

SECURITY

A New Framework for Analysis

Barry Buzan
Ole Wæver
Jaap de Wilde



BOULDER
LONDON

Published in the United States of America in 1998 by
Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
1800 30th Street, Boulder, Colorado 80301
www.rienner.com

and in the United Kingdom by
Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
3 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 8LU

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Buzan, Barry.

Security: a new framework for analysis/by Barry Buzan, Ole
Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-55587-603-6 (hc:alk. paper).

ISBN 978-1-55587-784-2 (pb:alk. paper)

1. Security, International. 2. National security.

3. Regionalism. 4. International economic relations. I. Wæver,
Ole, 1960- II. Wilde, Jaap de. III. Title.

KZ5588.B89 1997

303.48'2—dc21

97-21300
CIP

British Cataloguing in Publication Data

A Cataloguing in Publication record for this book
is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in the United States of America

Ⓢ The paper used in this publication meets the requirements
of the American National Standard for Permanence of
Paper for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1992.

15 14 13 12 11

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Preface

This book sets out a new and comprehensive framework of analysis for security studies. Establishing the case for the wider agenda, it both answers the traditionalist charge that the wider agenda makes the subject incoherent and formulates security to incorporate the traditionalist agenda. It examines the distinctive character and dynamics of security in five sectors: military, political, economic, environmental, and societal. It rejects the traditionalists' case for restricting security to one sector, arguing that security is a particular type of politics applicable to a wide range of issues. And it offers a constructivist operational method for distinguishing the process of securitization from that of politicization—for understanding who can securitize what and under what conditions.

The original motive for the book was to update regional security complex theory (Buzan 1991; Buzan et al. 1990), reflecting the widespread feeling in the mid-1990s that the post-Cold War international system was going to be much more decentralized and regionalized in character. We wanted to bring security complex theory in line with the wider post-Cold War security agenda so we could use it to analyze the emergent international (dis)order. Our question was, How could security complex theory be blended with the wider agenda of security studies, which covered not only the traditional military and political sectors but also the economic, societal, and environmental ones? This question was a natural outgrowth of the contradiction, already evident in *People, States and Fear* (Buzan 1991), between an argument for a wider conception of security on the one hand and a presentation of security complex theory cast largely in traditional military-political terms on the other. The question also followed naturally from our two earlier books (Buzan et al. 1990; Wæver et al. 1993), the first of which was based on state-centric security complex theory and the second of which sought to unfold the societal component of the wider security agenda.

Traditional security complex theory has considerable power to explain and predict both the formation of durable regional patterns of security relations and the pattern of outside intervention in these regions. But could this same logic be extended into the newer sectors as the relative importance of

military-political security declined after the end of the Cold War? In pursuing this question, we found it necessary to take up the challenge that the wider security agenda is intellectually incoherent. As a consequence, the project became more ambitious, evolving into a general consideration of how to understand and analyze international security without losing sight of the original purpose.

Much of the conceptualization and writing of the book has been a genuinely joint enterprise, with all of the authors making substantial inputs into every chapter. But different parts do have distinctive individual stamps. Barry Buzan was the main drafter of Chapters 1, 3, 5, and 9; was largely responsible for the sectoral approach; and took overall responsibility for editing and coordinating the work. Ole Wæver was the main drafter of Chapters 2, 6, 7, and 8, as well as the third section of Chapter 9, and was the primary supplier of the securitization approach to defining the subject. Jaap de Wilde, the newest member of the Copenhagen research group, was the main drafter of Chapter 4 and the first two sections of Chapter 8, made substantial inputs into Chapters 5 and 9, and restrained the other two from taking a too unquestioning position toward realist assumptions.

We have received a great amount of help with this project. First and foremost, our thanks to the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, whose generous grant made it possible for Buzan to devote his main attention to this book during the years 1995–1996, for us to assemble a team of experts who provided continual critical scrutiny, and for the support of the cost of a research assistant. Next, thanks to Håkan Wiberg and the staff at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, who provided a supportive, stimulating, and congenial atmosphere in which to work. Thanks also to our consultants—Mohammed Ayoob, Owen Greene, Pierre Hassner, Eric Helleiner, Andrew Hurrell, and Thomas Hylland-Eriksen—who lent us both their expertise and their wider judgment. All of the consultants made extensive written comments at various stages of the drafting of the book. This final version owes much to their input, although they bear no formal responsibility for what is written here. And thanks to Eva Maria Christiansen and Mads Vøge, our research assistants, who handled most of the logistical tasks and sometimes worked unreasonable hours without complaint. Finally, our thanks to people who volunteered comments along the way and whose insights have helped to shape our arguments: Didier Bigo, Anne-Marie le Gloannec, Lene Hansen, Helge Hveem, Emile Kirschner, Wojciech Kostecki, Grazina Miniotaite, Bjørn Møller, Marie-Claude Smouts, Michael Williams, and an anonymous reviewer for Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Barry Buzan
Ole Wæver
Jaap de Wilde

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to set out a comprehensive new framework for security studies. Our approach is based on the work of those who for well over a decade have sought to question the primacy of the military element and the state in the conceptualization of security. This questioning has come from diverse sources rarely coordinated with each other. Some has come from the policy side, representing organizations (including the state) trying either to achieve recognition for their concerns or to adapt themselves to changed circumstances. Other questions have come from academia: from peace research, from feminists, from international political economy, and from security (and strategic) studies. Their move has generally taken the form of attempts to widen the security agenda by claiming security status for issues and referent objects in the economic, environmental and societal sectors, as well as the military-political ones that define traditional security studies (known in some places as strategic studies).

As a consequence, two views of security studies are now on the table, the new one of the wideners and the old military and state-centered view of the traditionalists.¹ It is time to compare these two views and assess their costs and benefits. Doing so requires both unifying concepts and a method for pursuing the wider agenda in a coherent fashion. It also requires us to provide a classification of what is and what is not a security issue, to explain how issues become securitized, and to locate the relevant security dynamics of the different types of security on levels ranging from local through regional to global. Identifying security issues is easy for traditionalists, who, broadly speaking, equate security with military issues and the use of force. But it is more difficult when security is moved out of the military sector. There are intellectual and political dangers in simply tacking the word *security* onto an ever wider range of issues.

In this chapter, the next section surveys the debate between the new and the traditional approaches to security studies. The following two sections define the concepts that structure the analysis in this book. The first sets out our understanding of levels of analysis (spatial locations from macro to micro, where one can find both sources of explanation and outcomes), and the second addresses sectors (views of the whole that select a

particular type of interaction). The rest of the chapter deals with regions, looking at how they relate to levels of analysis, outlining "classical" security complex theory as we have used it to this point, and unveiling some of the problems with trying to extend security complex thinking into the non-traditional sectors (economic, societal, environmental).

The "Wide" Versus "Narrow" Debate About Security Studies

The "wide" versus "narrow" debate grew out of dissatisfaction with the intense narrowing of the field of security studies imposed by the military and nuclear obsessions of the Cold War. This dissatisfaction was stimulated first by the rise of the economic and environmental agendas in international relations during the 1970s and 1980s and later by the rise of concerns with identity issues and transnational crime during the 1990s. The issue-driven widening eventually triggered its own reaction, creating a plea for confinement of security studies to issues centered around the threat or use of force. A key argument was that progressive widening endangered the intellectual coherence of security, putting so much into it that its essential meaning became void. This argument perhaps masked a generally unspoken political concern that allowing nonmilitary issues to achieve security status would have undesirable and counterproductive effects on the entire fabric of social and international relations (more on this in Chapter 9).

Those arguing explicitly for widening include Ullman (1983); Jahn, Lemaitre, and Wæver (1987); Nye and Lynn-Jones (1988); Matthews (1989); Brown (1989); Nye (1989); Crawford (1991); Haftendorn (1991); Tickner (1992); and Wæver et al. (1993), most taking off from the urgency of new, often nonmilitary sources of threat. There has also been a strong thread in international political economy linking patterns in the economic and military sectors (Gilpin 1981; Crawford 1993, 1995; Gowa 1994; Mansfield 1994). Buzan (1991) is a widener, but he has been skeptical about the prospects for coherent conceptualizations of security in the economic (see also Luciani 1989) and environmental (see also Deudney 1990) sectors. Buzan has argued for retaining a distinctively military subfield of strategic studies within a wider security studies (1987; 1991, chapter 10). Ullman (1983) and Buzan (1991, chapter 3) have specifically widened the definition of threat away from a purely military to a more general formulation. The other two authors of this book are also wideners, de Wilde from a liberal-pluralist background and Wæver self-defined as a postmodern realist.

The defense of the traditionalist position got underway as the Cold War unraveled. Until rather late one could still find arguments for restricting the field to "anything that concerns the prevention of superpower nuclear war"

(Lebow 1988: 508). But as the main task of the strategic community—analysis of East-West military confrontation—evaporated, a period of disorientation occurred. The function, and therefore the status and funding, of the entire edifice of strategic studies built up during the Cold War seemed to be at risk; consequently, the military focus of strategic analysis seemed extremely vulnerable to pressure from the wideners. Indicative of this period was the 1989 issue of *Survival* (31:6) devoted entirely to "nonmilitary aspects of strategy."

Traditionalists fought back by reasserting conventional arguments about the enduring primacy of military security (Gray 1994b). In varying degrees, they accepted the need to look more widely at nonmilitary causes of conflict in the international system and made little explicit attempt to defend the centrality of the state in security analysis at a time when so many nonstate actors were playing vigorously in the military game. Most traditionalists insist on *military* conflict as the defining key to security and are prepared to loosen their state centrism. But some—Jahn, Lemaitre, and Wæver (1987) and Ayoob (1995)—hold the *political* sector as primary and Ayoob the *state* as the focal point, and ease the link to military conflict. Some traditionalists (Chipman 1992; Gray 1992) have argued that there was simply a return to the natural terrain of the subject after the artificial nuclear narrowing of the Cold War, but the key strategy was to allow widening only inasmuch as it could be linked to concerns about the threat or actual use of force between political actors. As Chipman (1992: 129) put it:

The structuring element of strategic analysis must be the possible use of force. . . . Non-military aspects of security may occupy more of the strategist's time, but the need for peoples, nations, states or alliances to procure, deploy, engage or withdraw military forces must remain a primary purpose of the strategic analyst's inquiries.

Although he is clearly trying to keep the lid on the subject, Chipman's statement is interesting because it explicitly moves away from strict state centrism by acknowledging that peoples and nations, as well as states and alliances, can be strategic users of force in the international system.

Stephen Walt gives perhaps the strongest statement on the traditionalist position. He argues that security studies is about the phenomenon of war and that it can be defined as "the study of the threat, use, and control of military force." Against those who want to widen the agenda outside this strictly military domain, he argues that doing so

runs the risk of expanding "Security Studies" excessively; by this logic, issues such as pollution, disease, child abuse, or economic recessions could all be viewed as threats to "security." Defining the field in this way would destroy its intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to

particular type of interaction). The rest of the chapter deals with regions, looking at how they relate to levels of analysis, outlining "classical" security complex theory as we have used it to this point, and unveiling some of the problems with trying to extend security complex thinking into the non-traditional sectors (economic, societal, environmental).

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devise solutions to any of these important problems. (Walt 1991: 212–213)

Walt (1991: 227; see also Dorff 1994; Gray 1994a) does allow “economics and security” into his picture but only as they relate to military issues rather than as economic security per se.

The traditionalists’ criticism that widens risk intellectual incoherence can be a powerful point. The wider agenda does extend the range of knowledge and understanding necessary to pursue security studies. More worryingly, it also does two other things. First, given the political function of the word *security*, the wider agenda extends the call for state mobilization to a broad range of issues. As Deudney (1990) has pointed out, this may be undesirable and counterproductive in the environmental sector, and the argument could easily be extended into other sectors. Second, the wider agenda tends, often unthinkingly, to elevate “security” into a kind of universal good thing—the desired condition toward which all relations should move. But as Wæver (1995b) has argued, this is a dangerously narrow view. At best, security is a kind of stabilization of conflictual or threatening relations, often through emergency mobilization of the state. Although security in international relations may generally be better than insecurity (threats against which no adequate countermeasures are available), a secure relationship still contains serious conflicts—albeit ones against which some effective countermeasures have been taken. Even this degree of relative desirability can be questioned: liberals, for example, argue that too much economic security is destructive to the workings of a market economy. Security should not be thought of too easily as always a good thing. It is better, as Wæver argues, to aim for desecuritization: the shifting of issues out of emergency mode and into the normal bargaining processes of the political sphere.

The main purpose of this book is to present a framework based on the wider agenda that will incorporate the traditionalist position. Our solution comes down on the side of the wideners in terms of keeping the security agenda open to many different types of threats. We argue against the view that the core of security studies is war and force and that other issues are relevant only if they relate to war and force (although in Buzan’s view [1991, chapter 10] such an approach would fit nicely with the idea of *strategic studies* remaining a militarily focused specialism within the new security studies). Instead, we want to construct a more radical view of security studies by exploring threats to referent objects, and the securitization of those threats, that are nonmilitary as well as military. We take seriously the traditionalists’ complaint about intellectual incoherence but disagree that the retreat into a military core is the only or the best way to deal with such incoherence. We seek to find coherence not by confining security to the military sector but by exploring the logic of security itself to find out what

differentiates security and the process of securitization from that which is merely political. This solution offers the possibility of breaking free from the existing dispute between the two approaches.

