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Human Security:
Discourse, Statecraft, Emancipation

Tan See Seng

Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies
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ABSTRACT

Of late, scholarly efforts that appropriate the notion of *securitization* to the Asia-Pacific security studies context have turned their "securitizing" gaze towards the concept and practice of human security. This paper argues that articulators of securitization fail to take seriously the radical possibilities afforded by their concept. More specifically, their claims that they are redefining security thinking reveal, on closer inspection, an unflagging commitment to the state at odds with their radical theoretical promises. Their discourse on human security is therefore a *state*-centered exercise deployed for the ongoing inscription or production of the state. Human security discourse is therefore less about the security of humans per se than a *practice of statecraft*. A suggested possibility for "emancipation" lies in the efforts of critical social movements to create new modes of political thinking and doing. To the extent that securitization effectively depoliticizes political spaces and practices, critical social movements, by way of a politics of resistance, help to *re*-politicize allegedly secure and sanitized domains—of the state, on the one hand, and, more indirectly, of security studies, on the other.

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Dr. Tan See Seng is Assistant Professor at IDSS. His research interests are in critical international relations theory and practice, with special emphasis on the politics and security of the Asia-Pacific region. He published most recently in *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 2001).

HUMAN SECURITY: DISCOURSE, STATECRAFT, EMANCIPATION [1]

Introduction

Traditionally, received wisdom in Asia-Pacific academic and policy circles has had it that international relations (or IR) theory bears little, if any, relevance to the region's international politics. Standard explanations for this state of affairs do not vary much, usually settling with minimal fuss upon the common refrain that the "realist paradigm" more than satisfactorily explains Asia-Pacific, particularly Southeast Asian, IR.[2] The more recent of these studies also draw attention to the growing salience, in post-Cold War multilateral security dialogues and forums, of new forms of security thinking and practice in the Asia-Pacific which provide, in some cases serious, challenges to the realist perspective. *Human security* is, ostensibly, one such notion. Even more recently other scholars have borrowed from contemporary innovations in mainstream IR scholarship for application to the post-Cold War Asia-Pacific region.[3] Some have even begun adopting these conceptual "tools" to the study of human security.[4]

It seems to me how the use of such concepts, particularly the notion of *securitization*, actually influences the way we view and practice human security is still not well understood, not at least as far as the current security studies literature is concerned. If, as radical constructivists[5]

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[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 9th Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) Working Group Meeting on Comprehensive and Cooperative Security, Wellington, New Zealand, 31 March – 2 April 2001.

[2] This point is made in the following studies on Asia-Pacific as well as Southeast Asian affairs: Donald K. Emmerson, "ASEAN as an International Regime," *Journal of International Affairs* vol. 41, no. 4 (1987), pp. 1-16; Pauline Kerr, "The Security Dialogue in the Asia-Pacific," *The Pacific Review* vol. 7, no. 4 (1994), pp. 397-409; Tim Huxley, "Southeast Asia in the Study of International Relations: The Rise and Decline of a Region," *The Pacific Review* vol. 9, no. 2 (1996), pp. 199-228.

[3] In the case of securitization, the concept of interest here, see Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998). Constructivism is another IR concept that is gaining currency in the analysis of Asia-Pacific IR. See Amitav Acharya, *The Quest for Identity: International Relations of Southeast Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Nikolas Busse, "Constructivism and Southeast Asian Security," *The Pacific Review* vol. 12, no. 1 (1999), pp. 39-60.

[4] See Barry Buzan, "Human Security in International Perspective," a paper prepared for the ISIS Malaysia 14th Asia-Pacific Roundtable on Confidence Building and Conflict Reduction, Kuala Lumpur, 3-7 June 2000. Constructivists are also turning their attention to human security as it pertains to the Asia-Pacific region. See Amitav Acharya and Arabinda Archaya, "Human Security in Asia Pacific: Puzzle, Panacea or Peril?" *CANCAPS Bulletin* no. 27 (November 2000), pp. 1-5. However, length constraints do not allow for a critique of the constructivist approach to human security here. I shall therefore be focusing strictly on the securitizing effects of human security, although an aspect or two of constructivism will unavoidably be touched on as a result of the overlap between the securitization and constructivism concepts.

remind us, our ways of making global life intelligible and meaningful are intimately tied to available representational resources[6], we can then say that such resources – securitization, in our case – not only represent, but also *constitute* or *produce* the discernible "facticity" or "reality" of global life. In short, I am interested less in what this concept says about human security (although that is clearly of major import), than what it *does* in effecting, by way of a human security narrative, a "reality" that is naturalized as the essential and self-evident story of Asia-Pacific security. However, I shall also want to argue that most articulators of securitization fail to take seriously the radical possibilities afforded by their concept; indeed, if anything, they act to foreclose such possibilities, permitting only a limited range of interpretive options. This they do less on grounds of failure to comprehend the full ambit of theoretical possibilities than those of the constant need to affirm the foundational categories of their discourses and to sustain the limits that define those discourses.[7]

Indeed, they must refuse to pursue the transgressing implications of their own concepts for fear that the "given and visible facts of global life" – "natural" categories such as "the state," "sovereignty," "anarchy," "security," "danger," "the post-Cold War world," "Asia-Pacific," etc. – upon which they stake their claims concerning Asia-Pacific security will unravel. To that end, human security discourse, as performed within the context of ongoing regional security dialogues, is essentially a *state*-centered exercise precisely for the reason that it is deployed for the ongoing inscription or production of the state as an ontological entity apart from the practices – discourse being but one such practice – that go into its constitution. Human security discourse, understood in these terms, is therefore less about the security of humans per se than a *practice of statecraft* insofar as it "crafts" into "existence" the state and other foundational genera that aid to realize the socially-lived truth of the political world of Asia-Pacific.[8]

[5] For a distinction between moderate and radical constructivism, or, as Wendt puts it, between regular constructivism and a so-called "postmodern" constructivism, see Peter M. Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," *International Organization* vol. 46, no. 1 (1992), pp. 1-35; and Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* vol. 46, no. 2 (1992), pp. 391-425.

[6] Nevzat Soguk, "Reflections on the 'Orientalized Orientals,' " *Alternatives* vol. 18 (1993), p. 362.

[7] Richard K. Ashley, "Living on Border Lines: Man, Poststructuralism, and War," in James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro eds., *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (New York: Lexington, 1989), p. 259.

