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Understanding Maritime Security.
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The 21st century prioritizes the ocean as a critical concern, a natural element that covers 70% of Earth's surface with a specific role in the Earth system, a great conveyor that gives life to human beings and feeds them. The ocean is also used for transportation with 90% of it is done by sea.

Recent discussions concerning the Arctic region and its prospective shipping routes contribute to the discourse on maritime security and its interpretation in the contemporary era or wave. This is what the recent publication *Understanding Maritime Security* by Professors Christian Bueger and Timothy Edmunds try to explain by offering an in-depth analysis of the contemporary threats and challenges confronting the global maritime order. They also try to take the reader on a journey that explains the dichotomy land-ocean and, at the same time, developing the reasons why the way of thinking the ocean should be different. The authors enhance their arguments with a wealth of examples drawn from diverse regions that include Europe, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Guinea, the Western Indian Ocean, and Southeast Asia. Composed of eight chapters, this book delivers valuable insights into the historical context of maritime security while presenting essential frameworks for its comprehension. Furthermore, the authors propose pertinent strategies to address the pressing issues of modern maritime security and outline potential future directions for the maritime security agenda. The book effectively illustrates the interrelated nature of various maritime security concerns, emphasizing that the maritime security agenda is fundamentally an interconnected network. The book's focus on the

holistic perspective of maritime security encourages the re-evaluation of the concept of security itself, influencing scholars working on conceptual issues in security studies. It advocates for moving beyond state-centric, military-focused security paradigms to incorporate a wider range of actors, including non-state actors, private entities, and local communities. The main contributions of this book to maritime security studies are: defining maritime security; multidisciplinary approach; real-world case studies; maritime governance and international cooperation; holistic security framework and recommendations.

The first chapter examines the concept of maritime security, focusing on various threats, challenges, risks, and potential opportunities. It delineates three key dimensions: conflicts between states, acts of maritime terrorism, and blue crime. These dimensions are informed by perspectives related to the ocean and seek to elucidate the contemporary threats and challenges that impact maritime security.

The second chapter explores the concept of a closed sea, *Mare Clausum*, and a free sea, *Mare Liberum*, and the maritime domain as a global common regulated by international organizations. The concept of closed seas has roots in the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, while a free sea involves the unrestricted exploitation of ocean resources and the unimpeded movement of vessels for international trade. The authors argue that the evolution of maritime security has been influenced by four waves: the first, heightened after 9/11, the second, piracy, the third is related to criminal activities such as including smuggling and illegal fishing, the fourth one is the expansion of the maritime security agenda, and finally a fifth wave is emerging, centred on “planetary thinking” that integrates issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and marine conservation. Though, the authors are not sure if it is a new wave or a new era ahead.

Edmunds and Bueger discuss in the third chapter various frameworks for analysing maritime security, including legal, state-centric, and practice-based approaches. They propose a framework addressing seven root causes of maritime insecurity, which can assist in risk assessment and

inform holistic responses on land and sea. These frameworks can be used by practitioners to assess risk and inform holistic responses.

Chapter four of the book explores inter-State conflicts, terrorism, and grey zones. The authors highlight that maritime disputes often don't escalate to military force, illustrating this with the "Whiskey War" and the Chagos Archipelago. They also discuss the South China Sea, highlighting the ambiguity in distinguishing between conflict types, and grey zone activities.

Chapter five examines blue crimes, focusing on different types of crime at sea. The ocean, covering over seventy percent of the Earth, allows for various illegal activities. Blue crime includes three categories: crimes against mobility, illicit flows, and environmental crimes. Piracy, defined by UNCLOS, is prevalent near Somalia and the Gulf of Guinea. Smuggling, including goods and people, is also a major issue.

The sixth chapter discusses the different actors involved in maritime security, including states, international organizations, private companies, and civil society organizations. States have obligations like protecting their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and following international laws. However, international organizations also play a role in addressing conflicts. While commercial entities act mainly out of self-interest, NGOs are seen as important yet undervalued contributors in this field. They help raise awareness and tackle the causes of maritime crime, but collaboration among all these actors is essential for effective maritime security. The authors explore ways to reduce maritime threats, including collaboration among naval forces like the U. S. initiative Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) for security operations in the Western Indian Ocean. The Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) meetings, started in 2008, provide a platform for discussing counterpiracy efforts near the Horn of Africa. Other collaborations involve partnerships with the private sector, diplomatic talks, and interagency cooperation. The authors discuss maritime security operations (MSOs) and the growing focus on maritime security, emphasizing the need for strategies like action plans and information sharing to tackle challenges. Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is crucial for building trust and improving the effectiveness of these operations.

In the concluding chapter, Bueger and Edmunds examine the prospects for maritime security. They emphasize various threats, including cybercrime, the security of ports, and the protection of essential infrastructure, such as offshore facilities and submarine cables. The authors reference the September 2022 incident involving the Nord Stream pipelines as a significant illustration of these concerns. Additionally, they discuss the implications of climate change on marine ecosystems and its role in exacerbating pollution.

In the concluding section of the book, the authors delineate two opposing master trends: planetary thinking and resurgence of geopolitics. The first trend promotes the concept of “planetary thinking” which underscores urgent environmental challenges and the necessity for effective ocean governance. The second trend, resurgence of geopolitics, draws attention to the increasing geopolitical rivalries among major powers, which hinder cooperative initiatives and intensify the issues related to militarization. The future of maritime security is expected to be significantly influenced by the interplay of these divergent trends over time. However, the authors express uncertainty regarding whether this represents a fifth wave or the onset of a new era characterized by a resurgence of geopolitics and strategic competition.

The book *Understanding Maritime Security* serves as a valuable resource for the maritime security community. The book aims to equip maritime security analysts, practitioners, professionals, and general readers with essential knowledge regarding maritime security. Christian Bueger and Timothy Edmunds offer the readers a comprehensive understanding by framing maritime security in a more inclusive and interdisciplinary manner. Bueger and Edmunds have pushed scholars to rethink and deepen their understanding of global maritime challenges. The links between maritime security and global challenges such as climate change, resource management, and human migration are the expression of an interdisciplinary work that encourages cross-field collaboration between scholars in international relations, law, environmental studies, and economics. The authors’ extensive expertise in the field enhances the coherence of numerous ideas and theories, supported by practical frameworks and global examples. Though, the Arctic region and the aspect of water in solid is not considered yet.

Perhaps a revised version in the future will include the frozen and Northern region of the world.

This book is essential for readers seeking to comprehend the intricacies of maritime security. Spanning 248 pages and divided into eight chapters, it elucidates the multifaceted nature of this field, which intersects with various domains and necessitates collaboration among diverse stakeholders. A different scenario is taken into consideration where planetary and water thinking are moving along geopolitical competition.

This book influences and contributes to both scholarly discourse and the practical application of maritime security measures by providing a thorough, interdisciplinary framework for analysing maritime security threats, the book broadens the discussion, fosters new insights for research and policy decisions. The impact on academic literature is evident in the increasing volume of studies that integrate aspects of governance, human security, and international collaboration within the context of maritime security.