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Towards a consequentialist evaluation of security: bringing together the Copenhagen and the Welsh Schools of security studies

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Abstract. This article constitutes an attempted bridge-building between the so-called 'Copenhagen School' and the so-called 'Welsh School' of security studies. The thesis of communality rests upon an evaluative bifurcation of the concept of securitisation into positive and negative securitisation. In tandem with this lies a bifurcation of the concept of desecuritisation into positive and negative desecuritisation. The two positive concepts are believed to be of equal value, with both trumping over the two negative concepts.

This evaluative strategy of securitisation/desecuritisation, it is hoped will combine the optimistic perception of security by 'Welsh School' critical security theorists, with the more pessimistic perception of security associated with the Copenhagen School – particularly with that of Ole Wæver, the originator of securitisation theory. Such a strategy is seen as advantageous for three reasons. First, it is believed that the more unified these critical theories are, the stronger a challenge they can offer to the mainstream of security studies; second, the more united the academy the more adoptable are its theories for policymakers (EU or otherwise) and third the strategy proposed here paves the way for a more evaluative engagement with security on the part of the analyst, allowing for normative – but denying infinite – conceptualisations of security.

In order to show that there are differences between the utility of securitisation and desecuritisation, this article demonstrates the distinctions by way of illustrative examples, all of which are taken from the environmental security sector. By means of this practical application, the article will show that neither securitisation nor desecuritisation are, in and of themselves positive or negative. It is rather the case that the outcome of a securitisation/desecuritisation is always issue dependent – something reflected here in the suggested two-tier structure of securitisation.

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War the study of security has been subject to several significant changes. The dominance of military security, prevalent during the Cold

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War, has been undermined by the incorporation of other sectors into the realm of security, with threats now stemming from sectors as diverse as, for example, the environment and the economy. Moreover, security is no longer mainly about the state, but other referent objects, such as for example the individual, have become recognised. Even though changes in the study of security have been undertaken everywhere, it is in Europe where the most progressive new security theories have been developed. Two of the most influential sources of these are the so-called 'Copenhagen School' and 'Welsh School', the former most associated with the work of Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan, and the latter with work by Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones. Whilst it is debatable whether or not these small groups of scholars – particularly in the latter case – are accurately described by the label school, in this article these labels are used for comparative purposes. Moreover, both labels are quite regularly used in the security studies literature.[1] Even though, as this article will show, these two schools of thought share some (very broad) ideas about how security should be studied, thus far there has been little dialogue between them – a gap this article seeks to fill.

The attempt for 'common ground' made in this article starts by arguing that there are no forbidding epistemological and methodological hurdles between the two schools that would prohibit such a dialogue from the beginning. This article goes much further than this, however, and takes the argument that elements of the two schools' work are complementary as its starting point. Based upon this, this article develops the idea that securitisation is neither mainly 'negative' as suggested by Wæver, nor necessarily 'positive' as suggested by Booth and Wyn Jones, but rather issue-dependent. This article picks up the idea – acknowledged from both sides – of the 'mobilisation power' of security and argues for a two-tier system of evaluation, whereby neither security nor 'desecurity' are either always positive or negative. Since it is argued here that 'what form' either concept will take is entirely issue-dependent, each of the four possible outcomes will be exemplified by using illustrative examples. Building on concepts developed by the two schools, and on the issue dependence of positive/negative, this article argues for a third approach to the study of security namely, one that pursues an evaluative strategy of the consequences of securitisation and desecuritisation. Although this third approach takes on board arguments from both the Welsh and the Copenhagen School of security studies, it is important to note that the author of this article is much closer to the latter, a fact which explains the closer reference to the Copenhagen School throughout.

For purposes of structure the article is divided into three parts. Section 1 constitutes a brief overview of both the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School. Section 2 lays the philosophical groundwork for this piece and the third section constitutes the main body of work. It is here where the two-tier structure of securitisation/desecuritisation is developed. The Conclusion briefly revisits the argument and draws attention to why such an approach is useful.

[1] The name Copenhagen School was coined by a fierce critic of the School, Bill McSweeney, in his 1996 article 'Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School', *Review of International Studies*, 22:1 (1996), pp. 81–94. The first usage of the term Welsh School is not so well documented, however, there is reason to believe that it was first used in the literature by Steve Smith in 'The Increasing Insecurity of Security Studies: Conceptualising Security in the last Twenty Years', in Stuart Croft and Terry Terriff (eds.), *Critical Reflections on Security and Change* (London: Frank Cass), p. 89.

Understanding the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School

The Copenhagen School

The name 'Copenhagen School' refers to a small group of scholars formerly based at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI)[2] in Copenhagen, Denmark. Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan are the School's most prominent members. The two scholars have developed three conceptual tools of analysis to facilitate the study of security. These three concepts are sectors of security, regional security complex theory and securitisation theory. The first two were originally developed by Buzan and the latter by Wæver. Since this article is only concerned[3] with securitisation theory, subsequent parts of the article use the label Copenhagen School and Wæver's name alternately.

Given the importance of securitisation theory for the argument of this article it is first of all necessary to explain what this theory entails. The main argument of securitisation theory is that security is a (illocutionary) speech act,[4] that alone by uttering 'security' something is being done. 'It is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one'.[5] A securitising actor, by stating that a particular *referent object* is threatened in its existence, claims a right to extraordinary measures to ensure the referent object's survival. The issue is then moved out of the sphere of normal politics into the realm of emergency politics, where it can be dealt with swiftly and without the normal (democratic) rules and regulations of policymaking. For security this means that it has no longer any given (pre-existing) meaning but that it can be anything a securitising actor says it is. Security is understood to be a social and intersubjective construction. That is the meaning of security.

To limit 'everything' from becoming a security issue, a successful securitisation consists of three steps. These are: (1) identification of existential threats, (2) emergency action and (3) effects on inter-unit relations by breaking free of rules.[6] To present an issue as an existential threat is to say that: 'If we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant (because we will not be here or will not be free to deal with it in our own way)'.[7] This first step towards a successful securitisation is called a *securitising move*. A securitising move is in theory an option open to any unit, because only once an actor has convinced an audience (inter-unit relations) of its legitimate need to go beyond otherwise binding rules and regulations (extraordinary measures) can we identify a case of *securitisation*. In practice

[2] COPRI was closed on 1 January 2003, when the newly elected right-wing Government merged COPRI with other Danish research institutes into the Danish Center for International Studies and Human Rights.

[3] This being said, sectors are actually used in this article. However, since they do not constitute a theory but rather an analytical ordering tool there is no need to further explain them here. For an explanation see, for example: Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

[4] The concept of speech-acts was originally formulated by John L. Austin in his *How to do Things with Words?* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), who identified the existence of what he called performative speech-acts, whereby by saying something, something is being done. Like naming a ship, betting, and so on.

[5] Ole Wæver, *Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen New Schools in Security Theory and the Origins between Core and Periphery* (unpublished manuscript, 2004), p. 9.

[6] Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998), p. 6. See also Ole Wæver, 'Security, the Speech Act: Analysing the Politics of a Word' (unpublished manuscript, 1998); and Ole Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

[7] Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization', p. 24.

securitisation is thus far from being open to all units and their respective subjective threats, but rather it is largely based on power and capability and therewith the means to socially and politically construct a threat. In this way the study of security remains wide, but with restrictions pertaining to 'who' can securitise, it is neither unmanageable nor incoherent.