[8] In this sense, my concerns here have less to do with the topic of human security per se than with the discourse of human security and other discourses intersecting or "intertextually linked" to it, in terms of their performative "nature."

Academics and policymakers alike seem to acknowledge, in varying degrees and if only implicitly, the significance of the issues that I have raised above. Former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans' call to revise and broaden doctrinal foundations of the UN Charter beyond "traditional, state-centered doctrine" specifically in the interests of human security is one such plausible instance.[9] Scholars invariably alert us in their preambles to the fact that human security remains a "poorly understood and contested" notion.[10] All of this raises – or at least it should raise – serious questions for the very grounds upon which the bulk of IR and foreign policy study and practice, not to mention human security discourse, stands. However, the manner in which "essentially contested" notions – and here, along with human security, we must include the so-called "given and visible facts of global life" enumerated above – are regularly deployed in regional security discourse is as if they are *uncontested*.[11] Invitations to redefine and enhance security thinking, beyond the cursory glance, often reveal an unflagging commitment to the state seemingly at odds with their at times radical promises. Meanwhile, notwithstanding well-intentioned efforts by academic and policy communities to theorize and effect into policy meaningful programs to protect and improve the lot of humans beings, various individuals and groups throughout the Asia-Pacific are continually marginalized – at times even brutally exterminated, if Pol Pot's killing fields in Cambodia, say, are any indication – partly because of an obdurate allegiance to state-bound metaphysics.[12]

A possibility for "emancipation," I want to suggest, lies in the aspirations and attempts of critical social movements to open, afresh, political spaces for new modes of political thinking

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[9] Gareth Evans, "Cooperative Security and Intra State Conflict," *Foreign Policy* no. 96 (Fall 1994), pp. 8-9.

[10] Acharya and Acharya, "Human Security in Asia Pacific," p. 1. See also Buzan, "Human Security in International Perspective," p. 1.

[11] Perhaps more than any other IR scholar, R. B. J. Walker has called attention to this paradoxical treatment of contested concepts by academics and policymakers alike. See, among others, Walker's "Gender and Critique in the Theory of International Relations," in V. Spike Anderson, ed., *Gendered States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

[12] I do not intend to deprive ideology of any explanatory salience. In Pol Pot's case, his Khmer Rouge had clear ideological motivations and "justification" for their genocidal campaign against, and forced internment of their fellow Cambodians in the mid to late 1970s. But just as the so-called "Sino-Soviet split" informed us about the fallacy of reading communism in monolithic terms, so too can we say, without recourse to either realism or liberalism as explanatory devices, that there is an undeniable element of fealty to the "reality" of states, whether conceived as an enduring fact of global life or just a short-term institutional means for achieving a different form of metaphysical presence or subjectivity. This is so even as communist theory emphasizes the primacy of global class conflict over interstate conflict. For example, in Edgar Snow's famous *Red Star Over China*, Mao Zedong reportedly made this statement: "For a people being deprived of its freedom, the revolutionary task is not immediate Socialism but the struggle for independence. *We cannot even discuss Communism if we are*

and doing. To the extent that securitization is but a kind of depoliticizing of political spaces and practices, then critical social movements, by way of a politics of resistance, are in effect engaging in the politicization of an allegedly secure and sanitized domain. This, I submit, may be a more reasonable alternative to the attempt to solve a complex human dilemma by recourse to the very institution (i.e., "the state") – or the discursive commitment to its ontology – that in part created that dilemma in the first place.

Embedded Realism

Nearly two decades ago, John Vasquez set his critical sights on the so-called "behavioralist" turn in IR study and, to devastating effect, "unmasked" much of the peace research enterprise as but variations of the dominant perspective against which many peace researchers purportedly militated, realism.[13] Vasquez, we recall, memorably termed their efforts as "coloring it Morgenthau" – a reference to their common commitment to key realist suppositions (of which Hans Morgenthau was preeminent articulator and apologist), notwithstanding their employment of what Hedley Bull once called the "domestic analogy."[14] By this Vasquez, it seems to me, was neither implying that peace researchers were laboring under a false liberal consciousness nor, even less so, that they were crypto-realists out to prove the reality of realism through positivist methods. What was evident among many peace researchers, however, was a shared and essentially unreflective commitment to realism's foundational categories and terms of reference even as they sought to contest the theory's claims and conclusions concerning international politics. As one writer has intimated in a different context, "if we continue to speak the same language to each other, we will reproduce the same story."[15] In other words, peace researchers produced quasi-realist renditions of international politics precisely because they spoke the same language as the realists did.

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robbed of a country in which to practice it." Quoted in Barbara W. Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-45* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. 202. Emphasis added.

[13] See John A. Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: A Critique* (London: Frances Pinter, 1983).

[14] See the essay by Hedley Bull, "Society and Anarchy in International Relations," in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1966), pp. 35-50.

[15] Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 205-206. Quoted in Cynthia Weber, "Reading Martin Wight's 'Why is There No International Theory?' as History," *Alternatives* vol. 23 (1998), p. 453.

Without overstating the relevance of Vasquez's thesis to my present purposes, I want to highlight below a similar dynamic at work in ongoing debates in Asia-Pacific academic and policy circles regarding "nontraditional" security concepts. Much, to be sure, has been made, and rightly so, about the inadequacies of "the realist conception of national security" in the post-Cold War Asia-Pacific because, as two scholars put it recently, "it [realism] provides a false image of reality as it fails to capture the non-military and internal dimensions of national security."[16] Indeed, by the 1970s – particularly after the OAPEC[17]-generated oil crises – prominent realist thinkers were grimly conceding that (in Stanley Hoffman's terms) "high politics" no longer dominated the diplomatic agenda in any consistent fashion. One remembers Henry Kissinger's rueful acknowledgment in 1975 that

> progress in dealing with the traditional agenda is no longer enough. A new and unprecedented kind of issue has emerged. The problems of energy, resources, environment, population, the uses of space and the seas now rank with questions of military security, ideology and territorial rivalry which have traditionally made up the diplomatic agenda.[18]

To that end, a great deal of scholarly reflection in the IR community on security thinking and practice in the post-Cold War world has engendered, and continues to do so, a veritable cottage industry on the redefining of security to accommodate a host of nontraditional – that is, nonmilitary – security challenges with which states presumably cope in today's "uncertain" strategic environment.[19] Concepts such as common security, and, more particularly, comprehensive security, cooperative security, and, of late, human security now grace the regional academic and diplomatic landscapes. Others elsewhere have noted that this "liberalizing" trend

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[16] Fahimul Quadir and Timothy M. Shaw, "Southeast Asia in the Twenty-First Century: Human Security and Regional Development," in Nana Poku and Lloyd Pettiford, eds., *Redefining the Third World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), p. 175.

