Post-Copenhagen Security Studies: Desecuritizing Securitization

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Introduction

AFTER A FEW BRIEF SKIRMISHES at various points during the 1990s, the debate about security studies has waned. New, or critical, security studies has firmly established itself and its research agendas, while traditional, or classical, security studies continues as if little has changed. Communication between the two sides has dwindled to a trickle. Indeed, one sometimes gets the impression that colleagues would rather just do their own thing and not have to answer for it to 'unsympathetic outsiders', more or less on the principle – à la James Bond – of 'live and let die', hoping that ignoring the 'Others' will in itself suffice to make 'Them' go away to die a silent death. The result is often that students are exposed to no more than one view – the dominant one at their institution – a trend enhanced by the tendency in many places to let hiring follow research convictions. And the views in question are rather different.

During the 1990s, non-traditional security studies has been identified with, inter alia, a widened security concept, a non-military and non-state perspective, and an emphasis on identity and cultural factors.[1] Critiques of the new trends have appeared off and on, beginning with a 1991 article by Walt.[2] Much of the criticism has been responded to at length, if not necessarily conclusively, in particular by Buzan and Wæver.[3] In addition, some of the issues have been dealt with by Baldwin[4] and in a symposium in *Cooperation and Conflict*.[5] Much of the debate has turned more on philosophical underpinnings than on substance. I argue in favor of a return to the substance of security policy and its role in shaping the fundamental relations between societies, groups, and states. Hence, the present critique is consciously narrow and selective in terms of the issues pursued.

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My argument flows from a concern to assure some priorities that are crucial to security studies but characteristically either overlooked or consciously downplayed by the Copenhagen school, which I choose as representative of the new security studies.[6] Those priorities are the following: to keep security research trained on the study of large-scale conflict and its potential for turning to violence; to preserve an objective core in the concept of threat;[7] and to focus on the state as a collective actor whose roles in security terms include, inter alia, the processing of threats. These points will be developed below.

A Digression on the New Theology

Let me begin with a small, but necessary, digression about the theological turn in the field of International Relations (IR). For almost two decades, our field of study has been a missionary field, where theological structures have been erected and true believers recruited. Standpoints and positions have too often been treated as if they could only be assumed in entire packages, complete with epistemologies, ontologies, and standard answers to empirical questions – not in discrete, reasoned treatments of delimited issues. Where belief becomes a standard of knowledge, I prefer the stand of an agnostic.

I reject holistic belief structures as unwarranted and unreasonable constraints in our efforts to understand international relations. While the most insistent classifiers may pin me down epistemologically as a scientific realist, I pray not to be classified in any holistic camp. More specifically, I reject IR classification as a 'realist', whether 'classical' or otherwise, even though some of my ideas may happen to correspond to those of Hans Morgenthau or Raymond Aron. From a strong tradition in social science I learned a long time ago that our experience is in large part socially constructed, without for that reason seeing a need to label myself a 'constructivist'. Indeed, the constructivist positions advanced by, for instance, Wendt, Adler, and Checkel[8] seem to me eminently reasonable but mostly without significant import for the way we should proceed.

I regard the insights and perspectives of sociology, history, and other social sciences as essential for the work we are doing in the study of international relations. To continue to integrate their insights, we need more eclecticism and less cumulative positioning. The latter habit, evidenced in the schematic labeling of colleagues and their works according to presumed theoretical belief systems,[9] originated in the neorealism / liberalism debate and was sustained by overproductive graduate schools. It is a pedagogical device which may have some worth at the undergraduate level. However, in the scholarly exchange about international politics to which we are devoted, I find it presumptuous and subversive to the advancement of our scholarly profession.

