

Contingency as the 'Missing Link': A New Approach to Understanding 'Change' in U.S. Foreign and Security Strategy in the 21st Century

Oliver B. Steward

Introduction

There have been significant changes in security strategy during both the Bush and Obama presidencies.¹ This can be seen in the military operations in Afghanistan in 2001, in the invasion of Iraq in 2003, in the troop surges in Iraq in 2007, as well as in the troop surges in Afghanistan in 2008, in the expansion of drone operations under Obama, and in the subsequent withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq in 2010 and Afghanistan in 2014. More recently, from 2014 onwards, we have seen responses to potential contingencies in the redeployment of U.S. forces under the Coalition umbrella in the fight against ISIS. These changes have generally signalled a more offensive posture on the part of U.S. military deployments in specific areas during particular times. As International Relations theory is devoid of any explicit definition of 'contingency', my working definition of contingency is a possible event constructed or potentially occurring in the future.

With the advent of the Obama administration, a different set of foreign policy and security goals was espoused, one which recognised the limits of U.S. power as well as the need to

repair its international credibility. The shift in Obama's foreign policy has been seen broadly in the realignment of grand strategy and, in particular, security commitments.² This is seen in the troop withdrawal from Iraq and in a pivot towards Asia in response to China's emergence as a regional hegemon, while policies in other areas, like counter-terrorism, foreign policy and the expanding of the War on Terror are pursued with a different set of means, through the increased use of drone strikes.³

Through historiographical research, it can be demonstrated that U.S. foreign policy does exhibit changes in its behaviour, particularly when it comes to its response to potential geopolitical threats. Typically, 'contingency' as a factor in the changing nature of U.S. foreign policy has been seen historically through this century and before. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 put contingency within the new geopolitical context of the Global War on Terror.⁴ The *National Security Strategy (2002)* and the subsequent policies of 'pre-emption', and 'pre-emptive self-defence' are based on the combating of potential threats to U.S. national security. More recently the *National Security*

¹ My working definition of security strategy is the stated plans of military action which the United States pursues in order to achieve long term security aim and goals. The particular focus of this inquiry is related to how strategic aims are constructed to facilitate specific security goals present within but not limited to the publication of National Security Strategy policy documents from the White House. This differs from securitization in that it does not solely focus on how threats become alleviated and subsequently 'securitized' through 'speech acts', but instead focuses on how counter-terrorist security policies evolve through time based upon the interaction of rhetoric and practice.

² Adam Quinn, 'Obama's National Security Strategy: Predicting US Policy in the Context of Changing Worldviews', Research paper (Chatham House: Royal Institute for International Affairs, 2015), pp. 15-17, accessible online at <https://www.chathamhouse.org/publication/obamas-national-security-strategy-predicting-us-policy-context-changing-worldviews> (last accessed 30 October 2015).

³ Trevor McCrisken 'Ten Years On: Obama's War on Terrorism in Rhetoric and Practice', in *International Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 4 (2011), p. 793; Quinn, 'Obama's National Security Strategy', pp. 15-17.

⁴ Paul Rogers, *Global Security and the War on Terror: Elite Power and the Illusion of Control* (London: Routledge, 2008).

Strategy (2010) has furthered the commitment to combat transnational terrorism within defined limits. However this commitment is not as well defined, although the Obama presidency developed a security strategy to take into account possible contingencies, most notably the threat from ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Empirically, the U.S. commitment to a 'troop surge' in Iraq in 2007⁵ –and its subsequent 'troop surge' in Afghanistan– was based on the contingencies of an ever increasing deteriorating situation in these respective countries, and the possibility of damage for American credibility.⁶

In terms of understanding international relations there is a wider debate as to whether current theoretical approaches adequately address the issue of change within the context of social processes and interactions. The mechanistic and materialistic theories associated with the dominant 'realist model' of IR is reductionist and negates the wider social factors which may be in operation. Neither the hegemonic stability theory⁷ nor neo-realism⁸ offer a complete explanation of why change is taking place as both are based on a crudely determinist ontology. An ontology open to wider factors involved in change is necessary to provide a more holistic explanation as to why 'change' has indeed taken place. It is this which sets the scene for a social-constructivist approach to U.S. behaviour. In my argument, one of the main factors that facilitate change in U.S. security strategy is that of contingency.