[17] OAPEC stands for the Organization of Arab Oil Exporting Countries.

[18] Quoted in Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence* (Boston, MA: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1989), p. 26.

[19] See, for example, David A. Baldwin, "The Concept of Security," *Review of International Studies* vol. 23 (1997), pp. 5-26; David B. Dewitt, "Common, Comprehensive, and Cooperative Security," *The Pacific Review* vol. 7, no. 1 (1994), pp. 1-15; Jessica Tuchman Matthews, "Redefining Security," *Foreign Affairs* vol. LXVIII, no. 2 (1989), pp. 162-177; N. Myers, "Environment and Security," *Foreign Policy* no. 74 (1989), pp. 23-41; L. Paggi and P. Pinzauti, "Peace and Security," *Telos* no. 68 (1985), pp. 79-92; and R. H. Ullman, "Refining Security," *International Security* vol. 8, no. 1 (1983), pp. 129-153.

in security thinking is less a redefinition than a rediscovery of security concepts originally introduced by liberals or idealists of the interwar period.[20]

As such, my aim here is not to label contemporary discourse on human security in Asia-Pacific IR circles as essentially an exercise in realism, if by this we mean the sort of interstate "high politics" that characterize realism. As outlined in the UNDP's *Human Development Report* of 1994, human security, aspiring to achieve the "twin freedoms" (i.e., freedom from fear and freedom from want[21]), hence refers to a process of protecting people from "the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards."[22] These are clearly not the sorts of things with which realism, particularly the classical realism of Bull, Morgenthau, or Kissinger, would have been concerned. Moreover, contemporary interest in nonmilitary and internal dimensions of national security also demonstrates otherwise, as evinced by the ubiquity of "nontraditional" issues as matters of concern in innumerable conferences, forums, and working groups throughout the region.

Nonetheless, much as the peace research agenda appears to have been framed if not hijacked by realist presuppositions, so too, it seems, are the ongoing Asia-Pacific-based efforts to rethink security. Associated with the Palme and Brandt Commission Reports of the early 1980s, common security, originally concerned with the linkage between security and development, seeks to avoid the competitive, zero-sum notions of deterrence and power, emphasizing instead cooperation, dialogue, and confidence-building.[23] Unfortunately, it remains wedded to the military realm, and therefore stays centered on the state.[24] The same can be said of cooperative security, although, in Dewitt's words, the concept "does not presume that states are principal actors but it does not preclude, by definition or intent, that non-state actors … have critical roles

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[20] See especially Lawrence T. Woods, "Rediscovering Security," *Asian Perspective* vol. 21, no. 1 (1997), pp. 79-102.

[21] See Tadashi Yamamoto, "Human Security: What It Means and What It Entails," a paper prepared for the ISIS Malaysia 14th Asia-Pacific Roundtable on Confidence Building and Conflict Reduction, Kuala Lumpur, 3-7 June 2000, p. 4.

[22] See UNDP, *Human Development Report 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 22.

[23] See Quadir and Shaw, "Southeast Asia in the Twenty-First Century," pp. 176-177; and Alan Dupont, "Concepts of Security," in Jim Rolfe, ed., *Unresolved Futures: Comprehensive Security in the Asia-Pacific* (Wellington: Centre for Strategic Studies, 1995), pp. 5-6.

[24] Geoffrey Wiseman, "Common Security in the Asia-Pacific Region," *The Pacific Review* vol. 5, no. 1 (1992), pp. 42-43.

to play in managing and enhancing security-relevant dynamics…"[25] But as Jim Rolfe has argued, "Cooperative security approaches acknowledge the centrality of the state in security processes and the primacy of state interests in the achievement of security."[26] Likewise, comprehensive security is principally about the state's response to domestic sources of conflict and nontraditional security issues; indeed, as a team of notable scholars has it, the nonmilitary approaches of comprehensive security would help lessen the risks of *interstate* conflict – the gist of their concern with second track diplomacy and the host of "alternative" concepts and arrangements therein.[27] All these concepts may not necessarily and inordinately emphasize the military component, but they clearly demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to the ontological status of the state.

It is in this regard, it seems to me, that much of the debate on human security taking place in the Asia-Pacific region (as well as in much of the world, although the Asia-Pacific is primary to my concern) can and should also be considered "realist," if by this we mean a largely uncritical commitment to the categories, frames, presuppositions, and terms of reference that inform and instruct an orthodox or a conventional understanding of global life.[28] It is in this sense that one may speak of an "embedded realism" in the bulk of regional human security discourse that gives pride of place to a particular rendition of global life by representing – indeed, by *producing* – a certain social reality that consistently privileges the sovereign state as global subject par excellence – *not*, as one might expect, the human beings with which such discourses are purportedly concerned.[29] By this I do not mean that human security discourse and praxis are

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[25] See David Dewitt, "Common, Comprehensive, and Cooperative Security," *The Pacific Review* vol. 7, no. 1 (1994), pp. 1-15.

[26] Jim Rolfe, "Preface," in Rolfe, *Unresolved Futures*, p. vii.

[27] Pauline Kerr, Andrew Mack, and Paul Evans, "The Evolving Security Discourse in the Asia Pacific," in Andrew Mack and John Ravenhill, eds., *Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1994), p. 233.