In addition to these restrictions on who can, and who cannot securitise it is important to note that Wæver is extremely critical of framing issues in terms of security. For him: 'security should be seen as a negative, as a failure to deal with issues of normal politics.'[8] Because of this, he promotes a strategy of *desecuritisation*, whereby securitisation is reversed and issues are moved out of 'the threat – defence sequence and into the ordinary public sphere' where they can be dealt with in accordance with the rules of the (democratic) political system.[9] Despite this statement of preference by Wæver et al., desecuritisation is left largely under-theorised and open to interpretation. In spite of this negligence, it is however clear that in Wæver's view desecuritisation is a positive concept – one policymakers should strive towards, and one a wider 'securitisation studies' should embrace.[10]

The Welsh School

The Welsh School of security studies works within the tradition of Critical Theory, a critique of the modernist meta-narrative of rational social/political theory. Critical Theory has its roots in Marxism. It has largely been developed by the 'Frankfurt School', a group of theorists working at the Frankfurt-based 'Institute for Social Research'. Amongst the most influential members of the Frankfurt School are Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and more recently, Jürgen Habermas. Critical Theory is a sophisticated and complex approach to social science research that combines many, at times opposing, ideas under one label. This short section on Critical Theory is not able to do justice to the complexity of the approach. Nevertheless, it is possible to gather the fundamental ideas into one brief and coherent picture. Raymond Geuss has done this convincingly in arguing that Frankfurt School Critical Theory is based upon the following three theses:

- Critical theories have special standing guides for human action in that: (a) they are aimed at producing enlightenment in the agents who hold them, that is, at enabling those agents to determine what their true interests are; (b) they are inherently emancipatory, that is, they free agents from a kind of coercion which is at least partly self-imposed, from self-frustration of conscious human action.
- Critical theories have cognitive content, that is, they are forms of knowledge.
- Critical theories differ epistemologically in essential ways from the natural sciences. Theories in natural science are 'objectifying'; critical theories are 'reflective'.[11]

[8] Ibid., p. 29.
[9] Ibid., p. 29.
[10] Ole Wæver, 'The EU as a Security Actor: Reflections from a Pessimistic Constructivist on Post-Sovereign Security Orders', in Morten Kelstrup and Michael C. Williams (eds.), *International Relations Theory and the Politics of European Integration* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 253.
[11] Raymond Geuss, *Idea of a Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 1–2.

The first of these three theses indicates the goal of Critical Theory, namely that critical theorists ultimately seek to emancipate humanity from what they see as the various false and often dangerous consciousnesses of our orthodox concepts and categories. 'False consciousness' being the condition whereby human agents 'falsely objectify their own activity'.[12] False consciousness is a result of the modernist way of generating knowledge, which is modelled on the laws of the natural sciences, or in short, positivism. Critical theorists believe that positivism produces non-reflective structures of truth and knowledge – thereby denying humanity alternative conceptions of truth and knowledge. For them, positivist theories – although they present themselves as objective – like all theories, are not void of perspective and intention. In the words of Robert Cox:

> Theory is always *for* someone *for* some purpose. [. . .] The world is seen from a standpoint definable in terms of nation or social class, of dominance or subordination, of rising or declining power, of a sense of immobility or of present crisis, of past experience, and of hopes and expectations for the future.[13]

Moreover, because positivism objects to these claims and represents itself as a 'theory in itself, divorced from a standpoint in time, it is the more important to examine it as an ideology, and to lay bare its concealed perspective.'[14] This is done by means of emancipation, whereby critical theory seeks to 'free' human agents from their false consciousness. Given the very fact that critical theorists ultimately want to emancipate or produce self-emancipation, it is clear that they believe in truth and reason. In order to gain emancipation, critical theorists start from enlightenment ideas of rational knowledge of human interests, and proceed to show that different critical narratives of 'truth' and 'knowledge' exist and are possible. In short, critical theory holds alternative narratives of reality – always indicating the potential for change towards a 'reflective' society. The starting point for such an alternative society begins with elements of the enlightenment project. Habermas, for instance, sees elements of reason within the enlightenment and consequently builds his theory of 'communicative action' on the foundations of a democratic society. On reason in the enlightenment project, Habermas states:

> I mean the internal theoretical dynamic which constantly propels the sciences – and the self-reflection of the sciences as well – beyond the creation of merely technologically exploitable knowledge; furthermore, I mean the universalist foundations of law and morality which have also been embodied (in no matter how distorted and imperfect form) in the institutions of constitutional states, in forms of democratic decision-making, and in individualistic patterns of identity formation; finally, I mean the productivity and the liberating force of an aesthetic experience with a subjectivity set free from the imperatives of purposive activity and from conventions of everyday perceptions.[15]

Over the course of the past twenty years Critical Theory, especially in form of the work of Habermas, has made an impact on IR theory.[16] The ideas of Critical Theory have also been picked up by security studies, namely by the Welsh School. Like other

[12] Ibid., p. 14.
[13] Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States and World Orders', *Millennium*, 10:2 (1981), p. 128.
[14] Ibid., p. 128.
[15] Jürgen Habermas, 'The entwinement of myth and enlightenment', *New German Critique*, 26 (1982), p. 18.
[16] For a good overview, see Thomas Diez and Jill Steans, 'Habermas and IR', *Review of International Studies*, 31:1 (2005), pp. 127–40.

critical approaches the Welsh School sets out from a criticism of conventional security studies, particularly realist theories of security. The Welsh School begins their critique by arguing that in the changed post-Cold War world state-centric realism can no longer satisfactorily explain the complex web of world politics. In an article from 1991 Booth foresees the end of the Westphalian system of sovereign states, arguing that the post-Cold War world order is best viewed as an 'interregnum' between the old – the state system and the new – an emerging (borderless) world community.[17] The disintegration of the state – for security issues at least – is seen as advantageous as it is the state that is at the heart of much insecurity. As Wyn Jones argues:

> In very many cases and not only in the disadvantaged South, the arms purchased and the powers accrued by governments under the guise of protecting their citizens from interstate war are far more potent threats to the security of those citizens than any putative foreign enemy. Eschewing the statism of mainstream security discourse, proponents of Critical Security Studies recognize that, globally, *the sovereign state is one of the main causes of insecurity*: it is part of the problem rather than the solution.[18]

For the Welsh School, the realist understanding of security as 'power' and 'order' can never lead to 'true' security. The security dilemma at the heart of realist thought by its very nature renders some (states) secure and others (states) insecure, as one state's security is another state's insecurity. Insecurity thus remains as much part of the system as security. For the Welsh School this is unacceptable. For them 'true security can only be achieved by people and groups if they do not deprive others of it'.[19] Regarding the question how this 'true' security is to be achieved, the Welsh School – in accordance with the premises of Frankfurt School Critical Theory – argues that an alternative reality is possible, if security is understood as emancipation.[20] To understand the connection between emancipation and security it is worth citing Booth in the original:

> Emancipation is freeing people (as individuals and groups) from the physical and human constraints, together with poverty, poor education, political oppression and so on. *Security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin.* Emancipation, not power or order, produces true security. Emancipation, theoretically, is security.[21]

The concept of the Welsh School and its conceptualisation of security as emancipation is, as the proponents themselves acknowledge, easier said than done. For them, unity within the academy on the meaning of security as emancipation is a crucial precondition for the concept's adoption in the real world. Emancipation could begin from within the academy. The Welsh School views mainstream security studies as fiercely guarded by those traditionalists eager to secure their own position and status. Booth, who refers to himself as a 'fallen realist', is optimistic and argues that it is possible to move beyond the traditional and towards a critical approach to IR, as any 'academic subject is ultimately what we make of it'.[22] The aim is thus to free

[17] Ken Booth, 'Security and Emancipation', *Review of International Studies*, 17 (1991), pp. 314–15.
[18] Richard Wyn Jones, 'Message in a Bottle'? Theory and Praxis in Critical Security Studies', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 16:3 (1995), pp. 310 (emphasis added).
[19] Booth, 'Security and Emancipation', p. 319.
[20] Ken Booth, 'Security in Anarchy: Utopian Realism in Theory and Practice', *International Affairs*, 67:3 (1991), pp. 539.
[21] Booth, 'Security and Emancipation', p. 319 (emphasis added).
[22] Ken Booth, 'Security and Self: Reflections of a Fallen Realist', in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (eds.), *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Case* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 92.

'mainstream' colleagues from their false consciousness of seeing security as belonging to the state and the military. In order to achieve this, critically minded academics/intellectuals should wage a Gramscian 'war of position' against their mainstream counterparts, always relying on the hope that their (emancipatory) argument will prevail. Thus, unlike any other theorist in IR the Critical theorist takes an active part of the production of the social world they observe.

Although the conceptualisation of security as emancipation is a promising contribution to security theory, there are problems with the theory, most of which stem from its normative conviction. Hence, the biggest problem with Booth and Wyn Jones' approach is where does security stop? Neither of the two theorists offers guidelines for when an issue is not a security issue, always implying the more security the better. If however, all issues are framed in security terms, what then is the value of framing anything as a security issue? The theory clearly misses a 'Wæverian' limitation of who can and who cannot securitise. In the latest book *Critical Security Studies and World Politics* (2005) Booth again fails to tackle this problem, even though it receives some indirect attention. Hence, Booth argues that security is not *only* about survival, but rather it is about survival and some basic human needs which enable human becoming. His definition reads as follows:

> Security in world politics is an instrumental value that enables people(s) some opportunity to choose how to live. It is a means by which individuals and collectives can invent and reinvent different ideas about being human.[23]

Booth continues in stating that self-inflicted risks – like those experienced by an extreme sports person – do not belong to what he perceives of as security threats. Security threats rather lie with those issues which are not self-inflicted, often stemming from social inequality and underdevelopment. Since neither human needs, nor threats to individual security are explicitly defined it is still not clear when normal politics ends and the need for security begins.

