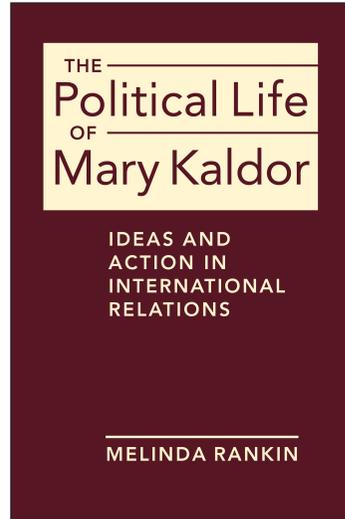


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The Political Life
of Mary Kaldor:
Ideas and Action in
International Relations

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1

The Politics of Mary Kaldor

IN THIS BOOK, AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY OF MARY KALDOR, I explore her political life from her privileged beginnings as the daughter of Lord Nicholas Kaldor, a Keynesian economist, to her development as a public intellectual who has combined activism, scholarship, and policy work to influence some of the most significant contemporary debates in international relations. Throughout her career, Kaldor has explored a broad range of questions surrounding the responsibilities of the state and society; the legitimacy of organized violence; ways to engage citizens in a democratic polity; the political responsibilities of the cosmopolitan citizen; the role of the military industrial complex in maintaining a market of insecurity; political and social dimensions of warfare as central to capitalism; the delinking of civil society from the state and the rise of global civil society; the importance of reconceptualizing contemporary wars as “new wars”; and the need for military intervention to protect civilians in a state of violence.

A leftist peace activist and academic in the 1970s and 1980s, Kaldor was opposed to military intervention during the Gulf War in 1991. Yet, as I argue in this book, through her direct experience of war in the Balkans and Caucasus, she became a supporter of humanitarian intervention and the use of force to defend civilians.

Although I explore some of Kaldor’s academic work, I focus more on her political life, highlighting the events and people that shaped Kaldor’s political and intellectual formation. I particularly focus on two social movements in which Kaldor was heavily involved: European Nuclear Disarmament (END) and the Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly (HCA). Kaldor was cofounder of both of these, and they provided the organizational base for much of her activism.

In the pages that follow, I look at the experiences that underpin the central questions that have preoccupied Kaldor throughout her intellectual and

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political life, charting how both the questions and the answers have changed over time. Exploring how her familial, political, historical, social, and geographical environments informed these questions and answers, I also consider the development of Kaldor's character and how her character shaped her particular style of public intellectual debate.

Early Political Life

The origins of many of Kaldor's later intellectual questions on the responsibilities of the state and society and the legitimacy of organized violence lie in her parents' political engagement and experiences. Kaldor's Hungarian-born father, Nicholas Kaldor, was a Keynesian economist, a liberal who was engaged in European reconstruction after World War II and the development of the British welfare state. Her British mother, Clarissa Kaldor, née Goldschmidt, was a descendent of the prominent Jewish D'Avigdor-Goldsmid family and was committed to democratic socialism. Clarissa campaigned with Bertrand Russell in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and was elected Labour Party local councilor. Both Kaldor's parents shared a commitment to Fabian principles and a Victorian sense of public duty, which set an example of political activism for their four daughters.

The experiences of her father's Hungarian family gave her a broader European context from which to pull her ideas: her grandmother's memories of the Holocaust and her relatives' experiences of the Hungarian Uprising of 1956 and of the Cold War. In her early family life, Kaldor adopted democratic socialism from her mother, who, although committed to socialism because she believed that state and society played a role in ensuring social and economic equality, always emphasized the *democratic* in response to the totalitarianism of Eastern Europe. Yet her mother's idea of democratic socialism was challenged within the family context in response to the Hungarian Uprising. Arguably, Kaldor's most formative experience as a child was listening to the arguments between her mother and her Hungarian uncle immediately following the Hungarian Uprising. Kaldor's uncle asked her mother why the West had not intervened during the uprising to defend Hungary against the Soviets, and her mother had replied that an intervention would have triggered a nuclear war, killing both families on either side of the Iron Curtain. Much later, this personal exchange would form the basis for Kaldor's academic questions about the effectiveness of violence and revolution as forms of protest, the use of nuclear weapons, and the threat of organized violence to suppress political dissent and human rights.