[28] My argument runs somewhat along the same lines as Richard Ashley's provocative assertion that structural realists, say, like Robert Gilpin or Kenneth Waltz, and neoliberal institutionalists, say, like Robert Keohane or John Gerard Ruggie, can all in effect be considered *neorealist* in that they hold to similar presuppositions and assumptions about global life. Ashley does not deny the (in Gilpin's term) "richness" and diversity of these varied scholars' explanations of international politics. Rather, he highlights their propensity to continually affirm – and, in doing so, reconstitute – the discursive limits that make possible their closed way of understanding global life, using categories such as the primacy of states, international anarchy, and the same kinds of inside/outside dichotomies. As such, contrary to claims about the "richness" of mainstream IR theories, Ashley takes these "neorealists" to task for their highly circumscribed way of understanding global life as well as the power politics that underwrite their truth claims. See Richard K. Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism," *International Organization* vol. 38, no. 2 (1984), pp. 225-286.

therefore unconcerned with the quite serious and complex problems of human suffering worldwide. But there is the equally important question of human security – also true of many if not most other kinds of security – as, in one scholar's words, "normally applied to the middle level of collectivities,"[30] namely, the state. In short, human security is principally a state-centered, though not necessarily state-sponsored, discourse and practice. And if, as I have suggested, the state is a tenuously iterated effect of practices of statecraft, how does "the state" respond to very serious human dilemmas, especially if those dilemmas may well have been caused in part by a shared fixation to "the state" as the idealized, if not already realized, mode of collective existence?[31]

Human Security as Statecraft

The above matters, beyond the usual concession or two tucked in preliminary comments in mainstream academic works, are generally of little concern to those who firmly hold that the state is a given presence, that it has an essential and independent ontological status. For them, security (human, in our case) is determined by the requirements of an already given sovereign state; foreign policy (human security discourse and practice) is therefore conducted in the state's name as a response to an objective challenge or danger (refugee outflows from Indochina, child prostitution in Bangkok, ethnic cleansing in west Kalimantan, religious persecution in China, etc.). They may push for greater accommodation by states of the contributions of

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[29] Embedded realism – or, perhaps more accurately, embedded neorealism – is also pervasive in neoliberal institutionalist discourse. The writings of Robert Keohane, one of the more prominent neoliberal institutionalists, illustrate this central disposition to realist presuppositions. Take, for example, his essay, "Theory of World Politics: Structuralism and Beyond," in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 1-26. Keohane somberly reminds his IR colleagues that, "the conditions of terror under which we live [i.e., anarchy] compel us to search for a way out of the [realist] trap" (pp. 198-9). According to Keohane, all "serious thinkers," even as they challenge the solutions provided by realists to manage and resolve international conflict, must, however, accept the "questions that Realism poses but fails to answer" (pp. 198-9). Note, however, that nowhere in his reasoning does Keohane even allow for the possibility that the questions posed by realism may not be the only questions that matter in global political life. It is in this sense that we can say of realists and liberals and those of other epistemological persuasions who accept without question the "questions that realism poses" that they reflect an uncritical commitment to the categories and presuppositions of realism, hence an *embedded* realism, even as some deny any intellectual allegiance to realism.

[30] Buzan, "Human Security in International Perspective," p. 1.

[31] Whether the state, as an imagined political community, has ever actually been realized in any one historical instance as a "completed entity" is doubtful – a view not uncommon even among mainstream scholars. As Charles Tilly has argued, any coordinated, hierarchical, and territorial entity is less a "nation-state" than what he calls a "national state," since its sovereign territorialization is and can never be perfectly aligned with a prior and primary form of identification, such as religion, language, ethnicity, or a symbolic sense of self. According to David Campbell, the implications of Tilly's analysis suggest that, "national states are unavoidably paradoxical

nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil societal actors in the interests of human security;[32] they may even lambaste states for failing to provide for the security of humans, including their own citizens, or, worse yet, being the direct cause of at times untold human suffering.[33] Nonetheless, it is precisely at the historical figuration of the state where most thinkers and practitioners of human security – whether they regard themselves as realist or liberal, whether they are advocates for democracy and human rights or apologists for "Asian values" – tend to converge. They focus on the aggregation of human security (or, more appropriately, insecurity) as it relates, to the state and, to be sure, an international order, an international regime, or a broader international community.[34] But here too in all these "transnational" settings the state figuration looms large. Moreover, notwithstanding concessions to the historicity and variegation of states, they seem in discourse to treat this figuration in just the opposite fashion as, in Manzo's words, "fixed empirical states of affairs of a rather uniform kind."[35] In short, they share a commitment and disposition to the state as a given and unparalleled mode of collective existence.[36]

In theory at least, conventional foreign policy is predicated on the notion that before any meaningful idea of a national interest or the assignation of value to various international interactions can obtain, "there must be in place a society, a self, with a distinct and meaningful identity that is represented by the state."[37] This dominant interpretation stands starkly at odds with other forceful arguments to the contrary, such as Benedict Anderson's notion that the nation-state is best understood as an "imagined community" that exists to the extent that it is

entities which do not possess prediscursive, stable identities." David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p. 11.

[32] See, for example, Alison Van Rooy, "In the Aftermath of Crisis, What Now? Civil Society and Human Security in the Asia Pacific," a paper prepared for the ISIS Malaysia 14th Asia-Pacific Roundtable on Confidence Building and Conflict Reduction, Kuala Lumpur, 3-7 June 2000.

[33] See, for example, William Shawcross, *The Quality of Mercy: Cambodia, the Holocaust and Modern Conscience* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984).

[34] Michael Wesley, "Human Security in Development and Crisis: How to Capture Human Security in Regional Institutional Arrangements?" *The Asia-Australia Papers* no. 2 (1999), p. 28.

[35] Kate A. Manzo, *Creating Boundaries: The Politics of Race and Nation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1996), p. 2.

[36] See especially William E. Connolly, "Democracy and Territoriality," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* vol. 20, no. 3 (1991), pp. 463-484; and Robert Latham, "Getting Out From Under: Rethinking Security Beyond Liberalism and the Levels-of-Analysis Problem," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* vol. 25, no. 1 (1996), pp. 77-108.

represented in discourse and text; the state is, as such, a cultural artifact.[38] Understood thus,

states have no ontological status apart from various "acts" that constitute its reality; they are, in

other words, not fixed presences in space and time established via founding acts (as

conventionally assumed), but are identities tenuously constituted in time and instituted in space

through a regulated process of stylized repetitious acts.[39] It is just such acts – security discourses,

in this case – that make a compelling case for what I, following others, have termed "practices of

statecraft."[40] Much can be said in this regard, but I shall limit my comments to just three points.

First, human security discourse, as one among a host of interrelated IR and security

discourses, can be said to be deployed in the service of the state in the sense that it conscribes,

albeit never in a totalizing fashion, the conditions of possibility that allow for certain meanings

and intelligibility in global life, while excluding others.[41] To be engaged in a discourse, as Bradley

Klein has proposed,

> is to be engaged in the making and remaking of meaningful conditions of
> existence. A discourse, then, is not a way of learning "about" something out
> there in the "real world"; it is rather, a way of producing that something as real,
> as identifiable, classifiable, knowable, and therefore, meaningful. Discourse
> creates the conditions of knowing.[42]

[37] Roxanne Lynn Doty, "The Double-Writing of Statecraft: Exploring State Responses to Illegal Immigration," *Alternatives* vol. 21 (1996), p. 179.