Review of current literature

The purpose of my research is to resolve the ongoing debate between change and continuity,

⁵ Stephen Benedict Dyson, 'George W. Bush, the Surge, and Presidential leadership', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 125, No. 4 (2010), p. 557; George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown Publishing, 2010), p. 370.

⁶ McCrisken, 'Ten Years On', p. 797.

⁷ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

⁸ Kenneth N. Waltz. *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Longman Higher Education, 1979); John J. Mearsheimer. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2001).

and how 'contingency' works; this will hopefully bring a greater empirical validity to the claim that President Obama's foreign policy in relation to counter-terrorism has been one of change.

The historiography so far has shown us that the debate has yet to be resolved. On the eve of the Obama administration, Lynch & Singh put forward an argument that Obama's foreign policy will be more characteristic of change than one of continuity, based upon the legacy of George Bush's policies both at home and abroad.⁹ This publication provides the genesis of the 'continuity thesis' which forms part of the historiography in discussions of Obama's foreign policy. Lynch and Singh predicted that 'Bush's imprint upon American grand strategy, his joining a global war on Islamic Terror and the establishment of policies at home and abroad... will remain substantially intact under his successors'.¹⁰ Furthermore, they go on to claim 'American administrations differ very little when it comes to foreign policy, especially national security: [and that] they tend to observe behavioural patterns of their predecessors'.¹¹ There are, however, two main difficulties with this thesis. Firstly it takes into consideration neither the unique and qualitatively different circumstances in which U.S. foreign policy operates, nor the differing world view that President Obama extols, nor, for that matter, the impact of contingency upon strategy. As we shall see below, this seminal work has sparked two competing schools of thought in regard to the historiography of Obama's presidency, one based upon continuity and the other on change.

Nicholas Bouchet observes that a consistent theme in U.S. foreign policy is 'democracy promotion' and argues this has an 'enduring influence' which has been brought to the forefront in America's relationship with the world.¹² In particular, the author argues that

⁹ Timothy J. Lynch & Robert S. Singh, *After Bush: The Case for Continuity in American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹² Nicholas Bouchet, 'The Democracy Tradition in U.S. Foreign Policy and the Obama Presidency', *International*

'Obama's first term confirms that, for all the difficulties and contradictions it produces, U.S. presidents persistently fall back on democracy as a theme and goal of their foreign policy'.¹³ The author goes on to examine exceptionalism and liberalism, as well as the strategic level in U.S.'s own conception of its unipolar position. This denotes a particularly important theme of the interaction of ideas with the power position of the United States, and how democracy promotion can be seen as emblematic of longer term historical precedents. While this may be the case when taking democracy promotion in isolation, it negates broader factors, including personnel, and decision making in reality, as well as individual leaders' world view.

Another author of the continuity debate, David Skidmore, argues that although Obama's rhetorical strategy is indicative of a shift in U.S. foreign policy, in reality it has been subject to much political restraint.¹⁴ By presenting empirical evidence Skidmore argues that U.S. foreign policy in practice has been characteristic of more continuity due in part to structural constraints. Therefore when structural constraints exist, 'the domestic and international challenges of engineering a multilateralist turn in U.S. foreign policy are formidable... unilateralism emerges as a common policy outcome, even when Presidents may prefer otherwise'.¹⁵ Although this thesis has empirical limitations in terms of a presupposition that structural factors override agency, it does provide the basis for further research. This will bring greater validity to the discussion of whether U.S. foreign policy is characterised by change or continuity between the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. Both authors delineate various factors that bring about change, which needs further exploration including ideational, structural and strategic. Any debate concerning U.S. foreign policy has to incorporate both structural and agential factors, and match rhetoric to practice. This will bring about

greater validity to the claims put forward and present a more complex picture of the relative factors underpinning Obama's foreign policy. Therefore, any future analysis must also take into account how contingency impacts upon the changing nature of U.S. foreign policy.

