Volume 7, Number 2 (November 2000)

Peace and Conflict Studies

Follow this and additional works at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/pcs

Part of the Peace and Conflict Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/pcs/vol7/iss2/4

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by the Peace & Conflict Studies at NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Peace and Conflict Studies by an authorized editor of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact nsuworks@nova.edu.
Karsten Friis  
From Liminals to Others: Securitization Through Myths  

Øyvind Jæger  
Securitizing Russia: Discursive Practices of the Baltic States  

Eli Stamnes and Richard Wyn Jones  
Burundi: A Critical Security Perspective  

INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Karsten Friis has previously been associated with the UN section at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and was until recently working in the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo (KFOR).

Øyvind Jæger has been affiliated to the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute.

Eli Stamnes is completing her doctoral work in the Department of International Politics at the University of Wales Aberystwyth. Her thesis explores the role of the United Nations in promoting alternative conceptions of security.

Richard Wyn Jones is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of International Politics at the University of Wales Aberystwyth. His research interests include Critical Security Studies and Welsh politics.
FROM LIMINARS TO OTHERS:
SECURITIZATION THROUGH MYTHS

Karsten Friis

Abstract
The article discusses the rise of societal and ethnic conflicts. It focuses on some of the analytical tools designed to illuminate these processes. More specifically it builds on the framework of the so-called "Copenhagen School of Security Studies" but seeks to develop a more flexible approach on the concept of identity. To understand how an identity gains strength, Roland Barthes’ theory of myths is examined and combined with Michel Foucault's concept of power. Finally a concept of agency is added, namely what has been labeled a “conflict entrepreneur”. It is argued that by combining these theoretical insights the process of constructing Self and Other, and the subsequent alienation of those who not fit these categories, will be better understood.

Introduction
Why is it that people are willing to die and kill for their communities? How can an identity be so strong that it is not worth living without? What makes “ethnic” or other identity-based wars often more brutal and violent than traditional wars?

To illuminate these questions, this article will discuss the concept of societal security as used by the “Copenhagen School of Security Studies” (McSweeney, 1996). Through a brief discussion of different approaches to national identities, the relational and boundary drawing aspects of all identities will be underlined. To understand how an identity gains strength, how it becomes an “identity trump”, Roland Barthes’ (1993) theory of myths will be examined. According to him, a myth is a depoliticized speech; it turns history into nature and makes the ambiguous ordered. This way an identity can be associated with a persistent core of values or culture to which a people identifies. Further, this will be combined with a theory of identity building based on the Foucauldian concept of discourse, which underlines the complexity of an identity process and its decentralized power.

Even though the discursive field is important for identity building, some sort of agency must be introduced to the securitizing process. A “conflict entrepreneur” has been suggested for this purpose (Eide 1997). Such an agent provides both a representation of a world of chaos and a necessary solution to this. This is done through “natural” and depoliticized myths, which provide legitimacy for the entrepreneur and his policy. This may mean suppression or expatriation, making the in-betweeners, the liminars, match the map of only Self and Others.

---

1 This article is based on a paper presented on a workshop on “the Copenhagen School of Security Studies” at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2 October 1998.
The Copenhagen School of Security Studies

Over the last couple of years, the framework of the so-called Copenhagen School of security studies has inspired a growing number of studies and triggered several theoretical debates. The growing importance of the Copenhagen approach is probably due to its wide applicability on almost any empirical matter as well to a theoretical approach, which highlights the procedural aspects of conceiving a threat and taking actions against it. Let me begin with a short summary of some of the Copenhagen School’s main insights.

In Ole Wæver’s (1993:8) definition, “‘security’ signifies a situation marked by the presence of a security problem and some measure against it.” Security is therefore a reaction to a perceived threat. Contrary to most other theoretical approaches to the study of security, the Copenhagen School deliberately avoids the ontological debate of what is “most threatening” (military, environment, poverty, and so forth). Instead they have developed a framework that can be used on all fields, by focusing on the process of labeling a threat, the process of securitization: “They have to be staged as existential threats to a referent object by a securitizing actor who thereby generates endorsement for emergency measures beyond rules that would otherwise bind” (Buzan 1997:13). This process is the same in all sectors, military as well as non-military, and is the core of security as a social process. The Copenhagen School thereby rejects security as something objectively “given”, but regards it rather as a social process applicable to any perceived value, any chosen referent object. A referent object is thus what is considered to be existentially threatened by the securitizing actor, traditionally the state. But anything can be made into a referent object. Security is a social construct and must be analyzed as such.

The central point in the Copenhagen School framework is therefore the process of securitization, by a securitizing actor with a referent object. The action of securitizing is labeled

“…a speech act, it is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real, it is the utterance in itself that is the act: by saying it something is done (like betting, giving a promise, naming a ship). By saying ‘security’ a state-representative moves the particular case into a specific area; claiming a special right to use the means necessary to block this development” (Wæver 1993:7).

The subjective and social construct of security is thereby underlined. This way the Copenhagen School opens for a constructivist approach to security studies, dismissing any “objective threats” and regarding security and securitization as an active social process.

Societal Security

To apply this theory to communities other than states, such as ethnic groups, the Copenhagen School introduced the concept “societal security” (Wæver et al. 1993). The basic argument is that whereas a state needs to secure its sovereignty in order to survive, a society will secure its identity. According to Wæver et al. (1993:21), a society is defined as “...having a high degree of social inertia, a continuity often across generations and a strong infrastructure of norms, values and ‘institutions’ in a wider sense.” The referent object in a securitization process will be society (Wæver et al. 1993:26), represented by the collective identity of this society. Thus, “[s]ocietal security is about situations when societies perceive a threat in identity terms” (Wæver et al. 1993:23). The collective identity is therefore
what the society considers vital for them in order to remain a society. If something threatens the core symbol of “us”, if there would be no “us” without it, then a call for protection would be expected. Thus, whatever the members of a society perceive to be core values or symbols can become a referent object in a securitization process.

This seems promising, but there are some complicated aspects associated with such an approach. A major question is how we analyze this process; how we deal with such a vague concept as a collective identity. What is identity, and how is it articulated? How can it be securitized? Is it something that is “there” prior to a securitization, or is the securitization also an identity building process? I will argue the latter (see also Albert 1998, Huysmans 1998), and try to show this by discussing the process of identity building more closely, and argue in favor of a position that regards identity as an on-going process.

The Ontological and Epistemological Questions of Identity

How should the concept of identity be treated analytically? A constructivist ontology would emphasize the mutual constitution of agent and structures (Hopf 1998:172), thus focusing on the ongoing process of identity formation. Given their emphasis on the socially constructed character of security, one would expect the Copenhagen School to also regard identity in constructivist terms. But a critique has been risen by Bill McSweeney (1996) who claims that the Copenhagen School has an excessively rigid view of collective identity. This critique is mostly based on the book by Wæver et al. (1993), which also presents the Copenhagen School’s deepest analysis of societal security to date. McSweeney seems to have a point. There are tendencies toward a rigid and objectivist view of identity in the book. In phrases like “Societal security concerns the ability of a society to persist in its essential character under changing conditions and possible or actual threats” (Wæver et al. 1993:23, my emphasis), the Copenhagen School seems to emphasize a very traditional view of identity. To consider a society as having an “essential character” reflects a positivist ontology. Of course, it could simply be a badly formulated sentence, or that “essential” still leaves room for evolution. This seems likely since they later have claimed that they are well aware of the constructed character of identities and thus have rejected McSweeney’s critique.

Still, their position is a little vague and unclear. In his article, Barry Buzan (1997:19) explicitly argues that “...even the socially constituted often gets sedimented as structure and becomes so relatively stable as practice that one has to do analysis also on the basis that it constitutes...” Similarly, in their answer to McSweeney, Buzan and Wæver (1997:243) argue that, “...when an identity is thus constructed, and becomes socially sedimented, it becomes a possible referent object for security.” Also, in their latest book they (Buzan et al. 1998:121) present what they consider “...the most common issues that have been viewed as threats to societal security.” These are all based on that “people X” are being challenged by this and that. “People X” already exists; their identity and values are there before the threat begins. At another point, Buzan and Wæver (1997:243) argue that “[t]his does not imply that identities do not change, only that we should not expect everything to change all the time; certain things stay the same throughout the period relevant for analysis.” They somehow seem obsessed with a need to “fix” an identity when they conduct their analysis of securitization. This implies overlooking the process of mutual constitution, in this case between the securitization process and the identity referent. Thus, their epistemology seems to be at odds with their constructivist ontology. This could lead to a position that holds an identity to be independent of the securitization.
As McSweeney (1996:84) points out, the Copenhagen School uses phrases like “independent variable” (see Wæver et al. 1993:185) to describe a society in a securitization process. This also is consistent with a positivist epistemology. Following the logic of a constructivist ontology (mutual constitution), there can never be such thing as an “independent variable” in social science. All social constructs are always in-the-making and have impact on each other. Nothing is ever independent. The securitization process will also always feed back on society. Identity is not just there; it is constantly represented and struggled over, and securitization will in most cases be a part of that process. Identities are social processes and must be analyzed as such, not simply as objective givens that can trigger securitization. Thus, to study identities one must try to grasp how they emerge and change. To simply describe them at a given point would be to miss that. In Espen Barth Eide’s (Eide 1998:71) words: “...we may choose to think of securitisation as a process which simultaneously constitutes the group and securitises it towards other groups” (original emphasis). Identity or society is not a constant. It is not something objectively given, and because it is struggled over it simply cannot function as an objective foundation from which securitization derives. This way of thinking may lead back to the rigid positivist and neo-realist stance from which the Copenhagen School seeks to distance itself.

Further, even if one for analytical reasons accepts identity as “fixed”, for instance to be able to concentrate on other aspects (like a securitization process), this approach obviously loses valuable insights and aspects of both the identity building and the process of securitization. Of course, the empirical investigation required to be able to cover the whole process of change and mutual constitution is vast; “[c]onstructivism is no shortcut” (Hopf 1998:198). Yet, by combining the two processes a richer picture of the whole process will be obtained.

The problem is that the Copenhagen School also argues in constructivist terms. For instance Buzan et al. (1997:120) write the following passage:

“Threats to identity are thus always a question of the construction of something as threatening some ‘we’ - and often thereby actually contributing to the construction or reproduction of ‘us’. Any we identity can be constructed in many different ways, and often the main issue that decides whether security conflicts will emerge is whether one or another self-definition wins out in a society”

---

2 Parts of Eide’s work is published. See Eide (1997).
3 To be fair the Copenhagen School is not alone. In the last couple of years a growing bulk of empirical work based on constructivist ontology suffers from these epistemological limitations. See Checkel’s (1998) review of Finnmore (1996) Katzenstein (1996) and Klotz (1995). This problem is due to an explicit urge to still speak in terms of dependent and independent variables, causation and explanations. This goes especially for the US branch of International Relations constructivists who obviously wish to “bridge the divide” (Checkel 1997) between the “neo-neo rationalists” and the poststructuralists and thus still use some positivist concepts and methods. The price to pay for this is inconsistency between their ontological stance and epistemological approach.
This seems well in line with constructivist ontology on identity and with their own claims in the debate with McSweeney, but it is at odds with some of their other statements. It is unclear what the Copenhagen School position really is. However, regarding national identity, their position seems clear. They build on Anthony Smith’s (1983, 1991) theories. Below I will try to show the limitations of this approach and instead argue in favor of a position based on Benedict Anderson’s (1991) theory of imagined communities.

**National Identity**

There is no doubt that nations are historical constructs. They are results of a special European movement and some active nation building elite. Phrases like “the invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) underline this fact. At the same time, nationalist movements have been trying to establish and argue that there is a history, a culture and a tradition from which the nations derive. This ambiguity can also be found in the theorizing of nationalism. The question is to what extent are the nations rooted in a historical and cultural base, or whether these links are merely created by the nation builders.

Anthony Smith’s (1983, 1991) theories of nationalism are based on a so-called *ethnie*, which denotes the “core” of a nation. This perception of a common name, ancestry, culture, history and homeland, together with some sort of solidarity, is a necessary condition for a nation according to Smith. Thus, there is something essential in the culture, something that hardly changes or evolves. Smith acknowledges that these ethnies have to be engaged and given significance; they are not just “there”. However, they are nevertheless a precondition for a national identity.

The Copenhagen School’s approach to national identity is largely based on Smith. It is in accordance with their view of identity as historically constructed. Simultaneously the approach emphasizes some core values (the *ethnie*) which are most likely to be securitized in a society. This seems likely enough. The problem with this approach, however, is that it cannot help us understand changes. It can illuminate how we got nations, and how they remain by relying on the historical background. But what if they do not remain? What if new identities emerge instead of today’s nations? Or what if the major symbols of a nation change? That can hardly be because of the articulation of an *ethnie*.

If a new ethnic consciousness rises somewhere, its origins can be traced. Historical links and symbols as well as narratives and symbolic places can be found. But that does not explain why it suddenly emerged as it did, at that particular time. Attempting to do so on the basis of historical trajectories will run the risk of ending up with a reductionistic explanation of necessity. The rise of the group *had to* happen due to the historical circumstances. This, of course, is both dangerous and misleading. This is a reminder of one of the important ethical dimensions of poststructuralist theorizing. All so-called “objective” explanations are in fact subjective (and thus political), and all “objective variables” leading to arguments like “*Y had to happen because of X*” are dangerous, as they tend to disentangle the responsibility of a social action. If something happened because it “had to”, then who is to blame? If the historical background is used as an *explanation*, then what else could be done? Popular explanations of the war in the former Yugoslavia have, for instance, sometimes been based on a “lid-theory” saying that with the end of communism “ancient hatreds” bloomed as if someone had removed the lid of a boiling pot. This implies a dangerous historical necessity that should be avoided.
If we stick to the former Yugoslavia, could the rise of the ethnic identities there be explained through a Smithian framework? Of course, the three ethnic groups had a knowledge of their ethnicity before the war. There existed some symbols, some historical narratives and the like. By searching, some sort of ethnie would be discovered. But that does not explain why and how these suddenly became so important, nor why they became securitized. This shows the limits of the focus of “essential characters” or an ethnie in the studies of securitization. Instead, we need to find out how something becomes considered essential, and that requires another approach.

Actually, the Copenhagen School raises a similar question: “How is an identity forgotten and/or reinvented?” (Wæver et al. 1993:37). To them, Smith’s approach is best fitted to answer that question: “It might well be that Anderson and maybe Gellner have the superior theories of the origins of nationalism, but ... Smith ... probably has more to offer on the workings of an existing national community” (Wæver et al. 1993: 37). But this claim is never really followed up and justified in the book.

I would therefore rather claim an opposite argument. Benedict Anderson’s (1991) theory is superior to Smith’s, especially “on the workings of an existing community”, because it is concerned with identity as a process. It is not restricted to one special historical happening (the rise of nations), but it tries to give a more general picture of how a group of people continuously experiences its common identity. His expression “imagined communities” underlies one important feature, namely the on-going process. People have to imagine a community, a society, or a common identity, for it to be real. It does not exist unless people think so, unless they feel some sort of solidarity with people they never have met.

In Christopher J. Ullock’s (1996) words, Anderson’s approach is based on “a metaphysics of becoming” (as opposed to a “metaphysics of being”), something that makes his theory dynamic. It focuses on the process of identity formations and is not limited to its historical origins. This makes the theory more generally applicable, both to kinds of collective identities other than states and to nationalist movements outside Europe which have a totally different historical background. It can also be useful for understanding developments of new communities with new collective identities. A non-territorial global identity community, like the Hells Angels for instance, cannot be understood on basis of any ethnie, but it must be studied on the basis on their on-going self perception.

Identity as Process

Identity is not something that just is; it can rather be described as a process. Collective identities are never stable and objective but always in-the-making. They are subjectively experienced and expressed, a result of social communication and perceptions of Self and Others. A basic insight in all identity theory is the importance of an Other.1 Without an Other there would be no Self. What constitutes an identity is therefore more the difference from the Other than the sameness of the Self. It

---

1See for instance Connolly (1991), Norton (1988) and Neumann (1996). Theories of nationalism, on the other hand, tend to be so focused on the creation of a core-identity that they overlook the relationship to other collectives. This also goes for Anderson (1991).
Karsten Friis

is the definition of the differences that establishes the Self. In Anne Norton’s (1988:3) words: “Meaning is made out of difference”.

