“Science cannot solve the ultimate mystery of nature. And that is because, in the last analysis, we ourselves are part of nature and therefore part of the mystery that we are trying to solve.”

Max Planck

“A text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author.”

Roland Barthes

1. Introduction

In everyday life, the term ‘security’ is being used very often and has become an essential part of the way we perceive and understand the world around us (be it social or physical). Most of the time we do not question what it means to be ‘secure’. Sometimes it refers to being ‘safe’ from ‘danger’, sometimes it means keeping something ‘locked up’ or ‘put away’. Nonetheless, when delved into deeper one recognises that these numerous meanings point to a significant blur. An academic investigation requires certain questions to be asked before taking dictionary definitions for granted. Who/what is ‘secure’ from/for whom/what? These questions are fundamental to any enquiry into the meanings and understandings of security. It is,

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obviously, a “contested subject” as even the ‘national’ version of it has been dubbed as an “ambiguous symbol”.5

Theories in Security Studies often start with answering these questions and diverge according to their answers. For example, when we say that the security of a state relates to another state’s material capabilities in condition of anarchy we rush into the realm of Realist approaches, or when we talk about security of states achieved through economic interdependence and bolstered by international institutions (still in condition of anarchy) we are in the domain of Liberal perspectives. In the end, each theory favours a certain world-view or even an ideology if you will, just as Robert Cox has famously put “[t]heory is always for someone, and for some purpose”.6 This proposition led me to ask whether there could be a universal theory. Not universal in an objectivist sense, but rather universal in that it could somehow benefit all of humanity. Looking for an answer, I had to face more and more questions. This was not necessarily disappointing because these questions helped me to get involved with Critical Theory much more in detail than the Security Studies textbook allowed. With my interest in security as well as a more social philosophical quest I realised that the intersection of these two would be a good starting point.

It was but by no means sufficient. There are, of course, chapters on critical approaches in many security textbooks and even dedicated volumes now.7 These critical approaches cover a wide array from neo-Marxism to feminism, from post-modernism to post-colonialism. Within these critical approaches of international security, three relatively distinct schools of thought emerged in Europe after the Cold War. They were named after their geographical emergence points although scholars

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associated with them were diverse (similar to the naming of the English School)\textsuperscript{8}. The Aberystwyth School’s approach was formulated by Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones in the University of Wales, Aberystwyth; the Copenhagen School’s perspective was the product of cooperation between mainly Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and a wide team of scholars at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute throughout the 1990s; and finally the Paris School centred on the works of Didier Bigo in Science-Po Paris for the journal \textit{Cultures \\& Conflits}.\textsuperscript{9} While getting specialised in the history of philosophy literature and political theory, I realised that it was essentially the Enlightenment thought that gave birth to Critical Theory and hence critical security studies.

### 1.1. Questions and the Enquiry

This doctoral dissertation aims at pinpointing the reasons of differentiation between the three schools of Critical Security Studies. If Cox’s previously cited proposition holds true, then Critical Theory (CT) must also be “for someone and for some purpose”. This purpose, as will be argued, should be the \textit{emancipation} of the people who are oppressed. The objective of this dissertation actually comes from this inference. CT as a theory needs to be for all humanity and \textit{for emancipation} because if it were not then this would pose a contradiction. Specific interests for the benefit of the self is contrary to Kantian morality and thus behaviours should be rational in a sense that they would not be means but ends as a result of “good will”. Details of Kant’s philosophy will be elaborated in the next chapter, therefore, for now, it will suffice to

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\textsuperscript{8} The English School is a school in IR Theory that is mainly based on the concept of ‘international society’. The so-called school consists of many scholars from different places (i.e., a central figure of the school, Hedley Bull, came from Australia) who were part of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics (1959 till the 1980s) and at some point in their lives taught at the London School of Economics. (Hidemi Suganami, “The English School in a Nutshell,” \textit{Rethinking Annual Review of International Studies} 9 (2010): 16.) See also: Andrew Linklater and Hidemi Suganami, \textit{The English School of International Relations: A Contemporary Reassessment} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

say that only if CT is for all humanity and for *emancipation* only then it would have moral worth in a Kantian sense.