In this way, Kaldor's distinct intellectual, political, and family milieu provided the rich context for her earliest political discussions and debates. Kaldor and her siblings were encouraged to be intellectually confident, to

be involved in the nuclear disarmament protests of the 1950s and 1960s, and to challenge the state on issues of militarism and the Cold War. They also participated in debates with their father on economic policy, supported their mother in her political campaigns, and, through their parents' political networks, met the most influential figures of the British left. As a teenager, Kaldor was already involved in various forms of political campaigning and public protest concerning the responsibilities of state and society and the legitimacy of nuclear weapons.

Somerville College, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Sussex, the Labour Party, and Protest

Kaldor's acceptance into Somerville College, Oxford University, to study economic policy was in many ways a continuation of her heritage. Yet what distinguished Kaldor from her parents and siblings were the generational changes taking shape in British society more broadly, such as the emerging counterculture and the shifting dynamics in gender equality. As the youngest sibling, Kaldor started her university studies as women were being admitted to many of the previously male-dominated colleges for the first time. As the first female editor of the Oxford university newspaper, *Isis*, in 1965, Kaldor was participating in and defining political debates and was not averse to voicing controversial views, at one point criticizing the Labour Party government, for which her father was an adviser.

Upon completing her honors in philosophy, politics, and economics, Kaldor began her career through her family connections at the newly founded Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). While at SIPRI, Kaldor gained access to distinguished scholars and political elites, such as Alva Myrdal, SIPRI's founder and first chair. Myrdal profoundly influenced Kaldor. Not only did Myrdal question state militarism and was later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her campaign against nuclear weapons, she had also revolutionized gender equality in Swedish public policy. For Myrdal, SIPRI was about involving ordinary people in the decisions that states make in relation to nuclear weapons and the trade in armaments, and she questioned the legitimacy of the international arms trade based on a narrative of defense and security. Myrdal argued that people should be informed and involved in the security policies that are developed in their name. Moreover, Myrdal's constructivist ideas of the defense narrative, not just regarding nuclear weapons but conceptions of the Cold War in general, informed Kaldor's later ideas. Another important influence on Kaldor at SIPRI was Julian Perry Robinson, a chemist and lawyer, whom she eventually married. Robinson's strong work ethic left a lasting impression on Kaldor, encouraging a prolific approach to her own work.

During the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, Kaldor was building on her political and intellectual inheritance from her family, particularly in relation to activism, policy views, and scholarship. At Oxford and SIPRI, Kaldor had focused on policy. She and continued to do so upon her appointment at Sussex University as a research fellow in 1969. Again Kaldor experimented academically with questions of foreign policy, the economics of arms trade and weapons production, and their relationship with the state. She also worked to shift the products of the weapons industry into socially useful technology to break what she considered to be the military industrial complex's economic dependency on war or the threat of war.

Yet, although Kaldor's early environment played a key role in shaping her ideas on violence, the state, and society, something must also be said of her character. What distinguishes Kaldor from her siblings, aside from being the youngest in the context of the 1960s emerging counterculture, was her total self-confidence. Whereas all her sisters were raised to be intellectually confident, Kaldor shared the self-assurance and extroverted nature of her father, which enabled her to approach establishment elites and debate political policy in a wider national arena. For example, Kaldor's involvement in the British Labour Party's National Executive Committee (NEC) in 1975, in the Study Group on Defence Expenditure, the Arms Trade and Alternative Employment, saw her play a more direct role in debating public policy. Up until 1975, Kaldor did not intellectually separate her activism, scholarship, and policy, yet her involvement with the NEC saw her increasingly move between the roles of scholar, activist, and policy adviser, and she assumed the social confidence to fuse the three approaches together in order to solve her intellectual questions.

European Nuclear Disarmament

As a response to the deployment of nuclear weapons across Europe by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Kaldor cofounded END in 1980 with E. P. Thompson, Dan Smith, and Ken Coates, among others. END was determined to unite Eastern and Western Europe against nuclear deployment. However, more than just a movement for a nuclear-free Europe, END opposed the Cold War altogether and questioned the legitimacy of preparations by both the Soviet Union and the United States for a nuclear war.