This is a classic insight from Fredrik Barth (1969:10) who argued that ethnic identities were a result of communication with other groups: “...ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are quite to the contrary often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built.” Identities are always a result of communication; they are relational.

Further, the symbols that turns out to be of importance are randomly chosen: “The features that are taken into account are not the sum of ‘objective’ differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant” (Barth 1969:14). You cannot tell in advance which features will be significant for a group’s identity; it is a result of the relationship and interaction with other groups. Normally, this will imply choosing symbols that are different from your neighbors’, thereby drawing a border and establishing the categories Self and Other.

In short, identity building is a boundary-drawing process, an attempt to define something, to give it a meaning, and to establish an order of knowledge. A boundary in identity terms is not geographical but social. It is a way of defining the symbols, values and meanings that are central for a group. It is a deciding of the inside and the outside. The outsider can be geographically outside, as in an ideal nation, but also inside. Geographical borders are results of these social borders, not the other way around.5

Those who do not fit into the definitions of the Self are different and may also be excluded, estranged or alienated. They may even be securitized and become enemies. This way the securitization also functions as an identity building process. The Others are securitized because they are considered to represent symbols and values that are incommensurable or threatening to those of the Self-group. I will come back to the relation to securitization.

This approach does not neglect historical traits (like language, culture and so on). But as long as these have to be interpreted and represented through subjects and through subjective experiences and language, they are subjective social constructs. There is no direct correlation, no necessity between the ethnie and the national identity. Collective identity cannot be reduced to the ethnie. Even though traditions, language, myths, and other features existed, there were also plenty of other myths and traditions that were never turned into major symbols for the nation, and also plenty of potential symbols that transgressed the borders of what later became a nation. Thus, the representation of an identity, the common imagination, is of more interest than its historical background. Nations (and other collective identities) do have a history. They have risen in a special historical context, but that does not explain how they evolve and transform today. Collective identities are not here because of

5 This means that geographic identity boundaries depend on social boundaries. State boundaries can sometimes be almost the same, but hardly ever fully. There is no necessity between a political unit and an identity unit. Of course, when there already is a distinct political unit, like a sovereign state as in Europe, it is of little surprise that the identity which emerged followed the state boarders. On the other hand, sometimes pan-movements proved stronger, like in Germany, and sometimes not, like the pan-Scandinavian movement around 1850. Political-juridical borders are by no means constitutive of identity boundaries.
history but because of the way we use history. It is the re-cycling of historical narratives, symbols and myths that keeps a nation alive. This re-cycling also implies constantly adapting to a new context and a constant re-interpretation of the symbols. The meaning of these might change, even though the symbols as such remain.

Still, this alone does not help us understand securitization. Of course, for an identity to be securitized, it must be considered important. What needs to be investigated is how an identity gains strength and is considered essential; how it becomes what Craig Calhoun (1994:11) has called a “trump” – an identity that is stronger than “...all other forms of identity, including those of community, family, political preference, and alternative ethnic allegiances”. In Mathias Albert's (1998:27) words: “If we want to gain an understanding of ‘securitization’ that does not freeze one reference point, i.e., (societal) identity, but can account for identity’s processual character too, we have to be able to explain why some issues are more ‘prone’ to being securitized than others...”

**Trumps and Myths**

It is necessary to get a better grip on this rather vague concept of identity. How can it be operationalized for analysis? If identity building is about drawing boundaries, then it seems necessary to investigate this further. For instance, what is it that is protected by these boundaries, or what is it that is established as signs of the identity through this boundary drawing? Along which dimensions is the identity manifested? In other words, how is an identity articulated and expressed?

The answer is normally through symbols around which everyone can cluster. However, anything can be a symbol, so that does not really help. The symbols must also represent a meaning and thus some sort of value. What is important is that they are not excluding anyone within the Self-group. They must be considered all-embracing, essential, and context-traversing. How is that achieved?

One way it happens is by lifting the symbols out of the realm of politics – by depolitization. A depoliticized speech (meaning any utterance, meaning or expression) is what Roland Barthes describes as a *myth*. Barthes’ (1993) classical work on this phenomena is still valuable. According to Barthes, a myth is not a false representation of reality, as it is often defined in daily usage of the word. Rather, it is a special way of representing reality. It is, in semiotic terms, a meta-language, or a second-order semiological system, where meanings are redefined and given a new content. For example, histories about wars can function as a myth for those who hear or read it afterwards. The history itself can very well be true and accurate, but when it is read as a myth, it gives a specific cultural and political impact on society that may not follow logically from the original history.

A central quality of a myth according to Barthes (1993:125) is that it “...is speech stolen and restored”. The restored meaning is different from the original; it is simplified and ambiguity is made into order. A myth transforms history into nature, and makes speech innocent in the sense that it is naturalized (Barthes 1993:129, 131). In other words, a myth gives “...a historical intention a natural justification, making contingency appear eternal”, and thus a “...myth is depoliticized speech” (Barthes 1993:142, 143, original emphasis). This is what gives it power. Barthes exemplifies this with a picture of a black man in French uniform, saluting the French flag. The picture speaks against colonialism as oppression and gives the impression of a Great Empire consisting of enthusiastic and patriotic citizens. Thus, the myth gets rid of the

---

6 Even though Barthes (1993:109) analyzes myths through semiology, it is not just linguistic expressions that can function as myths. Anything can be a myth, both verbal and visual expressions, like for instance photography or a car.
“...contingent, historical, ... fabricated quality of colonialism. Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact ... [I]t abolishes the complexity of human acts, it gives them the simplicity of essences...” (Barthes 1993:143)

The effect is powerful when something social is made essential, when history is turned into nature, and when politics is depoliticized. If an identity is built upon such myths, it too will be essentialized, naturalized and considered beyond politics. It becomes a trump. If a community’s historical narratives are simplified and purified, perhaps represented as an eternal fight between Good and Evil, its identity building effect is enormous. Then, the Self is not only representing the Good; it is the Good. This way myths also have ethical aspects, as they can legitimize political actions that are based on simplified mythical interpretations of the past. For example, such representations (we are Good, they are Evil) leave no room for in-betweeners, for so-called liminaries, who inhabit both the realm of the Self and the Other (Norton 1988). Liminality will always exist because all boundary drawing is limited, in the sense that all categories will contain some ambiguity. No nation, no gender, no meaning is ever “pure”. There are always some cross-overs who by their simple existence represent a political challenge to the order of things: “The mingling of identity and difference in the liminal challenges the integrity of the paranoid observer” (Norton 1988:55). Thus, a strong myth can have severe political implications because of its natural appearance and its apparent innocence. It can, for instance, serve to legitimize ethnic cleansing. I will come back to this later.

This leads us to the question of power. Who controls or constitutes myths and identities? Is the meaning established through powerful actors and seductive ideology, or is the power less traceable in terms of locus?

Identity as Discourse

One problem with Barthes’ approach is his indication that it is the bourgeois who somehow controls the myths. He (1993:142) sees it as “ ...the most appropriate instrument for the ideological inversion which defines this society...” and part of the “bourgeois ideology”. The power of the myth is connected to this bourgeois ideology. Such Marxian views of power have been criticized, among other things for implicitly suggesting that there is an objective, hidden truth “out there” that the bourgeois is trying to mask by ideology and use of power. The idea of such a “truth” not only connotes a problematic objectivist ontology (“the real truth”), but it also turns power into a question of legitimacy (Hindess 1996). By disclosing the illegitimate bourgeois power of oppression, this implicitly means that there is another form of power that is more legitimate – one which is emancipated from class-interests. Even though strong actors are often important, as we also shall discuss below, there is no doubt that collective identities can not be reduced to ideology or “false consciousness”. If people conceive it as real, an ideological conviction must be possessed to claim that they are “really” wrong. It also implies a very elitist self-perception of the scientist, since s/he is the only one who can expose this “truth”.

Instead of regarding depoliticized myths as part of a bourgeois ideology, Barthes insights can be used in a fashion that neither places power within a (illegitimate) class perspective nor assumes a “hidden reality”. This can be achieved by analyzing myths, and identity process in general, as a discourse in Michel Foucault’s (1972) definition of the word. Then we do not have to rely on some strong powerful agents or on an all-embracing ideology that seduces the masses. Truth in a discourse is
not based on powerful actors or objective realities but on a horizontal field that accepts or rejects utterances. This field is based on what has already been said and done – not only through language but also through institutions, practices and so forth. In this way meaning and truth are established as well as objects of knowledge. Madness, for example, is a category, an object and a field of knowledge that is the result of a historical discursive development. Not only science but also institutions, therapists, and others participated in this discursive field. Thus, to Foucault, discourse is not simply a linguistic term; it also encapsulates the material realm. In this way, an identity is not simply a narrative but involves also institutions, practices and the like, which participate in the creation of signs, meanings or objects.

With Foucault, power can be regarded as something productive and discursive, without a clear locus. It is producing categories, traditions and normality. Foucault (1973, 1977) focused on social categories such as madness and criminals as well as institutions like hospitals, prisons and assembly halls. However, the ordering of people into Selves and Others can easily be understood in the same way. The strong “normality” of national identity in many states and the often widespread feeling of centuries of national consistency are examples. Collective identities are constantly being built -- in sports arenas, in history books, in culture and in politics.

This discursive normalization process of Foucault also carries some similarities to Barthes’ depolitization in the way that both are concerned with showing how something apparently essential is in fact elusive or a historical and social construct. It is the entire discursive field that moves something into the natural and depoliticized realm, which normalizes the myths and other symbols of which constitute an identity. The power in a successful depolitization or naturalization should not be underestimated.

Collective identity is an on-going discourse, consisting of several actors, institutions, theories, and rituals. This discourse creates symbols and gives them meanings and values. In this way both the historical emergence of the categories Self and Other can be studied. For example this may be through a genealogy which is very conscious on avoiding historical “presentism” and anachronisms – “the fallacy of confusing rational functions for origins” (Price 1995:85) as well as the on-going dynamics of an identity today.

It is sufficient here to note that this further develops Anderson’s dynamic “metaphysics of becoming,” as it gives us a better understanding of how identities can become “identity trumps,” and how they become depoliticized and “natural”. The “imagined community” possesses a referent object, something to imagine such as myths. Let me, instead, return to the question of securitization and see how such a process fits into an identity building discourse.

Societal Securitization: Actors

At its extreme, people are willing to die and kill for their identity. For this to happen, the identity must be considered existential. It must be considered something as basic as life itself,  

\[ \text{\footnotesize Presentism means writing “history of the past in terms of the present” (Bartelson 1995:55). This means to consider contemporary analytical tools and interpretations as objective or unproblematic, and not taking into consideration that they are historically situated. For discussions of genealogy in general, see for instance Bartelson (1995), Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982), Szakolczai (1993), Price (1995) and Visker (1995).} \]
something of which you cannot live without. People will rarely kill for their companies, their choice of fashion, or some other “identity light”. They fight for the identity trumps. And as we have seen, trumps are trumps because they are depoliticized and “natural” within the group. I have argued this is due to the discursive field in which the identity is embedded. From this point of view, the naming of crucial values, and thus of Self and Others, is a discursive practice. It is not something which is done primarily by powerful agents but by a mix of these and historical traits, myths, values and traditions. Then what about securitizing, the process of moving something into a state of alert? Can it also best be analyzed as a discursive practice?

If so, it seems to be at odds with the Copenhagen School’s emphasis on securitizing actors and “the speech act”. These concepts seem to point towards an agency oriented approach.8 No doubt, securitization is often a very concrete political move, seemingly done by discernable actors at a given time. It is an observable process. In terms of societal security, it has been argued over and over that securitization is a process of making difference into radical otherness,9 or in Copenhagen terms, moving the representation of the Other from a politicized to a securitized position. That does not happen by itself. Espen Barth Eide (1998:74) has launched the concept “conflict entrepreneurs” to grasp why difference sometimes becomes conflictual. By doing this he (1998:74) is “bringing agency and strategy back in”, because “...organised conflict in one way or another needs an element of activeignition, of agency”.

Thus, a conflict entrepreneur is “...an individual who takes the necessary and deliberate steps to ignite a violent conflict by utilising a specific situation or in order to gain something through the exploitation of new power relationships” (Eide 1998:75). This is done not necessarily for personal reasons but also for collective reasons. The point is that he is able to enter the ongoing identity process and manipulate and influence it. He thus has power to interpret and represent history and symbols in his own way, and represent the Other as an existential threat to them. Control over media is often important in this respect. There is little doubt that in cases like Bosnia, such entrepreneurs were important triggers to the conflict, as Eide and others (e.g., Majstorovic 1997) have demonstrated.

Does this mean that the discursive approach to identity building is misleading? Not necessarily. The entrepreneur is also dependent upon a context which gives opportunities and limitations. For sure, securitization cannot be done by anyone at anytime with any referent object they like. In Eide’s (1998:58) words, “[t]he decision to accept the securitization of a particular topic rests with the audience, not with the actor who speaks”.

There is no need to reduce this to an agency-structure-debate, if that implies a need to decide, and an inherent either/or ontology (Doty 1997:374f). Following a constructivist ontology it is the process of mutual constitution which is of interest. Foucault’s discourses might not leave sufficient room for political entrepreneurs, but introducing agency does not necessarily imply a rejection of the entire Foucauldian framework. Erik Ringmar (1996) has for instance introduced the concept “formative moment” to describe periods where there is more room for agency. According to Ringmar (1996:91) such a moment can be described as “...a period when new metaphors were launched, when individuals and groups told new stories about themselves, and when new sets of rules emerged through

---

8 They never really discuss or develop the question of agency.
which identities were classified”. This is a moment of opportunity of which some entrepreneurs gain more influence and power than they otherwise would.

There is power in the discourse that provides such opportunities. For instance, a king was no doubt a powerful person some centuries ago, but he was nevertheless dependent upon the political system that allowed a king and a kingdom. Thus, we cannot locate a locus of power once and for all; any actor acts in a context that never can be left out of the analysis.

Besides, it is not unusual that the securitizing discourse also includes (what comes to be) the Other. A conflict entrepreneur will gain a lot of help if someone else is arguing similarly in the other camp. Samuel Huntington's (1993) attempted securitization of “the Rest” (versus “the West”), is said to be popular reading among Islamic fundamentalists. They tend to agree from the opposite position.

Let us therefore assume that a societal securitization process often includes some entrepreneurs who, due to the situation and discursive network, can maneuver themselves as representatives of the community, and thus define its boundaries. The entrepreneur might use some myths and/or contribute to its continued existence. What also must be done, however, is to provide an order or a world view of which the Self is situated. This means moving politics abroad, out on the borders, through what Hegel (1952) has called a “dialectic of conflict”. A part of the logic of delivering an order to a given group on the inside is that anarchy simultaneously is moved out into the spatial outside (Bartelson 1995:210ff). This creates two ontological rooms, one of order and one of anarchy and danger (Walker 1993). But how is this done?

From Liminars to Others

The problem with societal securitization is one of representation. It is rarely clear in advance who it is that speaks for a community. There is no system of representation as in a state. Since literally anyone can stand up as representatives, there is room for entrepreneurs. It is not surprising if we experience a struggle between different representatives and also their different representations of the society. What they do share, however, is a conviction that they are best at providing (a new) order. If they can do this convincingly, they gain legitimacy. What must be done is to make the uncertain certain and make the unknown an object of knowledge. To present a discernable Other is a way of doing this. The Other is represented as an Other -- as an unified single actor with a similar unquestionable set of core values (i.e. the capital “O”). They are objectified, made into an object of knowledge, by re-presentation of their identity and values. In other words, the representation of the Other is depoliticized in the sense that its inner qualities are treated as given and non-negotiable.

