



**European non-traditional security
theory**

Rita Floyd & Stuart Croft

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EU-GRASP Working Papers

EU-GRASP Coordination Team: Luk Van Langenhove, Francis Baert & Emmanuel Fanta

Editorial Assistance: Liesbeth Martens

United Nations University UNU-CRIS

72 Poterierei – B-8000 – Bruges – Belgium

Email: fbuert@cris.unu.edu or efanta@cris.unu.edu

Additional information available on the website: www.eugrasp.eu

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Abstract

Debate about the nature of security has flourished in many parts of the world since before the end of the Cold War. Throughout that time, Europe has proved to be a major focus for research in what has been termed non-traditional - in some ways, non-American - security studies. Ours is not an argument about ownership: one can find non-traditional security studies globally, yet there has been a consistency to the development of non-traditional theorising in Europe, often facilitated by research grants from bodies such as the European Union. With 'securitisation theory', 'emancipation theory' and 'insecuritisation theory' three theories have developed in particular. Whilst much has been written about the theoretical details of each of these theories their empirical application remains comparatively scant. Informed by the beliefs that a) only empirical applications will solve some of the theoretical dilemmas inherent to each theory, and b) that the utility of theory can ultimately only be assessed through practical utility, our aim in this essay is to animate scholars to apply these theories to empirical research.

About the Authors

Rita Floyd is British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick and Fellow of the Institute for Environmental Security. She is author of *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy* forthcoming in 2010 with Cambridge University Press. Previously her work has appeared in journals such as *The Review of International Studies*, *The Journal of International Relations and Development*, *the Human security journal* and the *International Spectator*.

Stuart Croft is Professor of International Security at Warwick University, Director of the Research programme *New Security Challenges*, and Chair of the British International Studies Association. His latest volume is *Culture, Crisis and America's War on Terror* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), which was short listed for the ISA's *International Security Section* book award for 2007. He is now completing a volume on Britishness and the war on terror. He has guest edited the journal *International Relations* in December 2006, and also guest edited a special issue of *Government and Opposition*, published in July 2007. He has published in a variety of journals, including the *Review of International Studies*, *International Affairs*, *Defence Studies* and *Political Studies*.

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European non-traditional security¹

Rita Floyd & Stuart Croft²

Warwick University

Introduction

Europe has proved to be the focus for research in what has been termed non-traditional – in some ways, non-American – security studies for over a quarter of a century. One can find non-traditional security globally, in the United States as much as in Canada, Australia, India, and Singapore. Yet the majority of such work originated, and is still formed, in Europe. Important works have been written by scholars self-consciously freed from the constraints of realist and rationalist thought. Some of this work has been furthered by research grants from European funding agencies, and this has helped develop a continental wide spread of a language of security studies which, increasingly, has been dominated by three schools of thought. It is our contention in this paper that the next stage of the development of this European interest in non-traditional security theory is, logically, an attempt to understand more fully how to move from ‘theory’ to ‘practice’; how, in other words, theoretical constructions can be applied to empirical studies, and in so doing, to understand the challenges posed by theory to method. This paper, thus, seeks to elucidate the nature of this security language theoretically, and provide both insight and questions for how researchers might take these theoretical frames into the field to understand everyday security practices.

In Europe the once fierce debate over ‘widening’ the study of security has been won by the ‘wideners’, and security studies now commonly comprises environmental, societal (identity), political and economic security issues alongside traditional concerns of military security. Many, though not all, of those in favour of ‘widening’, also believe in the ‘deepening’ of security, whereby security studies is to account for other referent objects of security alongside the state, most notably

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at an EU-GRASP workshop in July 2009 hosted by UNU-CRIS.

² The authors would like to thank Ken Booth, Mike Brown, Chris Browning, Barry Buzan, Theo Farrell, Lene Hansen, Jef Huysmans, Matt McDonald, Rens van Munster and Paul D. Williams for helpful and insightful comments on this paper. The views expressed are those of the authors alone. This is still a working paper, and we would welcome comments and insights from readers. Address for correspondence: S.Croft@warwick.ac.uk

individual persons.³ Thus the range of choice that the analyst has when beginning a study of security framed by non-traditional concerns not only comprises five different sectors of security, but also a vertical range including security at the individual, group, state, regional and global levels. In the European context, this direction is heuristically dated to Barry Buzan's *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (1983). Buzan's work inspired many, and was complemented in the 1980s by other works seeking to reshape the agenda of security studies, such as Caroline Thomas's *In Search of Security: The Third World in International Relations* (1987).

Scholarship in Europe from this time onwards has been a site for the development of 'non-traditional' security theory, and here the 'tradition' has been the forms of security studied that predominates in the United States, e.g. realism, neo-liberalism and, later, conventional constructivism.⁴ Among the most prolific of these are: securitisation theory associated with Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan; emancipation theory developed by Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones; and insecurity theory promoted by Didier Bigo and Jef Huysmans. Of course, they are by no means the only approaches to understanding security developed and utilised by scholars in Europe. However, they have achieved significant prominence, as seen in their deployment in the way that the discipline is taught across the continent, and in their use as frameworks for analysis, both in many doctoral theses throughout Europe and at many conferences.⁵ Thus, in what follows, we do not suggest that these three theories are in some way more important than others, only that their prominence in discussions about security in Europe means that they merit a focus.

Although in the relevant literature these three theories are frequently described as the 'Copenhagen', 'Welsh' (or 'Aberystwyth') and 'Paris' schools respectively, we consciously refrain from using these labels because the categorisation into schools (especially with the geographical prefix, as is the case here) is unnecessarily exclusive, suggesting not only that each would-be school is a closed group, but also potentially hampering dialogue between the various proponents (van Munster 2007: 239-42). There is an intellectual logic leading to dialogue between the so-called schools because proponents of each theory are concerned with the meaning of security itself, with the practice of security and also with the role of the analyst vis-à-vis security policies (Wæver 2004: 13). Yet in this paper we are not concerned with making an argument for common ground between

³ By 'deepening' we understand a shift from the state level to the inclusion of individual, regional and global levels of analysis following Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde. (1998: 55-ff). Notably, this differs from Ken Booth's definition of deepening (2007: 149-ff).

⁴ For analysis of security studies in the US and Europe see Wæver and Buzan (2007: 381-402)

⁵ See, for example, the textbook by Paul D. Williams (2008)

two or more of these security theories; instead our aim is to look at how an analyst can engage in applied research in any of the given theories. The concern is to understand the questions that an analyst must face and decide upon when she embarks upon a piece of empirical research framed by one or other of these theories. To this end we are concerned with the focus of the respective theory, what theoretical dilemmas this entails, and therefore which methodological issues prove challenging to empirical research. How, in short, do we achieve a securitisation, emancipation, or insecurity security study?