In the early stages of END, Kaldor formed an intellectual partnership with Thompson, which informed much of Kaldor's initial approach to campaigning and devising strategy in these years and saw her expand her activism to include Europe and the United States. Thompson often deferred to Kaldor for conceptual and strategic advice and considered her the central figure of END.

During this time, Kaldor continued to address the practical problem of militarism and the economics of the arms trade through her academic scholarship. She also explored political and social dimensions of warfare as central to capitalism and the system of states through important texts such as the essay “Warfare and Capitalism” and the book *The Baroque Arsenal*. Kaldor concluded that communism was essentially a war economy, whereas capitalism was dynamic and improved the political and economic position of the working class. Yet capitalism was also implicitly founded on socially organized physical violence as a means of coercion and solving conflict. More particularly, capitalism eradicated forms of individual physical violence but in doing so revealed the brutality of socially organized physical violence as a coercive force and means of persuasion. Although still involved in the NEC, Kaldor was also working with Labour Party members of parliament (MPs), such as Robin Cook, to influence policymakers and politicians alike who were responsible for Europe’s defense policy.

Nonetheless, although Kaldor and Thompson were intellectual leaders within END, their ideas regarding who should be involved in END and how to end the Cold War differed greatly. Kaldor believed that END should be more inclusive and emphasized participatory democracy over party politics. Although loyalty was important to her, Kaldor also had an independent mind and encouraged others to assert their own independence, particularly by not confining END debates to a “party line.” Kaldor attempted to influence and persuade other END members to decentralize control and to reflect a plurality of views and debates within the wider peace movement, including those in Eastern Europe.

Kaldor’s ideas regarding how to resolve the Cold War were also developing in ways that conflicted with many in END. During the 1980s, three key intellectual tools shaped her thinking. First, Kaldor placed importance on the notion of linking peace and human rights. Not only was she against nuclear weapons because of their direct consequences, as demonstrated in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but also because nuclear weapons suppressed democracy and legitimized oppression in Eastern Europe. Her Hungarian family’s personal experiences of the Cold War had seen her uncle imprisoned for advocating a democratic and independent Hungary and her aunt and cousin detained in labor camps. Although Marxism inspired her, Kaldor also drew on notions of democratic socialism and liberalism from her familial milieu, and she interpreted communism to be fundamentally undemocratic. Kaldor’s activism with a new generation of Eastern European dissidents and independents, who largely viewed communism as autocratic, reinforced this view. As Kaldor became increasingly active with Eastern European dissidents and was sympathetic to their view of democratic freedoms, she and Thompson came to disagree about what human rights meant and, therefore, how peace and human rights were linked.

Second, the emerging concept of politics “from below,” which emphasized participatory forms of politics, influenced Kaldor’s views. Although she was well connected to the political elite in Britain, particularly to those in the Labour Party, and across Europe, she increasingly prioritized connections with grassroots and independent groups, reflecting her sympathy with a participatory rather than representative form of democracy. Although Kaldor was initially inspired by Thompson’s notion of “history from below,” as advanced in his seminal book *The Making of the English Working Class*, the practice of activism in the early 1980s revealed that Kaldor’s own brand of politics from below was heavily influenced by both her associations with Eastern European activists and also Mient Jan Faber’s more egalitarian notions of “détente from below.” Unlike Thompson, who was suspicious of democratic and grassroots approaches being adopted within END, Kaldor emphasized greater direct participation. Moreover, Kaldor believed that the ending of the Cold War and the development of democracy in Eastern Europe could only evolve from below, in other words, from the social and political changes advanced by grassroots movements and with the involvement of ordinary people.

For Kaldor, this emerging philosophy also meant supporting the direct participation of dissidents and independent movements in Eastern Europe across the wider END movement. Although Thompson was one of the first to engage with contacts in Eastern Europe, he found that the new generation of independents were increasingly aligned with liberal democratic principles rather than with communist, or “renewed” socialist, movements. Although Thompson was a major proponent of history from below, in reality he found practicing politics from below difficult, which limited his ability to establish partners in Eastern Europe. Kaldor’s emphasis on participatory democracy, rather than renewed socialism, enabled her dialogue with dissident and grassroots independents but also brought her into direct conflict with END’s cofounders, such as Thompson and Coates, and others in the broader END movement.