The need is to construct a conceptualization of security that means something much more specific than just any threat or problem. Threats and vulnerabilities can arise in many different areas, military and nonmilitary, but to count as security issues they have to meet strictly defined criteria that distinguish them from the normal run of the merely political. They have to be staged as existential threats to a referent object by a securitizing actor who thereby generates endorsement of emergency measures beyond rules that would otherwise bind. These criteria are explained in detail in Chapter 2, and they show how the agenda of security studies can be extended without destroying the intellectual coherence of the field.

Levels of Analysis

For more than three decades, the debate about levels of analysis has been central to much of international relations theory (Buzan 1994c; Onuf 1995). Levels also run through all types of security analysis, whether in debates about preferred referent objects for security (individuals versus states) or about the causes of war (system structure versus the nature of states versus human nature). Since our project started with questions about the relationship between regional security theory and the multisectoral security agenda, it, too, depends on an understanding of levels of analysis. In the following chapters, we use levels of analysis extensively to locate the actors, referent objects, and dynamics of interaction that operate in the realm of security.

By levels, we mean objects for analysis that are defined by a range of spatial scales, from small to large. Levels are locations where both outcomes and sources of explanation can be located. Theories may suggest causal explanations from one level to another—for example, top down from system structure to unit behavior (e.g., market to firms, anarchy to states) or bottom up from human nature to the behavior of human collectivities, whether firms, states, or nations. But nothing is intrinsic to levels themselves that suggests any particular pattern or priority of relations among them. Levels are simply ontological referents for where things happen rather than sources of explanation in themselves.

In the study of international relations, the five most frequently used levels of analysis are as follow:

1. *International systems*, meaning the largest conglomerates of interacting or interdependent units that have no system level above them. Currently, this level encompasses the entire planet, but in

earlier times several more or less disconnected international systems existed simultaneously (Buzan and Little 1994).

2. *International subsystems*, meaning groups of units within the international system that can be distinguished from the entire system by the particular nature or intensity of their interactions with or interdependence on each other. Subsystems may be territorially coherent, in which case they are regional (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN], the Organization of African Unity [OAU]), or not (the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), in which case they are not regions but simply subsystems.
3. *Units*, meaning actors composed of various subgroups, organizations, communities, and many individuals and sufficiently cohesive and independent to be differentiated from others and to have standing at the higher levels (e.g., states, nations, transnational firms).
4. *Subunits*, meaning organized groups of individuals within units that are able (or that try) to affect the behavior of the unit (e.g., bureaucracies, lobbies).
5. *Individuals*, the bottom line of most analysis in the social sciences.

Levels provide a framework within which one can theorize; they are not theories in themselves. They enable one to locate the sources of explanation and the outcomes of which theories are composed. Neorealism, for example, locates its source of explanation (structure) at the system level and its main outcome (self-help) at the unit level. Bureaucratic politics locates its source of explanation (process) at the subunit level and its outcome (irrational behavior) at the unit level. Up to a point, levels also enable one to locate many of the actors, forums, and other elements involved in international relations. Some organizations (the UN) and structures (the global market, international society) operate at the system level; others (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union [EU], the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA], ASEAN) are clearly subsystemic. But it is not always possible to locate actors clearly within a given level. A lobby group such as the national farmers' union may sit clearly at the subunit level, but transnational organizations such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International cross levels. They may act in part on the subunit level and in part on the subsystem and system ones. The same can be said for multinational firms.

Because the levels-of-analysis debate in international relations has been closely associated with neorealism, it has tended to reflect that theory's state centrism, picturing subunits as within states and subsystems and systems as made up of states. On this basis, the levels-of-analysis scheme has been criticized for reinforcing the state centrism and inside-outside

assumptions typical of international relations (Walker 1993; Onuf 1995). In this view, the scheme is not just an innocent, abstract typology but presents a specific ontology that obscures and discriminates against those transnational units that do not fit clearly into the scheme. If one wants to see political time and space structured along different lines, the levels-of-analysis scheme in its neorealist form will be seen as problematic. There is no necessity for levels to privilege states—the unit level can encompass much more than states. Since in this project we are trying to open up a greater diversity of security units, and since one can argue that by necessity any unit has an inside and an outside (Wæver 1994, forthcoming-b), we do not accept the far-reaching version of the critique. But we do accept the reminder that in international relations one should be aware of the tendency for the levels-of-analysis scheme to reinforce state-centric thinking.

Sectors

What does it mean to adopt a more diversified agenda in which economic, societal, and environmental security issues play alongside military and political ones? Thinking about security in terms of sectors simply grew up with little reflection during the later decades of the Cold War as new issues were added to the military-political agenda. The practice of resorting to sectors is common but is seldom made explicit. Realists from Morgenthau to Waltz talk in terms of *political* theory, thereby assuming that sectors mean something analytically significant. It has become common when discussing international relations to qualify the identity of systems in terms of particular sectors of activity within them, as in "the international economic system" or "the international political system." Michael Mann (1986, chapter 1) thinks about power in terms of distinctions among ideology, economic, military, and political power. Indeed, the entire division of social and other sciences into disciplines is based largely on a preference for thinking in terms of sectors—a practice reflected in the general discourse, which often assumes that economy, society, and politics can somehow be separated without thinking too hard about how to do so. Embracing the wider security agenda means we need to consider what sectors mean.

One way of looking at sectors is to see them as identifying specific types of interaction. In this view, the military sector is about relationships of forceful coercion; the political sector is about relationships of authority, governing status, and recognition; the economic sector is about relationships of trade, production, and finance; the societal sector is about relationships of collective identity; and the environmental sector is about relationships between human activity and the planetary biosphere.

Buzan (1991: 19–20) set out sectors in security analysis as follows.

Generally speaking, the military security concerns the two-level interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states, and states' perceptions of each other's intentions. Political security concerns the organizational stability of states, systems of government and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Economic security concerns access to the resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power. Societal security concerns the sustainability, within acceptable conditions for evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture and religious and national identity and custom. Environmental security concerns the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprises depend.

In more recent work (Wæver et al. 1993: 24–27), we modified this statement to move away from its implicit (and sometimes explicit) placement of the state as the central referent object in all sectors. If a multisectoral approach to security was to be fully meaningful, referent objects other than the state had to be allowed into the picture. The present book extends this line of argument much further.

Sectors serve to disaggregate a whole for purposes of analysis by selecting some of its distinctive patterns of interaction. But items identified by sectors lack the quality of independent existence. Relations of coercion do not exist apart from relations of exchange, authority, identity, or environment. Sectors might identify distinctive patterns, but they remain inseparable parts of complex wholes. The purpose of selecting them is simply to reduce complexity to facilitate analysis.

The use of sectors confines the scope of inquiry to more manageable proportions by reducing the number of variables in play. Thus, the economist looks at human systems in terms that highlight wealth and development and justify restrictive assumptions, such as the motivation of behavior by the desire to maximize utility. The political realist looks at the same systems in terms that highlight sovereignty and power and justify restrictive assumptions, such as the motivation of behavior by the desire to maximize power. The military strategist looks at the systems in terms that highlight offensive and defensive capability and justify restrictive assumptions, such as the motivation of behavior by opportunistic calculations of coercive advantage. The environmentalist looks at systems in terms of the ecological underpinnings of civilization and the need to achieve sustainable development. In the societal sector, the analyst looks at the systems in terms of patterns of identity and the desire to maintain cultural independence. Each is looking at the whole but is seeing only one dimension of its reality.

The analytical method of sectors thus starts with disaggregation but must end with reassembly. The disaggregation is performed only to achieve simplification and clarity. To achieve understanding, it is necessary to reassemble the parts and see how they relate to each other, a task we undertake in Chapter 8.

Regions

Our interest in regions as a focus for security analysis stems not only from our previous work on regional security complex theory but also from an interest in the widespread assumption that in the post-Cold War world, international relations will take on a more regionalized character. The reasoning behind this assumption is that the collapse of bipolarity has removed the principal organizing force at the global level. The remaining great powers are no longer motivated by ideological rivalries, and they all show conspicuous signs of wanting to avoid wider political engagements unless their own interests are immediately and strongly affected. This situation creates weak leadership at the global level and, consequently, leads to the assumption that more than before, regions will be left to sort out their own affairs. Reinforcing this tendency is the fact that the weakening of the commitment to global engagement among the great powers is matched by ever rising power capabilities in most parts of the world. The long period of European and Western power advantage is being steadily eroded by the diffusion of industrial, military, and political capability among an ever wider circle of states and peoples.

In terms of level of analysis, regions are a special type of subsystem.² Geographical clustering does seem to be a sufficiently strong feature of international subsystems to be worth studying in its own right: Why should states tend to form regional clusters, and do other units behave in the same way? One has only to think of the EU, NAFTA, ASEAN, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the South Pacific Forum, the Southern African Development Community, the OAU, and others to see the importance of territorially defined subsystems. Regions are objects of analysis in themselves, particular locations where one can find outcomes and sources of explanation. Why does this type of territorial subsystem (or any particular instance of it) come into being and sustain itself as a feature of the wider international system?

Perhaps the best general explanation of regional state systems can be derived from the thinking of Hans Mouritzen (1995, 1997). He starts with the simple but seldom considered fact that the units (states) are fixed rather than mobile. In contemporary international relations theory, it is taken for granted that the main political units are not mobile, but this was not always so. For thousands of years prior to the fifteenth century, barbarian tribes were a major feature of the international system. These tribes could and did move over long distances. In those times, it was not uncommon to find one morning that one had a great power as a neighbor where there had been no neighbor before. Mouritzen argues that if units are mobile, each unit's average environment will, after a reasonable time, constitute the system as such rather than any particular segment of that system. By contrast, if the units

are nonmobile, each unit will face a relatively stable regional environment consisting of the major units in its geographical proximity; each unit will be characterized by a specific *location* in the system's structure (Mouritzen 1980: 172, 180).

The failure to account for the effect of nonmobile units explains in part why the subsystem level has been relatively neglected in international relations theory. Hollis and Smith (1991: 7–9), for example, do not even mention it in their scheme. Identifying the mechanism that forms regions underpins the argument for paying attention to the regionalizing aspect of the subsystem level in the analysis of international security.

This discussion relates mostly to states, where the mobility/immobility question is relatively clear. Mouritzen's argument, with its focus on the military and political sectors, provides additional justification for classical, state-centric security complex theory and also gives us clues about how to begin thinking about security relations in other sectors. In the societal sector, for example, one might expect units such as nations to display immobility logic similar to that of states and thus to find regional formations among them. But in the economic sector, units such as firms and criminal gangs may be highly mobile. There, in an echo of the barbarians, one might expect to find system-level logic working more strongly and therefore expect little in the way of regional formations.

"Classical" Security Complex Theory

This section summarizes "classical" security complex theory as developed up to 1991 and can be skipped by those familiar with Buzan (1991, chapter 5). Security complex theory was first sketched by Buzan in the first edition of *People, States and Fear* in 1983 (pp. 105–115). The theory was applied to South Asia and the Middle East (Buzan 1983), then elaborated and applied in depth to the case of South Asia (Buzan and Rizvi 1986), and later applied to Southeast Asia (Buzan 1988). Väyrynen (1988), Wriggins (1992), and Ayoob (1995) have applied versions of the theory to several regional cases, and Wæver (1989b, 1993), Buzan and colleagues (1990), Buzan and Wæver (1992), and Wæver and colleagues (1993) have used it to study the post-Cold War transformation in Europe. The most recent updates to the theory have been presented in Buzan (1991, chapter 5).

The logic of security regions stems from the fact that international security is a relational matter. International security is mostly about how human collectivities relate to each other in terms of threats and vulnerabilities, although sometimes it addresses the ways such collectivities relate to threats from the natural environment. The emphasis on the relational nature of security is in line with some of the most important writings in security studies (Herz 1950; Wolfers 1962; Jervis 1976), which have stressed rela-

tional dynamics such as security dilemmas, power balances, arms races, and security regimes. Little of interest can be said about the security of an isolated object (e.g., the security of France); thus, security must be studied in a wider context.

The widest context, the global level, is useful for studying the great powers, and also for thinking about systemic referent objects (the global environment, the world economy, international society). In the traditional (i.e., military-political) mode of security analysis, global security is integrated insufficiently to make much sense for most units: The securities of Togo and the Kurds might be deteriorating, whereas those of Argentina and Israel are improving and those of Sweden and Japan remain unchanged—without any of these situations being affected by the others. The rationale behind classical security complex theory was that for most of the actors at the unit level, military-political security falls into some in-between-sized clusters, and the theory claimed the most relevant scale was the regional one. Whether this rationale remains true within a multisectoral approach to security is one of the issues we address in this book.

