From the editors

Security, Annette Seegers points out, has to be defined; it must be given content or substance.[1] How security is defined is in many cases the result of a dualistic process, an interplay, between a debate on security by academia in the scholarly environment and an executive function of government in the policy process. In the definition of security, both the academic and the policy processes have to contend with two variables: domestic or internal vulnerabilities and threats from the outside, dangers lurking in the outer environment. This interplay between both perceptions and reality about the internal and the external environment and between vulnerabilities and threats is at the heart of how both the scholarly community and governments go about providing content to the idea of security. Security is therefore a deeply subjective process; a process, to quote Colin S Gray, "… influence by personality and mood swing chemistry and consideration or circumstances, but scarcely at all reliably by empirical data".[2]

The outcome of the definition is also highly unpredictable. South Africa experienced the policy-driven idea of total security turning our society into a highly securitised and militarised entity; and the scholarly-driven idea of human security increasingly being transformed into regime security.[3] The role of a journal like *Scientia Militaria* to foster debate in and between the scholarly and policy communities to encourage a nuanced understanding of the content of security should never be underestimated. This edition of the journal is another effort to provide content and understanding of and in the security, defence and military realms.

Andreas Westberg places emphasis on maritime security in his article on Somalian piracy. He highlights the fact that the circumstances of the outbreak of piracy in Somalia remain poorly understood. His study explored the environment within which Somalia's first outbreak of piracy occurred, and offers a critical re-think of its origins. Drawing on the author's own extensive fieldwork as well as contemporary reports, the study explored how pirate ventures were launched after the Indian Ocean tsunami on 26 December 2004 had obliterated the coastal economy. Westberg argues that the tsunami coincided with the eruption of a deadly and highly destabilising conflict, unprecedented for a coastal area that had remained relatively peaceful since the state collapse in 1991. The author points out that the tsunami and the establishment of the South Mudug piracy model in Harardhere and Hobyo in 2005 laid the foundation for a decade of ransom piracy.

The article by Laetitia Olivier, Francois Vreÿ and Theo Neethling highlights the utility of theoretical approaches in international relations and the way these approaches provide 'lenses' to enhance our understanding of the social dynamics of the world in general and of international politics as a social activity in particular. The authors emphasise those theoretical approaches in international relations that underlie security studies, and use the discussion to evaluate the relevance of the approaches in understanding the roles and functions of armed forces in a foreign policy context. They specifically argue that not only are policy directions of governments determined by state-centric pursuance of interests, but in addition, ideas and norms play an important role in governmental decisions. Moreover, the authors contend that regional powers, such as South Africa, adopt a number of strategies based on a variety of perspectives, and not necessarily on one dominating theoretical approach or perspective only. This complicates defence planning that is primarily based on views of threats from the outside.

In his article, Emmanuel Ojo questions the established proposition in literature on civil–military relations (CMR) that the military or instrumentality of force is a *sine qua non* to the formation and consolidation of the state. The author considers the views of the theorists on CMR and uses historical data to critically question the role of force in state formation. He argues that force and nation building are in dialectical opposition, whereas consensus and cooperation are required more than force in the process of nationhood. The article infers that in this 21st century, even after attaining nationhood, the state is still in need of very strong armed forces because of the challenges of globalisation, which include terrorism and territorial expansion by neighbouring and far-away states.

The article by Liliane Klaus explores how the idea of tone at the top works in the traditional military contexts found in Latin America, and how the right tone could be adopted in corrupt military institutions to move towards an ethical role-modelling environment. She highlights that it is hard to say whether unethical leadership or unethical culture came first in unethical traditional hierarchical institutions. The author argues that several strategies may help the military to fight military unethical culture in contaminated organisations, and highlights a number of hypotheses on the functioning of military institutions. She proposes the establishment of a strong, transactional-based tone at the top as the main tool to fight military corruption. She concludes that under normal conditions, the fear of being caught and the certainty of military punishment "… make[s] a half-reasonable soldier tremble and sweat in the harsh and arid traditional military world".

Gavin Cawthra discusses the military resistance movement in South Africa between 1974 and 1994. He argues that the conscription system of the apartheid

state provoked a counter-reaction in the form a movement of resistance to conscription and, more generally, to the various internal and external conflicts. The resistance was initially led by exiled self-styled 'war resisters' who set up a number of support organisations. After some political contestation, one such organisation, the Committee on South African War Resistance (COSAWR) emerged as the leading force and aligned itself openly with the African National Congress (ANC). The author is of the view that a relatively small group of exiled individuals was able to exert significant political influence through combining research, activism, mobilisation and lobbying, public and covert activities, and through working with an existing liberation movement and an increasingly influential international solidarity network. This in turn helped to create the conditions within which a domestic resistance movement, one of the largest ever amongst white South Africans, was able to emerge and play an important role in laying the basis for a non-racial South Africa.

Hendrik Snyders provides an interesting outline of the role of pigeons in the First World War. The author points out that carrier pigeons, lofts and pigeon handlers were legitimate targets for enemy forces during the war. He argues that, as a result of the multi-faceted nature and conflicting interests associated with the post-war debate on appropriate ways of memorialising the war dead, the contribution of animals was largely excluded from the discussions and rarely considered.

In their contribution to this edition of *Scientia Militaria,* Lindiwe Khoza and Gerhard van Zyl focus on the distance education programme at the South African Military Academy. The authors express the view that, compared to the residential programmes at the Academy, the distance education process displays poor throughput. Poor distance education throughput, the authors argue, contradicts recent advances in educational technologies, which provide a range of mitigation and support opportunities through the creation of learning spaces that mediate successful student learning anytime anywhere. The authors are of the view that the eradication of disparity in access to learning technologies may mitigate demographic disparity to promote graduate throughput.

This edition concludes with a commentary article by Maj Gen (retd) Roland de Vries on the influence of the Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle on the development of the South African mobile warfare doctrine, and a review article by Tobie Beukes on the Iraqi War. Moreover, interesting reviews on new publications on South African military historiography are also included. The most important is a review by Prof. Deon Fourie of *The military history of modern South Africa* by Prof. Ian van der Waag.

Prof. Van der Waag is also the newly appointed editor of *Scientia Militaria*. After five years, it is time for a change. Our best wishes accompany him in this important endeavour.

Abel Esterhuyse

Endnotes

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[1] Seegers, A. "The new security in democratic South Africa: A cautionary tale". *Conflict, Security & Development* 10/2. 2010. 264.

[2] Gray, CS. "Strategy and security". *Infinity Journal* 4/3. September 2015. 11.

[3] Africa, S. "Human security in South Africa". *Strategic Review for South Africa* 37/1. May 2015. 178.