These conflicts revealed Kaldor’s ideas on liberal debate. For Kaldor, genuine debate was not about accepting differences nor discussing themes that united activists between the blocs. Rather, liberal democracy was about being able to debate differences; it was about being able to disagree and to take responsibility as an active citizen for a state’s decisions, whether that citizen agreed with them or not. Moreover, Kaldor began to argue that the debate about the legitimacy of the bloc system and the acknowledgment of the political and economic arrangements that underpinned the nuclear arms race were critical to the peace movement. Although so-called nuclear deterrence was supposed to prevent a war in Europe, Kaldor argued that the threat of war served to continue the conflict, which gave the *raison d’être*

for the bloc arrangement. For Kaldor, ordinary people in Europe ought to be involved in and responsible for starting this debate.

Third, Kaldor's engagement and activism with her Eastern European counterparts informed her intellectual and scholarly understanding of the concept of civil society. Many Eastern European activist groups, with whom Kaldor would increasingly form intellectual alliances, such as Solidarity (*Solidarność* in Polish), Charter 77, and the Peace Group for Dialogue, were convinced that independent civil society was the most effective social and political mechanism for democratization in their countries and for ending the Cold War. This perspective contrasted with the usual top-down approaches, such as a violent revolution that toppled a government or a power shift, which replaced one totalitarian regime with another. Kaldor argued that Eastern European scholars, such as Adam Michnik, reinvented previous notions of civil society by delinking civil society from the state. During the mid-1980s, Kaldor started to explore the term *civil society* in her academic work. For example, in an article co-authored with Ferenc Mészlivetz, for example, Kaldor and Mészlivetz argued that any shift in power in Eastern Europe must be about redefining the relationship between state and civil society. In this respect, they drew on Václav Havel's the "Power of the Powerlessness" and Michnik's ideas on civil society, which emphasized a change in the level of political analysis. High politics was no longer the source of political legitimacy. Rather, low politics or politics of the everyday was at the heart of civil society and necessary for any effective democratic transition. However, not all members of British END, nor the wider END network, agreed about the merits of civil society. Thompson, for example, was skeptical. Although Kaldor and Thompson remained friends, their disagreements served to further separate them intellectually.

Much later, Kaldor explored the notion of civil society in terms of global civil society. For Kaldor, the social contract was an important feature that was tied to the Kantian idea of universal civil society. Although the social contract between the state and the individual remained a key feature, within an increasingly international context, Kaldor argued, individual contracts were also being expanded beyond the nation-state. In the same way that individuals pay taxes to a government in exchange for an end to anarchy and war within their own state, individual social contracts have expanded beyond the state to include economic, social, and political contracts between individuals from different nation-states, and these contracts mitigate anarchy and war between those states. Kaldor viewed civil society as the principal means through which many social contracts between individuals are negotiated and reproduced, both within the state and across the interstate system.

Kaldor remained a scholar at Sussex University during the 1980s, while continuing her involvement as an activist and policy adviser, a task

that was not without its challenges. Kaldor's attempt to blend activism with her scholarship made securing academic tenure and attracting funding for her research difficult. Nonetheless, these difficulties ultimately served to reinforce her determination to remain an independent scholar. Kaldor became more creative in the ways that she sourced her funding, and in doing so she developed an "entrepreneurial" approach to her scholarship.¹

As academia, activism, and policymaking continued to intertwine, Kaldor's ideas on how to solve the Cold War were drawn from debates with intellectuals, dissidents, and policy think tanks from both sides of the Iron Curtain. For example, the concept of dealignment was shaped by her interaction with international scholar Richard Falk. For Kaldor and Falk, a policy of dealignment was about developing foreign policy that was beyond the blocs and outside the US-Soviet axis, with the focus being on more democratic political structures, both between and within states. Although Kaldor and Falk conceded that an international consensus was required, they argued that dealignment should be built on a pluralist debate that involved a participatory democratic approach.

At the same time, Kaldor was also becoming an influential figure within the British END, particularly with respect to her engagement with Eastern European dissidents behind the Iron Curtain. Not only did she continue to debate with Eastern European dissidents, but she also began to ensure that Eastern European independents were included at the END conventions by personally inviting them during her field trips.