I will show that the three schools are all products of Kant’s Copernican revolution in philosophy, which formed idealism as well as immanent critique. However, in contemporary Security Studies, they tend to stay away from each other, rejecting certain ontological and/or epistemological positions. How is this possible? This dissertation seeks to understand the manner in which these schools of thoughts emerged from the same source. In other words, it tries to pinpoint the conjunctural factors as well as more general tendencies that shaped them. Therefore, this research is essentially a meta-theoretical comparative analysis of post-Cold War critical theories of Security Studies which will utilise three critical European schools of security as its focal point.

The central hypothesis is that philosophically similar schools of thought followed different developmental paths as a result of the difference between the German Enlightenment and the French Enlightenment as these created somewhat distinct albeit parallel philosophical traditions.\(^\text{10}\) Continuing from this point, the dissertation will ask the question whether it is possible to reconcile these schools of thought in a pluralistic way to avoid the relativism caused by their different formulations. To achieve this end, this research will address the following main questions:

- Are there practical and philosophical reasons for divergence of critical security schools?
- If so, how do these reasons affect communication and potential reconciliation of critical security schools?

With its meta-theoretical and genealogical approach, this dissertation intends to contribute to the understanding of critical theories in Security Studies. It will help to construct a more comprehensive framework with its findings on the epistemological, ontological and methodological origins of the three theoretical schools. In other words, this research will constitute a survey of philosophy and

\(^{10}\) Parallel in the sense that they were both part of the wider tradition of continental philosophy as opposed to analytical philosophy tradition.
sociology of IR theories in the security sub-field, which intends to contribute to the discipline in general.

Some previous works have argued about the compatibility of two of the three schools in different orders such as Aberystwyth and Copenhagen or Copenhagen and Paris, however, there has not been a comprehensive study of all three of them. These arguments for the compatibility of two schools open up territory for examining the three schools together.

1.2. The Late Arrival of Critical Theory in International Relations and Security Studies

The common narrative found in many International Relations (IR) textbooks and of course the Aberystwyth University’s website on the establishment of the discipline is as follows: The first IR department in the world was founded in Aberystwyth, a small coastal mining town in Wales, as the “Department of International Politics” in 1919. Following the end of the Great War, David Davies, a Welsh philanthropist and idealist politician, endowed a generous amount to University College Wales in Aberystwyth so that with the academic study of international politics another Great War could be prevented. It was the optimism and idealism of the interwar period that incepted the IR discipline. The first International Politics chair was named after the then President of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson. The period between the establishment of the department and the start of the Second


World War was later on characterised by the ‘first great debate’ in IR, which was between the Realists and Idealists. The debate as such never occurred, but there was a clear tension between a search for the ‘basic forces’ behind international relations (a core feature of Classical Realism) and ‘moral principles’ that ought to guide international relations (a core feature attributed to Idealism, but mostly without mentioning who belonged to this mode of thinking). It was ironic that Edward Hallett Carr was to take up the Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth in 1936 because he is considered as one of the major Classical Realists in IR. Carr published his introductory textbook of IR while he was in Aberystwyth. It would become one of the classics of the discipline’s literature, The Twenty Years’ Crisis. The idealistic objectives of the department did not materialise and an even more destructive war broke out. This caused scholars to focus on human nature through a pessimistic and conservative political philosophy. This approach was called Classical Realism which rose against the assumed utopian idealism of the interwar period.

In recent years, there has been an increase in enquiries into the history of the discipline telling a different story. Particularly, Robert Vitalis’s exploration of American IR is very informative in the sense that it shows how the discipline’s origins are embedded in racial relations and white scholarship. Furthermore, others delving into the sociology of the discipline have depicted several parallels and/or overlapping lines in the development of a discipline. Therefore, all in all, there are competing claims as to where the discipline emerged and how it developed initially. However, with the start of the Cold War, it can be said to have assumed an almost monolithic corpus based on superpower rivalry and nuclear deterrence especially manifesting itself in the Realist

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scholarship. This was also reflected in the study of security through a renewed focus on Strategic Studies, which has its roots in the works of Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) as well as Sun Tzu (544-496 BCE). Yet it was still the manifestation of the US dominance in the IR academia.

