinity even pre-dates the coups and has roots in the traditional warrior culture that formed the basis of Fijian masculinity (Baledrokadroka, 2012). This will be examined in more detail in Chapter 4.

The feminist security discourse has been progressively taking hold in the Pacific, although its actual policy influence has been limited. There is now growing consciousness about gender and human security issues and their relationship, and this has provided impetus for the genderisation of security discourse and policies among regional and civil society organisations. The resistance to the feminist approach has been largely from the patriarchal establishments, such as the churches and other traditional institutions. For instance, the opposition to CEDAW in Tonga was largely from churches as well as the traditional hierarchy, who saw gender equality as a threat to their control over land and power (Ratuva, 2017b).

The feminist security discourse is part of the broader critical social theory approach of the postcolonial discourse, which we look at next.

The relevance of the postcolonial security discourse in the Pacific cannot be understated. Rather than merely providing a simple snapshot of the immediate experience of threats, such as the case with the realist and liberal security discourses that have been dominant in the study of Pacific security, postcolonial theory provides a more historicised view by looking at the origins of unequal power relations from the colonial to the postcolonial era. PICs find themselves as subaltern entities in the global power dynamics, and often they are framed by neocolonial powers and their intellectual apostles through the 'arc of instability' and 'failed states' prisms. We shall examine this in more detail in Chapter 3.

The different theories discussed above have their own strengths as well as shortcomings, and they have their own analytical value when used to study the Pacific. Table 1 summarises the narratives around these security discourses and their significance in understanding security in the Pacific. These discourses will be used selectively in discussing various aspects of Pacific security in this book.

Table 1: Security discourses and relevance to the Pacific

Security discourse	Narrative	Application to Pacific
Securitisation	Threat is embedded in the language and the circumstances of usage.	Terms like 'coup', 'arc of instability' and 'climate change' invoke connotations of threat and thus become the basis for anxiety and feelings of insecurity.
Human security	Situations, issues and factors that relate to and affect people's livelihood rather than security of the state as traditionally assumed.	Relates to a whole range of social, economic, psychological and political issues such as poverty, employment, climate change, health and education. These issues are interrelated in the Pacific.
Postcolonial	Dominant security discourses are defined in terms of the interests of the 'Western' cultural prism. The views and interests of subaltern groups, many of whom were under colonial rule, need to be considered.	Most PICs are former colonies and are at the periphery of international capitalism and global power hierarchy. In many ways this also defines their security circumstances.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to demonstrate that security is not a given but a highly contested terrain and a dynamic and often arbitrary construct. Competing discourses try to define security using different ideological frames, conceptual tools, variables and contexts. For instance, securitisation theory focuses on the primacy of speech act, human security discourse is based on multiple situations of risks and threats to human well-being, the gender approach focuses on the dominance of the masculine culture, while the postcolonial approach provides an integrated narrative based on power through a dominant–subordinate relationship. The common strands in all these are two-fold: identifying the sources of threat or insecurity and ensuring peace. Again, the way these are defined is subject to conceptual and political contestation.

For the Pacific, one may be able to draw strands of thought from various security discourses to explain particular situations, not in a deductive way but in a critical and open-minded fashion in recognition of the strengths and limitations of the discourse in question. Indeed, some of the theories are fundamentally at odds with each other, and the way we

use them needs to be cautiously selective and evidence-based. The use of multiple discourses can be enriching because it enables one to visualise an issue and context from different conceptual and methodological vantage points without being hindered by the limitations of singular narratives. This is important for interdisciplinary-based studies such as this one, where seemingly disparate issues are framed as interconnected horizontally (across issues) and vertically (across different levels of issues). The approach is appropriate for the Pacific because of the interrelatedness and integration of social, economic, political and cultural issues associated with kinship-based semi-subsistence communities. Additionally, the wide diversity between and within PICs requires the use of multiple lenses to illuminate the manifest and latent dimensions of security. Often, the use of singular prisms can easily lead to generalisations, which oversimplify the complex social realities on the ground.

Let it also be emphasised here that the theories discussed in this chapter should not be treated as mere superficial abstractions; rather they are applied conceptual tools to help guide our understanding of the notion of security. Theories do not exist in isolation from social reality but rather reflect the way social reality is defined, framed and understood. For PICs, the challenge is the way theories are used to make sense of the constantly changing and highly contested terrain of security. We will look at this in Chapter 3.