In Jef Huysmans (1998:241) words, there is both a need for a mediation of chaos as well as of threat. A mediation of chaos is more basic than a mediation of threat, as it implies making chaos into a meaningful order by a convincing representation of the Self and its surroundings. It is a mediation of “ontological security”, which means “...a strategy of managing the limits of reflexivity ... by fixing social relations into a symbolic and institutional order” (Huysmans 1998:242). As he and others (like Hansen 1998:240) have pointed out, the importance of a threat construction for political identification, is often overstated. The mediation of chaos, of being the provider of order in general, is just as important. This may imply naming an Other but not necessarily as a threat.

Such a dichotomization implies a necessity to get rid of all the liminars (what Huysmans calls “strangers”). This is because they “...connote a challenge to categorizing practices through the impossibility of being categorized”, and does not threaten the community, “...but the possibility of ordering itself” (Huysmans 1998:241). They are a challenge to the entrepreneur by their very
existence. They confuse the dichotomy of Self and Other and thereby the entrepreneur’s mediation of chaos. As mentioned, a liminar can for instance be people of mixed ethnical ancestry but also representations of competing world-pictures. As Eide (1998:76) notes: “Over and over again we see that the “liberals” within a group undergoing a mobilisation process for group conflict are the first ones to go”.

The liminars threaten the ontological order of the entrepreneur by challenging his representation of Self and Other and his mediation of chaos, which ultimately undermines the legitimacy of his policy. The liminars may be securitized by some sort of disciplination, from suppression of cultural symbols to ethnic cleansing and expatriation. This is a threat to the ontological order of the entrepreneur, stemming from inside and thus repoliticizing the inside/ outside dichotomy. Therefore the liminar must disappear. It must be made into a Self, as several minority groups throughout the world have experienced, or it must be forced out of the territory. A liminar may also become an Other, as its connection to the Self is cut and their former common culture is renounced and made insignificant. In Anne Norton’s (1988:55) words, “The presence of difference in the ambiguous other leads to its classification as wholly unlike and identifies it unqualifiedly with the archetypal other, denying the resemblance to the self.”

Then the liminar is no longer an ontological danger (chaos), but what Huysmans (1998:242) calls a mediation of “daily security”. This is not challenging the order or the system as such but has become a visible, clear-cut Other. In places like Bosnia, this naming and replacement of an Other, has been regarded by the securitizing actors as the solution to the ontological problem they have posed. Securitization was not considered a political move, in the sense that there were any choices. It was a necessity: Securitization was a solution based on a depoliticized ontology.

This way the world-picture of the securitizing actor is not only a representation but also made into reality. The mythical second-order language is made into first-order language, and its “innocent” reality is forced upon the world. To the entrepreneurs and other actors involved it has become a “natural” necessity with a need to make order, even if it implies making the world match the map. Maybe that is why war against liminars are so often total; it attempts a total expatriation or a total “solution” (like the Holocaust) and not only a victory on the battlefield. If the enemy is not even considered a legitimate Other, the door may be more open to a kind of violence that is way beyond any war conventions, any jus in bello.

This way, securitizing is legitimised: The entrepreneur has succeeded both in launching his world-view and in prescribing the necessary measures taken against it. This is possible by using the myths, by speaking on behalf of the natural and eternal, where truth is never questioned.

Conclusion

10 The Copenhagen School’s stepwise illustration of a securitization process may be confusing. They say that an identity can go from a non-politicized to politicized to securitized mode (Wæver 1993). What should be underlined is that this politicization is always directed at the boundaries. Within the group the referent object is necessarily de-politicized in the sense that it encapsulates the entire group. The point with securitization is that the politicization/securitization is about placing the political challenge or the threat outside the group.
I have addressed the question of how an identity can become securitized and have argued in favor of a flexible and dynamic view of identity, based upon a metaphysics of becoming. This should help us avoid some theoretical pitfalls which could lead to a rigid objectivist and causal analysis. Through a brief discussion of different approaches to national identities, the processural, relational and boundary drawing aspects of all identities were underlined. To understand how an identity gains strength and how it becomes a “trump”, Barthes’ (1993) theory of myths was examined. As a myth is a depoliticized speech, it turns history into nature and makes the ambiguous ordered. It is thus easy to securitize. However, myths and identities cannot be established by strong agents alone. Identity can better be seen as a Foucauldian discourse, a productive field of order, truth and knowledge. On the other hand, when it comes to the securitizing process, some sort of agency must be introduced. The “conflict entrepreneur” may function as such an agent, even though still embedded in the discursive field. For him to succeed, he must provide both a world-view and a solution to the threats this view contains. He will have to make the uncertain certain by naming liminars and Others. The liminars represent by their very existence a threat to the entrepreneur’s order of things. They must therefore be “ordered” – forced to become either a Self or an Other. The reason why this can be done legitimately is through a depoliticized innocent representation of the world, a representation based on myths.

Acknowledgments
Thanks to all the participants in the workshop on “the Copenhagen School of Security Studies” at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2 October 1998, especially Lene Hansen and Iver B. Neumann. Special thanks also to Kari M. Osland and Jeffrey T. Checkel for comments.

References


Securitizing Russia: Discursive Practices of the Baltic States

Øyvind Jæger

Abstract
The author argues that the security situation of the Baltic countries cannot be separated from the way the Balts themselves speak of security. This is a discourse of danger producing insecurity in pursuit of security. Moreover, this article is a study of identity by demonstrating how Baltic security issues are constituted by discourses of danger revolving around Russian Otherness and European Sameness. In conclusion, the following aspects are addressed: the prospects for the coming together of East and West in the Baltic Sea Region – and NATO's role in this process – and whether this process will come to ease with a parallel between sovereignty and regionality as organizing principles for political space, or whether the one will succumb to the other in the course of a prolonged contest.

If you find my answers frightening, Vincent, you should cease askin' scary questions.
Jules Winnfield to Vincent Vega in the Quentin Tarantino film Pulp Fiction

There is no intellectual endeavour that in the end proves not to be futile.
Jorge Luis Borges

Introduction
This is a study of a discourse of danger producing insecurity in pursuit of security. In this article I will show how the Baltic security situation cannot be separated from the way the Balts themselves speak of security, that is, the Baltic security discourse. Moreover, I will point out how this security discourse is conducive in reproducing insecurity.

---

1 The film script is available on the Internet at http://gwarv.ppv.ntnu.no/pulp/pfscript.txt.
Furthermore, this is a study of identity as I will demonstrate how Baltic security issues are constituted by discourses of danger revolving around Russian Otherness and European Sameness. The theme of danger, David Campbell (1992) claims, is part and parcel of discursive practices delineating Self from Other, which in turn are instrumental in fixing (state) borders and ascertaining identity. In this article, I will seek to establish that this is also the case in the Baltic states.

First, through an analysis of security discourse in the Baltic states, I will identify how security is conceived of in these states, and, by implication, what conception of "security" they are about to apply. Second, the article focuses on the discursive practices of security in the Baltic states. That is, how issues are made security issues, with what purpose or function, and with what effect on the Baltic states’ domestic politics and international relations. Collective identity formation and (re)production of state identity are here taken to be a central, but neglected, feature of security discourse. Third, concluding along these lines, I will briefly look at the prospects for the coming together of East and West in the Baltic Sea Region – and the role of NATO’s enlargement in the process – and whether this process will come to ease with a parallel between sovereignty and regionality as organising principles for political space, or whether the one will succumb to the other in the course of a prolonged contest.

Over the past few years, the three Baltic states have drafted and debated National Security Concepts. Lithuania and Latvia have recently adopted theirs through parliamentary motion. Estonia is still set to do so – in fact, is yet to produce a draft. In the meantime, Estonia has however adopted a Defence Doctrine. I will take these documents as samples of a narrative genre of writing whose rationale it is to spell out provisions and guidelines for the security policy of a given state. A National Security Concept is a document on which a state will base its foreign and security policy in years to come. More important to this here study, however, is that National Security Concepts – as narrative representations of the way security, threat, defence, war, danger and countermeasures are conceived of – offer empirical material for a study of how security is conceptualised and reproduced through discursive practices. In other words, a National Security Concept is one particular written representation of discursive practice and can therefore be analysed as such. There are of course other representations of discourse. Other instalments in a security discourse underpinning, contesting and engaging the National Security Concept documents are made from academic quarters, journals and policy institutions producing publications on the subject of security. A third source of textual representations would be general public debate. In case of the Baltic states, it is hard to identify much of a public debate on security and hardly anything that is not represented in the two other main

---

One should note (possibly not to the Balts own liking) that documents of this kind and the very idea of spelling out National Security Concepts in writing with the aim of having them adopted by a parliamentary consensus, is one rooted in a Soviet political tradition. Many countries do however have a tradition for writing in this genre, and on the issue of war and defence, it winds back two millennia to the Chinese Sun Tzu. On the Western hemisphere, the works of the military strategist Carl von Clausewitz is indispensable, (cf. Paret 1986; Hendel 1992). National Security documents as such, however, appeared only post-World War II in the US when the deficiency of collective security on the one hand and national interest on the other, was resolved with the concept of national security. (See Morgenthau 1973 [1948]: 542, 407 ff).
sources. What follows, then, is a comparative textual analysis of the National Security Concepts of the three Baltic states. The aim is not only to discern what security concept is at work, but also to understand how security is conceptualised in these particular countries. That is, what is the mode of going about one's security business in the Baltic states and what explains this particular mode.

This article also looks at the friction between NATO and Russia over the enlargement issue, and it explores the possible effects thus generated on regional co-operation and the future of regionalism as a principle for organising political space alternative to, or besides sovereignty. Taking that as a launching pad for a content analysis of key security documents of the Baltic states, this article aims at revealing why and how the Baltic states are still entangled in a state-centrist, modernist agenda when addressing their security concerns, thus colliding with the West when engaging in mutual endeavours to mitigate insecurity.

The Name of the Game

The Baltic Rim is one of several areas along Europe's former Cold War demarcation line that are in the midst of regionalisation. Within this region, the Baltic states make for a particularly interesting case because they seem to fall between the chairs of old and new brands of security thinking as well as between those of current security arrangements. On the one hand, they are strongly inclined towards a Western foreign policy orientation, and this quest is met with considerable support and sympathy in the West. However, when it comes to detailed commitment of a NATO-sponsored security guarantee, they are met with a cold shoulder. On the other hand, they are the only post-Soviet states that employ a fierce and unambiguous Westward orientation despite Russian opposition, and they are the only post-Communist states with a common border with Russia seeking NATO and EU membership. Thus, they are firmly in the grips of a security dynamic driven by NATO's expansion, while at the same time exempted from membership because of geopolitical location and Russian sensitivities. This is likely to produce not only tension in relations between the Baltic states and Russia - and between Russia and NATO - but it also carries a potential for attributing unprecedented significance to the Baltic Sea Region. This potential dwells in the region-idea itself: Any region entails multilateral properties combined with an interaction and institutionalisation marked by modes of social organisation and political conduct that depart from traditional ones. Most regions, and certainly the

---

14 International Relations literatures on regionalisation are many. For one of the latest that also discusses the previous, see Joenniemi (1997). On changes in international relations (IR) and how to study them after the end of the Cold War, the literature is far more extensive. A sample of central and recommendable works would include Ashley (1984, 1987); Buzan, Waever and de Wilde (1997), Campbell (1992), Der Derian and Shapiro (1989), Der Derian (1992), Neumann (1996, 1996b), Walker (1993), and Wendt (1992). Within the field of security studies, the Copenhagen School (with Barry Buzan and Ole Waever as key figures) has claimed its own turf. The School has emanated from the IR milieu at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute and deals with security and identity in a way that is regarded as sufficiently original and coherent to qualify as a line of thought and to warrant the term 'school' or 'coterie' as referred to by Iver B. Neumann (1996b: 162), Cf. Neumann (1996b), and McSweeney (1996:81-93).
Baltic Sea Region, also offers equal accessibility for once separated Eastern and Western countries. Thus far, security concerns have not been part of regional dealings. However, regional security arrangements become more probable as the rapprochement between Russia and NATO proceeds, because the rationale for seeking security by pitching the one against the other evaporates in the process.

Moreover, one can as Pertti Joenniemi (1997, 1995, 1994a, 1994b, 1994d), see developments in the Baltic Sea Region as a contest between two principles for organising political space: The state centric and classical principle of sovereignty and a challenging principle of regionality. The claim is that the Baltic Sea Region is about what sovereign states and sovereign more-than-states (the EU) cannot or will not do, which is then left for the region to grapple with. Regionality is a principle that combines sub-national and international dynamics and thus transcends the entire modernist script in which the state is privileged as the dominant organising entity in politics. Regionality, Pertti Joenniemi (1995: 339) writes:

violates uniformity, as contained in the call for a new world order or other such quite centralist configurations of a modernist design, but it also deviates from and breaks with the principle of organising political space according to the standard statist, territorially fixed logic.

In this trend, Joenniemi sees a contest between two different security agendas aligning along the former East-West division line in Europe. In short, the Eastern agenda is still a modernist one privileging the state, attributing prime importance to sovereignty, military defence, security guarantees, and acts of war as the principal threat to security. The Western agenda on the other hand notes the recess of hegemonic power, state centrisnt and sovereignty, and in this development finds reason to shift focus onto societal, environmental, and economic security. The Western security agenda thus departs from the state centric emphasis on military means for security ends and advocates "softer" security. In this sense it is post-modern. These two security agendas are at odds in the Baltic Sea region (Joenniemi 1995; Knudsen and Neumann 1995).

Security, to be sure, is about the sovereignty and survival of the state as such – the state as an independent political unit. That does not, however, necessarily imply a privileging of the military sector of the state as is the case with classical security. Following Ole Waever (1997a; 1995; 1994), what pertains to security should be looked at as the speech-act of politics the discursive practice of doing by saying which is at work when states, not least the Baltic ones, are seeking to secure state formations. What is an issue of security, and what not, is delineated through speech-acts in a performative discursive practice coined by Ole Waever (1997a; 1995; 1994) as securitisation, making security issues of what is spoken of as security: One speaks security, and therefore it is a matter of security. As with sovereignty (cf. Walker 1993), security has no ontological basis outside of discourse. An army is not a threat in and of itself – it is merely an army – but becomes one when denoted in terms of danger. Conceiving of security as a speech-act, Waever argues that security is not something "out there" with an objective existence and a priori ontology, something that one should strive to acquire as much of as one possibly can. On the contrary, security is an act that comes into play by the very utterance of the word security.
Tell A Bigger Tale

Security is a field of practice into which subject matters can be inserted as well as exempted. Security is a code for going about a particular business in very particular ways. By labelling an issue a security issue, that is, a threat to security, one legitimises the employment of extraordinary measures to counter the threat, because it threatens security. In other words, security is a self-referential practice that carries its own legitimisation and justification. Security issues are allotted priority above everything else because everything else is irrelevant if sovereignty is lost, the state loses independence and ceases to exist.

This makes for the point that it is not security as an objective or a state of affairs that is the crux of understanding security, but rather the typical operations and modalities by which security comes into play, Wæver (1995) notes. The typical operations are speech-acts and the modality threat-defence sequences. That is, perceiving and conveying threats and calling upon defence hold back the alleged threat. This is also a self-referential practice with the dynamic of a security dilemma: Defensive measures taken with reference to a perceived threat cause increased sense of insecurity and new calls for defence, and so forth. Wæver’s argument is that this logic is at work also in other fields than those busying themselves with military defence of sovereignty.

Moreover, viewing security as a speech act not only makes it possible to include different sectors in a study of security, and thus open up the concept. It also clears the way for resolving security concerns by desecuritising issues which through securitisation have raised the concern in the first place. Knowing the logic of securitisation and pinning it down when it is at work carries the possibility of reversing the process by advocating other modalities for dealing with a given issue unluckily cast as a matter of security. What is perceived as a threat and therefore invoking defence, triggering the spiral, might be perceived of otherwise, namely as a matter of political discord to be resolved by means of ordinary political conduct, (i.e. not by rallying in defence of sovereignty).