Position Taken

While an unrepentant agnostic in terms of schools, my view of security is that we are (or should be!) dealing with the potential dangers and consequences of recurrent conflict between large organized groups – some of them states – each represented by individuals acting for their collectivity. These parties in conflict accept no authority from outside and find that they have no universally reliable, orderly procedures for resolving their differences. Under such circumstances, they resort to a wide range of improvised methods to realize their objectives. Some of those methods involve organized mass violence, others are more sophisticated, but all are geared to assuring and asserting the collectivity's will in the face of uncertainties seen to have been brought on by their partners in conflict.[10]

The project which I currently infuse with that general outlook deals with the prospects of a form of regional cooperative security:

> *Cooperative security* ... here ... refers to policies of governments or organized groups which (a) reflect the attitudes of former adversaries – or of parties which consider each other to be potential adversaries – to the present and future relationship between them, [policies] which (b) they seek to shift from a more to a less conflictual mode. In other words, cooperative security essentially represents the policy, demonstrated in practice, of dealing peacefully with conflicts, not merely by abstention from violence or threats, but by active engagement in negotiation and a search for practical solutions, and by a commitment to preventive measures.[11]

The challenge is to handle the processes of conflict which ensue when political actors (individuals or groups) who cannot deal with opposition resort to power plays. There are familiar antecedents to these lines of thought, and indebtedness to well-established broader notions such as *common security*,[12] but my emphasis is more focused, fixed on ways of dealing with conflict. This I see as fully compatible with a broad concept of security, except that it shifts the focus from societal sectors or issue areas (of which 'military' is one) to the more specific problem of indeterminate decisionmaking. By that I mean decisionmaking under conditions of conflict and perceived existential danger between large-scale organized groups. The military sector may or may not be part of that.[13]

The Copenhagen School and Its Securitization Concept

The Copenhagen school does not share the perspective from which I work. Its members consider the 'military core' of security studies as something to be avoided.[14] They remove themselves from the military sector in such a way that they also lose touch with the core element of our field, namely large-scale

conflict, that is, conflict brought to the point of mass violence, subjection, or submission.

The Copenhagen school has one outstanding distinctive feature as far as I am concerned: the concept of securitization. Beyond that, the school stands for rather middle-of-the-road, analytically sound standpoints, mostly traceable to Barry Buzan. Many of these standpoints are not unique to that school, however; several of them are specifically Buzan contributions, going back to the years before there was any recognizable Copenhagen milieu with this kind of profile.[15]

Let me stress that, while critiquing the securitization concept, I am not rejecting it out of hand. In fact, I appreciated its innovative value when it first appeared and continue to find it quite useful – within its natural limits – for the study of the politics of security policymaking. To judge from its frequent usage, the concept of securitization has in many ways been a great success in the field. Still, it encapsulates several questionable assumptions.[16] To get at these, it is necessary to take a quick look back.

Security studies as the field exists today has developed from a fragmented past. Back in the days when 'strategic studies' was a commonly used term (1960s to 1980s), peace research and strategic studies were literally at war.[17] In between was a motley group of political scientists, of whom some were conceptualizers (e.g. Schelling, Snyder, Morgan), others theory developers (George, Snyder, Jervis), and many also launched important empirical work.[18] This fragmentation has disappeared since the end of the Cold War. The presently improved relations between these groups are in large part due to the integrative influence of Barry Buzan's pathbreaking book *People, States and Fear*.[19] However, peace research has always had a broader agenda than mainstream security studies. The securitization concept of Ole Wæver paid tribute to this tradition in peace research by highlighting just that broader agenda.[20]

Obviously, the roots of the new security thinking did not lie exclusively with the group at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI) who gave it a strong intellectual voice. It was well established in the social democratic movements all over the North European region and the British Isles; Bjørn Møller and others had spent active years in the 1980s working on related ideas, such as non-offensive defense.[21]

In any case, the new security thinking had its greatest and most popular success with the idea of the broad security concept, with 'non-military threats' at the core. This trend clearly reflected the conviction that the end of the Cold War would usher in a new politics for Europe in which the military would no longer play first fiddle. Thus, the broad security concept made its political breakthrough as the Berlin Wall fell.[22]

Introducing the concept of securitization was in part a move along the path of the 'wideners',[23] replacing the focus on violence and the business of the military with a focus on a broader agenda. But its innovative value was to

shift the attention away from a mere widening of the security concept to a spotlighting of the way in which issues do or do not end up on the political agenda. Securitization thus also reflected the insights of political science regarding the importance of agenda-setting. According to this line of thinking, the items on the political agenda of the day – any day – have no intrinsic significance; they are there merely because effective political actors want them to be there. So, the argument goes, it is with security, only security has long succeeded in being lifted to such privileged heights that it is above and beyond the agenda. The formula of the people at COPRI, who later became associated with the Copenhagen school, was therefore to bring security back to the arena of debate and to put a new, broader notion of security onto the agenda. For the former achievement, they deserve only praise.