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly

In the time leading up to the fall of the Berlin Wall, Kaldor's involvement in the debates on civil society, politics from below, and the link between peace and human rights saw her shift her energies away from END to become a cofounder of the HCA. Born out of the ideas of END, the HCA was a grass-roots activist group that encouraged citizens from Eastern and Western Europe, as equal partners, to be directly involved in the future of the region, and this alliance had a significant impact on the Velvet Revolution and other nonviolent or "negotiated" revolutions across Eastern Europe.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the possibility of a new world order gave hope for a cosmopolitan and democratic Europe in which, Kaldor argued, the HCA would be a version of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), but from below. Nonetheless, Kaldor's initial euphoria was soon reconsidered with the advent of the Gulf War. Against the military intervention in Iraq, Kaldor questioned the socially organized and sanctioned violence against that country, which, she argued, was presented as a state of exception. Kaldor also questioned the absence of

a liberal debate, both in Parliament and more broadly in British society, in making the decision to commit to the war.

At the same time Kaldor took over as cochair of HCA in 1991, the prospect of a new world order was further diminished with the rise of violent nationalism in Europe. Kaldor responded to the wars in the Balkans and Caucasus with a series of public campaigns in an attempt to prevent war by political means. As war engulfed these areas, Kaldor initially viewed the conflicts as the absence of politics and, embracing a left liberal position, believed that politics from below and the strength of civil society could curtail the violence.

Characteristically Kaldor was comfortable in the role of leader and media front for the HCA's campaigns, which included briefing and taking questions from the media, writing scholarly and newspaper articles, organizing conferences, and involving scholars and political elites, as well as grassroots groups, in public debates. Yet Kaldor's interaction with activists in war zones also revealed less traditional leadership qualities, in which her loyalty and commitment to fellow campaigners extended to friendship and personal acts of solidarity. As in the 1970s and 1980s, the personal and the political merged, and this blending served to influence her work.

As it grew increasingly clear that the wars in the Balkans and Caucasus could not be resolved with a political solution from below or be curbed by high-level diplomatic engagement, Kaldor began the process of solving what she considered to be a series of ontological problems in the way that war, violence, and intervention were framed. Increasingly, two problems dominated Kaldor's thinking. First, Kaldor could not reconcile her experience of war with her conceptual understanding of conventional or Clausewitzian warfare. Unlike conventional wars between two discrete armies supported by states and viewed as a nation-building exercise, the wars in the Balkans and Caucasus saw the unravelling of the state. Although war still stemmed from an organizing principle anchored in a narrative of nationalist identity, it was declared in the defense and purity of the "state" by political and quasi-political elites against their own citizens, as opposed to conventional war in which the threat remains external. Kaldor observed that violent actors were also accorded some legitimacy by the fact that international diplomats and intermediaries attempted to negotiate a settlement with them, even while they committed war crimes, in order to arrange a cease-fire and to determine new borders based on ethnicity.

Increasingly, Kaldor shifted her position on warfare to view violence framed as a form of politics, although not a legitimate one. Therefore, Kaldor argued that foreign diplomats could no longer negotiate with political and military elites to stop violence where there was evidence they had suspended the rule of law and, therefore, jettisoned political legitimacy. Second, although Kaldor had championed civil society and politics from

below as preventing war, she increasingly realized that civil society could not survive in a situation of abject violence and that military intervention was required. However, military intervention did not require armies to pursue an “enemy” but to defend civilians from organized violence and to uphold the rule of law. More specifically, she came to argue that war must be stopped by military intervention before a political solution could be agreed upon, because such a solution relied upon citizens’ arriving at a political settlement through the process of a liberal debate, a debate that could not occur in the context of violence.

New Wars and Cosmopolitan Law Enforcement

Whereas at the beginning of the wars in the Balkans and Caucasus, Kaldor believed that political problems could and should be solved from below, during the course of the wars Kaldor increasingly assumed a cosmopolitan liberal position. As she accepted the limits to politics from below in curtailing the violence, she proposed that a political process could only start once civilians were protected from violence. This step required a top-down multilateral force to initially curtail the violence until citizens felt safe enough to participate in a debate to solve political disagreements and discuss the future of their country.