A call for more security will not eliminate threats and dangers. It is a call for more insecurity as it will reproduce threats and perpetuate a security problem. As Wæver (1994: 8) puts it: “Transcending a security problem, politicizing a problem can therefore not happen through thematization in terms of security, only away from it.” That is what de-securitisation is about.

David Campbell (1992) has taken the discursive approach to security one step further. He demonstrates that security is pretty much the business of (state) identity. His argument is developed from the claim that foreign policy is a discourse of danger that came to replace Christianity’s evangelism of fear in the wake of the Westphalian peace. But the effects of a “evangelism of fear” and a discourse of danger are similar – namely to produce a certitude of identity by depicting difference as otherness. As the Peace of Westphalia signified the replacement of church by state, faith by reason, religion by science, intuition by experience and tradition by modernity, the religious identity of salvation by othering evil (“think continually about death in order to avoid sin, because sin plus death will land you in hell” – so better beware of Jews, heretics, witches and temptations of the flesh) was replaced by a hidden ambiguity of the state. Since modernity’s privileging of reason erased the possibility of grounding social organisation in faith, it had to be propped up by reason and the sovereign state as a anthropomorphic representation of sovereign Man was offered as a resolution. But

17 Campbell (1992) refers to Delumeau (1990) on this point.
state identity cannot easily be produced by reason alone. The problem was, however, that once the "death of God" had been proclaimed, the link between the world, "man" and certitude had been broken (Campbell 1992: 53). Thus ambiguity prevailed in the modernist imperative that every presumption grounded in faith be revealed by reason, and on the other hand, that the privileging of modernity, the state, and reason itself is not possible without an element of faith. In Campbell’s (1992: 54) words:

In this context of incipient ambiguity brought upon by an insistence that can no longer be grounded, securing identity in the form of the state requires an emphasis on the unfinished and endangered nature of the world. In other words, discourses of "danger" are central to the discourses of the 'state' and the discourses of 'man'. In place of the spiritual certitude that provided the vertical intensity to support the horizontal extensiveness of Christendom, the state requires discourses of "danger" to provide a new theology of truth about who and what 'we' are by highlighting who and what 'we' are not, and what 'we' have to fear.

The mode through which the Campbellian discourse of danger is employed in foreign (and security) policy, can then be seen as practices of Wæverian securitisation. Securitisation is the mode of discourse and the discourse is a "discourse of danger" identifying and naming threats, thereby delineating Self from Other and thus making it clear what it is "we" are protecting, (i.e. what is "us", what is our identity and therefore - as representation - what is state identity). This is done by pointing out danger, threats and enemies, internal and external alike, and - by linking the two (Campbell 1992: 239):

For the state, identity can be understood as the outcome of exclusionary practices in which resistant elements to a secure identity on the "inside" are linked through a discourse of danger (such as Foreign Policy) with threats identified and located on the "outside".

To speak security is then to employ a discourse of danger inter-subjectively depicting that which is different from Self as an existential threat - and therefore as Other to Self. Securitisation is about the identity of that which is securitised on behalf of, a discursive practice to (re)produce the identity of the state. Securitising implies "othering" difference - making difference the Other in a binary opposition constituting Self (Neumann 1996b: 167).

Turning to the Baltic Sea Region, one cannot help noting the rather loose fitting between the undeniable - indeed underscored - state focus in the works of both David Campbell and the Copenhagen School on the one hand, and the somewhat wishful speculations of regionality beyond the state - transcending sovereignty - on the other. Coupling the two is not necessarily an analytical problem. It only makes a rather weak case for regionality. But exactly that becomes a theoretical problem in undermining the very theoretical substance, and by implication - empirical viability - of regionality.

There are of course indications that the role of states are relativised in late modern (or post-modern) politics. And there is reason to expect current developments in the security problematique of the Baltic states - firmly connected to the dynamic of NATO’s enlargement - to exert an impact on regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region, possibly even on regionality. NATO moving east, engaging Russia and carrying elements of the post-modernist security agenda with it in the process, is likely to narrow the gap between the two agendas. Moreover, since the Baltic states are not included in a first round of expansion, they might in this very fact (failure, some would say) find an incentive for
shifting focus from international to regional levels. Involving Poland and engaging Russia, the enlargement of NATO will in fact bring the Alliance as such (not only individual NATO countries as the case has been) to bear increasingly on the regional setting as well as on regional activity. That might add significance to the regional level. It does not, however, necessarily imply that the state as actor and state centric approaches will succumb to regionality. Neither does it do away with the state as the prime referent for, and producer of, collective identity, so central to the approaches of both Wæver and Campbell. But it might spur a parallel to sovereignty. A way out of this theoretical impasse would then be not to stress the either or of regionality/sovereignty, but to see the two as organising principles at work side by side, complementing each other in parallelity rather than excluding one another in contrariety.

The Discourse of Danger

The Russian war on Chechnya is one event that was widely interpreted in the Baltic as a ominous sign of what Russia has in store for the Baltic states (see Rebas 1996: 27; Nekrasas 1996: 58; Tarand 1996: 24; cf. Haab 1997). The constitutional ban in all three states on any kind of association with post-Soviet political structures is indicative of a threat perception that confuses Soviet and post-Soviet, conflating Russia with the USSR and casting everything Russian as a threat through what Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985) call a discursive 'chain of equivalence'. In this the value of one side in a binary opposition is reiterated in other denotations of the same binary opposition. Thus, the value "Russia" in a Russia/Europe-opposition is also denoted by "instability", "Asia", "invasion", "chaos", "incitement of ethnic minorities", "unpredictability", "imperialism", "slander campaign", "migration", and so forth. The opposite value of these markers ("stability", "Europe", "defence", "order", and so on) would then denote the Self and thus conjure up an identity. When identity is precarious, this discursive practice intensifies by shifting onto a security mode, treating the oppositions as if they were questions of political existence, sovereignty, and survival. Identity is (re)produced more effectively when the oppositions are employed in a discourse of in-security and danger, that is, made into questions of national security and thus securitised in the Wæverian sense.

In the Baltic cases, especially the Lithuanian National Security Concept is knitting a chain of equivalence in a ferocious discourse of danger. Not only does it establish "[t]hat the defence of Lithuania is total and unconditional," and that "[s]hould there be no higher command, self-controlled combat actions of armed units and citizens shall be considered legal." (National Security Concept, Lithuania, Ch. 7, Sc. 1, 2) It also posits that

\[
\text{[t]he power of civic resistance is constituted of the Nation’s Will and self-determination to fight for own freedom, of everyone citizen’s resolution to resist to [an] assailant or invader by all possible ways, despite citizen’s age and [or] profession, of taking part in Lithuania’s defence (National Security Concept, Lithuania, Ch. 7, Sc. 4).}
\]

When this is added to the identifying of the objects of national security as "human and citizen rights, fundamental freedoms and personal security; state sovereignty; rights of the nation, prerequisites for a free development; the state independence; the constitutional order; state territory and its integrity, and; cultural heritage," and the subjects as "the state, the armed forces and other institutions thereof; the citizens and their associations, and; non governmental organisations,"(National Security Concept, Lithuania, Ch. 2, Sc. 1, 2) one approaches a conception of security in which the distinction between state and nation has disappeared in all-encompassing securitisation. Everyone is expected to defend
everything with every possible means. And when the list of identified threats to national security that follows range from "overt (military) aggression", via "personal insecurity", to "ignoring of national values," (National Security Concept, Lithuania, Ch. 10) the National Security Concept of Lithuania has become a totalising one taking everything to be a question of national security. The chain of equivalence is established when the very introduction of the National Security Concept is devoted to a denotation of Lithuania’s century-old sameness to "Europe" and resistance to "occupation and subjugation" (see quotation below), whereby Russia is depicted and installed as the first link in the discursive chain that follows.

In much the same way the "enemy within" came about in Estonia and Latvia. As the independence-memory was ritualised and added to the sense of insecurity – already fed by confusion in state administration, legislation and government policy grappling not only with what to do but also how to do it given the inexperience of state institutions or their absence – unity behind the overarching objective of independence receded for partial politics and the construction of the enemy within. This is what David Campbell (1992) points out when he sees the practices of security as being about securing a precarious state identity. One way of going about it is to cast elements on the state inside resisting the privileged identity as the subversive errand boys of the prime external enemy.

An example of exclusionary practices of this kind is found in the Latvian National Security Concept (p. 2) in which it is stated explicitly that

> since the external threat of [to] Latvia can be related to efforts of neighbouring countries to destabilise internal situation in Latvia, it is impossible to shift external threat from internal one clearly.

And the Lithuanian National Security Concept (Ch. 1, Sc. 1) cites under a rubric labelled "Specific", "incitement of ethnic groups to disloyal behaviour or disintegration" as "potential risks and foreign threats to Lithuania’s security".

The document Guidelines of the National Defence Policy of Estonia busies itself strictly with military threats, but Mare Haab (1997), an Estonian International Relations (IR) scholar involved in counselling on the drafting of a National Security Concept, notes that "learing a 'fifth column' is a distinct part of Estonia’s threat perception". And indeed, a recent proposal by the Estonian Defence Ministry to draft residents-yet-not-citizens for alternative, non-military national service provoked an outcry in the Estonian Parliament casting the proposal as tantamount to creating a "fifth column" within Estonian Armed Forces (Clemmesen 1997). In neither Estonia nor Latvia are Russian speakers (or others) in citizenship limbo allowed to serve even in the volunteer Home Guards (Clemmesen 1997).

**Ethnic Statehood by Insistence on Historical Continuity**

The ritualised independence-memory and the scenario of possible provocations soon cast the substantial Russian speaking minorities in Estonia and Latvia as potential vehicles for the dirty deeds of the Soviet Union/Russian Federation. Despite cross-ethnic support of the Baltic state projects shown during the struggle for independence and after, the loyalty of entire populations was, and still is, questioned on grounds of subversive activity of marginal groups (Moshes and Vushkarnik 1997: 92; Stranga 1996: 164-7; Asmus and Nurick 1996:129-30).

Relations between the ethnic majority and minority in Estonia and Latvia soured as Russia linked the issue of troop withdrawal to the status of the Russian minority in these states. In fact, it can be argued that negotiations with Russia actually inflated the enemy image of the Russian speaking
population in Estonia and Latvia. Russia’s minority linkage was persistently resisted by Estonia and Latvia, but the Russian stance, together with out of context official statements from Russian politicians to the effect that Russia’s national interest would be served by actively coming to rescue of Russians in the "near abroad" (Stranga 1996: 142-61; Stamers 1996: 193-8), caused apprehension to the Balts and fuelled the essentialist notion embedding political loyalty in ethnicity (cf. Anderson 1983; Tilly 1990; Campbell 1992). This is the brand of Herderian romantic nationalism that takes the nation to be an eternal, essential and organic unity of genetic proportions, and where language, community and culture are treated as faculties of a population’s kinship and bonds of blood. These notions and this kind of nationalism is prevalent in the Baltic states (see Jurgaitiene 1993; Clemmesen 1997). It can be traced for instance in the legislation on citizenship in Estonia and Latvia, in property restitution and ownership to land in all three states, and in the stressing of ethnic and cultural nationality in the National Security Concept (NSC) of Lithuania and, to a lesser extent, Latvia. When the Lithuanian National Security Concept casts "national demographic decrease", "dangerous infections", and "the spreading of inhuman, violence-propagating pseudo-culture" as potential internal threats to national security (NSC, Lithuania Ch. 10, Sc. 2), it rings like ethnic nationalism. The Latvian National Security Concept (Sc. 1) is more moderate in tone but states in the very beginning that "(t)he goal of Latvian security policy is to maintain and develop (...) the language, (and) national identity...". In a following section the link between internal and external threats are made explicit in terms of "(e)thnic situation and execution of Citizenship Law can cause political, economical and social problems." This, the paragraph goes on, might then act as a pretence for "neighbouring countries to interfere (with) Latvian internal affairs or to carry out aggressive actions." (NSC, Latvia, Sc. 4.9).

Through this discourse of danger, facilitated and often fuelled by Russian remarks and policies, mere heterogeneity is cast as danger by the coupling of perceived external threats (Russia) to the possibility - and hence creation - of an enemy within (i.e. Russian-speakers in general). And, unfortunately, by denouncing the zero option in the question of citizenship (extending citizenship to everyone with legal residence within state borders at a given date) and thereafter enacting austere (and belated) legislation regulating the matter, state authorities in Estonia and Latvia made them selves protagonists of ethnic essentialism. In the process, mutual suspicion and distrust between minority and minority in these countries increased, and Russia’s insistence on linking troop withdrawal to minority issues and the Balts’ refusal reinforced antagonism. Lithuania, by contrast, went for the zero option as early as in 1989 (admittedly with smaller but still substantial minority groups within its borders, and subsequently tightened in 1991), and consequently reached a concluding agreement on troop withdrawal with Russia in August 1993, a year earlier than Estonia and Latvia.¹⁹ Relations

¹⁸ However moderated to match EU regulations in order to pave the way for future EU membership.
¹⁹ The agreement between Lithuania and Russia was reached after the Lithuanian side abandoned its claim to compensations for damages inflicted on Lithuanian land, property and material by the presence of the Red Army. Negotiations between Russia and the two other Baltic states stalemated at the same time (April 1993) as Estonia and Latvia stuck to their compensation claim (at times reckoned in astronomic figures), and as Russia offered a harsh response to what
between Russia and Lithuania have been considerably less strained and minority issues have not been brought to bear negatively on internal stability, as is the case in Estonia and Latvia (Nekrasas 1996: 60; Stamers 1996: 197-8).

Conflation of state and nation as one inseparable entity is also evidenced in the Baltic states’ practices of inscribing historical memory in state foundations (cf. Haab 1997; Raid 1996; Lejins 1996; Ozolina 1996; Miniotaite 1997; Haab and Vares 1996). A case in point is the Estonian insistence that Russia recognise the Tartu-agreement of 1920 between the Soviet Union and Estonia as the basis upon which to reach an interstate agreement between the two of today, a claim impeding significantly on the issue of fixing the current interstate border (cf. Moshes and Vushkarnik 1997: 95). Another case in point is the re-enactment of pre-war legislation on citizenship in both Estonia and Latvia. The newly independent states conferred citizenship (and hence political rights and duties) automatically to legal residents of the inter-war states and their descendants. All other residents had to apply. Typically for the ethnic tint of legislation, foreigners that could prove their ancestors to be ethnically Estonian or Latvian were granted citizenship even if they had never set foot in the Baltics. Consistently, residents without proper ethnicity or forefathers with legal pre-war residence were deprived of citizenship and subjected to naturalisation, despite the fact that many of them had lived their entire life in the Baltic. A period of fifty years under Soviet subjugation is thus sought rendered legally null and void, erased, as it were, to facilitate the restoration of pre-war independence. The policies of restoration imply that the inter-war republics are taken as an anchoring point for the new states when defining territory, sovereignty, nation and citizenry. In turn, this linkage spills over to colour the meaning of security for the present state formation. And surely, since there is an unavoidable difference between pre-war and post-Soviet republics – for instance in territory and citizenry – security is bound to seem at stake. The restoring of historical continuity by sorting Soviet times into parenthesis character is a performance almost invariably undertaken in Baltic literatures on security, as well as in the National Security Concepts. Thereby the Self (the state, the nation, the people) is depicted as European, and the Other is delineated to the East of Europeanness, that is to the east of the Baltic: Asia, Russia, Chaos. The introductory provisions guiding the Lithuanian Seima (Parliament) in adopting a National Security Concept (Lithuania, Introduction), illustrate this:

many centuries ago, having incepted itself the Lithuanian State, resting on the Christian cultural grounds unifying Europe, is an integral part of the community of European nations; having through many centuries accumulated its historical statehood experience, the traditions of concord with its historically adjoining ethnic communities, fostered the oldest living Indo-European language, unique culture and world outlook, the Lithuanian nation can with these values enrich the community of European nations; the Lithuanian nation has never agreed to any occupation and subjugation it has resisted by all possible means and sought to free itself, and this resolution of the nation is unchangeable; [...] the Lithuanian nation’s aspiration has been and continues (to be) to safeguard its liberty, to create and ensure guarantees for secure and free development of its ethnic land, to foster its
national identity, to bring up its natural creative potential and to contribute to the advancement of the world; [...]..