Classical security complex theory posits the existence of regional subsystems as objects of security analysis and offers an analytical framework for dealing with those systems. Also, like most other traditionalist work in this area, the theory has focused primarily on the state as the key unit and on the political and military sectors. This framework was designed to highlight the relative autonomy of regional security relations and to set those relations within the context of the unit (state) and system levels. One of its purposes was to provide area specialists with the language and concepts to facilitate comparative studies across regions, which is a notable weakness in the existing literature. Another purpose was to offset the tendency of power theorists to underplay the importance of the regional level in international security affairs. This tendency was exacerbated by the rise of neorealism in the late 1970s (Waltz 1979), which focused almost exclusively on the power structure at the system level. It seems reasonable to expect this bias to decline with the demise of strong bipolarity at the system level and the advent of a more diffuse international power structure.

All of the states in the system are enmeshed in a global web of security interdependence. But because most political and military threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones, insecurity is often associated with proximity. Most states fear their neighbors more than distant powers; consequently, security interdependence across the international system as a whole is far from uniform. The normal pattern of security interdependence in a geographically diverse, anarchic international system is one of regionally based clusters, which we label *security complexes*. Security interdependence is markedly more intense among the states inside such complexes than among states outside them. Security complexes are about the relative intensity of interstate security relations that lead to dis-

tinctive regional patterns shaped by both the distribution of power and historical relations of amity and enmity. A security complex is defined as *a set of states whose major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another*. The formative dynamics and structure of a security complex are generated by the states within that complex—by their security perceptions of, and interactions with, each other. Individual security complexes are durable but not permanent features of the international system. The theory posits that in a geographically diverse, anarchic international system, security complexes are a normal and expected feature; if they are not present, one wants to know why.

Because they are formed by local groupings of states, classical security complexes not only play a central role in relations among their members; they also crucially condition how and whether stronger outside powers penetrate the region. The internal dynamics of a security complex can be located along a spectrum according to whether the defining security interdependence is driven by amity or enmity. At the negative end lies conflict formation (Senghaas 1988; Väyrynen 1984), in which interdependence arises from fear, rivalry, and mutual perceptions of threat. In the middle lie security regimes (Jervis 1982), in which states still treat each other as potential threats but have made reassurance arrangements to reduce the security dilemma among them. At the positive end of the spectrum lies a pluralistic security community (Deutsch et al. 1957: 1–4), in which states no longer expect or prepare to use force in their relations with each other. Regional integration will eliminate a security complex with which it is coextensive by transforming it from an anarchic subsystem of states to a single, larger actor within the system. Regional integration among some members of a complex will transform the power structure of that complex.

The theory assumes that security complexes, like the balance of power, are an intrinsic product of anarchic international systems. Other things being equal, one should therefore expect to find them everywhere in the system. Two conditions explain why a security complex may not be present. First, in some areas local states have so few capabilities that their power projects little, if at all, beyond their own boundaries. These states have domestically directed security perspectives, and there is insufficient security interaction among them to generate a local complex. The second condition occurs when the direct presence of outside powers in a region is strong enough to suppress the normal operation of security dynamics among the local states. This condition is called *overlay*, which normally involves extensive stationing of armed forces in the area overlain by the intervening great power(s) and is quite distinct from the normal process of intervention by great powers into the affairs of local security complexes. Intervention usually reinforces the local security dynamics; overlay subordinates them to the larger pattern of major power rivalries, and may even

obliterate them. The best examples of overlay are the period of European colonialism in what is now the Third World and the submergence of European security dynamics by superpower rivalry after World War II. Under overlay, one cannot see the local security dynamics with any clarity and therefore cannot identify a local complex; one only knows what the local dynamics were before overlay.

Security complexes are subsystems—miniature anarchies—in their own right, and by analogy with full systems they have structures of their own. Since security complexes are durable rather than permanent features of the overall anarchy, seeing them as subsystems with their own structures and patterns of interaction provides a useful benchmark against which to identify and assess changes in the patterns of regional security.

Essential structure is the standard by which one assesses significant change in a classical security complex. The three key components of essential structure in a security complex are (1) the arrangement of the units and the differentiation among them (this is normally the same as for the international system as a whole, and if so it is not a significant variable at the regional level), (2) the patterns of amity and enmity, and (3) the distribution of power among the principal units. Major shifts in any of these components would normally require a redefinition of the complex. This approach allows one to analyze regional security in both static and dynamic terms. If security complexes are seen as structures, one can look for outcomes resulting from either structural effects or processes of structural change.

The changes bearing on any given local security complex are usually numerous and continuous. Power relativities are in constant motion, and even patterns of amity and enmity shift occasionally. The key question is, do such changes work to sustain the essential structure or do they push it toward some kind of transformation? Four broad structural options are available for assessing the impact of change on a security complex: maintenance of the status quo, internal transformation, external transformation, and overlay.

Maintenance of the status quo means the essential structure of the local complex—its distribution of power and pattern of hostility—remains fundamentally intact. This outcome does not mean no change has taken place. Rather, it means the changes that have occurred have tended, in the aggregate, either to support or not seriously to undermine the structure.

Internal transformation of a local complex occurs when its essential structure changes *within* the context of its existing outer boundary. Such change can come about as a result of regional political integration, decisive shifts in the distribution of power, or major alternations in the pattern of amity and enmity.

External transformation occurs when the essential structure of a complex is altered by either the expansion or contraction of its existing outer boundary. Minor adjustments to the boundary may not significantly affect

the essential structure. The addition or deletion of major states, however, is certain to have a substantial impact on both the distribution of power and the pattern of amity and enmity.

Overlay means one or more external powers moves directly into the regional complex with the effect of suppressing the indigenous security dynamic. As argued earlier, this situation is distinct from the normal process of intervention by great powers into the affairs of regional security complexes.

Once the regional level has been established, the full range of layers that comprise a comprehensive analytical framework for security can be sketched out. At the bottom end lies the domestic security environment of individual states and societies. Next come the regional security complexes. One would expect security relations to be relatively intense within these complexes and relatively subdued among them, but in some instances significant interplay can occur across the boundaries of indifference that mark off one complex from another. Thus relations among security complexes also comprise a layer within the framework, one that becomes important if major changes in the pattern of security complexes are underway. At the top end, one finds the higher, or great-power, complex that constitutes the system level. One would expect security relations among the great powers to be intense and to penetrate in varying degrees into the affairs of the local complexes. The method of analysis within this framework is first to understand the distinctive security dynamic at each layer and then to see how the patterns at each layer interact with each other.

In one sense, security complexes are theoretical constructs the analyst imposes on "reality." But within the theory they have ontological status: They reflect an observable patterning of global politics and so cannot be constructed merely at random. One can argue about the correct interpretation of the dividing lines, but one cannot simply use the term *security complex* to describe any group of states (Norden, the Warsaw Pact, the Non-Proliferation Treaty members). A distinctive territorial pattern of security interdependence must exist that marks off the members of a security complex from other neighboring states. And this pattern has to be strong enough to make the criteria for inclusion and exclusion reasonably clear.³ Thus, there is a European security complex but not a Nordic one (because Norden is part of a larger pattern of security interdependence), a Middle Eastern complex but not a Mediterranean one (because the Mediterranean states are parts of several other regional complexes). South Asia is a clear example of a security complex centered on the rivalry between India and Pakistan, with Burma acting as the border with the complex in Southeast Asia, Afghanistan delineating the border with the Middle East complex, and China looming as an intervening great power.

One value of classical security complex theory is that it draws attention away from the extremes of national and global security and focuses it on

the region, where these two extremes interplay and where most of the action occurs. Security complex theory also links studies of internal conditions in states, relations among states of the region, relations among regions, and relations between regions and globally acting great powers. More ambitiously, and as demonstrated in our 1990 book (Buzan et al.), security complex theory can be used to generate definitive scenarios and thus to structure the study of, as well as predictions about, possibilities for stability and change. The theory offers descriptive concepts for both static and dynamic analysis and provides benchmarks for locating significant change within the structure of international security relations. Once the structure of any given complex has been identified, it can be used to narrow possible options for change. The theory is prescriptive to the extent that it identifies appropriate (and inappropriate) realms for action and organization and suggests a range of states of being (conflict formation, security regime, security community) that can serve as frameworks for thinking about policy objectives.

Moving Beyond Classical Security Complex Theory

The classical approach to regional security analysis looks for patterns of security interdependence that are strong enough to mark off a group of units from its neighbors (Buzan, Jones, and Little 1993, chapter 5). Security complexes are formed from the inside out, by the interactions among their constituent units. Because classical security complex theory was formulated for thinking about the political and military sectors, states were its referent objects. Security regions therefore had the following characteristics:

1. They were composed of two or more states.
2. These states constituted a geographically coherent grouping (because threats in these sectors travel more easily over short distances than over long ones).
3. The relationship among these states was marked by security interdependence, which could be either positive or negative but which had to be significantly stronger among them than between them and outside states.
4. The pattern of security interdependence had to be deep and durable (i.e., much more than a one-time interaction), although not permanent.

In other words, security regions were a type of international political subsystem and were relatively autonomous microversions of the larger international political system within which they were embedded. Because the units of analysis were states, security regions tended to be a fairly large-

scale phenomenon. Most security complexes were subcontinental or continental in size: South Asia, the Middle East, Southern Africa, Europe, South America, and the like.

One of the ways in which this book moves beyond classical security complex theory (CSCT) is by opening the analysis to a wider range of sectors. To what extent are regional patterns discernible when one no longer sticks to the state and privileges the political and military sectors? Will the security dynamics in the nontraditional sectors generate significant regional formations, or will their security logics place their main focus on higher (system) or lower (subunit) levels? Will the other sectors show dynamics that are mainly global, mainly local, a mess, or what? The answers to these questions will hinge on whether the relevant units are fixed or mobile and on whether threats and vulnerabilities are strongly shaped by distance. If units are not fixed or if threats are not shaped by distance, regionalizing logic may be weak. Even if we find "regions" in several or all sectors, will they line up—for example, are the regions in the environmental sector at all like those in the political sector? Will environmental sectors cluster, for example, around seas (the Mediterranean, the Baltic, the Black Sea, the Sea of Japan, and so on) and rivers (the Nile, Euphrates, and Jordan), whereas the political and societal sectors will be mainly land-based and continental? Discovering the answers to these questions is the work of Chapters 3 through 7, and putting the findings together is that of Chapter 8.

Logically, there are two possible ways of opening security complex theory to sectors other than the military-political and to actors other than states:

1. *Homogeneous complexes.* This approach retains the "classical" assumption that security complexes are concentrated within specific sectors and are therefore composed of specific forms of interaction among similar types of units (e.g., power rivalries among states). This logic leads to different types of complexes that occur in different sectors (e.g., military complexes made up predominantly of states, a societal complex of various identity-based units, and the like).

2. *Heterogeneous complexes.* This approach abandons the assumption that security complexes are locked into specific sectors. It assumes that the regional logic can integrate different types of actors interacting across two or more sectors (e.g., states + nations + firms + confederations interacting across the political, economic, and societal sectors).

There is no reason to choose between these alternatives. In principle, both are possible, and the analyst needs to determine which alternative best fits the case under study.

Heterogeneous security complexes have the advantage of linking actors across sectors, thus enabling the analyst to keep the entire picture in

a single frame and also to keep track of the inevitable spillovers between sectors (military impacts on economic developments and the like). A, B, C, and D could be nations, a state, and a supranational institution such as the EU, and the security dynamics of Europe can perhaps best be understood as a constellation of security fears and interactions among nations, states, and the EU (Wæver et al. 1993, chapter 4; Wæver 1996b, forthcoming-a). A similar logic might be applied to the Middle East, where the security complex contains both states and nations (e.g., Kurds, Palestinians).

Homogeneous, or sector-specific, security complexes (which would include the classical political-military, state-dominated model) require the construction of separate frames for each sector. They offer the possibility of isolating sector-specific security dynamics (politico-military, economic, societal, and so forth), but they also present the challenge of how to reassemble the separate frames into a holistic picture and the danger that linkages across sectors will be lost or obscured. Looking at security complexes sector by sector, one might find patterns that do not line up. In the chapters that follow, we take the sector-by-sector approach on the grounds that we need to explore the as yet poorly understood security dynamics of sectors and because it seems to be the best way to set out the framework. This should not be read as privileging the homogeneous approach over the heterogeneous one, as becomes apparent in Chapter 8.

Each of the sector chapters contains a subsection that asks, where are the security dynamics of this sector predominantly located, and what are the trends? Are they regional, global, or maybe local? Two types of considerations affect how we answer those questions. First is the cause-effect nature of the issues around which securitization takes place: the "facilitating conditions" for securitization. Second is the process of securitization itself. Facilitating conditions are sometimes clearly located on a level and sometimes not. Issues are clearly global when they have global causes and effects—for example, planetary temperature change, sea-level rises, and the like. They are local when they have local causes and effects—for example, pollution of water by industrial waste or sewage discharge. Water pollution may occur in many places worldwide, but that does not make it a global-level issue in the sense we use that term here but rather a case of parallel local issues. The difference is not whether pollution is felt locally—sea-level rises are too—but that one case could take place without the other. Rising sea level, in contrast, is an integrated phenomenon; it is impossible for it to rise in one region and not in another. But in principle its causes could be local, caused, for example, by energy consumption in one country.