The possibility of compatibility

Within the discipline of International Relations (IR), or more specifically the sub-discipline of security studies, security is regarded as being an 'essentially contested concept'.[24] The contestedness of 'security' arises naturally as the meaning of security is not an ontological given, but changes across time.[25] Since security has no constant meaning, the concept means something different for every school of thought within security studies. Security's meaning is dependent on questions of epistemology, ontology and methodology underlying the respective school of thought.

[23] Ken Booth, *Critical Security Studies and the Study of World Politics* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2005), p. 23.
[24] Walter B. Gallie (1956), cited in Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, p. 7.
[25] Ken Booth, 'Critical Explorations', in Ken Booth (ed.), Critical Security Studies and World Politics (London: Lynne Rienner, 2005), pp. 1–18; Ole Wæver, 'Security: A Conceptual History for International Relations', unpublished manuscript, 2002; Ole Wæver, 'Peace and Security: Two Concepts and their Relationship', in Stefano Guzzini and Dietrich Jung, *Analysis and Copenhagen Peace Research* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 51–65; Emma Rothschild, 'What is Security?', in *Dædalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 124:3 (1995), pp. 53–9.

The study of security can roughly be divided into 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' conceptualisations. 'Traditional' hereby refers to those approaches to security that adhere to a positivist social science. Here, security is 'traditionally' about military security, with the state being the referent object of security – that which is to be secured. In recent years, other sectors, such as the environment, have been incorporated into the traditional security studies agenda, always, however, within the traditional threat and defence nexus. During the Cold War traditional security studies was pretty much all there was to the study of security. Today, this approach, although challenged, remains dominant particularly in the United States.

'Non-traditional' refers to those conceptualisations of security with a reflectivist epistemology. For these approaches, the military understanding of security still matters but is not privileged over other sectors of security. Furthermore, the referent object of security includes, besides the state, the individual, the global, the local and/or specific groups. At its most extreme, security threats can thus stem from almost anywhere, endangering almost anything. Non-traditional ways of thinking about security have become particularly popular with the end of the Cold War, and in its diverse forms have been developed mainly in Europe.

Developments in security studies from traditional to non-traditional are not autonomous of developments in IR theory. On the contrary, to a certain extent these developments are mutually constitutive. Traditional conceptualisations of security prevailed throughout the height of the Cold War until the 1980s, when IR theory was dominated by the so called inter-paradigm debate[26] – the debate between neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism. Wæver, in his account of debates in IR theory, classifies the inter-paradigm debate as the 'third debate',[27] thereby differing from other theorists' conceptualisations of the great debates in IR, most notably Lapid's 1989 account.[28] Lapid's third debate corresponds to Wæver's fourth debate in IR theory, which had its beginning in the early 1980s. Following Wæver's classification, the fourth debate is the debate between rationalist and reflectivist IR theory. With the advent of the fourth debate, conventional IR theory found itself challenged by work concerned with 'the problematic of subjectivity in international politics rather than the international relations of pregiven subjects'.[29] Reflectivist approaches to IR thus set out to problematise orthodox conceptualisations in IR theory – particularly realism. Some of the most influential reflectivist writings during that time dealt with the subject of security; laying the path for the widening of the spectrum of security studies.[30] This widening process was helped along greatly by the collapse of the Soviet Union, or

[26] Michael Banks, 'The Inter-Paradigm Debate', in M. Light and A. J. R. Groom (eds.), *International Relations: A Handbook of Current Theory* (London: Pinter, 1985), pp. 7–26; Michael Banks, 'The Evolution of International Relations Theory', in Michael Banks (ed.), *Conflict in World Society: A New Perspective on International Relations* (Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1984), pp. 1–21.

[27] The so-called first debate in IR was that of idealism versus realism in the 1940s, and the so-called second debate was that of behaviouralism versus traditionalism in the 1950s–1960s.

[28] Ole Wæver, 'Figures of International Thought: Introducing Persons instead of Paradigms', in Ole Wæver and Iver B. Neumann (eds.), *The Future of International Relations: Masters in the Making* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 1ff.

[29] David Campbell, *Writing Security*, 2nd edn. (Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 1998 [1992]), p. viii.

[30] Richard K. Ashley, 'The Poverty of Neorealism', *International Organization*, 38:2 (1984), pp. 225–86; Rob B. J. Walker, 'The Prince and the Pauper: Tradition, Modernity and Practice in the Theory of International Relations', in James Der Derian and Michael Shapiro (eds.), *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (Lexington MA: Lexington Books, 1989), pp. 25–48; James Der Derian and Michael Shapiro, *International/*

more precisely by the failure of orthodox IR theory and therefore traditional security studies to foresee the end of the Cold War. As Hugh Gusterson points out, what was of interest here, particularly for non-conventional IR scholars – bearing in mind that none of the different schools of thought within IR did, and not all even aim at prediction – was rather the overall failure of the positivist research project.[31] After all, it was the premise of Waltz's structural realism to 'explain and predict continuity within the system.'[32] On the back of this failure of positivist IR theory, 'critical'[33] approaches to IR gained momentum. Within security studies these were, amongst others, the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School of security studies.

As the first section of this article has aimed to show, these two schools of the study of security are very different indeed; however, regardless of these differences it is possible to draw out some general commonalities between the two schools. These are:

- Reflections on the concept of security as such, [that is,] as interesting in itself and not only a matter of delineation or pre-analytical definition.
- Concern with the issue of possible widening as contradictory and political.
- Security as practice.
- Self-reflection: one's own practice as security analyst is implicated in the politics of security and as such one faces hard ethical dilemmas as security actor.[34]

Despite these shared assumptions there has been little exchange between the two schools thus far, something that can partly be attributed to the epistemological differences of the respective theories. These epistemological differences influence the meaning of security for the different schools and are responsible for what the security analyst can do. These epistemological differences then are as follows: for the critical theorists of the Welsh School security is a normative concept, that when reconceptualised as emancipation frees people from the 'physical and human constraints' providing them with true (human) security. For Wæver and the Copenhagen School, on the other hand, the analysis of security has no normative connotations and they are interested in security merely for what it does, as opposed to what it can or ought to do. In the 1998 book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* it has been made clear that securitisation theory has no 'emancipatory ideal'.[35] This said, however, in the same paragraph it also says:

> Such an approach [read: the Welsh School] is therefore complementary to ours; it can do what we voluntarily abstain from, and we can do what it is unable to do; understand the mechanisms of securitisation while keeping a distance from security [. .].[36]

Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics (Lexington, NC: Lexington Books, 1989).

[31] Hugh Gusterson, 'Missing the End of the Cold War in International Security', in Jutta Weldes, Mark Laffey, Hugh Gusterson and Raymond Duvall (eds.), *Cultures of Insecurity* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 323.

[32] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1979), p. 80.

[33] This follows Keith Krause's and Michael Williams' small 'c' distinction in *Critical Security Studies* (1997), where critical security studies refers to all those approaches critical of the mainstream. This includes Frankfurt School Critical Theorists, postmodernists, post-structuralists, some versions of feminism, constructivism and the Copenhagen School.

[34] Ole Wæver, *Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen New Schools in Security Theory and the Origins between Core and Periphery* (unpublished manuscript, 2004), p. 13.

[35] Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998), p. 35.

[36] Ibid., p. 35.