Since the 1970s IR scholarship shook up the dust that has been settling over it for almost four decades and started to explore new ideas, found new sources in other disciplines. Peace Research, which emerged mainly in the 1960s, was an important field that encouraged this move. It came about as the questioning and criticism of traditional Strategic Studies. Although it was pursued globally, Peace Research was mainly concentrated in various institutes in Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and Germany; although there was also a strong US-based branch, centred on the works of Kenneth and Elise Boulding. The main motive was to analyse the causes of war and the conditions for peace, and to understand and develop ways to prevent conflicts. Based on Johan Galtung’s scholarship and a focus on “human survival”, the corpus expanded and has contributed significantly to alternative perspectives in IR and Security Studies. Ken Booth, for example, claims that Peace Research was one of the elements that helped critical security studies develop.

Following the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union proponents of these critical perspectives became able to raise their voices more strongly. Especially, post-modern and post-structuralist views became popular. In addition, a plethora of scholarly work has been produced within what is called the postcolonial (or non-Western) studies area. This can be best observed in the evolution of introductions to IR and IR Theory textbooks. For example, as an undergraduate student, my introductory IR course followed the third edition of Globalisation of World Politics. Its theory section consisted of Realism, Liberalism, Contemporary mainstream approaches: Neo-realism and Neo-liberalism, Marxist theories of International

\[17\] The first institution, International Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) was established in 1959.


Relations, Social Constructivism, and Alternative approaches to International Theory chapters. The seventh edition of the book, however, reformatte the section to Realism, Liberalism, Marxist theories, Social Constructivism, Post-structuralism, Post-colonialism, Feminism, and International Ethics. Similar changes can be seen in many IR and Security Studies textbooks. This shows the late arrival of critical theory in IR and Security Studies.

1.3. A Note on the Methods and the Structure

This is essentially a study based on genealogical textual analysis. Therefore it follows the philosophical roots and development of Critical Theory through the central texts and locates different points of divergence which in the end is embodied in the formation of the three schools of critical security studies. It is important to note here that neither Critical Theory nor its precursors are directly related to International Relations. It is their reflections that we see in the IR literature, therefore they are not the products of a direct line from those philosophical texts. These schools of thought did not evolve in a vacuum but they were informed and affected by political, social, economic, and cultural developments as well as the personal lives of their main proponents. For this reason, understanding and pinpointing divergence need further investigations when possible.

It is difficult to draw a line in the history of thought when there are numerous connections, disruptions, and re-discoveries. Nevertheless, it is imperative to draw some lines for a dissertation that seeks interconnectedness within critical schools of security. The central connection that will be elaborated throughout this text is a certain

21 Baylis, Smith, and Owens, Globalisation of World Politics, 3rd Edition.


commitment of all the three schools to some sort of emancipation. To paint a picture emerging from emancipation, I believe the starting point should be Kant. It is firstly related to the Kantian view of enlightenment as getting out of mental immaturity. Then through Hegel and Marx that Kantian critique assumes a new meaning, giving birth to (Frankfurt School’s) Critical Theory in the end. Moreover, the poststructuralists use Nietzschean concepts and understandings to interpret the world. Therefore the linkage provided between the Enlightenment, the philosophers and emancipation provide a fuller picture in terms of the emergence of these schools of critical thought. Foucault and Derrida will be the foci here and their relationship will be explained extensively in Chapter 3. Also the Critical Theory tradition has a branch that follows the Italian thinker Gramsci’s economic re-interpretation of Marx which has also consequences for IR and Security Studies. There can be others to include such as post-colonial security and/or feminist security as well as other potential theorisations, however, the selection of the three schools will be both comprehensive and parsimonious to provide a contribution to Security Studies.24

To elaborate the reason for the selection of these three schools I first need to explain what is meant by ‘school’. First of all, despite harsh criticisms and debates, the three schools have been actively engaged by security scholars even by those not committed to these approaches. Secondly, Ole Waever’s 2004 paper that he presented at the annual convention of the International Studies Association (which also became a book chapter in 2013) in a sense sedimented a view which I will call the ‘three schools approach’.25 Many scholars including Claudia Aradau, Ali Bilgic, Pinar Bilgin, Christopher Browning, Rita Floyd, Tara McCormack, Matt McDonald, João Nunes, and Paul Roe (most of whom will be cited throughout the dissertation) all refer to these schools.