The paper is divided into three parts. Part one provides an overview of the three security theories according to their originators. Based on this overview part two assesses the theoretical coherence of each theory. Part three looks at the operationalisation of each theory in practice. In other words, it is concerned with the question: how to deploy one of these three forms of non-traditional security studies to a specific security problematic.

Part I. Contemporary European Security Studies

This first part of the paper examines the theoretical structures of the three European approaches to security within their own terms, to understand the nature of the theoretical concerns manifested by each set of authors within each set of theories.

Securitisation Theory

Securitisation theory dates back to the late 1980s, when it was first presented by Ole Wæver, then a researcher at the former Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. It was developed with the stated purpose of moving security studies beyond Waltzian neorealism, and beyond the critique offered by poststructuralist critics (above all Richard Ashley). The essence of securitisation theory is the idea that in international relations something becomes a matter of emergency politics / a security issue not because something constitutes an objective threat to the state as, for example, neorealism would have it, but rather something becomes a security issue when a powerful securitising actor (often, but not necessarily, the state) argues that something constitutes an existential threat to some object that needs to be dealt with immediately if the object is to survive (Buzan et al. 1998: 24). In the case of environmental security, such an argument might see a securitising actor declare that if we want to curb irreversible and life threatening climate change then we must take emergency measures immediately, before it is too late for us to act in a meaningful way. The logic whereby something becomes a security issue because it is spoken of in the language of security is a

'performative speech act' (Austin 1962). By saying something, that thing is done, as by uttering the words 'I do' at a wedding, a marriage comes into existence.

Securitisation, however, does not simply come into being when one actor declares an existential threat (this is merely the securitising move). Instead, a securitisation exists only at the point when a designated audience accepts the speech act. Securitisation is thus both a performative speech, whereby in speaking security it is done, as well as an intersubjective process between the securitising actor and an audience (Balzacq 2005: 175-ff; Stritzel 2007: 363). Once an issue has been 'accepted' by an audience, a securitising actor is in the position to evoke emergency measures and go beyond established rules in an effort to address the threat. 'Securitisation is fulfilled [...] by cases of existential threats that *legitimise* the breaking of rules' (Buzan et al. 1998: 25). Neither rule breaking nor emergency measures are necessary conditions for a securitisation; they are what follows on from a securitisation, and what ultimately defines a securitisation's success. In the words of Buzan et al, '[a] successful securitisation has three components (or steps): existential threats, emergency action, and effects on interunit relations by breaking free of rules' (Buzan et al. 1998: 26).

Securitisation theory has been developed as an analytical tool meant to help analysts establish who securitised, by what means and to what effects (Wæver 1997a: 14). It allows no conceptual room for what *ought* to be securitised. Notably, the securitising actor and the security analyst are two functionally distinct entities, with the analyst in no position to enter the security equation in order to make recommendations. In the words of Buzan et al:

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 fulfil the security criteria. It is, further, the analyst who judges whether the actor is effective in mobilising support around the security reference (i.e. the attempted securitisers 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 securitisation, 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. (Buzan et al. 1998: 33-4)

Although, securitisation theory is in the first instance an analytic tool, Buzan et al have expressed a normative preference for desecuritisation over securitisation (Buzan et al. 1998: 29). Desecuritisation is the process whereby issues that were formerly securitised are downgraded and moved back into the normal political realm where they can be dealt with by the normal rules and

regulations of (democratic) politics. Achieving security is not an end point, rather, the end point is to remove an issue from the security agenda altogether – a classic example being the relationship between France and Germany, no longer a security relationship, but part of normal political relations.

Although there is still much work to be done in developing securitisation theory – for example, in defining audience and its relationship with the securitising actor (see below) – the move into desecuritisation creates interesting opportunities.⁶ Desecuritisation connects clearly to peacemaking and to peace building agendas (Wæver 2008).⁷ Both seek (amongst other elements) to find ways to reduce tensions and fears of violence; both are seeking to restore or develop political processes that are regular and not subject to emergency measures. In short, both are committed to that which Wæver describes as desecuritisation.

Emancipatory Theory

Whereas securitisation theory was developed from within international relations, emancipatory theory is in part deeply rooted in Critical theory, a body of literature united by the belief that theoretical enquiry is never free from perspective and intention. Critical theory is thus necessarily a normative exercise. Its proponents aim to liberate (or evoke self-liberation) from what they regard as the various false and often dangerous consciousnesses of our orthodox concepts and categories. The aim is to make people realise that they are not stuck with the world or some aspect of society as it is, but that there exist realisable alternative realities, which are better suited to people's welfare, fulfilment and happiness. As Robert Cox most famously put it, 'Theory is always *for* someone, and *for* some purpose.' (1986: 207) This, the process by which Critical theorists aim to alter the world in accordance with a normative ideal, is called *emancipation*. Unlike securitisation theory, therefore, emancipatory theory has not been especially developed for security studies. Instead it has been imported into the discipline from the 'Frankfurt school', a group of theorists working at the Frankfurt based 'Institute for Social Research', amongst the most influential members being Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and more recently, Jürgen Habermas and Axel Honneth, via scholars in International Relations, and above all, Robert Cox.

Emancipatory security theory was first developed by Ken Booth in the early 1990s. Symbolising the 'new' European move towards non-American theory, this constituted a complete turnaround in

⁶ See, for example, Claudia Aradau (2004: 388-413) and Jef Huysmans (2006)

⁷ On desecuritisation and environmental peacebuilding see Rita Floyd (2008: 58-ff).

Booth's theoretical orientation, as he had previously written as a realist (1997: 83-120). The ability to change oneself and others has become an integral part of emancipatory theory, and its heritage in Frankfurt school theory was later significantly clarified in Richard Wyn Jones' 1999 book *Security, Strategy, and Critical Theory*. Nonetheless, Booth remains the main advocate. In 2007 he published *Theory of World Security*, the definitive work on emancipatory theory. Given that this book unites all of Booth's previous works *without* any fundamental changes to the argumentation, our brief analysis here draws primarily on this latest work.