[38] See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, 1983).

[39] Campbell, *Writing Security*, p. 9.

[40] See, for example, Doty, "The Double-Writing of Statecraft," pp. 171-189, and, also by Roxanne Lynn Doty, "*Aporia*: A Critical Exploration of the Agent-Structure Problematique in International Relations Theory," *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 3, no. 3 (1997), pp. 365-392.

[41] I am not implying that discourse thereby provides a kind of "deep structure" that governs, in a structurally deterministic sense, the way we think and act in international politics – much as, say, Waltz envisaged of his "third-level image of war," i.e., the structure of the international system. See Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979). As Doty explains regarding discourses in terms of texts, "these texts constructed a hierarchical structure which consisted of various subject positions. I do not claim to have uncovered a "deep structure" existing prior to practice, that then made possible or constrained the practices of subjects. What I do claim to have shown is how discursive practices themselves constructed both the subjects (with varying degrees of agency) and the relations among them. The "deep structure," then, is no more or less than these practices. Their significance and power is to be found in their ability to frame interpretive possibilities, create meanings, and thereby naturalize a particular state of affairs." See Roxanne Lynn Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," *International Studies Quarterly* vol. 37 (1993), p. 314.

[42] Bradley S. Klein, "Strategic Discourse and Its Alternatives," Center on Violence and Human Survival Occasional Paper no. 3 (New York: John Jay College on Criminal Justice, 1987), p. 4. Two other plausible "definitions" of the discourse concept include the following. From O'Tuathail and Agnew: "Discourses are best conceptualized as sets of capabilities people have, as sets of socio-cultural resources used by people in the

From this vantage point, we can understand human security as but one prominent feature in the production of "truth"[43] through which academic and policy communities exercise power in disparate local sites, although not, however, as given omniscient subjects, secure in their unproblematic identity and outside of history. In this respect, academics, policymakers and other "actors" are, as Foucault might say, equally subjected to the production of truth through power just as they are incapable of exercising power except through the production of truth.[44]

Second, to describe discourse as a practice of statecraft is apposite to the extent that it is a way of producing the Asia-Pacific, with states as its principal subjects along with other supplementary "nonstate actors," as a real and meaningful world. Even as human security is presumably about humans and the human condition, the foundations upon which discourse on such matters usually rest are the state and inter-*nation*-al relations. The view of Canada's top diplomat, Lloyd Axworthy, is noteworthy in this regard. Calling for "a more comprehensive and systematic approach to enhancing the security of people" in the post-Cold War era, he nonetheless emphasizes that "security between states remains the *necessary condition* for the

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construction of meaning about their world and their activities. It is NOT simply speech or written statements but the rules by which verbal speech and written statements are made meaningful. Discourses enable one to write, speak, listen and act meaningfully. They are a set of capabilities, an ensemble of rules by which readers/listeners and speakers/audiences are able to take what they hear and read and construct it into an organized meaningful whole." See Gearoid O'Tuathail and John A. Agnew, "Geopolitics and Discourse: Practical Geopolitical Reasoning in American Foreign Policy," *Political Geography* vol. 11, no. 2 (1992), pp. 192-93 (emphasis original). From Alker and Sylvan: "As backgrounds, discourses must be distinguished from the verbal productions which readers or listeners piece together. As we prefer to use the term people do not read or listen to a discourse: rather, they employ a discourse or discourses in the processes of reading or listening to a verbal production. Discourses do not present themselves as such; what we observe are people and verbal productions." See Hayward Alker and David Sylvan, "Political Discourse Analysis," a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, 1986. Discourses, in other words, enable by permitting a certain bounded field of possibilities and reasoning as the process by which certain possibilities are realized.

[43] This is not the same as saying, as some versions of postmodern thought seem to claim, that there is therefore *no* material reality beyond language. There are, as Foucault has put it, "extra-discursive fields" that must be acknowledged – material and institutional forces, for example – even as the discursive field of discourse is aggressively pursued. See, for example, Michel Foucault, "On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle," in James D. Faubion, ed., *Aesthetics: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Vol. 2* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), pp. 297-333. What I am asserting here is simply based on the acknowledgment that we hold the ineluctable debt to language in our interpretation of our social reality. That is, the totality of our social existence – or, put differently, the multiplicity of our human experiences – is unavoidably indebted always to some manner of language, be it verbal, written, or other. See Mark Neufeld, "Interpretation and the "Science" of International Relations," *Review of International Studies* vol. 19 (1993), pp. 39-61.

[44] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (London: Harvester, 1980), p. 93.

security of the people."[45] In this sense, human security discourse can therefore be understood as a kind of "boundary-producing political performance," endlessly repetitive, that (re)produces the boundaries of, boundaries that make possible, the state.[46] This is true even in the light of liberal references to globalization and transnational flows and movements insofar as these are theorized, analyzed, or simply described within the discursive economy of mainstream IR. In the words of one scholar:

> Boundaries may become blurred, but they ultimately remain intact and given. The ontological commitment to the state ensures that the starting point is the existence of boundaries that are then transgressed, rather than always-in-process practices that effect the construction of contingent, and never fully fixed, boundaries.[47]

Nonetheless, for the very reasons stated earlier, a state-centered, human security discourse never pursues this implication to its logical conclusion. It is a conclusion of which intellectuals and practitioners of statecraft, it seems to me, are quite aware but who, as Nietzsche might put it, "actively forget" in order to proceed with the so-called serious – the decidedly "macho" – questions of IR, while neglecting a more fundamental question of global life.[48] Although always failing to represent what they purport to represent, IR social constructs like "security," "sovereignty," or "the state" are nonetheless *effective* often enough in their circulation and mutual reference – or so familiar as to appear self-evident in their existentiality – so as to afford this particular Asia-Pacific political imaginary a kind of discernible facticity.[49]

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[45] Lloyd Axworthy, "Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World," reprinted at http://www.dfait.maeci.gc.ca/foreignp/HumanSecurity/securi-e.htm. Emphasis added. Quoted in William T. Tow, "Alternative Security Models: Implications for ASEAN," a paper prepared for the Ford-IDSS Research Program on Nontraditional Issues in Southeast Asia, Singapore, September 21-22, 2000, p. 14.