With regards to what exactly it is that the Welsh School can do, that securitisation cannot do, Wæver is clearer in 2003. He argues that:

> The big contrast to Critical Security Studies [read: Welsh School] is that the analyst cannot step in on behalf of actors who do not speak security and tell that *really* their main security problem is this or that, only they suffer from false consciousness. Speaking from some general emancipatory ideal, Critical Security Studies [read: Welsh School] can deal with exactly the blind spot of the Copenhagen School *and thus the two might be complementary*.[37]

Wæver's assertion that the two schools might be complementary is crucial, thus not only does it 'legitimise' theorising in such a direction from a securitisation point of view, but rather it implies that a strategy in which the two approaches were combined would be a good thing. Overall it is this idea that this article tries to capture. Thus, a combination of the two schools is not only possible, but rather it is advantageous for at least three reasons. First, it is believed that the more unified the critical schools of security are, the stronger an alternative they can offer to the mainstream of security studies; second, the more united the academy the more adoptable are its ideas for policymakers (EU or otherwise), and third, a combination of the two schools into a larger approach paves the way for a more critical engagement with security on part of the security analyst, allowing for normative – but denying infinite – conceptualisations of security. Since the first two reasons are self-explanatory the following will engage in more detail only with the third one here. The advantage outlined under the third point comes as a result of recognising what Jef Huysmans has pointedly called the 'normative dilemma of speaking and writing security'. This dilemma is the idea that the analyst in writing (speaking) about a particular social reality is in part responsible for the co-constitution of this very reality, as by means of his/her own text this reality is (re)produced. For Wæver – as for most analysts – such a critique is substantial as the school 'reproduces the security agenda when it describes how the process of securitisation works'.[38] With perhaps the only comfort being that this is true for all constructivist security analysis, as is their 'particular understanding of language [that] makes any security utterance potentially securitising'.[39] Consequently, no such utterance is ever 'innocent or neutral'. In Huysmans' words:

> Like a promise is an effect of language, that is, of successfully making the promise, a security problem results from successfully speaking or writing security. It is the utterance of 'security' which politically introduces security questions in a publicly contested policy area. Thus, if successfully performed the speech act makes a security problem.[40]

In other words, in writing or speaking security, the analyst him/herself executes a speech act, this speech act is successful if the problem raised becomes recognised as a security problem in the academy and/or in the wider policymaking discourse. Until now, for the Copenhagen School, the only way is to 'accept the normative dilemma

[37] Ole Wæver, 'Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies' (unpublished manuscript, 2003), p. 23, emphasis added.
[38] Jef Huysmans, 'Migrants as a Security Problem: Dangers of ''Securitizing'' Societal Issues', in R. Miles and D. Thraenhart (eds.), *Migration and European Integration: The Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion* (London: Pinter, 1995), p. 69.
[39] Jef Huysmans, 'Language and the Mobilization of Security Expectations: The Normative Dilemma of Speaking and Writing Security' (unpublished manuscript, 1999), p. 26.
[40] Ibid., p. 8.

as a dilemma, as it cannot escape that its own security writing risks to contribute to the securitisation of an area'.[41] The argument made in this article, however, seeks to change this logic of mere acceptance of this normative dilemma, as a combination of the Welsh and the Copenhagen Schools of security studies is believed to enable the analyst to speak and write security more *critically*, as opposed to just speaking and writing security. To paraphrase Wæver, a combined approach is believed to enable the securitisation analyst to step into the security equation and on behalf of the actors encourage some securitisations/desecuritisations and renounce others – depending on whether or not they are seen as positive or negative.

The approach proposed here does not mean that it is necessary to share the view that a securitisation analyst *must* be political,[42] only that by means of this approach the analyst *can* be political. Being political, however, is secondary or supplementary to securitisation as it 'can never replace the political act [that is securitisation] as such'.[43] In other words, the analyst does not make the initial securitisation, the securitising actor does. In a wider realm of what Wæver has called 'securitisation studies' being able to be political is nonetheless useful, exactly because the constructivist analyst cannot escape the normative dilemma of speaking and writing security.[44]

Towards a consequentialist evaluation of security

Considering the two brief overviews of the different schools provided in the first section, it could be argued that Wæver has an overly negative conception of security, whereas Booth and Wyn Jones have an overly positive conception of security. This article will aim to show that what form security takes is entirely issue-dependent, leaving both camps having something important and valid to contribute to the study of security as both camps can potentially be right. Issue-dependent hereby does not mean that, for example, all securitisations in one particular sector are always positive (negative) – indeed this article will show how differently securitisations in the environmental sector can turn out – it rather means that every incidence of securitisation is unique. Since this is the case, however, security in general is neither as good nor as bad as the two camps argue, but rather it is a mixed bag.

In the approach proposed here, principles that determine whether a securitisation is positive or negative can only be derived by considering what would have been the alternative solution. Given that for the Copenhagen School, securitisation is nothing but 'an extreme version of politicisation',[45] the question to consider in evaluating the nature of securitisation must be: did the securitisation in question achieve more, and/or better results than a mere politicisation of the issue would have done? It is important to note here, that 'more and better', is not equivalent to the success of the speech act (successful securitisation can still be negative), but rather it refers to

[41] Ibid., p. 18. And, in recognition of this fact, see also Ole Wæver, 'Securitizing Sectors? Reply to Eriksson', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 34:3 (1999), pp. 338.
[42] Claudia Aradau, 'Security and the Democratic Scene: Desecuritization and Emancipation' (unpublished manuscript, 2004).
[43] Ole Wæver (2005), 'The EU as a Security Actor', p. 252.
[44] I have written about this in more detail, in Rita Taureck, 'Securitisation Theory and Securitisation Studies', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 9:1 (2006).
[45] Buzan et al., *Security: A New Framework*, p. 23.

whether the *consequences of, and the gains from*, the securitisation are preferable relative to the consequences and gains from a politicisation. The idea that the moral rightness (or wrongness) of a securitisation depends on its consequences corresponds to what in moral philosophy is known as a consequentialist ethics. Consequentialism[46] referring to a set of moral philosophies, which hold 'that the rightness of an action is to be judged solely by consequences, states of affairs brought about by the action'.[47] Or, put slightly differently 'a consequentialist theory [. . .] is an account of what justifies an option over alternatives – the fact that it promotes values.'[48] These premises capture well what is meant by positive and negative securitisation in this article, for the adjectives positive and negative do *not* refer to the relative success of the speech act that is securitisation, but rather to how well any given security policy addresses the insecurity in question. The approach introduced in this article will henceforth be referred to as a consequentialist evaluation of security.

In moral philosophy the idea that the moral rightness (or wrongness) of an action is attributable to its consequences alone is of course contentious (see also fn. 46). The question that arises is thus, why, in the evaluation of security/securitisation, focus on consequences as opposed to, for example, rights as

[46] The term consequentialism was coined by Elisabeth Anscombe in her 1958 essay 'Modern Moral Philosophy', *Philosophy*, 33:124 (1958). Anscombe's essay is a strong critique of (at the time modern) English moral philosophy, which she identified as collectively subscribing to the consequentialist principle whereby the moral rightness of an action is dependent on its consequences. Anscombe was strongly opposed to this principle, for she read consequentialism to mean that, 'a man does well [. . .] if he acts for the best in the particular circumstances according to *his* judgment of the total consequences of this particular action'. (Ibid., p. 9, emphasis added.) For Anscombe this subjective judgment of consequences is opposed to the Hebrew-Christian ethic where 'there are certain things forbidden whatever *consequences* threaten, such as choosing to kill the innocent for any purpose, however good.' (Ibid., p. 10 emphasis in the original.) For this and other reasons, for Anscombe thus what is morally right (wrong) cannot possibly be determined by an act's consequences, and she herself worked in the tradition of so-called virtue theory whereby moral rightness is not sought in consequences of actions, but rather 'in describing types of character which we might admire'. Greg Pence, 'Virtue Theory', in Peter Singer (ed.), *A Companion to Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005 [1991]), p. 249. For a critique of consequentialism along Anscombe's lines see also Thomas Nagel 'War and Massacre', in Samuel Scheffer (ed.), *Consequentialism and its Critics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988[1979]), p. 51–73.

It should further be noticed that Anscombe as the originator of the term consequentialism differentiates between consequentialism and utilitarianism. For her this difference lies in the consequentialist's 'denial of *any* distinction between foreseen and intended consequences, as far as responsibility is concerned', whereas, for example, the hedonistic utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill concerned itself with the intended consequences of the maximisation of happiness only, and would thus never have contemplated the calculation of murder. Be that as it may, today utilitarianism is widely regarded as a form of consequentialism and Bernard Williams, for example, argues that 'any kind of utilitarianism is by definition consequentialist'. See, 'A critique of utilitarianism', in J. J. C. Smart and Bernard Williams (eds.), *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 79.