During the Cold War, peace research was struggling to gain the status of social and intellectual respectability then only accorded strategic studies. The concept of securitization has helped to change that. A key aspect of the securitization idea is to create awareness of the (allegedly) arbitrary nature of 'threats', to stimulate the thought that the foundation of any national security policy is not given by 'nature' but chosen by politicians and decisionmakers who have an interest in defining it in just that way. That interest (according to this line of reasoning) is heavily embodied not just in each country's military establishment, but also in the power and influence flowing from the military's privileged position with respect to the network of decisionmakers and politicians serving that establishment**.** Hence, 'securitization' gave a name to the process, hitherto vaguely perceived, of raising security issues above politics and making them something one would never question.

This argument is convincing as far as its description of the military establishment and decisionmakers goes, but its heyday is gone. It was a Cold War phenomenon, and things just aren't so anymore. In the post-Cold War period, agenda-setting has been much easier to influence than the securitization approach assumes. That change cannot be credited to the concept; the change in security politics was already taking place in defense ministries and parliaments before the concept was first launched. Indeed, securitization in my view is more appropriate to the security politics of the Cold War years than to the post-Cold War period.

Moreover, I have a problem with the underlying implication that it is unimportant whether states 'really' face dangers from other states or groups. In the Copenhagen school, threats are seen as coming mainly from the actors' own fears, or from what happens when the fears of individuals turn into paranoid political action. In my view, this emphasis on the subjective is a misleading conception of threat, in that it discounts an independent existence for whatever is perceived as a threat. Granted, political life is often marked by misperceptions, mistakes, pure imaginations, ghosts, or mirages, but such phenomena do not occur simultaneously to large numbers of politicians, and hardly

most of the time. During the Cold War, threats – in the sense of plausible possibilities of danger – referred to 'real' phenomena, and they refer to 'real' phenomena now. The objects referred to are often not the same, but that is a different matter. Threats have to be dealt with *both in terms of perceptions and in terms of the phenomena which are perceived to be threatening*.

The point of Wæver's concept of security is not the potential existence of danger somewhere but the use of the word itself by political elites. In his 1997 PhD dissertation, he writes, 'One can view "security" as that which is in language theory 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.'[24] The deliberate disregard of objective factors is even more explicitly stated in Buzan & Wæver's joint article of the same year.[25] As a consequence, the phenomenon of threat is reduced to a matter of pure domestic politics.[26] It seems to me that the security dilemma, as a central notion in security studies, then loses its foundation. Yet I see that Wæver himself has no compunction about referring to the security dilemma in a recent article.[27]

This discounting of the objective aspect of threats shifts security studies to insignificant concerns. What has long made 'threats' and 'threat perceptions' important phenomena in the study of IR is the implication that urgent action may be required. Urgency, of course, is where Wæver first began his argument in favor of an alternative security conception, because a convincing sense of urgency has been the chief culprit behind the abuse of 'security' and the consequent 'politics of panic', as Wæver aptly calls it.[28] Now, here – in the case of urgency – another baby is thrown out with the Wæverian bathwater. When real situations of urgency arise, those situations are challenges to democracy; they are actually at the core of the problematic arising with the process of making security policy in parliamentary democracy. But in Wæver's world, threats are merely more or less persuasive, and the claim of urgency is just another argument. I hold that instead of 'abolishing' threatening phenomena 'out there' by reconceptualizing them, as Wæver does, we should continue paying attention to them, because situations with a credible claim to urgency will keep coming back and then we need to know more about how they work in the interrelations of groups and states (such as civil wars, for instance), not least to find adequate democratic procedures for dealing with them.

Drawing on the securitization concept, much research now focuses on the process of defining something as a threat in order to put 'new' things on the political agenda. It should follow from the above that I disagree with the level of emphasis thus placed on the subjective side. Such an emphasis means that researchers are asked to distance themselves from the world of politics as it is and to shift their attention one-sidedly towards the politics of 'what could be'. This aspect of Wæver's approach is clearly not accidental; it is intended to be that way.