Emancipatory theory proposes that people are wrong to think that anyone is truly secure as long as realist understandings of security as 'power' and 'order' prevail. For them, the ineluctability of the realist security dilemma, whereby one actor's security is another actor's insecurity, epitomises all that is wrong with mainstream (American) security theory. Booth further argues that patriarchy is a key element of insecurity that is necessarily excluded by traditional security analyses, along with issues such as class and race, which have been at best marginalised in those traditional analyses. Instead, security analysts should be working towards world security, which Booth defines as:

World security refers to the structures and processes within human society, locally and globally, that work towards the reduction of the threats and risks that determine individual and group lives. The greater the level of security enjoyed, the more individuals and groups (including human society as a whole) can have an existence beyond the instinctual animal struggle merely to survive. The idea of world security is synonymous with the freedom of individuals and groups compatible with reasonable freedom of others, and universal moral equality compatible with justifiable pragmatic inequalities. (2007: 4-5)

Whereas securitisation theory is based on the contestedness of security by theorising its self-referential nature, emancipatory theory holds that security is an uncontested concept (Booth 2007: 100). Security is 'an instrumental value in that it allows individuals and groups (to a relative degree) to establish the conditions of existence with some expectations of constructing human life beyond the merely animal. Survival is being alive; security is living.' (Booth 2007: 107)

Security, or being secure, enables people to live meaningful and fulfilled lives fit for human beings. Booth, who formerly argued that security and emancipation are 'two sides of the same coin' (1991a: 319), now argues that security should be seen as a means and emancipation as an end (2007: 114). If successful, then people will realise that they are indeed operating with a false conceptualisation of security and will consequently embrace alternative conceptions. By such a strategy of 'liberation', we collectively move towards world security. For Booth:

[T]he practice of security (freeing people from the life-determining conditions of insecurity) seeks to promote emancipatory space (freedom from oppression, and so some opportunity to explore being human), while realising emancipation (becoming more fully human) is to practise security (not against other people but with them). (2007: 256)

In Booth's view, means and ends are neither separate nor discrete entities, but are mutually constitutive (2007: 255). Booth evokes this language to stress that the way world security is to be brought into existence must be in line with the principles of world security, that 'it should be true to the end being sought' (2007: 256). This means, for example, that what he describes as 'cosmopolitan democracy', which would be home to world security, can never be achieved by war and revolution, because in such a new world order such means are unthinkable.

It should be clear from all that has been said so far that the role of the security analyst in emancipatory theory is very different to that of the analyst in securitisation theory. Rather than maintaining a functional distinction between analyst and actor, those working with emancipatory theory are simultaneously analyst and actor. In their role as analyst they offer a critique of the status quo in accordance with the world security vision. As actors they make the case for the protection of a threatened entity, thus gradually working towards achieving world security.

Insecuritisation Theory

Insecuritisation theory is inspired by the works of Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu. The writings of the former have been instrumental to the rise of the fourth debate in International Relations theory (Wæver 1997b: 1-ff), much of which took place in the sub-discipline of security studies. Bourdieu's prominence in IR theory is a more recent, yet equally telling, development (Guzzini 2000: 147-82).

New theories in European security studies discussed so far have self-consciously been developed in contradistinction to that which Europeans believe to be the American mainstream. This creates differences in how security is spoken about between different groups of scholars, notably, for example, at the International Studies Association Conference, and perhaps even more so at its International Security Studies Section Conference. This is not the case with insecuritisation theory which, instead, was developed in contradistinction to other European theories, and in particular securitisation theory. Thus, whereas proponents of securitisation theory maintain that 'security is what is done with it' (a self-referential practice), proponents of insecuritisation theory argue that 'what is done with it [how security is practiced] determines security' (Bigo 2001: 99).

Insecuritisation theory proposes that those security practices deemed to be internal to the nation state (policing) and those external to it (military practices) have merged into one 'field of security'. By 'field', insecuritisation theory draws upon Bourdieu's conception, in which agents can only be understood in relation to their social position, by the interplay of the habitus (patterns of thought, behaviour and taste) of the agents, agents' capital (which can be social, economic and crucially, cultural), and social rules of the field. The conclusion is that this new field of security is one in which the traditional internal/external divide, upon which the sub-discipline of International Relations was founded, no longer holds. According to Bigo, both the end of bipolarity and the rise of the European Union have contributed to the undoing of the internal and external, as the collapse of traditional threats has left both internal and external security agents searching for a *raison d'être*, and the development of the institutions and mechanisms of the EU (specifically the 1985 Schengen Agreement on free movement) have offered the political space in which internal and external security practitioners can interact (2000: 171).

For insecuritisation theorists, these developments have allowed for the emergence of new forms of 'governmentality', the interface between 'sovereignty', 'discipline' and 'government' as envisaged by Foucault in the late 1970s (1991 [1978]). Governmentality refers to the art of government we experience in our own time, which according to Foucault rests on two poles: 'the disciplines of the self and the regulations of population' (1984: 262). Security therefore should neither be understood as 'an anthropological need' (as in emancipatory theory), nor as a 'speech act' (as in securitisation theory), but rather as a 'process of securitisation / insecuritisation of the borders, of the identities and of the conception of orders' (Bigo 2000: 173, 177; Huysman 2006: 101). Or more explicitly:

Security is in no sense a reflection of an increase of threats in the contemporary epoch – it is a lowering of the level of acceptability of the other; it is an attempt at insecuritisation of daily life by the security professionals and an increase in the strengths of police potential for action. (Bigo 2001: 111)

Thus, without 'security' (understood in this way) there would be no insecurity. Bigo (2007: 177) cites the historian Paul Veyne as follows, '[...] we are wrong to imagine that the doing, or practice, can be explained based on what is done, as on the contrary, what is done is explained by what the doing was at any point in history. Things, objects, are simply the correlate of practices'. But a reference to Foucault would perhaps be more fitting. After all, for Foucault madness is but a product of society, whilst delinquency is a product of the penal system (2001 [1967], 1998). A

treatment of security as a product of fear and insecurity is therefore Foucauldian *par excellence*. Thus, insecurity is a social product, and security practice a product of governmentality.

Also Foucauldian is the strong concern for those groups ('the other') that are marginalised by the practices of governmentality. As Bigo explains, 'sometimes security creates unwanted side effects towards other groups of people' (Foucault 1998: 174). In the contemporary European Union, this 'other group' is the figure of the migrant, because migrants are seen as endangering 'the population dynamic of which they are part' (Huysmans 2006: 100). Insecuritisation theorists refute the claim that migrants are a danger to society as a 'truth' creation on behalf of security practitioners, emerging as a result of the interplay of, on the one hand, 'the fears of politicians about losing their symbolic control over boundary territories' and, on the other, 'the 'unease' that some citizens who feel discarded suffer because they cannot cope with the uncertainty of everyday life' (Bigo 2002: 65; Ceyhan and Tsoukala 2002).

In a further allusion to Foucault, Bigo describes the securitisation/ insecuritisation of migration as a 'ban-opticon'. In *Discipline and Punish* (1975) Foucault aimed to write a history of disciplines, and how discipline is and has been used to control populations, and especially society's 'deviants'. He argued that punishment was not always practiced in the same way. Instead, change to the penal system occurred at 'the moment [when] it became understood that it was more efficient and profitable in terms of the economy of power to place people under surveillance than to subject them to some exemplary penalty' (Foucault 1980a: 38). As a result of this, society had become a disciplinary society informed by a *garde á vue* (omnipresent surveillance) resembling Bentham's panopticon. 'Panopticism' is enshrined by means of the connection between power and knowledge; Foucault's idea that power and knowledge are mutually constitutive. Unlike the permanent and continuous surveillance of all offered by Foucault's panopticism, however, the 'ban-opticon' offers select surveillance according to society's needs. 'The technologies of surveillance sort out who needs to be under surveillance and who is free of surveillance, [according to their] profile' (Bigo 2002: 82).