Today consequentialism takes many forms – including the many variants of utilitarianism – all of these agreeing on the basic principle that the moral rightness of an action is to be judged by its consequences. It is precisely this principle to which deontologists (besides the virtue ethics of scholars such as Anscombe, consequentialism's main contestants) object. Thus deontologists reject the consequentialist view whereby the right is defined as that which maximises the good. In its place they propose a theory 'that either does not specify the good independently from the right, or does not interpret the right as maximising the good.' John Rawls *A Theory of Justice* (London: Harvard University Press, 1971) p. 30. Or, as Charles Fried puts it 'for the deontologist, [. . .] the right is prior to the good.' Fried cited in Nancy Davies, 'Contemporary deontology', in Peter Singer (ed.) *A Companion to Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005[1991]), p. 206.

[47] J. J. C. Smart (1973), 'An outline of a system of utilitarian ethics', in Smart and Williams (eds.), *Utilitarianism: For and Against*, p. 13.

[48] Philip Pettit (2005 [1991]), 'Consequentialism', in Singer (ed.), *A Companion to Ethics*, p. 235.

deontologists would have it, or indeed virtues, as virtue theorists suggest? Much of the answer to this question already lies in the argument of this article. Thus it is not only this author's opinion that the key to security evaluation lies with its consequences, rather scholars from both the schools discussed above, with their respective positive and negative views of security, themselves already focus on what they take to be the consequences of security. That is to say these scholars themselves are consequentialists. However, and as this article aims to show, the consequentialism proposed by them is neither very balanced nor, in the long run, particularly helpful, as in both cases, consequentialism is constricted by the nature of their respective theoretical frameworks. Frameworks, whereby one promotes security as emancipation, therefore generating a necessarily positive view of security, whilst the other school's framework for analysis is void of emancipation altogether, therefore partial to a negative view of security. That security is neither always positive nor negative but rather issue dependent is the key hypothesis of this article. If this hypothesis holds true we are – as a discipline – much in need of a more balanced and indeed critical evaluation of security than proposed by either school, a provision of which is the purpose of this article.

Given what has been said so far it should have become clear that the herewith proposed consequentialist evaluation of security is also the key to rendering the above-mentioned 'normative dilemma of speaking and writing security' less important, as it enables the analyst to *critically* evaluate his/her speaking and writing security, rather than his/her simply speaking and writing security. This approach thus enables the previously solely analytical securitisation analyst to step into the security equation and on behalf of the actors encourage some securitisations and renounce others, depending on the moral rightness of the respective securitisation's consequences. It is precisely at this point where the emancipatory nature of the Welsh School's security studies becomes crucially relevant for a consequentialist evaluation of security, for – under this approach – it is the task of the analyst to fight ignorance (or, put differently, false consciousness) on the part of existing and/or potential securitising actors and inform (or better enlighten) them of the best possible actions. But how does the analyst know what the best possible actions are? Or, put differently, with what standards in mind are the consequences to be evaluated? Is it enough to problematise securitisation by elites for elites, and make majority consensus the measuring unit behind the principles for positive/negative securitisation? One should think not. Although it is useful to assume, that the narrower the interest group behind the securitisation, the more likely it is to be negative, this cannot be ascertained as the only general principle. After all, majority consensus does not prevent the *effective* securitisation of something that is morally/ethically wrong. But how to determine what is morally/ethically right? In security studies, one way of doing so, is by entering the evaluation of positive/negative through the discourses of security prevalent in the different sectors of security. Here, by working out the specific security relations in the competing discourses that make up the individual sector – who or what is the referent object of security, who is the securitising actor and what is the nature of the threat – it should be possible to determine the most and the least advantageous strategies in addressing *insecurity*; thereby determining which approach to security (in the individual sector) is the best (most positive) all-round – morally, ethically, effective – strategy. A consequentialist evaluation of security thus postulates the maximisation of genuine security as its overarching value. The

invocation of values itself is perfectly legitimate, particularly considering that 'every moral theory invokes values such that it can make sense to recommend in consequentialist fashion that they be promoted or in non-consequentialist fashion that they be honoured'.[49]

Positive and negative securitisation/desecuritisation in the environmental sector in theory

It exceeds the scope of this article to lay out the specifics for positive/ negative thoroughly for all five sectors to security as identified by Buzan, to exemplify; however, the following will show what such a spectrum, from positive to negative, *might* look like in the environmental sector. At this point it is important to note that the spectrums from positive to negative might differ strongly in the individual sectors. Particularly because in the other security sectors, the analyst is likely to deal with different groups of human beings, as opposed to a non-human entity like the environment in the environmental sector, principles for positive/negative, in evaluating consequences, will have to take into account the relational nature of security, whereby one actor's security is another actor's insecurity. This article must thus merely be seen as a first tentative stab into the direction of a security evaluation that aims to utilise the role of the analyst as an inevitable securitising actor, by focusing on the consequentialist dimension of securitisation/desecuritisation. Before outlining the positive/negative spectrum in the environmental security sector, it is necessary to explain what the environmental security sector entails. In the environmental security sector there are numerous conceptualisations of environmental security, making 'environmental security' an essentially contested concept. As for all security studies, the differences in the way environmental security is conceptualised are based on the following central underlying issues: Security for whom? Security from what? And who provides security? On the basis of these underlying issues, it is possible to group the numerous individual approaches into two[50] overarching distinct schools of thought on environmental security. [51] The first school constitutes the majority of the literature and focuses on existential threats to the *state* caused by an ill-functioning environment, the link between environmental degradation and/or environmental scarcity and the onset of intrastate and interstate conflict, and on the role of the military in the provision of environmental security.[52] This broad approach

[49] Ibid., p. 237.

[50] It should be noted here that is possible to identify a third broad school concerned with the relations between the environment and security. In this approach, 'environmental security' moves away from both state-centric and human-centric interpretations of environmental security, in that it is argued that what is to be secured is the environment *per se*. Anthropocentric interpretations of security are to be replaced by eco-centric interpretations of security, as both humans and the state are seen as a threat to the health and stability of the natural environment. This conceptualisation of environmental security is commonly referred to as 'ecological security', and therefore – despite the close relation – falls outside the environmental security sector.

[51] Terry Terriff, Stuart Croft, Lucy James and Patrick M. Morgan, *Security Studies Today* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 118; and Richard A. Matthew, 'Introduction: Mapping Contested Grounds', in Daniel Deudney and Richard A. Matthew (eds.), *Contested Grounds: Security and Conflict in the New Environmental Politics* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1999), p. 14.

[52] For advocates of the various strands within the state centric environmental security discourse, see Jessica Tuchman Matthews, 'Redefining Security', *Foreign Affairs*, 68:2 (1989), pp. 162–77; Richard

to environmental security has two main characteristics: first, the state is the referent object of security; and second, the state is the provider of security as environmental security. This state-centric approach to environmental security is very much in line with the mainstream approaches to International Relations theory, in which the focus is on the security of the state, and where security is ultimately about state survival. The second main perspective in the literature conceptualises environmental security as non-violent environmental/demographic security.[53] In this understanding the referent object of environmental security is the *individual* and the nature of the threat stems from the dangers of long-term environmental degradation, such as global warming, species extinction, pollution of air and water, loss of biodiversity and ozone depletion, that are non-violent in character. In this approach, environmental security can be usefully defined as: 'The process of peacefully reducing human vulnerability to human-induced environmental degradation by addressing the root causes of environmental degradation and human insecurity'.[54] This conceptualisation of environmental security argues largely against the linkage between environmental degradation and conflict, and against the national and state-centric provision of security. Instead, this approach to environmental security is founded on concerns about issues such as ecological interdependence, the unsuitability of the state system for addressing transnational problems, human rights and joint value systems. In this understanding, the nation state is no longer a sufficient provider of environmental security, but rather shifts the concept of environmental security away from national to common or global security. This approach to the concept of environmental security is thus directly opposed to the state-centric understanding of environmental security, arguing instead that the concept is ultimately more compatible with the concept of human security. In the literature, this second approach is commonly referred to as the 'human security approach to environmental security'.[55]

Ullman, 'Redefining Security', *International Security*, 8 (1983), pp. 133ff; Norman Myers, *Ultimate Security: The Environmental Basis of Political Stability* (New York: Norton, 1993); Thomas F. Homer-Dixon and Val Percival, 'The Case of South Africa', in Paul F. Diehl and Nils P. Gleditsch (eds.), *Environmental Conflict* (Oxford: Westview Press, 2001), pp. 13–35; Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, 'Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases', *International Security*, 19:1 (1994), 5–40; Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, 'Global Environmental Change and International Security', in D. Dewitt; D. Haglund and J. Kirton (eds.), *Building a New Global Order: Emerging Trends in International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 185–228; Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, 'On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict', *International Security*, 16:4 (1991), pp. 76–116; Robert Kaplan, 'The Coming Anarchy.', in G. O. Tuathail; Simon Dalby and P. Routledge (eds.), *The Geopolitics Reader* (London: Routledge, 1998 [1994]), pp. 188–96; Ken H. Butts, 'Why is the Military Good for the Environment?', in Jyrki Käkönen (ed.), *Green Security or Militarized Environment*. (Brookfield: Dartmouth Publishing, 1994).