James Lindsay articulates two apparently competing visions. On the one hand, he saw Bush as 'optimistic about the capacity of American power to reshape the world, the United States went on the offensive'.¹⁶ On the other hand, Lindsay also recognised the limitations of American actions were exacerbated by the protracted nature of the conflicts in Iraq and the difficulties the U.S. encountered. By the end of the Bush administration, the 'existential limits to American power' were clear.¹⁷ However Lindsay is also clearly pointing out that there are ideational differences between the Bush and Obama Presidencies, as well as between the ways in which these differences interplay with power relations. What remains unexplored is, more importantly, that contingency may have highlighted the perceptions of difficulties U.S. encountered.

For James Mann, Barack Obama has departed from the legacies and set precedents of George W. Bush. Mann's thesis is that Obama's foreign policy is characteristic of a pragmatic, realist approach.¹⁸ In focusing on personalities and the composition of elite decision-makers Mann examines the intellectual impulses which make up foreign policy decision-making. However, Mann argues that Obama has fallen short of redefining American power. While the overall thrust of his thesis is one of change in U.S. foreign policy, Mann does provide a more nuanced perspective and highlights key features where there are noticeable continuities as well as differences in foreign policy approaches and world views. Further revealing are the changes in Obama's own foreign policy persuasion, in

Affairs, Vol. 89, No. 1 (2013), p. 31.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ David Skidmore, 'The Obama Presidency and US Foreign Policy: Where's the Multilateralism?', in *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 13 (2012), p. 61.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ James M. Lindsay, 'George W. Bush, Barack Obama and the Future of U.S. Global Leadership', *International Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 4 (2011), p. 765.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 770.

¹⁸ James Mann, *The Obamians: The Struggle Inside the White House to Redefine American Power* (New York, Toronto: Penguin Books, 2012).

the form of policies pursued in relation to military strategy. Though not explicitly stating so, Mann does make an inference that there is a change in military strategy, based in part on contingencies. This would explain Obama's decision to initiate a troop surge in 2009. As Mann points out:

'The president also changed his military strategy in a fundamental way so that the Obama in 2011 was not the same as the Obama of 2009. As the start of his administration, Obama bought heavily into the strategy of counter-insurgency that had seemed to work for Petraeus in Iraq [and] Obama shifted in Afghanistan towards counter-insurgency.'¹⁹

This had led to Robert Singh revising his argument to support the 'change thesis'.²⁰ What is interesting is the apparent evolution in Singh's argument following his co-authoring with Lynch a book titled *After Bush*. Arguing that U.S. foreign policy has been 'leading from behind' as he terms it, which was characterised by foreign policy retrenchment, restraint and the implicit assumption that Obama perceives the world in a 'post-American era', Singh identifies a relationship between the changing political nature of the foreign policy decision making and U.S. foreign policy. This complexity in itself is illuminating as various authors have failed to isolate this changing political culture as a product of change in foreign policy terms. Furthermore, implicit in Singh's thesis is the interaction between the changing nature of the international system and Obama's foreign policy. The crux of Singh's argument is that Obama's foreign policy can be 'best understood adhering strongly to a 'post-American' conception of a world order – one in which American primacy is steadily but inexorably ebbing'.²¹ The perception of a post-American world is in part based upon the contingency of other rising powers, and its subsequent impact upon American primacy, although this is not addressed by the author.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 337-338.

²⁰ Robert Singh, *Barack Obama's Post-American foreign policy: The Limits of Engagement* (London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

According to Singh, characteristic of Obama's foreign policy approach is an inherent tension in the commitment towards American leadership on the one hand, and the changing nature of the international order post-2008 on the other hand. The perceived nature of the changing international order signifies the importance of social facts and how the international environment is perceived by key decision makers. Arguably, this tension in itself has stimulated change, resulting in attempts by the Obama administration to follow a more considered forceful policy outlook. Singh argues that the main predicament for Obama is how to adapt to this transitional international order 'which is defined and directed from many places and [by] many people'.²²

Singh points to an interesting development in which U.S. foreign policy is more circumscribed and constrained not just by the new realities of the geopolitical environment, but also by the decision-makers' own perceived world view, and by the ways they construct the international environment around them. What are the relative social factors that contribute to the changing international environment, and how does this imprint itself upon security strategy? These are questions which remain in Singh's thesis.²³ What is useful, however, is the delineation between the changing nature of the international environment and Obama's own world view, which forms the basis of foreign policy based upon 'leading from behind'.