The problem here is that this serves to downgrade the significance of problems that exist out there – not just in the heads of politicians and decision-makers but as challenges to their experience and problem-solving efforts. The implication of the agenda-setting approach is that perceptions and images are arbitrary, a stance which in itself may be ill-advised because it detracts from the significance of issues like crisis management in Europe, which ought to have a fairly high priority. Yet, to be fair, the distance of theory from policy is not only a product of the Copenhagen school; it is also an effect of the excessive emphasis on epistemology and metatheoretical issues referred to above.

Finally, it should be noted that 'securitization' is an ambiguous concept because in Copenhagen usage it refers to two things at once. On the one hand, it refers to the act (or process) of removing an issue from and raising it above politics, taking it out of the limelight. On the other hand, it points to the act (or process) of taking an issue out of obscurity or neglect and placing it on the political agenda. Hence, the same term refers at the same time to more or less inverse types of phenomena. At times, this leads to further confusion because the securitization concept assumes we know where the issue 'comes from', whereas when an issue is not on the agenda its actual status is not always easily determined. It could be off the agenda because it is a holy cow in politics, as securitization suggests, or simply because nobody thought of putting it up there. And if it is a holy cow, it could be so both because 99% of the population regard it as 'obviously holy' or because some sinister group succeeds in misleading the great majority and keeping it off the agenda through their continuous, eager machinations. To take an example, when the government of Finland chose to define the hard-security aspects of its Northern Dimensions policy as off-limits, and in this way precluded a more open and multilateral handling of Finnish security, some regarded that act as an instance of 'securitization' while others saw it as 'desecuritization'.

Paranoia of the State

I hesitate to say what I have to say on this subject because it seems to me to be so utterly obvious. States and state-like organizations – such as guerilla groups – are useful for many collective purposes, including making war and preparing for war. As IR specialists, we therefore need to study the state and take it seriously as a social phenomenon.[29] However, I keep running across reminders that many don't share this view. The best evidence is the way in which the term 'state-centered approaches' – a quick phrase with a subtle pejorative effect – is used. The debate of the 1990s has developed to the point where one understands immediately, without further reading, that the study

of states is a 'no-no'. I find this a major ingredient in a mindless fad. Consider its place in the work of the Copenhagen school.

The 'referent object' is a key notion in the Copenhagen school's conceptual apparatus – that 'thing' whose security is at stake. Buzan et al. pedagogically point out the need to break away from the traditional fixation upon the state as the referent object of security.[30] However, as I read on in the book I get the impression that Buzan and his colleagues are not really that convinced of this themselves – they keep referring to the state nevertheless. Other Copenhagen writings confirm this impression. Indeed, studies of the state have not disappeared even among researchers who style themselves as critical or who somehow subscribe to a 'new security studies' agenda.[31] The upshot is that their views on the role of the state are inconsistent.

The Copenhagen school will probably claim to have put this critique to rest. However, it is hard to read the argument in the 1997 article where the discussion is perhaps best presented,[32] then absorb the text in the multi-authored 1997 book[33] and still claim to have found consistency. On the one hand, the Copenhagen authors warn against 'state-centrism' and build a complicated reasoning on identity as a replacement for the state; on the other hand, they continue to reason quite conventionally about states (as, for instance, in the security-complex theory). Hence, their position on the state is at best misleading, at worst confused.[34]

In this, they reflect the general picture in the field of IR itself. After a long period of neglect, two very different things started happening – sometime between 1975 and 1985 – with the idea of the state. What took place was a strange and deep bifurcation of research. On one side, there was what may be termed the 'rediscovery of the state', which began with the efforts of Charles Tilly and others but is perhaps best shown in the work of Theda Skocpol. On the other, there was the attack on state-centered thinking coming from the happy trashers of everything traditional in IR studies, the early postmodernists.[35]