Apart from the touch of pathos and the slight circumscription of historical facts, this quotation should suffice to illustrate the point made of inscribing a historical continuity. The preamble also provides an illustrious example of the discursive practices of delineating Self as European Sameness. And by implication, as the document continues with an extensive list of threats and risks to national security, it spells out what is Other to the Lithuanian Self, namely: ".. the fragile democracies, militarised states in the vicinity (of Lithuania) with highly unpredictable evolution options." (NSC Lithuania, Ch. 10, Sc. 1).

By the same token "fragile democracies and militarised states in the vicinity (of Lithuania) with highly unpredictable evolution options" is also what is Otherness to European Sameness. This rehearsal is reiterated time and again in official statements and in scholarly literature. The former Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Povilas Gyllys, stated in 1996 that integration with the EU is "a logical continuation of the history of an European Nation whose statehood dates back to the 13th century." (Grobel and Lejins 1996: 15). And a passage from the speech by the current Foreign Minister, Algirdas Saudargas, given before the Danish Institute of International Affairs on 3 February 1997, reads:

For centuries, Lithuania has sought to become an equal partner of European Affairs (the coronation of King Mindaugas in July 1253, the failed coronation of Grand Duke Vytautas in 1430 were actually steps in that direction), fulfilling its duty to the Continent by stopping incursions form the East and assuming a balancing position at times of peace (Print handed out on the occasion).

Lithuania’s plight and current danger, one is led to understand, is that the division line between an European Self and an Asian-Russian Other be inscribed to the West of the Baltic, leaving the Baltic states once again on the "wrong" side, as it were, and thereby prey to the Other. The talk of "a new Yalta" or "a new Munich" is rife in Baltic security discourse (Nekrasas 1996; Miniotaite 1997). It certainly invokes not only the collective memory of historical continuity, but also danger. Here is the reasoning of Evaldas Nekrasas (1996: 23), a prominent Lithuanian specialist in security policy:

In Lithuania at least, it is a common understanding that the most eminent danger to Lithuania’s security is not so much Russia itself with all its instability, messianic zeal, problems with redefining past identities and difficulties in defining and calculating present interest, but Western hesitation about where "to place" the Baltic states - among the "successor states of the Soviet Union" or in the group of the Central European states. The first alternative is quite perilous.

On this, the Latvian security scholar Aivars Stranga (1996: 162) seems to agree when he notes that the main threat to Baltic security interests stems from Russia’s "unwillingness ... to permit the establishment of a security system in Europe which would give the Baltic states true military and political security guarantees;" then he goes on to stress that the crucial point in this respect is "the pressure Moscow wages against the West" and "the readiness of Western Europe and the United States to yield to such pressure." In Stranga’s mind, considering the forecasted scope of NATO enlargement, it is apparently an excessive readiness." To the same effect, Ronald D. Asmus and Robert Nurick (1996: fn3) note that "Estonian President Lennart Meri has gone so far as to insist that any attempt by

---

* Cf. also the statement by the Latvian Foreign Minister V. Birkavs in Grobel and Lejins (1996: 34).
NATO to differentiate between the Baltic states and other East-Central European countries would be tantamount to a new form of ‘appeasement’.

As mentioned earlier, the Latvian National Security Concept makes no efforts – except naming Russia – to veil the sources from which it takes threats to emanate. On the contrary, the Latvian National Security Concept posits as an established fact that "neighbouring states" are harbouring ill will and evil intentions against Latvia. Rhetorically, the Latvian National Security Concept is held in a more sober and pragmatic tone than the Lithuanian one, and there is nothing of the introductory passages invoking a glorious past of the Latvian nation. However, the minority issue and the fear of a "fifth column" of Russian residents disloyal to the Latvian state – a threat perception addressed frequently elsewhere in Latvian literatures on security – is alluded to in the paragraph following immediately after the one identifying the main source of external threat. In the paragraph outlining "Threat" the Latvian National Security Concept states that "(i)f (the) political situation in a neighboring country is completely unstable, different political or military formations may try to seize power in Latvia even without approval or support of the government of this neighboring country." (NSC Latvia Ch. 3: 2).

Estonia is perhaps the one Baltic state that most consequently has pursued a policy of inscribing historical continuity to the current Estonian Republic. Mare Haab (1997) notes this policy not only in the restitution of pre-war ownership to land and real estate, and in the initial pre-war design to an Estonian Defence force, but also in the fact that on 6 November 1991 the Supreme Council of Estonia (the still Soviet type Parliament preceding the Riigikogu) re-enacted the 1938 Law on citizenship (cf. also Wæver 1997b). She (Haab 1997) also points out that the new Parliament, elected in September 1992, took as its urgent business to declare "on 7 October 1992 that the present Republic of Estonia was identical to the Republic that had existed in 1918-1940" (added emphasis). This, she (Haab 1997) observes, was "… utterly unproductive as to the Estonian-Russian relations." She concludes that Estonia’s relations with Russia in the period between recognition of independence (20 August 1991) to the withdrawal of Russian troops (31 August 1994) were primarily determined by impacts of historical legacy. Estonia expected Russia to: first, condemn the 1940 aggression against Estonia and apologise for Stalinist mass repression against the Estonian people; second, acknowledge of the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty between Estonia and Russia; third, immediately withdraw all the Russian troops from the territory of independent and sovereign Estonia (Haab 1997).

These practices of inscribing historical continuity in state foundations are in themselves a kind of securitisation inasmuch as they cast the entire state project as precarious if not firmly connected to the historic one. This held together with the way the minority issue is handled in Latvia and Estonia and

---

21 This is a parallel to the emphasis in the Lithuanian National Security Concept placed on total defence and guerrilla warfare, explicitly referring to the «Forest Brothers'» armed guerrilla resistance to Soviet occupation waged up to 1953, and - on the level of symbols - the uniforms of the Lithuanian National Guard which is celebrated replicas of the uniforms of the inter-war National Guard.

22 Quote taken from an early draft of Haab’s article. Page numbers not available.
the prominence of the "fifth column" theme in these state’s discourse on security (Haab 1997, Ozolina 1996; Stranga 1996; Stamers 1996; Ozolins 1996; cf. Clemmesen 1997), a fairly explicit conflation of external and internal threats emerges in the Campellian sense of "exclusionary practices" (Campell 1992: 239). To Campbell (1992), this practice has to do with the construction of state identity, part and parcel of the whole security business.

And surely, the ritualising of collective memory, the evoking of historical continuity, and delineating the Baltic as European Sameness opposed to Russian Otherness is very much a discursive practices to (re)produce identity by defining territory, citizenry, and sovereignty – in short, inscribing borders. So are the righting of historical wrongs: Not only a source of legitimacy in the struggle for secession from the USSR, but a discursive pursuit to link pre-war independence and post-Soviet current statehood. This move is seeking to exempt, as it were, the middle part to facilitate a coherent narrative of the state. Naturally, there is no room for a foreign disjunction in a monological narrative of historical continuity. "The result", Erik Ringmar (1996: 456) contends,

is an occasion when not only our interests, but also our identities are called into question; when we suddenly will be presented to ourselves as a new kind of character participating in a different kind of plot. In case of an individual, perhaps we could call such a time an 'identity crisis'; in case of a society, perhaps we could call it a "formative moment".

Consequently, the "formative moments" of state independence in Estonia and Latvia left the Russian minorities there in a political as well as a judicial limbo. In both Estonia and Latvia only those who were legal residents of the pre-war republics on the date of 17 June 1940 (the date of Soviet annexation) and their descendants were granted citizenship, a regulation leaving 90% of the Russian minority in Estonia and 70% in Latvia without citizenship and subject to naturalisation in order to get a Baltic one (Stamers 1996: 192). The minority policy and legislation on citizenship in Estonia and Latvia were met with harsh responses from Russia, alleging gross violations of minority rights and rattling the sabre of Russia’s obligation to protect the interests of Russians abroad. As the issue of

---

23 The literature on the ethnic issue in the Baltic states applies a variety of ways to differentiate the population's ethnic composition. 'Russian-speakers', a term favoured by Russian authorities, lump together all non-Baltic groups without regard to ethnic origin. The numbers here refer to those who in the 1989 census declared their ethnic identity as Russian, a number which peculiarly also includes Belorussians and Ukrainians. The 1989 census provides the latest figures, according to which 62% of the Estonian population regarded themselves as ethnic Estonian, whereas 52% in Latvia stated Latvian origin. In Lithuania, 80% considered themselves Lithuanian, while only 9% viewed themselves as Russian. There has been net emigration among the non-Baltic ethnic groups since 1991, altering the proportions slightly. See Guntis Stamers (1996: 190-2, note 50).

24 The naturalisation requirements include five years of permanent residence permit; demonstrated language skills; familiarity with the country’s history, Constitution, and National Anthem; and an oath of loyalty to the Constitution. Estonia tightened the residence requirements in a 1995 revision of the law of 1992. A permanent residence permit is now obtained upon 3 years temporal (and legal) residence. After the 5 (previously 2) years of permanent residence one must undergo 1 'waiting year' before being eligible to apply for an Estonian citizenship – altogether 9 years after entering the country. In Latvia, the process of naturalisation is regulated according to age groups allowing the last tranche of those not born in Latvia to apply for citizenship in 2003. Politically, aliens are not enfranchised and can not run for office in general elections, they are not entitled to own real estate or weaponry. In course of Latvia’s privatisation process, «aliens» were on general basis allotted fewer privatisation vouchers than citizens, which in turn received bonus vouchers. Also, Latvian state pension is summarily reduced with 10% for non-citizens. See Stamers (1996: 190-3) and Moshes and Vushkarnik (1997: 90-1).

25 Most notably in the Main Provisions of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation issued on 2 November 1993, in which the Political Section states that Russia might employ military force to defend the interests of Russian citizens abroad, military facilities and armed forces of the Russian Federation situated abroad, and to prevent the expansion of
minority status and citizenship in the Baltic states is legally settled, monitored by an Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioner and a Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Representative (sometimes denoted “Ombudsman”), and accepted by the OSCE and the Council of Europe, Russia has, however, lessened its critique (Stranga 1996: 193-7), except for an outburst in early 1998, which led to concessions in Latvian naturalisation requirements.

When legislation on citizenship in Latvia was finally adopted in 1994 (in Estonia 1992, revised in 1995), residents without citizenship were at least conferred a "aliens with legal resident permit" status, but the legislation did not mitigate the judicial limbo they found themselves in. Those not yet eligible for naturalisation are de jure stateless persons, since the state of which they used to be citizens (the Soviet Union) ceased to exist in 1991 (Moshes and Vushkarnik 1997: 91). Many find the threshold for naturalisation too cumbersome or too distant to be worth climbing. Instead they opt for Russian citizenship, which is subsequently securitised by representatives of the majority as evidence of Russia’s evil schemes to once again subjugate the Baltic states by establishing and exploiting a "fifth column" of Russian-speaking minorities (cf. Ozolina 1996a; Haab 1997). Tension in minority-majority relations is thus reproduced and continues to sour Estonia’s and Latvia’s interstate relations with Russia.

In Pursuit of Self

Reading Baltic literatures on security, one is not left in much doubt that Russia is the organised political power, (i.e. the representation of an anthropomorphic collective will). The Russian state is the danger to the Baltic. The danger of Russia is primarily seen as one of encroachment - be it by ways of political or economic subversion, or by downright military aggression - on their state sovereignty. Conflating state and nation, everything Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian is thereby also threatened. The sheer size and might of Russia, and the asymmetric power relations between Russia and the Baltic states itself is inscribed with danger. The prevalent economic and political instability in Russia is denoted as a threat in terms of uncertainty and unpredictability, that is, installed as one link in a discursive chain of equivalence casting Russia as anarchy, the binary opposition to state sovereignty. Baltic state sovereignty is thus underpinned by a discourse of danger securitising culture, crime, diseases, alleged smear campaigns and possible invasions alike.

In this discourse of danger, the current thaw and policy of liberal reform in Russia is interpreted as a mere parenthesis in a brutal history of Russian imperialism, her true nature, as it were. It is widely held among the Balts that the imperial traditions in Russian foreign policy might resuscitate at any time and imminently pose a threat to the Baltic states. The bottom line of Baltic threat perception and assessment is one of Russian coercive aggression.

The Baltic states increasing vocal quest for Western integration after 1991 have excluded alternatives to a security policy based on "hard" NATO guarantees. As the Baltic states realise that they will not be the first to join NATO, their foreign policy orientation is becoming disparate, and Baltic unity is cracking as Lithuania woos Poland, Estonia looks to the Nordic countries and Latvia still pins its hopes on the USA (cf. Foreign Policy Concept, Latvia, p. 11).

---

military blocs or alliances to the detriment of Russian security interests. See Stranga 1996: 146.

*a In Estonia the number of residents with Russian citizenship is up from some 34,000 in 1994 to 89,174 by April 1996 (Haab, 1997), and 110,000 by 1 October 1996 (Moshes and Vushkarnik 1997: 92).
Indeed, the West (i.e. NATO), notwithstanding the Partnership for Peace, is reluctant to project its power to the Baltic states. Rather, the West stresses other means of security, other types of security, and other modes of going about issues of a political nature that not in and of themselves have to be treated as security problems. This is pretty much in accordance with the post-modern security agenda. Although elements of the post-modern security agenda are paid attention to in the Baltic states – even in the National Security Concept documents – and there certainly are dissonant voices to the dominant discourse of danger, the modernist security agenda is still dominant. Albeit, as indicated, it is under increasing pressure because Baltic securitisation no longer seem to have the same effect on the West as it once did.

Conclusion

Could it be that NATO’s enlargement and the prospect of an EU expansion are inaugurating an opportunity – indeed, an imperative – of shifting discourse from securitisation to integration? And could it be that one is facing the presence and contest between two different discourses of an entirely incompatible nature? One which essence it is to "other" Russia through persistent securitisation? Another which crux it is to engage and involve Russia in a heterologue among East and West (or at least a dialogue between NATO and Russia)? If this is the case, the NATO enlargement summit in July 1997 will most likely be a watershed point after which the enlargement issue will be out of the way, so to speak, enabling a further rapprochement between Western Europe and Russia – politically as well as economically. This dynamic of engaging rather than "othering" Russia certainly carry repercussions for the way "the Lands between" Russia and current-scale-NATO are dealing with both. A NATO-Russia modus vivendi on the enlargement issue and subsequently increased co-operation between Russia and Western Europe surely undermines some of Eastern Europe’s rationale for "othering" Russia. The paramount objective of countries in Eastern and Central Europe is Western integration, which already requires them to solve whatever border and minority disputes they may have with their neighbours. It is likely that a further NATO-led integration, not least an integration of the states further East (those with closer proximity, even common borders, with Russia) will require these states to engage Russia constructively in addition to solving actual disputes. Certainly, many East Europeans themselves underscore their possible role as a bridge between the West and Russia. Sadly, however, the vigorous discourse of danger and the practices of overly securitisation interrupts the bridging. This will have to change if integration is to continue.

Moreover, the second tire in the coming together of the European continent is prospectively constituted by the EU and the plans for an EU expansion. Since Russia welcomes an EU expansion and there is little reason to expect the EU to overtake NATO in issues pertaining to European security, the discourse of EU-driven integration is certainly not one of danger and securitisation. On the contrary, a discourse of danger, particularly one securitising Russia, is disqualifying almost per se in the EU. There are indications that at least some influential Balts now understand this, and that they have come to regard the success of multilateralisation (their successful strategy of internationalising concerns by staging a sense of security drama and practising high-pitch securitisation) as exhausted. It is a strategy of yesteryear that no longer will increase the prospects for a rapid Western rescue. Many are yet not convinced. Convincing them might prove to be a difficult process precisely because of the hitherto successful securitisation. Rather, it is now time to pick up the old bridge-vision and take it further, to envision a extended, united "Europe of difference" – no less. That would be a "Europe" including Russia. This, of course, is an elaboration in concord with the notion of the two contending security agendas. And, it is a (perhaps wishful) scenario envisioning the end of power-politics, hard-
ware security, state-centrist, and enemy-producing security discourse. And, it will be surely ironic, if it holds to be true, that a change of this magnitude and significance is being spearheaded by NATO – a former hard-ware military alliance of the Cold War.