The core of the dissertation attempts at finding out the linkages, whether disrupted or not, between emancipation, the three schools, philosophers and philosophical tradition as shown in Figure 1 (see the next page). This will, in turn, show

24 It needs to be kept in mind that post-colonial and feminist critiques of these schools will be provided and Butlerian conception of performativity will be observed in the Copenhagen and Paris schools

25 Waever.
us the interconnectedness of the schools and their relationship to *emancipation* which will allow a more comprehensive framework for the study of security.
Figure 1: Positioning emancipation in critical security studies
As Peoples and Vaughan-Williams point to, mapping out critical studies in security through schools may not always be desirable. They try to provide a sketch without such a mapping which is somewhat reminiscent of the C.A.S.E. collective’s attempt at creating a dialogue as the field is much more complex than just the three schools.

I do agree that the field is complex and delineations through schools and categories may not do justice to many details and nuances as well as connections. It is through this research that I was able to realise the difficulties of such an approach. However, I have also come to the conclusion that schools as heuristic devices are very helpful to deconstruct their intellectual histories and philosophical underpinnings and see through generalisations. In other words, thinking these approaches as separate schools allows many reconstructions that show continuities and disruptions beyond claims of being normative, analytical, or sociological.

I have also regarded some scholars as parts of the schools which they might not agree to be included. I am sure they have their reasons for this, however, when I put them in a certain school it is because their analyses fit in the schools as I have interpreted them. This will, of course, be elaborated comprehensively. But it should be noted that this research is based on observation from within and without through a critical perspective.

1.4. Outline

While having an underlying Kantian conception of enlightenment and emancipation, this dissertation will show how the so-called schools are connected by an emancipatory purpose. Furthermore, these connections will lead to a novel


27 c.a.s.e collective. Interestingly enough the collective did not include anyone connected to the Aberystwyth School.

28 Despite, for example, it is very implicit and by implication in the Copenhagen School’s case as it will be shown in chapters 4 and 5.
interpretation that should give us reasons to rethink Enlightenment and intellectual history as genealogical elements of contemporary perspectives and debates. As mentioned in the previous section, Figure 1 constitutes the central structure of the dissertation which shows the relationship between these philosophers, which are themselves products of Kantian revolution in philosophy, the three security schools, and emancipation.

The dissertation is divided into six chapters. After the current introductory chapter, the analysis starts with *The Origins of Critical Theory* (Chapter 2) which comprehensively explains Kantian, Nietzschean, Marxian, Gramscian and the Frankfurt School origins through central tenets of the thoughts of the philosophers that paved way for the emergence of CT. In the next chapter, *New Critical Thought* (Chapter 3) influences from post-structural and critical sociology on CT are investigated while pointing at differentiation as a result of distinct traditions of thought in the German and French intelligentsia. Chapter 4 focuses on the International Relations side of the philosophical developments. It describes the three schools of thought as understood in the Security Studies literature and depicts similarities and differences with IR language. Chapter 5, *Conceptual Analysis: Roots and Differentiations*, is the main discussion and argumentation chapter that brings IR into contact with the philosophical and intellectual backgrounds. Here ontological, epistemological and to some extent, methodological comparisons and contrasts are made with reference to the political and intellectual developments. The three schools’ analyses of the Global War on Terror are elaborated to illustrate how the three theoretical approaches re-tell the narrative in a critical manner and how these re-tellings are interrelated. In the *Conclusion*, the arguments are wrapped together and potential avenues for further exploration are put forward.