Currently, the postmodernists seem – regrettably – to have won out, because there is continuing paranoia about the state in studies of international politics. To be politically correct these days, one must disavow state-centrism. At the same time, the state continues to be there, as it is in the work of people as diverse as Buzan, Wendt, and Walt. Better than most of their work, however, is the research by Kal Holsti on the vagaries of the state and its relationship to war – a piece of mainstream work.[36] Though hardly the first to make this argument, Holsti shows convincingly that internal wars are now by far the most important kind of war. This point has been used to argue that interstate relations have decreased in significance. If we compare two categories of relations, intrastate and interstate, that is of course true in relative quantitative terms. However, one must not overlook what those wars are about: the control of the state apparatus and its territory. Internal wars testify not to the disappearance

of the state, but to its continuing importance. Hence, the state must continue to be a central object of our work in IR, not least in security studies. We should study the state – conceived as a *penetrated* state – specifically because it performs essential security functions that are rarely performed by other types of organization, such as being:

- the major collective unit processing notions of *threat*;
- the mantle that cloaks the exercise of elite power;
- the organizational expression that gives shape to communal 'identity' and 'culture';
- the chief agglomeration of competence to deal with issue areas crossing jurisdictional boundaries;
- the manager of territory / geographical space – including functioning as a 'receptacle' for income; and
- the legitimizer of authorized *action* and *possession*.

Recognizing the problems of state-focused approaches belongs to the beginner's lessons in IR. There is the danger of legitimizing the state as such by placing it at the center of research, and of legitimizing thereby the repression and injustice which on a massive scale have been and still are perpetrated in its name around the globe. Some draw the conclusion on this basis that states should not be studied, a stance which is obviously unwarranted and pointless. The state is an instrument of power on a scale beyond most other instruments of power. For this reason alone, keeping a watch on how it is used should be a top priority for social scientists.

The mobilization – the assumption of the mantle – of state power by more or less arbitrarily chosen (or self-selected) individuals or groups, to act on behalf of all, is something which requires continual problematization, not least when it is done vis-à-vis other collectivities. The state is also the instrument of democracy on a large scale in its most well-functioning forms. Surveying democracy's state of health is a crucial responsibility for social scientists. Finally, when it comes to performing collective tasks on a large scale, the state is the most potentially effective organizing instrument across an almost limitless range of objectives. Security is among them.

In short, the state is too central to the large-scale business of human life to be ignored or put aside, whether for ideological or idealistic reasons. Still, we need to recognize the historical dimension in this. It is not necessarily the state's present form which makes it an important object of study; rather, it is its primary function of being the largest universal-purpose collective-action unit around. Such units require study in all civilizations and at all times in human history, regardless of their name or specific functions. The Westphalian preoccupation of IR is therefore somewhat overdrawn.[37] There is no need to apologize for focusing on states or state-like units.

To the extent that one does focus on states, there is, on the other hand, a different danger, which is to reify the state, to believe that it actually 'is' an actor with humanoid qualities.[38] The injunction against this is, of course, another old and familiar one to generations of IR students. Again, too often the warning is mistaken as an argument against studying states as units, or 'states-as-actors'. It is good practice, however, to refrain from talking about states as if they were humans. The worst sinners in this regard tend to be neorealists and their interlocutors. Their line of thinking potentially undermines a significant theme of research, already alluded to above: the transformation that occurs as actions performed by small groups or individual decisionmakers become perceived as actions performed by the state with which they are associated – that is, the state they are taken to represent. The phenomenon of representation in itself is at the heart of what we study in IR: the representation of the collective unit inward as well as outward.[39] Its problematic dimensions are as equally well shown in the life of trade unions as in the life of states – to illustrate the relativity of the oft-claimed uniqueness of IR.

Representation is also where the state offers politicians a possibility to abuse their role in security affairs. It is the utilization of the state machinery in the processing of threats which the Copenhagen school wants to change. How that can be done by dropping the state from the research agenda is beyond me.

A final danger in focusing on the state is that of building the illusion that states have impenetrable walls, that they have an inside and an outside, and that nothing ever passes through. Wolfers's billiard balls have contributed to this misconception.[40] But the state concepts we should use are in no need of such an illusion. Whoever criticizes the field for such sins in the past needs to go back to the literature. Of course, we must continue to be open to a frank and unbiased assessment of the transnational politics which significantly influence almost every issue on the domestic political agenda. The first decade of my own research was spent studying these phenomena – and I disavow none of my conclusions about the state's limitations. Yet I am not ashamed to talk of a domestic political agenda. Anyone with a little knowledge of European politics knows that Danish politics is not Swedish politics is not German politics is not British politics. Nor would I hesitate for a moment to talk of the role of the state in transnational politics, where it is an important actor, though only one among many other competing ones. In the world of transnational relations, the exploitation of states by interest groups – by their assumption of roles as representatives of states or by convincing state representatives to argue their case and defend their narrow interests – is a significant class of phenomena, today as much as yesterday.