[53] For advocates of the human security approach to environmental security, see Simon Dalby, *Environmental Security* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Edward A. Page and Michael Redclift (eds.), *Human Security and the Environment* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2002); Jon Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security* (London: Zed Books, 2001); Jon Barnett, 'Destabilizing the Environment-Conflict Thesis', *Review of International Studies*, 26 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 271–88; Jack A. Goldstone, 'Demography, Environment and Security', in Paul F. Diehl and Nils P. Gleditsch (eds.), *Environmental Conflict* (Oxford: Westview Press, 2001), pp. 84–108).

[54] Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security*, p. 129.

[55] Deudney and Matthews, *Contested Grounds*, p. 14; Terry Terriff, 'Environmental Degradation and Security', in Richard H. Shultz, Roy Godson and George H. Quester (eds.), *Security Studies for the*

In accordance with what is stated above, the evaluation of the different approaches to environmental security must focus on which approach best addresses environmental *insecurity*, as opposed to, for example, which approach can easier be put into practice, or worse, the security analyst's personal preferences. Given that environmental degradation, unlike traditional military security issues, knows no territorial boundaries, it appears that the state-centric approach to environmental security is inherently limited. This is not to rule out the possibility of environmental conflict constituting a serious security issue in our time, but rather that focusing entirely on environmental conflict as environmental security, only superficially deals with one symptom of environmental degradation, without alleviating the root causes of such conflict such as, for example: overpopulation. Similarly environmental stewardship by the military is a worthy and extremely necessary cause and should be part of any military's cause of conduct, but to make this the sole meaning of environmental security, again does not address nationwide, let alone global, environmental insecurity; particularly given that environmental security efforts by the military are commonly restricted to military installations only. The second – non-state-centric – reading of environmental security, on the other hand, seeks to address the root causes of environmental insecurity, focusing on the ecological interdependence between man and nature, and on the global nature of environmental issues; in a holistic approach offering cure through change, as opposed to a mere treatment of symptoms. Given all that has been said here about the nature of *environmental insecurity* and the different strategies of environmental security, it appears, that – as a general rule – the more narrow (state-centric) the focus of the environmental security strategy in question, the less promising its results, and *vice versa*. Putting this into the language of a consequentialist evaluation of security, mainstream approaches to environmental security (such as military environmental security and the environmental conflict thesis) must, for the most part, be seen as negative; whereas broad conceptions of environmental security must be seen as positive. This said, however, it is always necessary to consider the security relations in the individual case, as it is of course possible that, circumstances allowing, a state can securitise the environment under its jurisdiction in a positive way, provided that the state subscribes to a broad interpretation of environmental security. In sum, a positive securitisation can be defined as an intense political solution that within the margins of moral rightness, and preferably based upon the political interest of the majority, benefits a security problem (here environmental insecurity) and deals with it faster, better and more efficiently than a normal politicisation does, offering a just and useful alternative. If positive securitisation is partly dependent on majority consensus and partly on just ethical conduct, then logically negative securitisation occurs in the absence of the latter of the two, or both combined. Less abstractly put, negative securitisation can be defined as an intense political solution that benefits the few; and/or with a, too narrow focus to address the underlying problems of the prevailing insecurity. Naturally, such a negative securitisation is mostly chosen by those who it benefits, more than often, the securitising actor.

Like securitisation, desecuritisation must also be evaluated in relation to politicisation. Here, however, the criteria are more easily derived and for the environmental

21st Century (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1997), pp. 253–87 at 254; Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security*, p. 122.

sector at least a desecuritisation is seen as positive simply when the issue re-emerges on the political agenda, for example, leads to a politicisation; and it is seen as negative when it drops off the political agenda altogether (desecuritisaton as depoliticisation).[56] In this consequentialist evaluative approach to security, the analyst in making an evaluation of a particular securitisation, must always determine the nature of the security relations in relation to the alternative – politicisation – and determine whether or not the securitisation achieved a better overall policy than the politicisation could have done. To reiterate, this evaluation of positive/negative does not result from the analyst's personal preferences, but rather must follow a rigorous analytical and practical evaluation of what kind of security best addresses insecurity; thereby seeking to deconstruct the power/knowledge dimension some see as inherent to all social processes, both on part of the analyst and within the discourse.

Positive and negative securitisation/desecuritisation in the environmental sector as applied

Security, unlike any other concept in world politics, has the power to catapult a formerly neglected issue to the top of the political agenda, where it can be dealt with swiftly, irrespective of democratic rules and regulations. This *mobilisation power* of security is of central interest to this article, as it is here where the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School can be brought together. This is because both Wæver and the Welsh School scholars recognise the 'mobilisation power' of security as a force unlike any other in world politics. Thus, Wyn Jones speaks of the 'mobilisation potential undoubtedly generated by using the term security',[57] and the slightly more subdued Wæver argues:

> In some cases securitisation of issues is unavoidable, as when states are faced with the implacable or barbarian aggressor. Because of its prioritising imperative, securitisation also has tactical attractions – for example, as a way to obtain sufficient attention for environmental problems.[58]

In other words, security, because of its 'mobilisation power' has a certain attraction. As Wæver put it: '[. . .] but if one is actually concerned about something, securitisation is an attractive tool that one might end up using – as a political actor.'[59] This said, however, for Wæver the mobilisation power of security is not exclusively

[56] The qualification 'in the environmental sector of security' here is of vital importance. Thus it is reasonable to suggest that whilst 'desecuritisation as politicisation' is positive in the environmental sector of security, the same may be negative in other sectors of security. In more detail, whilst an environmentally-conscious individual will always favour a politicisation of environmental issues over their disappearance from political and public concern after a desecuritisation, the same cannot be said for all issues that were once high on an actor's security agenda. Indeed, it could be argued that it is a laudable sign of progress when some issues (such a xenophobia for example) have vanished from an actor's political agenda following desecuritisation, as by becoming non-issues they cannot quietly stir in the background, potentially leading to renewed conflict. In other words, the evaluative categories of positive and negative desecuritisation (staying on/off the political agenda following desecuritisation) are not absolute; they are issue-dependent and will have to be reviewed for each and every issue.

[57] Richard Wyn Jones, *Security, Strategy, and Critical Theory* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), p. 109.

[58] Buzan et al., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, p. 29.

[59] Ole Wæver, 'The EU as a Security Actor', p. 251.

positive, but rather needs to be considered carefully as much of the force inherent to the concept of security results from the 'mobilisation of fear'.

An example, however, where this mobilisation power of security has been put to good use is the case of environmental security in Brazil post-1988. Following a combination of severe international pressure (occurring in the wake of global environmental awareness) over Brazil's destructive deforestation policy of the Amazonian rainforest (logging was actually cast as an essential element of Brazil's National Security Strategy), coupled with the onset of democratisation in 1985, the Brazilian government changed its hitherto destructive policy towards deforestation, and in 1988 incorporated notions of environmental security as international society into its National Security Strategy. The term 'notions' here is deliberately employed, as environmental security – as has been shown above – is a highly contested concept, leaving most practical securitisations of the environment open for criticism from 'greener', more critical, more radical theorists/environmentalists.[60] Nonetheless, upon considering the development of environmental security after 1988 – particularly in relation to the policies prior to 1988, it must be concluded that, 'The movement from the dominance of a Realist to an International Society security discourse regarding Amazonian deforestation constitutes a *positive* progression concerning the Amazon.'[61] In accordance with the evaluative strategy above, this securitisation – whereby the mobilisation power of security has been put to a genuine positive end – one more efficient than achievable by a mere politicisation – constitutes an example of *positive securitisation*. But not all securitisation is positive, and Wæver is indeed right to warn against thinking of security in positive terms only. Hence, the 'mobilisation power' of security can easily be abused by securitising actors for harmful pursuits; particularly, because the special right claimed by the process of securitisation, is, in Wæver's words: 'a right that will in the final instance always be defined by *the one using it*.'[62] Security is thus, particularly vulnerable to abuse. Perhaps less obvious security can also be used by actors simply to 'look good'. After all, security in its common guise as the 'absence from harm' carries a strong positive connotation,[63] a fact that policymakers can abuse to their own advantage. Here, securitising actors perform a securitising speech act, but without the intention of

[60] For a good overview of the different approaches to environmental security, see Richard A. Matthew, 'Introduction: Mapping Contested Grounds', in Deudney and Matthew (eds.), *Contested Grounds*, p. 1–22.

