

Somewhat analogously, Andrew Latham's case study of Indian security policy points to its opposing tendencies: the Kautilyan tradition, which portrays the "external" domain "as being an inherently violent place where conflict and violent competition was the rule, and where peace and stability were the (rare) exception," and the Gandhian tradition, which includes "a commitment to peaceful change, non-violent inter-state relations, and pacific conflict resolution through negotiation."⁴

This notion of binary (or dialectical) strands in security policy is paralleled in the West, and in particular in the United States, where scholars have drawn attention to the two strands of American foreign policy: the "Wilsonian liberal internationalist" vision, and the realist (occasionally isolationist) strand associated with Henry Kissinger, George Kennan, Hans Morgenthau, and a host of other figures.⁵ But there are three things to note about these binary oppositions. First, they do not appear in all cultural contexts, and in particular do not appear to be part of the European, Latin American, or Southeast Asian experiences. Second, these binary oppositions are not identical in all cases, although they do share certain overlapping "family resemblances." Chinese *realpolitik* (which is combined with a hegemonic world view) is *not* the same as American realism (which is admixed with an isolationist, "city on a hill" tendency), nor is it the same as the Indian combination of Kautilyan and Gandhian traditions (with associates moral with political power). To reduce these all to some sort of universal "realism" is a reductionist error that conceals more than it reveals.

Most importantly, the existence of different strands of thought in broad socio-cultural contexts alerts us to the fact that cultures are not monolithic, and thus to the two-way relationship between "cultures" and "actors." The consensus among the various authors of these case studies seems to be that these sorts of broad cultural ideas, derived from ethical traditions, religion or philosophy, are often used instrumentally by different political entrepreneurs, depending on their circumstances and the challenges they face. But the fact that political leaders and elites can deliberately manipulate and use cultural referents in order to achieve specific ends in the security-building and arms control field does not mean that it is purely instrumental (and hence has no explanatory value): it can only be used in certain ways, and its broad parameters must be respected. Moreover, understanding these cultural "buttons" (and how they can be pushed) may have important practical value for policy makers/diplomats on the other side of a negotiation.

An excellent example of this is provided by the Middle Eastern experience. As various analysts have pointed out, Islamic references could be (and were used) to denounce Israel prior to Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, but were also used to justify the peace initiative that he undertook. A simplistic reading would see Egyptian/Islamic political culture as completely pliable or neutral in this case. However, as Ahmed Fakhr emphasizes in his contribution, the pervasive sense of injustice and unequal treatment that has informed Egyptian political discourse since the colonial period, has meant that "both the elites and common people feel that the superpowers and major powers dealing with arms control, disarmament and

⁴ Andrew Latham, "The Role of Culture and Identity in Indian Arms Control and Disarmament Policy," 108-109.

⁵ See Michael Joseph Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986); David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992); and in the discipline of International Relations, David Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).