On an empirical level, the *National Security Strategy (2010)* under the Obama administration can be seen as symptomatic of an effort to articulate a change and a shift away from the foreign policy of George W. Bush.²⁴ Although one may come to the conclusion when looking at the key themes of the *National Security Strategy*

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

²³ In this discussion the relative social factors are the discursive aspects formulating the changes in U.S. foreign policy. As President Obama has come into the equation with a differing set of geopolitical beliefs and ideas this has had a formative impact on the power projection of America. A deconstruction of the relative aspects of these ideas is fruitful for any future inquiry.

²⁴ U.S. Government, *National Security Strategy* (The White House, May 2010).

(2010) that not much has changed in the Obama administration's strategic outlook, this does not represent the broader picture. As Quinn points out:

'On the basis of these reaffirmations of prior commitments in isolation one might suppose that not much has changed between administrations. This would be to neglect a marked shift in emphasis and tone, however. And since ... emphasis and tone are coin of the realm in crafting of the NSS, such shifts should not be ignored.'²⁵

Quinn's useful deconstruction and analysis of Obama's security strategy can be observed by comparing the content of the *National Security Strategy (2010)* with the realities of the Obama administration's counter-terrorist strategy. In terms of military intervention, the administration has expressed reluctance through its *National Security Strategy (2010)* to become engaged in major military operations across the globe. As Quinn points out, prior to 2014 this was evidently the case; the U.S. became involved in only one military operation, in Libya, and this was done reluctantly and only at the behest of the wider UN-sanctioned international community. This is, in some ways, an example of what Singh describes as 'leading from behind'. However, since 2014 Quinn has argued that the Obama administration has reconsidered its stance on military intervention and has launched major military operations against ISIS, though it has ruled major ground operations.²⁶ Furthermore in terms of counter-terrorism practices, Barack Obama has massively expanded 'the scale of U.S. unmanned aerial vehicle ('drone') strikes against terrorist targets in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia', while scoring a success with the assassination of Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan.²⁷ The military operations against ISIS are indicative of contingency and the social construction of possible eventualities of ISIS's rise, which any future research should take into account.

²⁵ Quinn, 'Obama's National Security Strategy', p. 15.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

In summary, Quinn's working paper serves to reinforce the importance of matching rhetoric with practice and deconstructing the relative ideational elements and practices of the Obama administration in relation to national security strategy. While Quinn deconstructs the *National Security Strategy (2010)* through that of foreign policy in practice, the author is in danger of missing a vital link in the construction and evolution of U.S. security strategy during this administration, that of wider discursive practices of elite decision-makers and successful norm-entrepreneurs, as well as the question of how the missing link of contingency impacts on the evolving security trajectory. This demonstrates why it is vital not to focus only on security documents like as *National Security Strategy*, however important these may be, but to also include the wider practices as revealed in speeches, interviews and wider statements.

As mentioned above, the seminal article by Lynch and Singh has provided the basis for the emerging of two schools of thought, one based on the idea of continuity and the other on that of change. The examination of Obama's *National Security Strategy (2010)* by Quinn has been an attempt to marry particular discursive practices and foreign policy precedents found in official documentation to that of the practices of counter-terrorism. However one noticeable gap in research is that contingency has yet to be taken into account. When looking at the troop surges in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as at the subsequent military action against ISIS, we see a lack of either empirical or theoretical insights as to how 'contingent' factors affected those decisions. With this new framework in mind, it will now be possible to identify the relevant and as yet unexplored 'contingencies'.