This very different understanding of security as insecuritisation has led to the suggestion of an altogether different research project in security studies, one that is informed by a set of research questions and aims that have formerly not been part of security analysis. No longer is it the aim to 'reflect on the right definition of security and the diverse forms that it takes according to the sectors', nor to focus on an emancipatory ideal. Rather the aim is to focus on 'the securitisation

/insecuritisation practices that run across the internal sphere as much as the external sphere' (Bigo 2002: 99).

Insecuritisation theorists are especially concerned with 'the political', by which they mean not the level of party politics and personalities, but the process through which social practices, meanings and notions become constructed as singular, neutral and objective (Mouffe 2005). Security is seen as political in at least three ways. It 'sustains security policies'; it is an instrument of competition between political opponents; and finally, security framing 'upholds particular concepts of the political, i.e. of what *political* community is about' (Huysmans 2006: 31). This linking of the political and security is in and of itself not a new thing. For securitisation theory, both securitisation and desecuritisation are by definition political processes, whilst, for example, R.B.J Walker has previously emphasised the constitutive relationship between security and the political (Buzan et al. 1998; Walker 1997: 61-81). That which is new and extremely important, however, is that insecuritisation theorists want to unravel the political logic behind security framing and security knowledge, in order to overcome what Huysmans has called the 'normative dilemma of speaking and writing security': the process whereby security analysts are said to co-constitute social and political reality simply by virtue of their own text (1999).

Part II: Theoretical Coherence

Assessing the theoretical coherence of each of the European security theories is only possible within the aim of each individual theory, as the aim harbours that which the security analyst is meant to achieve by deploying that theory. That is, we are not attempting to situate our analysis outside the particular theoretical framework under examination. Our task is to analyse how well the analyst can achieve the stated aim by using the theory in question, as a precursor for understanding how the analyst might then use this theoretical frame in empirical analysis.

Securitisation Theory

The purpose of securitisation theory is to offer a tool for analysis with which the analyst can trace incidences of securitisation and desecuritisation. Of course, this is in the context of the analyst having a very specific understanding of security as, on the one hand, a social and an intersubjective construction, but with a fixed understanding of security as survival on the other. The analyst using securitisation theory must *not* focus on what security is, but only on what it does – because what is done in the name of security is tantamount to the meaning of security. Besides analysing incidences

of securitisation and desecuritisation, securitisation theory is thus informed by a second aim, namely, to show that security operates in this way and no other. Indeed, the securitisation analyst aims to destabilise those approaches to security (traditional and non-traditional alike) that operate with objective understandings of security (as in emancipatory theory) by showing that security is a truly self-referential practice.

Though the two aims are clearly interrelated they generate two separate questions with regard to considerations of how securitisation theory might be operationalised: first, how useful is securitisation theory as a tool for analysis? And second, how convincing / useful is the claim that security operates like a self-referential practice?

Of the three European theories of non-traditional security studies, it is securitisation theory that has generated the largest body of secondary literature. Many of the writings on securitisation theory have suggested substantial changes to the original framework of securitisation.⁸ Whilst we will not look at any of these here, it should be noted that these amendments to the original framework are all necessitated by striking contradictions within the original formulation and by the relative lack of clarity of certain key concepts.

Without doubt the most important contradiction in the original securitisation theory is that securitisation is at the same time a performative speech act (whereby by simply speaking security, security is being done) as well as an intersubjective process decided between securitising actor and an audience (Balzacq 2005; Stritzel 2007: 363). A related contradiction concerns the separation between a securitising move and a securitisation proper, a distinction that can simply not be upheld if a securitisation operates like a performative speech act, as then the saying itself (the securitising move) would be the complete securitisation. In relation to the ill-definition of key concepts, it is not clear who or what the audience is supposed to be⁹ and how to detect the securitiser. Taken together, these problems constitute considerable obstacles to the theoretical coherence of securitisation theory. Indeed the problem is such that analysts new to the subject cannot simply use and apply securitisation theory to any given empirical case study. Instead they need to begin by clarifying their own position on all of these contested points and also define what they mean by the various ill-defined concepts. As Wæver puts it, empirical studies that have used securitisation theory 'do not follow a standardised format':

⁸ See, for example, Balzacq (2005), Stritzel (2007) and Rita Floyd (forthcoming 2010)

⁹ A much more refined analysis of the audience is offered by Mark B. Salter (2008: 321-49).

Optimistically, the diversity is a sign that the theory has a relatively clear core idea and sufficiently explicit conceptualisation, that it can generate/structure different kinds of usage and even produce anomalies for itself in interesting ways. The many critiques of the theory are in my view (mainly!) a sign of strength. You don't criticise a theory that is so vague that it does not do much. If the theory is distinct enough, you can produce precise problems and these are then interesting too – and only possible to get to by starting from this theory (2003: 22).

So how clear is the 'core idea' that security operates like a self-referential practice? Quite unlike any other concept in security studies, securitisation theory captures the idea that security is an essentially contested concept. It allows the analyst to show that securitisers can use one and the same label to refer to entirely different ideas. Thierry Balzacq (2005: 181) has argued, however, that a preoccupation with security as a self-referential practice has rendered securitisation analysts blind to the existence of 'brute threats', threats that are not affected by the way we talk about them (third emphasis added). For example, climate modelling suggests that climate change brings with it a number of brute threats. Regardless of how the governments of Tuvalu and those of the Kiribati Atoll frame global sea levels rising, these islands will simply disappear should the seas rise to a certain point.

Emancipatory Theory

Emancipatory theory seeks to free people from their false conceptualisation of security as national and military security, to bring about a better world order. Contrary to first impressions, proponents operate under no illusions as to the immediacy of the impact that an individual analyst might have. They realise, for example, that academics are rarely heard by those in power, and that one analyst cannot possibly cover all fields of expertise satisfactorily (Booth 2007: 199, 267). As such, what is asked of the individual is rather modest, yet there is an element of moral duty to it. Thus theorists, in order to become critical individuals, must first of all change themselves. They must become virtuous individuals and do things a good person would do. That is, their intellectual commitment must translate into personal practice in their relations with other humans, seeking practical, immediate and everyday emancipatory actions. Above all, they must have the commitment to an alternative world order as possible. Indeed imagining such an order becomes their guiding principle (Booth 2007: 187-ff). Finally, they need to reach out to those around them (students, civil society groups, etc) and spread the critical message. Emancipation is thus not one big bang moment instigated by one person or even a handful of people. It is instead a gradual process.