However, this article maintains that the Westward thrust of the Baltic states to date has been part and parcel of a Baltic discourse of danger delineating Russia as Other and Europe as Self. With few exceptions the discourse on Baltic security identifies an array of dangers emanating from Russia and threatening the entire gamut of Baltic security from sovereignty to ethnicity. The conflation of state and nation and the invoking of historical memory as legitimisation of state-building enterprises reproduces the perception of threat and perpetuates the discourse of danger. A rationale for widespread securitisation is provided, and a precarious Baltic state identity is (re)produced. Precisely because identity is precarious and elusive, and because state institutions are weak, faltering or lacking, the entire state project is perceived as vulnerable. The discourse of danger is instrumental in propping up state institutions, borders and identity to mitigate the sense of vulnerability. Only firmly anchored to 'the West' can the Baltic countries ascertain their state identity, it is held. This, however, implies that the division line between East and West must be reinscribed between Russia and the Baltic states, which in turn perpetuates insecurity, permits securitisation, and bolsters identity by "othering" difference. In short, Russia is the Baltic states' constituting Other (cf. Neumann 1993; 1996b; Knutsen and Neumann 1995: 31).

Rather, the discourse of danger should be substituted with one of difference; the mode of discourse should shift from one of threat-defence sequences to one of discord-mediation sequences, allowing difference to meet and discord to be resolved without the conjuring up of existential threats, danger and in-security. Otherness need not be invoked to ascertain and (re)produce identity – difference will suffice.

A struggle of speak is now waged against the continuos re-inscription of the division line between East and West in Europe. This is performed not only by the Balts but also by those elements in the West subscribing to classical, hard-ware, enemy-producing security, as well as in the entire belt of states currently separating NATO and Russia. This is the struggle between the modernist and the post-modernist security agenda – in a sense also a struggle between East and West. The question is not which will prevail – but how to get together.


Grobel, O. and Atis Lejins, eds. 1996. *The Baltic Dimension of European Integration* (Conference Report), Riga: Latvija Arpolitikas Instituts (LAI), Institute for East West Studies (IEWS), Royal Danish Embassy.


BURUNDI: A CRITICAL SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

Eli Stamnes and Richard Wyn Jones

Abstract
In the last few years Critical Security Studies (CSS) has emerged as a new approach to the academic study of security. This article argues that its genesis is best understood as a reaction to two developments, namely ‘real world’ changes after the end of the Cold War and the far-reaching philosophical debates that have recently been taking place within the social sciences. The authors argue for a conceptualisation of CSS based on an explicit commitment to human emancipation. They then illustrate their preferred understanding of security through a discussion of Burundi. This case study not only illustrates the theoretical claims of CSS but also serves as a contribution to a more comprehensive understanding of the security issues with which this country and its inhabitants are faced.

Introduction
This article has two inter-related aims. It seeks first to outline and explain the approach to the study of security which has developed under the rubric ‘Critical Security Studies’ (CSS). This is done initially by comparing the principles and precepts of CSS to those of the more orthodox approach to the study of security – described here as Traditional Security Studies.27 Subsequently, the particular case of Burundi is explored from a Critical Security perspective. This serves not only to further illustrate the nature of the Critical Security approach, but also – the second aim of the chapter – to provide a conceptual framework for understanding the theory and practice of security in Burundi.

Critical Security Studies
CSS represents an important departure in the academic study of security, strategy and peace. The approach owes its genesis to two coincidental developments: the end of the Cold War, and major debates within the social sciences as to their nature, purpose and method. Both developments ask fundamental questions about some of the central tenets that underpinned traditional Security Studies and Peace Studies alike. The vibrant and often contentious exchanges that have resulted

from this period of geopolitical transformation and intellectual uncertainty look set to continue well into the 21st century. Nevertheless, the contours of a new approach are now clearly emerging. CSS, as it has come to be known, is nothing if not ambitious. Its proponents not only offer a thoroughgoing critique of both the theory and practice of the hitherto dominant, traditional approach to security (usually called Strategic Studies or National Security Studies). They also aim to provide intellectual support and justification for alternative security practices that can emancipate humanity from the fear and insecurity which dominate the lives of people across the world (Bilgin, Booth and Wyn Jones, 1998; Wyn Jones, 1999; Booth, forthcoming).

**The Critique of Traditional Security Studies**

Traditional Security Studies was in many ways a direct product of the Cold War. Despite ritualistic references to such great military thinkers of the past such as Sun Tzu and Clausewitz, the subject was almost exclusively concerned with superpower rivalry, and in particular its nuclear manifestations. It was the perceived exigencies of Cold War competition that encouraged Security Studies to flourish in Western academia and research institutes. Furthermore, from the late 1940s onwards, such was the symbiotic nature of the relationship between security specialists in academia and defence establishments in government and industry that some posited the existence of a military-industrial-academic complex; each element had vested interest in promoting a militarised conception of relations between states.

The ethical issues raised by this entanglement were trenchantly highlighted in the 1960s by such writers as Anatol Rapoport (1960; 1964; 1970) and Philip Green (1966; 1973), but equally as problematic for the future of human security was the state-centric conceptualisation of the subject. Making sovereign states conceived in rather simplistic unitary terms, the exclusive ‘referent object’ for the understanding of security issues had far-reaching implications. Because Cold War Security Studies was about states, the security of individuals was subsumed under the ambit of the state, and often sacrificed to the demands of realpolitik. The more secure the apartheid state of South Africa became, for example (in terms of strong borders and increased legitimacy for the regime) the less secure became the lives of the majority of the population. Security Studies, implicitly or explicitly, generated information and analysis for states, and specifically for the ruling elites within them (Wyn Jones, 1999). Security Studies within universities became an arm of statism.

Moreover, Cold War Security Studies conceived state security in almost exclusively militarised terms. Security was equated with military security. True, during the era of détente and oil shocks from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s, a broader range of issues was allowed on to the agenda, in recognition of the growing sensitivity of economic and environmental concerns. However, this constituted more of a parenthesis rather than a break; things returned quickly to security-business-as-usual with the re-intensification of the Cold War in the late 1970s.

Traditional Security Studies was never without its critics. As already noted, some questioned whether close involvement with government was compatible with scholarly independence. But criticism was not confined to academia. Events such as the ‘Ban the Bomb’ marches in Britain in the late 1950s, support for the ‘nuclear freeze’ in the United States in the 1980s, and growing demands in Western Europe for ‘pan-European’ perspectives, illustrated that crosscutting differences over the theory and practice of security existed even within the West (see, for example, Kaldor, 1991).

In the early 1980s, the widespread fear and disaffection created by the Second Cold War led to two inter-related and hugely significant developments. First, the introduction of Cruise and Pershing II missiles into western Europe led a massive resurgence in peace activism that challenged
some of the central nostrums of security policy. The newly invigorated peace movement also inspired and was inspired by a second development, namely the growth of ‘alternative defence’ thinking, which challenged the establishment and its experts on their own grounds.

The crucial insight upon which ‘alternative defence’ was based was that the zero-sum notions of security prevalent during the Cold War were actually destabilising, and a major source of insecurity in international relations. Thus for alternative defence thinkers, real peace and security was not just the absence of war, but rather depended on the establishment of the conditions for social justice and mutual understanding – a view also shared by Peace Research. Alternative defence thinking concentrated on seeking means whereby the so-called ‘security dilemma’ could at least be mitigated. Consequently they developed such concepts as common security, non-offensive defence, a nuclear freeze, military confidence building, democracy and disarmament, ‘détente from below,’ and alternative security orders. Surprisingly perhaps, it was ultimately in the Eastern bloc that these ideas were to have most impact. The principles and precepts of ‘alternative defence’ directly influenced the ‘new thinking’ that emerged in the Soviet Union after 1986 under its new leader Mikhail Gorbachev (Risse-Kappen, 1994, Wyn Jones, 1999). Despite being condemned in many Western capitals for being hopelessly deluded and idealistic, alternative defence thinkers played a crucial role in the ending of the Cold War.

Towards a Critical Security Studies

Given the symbiotic relationship between the Cold War and Security Studies, it is not surprising that the end of the former led to a crisis in the latter. Not least among the factors that have led some to call for a fundamental rethink of the way security is conceptualised has been the inability of ‘security specialists’ to respond adequately in the face of the new – or old, but hitherto neglected – issues which have emerged since the late 1980s. These issues have forced all but the most hidebound to reconsider what we actually mean when we use the term ‘security’, and what is the appropriate ‘referent object’ for security discourse (the contours of the ensuing debate can be traced through the following collections: Lipschutz, 1995; Brown, Lynn-Jones and Miller, 1995; Brown, Coté Jr., Lynn-Jones and Miller, 1997; Lynn-Jones and Miller, 1995; Krause and Williams, 1997; Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998 28; Booth, forthcoming). Proponents of CSS have combined an eagerness to explore these crucial issues with a commitment also to reconsider the methodology by which security should be studied (Krause and Williams, 1997; Wyn Jones, 1999). Again, the influence of the alternative defence thinkers of the early 1980s is important here. They had been concerned to support and influence those social movements that had emerged to protest the continuing superpower arms spiral. In doing this they had broken fundamentally from traditional security specialists who had often claimed a spurious objectivity and detachment for their work while in reality their teaching and research legitimised the prevailing status quo by making it into a ‘false necessity’.

Through their rejection of simplistic notions of ‘detachment’ and ‘objectivity’, alternative defence thinkers were precursors of a much more widespread move in the social sciences to question
the very nature and purpose of social research (Bernstein, 1988). While such questioning has been vigorous, there has been little consensus as to what might constitute acceptable answers. This is reflected in CSS where there is disagreement, for example, between those who follow such post-structuralist thinkers as Foucault and Derrida and those who are more persuaded by the arguments of Critical Theorists such as Horkheimer and Habermas. Whereas the former group of scholars focus largely on deconstruction/de-essentialising claims about security, the latter group’s theorising also involves a reconstructive element. Nevertheless, whatever their differences in focus and methodology, all proponents of CSS seem to regard the ultimate aim of their work as aiding in the transformation of prevailing patterns of power and domination in favour of those who are currently disempowered and disenfranchised. In the case of the post-structuralists, this purpose is usually implicit in their work – to be read ‘between the lines’ as it were (but see the discussion in chapter 4 of Wyn Jones, 1999 for a more detailed survey). However, in the case of thinkers influenced by Critical Theory, this intent is recognised in terms of an explicit commitment to human emancipation. It is within this latter strand that this article has its basis.

As well as introducing a new level of methodological awareness and sophistication into Security Studies, proponents of CSS have also re-worked the key concept of ‘security’ in important ways. In doing so they have provided new answers to such central questions as: What is security? Whose security should we be concerned about? And, what is the purpose of studying security? The answers to these questions provide the basis for the claim of supporters of CSS that it represents ‘the next stage’ in this new era of world politics.

**What is security?**

As we have already seen, Traditional Security Studies understood security in almost entirely military terms. This may have had a certain logic during the period of nuclear, mutual assured destruction (MAD). However, even then, this understanding did not produce a conceptualisation of security that spoke the concerns of the vast majority of the world’s population living in the Third World: for them a broader conception of security always made more sense. In the wake of the end of the Cold War, the narrowly militarised understanding of security simply became anachronistic. The vocabulary of nuclear deterrence, arms control, limited war and superpower crisis management had minimal relevance in a world in which the salient security concerns increasingly related to ethnic conflict, refugee flows, famine, peaceful settlement of disputes, the politics of identity, confidence-building, humanitarian intervention, conventional war, and so on. A narrowly militarised understanding fails to grasp the complexity of the ‘new’ issues on the security agenda, not to mention their life-and-death relevance to many people on the planet.

Published in 1983, Barry Buzan’s seminal study *People States and Fear* was the first sustained attempt from within Security Studies to re-draw a broader notion of security that moved beyond a purely military focus. Although still arguing within a state-centric framework, Buzan argued that by paying disproportionate attention to the military dimension, analysts ignored other issues which were of equal importance when it came to understanding how policy-makers and populations alike perceive their security interests. In response, he proposed to broaden the conceptualisation of security to include four other ‘sectors’ in addition to that of the military: these were political, economic, societal and environmental sectors. This influential formulation has been criticised. Some traditionalists argue that adopting a broader conception of security will dilute the coherence of Security Studies (Walt, 1991). Some radical critics are wary of the danger that labelling
issues such as environmental degradation as ‘security concerns’ will lead to their militarisation (Deudney, 1990). However, these arguments have been forcefully countered by those who favour the ‘broadening of security’. On the one hand they have pointed out that the parsimoniousness of the traditional approach has blinded analysts to the inter-relationship between different threats, or in Buzan’s terms, between the different sectors. Thus one of the consequences of rejecting any attempt to narrow the analysis through an arbitrary definition is to allow for a more variegated and realistic assessment of the dynamics of security. Interestingly, a broader notion of security also echoes what is increasingly becoming the explicit practice of states. Even Britain, for example, now distinguishes between ‘defence policy’, which focuses exclusively on the military dimension, and ‘security policy’, which takes a broader view incorporating economic and trade issues.

In response to worries that ‘broadening security’ runs the risk of militarising the new issues incorporated onto the security agenda, supporters argue that broadening is itself part of a move to promulgate a different understanding of security: this understanding rejects the zero-sum notions prevalent during the Cold War (Wyn Jones, 1999).

In addition to supporting moves to broaden notions of security, proponents of CSS have also called for its ‘deepening’. Deepening involves the recognition that security is a derivative concept (Walker, 1997; Booth, 1991, 1997). That is, our conceptions of security depend on the particular philosophical world-view we have. Traditional Security Studies was based on an often-implicit understanding of a world characterised by a continual struggle for power among sovereign states competing in an anarchical international system. According to this understanding, inter-state conflict is endemic and is destined to remain so, and this should establish the character of Security Studies. However, while this view may have achieved the status of ‘common-sense’ among Cold War security specialists, this is far from being the only possible world-view. When conceptions of security are derived from alternative perspectives – those of Feminists, Marxists, World Order thinkers and so on – very different understandings of ‘security’ emerge. Recognising the derivative nature of security, CSS has sought to expose and criticise the world-view that has underpinned traditional Security Studies and explore the understandings of security that can be built on the basis of possible alternatives. To this end CSS is concerned to explore regional security questions, including those of a military character, and promote thinking about practical policies to advance the security of people as individuals and groups (Booth and Vale, 1997).

**Whose security?**

One of the most pervasive assumptions underlying traditional Security Studies is state-centrism. State-centrism privileges the role of the state in world politics, regarding it as the sole legitimate focus for decision making and loyalty. The state became the only referent object of Cold War Security Studies. Strategic problems were analysed in terms of their impact on states. ‘National security’ was stressed as opposed to the security of individuals, groups of one sort or another, civil society, world society or common humanity. The justification for this was the doctrine that the state provides security for its own citizens. However, even a cursory examination of the empirical reality of world politics exposes the fact that this is a hopelessly idealised view (Booth, 1991; Reus-Smit, 1992; Wyn Jones, 1999). States tend to prioritise threats to their own security and often end up neglecting those posed to individuals, groups within the state, and certainly humanity as a whole. Indeed, in many cases, the state itself is one of the main threats to the security of its own population.
This fact is all too well confirmed by the widespread pattern of state-sanctioned political oppression, human rights violations and torture.