It is possible to mix levels and have, for example, local causes and global effects (the earlier example) or global causes and local effects (such as holes in the ozone layer). This situation, however, is all about the level of the *issue*, not necessarily of its securitization. As in classical security complex theory, the more important criterion is which actors are actually

linked by their mutual security concerns. If the Middle Eastern powers become locked into a security rivalry and thus form a security complex, it is irrelevant whether some analyst can argue that the "real" threat to those powers is Russia or the United States. If the actors make their major securitizations so the Middle East becomes tied together, it constitutes a regional security complex.

More generally in this investigation, the criterion for answering the levels question is ultimately political: what constellation of actors forms on this issue. The nature of the issue—causes and effects—can often be an indicator of the likely level, but it is not what ultimately answers the question. In the process of securitization, the key issue is for whom security becomes a consideration in relation to whom. For example, a water shortage could become securitized at the global level, but the major battles will more likely be regional. Upstream and downstream powers and other potential beneficiaries from a particular river or lake will see each other as both threats and potential allies, which might play into other rivalries and constellations in the region and thus become tied into a more general regional security complex. This result is not determined purely by the nature of the issue: If all downstream nations could join together and push for global regulations on water usage, they could securitize the issue at the global level. The outcome that materializes is a result of politics, and our answer to the levels question thus must pay attention to the actual securitizations and not only to the objective qualities of the issue itself. The defining feature is the size of the political security constellation that is formed around the issue.

Because we opt for the homogeneous, sector-specific approach in Chapters 3 through 7, there is a problem in pinning down the meaning of region and, more generally, of levels. In line with the scheme presented in the section Levels of Analysis, we would have preferred to think of regions and units in terms appropriate to specific sectors. Thus, in the military and political sectors the units would be states and regions would be sets of adjacent states, but, say, in the societal sector, units might be nations and regions sets of adjacent nations. The problem with this approach is that unit and region can mean very different things in different sectors: The politico-military unit Nigeria, for example, might contain several societal "regions." We therefore adopt a state-centric frame for the purpose of getting a fixed scale against which to measure levels. Thereby, we achieve consistency in the meaning of *region* by using the political, state-defined sense of the term as a standard measure no matter which sector we are discussing. We do this not to determine or privilege the state as an actor but merely to achieve consistency in discussions. Other units exist, but only one is chosen as the instrument of measurement.

Thus, by *region* we mean a spatially coherent territory composed of

two or more states. *Subregion* means part of such a region, whether it involves more than one state (but fewer than all of the states in the region) or some transnational composition (some mix of states, parts of states, or both). *Microregion* refers to the subunit level within the boundaries of a state.

The second way in which we move beyond CSCT is by taking an explicitly social constructivist approach to understanding the process by which issues become securitized. CSCT addressed this issue simply in terms of patterns of amity and enmity (which entailed some constructivist deviation from objectivist, material realism—amity and enmity are generated by the actors and are not reflections of material conditions); adopting the wider agenda requires a more sophisticated approach. That approach is the subject of Chapter 2, which makes the case for understanding security not just as the use of force but as a particular type of intersubjective politics. Chapter 2 attempts to clarify two analytical issues: (1) how to identify what is and what is not a security issue, or, put another way, how to differentiate between the politicization and the securitization of an issue; and (2) how to identify and distinguish security actors and referent objects. These clarifications aim to meet the criticism of the broad security agenda which holds that opening up the agenda risks securitizing everything, therefore voiding the security concept of any meaning. We hope to show how the essential meaning of security can be carried across sectors (thus achieving the desired aim of broadening) without so diluting the concept that its distinctive meaning is destroyed.

Each of Chapters 3 through 7 covers one of the principal sectors that define the attempt to construct a broader agenda for international security studies. These chapters have a common structure: each asks what the security agenda is within the sector, what types of actors are distinctive to the sector, what logic of threats and vulnerabilities operates within the sector, and how the security dynamics within the sector divide among the local, regional, and global scales. Each of these chapters is a lens that isolates a specific sector for analytical purposes and tries to uncover its distinctive security dynamics. The assumptions are that these dynamics may be different and that the overall character of security relations will change as the dominant focus of security concerns shifts among sectors. Investigating whether we should expect a strong regional logic in the nontraditional sectors is one of the main purposes of the inquiry.

Chapter 8 attempts the reaggregation, first in terms of how the security dynamics in the five sectors align with each other but mainly in terms of the reintegration of sectors by actors in the policymaking process. Chapter 9 reflects on the approach used to pull security studies into a coherent framework, compares the new framework with the traditional one, and looks at implications for security complex theory.

Notes

1. A possible third contender is the newly launched "critical security studies," committed to seeking alternatives to realist, statist, and positivist orthodoxies. Some of what follows might be seen as fitting that description, but we have no prior commitment to antistate or antirealist positions, and we are driven more by methodological collectivism than by methodological individualism. More on critical security studies in Chapter 2.

2. We are aware that in some other literatures the term *region* has a different meaning from ours. The term was originally introduced at the subunit level. In nineteenth-century France, a political movement formulated regionalism as an ideal for political organization that was located in the middle of the continuum between centralized government and political autonomy. This politicized notion of the region lives on in separatist movements. Also, contemporary journals like *Regional Politics and Policy* (published since 1990), *International Regional Science Review* (since 1975), *Journal of Regional Science* (since 1958), and *Regional Studies* (since 1967) are devoted primarily to the situation of ethnic minorities in specific subunit regions and to issues of administration and planning at different political levels—that is, political centralization and decentralization. Additionally, there is a Europe of the regions: The contemporary map of the EU is subdivided not only into states but also into thousands of smaller units (a Swissification of Europe) and also increasingly into a variety of transnational "regions" (the Baltic Sea region, the Alpe-Adriatic, and the like), which in our terminology would appear as subregions and transregions, respectively. In this study, region refers to what that other literature sometimes calls macroregions (cf. Joenniemi 1993, 1997).

3. The security complex is not objective in the sense of "independent of actors." In much traditional security analysis, region is defined "objectively" purely in terms of geography or history (cf. current debates about whether Russia is a part of Europe). In this sense, a region is simply an arena for security and one that is not influenced by security policies—the analyst observes "objective" reality and tells the actors to which region they belong. In contrast, security complexes are specifically defined by security interactions among units. Since we argue that security is not an objective issue but a product of the behavior of actors, security complexes are not objective in the traditional sense. Nor is the security complex to be seen as a discursive construction by the actors. We are not (in this context) interested in whether the actors define themselves as a region or whether they claim that their true region is something larger or smaller. Security complexes do not require that their members think in terms of the concept *security complex* (cf. note 6, Chapter 2). Analysts apply the term *security complex* (and therefore designate a region) based upon the contingent, historically specific, and possibly changing constellation generated by the interdependent security practices of the actors. On this basis, lines can be drawn on a map, and the theory can be put into operation.

CHAPTER 2

Security Analysis: Conceptual Apparatus

What Is Security?

What quality makes something a security issue in international relations? It is important to add the qualification "in international relations," because the character of security in that context is not identical to the use of the term in everyday language. Although it shares some qualities with "social security," or security as applied to various civilian guard or police functions, international security has its own distinctive, more extreme meaning. Unlike social security, which has strong links to matters of entitlement and social justice, international security is more firmly rooted in the traditions of power politics. We are not following a rigid domestic-international distinction, because many of our cases are not state defined. But we are claiming that international security has a distinctive agenda.¹

The answer to what makes something an international security issue can be found in the traditional military-political understanding of security. In this context, security is about survival. It is when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object (traditionally, but not necessarily, the state, incorporating government, territory, and society). The special nature of security threats justifies the use of extraordinary measures to handle them. The invocation of security has been the key to legitimizing the use of force, but more generally it has opened the way for the state to mobilize, or to take special powers, to handle existential threats. Traditionally, by saying "security," a state representative declares an emergency condition, thus claiming a right to use whatever means are necessary to block a threatening development (Wæver 1988, 1995b).

When we consider the wider agenda, what do the terms *existential threat* and *emergency measures* mean? How, in practice, can the analyst draw the line between processes of politicization and processes of securitization on this basis? Existential threat can only be understood in relation to the particular character of the referent object in question. We are not dealing here with a universal standard based in some sense on what threatens individual human life. The essential quality of existence will vary greatly

across different sectors and levels of analysis; therefore, so will the nature of existential threats.

In the military sector, the referent object is usually the state, although it may also be other kinds of political entities. It is also possible to imagine circumstances in which threats to the survival of the armed forces would elevate those forces to referent object status in their own right, perhaps serving to justify a coup against the existing government and its policy (whether of disarmament or of hopeless conflict). Traditional security studies tends to see all military affairs as instances of security, but this may not be the case. For many of the advanced democracies, defense of the state is becoming only one, and perhaps not even the main *de facto*, function of the armed forces. Their militaries may be increasingly trained and called upon to support routine world order activities, such as peacekeeping or humanitarian intervention, that cannot be viewed as concerning existential threats to their states or even as emergency action in the sense of suspending normal rules.

In the political sector, existential threats are traditionally defined in terms of the constituting principle—sovereignty, but sometimes also ideology—of the state. Sovereignty can be existentially threatened by anything that questions recognition, legitimacy, or governing authority. Among the ever more interdependent and institutionalized relations characteristic of the West (and increasingly of the international system as a whole), a variety of supranational referent objects are also becoming important. The European Union (EU) can be existentially threatened by events that might undo its integration process. International regimes, and international society more broadly, can be existentially threatened by situations that undermine the rules, norms, and institutions that constitute those regimes.

In the economic sector, the referent objects and existential threats are more difficult to pin down. Firms are most commonly existentially threatened by bankruptcy and sometimes by changes to laws that make them illegal or unviable (as after communist revolutions). But in the market economy firms are, with few exceptions, expected to come and go, and only rarely do they try to securitize their own survival. National economies have a greater claim to the right of survival, but rarely will a threat to that survival (national bankruptcy or an inability to provide for the basic needs of the population) actually arise apart from wider security contexts, such as war. Unless the survival of the population is in question, the huge range of the national economy doing better or doing worse cannot be seen as existentially threatening. As in the political sector, supranational referent objects from specific regimes to the global market itself can be existentially threatened by factors that might undermine the rules, norms, and institutions that constitute them.

In the societal sector, as we have defined it, the referent object is large-scale collective identities that can function independent of the state, such as

nations and religions. Given the peculiar nature of this type of referent object, it is extremely difficult to establish hard boundaries that differentiate existential from lesser threats. Collective identities naturally evolve and change in response to internal and external developments. Such changes may be seen as invasive or heretical and their sources pointed to as existential threats, or they may be accepted as part of the evolution of identity. Given the conservative nature of "identity," it is always possible to paint challenges and changes as threats to identity, because "we will no longer be us," no longer the way we were or the way we ought to be to be true to our "identity." Thus, whether migrants or rival identities are securitized depends upon whether the holders of the collective identity take a relatively closed-minded or a relatively open-minded view of how their identity is constituted and maintained. The abilities to maintain and reproduce a language, a set of behavioral customs, or a conception of ethnic purity can all be cast in terms of survival.

In the environmental sector, the range of possible referent objects is very large, ranging from relatively concrete things, such as the survival of individual species (tigers, whales, humankind) or types of habitat (rain forests, lakes), to much fuzzier, larger-scale issues, such as maintenance of the planetary climate and biosphere within the narrow band human beings have come to consider to be normal during their few thousand years of civilization. Underlying many of these referent objects are baseline concerns about the relationship between the human species and the rest of the biosphere and whether that relationship can be sustained without risking a collapse of the achieved levels of civilization, a wholesale disruption of the planet's biological legacy, or both. The interplay among all of these factors is immensely complicated. At either the macro or the micro extreme are some clear cases of existential threat (the survival of species, the survival of human civilization) that can be securitized. In between, somewhat as in the economic sector, lies a huge mass of problems that are more difficult, although not impossible, to construct in existential terms.

Securitization

"Security" is the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics. Securitization can thus be seen as a more extreme version of politicization. In theory, any public issue can be located on the spectrum ranging from nonpoliticized (meaning the state does not deal with it and it is not in any other way made an issue of public debate and decision) through politicized (meaning the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance) to securitized (meaning the issue is pre-

sented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure). In principle, the placement of issues on this spectrum is open: Depending upon circumstances, any issue can end up on any part of the spectrum.² In practice, placement varies substantially from state to state (and also across time). Some states will politicize religion (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Burma) and some will not (France, the United States). Some will securitize culture (the former USSR, Iran) and some will not (the UK, the Netherlands). In the case of issues (notably the environment) that have moved dramatically out of the nonpoliticized category, we face the double question of whether they have merely been politicized or have also been securitized. This link between politicization and securitization does not imply that securitization always goes through the state; politicization as well as securitization can be enacted in other fora as well. As will be seen later, it is possible for other social entities to raise an issue to the level of general consideration or even to the status of sanctioned urgency among themselves.