As a first concrete step towards a better world order, many emancipatory analysts seek to free 'mainstream' colleagues from their false consciousness of seeing security as belonging to the state

and the military. In order to achieve this, critically minded intellectuals wage a Gramscian ‘war of position’ against their mainstream counterparts, always relying on the promise that their (emancipatory) argument will prevail (Jones 1999, 1995: 299-319). Notably, the ‘mainstream’ that is critiqued is now more broadly based than simply ‘American’ Realism/ Neo-Liberalism, with even that which was originally positioned within non-traditional security studies – securitisation theory – situated now within this ‘mainstream’ category, and therefore attacked for its ostensible state centrism (see below).

Beyond embracing the critical commitment, imagining world security, and campaigning for it, the other key element of the theory is its commitment to immanent critique. Here, the emancipatory analyst examines the principles behind existing policy and compares them to practice. Thus military operations in Iraq might have been about building peace and democracy, but this would have been contrasted with the practice in which thousands of non-combatants died. Through immanent critique, existing statist practice is undermined, and imagined futures are illustrated. Thus, he has to understand, engage with, and critique that which is done in the security world, undermine those approaches from within their own terms, show where the power structures lie, and from that basis, postulate a world security based alternative. As such, it has much in common with the intellectual strategies adopted by the European peace movements throughout the 1970s.

It is possible to identify eight interrelated elements that comprise the epistemological position of emancipatory theory. First, that truth is indispensable yet inaccessible. Second, that therefore a philosophical anchorage is the most secure basis for knowledge. Third, a critical distance is truer than any general pretence to objectivity because, fourth, knowledge has interests. Power and knowledge are therefore interrelated, although in complex ways, and therefore, sixth, mainstream theory (popularised by Cox as problem solving theory) merely replicates existing power structures. Only Critical theory can emancipate, and there is therefore as big a difference between emancipatory theory on the one hand and both securitisation theory and insecurity theory, as there is between emancipatory theory and the ‘American mainstream’. Yet empirical enquiry is crucial, seventh, to the work of the emancipatory analyst, as the basis for immanent critique. Finally, all theory is constitutive, and therefore our choices about theory have a real impact in the world beyond the academic literature (Booth 2007: 277).

Perhaps the crucial step is at point three, the achievement of a ‘critical distance’ whereby the analyst is asked to *step back from his own context* and aim for a position that shares ‘the aims of objectivity’ (trying to free oneself from biases and so on)’ (Booth 2007: 237). Considering the other

seven points that make up the emancipation analysts' epistemological framework, it is not clear how an analyst informed by this theory can successfully be free and achieve critical distance. If the security analyst is at the same time always also a securitising actor and, if as under (4), 'knowledge has interests', then it is simply not clear on what grounds value judgements can be made. The problem for emancipatory theory is, as Robert Jackson has pointed out, that value judgements do not result from lengthy inquiry, but rather analysis starts with the promotion of certain values. 'If political scientists adopt such an orientation to their inquiries from the beginning, they have, in effect given up on academic study as a disinterested and detached study' (2009: 26). In addition, it is not clear how (1) 'truth is indispensable yet inaccessible' can be squared with the promotion of value judgements that are themselves truth claims.

Considering all of this, surely genuine critical distance can only be achieved if *when analysing* security policies the security analyst is functionally distinct from the securitising actor? Proponents of the emancipatory theory, however, deny the possibility of a functional distinction between actor and analyst. Booth finds confirmation of this in the existence of the so-called 'normative dilemma of speaking and writing security' captured in point eight of this epistemological vision - all theory is constitutive. Whilst it is true that all theory that believes in the performative force of language is subject to the normative dilemma of speaking and writing security, it is also true that this has been described as a *dilemma* precisely because it is an *involuntary* co-constitution of social and political reality on the part of the security analyst, not a deliberate one. Thus, Booth (2007: 239, 37) suggests that the choice of the referent object studied equates to the analyst's normative position, and criticises proponents of securitisation theory - who more often than not study national security - as elitist for doing so. Instead of focusing on the state, Booth suggests that security analysts must exercise 'ontological imagination' and conceive of other referent objects of security altogether. He argues:

Ontology [...] is not a matter of abstract philosophy; it is *what we take to be real*, and so in security policy it is the basis of what we believe needs to be protected. This in turn impacts directly on such important issues as what we consider to be relevant knowledge, what the chief struggles are deemed to be, and how we might act. This is why the debate over understandings of 'security' is so important and *why ontology must be turned into one of the battlefields* in the study of international relations.' (2007: 187)[emphasis added]

In this, we can see the clear distinctions between emancipatory theory and securitisation theory. Unlike proponents of emancipatory theory, the securitisation analyst is not interested in making

normative prescriptions for what *ought* to be a security issue, but in what *is* securitised, in who securitises, by what means and to what effect. Informed by the functional distinction between the security analyst and the securitising actor they do not choose the referent object (or for that matter sectors) of security as a result of their normative preference. Instead it is a reflection of that which they identify as occurring in practice (See, Eriksson 1999: 311-30; Wæver 1999: 334-40; Floyd 2007: 41). In other words, if the state features heavily in their analysis it is neither a sign of elitism, nor is it a personal preference on the part of the security analysts; rather it is a description of the way the world is (Buzan and Wæver 2003: 71).

Insecuritisation Theory

Proponents of insecuritisation theory aim to unravel existing security / political dynamics responsible for the insecuritisation of the 'other'. As shown above, their definition of security as insecuritisation is derived from Foucault's concept of governmentality, while they aim to shed light on the insecuritisation process by employing a 'Foucauldian lens' of analysis. In other words, insecuritisation analysis is informed by a simple, as well as infallible¹⁰, circular logic, one whereby the method allows for only one conclusion, which in turn confirms the method and so on. Indeed, Bigo considers his own work an 'extension of Michel Foucault's work' (2002: 81).¹¹ This is crucial to an understanding of the philosophy of insecuritisation theory and, in this context, it is important to take a position on the debate over Foucault's propensity to overstate the facts in order to create a desired impression (Macey 1993: 112; Walzer 1986: 53). A case in point is his vivid account of the so-called 'ship of fools' whereby the mad were deported to sea, central to his argument in *Madness and Civilisation*. In Foucault's words:

[T]hese boats that conveyed their insane cargo from town to town. Madmen then led a wandering existence. The towns drove them outside their limits; they were allowed to wander in the open countryside, when not entrusted to a group of merchants and pilgrims. [...] Frequently they were handed over to boatmen: in Frankfurt, in 1399, seamen were instructed to rid the city of a madman who walked about the streets naked; in the first year of the fifteenth century, a criminal madman was expelled in the same manner from Mainz. [...] Often the cities of Europe must have seen these 'ships of fools' approaching their harbours (2001 [1967]: 6).