After the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BaH), Kaldor arrived at the conclusion that the wars in the Balkans and Caucasus were what she termed *new wars*, as distinguished from conventional war, and that to end them required cosmopolitan law enforcement, which included, but was not limited to, military intervention. Kaldor’s ideas on new wars and cosmopolitan law enforcement developed simultaneously as an argument to explain why state violence is never an internal affair, and why, as members of a global civil society, we are all responsible for stopping organized violence and affording other citizens the protection enjoyed in Western countries in the form of civic policing. In 1999, Kaldor published *New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Global Era* in an effort to continue to stimulate public debate regarding contemporary notions of war and international law enforcement and to further expand on her existing conceptual framework. Aiming her ideas at policymakers, activists, scholars, and a wider public, Kaldor attempted in her exposition of the concept of new wars to change the way in which policy elites and the United Nations responded to war but also endeavored to involve the wider public in a discourse about the responsibilities of the state and society and the legitimacy of using violence to solve political problems.

Kaldor’s activist experiences of war in Kosovo further refined her understanding of how military intervention should be conducted. Through a series of scholarly articles and public debates, Kaldor continued to chal-

lenge conventional understandings of war, the manner in which armies should conduct themselves in the theater of war, and the legitimacy of organized violence executed by the state. Kaldor concluded that, with the exception of the civilian role of policing and upholding the rule of law domestically and internationally, the state had lost its legitimacy to engage in organized violence.

The Evolution of Kaldor's Political Life

In contrast with the elite-focused politics of her family, Kaldor's career must be understood in the context of the social movements of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, from which she learned particular forms of political organization and activism, such as the debate, the forum, and the assembly, and the power of grassroots networks to create a politics from below. Although since the beginning of her career, Kaldor has occupied the space between policymaking, academia, and activism, one could argue that she has never firmly belonged to any of them. Even though she identifies first and foremost as an academic, she views policymaking and activism as inseparable from her scholarship, a perspective that influences the nature of her work and thinking in response to her experiences.

Up until the wars in the Balkans and South Caucasus, Mary Kaldor's intellectual and activist preoccupations were focused on moving away from a war-based system driven by the military industrial complex and instead establishing a society that was not based on war and militarism in either the Western or the Eastern bloc states. Her work at SIPRI, her book *The Baroque Arsenal*, and her work on conversion of the military industry were all products of these preoccupations. For Kaldor, the 1980s shift in security was not just about changing the relationship between state and society but conditional on participatory forms of politics from below, the link between peace and human rights, and a thriving civil society.

However, the publication of *New and Old Wars* saw a turning point in her career. In the 1990s, Kaldor set the agenda on a wider public debate, which reexamined the nature and character of contemporary war and questioned the legitimacy of war as an extension of state policy. Moreover, Kaldor argued that war was not a legitimate form of politics nor did it solve contemporary political conflict. Nevertheless, a tension remained in her work in that she believed that force was always necessary to protect civilians from organized violence.

Since the late 1990s, Kaldor's ideas regarding new wars and cosmopolitan law enforcement have influenced debates in the Pentagon, the European Union, and NATO. But, for Kaldor, the most important debates regarding the legitimacy of organized violence by the state are the public discussions that take place from below. The most important question that

still remains, therefore, is not *if* we are involved but *how* all of us, each and every one of us, are involved in the social organization of violence in an increasingly global civil society.

For Kaldor, this involvement meant being able to challenge the state and society on matters of violence and to question the legitimacy of decisions made regarding organized violence in the name of a state, all to a broader audience. At the heart of Kaldor's self-confidence and self-assuredness was a political philosophy that fundamentally recognized political legitimacy as beginning at the grassroots level. Questions such as those about the legitimacy of state violence, citizen engagement in a democratic polity, and the political responsibilities of the cosmopolitan citizen were triggered initially within the context of her early family life but have been reconstituted and refined through the course of her involvement in social movements, her role in policymaking, and her continued connection to academia. In this sense, both context and character are key to understanding her political life and her ideas on society, the state, and the legitimacy of state violence.