In this approach, the meaning of a concept lies in its usage and is not something we can define analytically or philosophically according to what would be "best." The meaning lies not in what people consciously think the concept means but in how they implicitly use it in some ways and not others. In the case of security, textual analysis (Wæver 1988, 1995b, 1995c) suggests that something is designated as an international security issue because it can be argued that this issue is more important than other issues and should take absolute priority. This is the reason we link the issue to what might seem a fairly demanding criterion: that the issue is presented as an existential threat. If one can argue that something overflows the normal political logic of weighing issues against each other, this must be the case because it can upset the entire process of weighing as such: "If we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant (because we will not be here or will not be free to deal with it in our own way)." Thereby, the actor has claimed a right to handle the issue through extraordinary means, to break the normal political rules of the game (e.g., in the form of secrecy, levying taxes or conscription, placing limitations on otherwise inviolable rights, or focusing society's energy and resources on a specific task). "Security" is thus a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue—not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat.

Of course, places do exist where secrecy or violation of rights is the rule and where security arguments are not needed to legitimize such acts. The earlier illustrations were for a liberal-democratic society; in other societies there will also be "rules," as there are in any society, and when a securitizing actor uses a rhetoric of existential threat and thereby takes an issue out of what under those conditions is "normal politics," we have a case of

securitization. Thus, the exact *definition* and *criteria* of securitization is constituted by the intersubjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects. Securitization can be studied directly; it does not need indicators. The way to study securitization is to study discourse and political constellations: When does an argument with this particular rhetorical and semiotic structure achieve sufficient effect to make an audience tolerate violations of rules that would otherwise have to be obeyed? If by means of an argument about the priority and urgency of an existential threat the securitizing actor has managed to break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by, we are witnessing a case of securitization.

Even if the general logic of securitization is clear, we have to be precise about its threshold. A discourse that takes the form of presenting something as an existential threat to a referent object does not by itself create securitization—this is a *securitizing move*, but the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accepts it as such. (Accept does not necessarily mean in civilized, dominance-free discussion; it only means that an order always rests on coercion as well as on consent. Since securitization can never only be imposed, there is some need to argue one's case.) We do not push the demand so high as to say that an emergency measure has to be adopted, only that the existential threat has to be argued and just gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimize emergency measures or other steps that would not have been possible had the discourse not taken the form of existential threats, point of no return, and necessity. If no signs of such acceptance exist, we can talk only of a securitizing move, not of an object actually being securitized. The distinction between a securitizing move and successful securitization is important in the chapters that follow.

Securitization is not fulfilled only by breaking rules (which can take many forms) nor solely by existential threats (which can lead to nothing) but by cases of existential threats that legitimize the breaking of rules. Still, we have a problem of size or significance. Many actions can take this form on a small scale—for example, a family securitizing its lifestyle as dependent on keeping a specific job (and therefore using dirty tricks in competition at the firm) or the Pentagon designating hackers as "a catastrophic threat" and "a serious threat to national security" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, May 23, 1996: A11), which could possibly lead to actions within the computer field but with no cascading effects on other security issues. Our concept of international security has a clear definition of what we are interested in, but it does not tell us how we sort the important cases from the less important ones. We do not want to sort by arbitrarily assigning degrees of importance to referent objects and sectors, for instance, defining state as more important than environment or military as more securitylike

than identity. Doing so would undermine the logic of both widening the security agenda and taking a securitization approach to that agenda. It would constrain arbitrarily and a priori what we can see and thus make it impossible to capture the extent to which the security agenda has actually changed or been widened.

A better measure of importance is the scale of chain reactions on other securitizations: How big an impact does the securitizing move have on wider patterns of relations? A securitizing move can easily upset orders of mutual accommodation among units. The security act is negotiated between securitizer and audience—that is, internally within the unit—but thereby the securitizing agent can obtain permission to override rules that would otherwise bind it. Typically, the agent will override such rules, because by depicting a threat the securitizing agent often says someone cannot be dealt with in the normal way. In the extreme case—war—we do not have to discuss with the other party; we try to eliminate them. This self-based violation of rules is the security act, and the fear that the other party will not let us survive as a subject is the foundational motivation for that act. In a securitized situation, a unit does not rely on the social resources of rules shared intersubjectively among units but relies instead on its own resources, demanding the right to govern its actions by its own priorities (Wæver 1996b). A successful securitization thus has three components (or steps): existential threats, emergency action, and effects on interunit relations by breaking free of rules.

The distinguishing feature of securitization is a specific rhetorical structure (survival, priority of action “because if the problem is not handled now it will be too late, and we will not exist to remedy our failure”). This definition can function as a tool for finding security actors and phenomena in sectors other than the military-political one, where it is often hard to define when to include new issues on the security agenda. Must new issues affect the military sector or be as “dangerous” as war (Deudney 1990)? To circumvent these restrictive ties to traditional security, one needs a clear idea of the essential quality of security in general.

That quality is the staging of existential issues in politics to lift them above politics. In security discourse, an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus, by labeling it as *security*, an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means. For the analyst to grasp this act, the task is not to assess some objective threats that “really” endanger some object to be defended or secured; rather, it is to understand the processes of constructing a shared understanding of what is to be considered and collectively responded to as a threat. The process of securitization is what in language theory is called a speech act. It is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real; it is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done (like betting, giving a promise, naming a ship) (Wæver 1988; Austin 1975: 98ff.).

Sectors and Institutionalization of Security

What we can study is this practice: Who can “do” or “speak” security successfully, on what issues, under what conditions, and with what effects? It is important to note that the security speech act is not defined by uttering the word *security*. What is essential is the designation of an existential threat requiring emergency action or special measures and the acceptance of that designation by a significant audience. There will be instances in which the word *security* appears without this logic and other cases that operate according to that logic with only a metaphorical security reference. As spelled out later, in some cases securitization has become institutionalized. Constant drama does not have to be present, because it is implicitly assumed that when we talk of *this* (typically, but not necessarily, defense issues), we are by definition in the area of urgency: By saying “defense” (or, in Holland, “dikes”), one has also implicitly said security and priority. We use this logic as a definition of security because it has a consistency and precision the word as such lacks. There is a concept of international security with this specific meaning, which is implied in most usages of the word.

Our claim is that it is possible to dig into the practice connected to this concept of security in international relations (which is distinct from other concepts of security) and find a characteristic pattern with an inner logic. If we place the survival of collective units and principles—the politics of existential threat—as the defining core of security studies, we have the basis for applying security analysis to a variety of sectors without losing the essential quality of the concept. This is the answer to those who hold that security studies cannot expand its agenda beyond the traditional military-political one without debasing the concept of security itself.

Sectors are “views of the international system through a lens that highlights one particular aspect of the relationship and interaction among all of its constituent units” (Buzan, Jones, and Little 1993: 31). Given that the analytical purpose of sectors is to differentiate types of interaction (military, political, economic, societal, and environmental), it seems reasonable to expect (1) that one will find units and values that are characteristic of, and rooted in, particular sectors (although, like the state, they may also appear in other sectors); and (2) that the nature of survival and threat will differ across different sectors and types of unit. In other words, security is a generic term that has a distinct meaning but varies in form. Security means survival in the face of existential threats, but what constitutes an existential threat is not the same across different sectors. One purpose of the following chapters is to unfold this sectoral logic of security more fully.

Securitization can be either ad hoc or institutionalized. If a given type of threat is persistent or recurrent, it is no surprise to find that the response and sense of urgency become institutionalized. This situation is most visible in the military sector, where states have long endured threats of armed coercion or invasion and in response have built up standing bureaucracies,

procedures, and military establishments to deal with those threats. Although such a procedure may seem to reduce security to a species of normal politics, it does not do so. The need for drama in establishing securitization falls away, because it is implicitly assumed that when we talk of this issue we are by definition in the area of urgency. As is the case for defense issues in most countries and for the dikes in the Netherlands, urgency has been established by the previous use of the security move. There is no further need to spell out that this issue has to take precedence, that it is a security issue—by saying “defense” or “dikes,” one has also implicitly said “security” and “priority.” This can be shown by trying to inquire about the rationale for decisions in these areas. Behind the first layers of ordinary bureaucratic arguments, one will ultimately find a—probably irritated—repetition of a security argument so well established that it is taken for granted.

Some security practices are not legitimized in public by security discourse, because they are not out in the public at all (e.g., the “black programs” in the United States, which are not presented in the budget), but this is actually a very clear case of the security logic. In a democracy, at some point it must be argued in the public sphere why a situation constitutes security and therefore can legitimately be handled differently. One could not take something out of the budget without giving a reason for the use of such an extraordinary procedure. When this procedure has been legitimized through security rhetoric, it becomes institutionalized as a package legitimization, and it is thus possible to have black security boxes in the political process. The speech act reduces public influence on this issue, but in democracies one must legitimize in public why from now on the details will not be presented publicly (because of the danger of giving useful information to the enemy and the like). In all cases, the establishment of secret services has some element of this logical sequence. Not every act is presented with the drama of urgency and priority, because it has been established in a general sense that this is an entire field that has been moved to a form of treatment legitimate only because this area has been defined as security.

In well-developed states, armed forces and intelligence services are carefully separated from normal political life, and their use is subject to elaborate procedures of authorization. Where such separation is not in place, as in many weak states (Nigeria under Abacha, the USSR under Stalin) or in states mobilized for total war, much of normal politics is pushed into the security realm.³ The prominence of institutionalized military security underpins not only the claim of those who want to confine security studies to the military sector but also the *de facto* primacy of the state in security affairs. But nothing is necessary about this particular construction; it comes out of a certain history and has formidable institutional momentum but is not fixed for all time. Where the threat profiles warrant them, one can see other types of institutionalized security structures, such as those concerned with flood control in the Netherlands. One of the diffi-

culties facing those attempting to securitize environmental issues is that the threats are both new (or newly discovered) and controversial regarding their existential urgency. Consequently, they do not (yet) have institutions, and they find themselves operating in a political context dominated by security institutions designed for other types of threat.

Although in one sense securitization is a further intensification of politicization (thus usually making an even stronger role for the state), in another sense it is opposed to politicization. Politicization means to make an issue appear to be open, a matter of choice, something that is decided upon and that therefore entails responsibility, in contrast to issues that either could not be different (laws of nature) or should not be put under political control (e.g., a free economy, the private sphere, and matters for expert decision). By contrast, securitization on the international level (although often not on the domestic one) means to present an issue as urgent and existential, as so important that it should not be exposed to the normal haggling of politics but should be dealt with decisively by top leaders prior to other issues.

National security should not be idealized. It works to silence opposition and has given power holders many opportunities to exploit “threats” for domestic purposes, to claim a right to handle something with less democratic control and constraint. Our belief, therefore, is not “the more security the better.” Basically, security should be seen as negative, as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics. Ideally, politics should be able to unfold according to routine procedures without this extraordinary elevation of specific “threats” to a prepolitical immediacy. In some cases securitization of issues is unavoidable, as when states are faced with an implacable or barbarian aggressor. Because of its prioritizing imperative, securitization also has tactical attractions—for example, as a way to obtain sufficient attention for environmental problems. But desecuritization is the optimal long-range option, since it means not to have issues phrased as “threats against which we have countermeasures” but to move them out of this threat-defense sequence and into the ordinary public sphere (Wæver 1995b).

When considering securitizing moves such as “environmental security” or a “war on crime,” one has to weigh the always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security against the possible advantages of focus, attention, and mobilization. Thus, although in the abstract desecuritization is the ideal, in specific situations one can choose securitization—only one should not believe this is an innocent reflection of the issue *being* a security threat; it is always a political choice to securitize or to accept a securitization.

Subjective, Objective, and Intersubjective Security

Extracting the essential quality of international security takes one some way toward pinning down a general but nonetheless still fairly confined

meaning of the concept that can operate both within and beyond the traditional military-political understanding of that concept. But this does not solve all of the problems. Commentators on security at least as far back as Arnold Wolfers (1962: 151) have noted that security can be approached both objectively (there is a real threat) and subjectively (there is a perceived threat) and that nothing ensures that these two approaches will line up. This distinction turns out to be crucial in formulating an international security concept for a multisectoral agenda.

Our argument is that securitization, like politicization, has to be understood as an essentially intersubjective process. Even if one wanted to take a more objectivist approach, it is unclear how this could be done except in cases in which the threat is unambiguous and immediate. (An example would be hostile tanks crossing the border; even here, "hostile" is an attribute not of the vehicle but of the socially constituted relationship. A foreign tank could be part of a peacekeeping force.) It is not easy to judge the securitization of an issue against some measure of whether that issue is "really" a threat; doing so would demand an objective measure of security that no security theory has yet provided. Even if one could solve the measurement problem, it is not clear that the objectivist approach would be particularly helpful. Different states and nations have different thresholds for defining a threat: Finns are concerned about immigration at a level of 0.3 percent foreigners, whereas Switzerland functions with a level of 14.7 percent (Romero 1990).⁴

Regardless of whether an analyst finds that an actor's disposition toward high or low thresholds leads to correct assessments, this disposition has real effects. And other actors need to grasp the logic this unit follows. When states or nations securitize an issue—"correctly" or not—it is a political fact that has consequences, because this securitization will cause the actor to operate in a different mode than he or she would have otherwise. This is the classical diplomatic (and classical realist) lesson, which holds that good statesmanship has to understand the threshold at which other actors will feel threatened and therefore more generally to understand how the world looks to those actors, even if one disagrees (Carr 1939; Kissinger 1957; Wæver 1995d).