However, this vessel never actually existed, but was a 'purely literary phenomenon' (Macey 1993: 432). Indeed, he argues that: 'the *Narrenschiff* [ship of fools] is the only one [on a previous page

¹⁰ In so far as the different elements confirm one another indefinitely.

¹¹ Moreover in the introduction to *Controlling Frontiers* Bigo (2005: 2) writes "The underpinning reference of all contributors, independently of their discipline, is the work of Michel Foucault".

Foucault talks about a number of different ships such as the ‘ship of health’ and the ‘ship of virtuous ladies’] that had a real existence – for they did exist’ (Foucault 2001: 6). So, can securitisation theory deploy fictitious accounts of history in order to usefully generate truthful claims? In addition, this brings with it Foucault’s ‘anti-disciplinarian’ commitment, and his ‘war with the established intellectual disciplines’ (Walzer 1986: 52). Accordingly, Foucault distanced himself from conventional political theory and its methodologies¹² and rather than merely offering a form of political theory, Foucault lived what he saw as being the appropriate role for the intellectual, whereby the intellectual no longer is the ‘bearer of universal moral, theoretical and political values’, but rather ‘speaks out against the intolerable on the basis of his sectoral knowledge’.¹³ Barry Smart summed this up as follows:

[A]ccording to Foucault, [the role of the modern intellectual is] ‘no longer to place himself ‘somewhat ahead and to the side’ in order to express the stifled truth of the collectivity; rather it is to *struggle against* the forms of power that transform him into its object and instrument in the sphere of ‘knowledge’, ‘truth’, ‘consciousness’ and ‘discourse’. *In this sense theory does not express, translate, or serve to apply practice: it is practice.* (1985: 17) [both emphases added]

In other words, for the ‘specific intellectual’ there was no longer any distinction between theory and practice – Foucault himself had become a *practitioner*.

This has two direct and interrelated consequences for the theoretical coherence of securitisation theory. Firstly, securitisation analysts consider themselves politically motivated critics, who struggle against security framing understood as securitisation. Thus the problem is securitisation and its effects on certain sectors of society, and from there, the analyst works back to the problem of security. This can be seen in understanding the relationship between security, on the one hand, and migration and asylum in the EU on the other. For Huysmans:

Although it was clear that security approaches increasingly impacted on migration and asylum policy in the 1980s and 1990s, it was difficult to grasp this as a straightforward process of securitisation, as understood by Buzan and Wæver. Although security language was being used [...] it was difficult to justify that migration and asylum were governed as central existential threats. Speech acts explicitly defining migration as a major security threat to the European Union did not play a central role in the securitization of the Internal Market. (2006: 150)

¹² Foucault cited in Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982: 208)

¹³ First quote in Smart (1985: 67), second quote in Macey (1993: 269) (emphasis added)

Thus, 'Securitisation is not a speech act but a multidimensional process with skills. Expert knowledge, institutional routines and discourses of danger modulate the relationship between security and freedom' (Huysmans 2006: 153).

The second consequence for the practical deployment of insecurity theory is that proponents cannot possibly offer anything but a negative view of security policies. Their starting point is the negative effect of insecurity on sectors of society. Theories of security studies that do not recognise the logic of insecurity simply reproduce existing security knowledge, hence taking part in the production of insecurity, when the aim should be to deny security knowledge bringing about desecuritisation, which in turn consists in 'de-legitimizing the ethical, political and/or scientific validity of security knowledge for understanding migration and asylum' (Huysmans 2006: 143). While some would view this as an ethically desirable position, and one that tackles the normative dilemma of speaking and writing security, others would question the idea that the academic should assume the role of practitioner.

The final issue concerns where and in what forms insecurity theory applies. Is it examining one phenomenon only, that of the creation of insecurities based on identity politics where the inside/outside boundary has collapsed? How broad is that phenomenon across the range of issues that comprise security studies? And, given that the empirical work is for the most part based in and on the EU, is this a theoretical model that has vitality outside European boundaries, and if so, are there any limits to those boundaries connected to political culture or regime type?

Part III. Questions for Empirical Research

Having outlined in this paper three of the main theories of non-traditional security studies operating in Europe in contemporary scholarship, and then having briefly outlined issues of internal coherence, in the final section of we turn our attention to the ways in which these theories can shape empirical research.

Securitisation Theory

Since the securitisation analyst aims to uncover 'specific rhetorical structures' for the existential threat, her research method is necessarily discourse analysis. Securitisation analysis must be conducted on those texts that are prominent in the public domain because it is 'against the nature' of the existential threat argument 'to be hidden' (Buzan et al. 1998: 177). The specific structure of the securitisation logic also limits what kind of texts the researcher must read (publicly available

texts by those with agency to be making a securitising move) and those that can therefore be ignored (obscure texts, or statements not intended for public viewing). Which specific texts are relevant in any given case is of course an empirical question¹⁴.

As part of analysing the discursive construction of the existential threat the securitisation analyst must identify the securitising actor (who speaks security), the referent object of security (who or what is to be secured) and the audience (who or what is to accept the speech act, thereby legitimising the breaking of rules). For the most part, the securitising actor and the referent object of security are distinct entities with the securitising actor speaking security on behalf of a particular threatened entity, for instance the state on behalf of its citizens. Whilst Wæver has acknowledged this it is somewhat awkward to say, 'the state' acts, as the state itself is composed of institutions, individuals and so on, for the purpose of analytical simplification it is common practice to equate states with individual actor qualities.¹⁵ The identification of securitising actors other than states is likely to be much more difficult. For one thing there are fewer case studies that the researcher can utilise for purposes of comparison. For another, unlike for national security, no standard textbooks exist that tell the analyst who (what actors, institutions and bureaucracies) are involved in the making of security, which documents matter (official speeches, national security and defence strategies), what hierarchy exists amongst different institutions (spheres of influence) and so on. Besides, should the securitising actor be other than the state, then the analyst has to make a case for the social and political power of that actor to shape agendas and to speak security. None of this is of course impossible. It is, rather, a far less well-trodden path.

As a general principle, in order to identify the securitising actor, researchers ought to look for 'what logic shapes the action' and not - in the first instance - at 'who performs the speech act' (Buzan et al. 1998: 41). The same could be said for the identification of the referent object of security (the 'who' or 'what' is believed to be threatened). Given that it is the securitising actor and not the securitisation analyst that chooses the referent object of security, no normative beliefs of the researcher herself should infiltrate the analysis at this point. Instead the analyst studies the text in order to unravel the specifics of the discursive move, thus allowing the identification of who or what is being secured.