[46] See Richard K. Ashley, "Foreign Policy as Political Performance," *International Studies Notes* vol. 13 (1987), pp. 51-54.

[47] Doty, "The Double-Writing of Statecraft," p. 175.

[48] See the discussion on "forgetting" in the "Translator's Preface" in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. ix-lxxxvii.

[49] As Ashley has mused in the context of sovereignty, "To be sure, no historical instance of such invokings … even comes close to fulfilling the requisites of the idealized state of affairs that the concept, as abstractly posited, *would* represent. Of no practical-historical utterance of the sovereignty concept can one say without fear of contradiction: it truly describes some empirically discernable state of affairs. And yet, such invokings are very often *effective...* [T]he important thing is that in their circulation and mutual reference these invokings can and often do *work*." See Richard K. Ashley, "Lakatos, Sovereignty, and the Statecraft of English-Language International Relations Theory," a paper presented at the Conference on "Progress in International Relations Theory: A Collaborative Assessment of Imre Lakatos' Methodology of Scientific Research Programs," at Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, January 14-16, 1999, p. 15.

Third, in positing that truth production is also the province of academics, we draw closer to the notion of academics (and other "nongovernmental" subjects) as, in a sense, makers of foreign policy and practitioners of statecraft. Rather than following the well-trodden path of recent constructivist studies that emphasize the causal impact of ideas, as propagated by individuals and institutions, upon official policy[50], I focus instead on the representations of the Asia-Pacific vis-à-vis human security by both academic and policy communities, most of which share a mutual frame of reference and categories with a familiar, self-evident tenor. This mutuality between academia and government is not unlike what Edward Said has commented about the constellation of forces that combine to make possible what he has called Orientalism.[51] It is, in the words of one scholar, to discursively "police the Asia-Pacific" by seeking to domesticate or discipline the constantly changing regional environment in the name of order and stability.[52] Just this sort of "policing" activity, I want to suggest, is precisely what the discourse of securization, as an exercise in "depoliticization," accomplishes, or at least seeks to accomplish.

Securitization: Depoliticizing Human Security?

The securitization concept is the brainchild of the so-called "Copenhagen School" of IR.[53] Among its denizens are Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, both of whom are well known in IR circles for their innovative scholarship. The concept focuses, so its originators claim, on "societal security" as conceived within communities but not necessarily confined to state sovereignties.[54] Specifically, securitization thinkers concern themselves with how-possible questions: how, for example, does the notion of security come about, or how is it politicized within a particular

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[50] See, for example, the special issue of *The Pacific Review* vol. 7, no. 4 (1994) edited by Richard Higgott on ideas, interests, and identity in the Asia-Pacific region.

[51] Said writes: "The interchange between the academic and the more or less imaginative meanings of Orientalism is a constant one, and … there has been a considerable, quite disciplined – perhaps even regulated – traffic between the two… Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it; in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient." See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 1978), p. 3.

[52] Michael Sullivan, "Australia's Regional Peacekeeping Discourse: Policing the Asia-Pacific," in Graeme Cheeseman and Robert Bruce, eds., *Discourses of Danger and Dread Frontiers: Australian Defence and Security Thinking After the Cold War* (St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1996), p. 198.

[53] See Bill McSweeney, "Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School," *Review of International Studies* vol. 22, no. 1 (1996), pp. 81-93.

[54] See Tow, "Alternative Security Models: Implications for ASEAN," p. 10.

"objective" context. Securitization therefore helps us understand why particular issues are "securitized" as threats to the collective identity of whichever "referent object" is in question, including the state. But this also means that security is necessarily a self-referential exercise in that it is through securitizing practices that a specific issue becomes a *security* issue. In short, a threat is a threat only because it has been presented as such, not necessarily because there is an actual material or existential basis to it.[55]

For all its theoretical promise regarding a "societal security" unanchored in the state, securitization remains very much a state-centered concept, however. "Collective identity," inscribed as the endangered element within a securitized discourse, therefore becomes synonymous with national or state identity. Threat construction and perception, in such instances, can easily fall prey to capture by a particular element of society and used for its own purposes. It is not uncommon for states to go beyond contrasts with the "external world" in order to secure their identities, to the extent that this is possible, for Others can just as readily be found *within* state borders.[56] Distinctions between the allegedly competent and "normal" members of the state and, as Foucault has demonstrated, the marginal (e.g., the "criminal," the "insane") also play a significant part in the constitution of political community.[57] Elsewhere scholars have highlighted the deployment of the rhetoric of "national security" by governments for perpetuating forms of "structural violence" against segments of their own citizenry.[58] Acute differences at times exist between the dominant strata and subaltern groups who may possess the so-called "rights of citizenship," but who are de facto second-class residents of their own nation.[59] In all these respects, the track records of various Asia-Pacific countries are, to put it lightly, blemished.

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[55] Tow, "Alternative Security Models," p. 10.

[56] See, for example, Syed Aziz-Al Ahsan, "Burma's Iron Hands Towards Ethnic Minorities: The Rohingya Plight," *Asian Profile* vol. 21, no. 4 (1993). One remembers as well, in the American historical experience, the internment of Japanese-Americans during the Pacific War, or McCarthy-inspired witch hunts for suspected communists during the early days of the Cold War. As such, in conjunction with the construction of "external threats," the regular indictment of one's own citizenry through discourse and other practices is part and parcel of the purchase of state or national identity. In short, it is a practice of statecraft.

[57] See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, 1977); and *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Tavistock, 1967).

[58] Muthiah Alagappa, *Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Factors* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 30-31, cited in Tow, "Alternative Security Models," pp. 11-12.

[59] Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p. 2.