[61] Matt McDonald, 'Power and Identity: The Environment and the Construction of Security', Ph.D thesis (unpublished manuscript, 2003), p. 199 (emphasis added). It is important to notice here that Matt McDonald's understanding of the term *positive*, differs from mine. By positive McDonald merely means to say, that the development from a mainstream conception of environmental security to that of an international society one was positive; whereas I would argue that the overall outcome of the later securitisation was positive, understood as defined in this article.

[62] Ole Wæver, 'Security the Speech Act' (unpublished manuscript, 1989), p. 4.

[63] This was not always the case, Wæver, in 'Peace and Security: Two Concepts and their Relationship', in Stefano Guzzini and Dietrich Jung (eds.), *Analysis and Copenhagen Peace Research* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 51–65, and in *Security: A Conceptual History for International Relations* (unpublished manuscript) shows that throughout history security has had both positive and negative meanings. McSweeney in *Security, Identity and Interests* makes the same point. To add to the confusion, however, McSweeney shows how security moved from a positive to a negative meaning over time; whereas Wæver argues that security moved from a formerly negative meaning to a positive meaning in our own time. 'Security has not always been a clearly positive term. Especially to Christians, it was highly ambiguous – only God knows with certainty about your salvation, and for you humans to be 'secure' is presumptuous. [. . .] This potentially negative meaning was present throughout medieval theological discourse, only to break into the open with Luther and Calvin.

sticking to the truth conditions which are required to keep the speech act felicitous. This is of course taken from John L. Austin's felicity conditions for speech acts.[64] The essential idea here is that the infelicity of a speech act does not automatically mean that the speech act is void. What Austin refers to here are those cases where the speech act follows the appropriate grammar of the speech act, that is, it is performed by the 'right' people and in the correct/approved way, but where the speech act is subject to insincerities, infractions and/or breaches. According to Austin these can occur in three areas: feelings, thoughts, and intentions. As examples of such infelicitous, but valid speech acts, Austin gives the following examples:

> 'I congratulate you', when I did not feel at all pleased, perhaps was even annoyed. [. . .] 'I find him not guilty – I acquit', said when I do believe that he was guilty. [. . .] 'I promise', when I do not intend to do what I promise.[65]

The existence of these infelicitous but nonetheless valid speech acts is crucial for the classification of *negative securitisation*, as infelicity is likely to play a part in rendering the speech act negative. An example of such a negative securitisation can be found in the securitisation of the environment by the US military under the Clinton Administration beginning in 1993, with the creation of the Office of Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security (ODUSD-ES) within the Department of Defense (DOD). Following a combination of mounted public pressure over environmental neglect by the military,[66] the end of the Cold War and the resulting discourse over the military's engagement into non-traditional areas where military force could be advantageous,[67] environmental security rose to policymakers' attention, and under the first Clinton administration the environment was integrated into the US National Security Strategy of 1994/1995. The US environmental security policy was a multi-actor effort, but it was the Department of Defense with the specially created Office of Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security that played the largest role in the environmental security policy. The dominance of the military for environmental security is significant, as in the institutionalised context of the DOD environmental security was absorbed into the normal conduct of policymaking, with environmental security being – in the domestic realm – for the most part tantamount to compliance with federal, state and international environmental legislation. Despite this narrow focus of defence environmental security, however, it appears that environmental compliance by the DOD has been good in most of its specified environmental security areas. For the

[. . .] The concept of certitudo in particular became a vehicle for gradually developing a modern, unashamedly positive attitude to security.' (Wæver, pp. 54–5) And, McSweeney argues: 'Etymologically, the noun ''security'' has evolved from a positive, comforting term to a negative one. From being a psychological condition of the care-free into which we are easily lulled [. . .]', to a technology of the state, whereby threat and defense are routinely evoked to secure the states boundaries and separate the inside from the outside.' (McSweeney, p. 16).

64 Austin, *How to Do Things with Words?*, p. 15.

65 Ibid., p. 40.

66 Arthur H. Westing (ed.), *Herbicides in War: The Long-term Ecological and Human Consequences* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1984); Anne H. Ehrlich and John W. Birks, *Hidden Dangers: Environmental Consequences of Preparing for War* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Book Club, 1990); Susan D. Lanier-Graham, *The Ecology of War* (New York: Walker and Company, 1993).

67 George H. Quester, 'Non-Traditional Uses of Military Force', in Shultz, Godson and Quester (eds.), *Security Studies for the 21st Century*, pp. 131–70; and Kent H. Butts, 'Why is the Military Good for the Environment?', in Jyrki Käkönen (ed.), *Green Security or Militarized Environment* (Brookfield: Dartmouth Publishing, 1994).

meaning of environmental security, however, the magnitude of these successes become somewhat less momentous when considering that the same environmental laws that were in place long before environmental security ever became an issue informed the majority of the environmental security directive. Rhetoric and environmental compliance/clean-up programmes suggest that the individual was the ultimate referent object of security. This being the case, it could be argued that the focus on the military in the environmental security policy does not offer the best strategy to address environmental insecurity. This is because the policy did not promote an environmentally friendly course of conduct for all natural land, but rather confined conservation, clean-up and pollution prevention to military land only. Considering the fact that industrial pollution alone accounts for the single largest source of national pollution in the United States, the focus on the military as the best-funded (environmental) securitising actor is doubtful. Furthermore, although compliance records of the DOD have improved under the environmental security programme, it has been argued that the compliance rate is not nearly high enough. Such estimates predict that even with some $4 bn spent on environmental compliance per year 'the DOD will not comply with current legislation until around 2050'.[68] This time delay in achieving compliance is not a result of a cash strapped DOD, but rather a question of the allocation of resources. After all, defence spending is on the increase, particularly following the terrorist attacks of September 11th, meaning that full compliance could be achieved much quicker than in 2050. Considering all that was said here, the US defence environmental security policy constitutes, despite its achievements, a case of *negative securitisation*. This is because despite the successful securitisation of the environment on the part of the US military, the strategy, by its very nature, was limited in addressing environmental insecurity. Given the importance of the military for the US environmental security and what this meant in actual policies it is not clear whether the US administration ever had a sincere intention regarding overall environmental security, or whether the policy had other purposes, such as, for example, the much desired environmental compliance on part of the DOD.[69] A thorough analysis of the underlying reasons 'why' the environment was made a security issue is beyond the realm of this article, consequently, the question whether or not the Clinton administration was sincere in their intention cannot be

[68] Gerald B. Thomas, 'US Environmental Security Policy: Broad Concern or Narrow Interests', *Journal of Environment and Development*, 6:4 (1997), pp. 397–425.

[69] Jon Barnett, for example, argues that the US environmental security strategy, particularly the focus on the military was used to 'preserve legitimacy, avoid radical reform, and distract attention from the contradictions of the modern world for which the United States is inextricably responsible'. 'Environmental Security and US Foreign Policy: A Critical Examination', in Paul Harris (ed.), *The Environment, International Relations, and US Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001), p. 80. And, 'that the US military has thus far employed the concept of environmental security in such a way as to maintain its privileged position as the guardian of national security demonstrates the recurrent and fundamental danger of the concept'. (Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security*, p. 107.) Furthermore, Barnett, in analysing the DOD's environmental security strategy, argues 'what is being secured in this interpretation of environmental security is the military readiness of the armed forces rather than the state. The threat here is the possibility that environmental degradation might undermine the effectiveness of the US military by limiting access to training areas or by detracting from the health and welfare of military personnel.' (p. 79.) Barnett concludes, that 'it would seem that the DOD is using environmental security (a term which ideally suits its needs) to promote its (questionable) green credentials and to marginalise the efficacy of scholars and social movements critical of the Pentagon's environmental record'. (p. 80).

answered here. Given what has been discussed above, however, it is feasible to assume that the unfulfilment of sincerity underlying security seen as a speech act is more likely to lead to a negative securitisation than a positive securitisation.