¹⁴ A much more comprehensive guide to which texts are relevant for security analysis than that offered by Buzan et al. (1998) is Hansen's *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (2006).

¹⁵ The unique capability of states to act as a coherent unit is epitomised by Wendt's phrase (1999) - 'States are people too'.

As part of this analysis, the analyst also locates the final component necessary for a successful securitisation - the audience - whose precise nature again depends on the case in point. This may be relatively straightforward. However, it is more problematic to be able to determine the location of the success of the securitising move, which rests upon the acceptance of the speech act by the audience. Yet at the same time 'accept' does not necessarily mean in civilised, dominance-free discussion; it only means that an order always rests on coercion as well as consent. Since securitisation can never be imposed, there is a need to argue one's case (Buzan et al. 1998: 25). In other words, the securitising actor needs to argue the case for why an issue should be addressed in security mode, and researchers must uncover the nature of this argument in addition to the simple postulation of the existential threat by the securitiser.

The close connection between the audience and argument means that securitisation theory has been criticised for not being applicable outside of western liberal democracies, where the power of argument is an essential part of public life and political debate (Wilkinson 2007: 5-25). Though securitisation theory was clearly developed in this context, Wæver is eager to stress that the audience is applicable in all political contexts, for even the most powerful leader could not achieve successful securitisation without anyone carrying out emergency measures. The audience thus may be different things in different political systems; conceptually, 'audience' is not coterminous with the citizenry or population of a democratic country (Wæver 2003: 12; Vuori 2008: 65-99). This shows that the definition of the audience is actually crucial. There are numerous securitising actors who stand up and make *securitising moves* with reference to some referent object, but a securitisation has only happened when the relevant audience accepts the security argument, to an extent where this *could* be used as a basis for using extraordinary means to fend off the alleged threat.

Emancipatory Theory

The core commitment of emancipatory theory is to identify means of removing the false consciousness that limits the lives of so many, to challenge oppressive structures, and to imagine the means by which world security can be brought about. Theoretically, this means a close engagement with the writings of the Frankfurt School, as set out above, either directly or through writers in International Relations, such as Cox, so that the researcher might be comfortable with a definition of Critical theory that can underpin all that follows.

The starting point has to be the identification of structures that are oppressive, and which lead to the functioning of false consciousness, not just in terms of social class, but in gendered relations, with ethnic, tribal, and other structural factors all necessarily considered. Once these structures are identified, the emancipation analyst must then examine the principles of those structures, and reveal them as not delivering that which they promise, but instead, to reveal their oppressive nature, through the means of immanent critique.

The emancipatory security analyst is also an activist. It is important to engage in these intellectual tasks, but also to actively engage in knowledge transfer, to seek to find ways in which oppressive structures can be confronted, and their false promises revealed, thereby allowing those oppressed to address themselves what it means for them to be free, and thereby, secure. Central to this is a positive demand on the emancipation analyst to imagine alternatives, new world orders that would lead to world security in which emancipation is at the core of human society. And those ideas have to be achievable – the task is, as Booth put it in the title of an early piece in this field, ‘Utopian Realism in Theory and Practice’ (1991b: 527-45).

One dilemma here is to understand the relationship between the imaginings of the emancipation analyst, and the understandings of those with false consciousness about their own emancipation. The voices of the oppressed must be heard; but how much weight should they have if it is the case that there are contradictions between their emancipatory demands and the imaginings of the elite emancipatory analyst? That is, the voice of the oppressed must be heard, and in many ways it might be facing some oppression; but if it is still bound up with gendered distinctions that are detrimental to many, it is not yet fully authentic. Of course, such dilemmas are common in working through the mass/ elite relationship in all post-Marxist thought.

It would be unfair to leave the pragmatics of emancipatory theory at that point, however, as there is also the demand for the Gramscian ‘war of position’. That is, as an activist the emancipatory analyst also intervenes in public debate, and works, for example, with non-governmental agencies. It is critically important that the cause of emancipation be advanced across society, and so it is incumbent upon the emancipatory analyst to seek to advance thought and action in this area by engaging in ways of security positions of intellectual and academic influence in and beyond the particular field of research in which the analyst is operating.

The emancipation analyst’s work is not confined geographically or by sector. The focus on world security for all humanity is by definition all encompassing, thereby emancipation analysis can be in

Europe and Africa, in economic, political, environmental and military spheres, and can be at the level of the home, as well as that of the state or the globe. One exception, however, is at the level of identity security, that is to say, the universalist claims of emancipation theory are seen as contra the relativist claims of some of those who work in identity security issues.

Insecuritisation Theory

Given that Foucault is instrumental in so many ways, a sound knowledge of at the very least Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The birth of the Prison* and *Security, Territory and Population* are essential reading for any researcher interested in this approach. For those seeking to apply insecuritisation theory, the initial starting point is to identify a particular group who are the victim of security practices that make them the subject of a state of insecuritisation. With securitisation conceived of not as a speech act but rather a 'multidimensional process with skills; expert knowledge, institutional routines as well as discourses of danger', the insecuritisation analyst does not rely on discourse analysis alone, but rather utilises a number of research methods, including interviews. The impetus for how precisely these interviews are used is again taken from Foucault. Thus, like Foucault (with interviewing prisoners for *Discipline and Punish*) they refrain from directly quoting the interviews with security practitioners, as they want to give those who are subjected to insecuritisation a voice, and not speak for them (Bigo 2005: 4). In this, of course, lies a major contradiction with emancipation theorists, who wish to shape those voices towards defined, emancipatory ends in line with imaginings of world security.

The identification of the insecuritised, and the granting to them of a voice, is followed by an analysis of the nature of the particular security field. Here, it is important to identify the social rules that operate within the field, to acquire an understanding of the habitus of the agents, and also to be able to map the nature of the capital possessed by the agents (social, economic, and cultural). The purpose is to be able to identify the

[T]ransversal field of processes of (in)securitisation whereby a certain number of professionals [...] occupy the dominant positions. By maintaining these positions, they exclude alternative discourses. [...] The field is thus established between these 'professionals' with specific 'rules of the game' and rules that presuppose a particular mode of socialization or habitus. (Bigo 2006: 113)

Of course, inherent in insecuritisation theory is the importance of understanding that it is a political choice to frame issues in security mode; those politics need to be exposed and critiqued. In so

doing, it is possible that the insecuritisation analyst might bring about a different framing, but there is no universalist frame against which this can be done. For example, Huysmans' study of migration and asylum in the EU is informed by the following research questions: 'What makes a restrictive migration policy a security policy rather than economic policy? What is specific about framing these policy issues in terms of security? How does it differ from human rights or aesthetic framings?' (2006: 146)

Security/political relations are to be unravelled by applying a 'Foucauldian lens', which 'seeks to embed discourse in technologies of government that are practically realising [...] security modalities of governing free movement' (Huysmans 2006: 93). Or in other words, security/political relations can best be unravelled by analysing (in the case of migration and the EU) European security knowledge productions along the lines suggested in Foucault's studies of governmentality (Huysmans 2006: 93).¹⁶ The insecuritisation analyst thus functions as a politically motivated critic. She no longer focuses on either widened and/or deepened notions of security. Instead, the objective is to struggle *against* security framing in order to achieve a different kind of understanding/framing of 'the political'. This is important, because as Foucault put it, 'if politicisation means falling back on ready-made choices and institutions, then the effort of analysis involved in uncovering relations of force and mechanisms of power is not worthwhile' (1980b: 190). In short what we understand by 'the political' is what needs to change.