Towards a Renewal of the Empirical Foundation for Security Studies

Fundamentally, the sum of the foregoing list of sins blamed on the Copenhagen school amounts to a lack of attention paid to just that 'reality' of security which Ole Wæver consciously chose to leave aside a decade ago in order to pursue the politics of securitization instead. I cannot claim that he is void of interest in the empirical aspects of security because much of the 1997 book is devoted to empirical concerns. However, the attention to agenda-setting – confirmed in his most recent work[41] – draws attention away from the important issues we need to work on more closely if we want to contribute to a better understanding of European security as it is currently developing.

That inevitably requires a more consistent interest in security policy in the making – not just in the development of alternative security policies. The danger here is that, as alternative policies are likely to fail grandly on the political arena, crucial decisions may be made in the 'traditional' sector of security policymaking, unheeded by any but the most uncritical minds.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

* Olav F. Knudsen is Professor of Political Science at Södertörn University College, Stockholm. This article was written when he was a NORFA Visiting Professor at the University of Copenhagen. The author wishes to thank Morten Kelstrup, Anders Wivel, Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, and Marlene Wind for their interest and critical comments on an earlier version of this article. Pavel Baev of *Security Dialogue* and the anonymous reviewers have also provided useful feedback. Regrettably, Ole Wæver has not responded to repeated requests for comments.

1 The so-called Copenhagen school is perhaps best represented in Barry Buzan, 'Rethinking Security After the Cold War', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 32, no. 1, March 1997,
pp. 5–28, and more fully developed in Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver & Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997). A sort of middle-of-the road version of new security studies is found in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

2 Stephen M. Walt, 'The Renaissance of Security Studies', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 2, June 1991, pp. 211–239.

3 Buzan (note 1 above); Barry Buzan & Ole Wæver, 'Slippery? Contradictory? Sociologically Untenable? The Copenhagen School Replies', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 23, no. 2, April 1997, pp. 241–250. The critique to which Buzan & Wæver replied came above all from a 1996 article by Bill McSweeney; a reworked version of this article can be found in his book *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

4 David Baldwin, 'The Concept of Security', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 23, no. 1, January 1997, pp. 5–26.
5 Johan Eriksson, 'Observers or Advocates? On the Political Role of Security Analysts', *Cooperation and Confli*ct, vol. 34, no. 3, September 1999, pp. 311–333. The symposium also includes the replies from Kjell Goldmann, Ole Wæver, and Michael C. Williams, together with a reply from Eriksson.
6 It should be noted that we appear to agree on one major point, namely the need to study security in its regional contexts. I also accept Morten Kelstrup's point that the critique presented here cannot pretend to invalidate the work of the Copenhagen school as such. The Copenhagen school stands for much more than the isolated points I am criticizing here. Nevertheless, it is its most distinctive aspect that is under attack.
7 More exactly, the element of urgency (time constraint) in the notion of threat. See the relevant section on pp. 360–361.
8 Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization*, vol. 46, no. 2, Spring 1992, pp. 391–425; Emanuel Adler, 'Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 3, no. 3, September 1997, pp. 319–363; Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory', *World Politics*, vol. 50, no. 2, January 1998, pp. 324–348; Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). For an explicit rejection of Adler's middle ground, see Heikki Patomäki & Colin Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 2, June 2000, pp. 213–237.
9 Kjell Goldmann, 'Issues, Not Labels, Please! Reply to Eriksson', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 34, no. 3, September 1999, pp. 331–333.
10 This may seem not so far off from ideas found in writings as recent as Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (note 1 above). My formulation goes a generation back.
11 Olav F. Knudsen, 'The Concept of Cooperative Security and its Relationship to Policy', unpublished paper, presented at the ISA Annual Meeting in Chicago, February 2001.
12 I am indebted to the tradition of Nils Andrén (*Den totala säkerhetspolitiken* [The Total Security Policy], Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 1972) and other writers who in similar ways have emphasized the political dimension in security (e.g. Helga Haftendorn, 'The Security Puzzle: Theory-Building and Discipline-Building in International Security', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 1, March 1991, pp. 3–17).
13 Thus I reject Walt's standpoint (note 2 above) of making war and the military aspect a defining criterion of security studies.
14 Buzan (note 1 above); Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (note 1 above), p. 4.
15 Buzan & Wæver (note 3 above).
16 In addition to some rather awkward language: 'Securitization' works all right in English but is unpronounceable in the Scandinavian languages. It testifies to the popularity of the cult that Scandinavian students nevertheless employ the Danish, Swedish, or Norwegian versions in their academic discussions. However, I find 'securityness' a shade too sectarian for ordinary scholarly discourse.
17 See, for instance, the retrospective accounts of Blechman and Dörfer: Barry Blechman, 'Common Security as Seen From the 1990s', in Olav F. Knudsen, ed., *Strategic Analysis and the Management of Power: Johan Jørgen Holst, the Cold War and the New Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 93–108; Ingemar Dörfer, 'A Comment on the Palme Commission Report', pp. 109–112 of the same volume.
18 Walt (note 2 above).