Political Biography as a Different Kind of Analytical Lens

In this intellectual biography of Mary Kaldor, I trace the historical underpinnings between the subject's life and work and the broader context to which Kaldor responded. The organization of this book is both thematic and historical-chronological in approach in order to explore how Kaldor's character and context shaped her thinking over time. As Robert Skidelsky, academic and biographer, argues, biography "is above all about character and context, not about proposition."²

Even though I explore Kaldor's character and context, I also reflect on Kaldor's political life. According to Judith Brett, academic and biographer, the objective of political biography is to convey the story of a "political life in such a way as to make that life intelligible" and to understand what makes some "unable to leave politics alone."³ In this way, I seek to reflect some sense of what Kaldor felt and thought about the key conflicts and experiences in her life, to draw out the distinctive strategies that contributed to her accomplishments and failures, and, lastly, to explore how Kaldor may have changed and personally responded to life's events and endeavors.⁴ I hope to illuminate the way Kaldor's ideas concerning organized violence were informed and the questions that drove her.

A biography of Mary Kaldor, a political biography in particular, provides for a different kind of analytical lens in four ways. First, unlike other forms of analysis of Kaldor's work, which start and end with her scholarly texts, an intellectual biography incorporates outside research. Historical

context provides insights into Kaldor's life and the events that influenced her academic texts. Even though these insights and events are implicit in her writing, they are not provided by Kaldor herself. Kaldor also endeavored to make her work accessible and, in doing so, simplified complex concepts to solicit broader public debate. For those who adhere to traditional theoretical and philosophical disciplines, such as traditional international relations theory, Kaldor's academic writings and speeches could appear rather idealistic or simplistic. Yet an historical examination of the relationship between Kaldor's life and work may not change realist views of her work, but it attempts to illuminate the richness and subtle nuances of Kaldor's debates. These nuances were often forfeited in her academic writings so as to engage a wider public discourse. Moreover, Kaldor often ignored the disciplinary divides of political science, which meant that her work was perhaps not taken as seriously as it should have been. In short, a political biography of Kaldor's life contributes to understanding her writings and, thus, suggests how and why Kaldor arrived at her conclusions, rightly or wrongly, concerning political violence and military intervention.

Second, a political biography of Kaldor's life also serves as an analytic lens to reconsider the debates surrounding the legitimate use of force in the post-Cold War era. Kaldor's personal transition on the subject of intervention highlights the complexity of deriving an ethical and moral standpoint for contemporary notions of defense and security. Initially Kaldor held an anti-interventionist position to the First Gulf War in relation to Operation Desert Shield, which aimed to stop the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and she challenged the well-accepted principle that war and force were legitimate extensions of state politics. Yet her direct experience of the wars in the Balkans and Caucasus saw Kaldor shift toward humanitarian intervention in the form of cosmopolitan law enforcement to defend civilians from state and quasi-state violence. Understanding the evolution of these debates reveals how society frames contemporary war and security and how people understand the events that formed the contemporary basis for what might be termed the *responsibility to protect*.

Third, Kaldor's personal experiences also provide a window into the role of the individual in the development and formation of ideas. On the one hand, Kaldor's political life is one of privilege, well connected to the establishment and political elite, which enabled her to influence and effect change in matters of security. On the other hand, her activism, scholarship, and policy work also reflected a life that encouraged participatory democracy and politics from below. In this respect, a biography of Kaldor shows her preoccupation with where she believed legitimate forms of politics are situated within the state. Kaldor increasingly began to believe that questions concerning security should not start with established political or military elites. Rather, the most important decisions regarding war and security

should be born out of a liberal discussion by ordinary citizens who then define public policy.

Kaldor's experiences in both the END and HCA provided her with the opportunity to test many of her ideas on political legitimacy, and through a review of her successes and failures, one gains a richer understanding of the process by which, and the reasons why, Kaldor formed her ideas on the legitimacy of violence, citizen involvement in a democratic polity, and the political obligations of the cosmopolitan citizen.

Lastly, and following on from above, a political biography of Kaldor's life provides a window into the relationship between policy, agency, and ideas. Kaldor is a complex and yet illuminating subject of intellectual biography, particularly within the realm of international relations scholarship, because, throughout her career, she has been an activist, policy adviser, and scholar, and she has viewed these three roles as inseparable. On the surface, this intertwining of roles makes Kaldor more difficult to pin down or pigeonhole: Is she an activist, policy adviser, or scholar? Or is she all of these things? Or is she none?