In some cases, however, it *does* matter how others judge the reasonableness of a securitization, because this influences how other actors in the system will respond to a security claim. What may seem a legitimate securitization within a given political community may appear paranoid to those outside it (e.g., Western perceptions of Soviet concerns about pop music and jeans). Conversely, outsiders may perceive that a political community undersecuritizes a "real" threat and thus endangers itself or free rides (e.g., U.S. perceptions of Danish defense policy during the Cold War). The way the securitization processes of one actor fit with the perceptions of others about what constitutes a "real" threat matters in shaping the interplay of

securities within the international system. Both within and between actors, the extent of shared intersubjective understandings of security is one key to understanding behavior.

In any case, it is neither politically nor analytically helpful to try to define "real security" outside of the world of politics and to teach the actors to understand the term correctly. Such rationalist universalism will easily be "right" on its own terms, but it will be of very little help in political analysis. It is more relevant to grasp the processes and dynamics of securitization, because if one knows who can "do" security on what issue and under what conditions, it will sometimes be possible to maneuver the interaction among actors and thereby curb security dilemmas.

The distinction between subjective and objective is useful for highlighting the fact that we want to avoid a view of security that is given objectively and emphasize that security is determined by actors and in this respect is subjective. The label *subjective*, however, is not fully adequate. Whether an issue is a security issue is not something individuals decide alone. Securitization is intersubjective and socially constructed: Does a referent object hold general legitimacy as something that *should* survive, which entails that actors can make reference to it, point to something as a threat, *and* thereby get others to follow or at least tolerate actions not otherwise legitimate? This quality is not held in subjective and isolated minds; it is a social quality, a part of a discursive, socially constituted, intersubjective realm. For individuals or groups to speak security does not guarantee success (cf. Derrida 1977a; Wæver 1995b). Successful securitization is not decided by the securitizer but by the audience of the security speech act: Does the audience accept that something is an existential threat to a shared value? Thus, security (as with all politics) ultimately rests neither with the objects nor with the subjects but *among* the subjects (cf. Arendt 1958, 1959; Wæver 1990; Huysmans 1996).

Social Power and Facilitating Conditions

This relationship among subjects is not equal or symmetrical, and the possibility for successful securitization will vary dramatically with the position held by the actor. Security is thus very much a structured field in which some actors are placed in positions of power by virtue of being generally accepted voices of security, by having the power to define security (Bigo 1994, 1996, forthcoming). This power, however, is never absolute: No one is guaranteed the ability to make people accept a claim for necessary security action (as even the Communist elites of Eastern Europe learned; see Wæver 1995b), nor is anyone excluded from attempts to articulate alternative interpretations of security. The field is structured or biased, but no one conclusively "holds" the power of securitization.⁵ Therefore, it is our view

(contra Bigo) that one can not make the actors of securitization the fixed point of analysis—the practice of securitization is the center of analysis. In concrete analysis, however, it is important to be specific about who is more or less privileged in articulating security. To study securitization is to study the power politics of a concept.

Based on a clear idea of the nature of security, securitization studies aims to gain an increasingly precise understanding of who securitizes, on what issues (threats), for whom (referent objects), why, with what results, and, not least, under what conditions (i.e., what explains when securitization is successful).

The impossibility of applying objective standards of securityness relates to a trivial but rarely noticed feature of security arguments: They are about the future, about alternative futures—always hypothetical—and about counterfactuals. A security argument always involves two predictions: What will happen if we do not take “security action” (the threat), and what will happen if we do (How is the submitted security policy supposed to work?). A security theory that could tell politicians and citizens what actually constitute security problems and what do not would demand that such predictions should be possible to make on a scientific basis, which means society would have to be a closed, mechanical, and deterministic system. Even this condition, however, would not be enough, because a second complication is that securityness is not only a matter of degree—“how threatening”—but is also a qualitative question: Do we choose to attach the security label with its ensuing effects? Actors can choose to handle a major challenge in other ways and thus not securitize it. The use of a specific conceptualization is always a choice—it is politics, it is not possible to decide by investigating the threat scientifically.

An objective measure for security can never replace the study of securitization, because the security quality is supplied by politics, but this does not mean a study of the features of the threat itself is irrelevant. On the contrary, these features rank high among the “facilitating conditions” of the security speech act. Facilitating conditions are the conditions under which the speech act works, in contrast to cases in which the act misfires or is abused (Austin 1975 [1962]). Conditions for a successful speech act fall into two categories: (1) the internal, linguistic-grammatical—to follow the rules of the act (or, as Austin argues, accepted conventional procedures must exist, and the act has to be executed according to these procedures), and (2) the external, contextual and social—to hold a position from which the act can be made (“The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked” [Austin 1975 (1962): 34]).

A successful speech act is a combination of language and society, of both intrinsic features of speech and the group that authorizes and recognizes that speech (Bourdieu 1991 [1982]; Butler 1996a, b). Among the

internal conditions of a speech act, the most important is to follow the security form, the grammar of security, and construct a plot that includes existential threat, point of no return, and a possible way out—the general grammar of security as such plus the particular dialects of the different sectors, such as talk identity in the societal sector, recognition and sovereignty in the political sector, sustainability in the environmental sector, and so on (cf. Wæver 1996b). The external aspect of a speech act has two main conditions. One is the social capital of the enunciator, the securitizing actor, who must be in a position of authority, although this should not be defined as official authority. The other external condition has to do with threat. It is more likely that one can conjure a security threat if certain objects can be referred to that are generally held to be threatening—be they tanks, hostile sentiments, or polluted waters. In themselves, these objects never make for necessary securitization, but they are definitely facilitating conditions.

After thus subdividing the social, external speech-act conditions into actor authority and threat related, we can sum up the facilitating conditions as follows: (1) the demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security, (2) the social conditions regarding the position of authority for the securitizing actor—that is, the relationship between speaker and audience and thereby the likelihood of the audience accepting the claims made in a securitizing attempt, and (3) features of the alleged threats that either facilitate or impede securitization.

Actor and Analyst in Securitization Studies

Approaching security from a speech-act perspective raises questions about the relationship between actors and analysts in defining and understanding the security agenda. As analysts, we define security as we have done here because it is the only way that makes coherent sense of what actors do. We have identified a particular sociopolitical logic that is characteristic of security, and that logic is what we study. Although analysts unavoidably play a role in the construction (or deconstruction) of security issues (viz., the long argument between peace research and strategic studies or the U.S. debate about the securityness of the Vietnam War), it is not their primary task to determine whether some threat represents a “real” security problem.

Objective security assessment is beyond our means of analysis; the main point is that actors and their audiences securitize certain issues as a specific form of political act. Actors who securitize do not necessarily say “security,” nor does their use of the term *security* necessarily always constitute a security act. We use our criteria to see if they take the form of “politics of existential threats,” with the argument that an issue takes priority over everything else and therefore allows for a breaking of the rules. As a first step, the designation of what constitutes a security issue comes from

political actors, not analysts, but analysts interpret political actors' actions and sort out when these actions fulfill the security criteria. It is, further, the analyst who judges whether the actor is effective in mobilizing support around this security reference (i.e., the attempted securitizers are "judged" first by other social actors and citizens, and the degree of their following is then interpreted and measured by us). Finally, to assess the significance of an instance of securitization, analysts study its effects on other units. The actor commands at only one very crucial step: the performance of a political act in a security mode.

Thus, it is the actor, not the analyst, who decides whether something is to be handled as an existential threat. This does not make analysts hostage to the self-understanding of actors for the duration of the analysis. In all subsequent questions of cause-effect relationships—what are the effects of these security acts, who influenced decisions, and so on—we do not intend to give actors any defining role. Thus, a concept such as *security complex* is defined not by whether actors label themselves a complex (they do not!) but by analysts' interpretation of who is actually interconnected in terms of security interaction.⁶ (Security complex is basically an analytical term; security is a political practice that we have distilled into a specific, more precise category on the basis of the way the concept is used.) The speech-act approach says only that it is the actor who by securitizing an issue—and the audience by accepting the claim—makes it a security issue. At that level, the analyst cannot and should not replace the actor.

This point does not suggest that we feel obliged to agree with this securitizing act. One of the purposes of this approach should be that it becomes possible to evaluate whether one finds it good or bad to securitize a certain issue. One rarely manages to counter a securitizing attempt by saying as an analyst, "You are not really threatened, you only think so." But it is possible to ask with some force whether it is a good idea to make this issue a security issue—to transfer it to the agenda of panic politics—or whether it is better handled within normal politics. As witnessed in the discussion about environmental security, even environmentalists have had strong second thoughts about the effects of putting the environmental agenda in security terms. The securitization approach serves to underline the responsibility of talking security, the responsibility of actors as well as of analysts who choose to frame an issue as a security issue. They cannot hide behind the claim that anything in itself constitutes a security issue.

The relationship of analyst to actor is one area in which our approach differs from that taken by many scholars with whom we share some theoretical premises. An emerging school of "critical security studies" (CSS) wants to challenge conventional security studies by applying postpositivist perspectives, such as critical theory and poststructuralism (Krause and Williams 1996, 1997). Much of its work, like ours, deals with the social construction of security (cf. also Klein 1994; Campbell 1993), but CSS mostly has the intent (known from poststructuralism as well as from con-

structivism in international relations) of showing that change is possible because things are socially constituted.

We, in contrast, believe even the socially constituted is often sedimented as structure and becomes so relatively stable as practice that one must do analysis also on the basis that it continues, using one's understanding of the social construction of security not only to criticize this fact but also to understand the dynamics of security and thereby maneuver them. This leads us to a stronger emphasis on collectivities and on understanding thresholds that trigger securitization in order to avoid them. With our securitization perspective, we abstain from attempts to talk about what "real security" would be for people, what are "actual" security problems larger than those propagated by elites, and the like. To be able to talk about these issues, one has to make basically different ontological choices than ours and must define some emancipatory ideal. Such an approach is therefore complementary to ours; it can do what we voluntarily abstain from, and we can do what it is unable to: understand the mechanisms of securitization while keeping a distance from security—that is, not assuming that security is a good to be spread to ever more sectors.

There are other differences between the two approaches (much of CSS takes the individual as the true reference for security—human security—and thus in its individualism differs from our methodological collectivism and focus on collectivities; cf. Chapter 9), but the political attitude and its corresponding view of constructivism and structuralism is probably the most consistent one. The analyst in critical security studies takes on a larger burden than the analyst in our approach; he or she can brush away existing security construction disclosed as arbitrary and point to some other issues that are more important security problems. Our approach links itself more closely to existing actors, tries to understand their *modus operandi*, and assumes that future management of security will have to include handling these actors—as, for instance, in strategies aimed at mitigating security dilemmas and fostering mutual awareness in security complexes. Although our philosophical position is in some sense more radically constructivist in holding security to always be a political construction and not something the analyst can describe as it "really" is, in our purposes we are closer to traditional security studies, which at its best attempted to grasp security constellations and thereby steer them into benign interactions. This stands in contrast to the "critical" purposes of CSS, which point toward a more wholesale refutation of current power wielders.

The Units of Security Analysis: Actors and Referent Objects

The speech-act approach to security requires a distinction among three types of units involved in security analysis.

1. *Referent objects*: things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival.
2. *Securitizing actors*: actors who securitize issues by declaring something—a referent object—existentially threatened.
3. *Functional actors*: actors who affect the dynamics of a sector. Without being the referent object or the actor calling for security on behalf of the referent object, this is an actor who significantly influences decisions in the field of security. A polluting company, for example, can be a central actor in the environmental sector—it is not a referent object and is not trying to securitize environmental issues (quite the contrary).

The most important and difficult distinction is that between referent objects and securitizing actors, and this distinction requires some discussion. We deal with functional actors in the sector chapters.

The *referent object* for security has traditionally been the state and, in a more hidden way, the nation. For a state, survival is about sovereignty, and for a nation it is about identity (Wæver et al. 1993, chapter 2). But if one follows the securitization approach outlined earlier, a much more open spectrum of possibilities has to be allowed. In principle, securitizing actors can attempt to construct anything as a referent object. In practice, however, the constraints of facilitating conditions mean actors are much more likely to be successful with some types of referent objects than with others. Security action is usually taken on behalf of, and with reference to, a collectivity. The referent object is that to which one can point and say, "It has to survive, therefore it is necessary to . . ."