Sceptical of securitisation in the first place, Wæver advocates a strategy of desecuritisation whereby an issue is moved out of emergency mode back into the realm of normal politics. Based on this theoretical framework it needs to be asked would the US environment and by extension the American people be better off after a process of desecuritisation of the environment? In case of the United States military, to some extent, 'desecuritisation' has already taken place, however, *without* the desired effect of stirring environmental discourse in politics. Thus, with the advent of the Bush (Jnr) administration, funding for the environmental security programme has been cut where possible, fines for non-compliance have gone up and the label 'environmental security' is no longer part of the NSS. Further, in 2001 the key environmental security institution – the Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security – was transformed into the Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment (DUSD I&E). And perhaps most importantly, in March 2005 the DOD's environmental security directive from 1996 was replaced with the directive for Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health (ESOH) that exempts many military activities from existing environmental legislation. In the new directive several sentences that outline the specifics of the role of the DOD for environmental protection in relation to pollution prevention, compliance and conservation have been replaced with just one paragraph that calls on the military to 'make prudent investments in initiatives that support mission accomplishment, enhance readiness, reduce future funding needs, prevent pollution, ensure cost effective compliance and maximize the existing resource capability'.[70] With the existential threat not mentioned any longer, emergency mode outmoded and units in charge of environmental security dismantled, it is fair to say that the Bush administration has successfully desecuritised the environment. This desecuritisation, however, has not led to defence environmental issues being part of the political agenda in the US today. In fact, it seems that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have pushed environmental responsibility on part of the DOD far into the background. Preparation for war and military conduct, it appears, do not mix with environmental compliance. This shows that a strategy of desecuritisation, opposed to Wæver's suggestion, does not necessarily have to be positive. Desecuritisation does not automatically make an issue area into a political concern, but rather the issue may be threatened to leave the political agenda altogether; a phenomenon which will henceforth – and for the environmental sector of security – be referred to as *negative desecuritisation*. The opposite, *positive desecuritisation*, of course refers to Wæver's somewhat idealised version of desecuritisation. Positive desecuritisation, however, does exist, with the most popular example being the European integration process during the Cold War, whereby integration desecuritised the relations among the member states (most notably Britain, France and Germany) in favour of other issues.[71] In the environmental sector it is difficult to think of an example of a positive

[70] Department of Defense Directive Number 4715.1E 19. March 2005 p. 2, section 4.5. See also ⟨http://www.peer.org/watch/federal_info.php?row_id=3⟩.

[71] Ole Wæver, 'Security, Insecurity and Asecurity in the West-European Non-War Community', in Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 69–118, at 69.

desecuritisation, however, at this point, it is important to note that the securitisation of environmental issues is not always the best solution to environmental problems.[72] Wæver, himself a critic of the state-centric reading of environmental security, argues that the concept of environmental security ''might lead to an inappropriate social construction of the environment as a threat/defence problem'', by not solving environmental problems, whilst militarising the environment.[73] To avert these problems Wæver suggests that the environment needs to be *desecuritised*, as only then may alternative solutions to environmental problems gain momentum. This argument is compatible with that of Marc A. Levy,[74] who argues that the securitisation of the environment does not necessarily offer incentives for successful international cooperation, but rather may achieve the opposite, international competition. To underline his argument Levy points to the successful international cooperation on ozone depletion, which was completed before the existence of environmental security as a political concept. Levy's example, may therefore serve as an example of what *positive desecuritisation* in the environmental sector would look like, even though the issue was never actually securitised.

What then does all this mean then for the above outlined two tier structure of security? It means that securitisation is neither *a priori* positive nor negative, what form it takes is always entirely dependent on the issue and situation in question. The same logic applies to desecuritisation. Finally, what is never issue-dependent, but always fact, is that positive securitisation and positive desecuritisation are equated equal standing and both concepts respectively trump over both negative securitisation and negative desecuritisation.

Conclusion

It was the purpose of this article to identify some common ground between the Copenhagen School of security studies and the Welsh School of security studies in order to bring these two non-traditional schools of security closer together. This article has criticised Wæver et al. for having too pessimistic a view of security and what it can do, whilst at the same time criticising the Welsh School for being to optimistic in their view of security. The analysis has identified the acknowledgement of the 'mobilisation power' of security as a shared assumption in both schools. From there it has proceeded to argue that this 'mobilisation power' can potentially be put to good use with securitisation as just the 'right' solution to some problems. This has been called positive securitisation. It is this concept, and only this one, upon which a normative theory of security, such as that of the Welsh School, *should* be built. This is so, because the 'mobilisation power' of security can be used or abused and put to limited, fake, or worse, malicious intentions resulting in what has here been called

[72] For an extended argument of the incompatibility of the environment with security, see Daniel Deudney, 'Environmental Security: A Critique', in Deudney and Matthew (eds.), *Contested Grounds*; Daniel Deudney, 'Environment and Security: Muddled Thinking', *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, 47:3, pp. 23–8; Daniel Deudney, 'The case against linking environmental degradation and national security', *Millennium*, 19:3 (1990), pp. 461–76; Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization'.

[73] Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization', p. 65.

[74] Marc A. Levy, 'Is the Environment a National Security Issue?', *International Security*, 20:2 (1995), p. 62.

negative securitisation. Negative securitisation is clearly more in line with Wæver's warnings about security. If the existence of negative securitisation is observed by the Welsh School it puts a useful lid on what *should* be spoken of in terms of security and what not, and thus ends the seemingly fathomless securitisation of everything that is associated with the said School. This said, there is no harm in proposing a normative argument for positive securitisation and doing just that constitutes a useful academic exercise on how better policymaking could be achieved. Doing so, however, should not happen without recognising that concepts can become corrupted in the political process and can turn out to mean a lot less then they *seem* to mean. This was clearly the case with US defence environmental security, with its narrow focus on environmental compliance of the Department of Defense and its components – in the domestic realm – doing little more than they were legally required to do anyway.

In addition to positive/negative securitisation, this article has argued for a distinction between positive and negative desecuritisation. This distinction has been found necessary because, opposed to Wæver's suggestion that desecuritisation leads to politicisation, the example of the US military's defence environmental security strategy under the current Bush administration shows that this is not invariably the case.

Taking at its starting point that the two schools are complementary this article has combined some of the key ideas of the two schools into a third approach, which focuses on the evaluation of securitisation/desecuritisation in terms of their consequences, and has been given the name 'consequentialist evaluation of security'. In this approach, securitisation theory – whereby security is treated as a speech act and, whereby the meaning of security is in what is done with it – is taken as the founding basis for all security analysis. This first step – the analysis of the political act that is securitisation/desecuritisation – is outside the analyst's realm, as to reiterate, nothing can replace the political act that is securitisation/desecuritisation. In a second step, this article has argued that every security analysis must take into account what form (for example, positive or negative) securitisation/desecuritisation takes, as both concepts are believed to be entirely issue-dependent rather than static. In a third step, this becomes crucial for a more wholesome security analysis than that offered by securitisation theory, as under the framework proposed here the analyst's evaluation of the discourse in the individual sector regarding the securitisation/desecuritisation in question is seen as vital, particularly for making policy recommendations. Whilst this article proposes a framework of how a consequentialist evaluation of security might be conceived, it must be noticed that this framework remains tentative, simply because only one of the five sectors of security as identified by the Copenhagen School has been subject to investigation here. In order to provide a comprehensive framework and thus test the utility of the concepts proposed here, future research into all the existing sectors of security will be necessary.

Finally, based on the earlier examples, it can be concluded that securitisation and desecuritisation are neither always good, nor always bad. Because this is so, both the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School are valuable in analysing security issues and answering the problem of why and when to make/not make normative statements regarding its practice. The distinction proposed here is thus hoped to help with the critical engagement with security made on the part of the analyst as, to paraphrase Jef Huysmans, 'how to write and speak security critically' becomes

easier – or indeed possible. An agenda of what Wæver has called 'securitisation studies'[75] should therefore be built upon this evaluative bifurcation of securitisation and desecuritisation, and not on desecuritisation alone.

[75] Wæver, 'The EU as a security actor', p. 254.