Huysmans clearly has done the most work in this regard. He suggests that in order to relocate 'the political' away from the Schmittian friend-enemy dichotomy, desecuritisation needs to be redefined as a critical strategy (2006: chapters 8 and 9). Then, there needs to be a re-politicisation of 'the political' elsewhere in a pluralist realm - that is, alongside other normal political issues. Hence, desecuritisation is the normative ideal for the insecuritisation analyst.

Insecuritisation theory can be seen from the perspective of the range of approaches in non-traditional security as perhaps the narrowest approach, in that it deals essentially with the societal sector of security. And, of course, the empirical work taken place to date has been almost exclusively within the European Union. It is not at all clear as to the geographical range for empirical studies focusing on insecuritisation beyond Europe or perhaps more fully, beyond the 'West.'

¹⁶ The same course of conduct is suggested by Bigo and Guild (2005).

Conclusion

Although there have been, and will continue to be, important discussions about theoretical similarities and shared perspectives between the three theories under discussion here, they each lead in different directions with regard to the methodological choices that need to be made. This conclusion seeks to summarise the steps that the analyst must take, having selected a particular theoretical framework, in order to be able to carry out detailed empirical work. Of course, there will be differences here, not least because the theories seek to achieve different ends: securitisation theory seeks to explain the world; emancipation theory to change it; and insecurity theory to give a voice to the oppressed.

For securitisation theory, the key starting point is that the analyst is functionally distinct from the securitising actor, and that securitisation theory is a value neutral tool for analysis. From this position, the analyst seeks to understand the logic of debate enabling him to uncover who speaks security. Perhaps most often, the 'who' will be the most powerful representatives of government, but it does not have to be so, and analysts need to be able to justify the selection of agency, not just assume it. From there, a methodological choice needs to be made as to what counts as speaking: speeches, government documents, images, and indeed, silences. In what way is the securitising move made? Finally, the analyst must examine who the audience for the securitising move is, how they receive the securitising move, and how it can be ascertained whether they have accepted it or not. Provided that the securitisation is successful, the analyst can then identify the emergency measures that follow.

Such a description of the methodological steps to be undertaken by an analyst taking an empirical example and examining it using securitisation theory is straightforward; yet enacting it is rather more complex. As we have seen above, securitisation theory is rather under-specified on some points, and so rather than simply taking the above as a methodological cue for action, the analyst still has theoretical work to do before operationalising the method in a particular empirical case. For example, he will need to be able to say what counts as an audience, and will need to theorise the relationship between the securitising actor and the audience; there is no ready made and agreed theory in place to select 'off the shelf.' But perhaps this is healthy. Perhaps the best way to further develop securitisation theory is through operationalising it with empirical examples.

With regard to emancipatory theory, the analyst must first identify the mutual constitution of an oppressed community with the power structures that produce that oppression. In so doing, she will

necessarily first expose the elements of false consciousness that prevents the oppressed from fully engaging in widespread political rebellion, and also, through immanent critique, illustrate the falsity of the prevailing order, demonstrating how the logic of the language leads to contrary practices, to the detriment of the oppressed. These steps are less precise than those under the method of securitisation theory, and thereby lead to perhaps still wider theoretical questions to be examined. What scale should be applied to the selection of those oppressed? If the focus is patriarchy, then arguably the empirical analysis is global in dimension; how then are local structures of patriarchy to be understood, empirically, in relation to the global? This is also important to the next element of the emancipatory analyst's method: she must imagine alternatives to current oppression that are achievable through political action. Moreover, of course, she must engage in the 'war of position' as an activist, in order to further that alternative imagining. It is perhaps this last point that is most unspecified methodologically: what must the analyst do, practically, to further that new imagining?

Insecuritisation theory seems to begin from a similar place, methodologically, to emancipatory theory. Analysts need to begin by identifying a group or community that is subject to insecurities. Again, rather like the emancipatory theorist, empirically it is important to grant a voice to the oppressed or rather, here, to the insecure. But here the nature of the voice – methodologically – is sought for different reasons and produces different empirical material. For the insecuritisation theorist, empirically the voice produces data illustrating the nature and scope of insecuritisation, both for that community, and also by those agencies of governmentality that bring it about. Emancipatory analysts are more interested in understanding the structures of false consciousness, and in engaging with representatives of that oppressed community in sharing the imaginings of an alternative future. Insecuritisation analysts also need to focus very fully on the insecuritisation agents. Methodologically, they need to be able to study the agents to gain insight into their habitus; they need to be able to give discursive evidence for their social, economic and cultural capital. They need to understand the nature and dynamics of the powerful and produce data to illustrate that, in ways dissimilar to the needs of the emancipatory analyst.

These three European approaches to non-traditional security studies are rooted in different epistemological commitments, take different views on ontology, and are thereby frequently seen in opposition to one another. In this piece, we have not sought to counter such perspectives; indeed, as we have argued, each has fundamentally different purposes and aims. However, that is not all that there is to be said, certainly not when it comes to the question of how scholars deploy these

theories to actually understand specific global realities – how they are used in empirical analysis. Indeed, from this point of view, these European theories of security have elements in common: they are based on discursive power, they are interested in change (from politicisation to securitisation, or in the status of the disempowered), and they are all (though in different ways) operating self-consciously as something different from mainstream theories of security such as realism and neo-liberalism.

Much of the focus in recent scholarship in non-traditional security studies has been on ways of clarifying theoretical claims within the three branches of study, and also to further understanding the theoretical linkages between them. This work has been easily as important as that of the original theorists. Our contention is, however, that at this point in time *more* attention should be given to how to actually use these theories in practical, empirical studies. We believe that doing this will provide further important theoretical insights as empirical application highlights theoretical limitations that are otherwise almost impossible to detect. Awareness of in this way uncovered theoretical limitations can in turn usefully feed back into the respective theory, enabling further theoretical advancement, and ultimately increasing practical utility.

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Contact: EU-GRASP Coordination Team
72 Poterierei – B-8000 – Bruges – Belgium
Email: faert@cris.unu.edu or efanta@cris.unu.edu

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