Size or scale seems to be one crucial variable in determining what constitutes a successful referent object of security. At the micro end of the spectrum, individuals or small groups can seldom establish a wider security legitimacy in their own right. They may speak about security to and of themselves, but few will listen. At the system end of the scale, problems also exist in establishing security legitimacy. For example, attempts have been made to construct all of humankind as a security referent—most notably in terms of shared fears of nuclear annihilation during the Cold War but also in the context of environmental fears. Another system-scale attempt was the failed move by socialists in 1914 to mobilize in the name of the international working class. Thus far, however, the system level has rarely been able to compete with the middle scale, although this does not mean it will not become more attractive in the future as international circumstances change.

In practice, the middle scale of limited collectivities has proved the most amenable to securitization as durable referent objects. One explanation for this success is that such limited collectivities (states, nations, and, as anticipated by Huntington, civilizations) engage in self-reinforcing rival-

ries with other limited collectivities, and such interaction strengthens their "we" feeling. Because they involve a reference to a "we," they are social constructs operative in the interaction among people. A main criterion of this type of referent is that it forms an interpretative community—it is the context in which principles of legitimacy and valuation circulate and within which the individual constructs an interpretation of events. The referent is a social context with the dignity of a "site of judgment" (Foucault 1979). If rivalry is a facilitating condition for successful securitization, middle-level collectivities will always have an advantage over the system level in this respect. Somehow, the system-level candidates are still too subtle and indirect to trigger the levels of mass identity necessary for securitization. Lacking the dynamic underpinning of rivalry, their attempt at universalist political allegiance confronts the middle-level collectivities and loses.⁷

The apparent primacy of the middle-level, limited collectivities opens the way for an attack on our approach from traditional state-centric security analysts (and perhaps also from certain types of liberals). Their argument goes like this: Security, by definition, is and should be about the state, and the state is and should be about security, with the emphasis on military and political security. A hard-line liberal might say the state has no legitimate functions other than security. When security is expanded beyond the state, we have problematic securitizations such as environmental security; when the state expands beyond security, we have problems such as the conflation of economic security with protectionism. It is possible to take the state-security position and argue politically against all attempts to "do" security with reference to other referent objects on the ground that only through the state can the process of securitization be controlled democratically and kept in check.

We acknowledge that there is some analytical truth, as well as a legitimate political position, in this tight link between state and security. But the logic of our approach forces us to reject the use of such a narrow and self-closing definitional move. We have constructed a wider conceptual net within which the state-centric position is a possible but not a predetermined outcome. In using this scheme, one may still find that the state is the most important security referent; if so, this finding would carry much more force than if it were made true by definition and would also remain open to change. We do not say security is only about the state (although there is much truth to the argument that the state is the ideal security actor) nor that security is equally available to all—states and other social movements. Security is an area of competing actors, but it is a biased one in which the state is still generally privileged as the actor historically endowed with security tasks and most adequately structured for the purpose. This explanation acknowledges the difference between a state-centric approach and a state-dominated field.

But whereas the middle level in general, and the state in particular,

might enjoy primacy in the selection of referent objects, that is not the end of the story. Being a middle-level, limited collectivity is insufficient for achieving status as a referent object. This is probably best illustrated in the case of economic security, where one would think firms are the natural limited collectivity units. But by their very nature, firms rarely have a strong claim to a right of survival. If the survival of a firm is threatened, the firm will not be able to legitimize action beyond the normal, legal rules of the game. We rarely see middle-level security policy in this field except when economic arguments can be linked to what in economic terms is the secondary unit—the state—which *can* claim a natural right to survive, to defend its existence, and to take extraordinary measures (protectionism and the like) on a national issue (such as maintaining the capability for military mobilization) if deemed necessary.

Nor do system-level referent objects always lose out. Thus far they have done so in the military and political sectors, where the security of humankind has generally had less appeal than that of the state. But the story is different in other sectors. The environment is becoming an interesting case, because groups are using a securitizing logic that exactly follows the format prescribed in the previous section: The environment has to survive; therefore, this issue should take priority over all others, because if the environment is degraded to the point of no return all other issues will lose their meaning. If the normal system (politics according to the rules as they exist) is not able to handle this situation, we (Greenpeace and especially the more extremist ecoterrorists) will have to take extraordinary measures to save the environment. Sustainability might be the environmentalists' equivalent of the state's sovereignty and the nation's identity; it is the essential constitutive principle that has to be protected. If this idea catches on, the environment itself may be on the way to becoming a referent object—an object by reference to which security action can be taken in a socially significant way. We discuss this more fully in Chapter 4.

Once this door is opened, one can see other plausible candidates for security referent objects at the system level. Humankind as a whole achieved some status as a referent object in relation to nuclear weapons and could do so again—perhaps more successfully—in relation to environmental disasters, such as new ice ages or collisions between the earth and one or more of the many large rocks that occupy near-earth space. The level of human civilization could also become the referent object in relation to environmental threats. In the economic sector, system-level referents may be more effective vehicles for security discourse than limited collectivities, such as the firm and the state. Already, systems of rules or sets of principles, such as “the liberal world economy” and “free trade,” have some status as referent objects in the economic sector. A similar practice could grow in the political sector around international society or democracy (the latter as an extension of the democracy = peace hypothesis). Our position is that

no principled, logical exclusion of referent objects should take place at the system level; therefore, we investigate the issue in each of the sector chapters.

Also, the individual is again a factor in security debate. As argued by Ken Booth (1991, 1994, 1995), much of security analysis blanks out the effects on actual human beings of the issues discussed; thus, his argument is an attempt to securitize concrete individuals in their competition with aggregate categories. Emma Rothschild (1995) has argued that historically, a major part of liberal thought had the individual as the referent of security; thus, there is a respectable philosophical tradition to build on. In the 1980s, with projects like the Brandt and Palme Commissions, security thought drifted back toward the individual, and Rothschild argues convincingly that regardless of whether it is intellectually coherent or ethically ideal, securitization of the individual is a real political practice of our times. (In this book, the individual will reappear primarily in the political-sector chapter, because it is usually a question of establishing the *principle* of, for example, human rights rather than of specific individuals appearing one by one as securitized referent objects.⁸)

To conclude, one can study security discourse to learn what referent objects are appealed to and can study outcomes to see which hold security legitimacy so an appeal to their necessary survival is able to mobilize support. Traditionally, the middle level has been the most fruitful generator of referent objects, but lately more has been heard about system- and micro-level possibilities (Rothschild 1995). Referent objects must establish security legitimacy in terms of a claim to survival. Bureaucracies, political regimes, and firms seldom hold this sense of guaranteed survival and thus are not usually classed as referent objects. Logically, they could try to establish a claim to survival and thus to security legitimacy, but empirically this is not usually possible. In practice, security is not totally subjective. There are socially defined limits to what can and cannot be securitized, although those limits can be changed. This means security analysis is interested mainly in successful instances of securitization—the cases in which other people follow the securitizing lead, creating a social, intersubjective constitution of a referent object on a mass scale. Unsuccessful or partially successful attempts at securitization are interesting primarily for the insights they offer into the stability of social attitudes toward security legitimacy, the process by which those attitudes are maintained or changed, and the possible future direction of security politics. In these larger patterns, desecuritization is at least as interesting as securitization, but the successful acts of securitization take a central place because they constitute the currently valid specific meaning of security.

Critics will undoubtedly protest our abdication of the critical use of objective security measures as a way to question dominant definitions (cf. McSweeney 1996). When a threat is not securitized, should one not be able

to show that this *is* a threat? Yes, the securitization perspective, which basically removes the objective ground from the dominant discourse, opens the possibility of problematizing both actual securitization and the absence of securitization, but it cannot do so by proving that something "is" a security problem—at least not without shifting from the role of analyst to securitizing actor. Thus, it is not advisable to add to our basic securitization perspective that there are also objective security problems (to hold against false securitizations and the lack thereof). Doing so would introduce an incompatible ontology that would ultimately undermine the basic idea of security as a specific social category that arises out of, and is constituted in, political practice.

What one *can* add are arguments about the likely effects.⁹ One can try to show the effects of either excessive securitization—security dilemmas—or of *not* securitizing—the inability to handle an issue effectively unless it is securitized. Only within society and by one's own participation in political practice can one contribute to securitization or desecuritization, which is a different matter from the threat "being" a security problem. Things can be facilitators of securitization—it is made easier if one can point to matters associated with threats, but the ultimate locus of securityness is social rather than technical, and it is between a securitizing actor and its audience in reference to something they value.

A *securitizing actor* is someone, or a group, who performs the security speech act. Common players in this role are political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists, and pressure groups. These actors are not usually the referent objects for security, because only rarely can they speak security through reference to the need to defend their own survival. Their argument will normally be that it is necessary to defend the security of the state, nation, civilization, or some other larger community, principle, or system. Only occasionally will actors such as governments or firms be able to speak successfully of security on their own behalf.

The notion of an "actor" is in itself problematic. To say precisely who or what acts is always tricky, because one can disaggregate any collective into subunits and on down to individuals and say, "It is not really 'the state' that acts but some particular department—or in the last instance individuals." But to disaggregate everything into individuals is not very helpful, because much of social life is understandable only when collectivities are seen as more than the sum of their "members" and are treated as social realities (methodological collectivism).

Identifying actors is thus more complicated than identifying referent objects. The former involves a level-of-analysis problem: The same event can be attributed to different levels (individual, bureaucracy, or state, for instance). Unlike the case with the referent object, a speech act is often not self-defining in terms of who or what speaks, and the designation "actor" is thus in some sense arbitrary. Ultimately, individuals can always be said to

be the actors, but if they are locked into strong roles it is usually more relevant to see as the "speaker" the collectivities for which individuals are designated authoritative representatives (e.g., parties, states, or pressure groups)—for example, France-materialized-as-de Gaulle rather than the person de Gaulle. If one wants to downgrade the role of the analyst in defining actors, one option is to let other actors settle the matter. Other states treated de Gaulle as acting on behalf of France and held France responsible for his acts; thus, in the world of "diplomats" France was constituted as the actor (Manning 1962; Wæver forthcoming-c). How to identify the securitizing actor is in the last instance less a question of who performs the speech than of what logic shapes the action. Is it an action according to individual logic or organizational logic, and is the individual or the organization generally held responsible by other actors? Focusing on the organizational logic of the speech act is probably the best way to identify who or what is the securitizing actor.

The difference between actor and referent object in any specific case will also usually mean there is a separate category of "audience," those the securitizing act attempts to convince to accept exceptional procedures because of the specific security nature of some issue. One danger of the phrases *securitization* and *speech act* is that too much focus can be placed on the acting side, thus privileging the powerful while marginalizing those who are the audience and judge of the act (Huysmans 1996).

One use of the distinction between actors and referent objects is to avoid reifying some security units—for example, nations. When we say in the chapter on societal security (and in Wæver et al. 1993) that societal security is often about nations and their survival, we do not want to say that "a nation acts to defend itself," which would represent reifying and anthropomorphic terminology. Someone—some group, movement, party, or elite—acts with reference to the nation and claims to speak or act on behalf of the nation.

The distinction between securitizing actor and referent object is less of a problem in the context of the state and therefore has not previously been clearly noted. The state (usually) has explicit rules regarding who can speak on its behalf, so when a government says "we have to defend our national security," it has the right to act on behalf of the state. The government *is* the state in this respect. No such formal rules of representation exist for nations or the environment; consequently, the problem of legitimacy is larger in these areas than in the case of the state. When someone acts in the name of a nation, certain discursive rules are imposed on the actor, because he or she has to speak in terms of identity, in terms that follow the logic of "nation," and these terms shape the discourse and action in a way that differs from that appropriate to other referent objects. But only in the weakest sense does this mean the nation is "acting." The rules for what one can do in the name of a nation are less rigid than those for a state; therefore, it will

be easier to talk of the state acting than of the nation doing so. This is a matter of degree rather than necessarily a qualitative difference. Consequently, the analyst who writes about a fringe neo-Nazi group that tries to mobilize people to defend "our national survival" against the threat posed by immigrants will feel uncomfortable phrasing this as "the nation acting." It feels more correct to make the distinction between who actually does the acting and what those actors are referring to as that which should survive and then see how successful they are in asserting a claim to speak for that higher entity.

These arguments show why it is important to distinguish between securitizing actors and referent objects. But the distinctions are contextual rather than intrinsic to specific units: In many cases, the securitizing actors will be different from the referent object, but in others—most notably the state—the referent object will in a sense speak for itself through its authorized representatives. In all cases, however, the analyst is obliged to question the success or failure of the securitizing speech act. Even governments can fail at securitization, as happened to Britain over the Suez, the United States in Vietnam, and the European Communist regimes domestically in the late 1980s.

In applying the distinction among referent objects, securitizing actors, and functional actors to the five sector chapters that follow, it is important first to clarify the referent object(s) in each sector. In some cases, this will constitute most of the exercise. To map societal security around the world, it is probably more interesting—and at least logically primary—to know where people are mobilized in the name of nations, civilizations, religions, or tribes than to know where mobilization is effected by political parties, where by state elites, where by social movements, where by churches, and where by intellectuals. In the military sector, the referent object may almost always be the state, and the securitizing actor may in some sense also be "the state," but a number of functional actors may also influence decisions. If so, one would need to spend more space tracking down these functional actors. Thus, the sector chapters will vary in terms of the weight of analysis given to the three types of security unit. In an ideal situation—perhaps in more complete future case studies based on this approach—all three types will be covered fully, in particular the articulation of referent objects and securitizing actors.