19 Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1983).
20 Ole Wæver, *Concepts of Security*, PhD dissertation, Institute of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, 1997, pp. 211–256.
21 Bjørn Møller, *Common Security and Nonoffensive Defense: A Neorealist Perspective* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991).
22 However, the premise of the importance of non-militarized security was soon proven wrong in the politics on the European ground level as Yugoslavia fell apart. The old scare-bug type of security – the hard version – was still there. Non-military security was proven irrelevant to this type of danger.
23 Buzan (note 1 above).
24 Wæver (note 20 above), p. 221.
25 Buzan & Wæver (note 3 above), p. 246. See also McSweeney (note 3 above).
26 A more complete argument for this subjective conception of security is given in Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (note 1 above), pp. 29–31.
27 Ole Wæver, 'The EU as a Security Actor: Reflections from a Pessimistic Constructivist on Post-Sovereign Security Orders', in Morten Kelstrup & Michael C. Williams, eds, *International Relations and the Politics of European Integration: Power, Security and Community* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 250–294.
28 Actually, the political process of defining something as a threat has not usually – to my knowledge – been much marked by panic, or even urgency, at least not in North European countries; rather, armchair speculation has typified it, as part of defense planning. But that it has taken place in convenient secrecy, protected by an argument of urgency, is of course correct – and that has rightly been targeted by the Copenhagen school.
29 That is not to say that the state must be conceived of as a massive, impenetrable unit or as a unit that is necessarily strong. More on this below.
30 Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (note 1 above), pp. 35ff.
31 I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for the point about the literature. Contrary to the reviewer's view, however, I believe that it strengthens my argument. (See also note 34 below.)
32 Buzan & Wæver (note 3 above).
33 Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (note 1 above).
34 Exactly the same inconsistency is found in the work of Bill McSweeney (note 3 above), one of the Copenhagen school's sharper critics – which is all the more surprising considering the many sensible things he has to say both about the Copenhagen school and the use of the state concept. His argument is puzzling on this score: After an initial critique of state-centeredness, McSweeney gradually works his way back to assigning the state an important place in his analytical scheme.
35 See, for example, Richard K. Ashley, 'The Poverty of Neorealism', *International Organization*, vol. 38, no. 2, Spring 1984, pp. 238–242.
36 Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
37 See, for example, John Gerard Ruggie, 'Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations', *International Organization*, vol. 47, no. 1, Winter 1993, pp. 139–174; Ethan B. Kapstein, 'Territoriality and Who is US?', *International Organization*, vol. 47, no. 3, Summer 1993, pp. 501–503; Stephen Krasner, 'Westphalia and All That', in Judith Goldstein & Robert O. Keohane, eds, *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 235–264.
38 Though Alexander Wendt has no problem with that. See Wendt (note 8 above).

39 Which is why 'two-level games' were hardly new in 1988. Robert Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games', *International Organization*, vol. 42, no. 3, Summer 1988, pp. 427–460.

40 Arnold Wolfers, 'The Actors in International Politics', in William T. R. Fox, ed., *Theoretical Aspects of International Relations* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), pp. 83–107.

41 Wæver (note 27 above).