Rather than continue to privilege states as the referent object for Security Studies, proponents of the Critical approach have argued that the concept of security should be extended to referents other than the state. In his influential essay on ‘Security and Emancipation’ (1991), Ken Booth insisted on the need for analysts to view states as means rather than ends in themselves. That is, while states may in some cases be providers of security, and are certainly a crucially important element in the politics of security, this does not mean that they should be privileged as referents for the theory and practice of security. Booth argues that the ultimate referent for security should be individual human beings. This formulation has not won universal acceptance even in the Critical camp. Some, for example, have suggested that ‘civil society’ is a more appropriate referent. However, given that making individuals the ‘ultimate’ referent for discussion of security concerns does not preclude – in fact, encourages – consideration of the broader contexts in which human beings live their lives, the logic of favouring the individual referent is particularly strong (for an extended discussion of this issue see Wyn Jones, 1999).

**What sort of Security Studies?**

In addition to challenging the way in which security has been conceptualised, CSS also offers an alternative understanding of the meaning and purpose of studying security in the context of universities. As we have noted, behind a veil of spurious detachment and objectivity, traditional Security Studies has served the interests of statism and official thinking. Ultimately the subject has legitimised and supported the interests of those who benefit from the status quo, on both a local and global scale. CSS follows in the tradition of alternative defence thinking by regarding itself as thought in the service of ‘bottom-up’ progressive social change. Robert Cox (1981: 128) has famously argued that “all theory is for someone and for some purpose”. If this is the case then CSS is primarily for those made insecure by the prevailing order. In Critical Theory terms, its purpose is to aid in the process of their emancipation.

**Critical Security Studies and the future**

The traditional, Cold War approach to security has attracted many critics, though it is still resilient in many institutions. CSS is perhaps best understood as an attempt to bring together these various strands of criticism and to weld them into a coherent whole. A variety of different approaches have important contributions to make to the CSS project: the work of the Peace Researchers in widening the concept of violence and emphasising the positive conception of peace, the work of alternative defence thinkers in focusing on ‘common security’ and ways of mitigating the security dilemma, the work of critics within Security Studies in broadening the security agenda, the role of Third World specialists in emphasising the role of the structure of the international economic system in engendering insecurity in the South, the insights of feminists in underlining the relationship between the personal, the political and the international, and demonstrating the centrality of identity politics to the understanding international phenomena, the analyses of Critical Theorists in exposing traditional approaches to theory and in outlining a theoretical approach explicitly oriented towards human emancipation, and the work of World Order theorists in outlining alternative visions of attainable and sustainable world orders (Booth, 1997).
By bringing these strands together, underpinning them with greater methodological sophistication, and providing new direction and greater coherence, CSS hopes to become an important voice informing and legitimising those political practices which promote security, community and emancipation for the whole of humanity (Booth, forthcoming). However if this extremely ambitious aim is to be achieved, the Critical Security perspective must do more than assist analysts in clarifying conceptual and meta-theoretical issues – although this is undoubtedly important – it must also prove its ability to throw new light on empirical studies. While the task of applying the conceptual insights of CSS to ‘real people in real places’ is still in its relatively early stages, prominent proponents of the approach such as Ken Booth and Peter Vale (1997: 329) are explicitly aware that it is the success of this venture that will determine “if critical security studies are to flourish and lead to a revisioning of security in world politics”.29 The following discussion of Burundi’s security situation represents our own modest contribution to this effort.30 It seeks to demonstrate how both ‘broadening’ and ‘extending’ the concept of security is necessary in order to understand the security issues that concern the people of this benighted central-African state. Furthermore, it will seek to demonstrate the (potential) utility of fastening upon some of the areas of unfulfilled potential that exist within the specific Burundian situation in order to edge developments in Burundi in a more emancipatory direction.

Burundi: whose security?

“Disputes – international: none” – so reads the section dedicated to Burundi in the 1997 CIA World Fact Book. This suggests that when viewed from the perspective of Traditional Security Studies with its stress inter-state military conflict (actual or potential), this was a country whose affairs were of little relevance to the concerns of security analysts. In the intervening period, Burundi seems to have become embroiled in the chaos in its neighbour to the west, the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), and may thus now fall under the remit of Traditional Security Studies. However even in 1997, it would seem to be a particularly perverse form of Security Studies that did not recognise that Burundi was beset by the most serious of security problems. As will be seen below, sudden violent death had been an ever-present threat for the Burundian population during the previous five years. Moreover, the chronic insecurity of the 5.5 million inhabitants was further compounded by their country’s extreme poverty (see for example Amnesty International, 1997; 1998; Evans, 1997).

Burundi provides a striking empirical example of the inadequacy of the traditional security paradigm. Let us first consider the issue of the appropriate referent object for Security Studies. The traditional focus on the state was justified, in familiar contractarian terms, on the grounds that the state provides for the security of its own population (Krause and Williams, 1997). In the words of Osgood and Tucker (1967: 284), the state was regarded as the “indispensable condition of value”.

29 We should note that proponents of Critical Security Studies realise that the tasks of conceptualisation and the application of concepts to concrete empirical examples are dialectically inter-related. Their conceptual framework is not regarded as immutable but is rather subject to transformation in the light of practice (Wyn Jones, 1999).
30 Please note that this article deals with the situation in Burundi up until the autumn of 1998.
The example of Burundi not only serves to refute this assumption, but totally reverse the terms of debate. For ever since Burundi gained its independence in 1962, the state has been the major source of insecurity for the greater proportion of its population. Most horrifically, on several occasions the state’s armed forces have carried out massacres during which tens of thousands have been slaughtered.

This endemic insecurity is a result of the deep ethnic and socio-economic fissures in Burundian society. Since independence, with the exception of one short period in the 1990s, Burundi has been ruled by Tutsi dominated governments. The Tutsi form a minority (approximately 14%) of the population, and successive governments have maintained their domination over the Hutu majority (approximately 85% of the population) by ensuring their “near exclusion [...] from public life, knowledge and wealth” (Reyntjens, 1993: 563). In this sense, Burundi has provided a mirror-image to neighbouring Rwanda. There the Hutu majority (the proportions of both groups are broadly similar in both countries) has dominated the Tutsi for most of the period since the revolution of 1961 and the break-up of Ruanda-Urundi (Lemarchand, 1970). But despite this difference in the balance of power between both groups, the post-independence history of both states has been equally grisly.

Since Burundi gained independence it has been convulsed by regular bouts of violence: coups have been the ‘normal’ means of securing (intra-Tutsi) regime change, while several Hutu uprisings have attempted to challenge discrimination and oppression, in turn sparking extremely violent reactions by the armed forces. In the ensuing spirals of killings and counter killings hundreds of thousands have been forced to flee, with each violent episode serving to further solidify and harden the intercommunal boundaries. The result is that Hutu-Tutsi divisions, while historically caste-based, have taken on the appearance of being timeless, primordial and intractable ‘ethnic’ divisions, and Hutu-Tutsi relations have come to be perceived in purely zero-sum terms (Lemarchand, 1970; Reyntjens, 1993; Evans, 1997).

In 1972 the state’s reaction to a Hutu uprising may be properly characterised as genocidal. The uprising was a reaction to the arrest and killing of the former King of Burundi, Ntare V, by the regime that had deposed him in 1966 and established the first republic under Michel Micombero. In reaction to his killing, groups of Hutu who felt themselves to be increasingly discriminated against by the regime attacked military centres around Burundi. This triggered brutal reprisals. In the following weeks Hutu were systematically slaughtered, with members of the Hutu ‘elite’ – essentially anyone with education or in a position of leadership and responsibility – being particularly targeted. This latter group included all Hutu officers and most of the Hutu soldiers in the armed forces; most Hutu teachers, nurses, students, secondary school pupils, business men and civil servants were also killed. Priests were another target due to the Church’s role in education and political life. Thus the Hutu were effectively decapitated; their organic leadership hunted down and slaughtered as part of a sustained campaign of murder which left a death toll of between 150,000 - 250,000 and forced more than 100,000 to flee the country (Malkki, 1995; Lemarchand, 1989).

In comparison to the horrors of 1972, events in 1988 appeared to be something of a watershed in inter-communal relations in Burundi. Then international reaction to yet another massacre in August of that year, forced the President, Major Pierre Buyoya, to change course. The memories of the 1972 genocide are important in explaining the motivation for the killings in the communes of Ntega and Marangara in 1988 (Lemarchand, 1994; Malkki, 1995). The arrest of several Hutu and unannounced army manoeuvres were interpreted as an attempt to repeat the 1972 atrocities, and as a result a number of Tutsi were killed in reaction (Lemarchand, 1989; Evans, 1997). The armed forces reacted in their now all-too-familiar
Ethnic divisions were recognised and a reconciliation program was established. This included the appointment of a Hutu Prime Minister and the creation of a Cabinet with equal numbers of Hutu and Tutsi portfolios. A ‘Commission to Study the Question of National Unity’ was established and resulted in a charter approved by referendum in February 1991. This was followed by work on a new constitution, which also was approved by referendum eleven months later. New political parties as well as an independent press emerged, and the recruitment practices for civil servants and the admission examinations for secondary schools were changed in order to encourage Hutu participation (Lemarchand, 1989; Reyntjens, 1993; Chretien, 1996; Des Forges, 1995). This process continued despite efforts to obstruct it from both the armed forces and extremist Hutu (from the PALIPEHUTU movement). Many Hutu gained employment in the state apparatus, and the proportion of Hutu within the higher education system increased. Indeed refugees who had been living in Tanzania since the 1972 genocide began to return, such that in 1993, an arbitration programme was established to deal with the disputes over property that might arise from this process (Mallki, 1995: 284; Des Forges, 1994: 205). Undoubtedly the highpoint of this period of reconciliation were the first democratic presidential and legislative elections held in June 1993. These were won by Melchior Ndadaye and the FRODEBU party, winning 65% and 71% of the vote respectively (Reyntjens, 1993: 567-572). Further hopes were raised by the new president’s conciliatory attitude towards the former president Buyoya, the UPRONA party and the Tutsi in general. However, these hopes were violently dashed when President Ndadaye, together with his three possible successors, were all killed in a coup d’état, after merely 100 days in office. (Des Forges, 1995: 207; Evans, 1997:27) Yet again, the perpetrators came from within the armed forces. In the following days these forces went on to kill thousands more. Yet again this instigated a wave of killing and counter-killing which left around 50,000 dead and forced almost a million to flee (Des Forges, 1994: 203; Mallki, 1995: 285-6).
Quite apart from the general challenge to people of conscience everywhere that the horrors of Burundi undoubtedly should provide, it is a history which confronts Traditional Security Studies with fundamental and thorough-going questions about its conceptual framework. For this is an example, *in extremis*, of that framework’s normative and empirical failings. In the Burundian context, it should be apparent that any attempt to privilege the state as the provider of security is simply grotesque. Moreover, Burundi also forces proponents of the traditional approach to confront difficult – even existential – questions over who or what constitute a state? Who does a state consist of when, as in the case of Burundi, ‘its’ inhabitants are regularly forced to flee the country in their tens and hundreds of thousands? These Barundi live abroad for years, while simultaneously refugees from the neighbouring countries settle in Burundi. Are these refugees a part of the state? And if so, of which state? Given the statist assumptions of Traditional Security Studies, these questions would seem to be of crucial of importance. But whatever the theological niceties of the discussion, it is clear that any serious discussion of security in this area must give central consideration to the fate of these refugees. Refugees loom large in the Tutsi’s fear of Hutu revenge, and these ‘outside elements’ have often been blamed by the state or its supporters for fomenting rebellion (Malkki, 1995; Chretien, 1996). These accusations contain within them a kernel of truth in as much as it is clear that refugees from the different countries in the Great Lakes Region have been instrumental in fomenting violence in other countries (see Evans, 1997 for more details on this). All of which underlines that the traditional simplifying assumption of a basic congruence between state borders and the boundaries of various societies is not only untenable but also empirically unhelpful (see Wæver et al., 1993 who distinguish between state and society in the European context). To treat the different states as distinct, discrete units in any simple neorealist sense is in fact highly misleading.

Given the problems with privileging the state as the referent object for any discourse on security in Burundi, what then of other candidates for the role of referent object? One obvious candidate is ethnic identity given that the situation in Burundi is often understood in terms of an ‘ethnic conflict’.

It can hardly be denied that understanding Burundi’s catastrophic post-independence history in ethnic terms throws a certain light upon event there. As has already mentioned, the character and implications of the country’s ethnic divisions became rapidly more divisive and murderous in the immediate aftermath of independence. Three linked developments were of particular importance: the assassination of a Hutu Prime Minister in 1965, the success of Hutu candidates in subsequent legislative elections, and the coup in 1966 which replaced Burundi’s constitutional monarchy with a Tutsi-dominated, one-party regime (Lemarchand, 1970; Chretien, 1996). Historically there had been long-standing social divisions between the Hutu, Tutsi and a third category, the Twa, which represent 1% of the population. These divisions were largely caste-based – the Tutsi were predominantly pastoralists, the Hutu predominantly cultivators and the Twa predominantly hunters, potters and ironworkers – with the Ganwa (‘the princes of the blood’), a noble caste of Tutsi, standing at the top of the socio-economic pyramid. A feudal system revolved around the kettle clientship, with its intricate system of mutual rights and duties between patron and client. This was separate from and subsidiary to a decentralised political structure, in which local Ganwa chiefs shared power with the king. But it is nonetheless important to note that this intricate social pattern did allow movement from one ‘ethnic’ category to another, and that intermarriage was not unusual

---

33 Barundi is the plural for the Burundi people, while Murundi is the singular term. Kirundi is the language spoken in Burundi (Lemarchand, 1970: xiii).
Eli Stamnes and Richard Wyn Jones

(Lemarchand, 1970; Des Forges, 1994; Malkki, 1995; Evans, 1997). It was in many ways the colonial powers, Germany and Belgium, who solidified and exacerbated the divisions between Hutu and Tutsi. They magnified the political importance of ‘ethnic’ distinctions during their drive to ‘tidy up’ the existing structures of governance, whose end-result was to privilege the Tutsi.

Since the most recent attempt to transcend ethnic divisions by fostering a sense of ‘national unity’ was brutally crushed in October 1993, ethnic divisions have taken on an even greater importance.34 At least 150,000 have been killed in the violent conflict motivated overwhelmingly by ethnic differences (Evans, 1997: 9). Reyntjens (1993: 582) claims that “ethnicity has re-emerged as the single most important factor of political life” and the United Nations commission who investigated the assassination of President Ndadaye concluded that an ‘overwhelming majority’ of the Barundi identified themselves with either the Hutu or the Tutsi category (Evans, 1997: 22). In this context arguments that the Hutu-Tutsi distinctions are not ‘really’ ethnic, and that the ethnic ideology is based on “a confusion between concepts of race and class” seem to miss the point (Chretien, 1996: 206; Makinda, 1997; Des Forges, 1994). For even if these distinctions have little ‘objective’ basis, conflict based on the perceived differences between Hutu and Tutsi continue to have deadly consequences (Lemarchand, 1994).35

Does the undoubted importance of ethnic identities in the ongoing conflict in Burundi justify focusing on these identities as the referent object in any security analysis of the country? In our view the answer is no, and this is for at least two reasons. First of all to do so, as Bilgin et al. (1998) has pointed out, would be to logically confuse agents and referents. While ethnic identity is clearly a very important element of the security problematique in Burundi, to privilege it as the referent object for security is merely to reintroduce all the problems identified with the privileging of the state at another level (Krause and Williams, 1997; Shaw, 1994). Moreover, and relatedly, to privilege ethnic identity, underpinned as it is in this case by a particularly pathological ‘self-other’ distinction, would be to privilege exactly that which needs to be removed or at least ameliorated for progress towards a more sustainable and secure environment to be made. Secondly, to understand Burundi purely in terms of Hutu-Tutsi conflict is effectively to silence other aspects to the conflict: these include the socio-economic aspects already alluded too, intra-group conflict, and the situation of the Twa. The latter group is almost always ignored by analyses of the conflict with much of the literature suggesting that they are not interested or active in politics and that they can thus be safely ignored. It is however far from certain that the Twa’s security interests would be served by ‘adding’ them to a discussion which focuses on ethnic identities. This is because the ethnic characterisations (stereotyping) of the Twa tend to be extremely negative, focusing as they do on the Twa’s ‘pygmyoid features’ and alleged intellectual deficiencies – the Twa are regularly seen as “half-monkeys” (Malkki, 1995: 21, 29-30). In this context, fastening upon and further privileging ethnic identities seems likely merely to reinforce these stereotypes.