What this implies for human security is at best ambivalent. Arguing that, "there are good reasons why the individual and human race levels are difficult to construct as referent objects for security," Buzan, in an analysis of human security, has observed:

> States may not be a sufficient condition for individual security, and they may even be the main problem… But they are almost certainly a necessary condition for individual security because without the state it is not clear what other agency is to act on behalf of individuals. Because states hold this position, they can claim their own right of survival over and above that of their individual citizens.[60]

However, it is not entirely evident why the state should constitute the "necessary condition for individual security" simply because "it is not clear what other agency is to act on behalf of individuals" in lieu of the state. Regarding the individual level, he argues that, "individuals or small groups can seldom establish a wider security legitimacy in their own right" because "few others will listen" to their attempts to speak security to and of themselves. "Versions of human security that seek to reduce all security to the level of the individual," Buzan continues, "have somehow to confront the dilemma that bypassing the state takes away what seems to be the necessary agent through which individual security might be achieved."[61] Regarding the global systemic level, he highlights various efforts, notably global concerns over the specter of nuclear war and environmental degradation, but believes that "the middle-scale of 'limited collectivities' have [sic] proved the most amenable to securitization as durable referent objects."[62] Nonetheless, we are left in no doubt that what Buzan means by the "middle-scale of limited collectivities" is in fact a reference to *states*. This is a long way from the claim that "societal security" is, as one scholar puts it, "conceived as existing within borderless communities rather than within state sovereignties."[63] Buzan simply accepts that the "middle-scale of limited collectivities" is to be reduced to the sovereign state at the expense of other forms of middle-scale limited collectivities. As William Tow has argued, "although securitization claims to prioritize society as its key referent, its actual focus on the state tends to belie the claim and to render it nothing more than national security – realism in different trappings."[64]

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[60] Buzan, "Human Security in International Perspective," p. 1, 8.

[61] Buzan, "Human Security in International Perspective," p. 8.

[62] Buzan, "Human Security in International Perspective," pp. 4-5.

[63] Tow, "Alternative Security Models," p. 10.

Tow's allusion to an (in my terms) embedded realism in the securitization notion underscores my argument regarding the consistent ontological commitment to the state in much of regional security discourse – a commitment that Buzan demonstrates fairly generously in his analysis of human security. But to simply assert that securitization masquerades as a realist concept without pursuing further the implications therein is to miss the point regarding human security discourse as a practice of statecraft. For all the problems adumbrated about securitization, Buzan's analysis is nonetheless a tour de force of cogency, eloquence, and sound logic that we have come to expect of his writings. Yet, as the scholar himself has intimated, "My argument in this paper is from this *international* perspective, and it is within that frame that I will try to understand what 'human security' might mean."[65] That is, Buzan's starting point – his categories, presuppositions, and terms of reference – at the "middle-scale" (or, in Waltz's terms, "second-image cause of war"[66]) influences what he would see and the conclusions at which he would arrive. This focus on the international dimension, as I have argued above, is not only the province of realists but also that of many liberals, particularly neoliberal institutionalists, whose agenda is essentially and narrowly circumscribed owing to its fealty to a "levels of analysis" approach and, again, a metaphysical commitment to the state.[67]

What all this says about the securitizing of human security discourse, it seems to me, is essentially the depoliticizing or "technologizing" of a field as a way of securing it from the potentially disturbing if not devastating effects of critical questioning. To technologize, in social scientific terms, is to allow for the total domination of rational calculability and planning; it is to celebrate the triumph of instrumental or technical reason.[68] To do so, however, may be to "disavow reflection," as Jurgen Habermas puts it. Commenting on what he sees as the systematic abandonment in the positivist enterprise of critical reflection precisely due to its domination by instrumental reason, Habermas writes:

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[64] Tow, "Alternative Security Models," p. 11.

[65] Buzan, "Human Security in International Perspective," p. 3. Emphasis added.

[66] See Waltz's excellent discussion on the three levels of analysis in his seminal work, Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

[67] See especially the arguments on the points of convergence between realists and liberals in Connolly, "Democracy and Territoriality"; and, Latham, "Getting Out From Under: Rethinking Security Beyond Liberalism and the Levels-of-Analysis Problem."

[68] Jenny Edkins, *Poststructuralism and International Relations: Bringing the Political Back In* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999), p. 9.

In following the process of the dissolution of epistemology which has left the philosophy of science in its place, one makes one's way over abandoned stages of reflection. Retreading this path from a perspective that looks back towards the point of departure may help to recover the forgotten experience of reflection. That we disavow reflection is positivism.[69]

The disavowal of reflection, we might say, is a fundamentally political act deployed for the purpose of affirming and sustaining the limits of a discourse as natural and self-evident. The act of disavowal may not be consciously or deliberately performed; as Terence Ball has observed, we have "been speaking positivist prose, though without knowing it."[70] Seen as such, a securitized human security discourse serves to *depoliticize* the field of human security through foreclosing critical reflection that may subvert and undermine the incessant exercise of affirming and sustaining the discursive boundaries that render possible a naturalized a particular "state" of affairs – a self-evident world of state sovereignties.

The discursive moves in the securitization narrative to depoliticize is evident in the following statement by Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde from their well received book:

"Security" is the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics. Securitization can thus be seen as a more extreme version of politicization. In theory any public issue can be located on the spectrum ranging from nonpoliticized (meaning the state does not deal with it and it is not in any other way made an issue of public debate and decision) through politicized (meaning an issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance) to securitized (meaning the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure).[71]

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[69] Jurgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. J. J. Shapiro (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1971), p. vii. This raises the question of the wisdom of Keohane's well-known proposition that there are essentially two kinds of IR scholarship, rationalist and reflectivist. See Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches," *International Studies Quarterly* vol. 32 (1988), pp. 379-396. Keohane's move, problematic as it is, inadvertently lends itself to the charge made by Habermas of positivism – which is precisely what Keohane understands rationalism to be – because it does not reflect on its own acts and practices and presuppositions, the very sorts of things to which many of the "reflectivists" want to draw attention.

[70] Terence Ball, *Idioms of Inquiry: Critique and Renewal in Political Science* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1987), p. 8.

[71] Buzan et al., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, pp. 23-24.

According to this reading by Buzan et al., securitization is "a more extreme version of politicization." However, if to securitize an issue or person or collectivity as an existential threat is to render that "threat" (and the "emergency measures" for dealing with it) as "outside the normal bounds of political procedure," then it is evident that what the authors mean by extreme politicization is in fact a *de*politicization, since securitized items are removed from public debate or, indeed, public view.[72] In this respect, Buzan's analysis of human security (discussed above) can therefore be understood as a practice of statecraft to the extent that the text, in "intertextual" linkage with other texts and discourses, continues to privilege a certain reality by securitizing or depoliticizing it – a reality that may not comport with the alternative and marginal reality, say, of the hunted Burmese Karen, or the GAM "rebel" in Aceh, or the Madurese widow whose husband and children have been decapitated. This poses interesting ramifications for the participation of epistemic communities and think tanks – an IR study fad in the early 1990s[73] – in what its proponents have euphemistically called "international policy coordination."[74] For a great deal of what they do, as intellectuals of statecraft engaged in practices of statecraft, is the work of securitizing and domesticating, of policing in short, the world of world politics.