Traditionally, the study of international relations has rarely questioned the importance of exploring individual subjects and the context of their political thought. Yet the history of thought has played a central role in how we frame human action and consequently how we understand the unfolding of history.⁵ Similarly, the discipline of international relations traditionally presents an ahistorical approach to how scholarship and theory evolve. As Duncan Bell, an academic, argues, "history, in its various manifestations, plays an essential, constitutive, role in shaping the present: in mainstream [international relations] this has often been disregarded."⁶ I wish to explore the historical context of Kaldor's political thought and show how her scholarship and thought evolved over time to shape important events and ideas.

In this book, I draw extensively on several private and public archives, largely consisting of unpublished materials such as speeches, reports, memos, minutes, and letters. Given that some personal insights were difficult to gauge from primary documentation alone, I also conducted several interviews, face-to-face, by correspondence, or via telephone. Interviewees were selected on the basis of their personal and professional associations with Mary Kaldor and to reflect a diversity of views and experiences at each stage of her life. Interviewees ranged from her sisters and family friends to her contemporaries at Oxford, activist colleagues, and academic peers, to politicians, political advisers, and military practitioners. Not all desired interviewees were available (or living). Where an intended interviewee was not available, an attempt was made to identify an alternative contact (or series of contacts) with a similar perspective. Most face-to-face interviews were conducted in the Balkans, the South Caucasus, and Eastern and Western Europe.

I prioritize in-depth analysis over a complete list of all Kaldor's political activities. The biography is by no means an exhaustive or definitive intellectual study of Mary Kaldor. Rather, as the emphasis of the study is on what informed Kaldor's conceptual evolution on the subjects of violence, the state, and society, I directed my attention to key moments and people that influenced Kaldor's intellectual formation related to these themes and sought to examine critical shifts in her thinking.⁷

Given that Kaldor's work is still evolving and she continues to contribute to debate, one could not possibly make a complete assessment of her life's work or her legacy at this point. For this reason, I focus on the development of Kaldor's thinking on organized violence up until the publication of *A European Way of Security: The Madrid Report of the Human Security Study Group*,⁸ and I omit much of her activism in other countries, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, and many of her projects such as the Security in Transition project. Although Kaldor's notions of intervention were also challenged throughout these wars, these later debates, though important, were still evolving when this book was started. For example, Kaldor was still developing her ideas on human security with the Human Security Capability Group (HSCG). As coconvenor of the group, she published the report entitled *From Hybrid Peace to Human Security: Rethinking EU Strategy Towards Conflict*, which was presented to Federica Mogherini, the high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy, in 2016.⁹ In other words, a complete survey of all the debates surrounding her thoughts on human security is difficult to conduct. Moreover, given the sheer volume of all Kaldor's work, which includes books, speeches, journal articles, policy papers, activist materials, and various experiences of activism, I thought focusing on the evolution of her ideas on organized violence, rather than the complete survey of her life's work, more effective.

As the first biography of Mary Kaldor, this study should be a starting point, with the expectation that further analysis and examination of Kaldor's work, including her activism in Tuzla and the debates surrounding the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, in which she was involved, will follow.

Notes

1. Martin Albrow, interview with author, 8 June 2011.
2. Robert Skidelsky, "Essay: Confessions of a Long-Distance Biographer," *Independent on Sunday*, 29 November 2003, <http://www.skidelsky.com/>.
3. Brett, "The Tasks of Political Biography," pp. 74–75.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 74–75.
5. Bell, "International Relations."

6. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

7. Although I explore Kaldor's political life and her early family life, the nature of her immediate domestic life with her husband and children is not a central feature of this study. The biography is limited to references to how Kaldor pursued her public political life in the context of her family commitments. That is not to say, however, that her immediate family did not influence her political life. The study of how her husband and children directly informed her political life remains outside the scope of this study and may require further study in the future. Similarly, other personal or familial influences could also be explored.

8. Albrecht et al., *A European Way of Security*. For example, it does not explore her activism or collaboration with civil society peers in other HCA countries (outside the Balkans and Caucasus), nor does it explore all of her experiences in the Balkans and Caucasus (such as her work in Tuzla).

9. Human Security Capability Group, *From Hybrid Peace to Human Security: Rethinking EU Strategy Towards Conflict: The Berlin Report of the Human Security Study Group*, London School of Economics, 24 February 2016, <http://library.fes.de/>.