For these particular reasons, as well as the more general reasons alluded to in the first part of this article, the ultimate referent object in the following discussion will be the Burundi individual –

---

34 It has been claimed that political discourse in Burundi had already become ethnicised before October 1993 when, towards the end of that year’s election campaign, ethnic distinctions were stressed in order to galvanise political support (Des Forges, 1994: 205; Chretien, 1996: 208; Evans, 1997: 25-26).

35 This is not to imply that work to ‘denaturalise’ the Hutu-Tutsi division is of merely esoteric concern. Rather it can play a part in a long-term strategy which aims to transcend the divide. In this context, work like Lemarchand’s *Burundi: Ethnocide as Discourse and Practice* (1994) is potentially very useful.
the Murundi. It is interesting (and indeed heartening) to note in this context that the Cairo Declaration which resulted from the 1995 African Heads of State summit declares that “the security of individuals was a fundamental problem in Burundi” (Evans, 1997: 34).

**Security for the Murundi**

Focusing on individual security as the ultimate referent object in any attempt to understand the theory and practice of security inevitably opens up a ‘broader’ conception of security as well, for it is not only issues related to military security which impinge upon any individual’s security situation (Wyn Jones, 1999). Therefore other security concerns will also be discussed in the remainder of this article which will review the contemporary security situation as it affects the Murundi before suggesting some possible ways forward. However, given the catastrophic effects of the on-going uncivil war, the section will begin by focusing on the seemingly endless spiral of ethnically based violence.

Even though the attempted coup in 1993, during which President Ndadaye was murdered, did not succeed as the junior officers who carried it out were disavowed by the Chief of Staff, it did generate a debilitating vacuum in Burundian politics. Surviving members of the government gradually re-emerged from foreign embassies where they had sought refuge from the coup and subsequent massacres, but almost three months were to elapse before a new president could be sworn in and a government established. Moreover, despite the consensual character of the new government based as it was on power-sharing between a Hutu President and Tutsi Prime Minister, the mutual mistrust between both groups grew as ethnically motivated violence continued (Des Forges, 1994; Chretien, 1996: Evans, 1997). Like his predecessor, new President Ntaryamira was destined to enjoy only a brief period in office as he was killed when the plane carrying him and Rwandan President Habyarimana was shot down outside Kigali on the 6 April 1994. This action was the signal for the start of the appalling genocide in Rwanda. In contrast Burundi initially remained relatively calm. However, the situation was extremely tense. Yet another Hutu, Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, was elected President by the National Assembly, while the country’s Constitution was suspended and replaced by a Convention of Government. However, this could not halt Burundi’s slide towards civil war. Indeed some analysts have argued that the suspension of the constitution and the establishment of the National Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD) along with its armed branch the Front for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) were partly responsible for the deterioration in the situation (Chretien, 1996: 210; Evans, 1997).

Since then fighting between the armed forces and various groups of Hutu militia, massacres of (predominantly Hutu) civilians, arbitrary detention and torture have all become commonplace. By the summer of 1996 Burundi’s internal situation deteriorated to the extent that African state leaders decided to give security assistance to the country. This in turn was the prelude to yet another military coup. President Ntibantunganya was forced to flee and the perpetrators of the coup offered the Presidency to former President Buyoya. Since then, although Buyoya has gradually introduced various conciliatory measures at the political level under considerable external pressure, the violence and distrust between both sides of the ethnic divide has continued (Evans, 1997: 36-7; Amnesty International, 1996). A cease-fire between all groups involved in the fighting agreed on the 20 June

---

36 See note eight.
1998 has had little or no effect (Burundi-Bureau, 1998b; Radio Burundi, 22 June 1998). As a result, the life of almost every Murundi is currently characterised by extreme insecurity.

That said, it is important to understand that this insecurity is not only a function of the fear generated by living in a country roamed by marauding bands of killers – uniformed or otherwise. Rather this insecurity is manifested in areas of life not normally considered to fall within the purview of security specialists. One good example is housing. Housing is usually regarded as a welfare issue, but in Burundi regroupment camps (*regroupés*) are central to the security concerns of individuals and their families.

Since early 1996, civilians from rural areas have been forced to leave their homes and settle in so-called regroupment camps. The government has claimed that this has been for the civilian’s own protection because of the ongoing fighting (Amnesty International, 1997: Evans, 1997: 39). However, people have been kept in the camps long after the fighting in their areas has subsided, fuelling the suspicion that the regroupment policy is based more on a desire to isolate Hutu rebel groups from potential and actual supporters than to protect the civilian population. There is ample evidence to support such suspicion. Population movement seems to have been effected almost entirely through coercion in operations often characterised by arbitrary arrests, rapes and massacres. Subsequently many have ‘disappeared’ from the camps and Amnesty International (1997; 1998) have concluded that these have been victims of extrajudicial executions. Moreover, the camps have proved to be anything but secure for their inhabitants. They have been subject to countless attacks in which hundreds have been killed and raped, and the hygiene and health conditions inside are almost uniformly appalling. Finally, several camps have been connected to systematic attempts at political indoctrination in which residents have been “re-educated” or “de-toxicated” (Amnesty International, 1997; Burundi-Bureau, 1998a).

The government argues that both Hutu and Tutsi are equally affected by the regroupment system, but in fact most Tutsi live in so-called displaced peoples camps (*déplacés*). Although the conditions within these camps are equally unhealthy and unhygienic, there are crucial differences between them and the regroupment camps, most notably in terms of freedom of movement. Whereas the residents in the *regroupés* are not allowed to leave their camp or have had restrictions placed on their movement, the inhabitants of the *déplacés* can move freely, and indeed, move from the camps if they so wish. Hutu fears that the regroupment policy is intended to effect a permanent shift in settlement patterns in Burundi are heightened by the fact that many of the residents’ properties were burned and destroyed shortly after they were taken away to the camps. Furthermore, the few who have been allowed to leave the camps have been resettled along roads and not allowed to go home. Several hundred thousand people in Burundi live with insecurity generated by this situation (Burundi-Bureau, 1998a; Amnesty International, 1997).

The Burundian judicial system represents another major source of insecurity for individuals in Burundi. As UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan pointed out during his visit to Burundi in May 1998, this is a system in desperate need of reform (see UN Press Release, 1998). Far from conforming to the tenets of impartiality and fairness, the judicial system is virtually totally dominated by Tutsi. According to Albert Mbonerane (1997: 3) they use the judiciary as “an instrument of repression in the service of the government” instead of as “the guarantor of impartial application of the law”. This abuse became even more commonplace after July 1996 when Buyoya took power. The already suspended constitution was abolished and the judiciary and legal system even further politicised. This has resulted in great and manifest injustice for the Hutu. Hutu are not
allowed legal representation, and it has been widely claimed that many are tortured in order to make them confess to crimes they have not committed (Amnesty International, 1998). There are great inequalities before the law. Tutsi are often set free after having committed the same crimes for which Hutu are executed. Court cases which result in execution sentences often do not take more than a few hours (Mbonerane, 1997; Amnesty International, 1998). The courts are arenas where any meaningful concern for justice has been replaced by a desire to reinforce ethnic supremacy (Mbonerane, 1997; UN Press Release, 1998). All of this is compounded by the fact that many judges are inexperienced and without proper qualifications. This, together with the fact that legal texts are written in French – a language that only 10% of the population understand – adds to the arbitrary character of the system (Mbonerane, 1997; Amnesty International, 1998). This ethnically-biased judicial apparatus adds yet another layer of insecurity to the daily life of the Murundi.

Other factors impact in equally profound ways on individual security in Burundi; in this case factors, namely poverty and starvation, tend not to respect the boundaries between ethnic groups. Again these are issues which Traditional Security Studies has tended to regard as lying beyond its intellectual remit, but when individual security is placed central stage it is clear that they create extreme insecurity for very many individuals.

As Burundi is not blessed with many mineral resources, its economy is predominantly agricultural. Coffee is its main export product and represents 80% of the country’s foreign exchange earnings. This makes the Burundian economy very vulnerable to changes in the world market. Otherwise, 9 out of 10 inhabitants depend on subsistence agriculture, which means that the security to plant, tend and harvest crops takes on especially crucial importance (Des Forges, 1994: 203; Malkki, 1995: 20). An economic reform programme was introduced in 1991 but has had no effect as the civil war has effectively ruined the economy with crops destroyed, population displaced and fertile land rendered unsafe or inaccessible by the conflict. Malnutrition and the diseases that thrive among a famine-weakened population have become commonplace, especially so in the camps (Des Forges, 1994: 206; Malkki, 1995: 287; Evans, 1997: 20; UN Press Release, 1998; Burundi-Bureau, 1998a). Quite apart from the direct effects on the subsistence economy, the insecurity in Burundi has slashed coffee revenues further damaging an already debt-burdened economy. All these problems have been further compounded by the external reaction to the 1996 coup when that many aid donors withdrew their support and neighbouring countries imposed economic sanctions (The Economist, 1996; Makinda, 1997: 382; Evans, 1997:20, 36). However, Burundi’s economic problems and the resulting insecurities should be seen in a broader context than that of civil war and sparse resources. Even without these debilitating specific problems, Burundi would still be massively disadvantaged by the iniquities and inequalities of the world economic system.

**Possible pathways towards emancipation**

CSS rejects the ‘scientific objectivist’ conception of knowledge on which Traditional Security Studies is based and argues instead that “both the subject and the object of scientific activity are socially constituted” (Dubiel, 1985: 104; Wyn Jones, 1999). One implication of this is that all theories whatever their claims to the contrary, prioritise and privilege certain actors and organising principles: or in Robert Cox’s (1981:128) well worn phrase, “all theory is for someone and for some purpose”. In the Burundian context, the whole aim of any CSS understanding of the situation will be to generate knowledge which can assist in some way in emancipating the men and women of that country from the insecurity and fear in which they find themselves. Within the given
space-constraints, we are not in a position to develop a full analysis here. What we will attempt to do in this final section is therefore to suggest the methodology through we would suggest that emancipatory possibilities may be identified and then provide some empirical examples.

Methodologically, the critical approach underpinning CSS holds that there is no simple causal explanation of the cause or causes of conflict; neither is there a solution (or solutions) which can simply be applied universally. Neither does it posit emancipation as an end-point – a destination which can be arrived at and at which history will somehow come to an end. Rather a Critical Security approach, with its stress on immanence, focuses on the development of unfulfilled potentials within the actual conflict situation as it stands, as part of an emancipatory process (Wyn Jones, 1999).

When it comes to potential pathways to a more emancipated Burundi, a few routes suggest themselves which could form part of such an emancipatory process. The ongoing negotiation process in Arusha, Tanzania is plainly one. The most recent round of talks took place on 13-22 October 1998 and was the third such meeting in a process which started on 15-21 June 1998 and continued on 20-29 July 1998. They included representatives of the Burundian Government, the political parties (both the internal and external branches) and the armed groups involved in the fighting. The negotiations, chaired by the former Tanzanian President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, were organised around the following themes: “the nature of the Burundian conflict”, “democracy and good governance”, “peace and security”, and “development and rebuilding” (Burundi-Bureau, 1998c). From a Critical Security perspective it is interesting to view these negotiations in the light of Habermas’ notion of unfulfilled potential, namely the potential for reaching mutual understanding (and potentially at least, accommodation) through undistorted communication inherent in speech (Wyn Jones, 1999; Jones, 2000). To what degree are the parties to the discussion engaged in a genuine and inclusive attempt to promote dialogue with the aim of developing mutual understanding? Or are some or even all merely engaged in a cosmetic exercise in order to placate various constituencies either within or external to Burundi while hoping for (an ultimately unobtainable) violent solution? Obviously the answers to these questions are difficult to gauge without direct access to the talks and the participants. However there are at least some positive signs that there is increasing consensus both about the negotiations themselves and their contents. The government, the National Assembly and the FRODEBU party signed a partnership agreement in the summer of 1998 agreeing to co-operate in peace efforts, and Buyoya was sworn in as President by the National Assembly. This latter development is potentially significant as the National Assembly is the only ‘survivor’ from the 1993 political reforms and was part of the structure overthrown by the 1996 coup (Pitman, 1998). Another potentially significant straw in the wind is that elements of Burundian civil society have shown interest in participating in the negotiation process, and this question was put on the agenda for the October 1998 round of talks with several civil society groups travelling to Arusha to make representations to the delegates. Among these were women’s groups hoping to promote the inclusion of more women into the peace efforts (Agence France Press, 1998; Burundi-Bureau, 1998b; 1998c). However despite these positive signs, there is also much cause for caution before jumping to any overly-optimistic conclusions. There remains dissent about the talks within the various parties to them and fighting still persists.

In addition to this ‘grand-plan approach’ to attaining a more just and secure environment for the Barundi, there are also smaller scale initiatives which might well make a positive contribution. One is a civil society-based initiative which is attempting to ameliorate and even transcend ethnic boundaries by establishing a multi-ethnic or non-ethnic radio station. Radio is a very powerful
medium in a country where the transport infrastructure is poor, where most political activity takes place in the hills among a dispersed rural population, and where other means of communications are scarce (Malkki, 1995: 20). It played an important role in the genocide in 1972 when it was used to encourage Tutsi to kill their Hutu neighbours. ‘Hate radio’ has been used by both sides for the same purpose during the civil war over the last five years. However, groups within civil society have started broadcasting programmes aimed at building trust and securing reconciliation between the groups. An American Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Search for Common Ground, has initiated a project where Hutu and Tutsi journalists work together. The hope is that through cooperating in a work environment these journalists will begin to view each other as individuals and fellow professionals rather than simply representatives of rival ethnic groups, and that this will result in a spirit of tolerance which will then be communicated to the listeners (Des Forges, 1994: 204; Evans, 1997: 40). This and other similar radio initiatives may help to prepare the ground for a more general process of communication and reconciliation within Burundi.

Other potentially important ‘grass-roots’ initiatives have concentrated on involving new actors in the process. One example is the Center for Women, established in January 1996, again by Search for Common Ground. This has worked to encourage and facilitate the participation of women in the work for peace. The centre’s efforts range from providing administrative infrastructure and meeting facilities to training women in peaceful conflict resolution techniques. Women from the different regions and ethnic communities have been encouraged to discuss and promote reconciliation within their families and communities. In this way, individuals and groups who are not traditionally considered as ‘political’ actors are included in the communication process, something that may further reinforce and dynamise the negotiations taking place at both national and provincial levels (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 1998).

Concluding Remarks

This article has attempted two tasks. First it attempted to outline and explain in general terms the approach to the study of security that has become known as CSS. In particular, it stressed how CSS eschews the traditional approach’s concentration of the military dimension of state security and concentrates instead on a more holistic understanding of individual security concerns – that is on how CSS both ‘broadens’ and ‘extends’ the orthodox understanding of security. It then illustrated these arguments by way of a discussion of Burundi. This served not only to provide an empirical illustration of the necessity of reconceptualising security, but also to provide a more coherent conceptual framework for understanding that benighted country’s problems.

It may well be objected that many analyses of Burundi already adopt this expanded conception of security as their starting point. This is an argument that we would certainly accept but would make two points in response. First, while it has long been the case that area specialists often utilise such a conception, much conceptual work in International Relations and Security Studies is still mired in idealised models of international politics, which are neither ideal nor representative of reality. While this situation persists there remains the need to emphasise points that some may well regard as obvious – even ‘common sensical’. Secondly, the major advantage of the CSS approach is the consistency and self-reflexivity of its theoretical framework. Much important empirical work lacks this and as a result suffers from logical lacunae or contradictions. By outlining a broad theoretical framework within which security can be properly understood, CSS can give empirical
work greater direction and hopefully maximise its positive impact. For above all else, the example of Burundi illustrates the need to develop alternative strategies for attaining human security.

References