Although this debate has yet to be resolved, several basic features can be discerned. One is that there is an apparent disjuncture between rhetoric and foreign policy in practice; and secondly, that President Obama's world view is characteristically different from that of President Bush. Singh's reinterpretation of the continuity thesis towards that of change is revealing as the nature and subject of the debate has changed. I intend to bring about

greater validity of empirical findings to the change thesis by connecting rhetoric to composition of personnel, as well as to foreign policy in practice in relation to counter-terrorism.

Limitations in the historiography

The limitations in the historiography are the problematic arguments presented. A conceptual remedy to understand the role of 'contingency' in foreign policy-making will be to provide a synthesis looking at rhetoric, personnel, and foreign policy in practice. There is a lack of a systematic account fully exploring the themes of change and continuity, and the debate has yet to be resolved. Although authors have highlighted key themes in different areas, these have not been brought together. This provides a gap for foreign policy analysis to exploit. As we shall see, there is a need for an all-encompassing approach bringing together all the major themes if we are to answer the central question, namely how much Obama's foreign policy in relation to counter-insurgency has deviated from that of the preceding administration? This methodological holism will bring greater validity to the findings, and allow for the incorporation of contingency.

Limitations in theory

This section of the literature review examines how theory relates to U.S. foreign policy looking specifically at the theories of realism and liberalism, and addressing how these theories do or do not explain change and continuity. I believe that these theories do not allow for the analysis of social factors, nor do they explain why particular strategies are chosen within particular temporal periods. What I am arguing is that conventional theories are inadequate in explaining change and the invocation of ideas in discourse. It is important to relate ideas to the material practices of foreign policy interventionism. Bringing in ideational factors as a key component of U.S. foreign policy provides the basis for a constructivist account of changes in U.S. foreign policy between the Bush and Obama Administrations.

There have been some novel attempts by neo-

realists and liberal scholars to provide a theoretical account to augment understanding of the course of the Global War on Terror. Miller provides a neo-realist account for change in U.S. strategy in relation to its security strategy based on systemic factors. He explains the change in U.S. behaviour following the events of 9/11 through the prism of what he terms 'offensive liberalism', which culminated in the war in Iraq, which he includes as part of a blueprint for understanding change in foreign policy behaviour as emblematic of 'defensive and offensive realism, and defensive and offensive liberalism'.²⁸ In expanding the category of offensive strategies to include the term 'offensive liberalism', Miller attempts to explain the changes in U.S. foreign policy based upon its predominant position and the external threats to America following the events of 9/11 which created the impetus for behavioural change based on 'ideological grand strategies'.²⁹ This theoretical model has the added benefit of combining 'systemic-material and domestic ideational factors in an integrated framework' to explain shifts in foreign policy behaviour.³⁰ The dependent variables in this case consist of ideational factors, whereas the selection of these factors is based in turn on systemic factors (the structure and nature of threats in the international system).

Although Miller provides a novel way to systematise different ideational and systemic variables, it too is not without limitations. Firstly, Miller assumes that structural conditions are the overriding factors in the selection of his self-described approaches to security, and this limits the role of agential factors as prime movers. It thus assumes structural conditions are much more important, thus risking to downplaying in his thesis the significance of the interaction between structural and agential factors in explaining nation-state foreign policy behaviour. In reality, politics are based upon the interaction between structure and agency, and in particular upon how key agents construct their realities. Barack Obama's own political

²⁸ Benny Miller. 'Explaining Changes in U.S. Grand Strategy: 9/11, the Rise of Offensive Liberalism and the War in Iraq', *Security Studies*, Vol. 19 (2010), p. 26.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 26 – 27.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

pedigree is also important in shaping both geopolitical strategy and the broad thrust of U.S. foreign policy. Taking Miller's framework forward delimits these factors. Any comparison between George W. Bush and Barack Obama has to take this co-dependency into account.