Regions and Other Constellations of Securitization

In the part of this work aimed at tracing security complexes, the approach is to look at the pattern of security connectedness. The investigation proceeds in three steps: (1) Is the issue securitized successfully by any actors?

(2) If yes, track the links and interactions from this instance—how does the security action in this case impinge on the security of others, and where does this then echo significantly? (3) These chains can then be collected as a cluster of interconnected security concerns. When this case along with the patterns from all of the other cases (of the sector in the case of homogeneous sector-specific analysis or across sectors in the case of heterogeneous security complex analysis; cf. Chapters 1 and 8) are aggregated, we can see the level on which the processes of securitization and the patterns of interaction are concentrated.

Our general assumption, and one of the key motivations for this project, is that the post-Cold War world will exhibit substantially higher levels of regionalization and lower levels of globalization than was the case during the Cold War. One of our purposes is to adapt security complex theory to deal with this more complicated world. In the sector chapters that follow, however, we keep this question open. It may be that the security logic of some sectors inherently inclines toward regionalization, whereas in other sectors it does not. This is what we need to investigate in these chapters. And we do so in basically the same way as is done in classical security complex theory: by combining the concerns of major actors into a constellation, a knot of mutual security relations.

One final problem in thinking about security regions is how to tie such thinking into the discussion of actors and referent objects in the previous section. Is a security complex defined by actors or referent objects? As just argued, the security complex is actually a constellation of security concerns; the different instances of securitization as such form the nodes among which the lines can be drawn and the complex mapped. Because referent objects are the more basic, enduring, and salient features on the security landscape, the answer to our earlier question is the referent objects. Some might object that according to our scheme referent objects do not act and therefore cannot be the units in subsystems that are defined by interactions. This is an illusion. Security actors speak and act in the name of referent objects, and they generally see threats as emanating from other referent objects. There is thus a real sense in which India and Pakistan, Turkey and the Kurds, or Chile and ITT interact.

Since referent objects are the socially constituted units, they are often actors for each other, even if some analytical theories point to other links in the chains as the actors. For instance, states are to some extent real as states and they act as states even if the literal acting is done by statesmen, because states ascribe intentions and responsibility to each other as states (Manning 1962; Wæver forthcoming-c). This reflection is structured by the motivation of security complex analysis, which is to reach a dynamic analysis of security situations. We want to be able to grasp the connections between the security of A and that of B, the security dilemmas as well as mutually rein-

forcing security loops. Therefore, it is essential that we organize the regional analysis around nodes that are simultaneously that which is (claimed to be) threatened and that which is (depicted as) the source of threat.

In classical security complex theory (CSCT), the definition was phrased in terms of primary security concerns; in the current framework, it must be instances of securitization that connect and form the complex. In both cases, the core is obviously the articulation of threats by the major actors. Unfortunately, there is little conceptual literature on threats. In discussions of the concept of security, some participants claim an actor-based threat is a precondition for something to be a security problem (Deudney 1990). It is difficult to see what justifies this as a logical step, although it could be an empirical connection, a structural proclivity making threats attributed to actors more easy to securitize. We do not, however, want to define security problems such that actors *have* to be the problem. Probably, they usually are.

It follows from our general securitization perspective that what interests us is the *attribution* of security problems to specific sources rather than the actual origins of what appear as security problems. As argued by attribution theory, there is a general psychological tendency to overestimate the degree of choice for *alter* while emphasizing necessity as to *ego* (Hart 1978; Jervis 1976). One will therefore generally tend to "actorize" the other side—that is, fashion the other as a willful chooser rather than a chain in a series of events. In most cases, the fact that the other is a strategic actor with several choices is an amplifying factor in any threat perception and therefore assists in pushing an issue across the security threshold. Because the other is an actor, not just a wheel in a machine, it has the potential of outwitting us, of having intentions, or of bending or suppressing our will to replace it with its own (cf. Clausewitz 1983 [1832]; Wæver 1995b).

This focus on actors could seem to point to securitizing actors rather than to referent objects. This deduction, however, is probably false. What the attribution argument implies is not that we should focus on those units we see as actors but rather that whatever is presented as the cause of security problems is most likely also actorized. If securitizing actor "a" on behalf of community "A" claims A is threatened by B, he or she will present B as an actor, as responsible for the threat, as an agent who had a choice. Therefore, we do not have to define security complexes in terms of what we have labeled *actors* in our analytical framework: The actors might operate with other actors and thereby point to the bigger, more abstract categories—the referent objects. On the other hand, threats do not need to be attributed to the same categories as those the other side acted with reference to. Actual events are likely to be varied and complex, requiring a pragmatic approach that allows us to find the specific units of the case.

For instance, Churchill as a securitizing actor could have securitized Nazism as a threat. This does not necessarily mean a countersecuritization

is performed either by Nazism as actor or with Nazism as referent object. Instead, Hitler could securitize England (the referent object of Churchill, so far so good) as the threat in the name of Germany, all Germans, and the Aryan race. What constitutes the threat for one is not necessarily the referent object for the other. This procedure was much easier in CSCT where security was conducted for and by India, which was also the (perceived) threat to Pakistan and vice versa. The argument from attribution theory gives us reason to believe that most threats will be linked to actors and that what we analyze as referent objects will often be constructed by other actors as actors. If, however, one draws the map too finely, a number of actors will be securitizing slightly different referent objects (the German race, the German people, Germany, Aryans)—differences that are important when one is trying to look into the politics of securitizing moves—whereas we in security complex analysis need to find the main patterns of interaction and therefore need to bundle together the various versions of securitizing "Germany" as one node.

When generating the security complex, the best way to define the points between which the security arrows go might be to point to conglomerates of a referent object and the corresponding securitizing actor. In the extreme case, this means we have referent objects with stable spokespersons. A stable combination of referent object and "voice" points to the classical concept of the state as a clear instance. But even the state and sovereignty as referent object is appealed to by other than the one official voice. There are several actual securitizing actors, and the state as well as the other actors occasionally securitize other referents, such as the nation, the European Union (EU), or some principles of international society. In the case of France, Japan, and Sudan, the name makes a relatively clear reference to a dense network of correlated referent objects and securitizing actors. The different securitizing actors are connected by competing for the representation of the same referent object; the different referent objects are unified by their mutual substitutability for each other. There is more a chain of family resemblances than a clear-cut criterion or one primary unit. In each case, a conglomerate of actors and referent objects is unified by the density of overlapping security discourse and usually also nominally by a name: the security of "France" (which can mean several different referent objects and a large number of possible actors), of Europe and the EU, and of "the environment." (See the further discussion on pp. 171–175.)

The key question in security analysis is, who can "do" security in the name of what? For a time, experts could get away with analyzing only "states," and the system was then the sum of the states. Regional security meant the sum of national securities or rather a particular constellation of security interdependence among a group of states. The approach developed here offers more types of units to choose from, but the basic idea of security complexes can be carried over into a world of multiple units.

Notes

1. The history of the word *security* is complex (Kaufmann 1970; Der Derian 1993; Delumeau 1986; Corze 1984), but in the 1940s it was established in international affairs with a fairly distinct meaning (Rosenberg 1993). Much of this meaning was so easily installed because it rested on an old argument that had used the word *security* much less systematically—an argument about “necessity” previously contained primarily in the concept of *raison d'état* (Butterfield 1975). Especially from the mid-nineteenth century, when the state enters a juridical self-limitation and self-control, this “is balanced by the designation of a range of ‘governmental acts’ which are immune to legal challenge. This juridical reserve area of executive power is . . . the qualification which . . . calculations of security impose as a condition for the political feasibility of a liberal democracy” (Gordon 1991: 33; cf. Foucault 1991 [1978]). The classical argument, which holds that in extreme cases the government can use all means necessary, becomes concentrated as a specific, exceptional case (Wæver 1988, 1995b). This meaning of security evolved separately from the use of security in various domestic contexts (although connections definitely exist; see Kaufman 1970). This international type of security starts to spread to new referents and new actors; therefore, we want to retain a focus on international security because it has a distinct meaning, but we do not exclude the possibility that we will meet this kind of security increasingly in domestic contexts.

2. This argument does not imply that private issues could not in some sense be political, an argument made forcefully by feminists. To claim such is a politicizing move.

3. The concept of strong and weak states is elaborated and defined in Buzan (1991: 96–107) and rests on the degree of sociopolitical cohesion within the state, which is high for strong states and low for weak ones. The concept should not be confused with the distinction between strong and weak powers, which is about their capabilities vis-à-vis other powers.

4. Baldwin (1997) is the most sophisticated and consistent attempt to define security and to structure security studies according to the idea that the purpose and task is to assist decisionmakers in correctly assessing the relative attention to devote to different threats.

5. The importance of “cultural capital” to the ability to perform a speech act has been argued by Pierre Bourdieu (1991 [1982]). A speech act is not only linguistic; it is also social and is dependent on the social position of the enunciator and thus in a wider sense is inscribed in a social field. However, Bourdieu made this argument to counter a tendency of some poststructuralists and philosophers of everyday language to make the purely linguistic, internal features of a speech act completely determining (Bourdieu 1996). He has accepted the critique by Judith Butler (1996a, b) that since the speech act needs to include an idea of—with his own phrase—the “social magic” whereby some are accepted as holding authority and others are not, it has to be indeterminate, open for surprises. This is not purely a question of a formal *position* of authority (Austin’s example in which “I declare you man and wife” is an effective speech act only when performed by a properly authorized authority; 1975 [1962]: 8–15). There is a performative force to the speech act; to use Bourdieu’s own concepts, it has a magical efficiency, it makes what it says. A speech act is interesting exactly because it holds the insurrecting potential to break the ordinary, to establish meaning that is not already within the context—it reworks or produces a context by the performative success of the act. Although it is important to study the social conditions of successful speech acts, it is necessary always to keep open the possibility that an act that had previously succeeded and for which the formal resources and position are in place may fail and, conversely, that new

actors can perform a speech act they had previously not been expected to perform (Butler 1996a, b; Derrida 1977a [1972], 1977b, 1988). Therefore, the issues of “who can do security” and “was this a case of securitization” can ultimately be judged only in hindsight (Wæver et al. 1993: 188). They cannot be closed off by finite criteria for success.

6. This stands in contrast to some other studies of regions where one is interested in the *construction* of regions by actors (Neumann 1994; Joenniemi and Wæver 1992; Joenniemi 1997). Both approaches to regions are relevant, but for different purposes.

7. For those interested in pinpointing our position within the field of international relations theory, this is probably the passage to pick. We do not take the state or sovereignty as representing fixed limits, but we are skeptical of individualism as the traditional alternative to state centrism. We therefore form a picture of a world of multiple units, which might be called postsovereign realism. The units can be overlapping (in contrast to the exclusivity of sovereign territorial states), but this does not necessarily lead to any benign transnationalism in which the focus is on the multiple identities of individuals relativizing all units and collectivities. Although each individual in a world of overlapping units is a “member” of several units, instead of focusing on any such softening effects produced by overlap, we study how the units can continue to conduct power politics; think, for example, of the work of Susan Strange (state-firm diplomacy; 1994) and Robert Kaplan (a very anarchic anarchy after sovereignty; 1994). Each unit has a possibility of becoming the reference for security action, but since the different units overlap and are placed at different levels, there is no fixed line between domestic and international—what is internal to one unit can be interunit when one thinks of other units. More importantly a distinction exists between individual and collective security. This argument is important for the present project, because if domestic and international were fixed, there would be a risk of generating a cozy Western view of politics: Domestic politics is normal and without security, whereas the extreme is relegated to the international space. In other parts of the world, domestic is not cozy. This fact can be grasped by focusing on those units and collectivities that are mobilized in such contexts: These domestic security relations are interunit because in these places the most powerful referent objects are smaller than the state.

8. One can contemplate cases in which concern seems to focus on a particular individual: one girl in Sarajevo or Salman Rushdie. To a large extent, these individuals are given such prominence and more resources are spent on them than on most others because they are taken to represent principles. Action for some specific individual always depends on a construction of that person as representing some category, as deserving protection because he or she belongs to a particular social category—for example, leader, representative, free intellectual, or revealing test case.

9. The analyst can also intervene to countersay actors in relation to the use of the word *security*. Sloppy talk of “economic security” or “environmental security” can be questioned by arguing that the security act has not really been performed and that the securitizing actor has not managed to establish a case for treating the threat as existential. Whether the threat really is or is not existential in relation to the referent object is impossible to decide from the outside, but we can study the discourse and see if the issue has been securitized in this sense. This is primarily an intervention into the debate among observers over the appropriateness of the use of the security label. When intervening in direct policy debates over a securitization, the mode of argumentation will typically be in terms of comparing the likely effects of having the issue securitized or desecuritized.