Jonathan Monten also attempts to marry elements of both realism and liberalism, by investigating the ideational and material basis for the Bush Doctrine. The focus of Monten's thesis on U.S. democracy promotion, for example, is that power and ideas are not mutually exclusive, but that they instead interact with one another to produce a set of foreign policy outcomes³¹. In Monten's view, one of the main corollaries of the Bush Doctrine is the promotion of democracy to further U.S. interests, underpinned by U.S. foreign policy ideology. The basic premise here is that the Bush Doctrine consisted of active measures to spread supposedly universal values under the auspices of 'democracy promotion', within the context of its hegemonic position based on its military pre-eminence. To quote Monten:

'Both powers and ideas interact to produce outcomes... [which] demonstrate the utility of this approach in producing a more theoretically sound and empirically comprehensive understanding of this vital dimension of U.S. foreign and security policy'³²

Although Monten has unified both ideational and material factors,³³ he has failed to take into account change, while Miller³⁴ has based an understanding of change in a crude systemic tradition of Neo-Realism but fails to take into account social factors. Furthermore totally absent from Monten's thesis is an ability to take into account the precursors for change, as well as the ways in which the agent may attempt to change the social structure.

³¹ Jonathan Monten, 'The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in U.S. Strategy' in *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Spring, 2005), p. 116.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 156.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Miller, 'Explaining Changes in U.S. Grand Strategy'.

Case for a modified social constructivist approach to foreign policy analysis

Any mapping or exploration of key changes and continuities present within U.S. post-9/11 security strategy should, in my view, do the following: firstly, it should demonstrate how these continuities and changes are present within the relative discursive practices of both administrations; secondly, it should also empirically account for these trends in practice. This brings us to the emerging approach of constructivist account of U.S. foreign policy, and how the key themes delineating in this growing body of research give us theoretical insights into the debate about whether Obama's foreign policy has been subject to change or continuity.

In relating constructivism and its focus with identity and norm creation with security is the concept of 'securitization'. One school of thought that has emerged, the Copenhagen School of Securitization provides a rudimentary framework for understanding security issues. This is an application of constructivism which treats security not as a condition of power distribution in terms of an objective reality (as realism proposes), but instead as an outcome of specific social processes in which threats become represented and recognized through agency³⁵. The school provides an approach to understanding how particular actors viewed and constructed security and threats using the concept of 'securitization'. The sectors are defined in terms of arenas which exhibit a particular security interaction³⁶. These interactions encourage and develop differing definitions of the 'referent object'. It is important to note that the flexibility of the Copenhagen School's approach is its varying definitions of what constitutes a referent object: there is no fixed objective meaning as this is every time based upon concrete social interactions. Although the securitization approach does not explicitly take into account contingency, it has the flexibility in order to do so.

³⁵ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever & Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

The use of the 'securitization' concept forms the central apex of the Copenhagen School's approach to security. The articulation of the threat is found within a 'speech act' which is based upon particular discursive forms of representation. However this concept in itself has evolved with the Copenhagen School. Buzan and his co-authors brought into this equation the concept of performativity, as 'speech act' was defined as a specific form of securitization move, in which the issue is only ever successfully securitized only 'when the audience accepts it as such'.³⁷ Underpinning this successful securitization move is the notion of 'facilitating conditions'.³⁸ The understanding of 'facilitating conditions' brings about a greater coherence to the securitization framework and allows for further analysis of the contextual factors that underpin successful securitization. Although implicitly the securitization framework is applicable to states, this does not mean it is not limited to these, and as such can be used to enable a greater understanding of wider security issues which include non-state actors, including but not limited to concepts relating to transnational terrorism. There is potential scope for linking this to the impact of contingency.

There are, however, limitations here as well. Firstly, securitization itself needs to be broadened to include the practices of security itself, as well as that of contingency. Securitization in this sense, would include not just the articulation and elevation of such threats, but also what is evident in foreign policy practices. Secondly, securitizations evolve through time. Thirdly, the process of successful securitization should not be limited to speech acts, and should include wider discursive practices of key elite decision-makers. Although Buzan does broaden speech acts to include securitization moves, this is still insufficient. In order to achieve a fuller contextual analysis of the evolution of security strategy between the Bush and Obama administrations it is necessary to unite rhetorical strategy with that of the composition of elite decision-making with foreign policy in practice evident in the security practices found in the subsequent military

interventions. To put it simply, a constructivist analysis of U.S. foreign policy during this period must look at both rhetoric and foreign policy in practice using a case study approach to bring greater empirical validity mapping 'contingency'.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.