Critical Social Movements and Human Security

My argument thus far has focused on securitizing influences on human security as a state-centered discourse, for the reasons adumbrated above. The political imaginary of Asia-Pacific is very much a story of exchanges between state sovereignties, and human security discourse and practice as conceptualized and read from the so-called "international" perspective more or less tell the same story. The constellation of powerful forces that render possible this story is complex: Enlightenment thought, the rise of capitalism, the legacy of the Westphalia treaty, and so on, clearly beyond the limited aims and scope of this paper. What is undeniable, however, is that this beguiling story, much like if not exactly a myth, has obscured (and continues to do so) a very complex array of social transformations.

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[72] See Edkins, *Poststructuralism and International Relations*, p. 11. Similarly, Richard Ashley has also noted that the process of constituting something as a "danger" or a threat involves decisions and solutions that are presented in *technical* terms – which is what I, following Ball, Habermas, and Edkins, mean by technologization. See Richard K. Ashley, "The Powers of Anarchy: Theory, Sovereignty, and the Domestication of Global Life," in James Der Derian, ed., *International Theory: Critical Investigations* (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 1995), p. 98.

[73] See the special issue on epistemic communities in *International Organization* vol. 46, no. 1 (1992), edited by Peter M. Haas and Emmanuel Adler.

[74] See Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," pp. 1-35.

However, equally undeniable has been the proliferation of various critical social movements that now sprinkle the regional landscape, especially since the end of the Cold War. Such contemporary movements, having grown out of the particularity of historical experience, resist the incorporation of their own stories into the generalizing category of state or nation or, per sociological categories, class.[75] They do not replace the state, however. Aside from those committed to violent revolution and overthrow of government regimes, most movements today seem skeptical about both the possibility and the desirability of taking over the state as the primary object and instrument of political activity. After all, the notion of "revolution betrayed" has proved a recurrent and quite depressing theme of modern history.[76] In other words, movements today evince a wariness over concepts of political life that treat the state – as do securitized discourses on human security – as the only space in which serious political activity can take place. In their search for new spaces in which to think and act, movements help create new social norms and identities; reshape existing institutions; and, working within their local spaces in civil society, engender and mobilize resistance against minor dominations. In diametric contrast to the depoliticizing effects of securitization, movements act, both via discourse and other kinds of practices, to (re)politicize social, economic, and political domains.

Along with politicization come opportunities for reconceptualizing the nature of political practice. As Walker has noted, the story of the state, at least for much of the twentieth century, has largely been about the centralization of authority and the intervention if not encroachment of state power in and upon more and more areas of social life.[77] In this sense, securitization, as a (in Foucault's terms) "technology of discipline" for depoliticizing domains of global life for the purpose of control and management, must also be read as a practice circulating in the service of the state to forcefully depoliticize not only the IR realm, but vast areas of social existence. The

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[75] This section's look at critical social movements draws from R. B. J. Walker, *One World, Many Worlds: Struggles For a Just World Peace* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1988).

[76] It seems to me that the modern story of revolution is a rather sad retelling of the substitution, whether deliberate or unwitting, of new orthodoxies in the place of the old, the *nouveau regime* in the place of the *ancien regime*, each equally if not more authoritarian or totalitarian than the one before. This extra-discursive dynamic also holds true in the realm of the discursive, it seems. "The history of political thought," as Terence Ball has wryly observed, "is the story of older orthodoxies being criticized and replaced by revolutionary challengers. The revolutionaries, in their turn, come to be the guardians of a new orthodoxy, which is, in its turn, challenged by critics." Terence Ball, *Idioms of Inquiry: Critique and Renewal in Political Science* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1987), pp. 2-3. We can perhaps say along with Marx, to the effect, that, "History repeats itself – the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce."

[77] Walker, *One World, Many Worlds*, p. 83.

case of Singapore's foreign policy discourse and practice illustrates my point rather well. As the late Michael Leifer correctly noted, the island-state, despite achieving economic and diplomatic accomplishments and boasting a defense capability even some developed nations would envy, remains "a state whose foreign policy is rooted in a culture of siege and insecurity,"[78] and therefore (at least in the view of its policymakers) incessantly "coping with vulnerability."[79] Insofar as this kind of securitizing discourse encroaches and pervades various areas of social life – Singapore's all-encompassing "Total Defence" philosophy offers a readily available example[80] – can we therefore say that the "fact" of Singapore as a depoliticized state has a double meaning, both of which are interrelated.[81]

The securitizing effects as exercised over the social cum political space known as the sovereign state, I want to suggest, occur in part through state-based, human security discourses. There is as such good reason why domains or fields of pedagogical pursuits are known as "disciplines." As Linklater has observed:

> [T]here are several important similarities between states and disciplines. Both have specific boundaries which define what is inside and what lies outside a settled domain. Both possess systems of surveillance and instruments of disciplinary power for regulating and policing the lives of citizens, and for identifying who does and does not belong. Both rely on a specific conception of time, and instill memories of origins, discrete epochs and decisive watersheds to regulate collective identities. Similarities are evident in the way that both disciplinary boundaries and national frontiers are determined arbitrarily and maintained by force.[82]

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[78] Michael Leifer, *Singapore's Foreign Policy: Coping With Vulnerability* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 4.

[79] From the subtitle of Leifer's *Singapore's Foreign Policy*.

[80] See, for example, the Singapore defense ministry's "White Paper" of 2000 entitled, *Defending Singapore in the 21st Century* (Singapore: Ministry of Defence, 2000).

[81] The first and more obvious meaning is the oft-mentioned notion that Singapore, due to the allegedly heavy-handed style of governance by Lee Kuan Yew and his People's Action Party (PAP) government, has produced a depoliticization and demobilization of the Singaporean electorate. The classic formulation of this view comes from Chan Heng Chee, "Politics in an Administrative State: Where Has the Politics Gone?" in Seah Chee Meow, ed., *Trends in Singapore* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1975), p. 52. The second and much less obvious meaning is that presented in this paper, i.e., securitization understood as depoliticization. Clearly, as a securitizing practice of the first-order, the constant preoccupation with Singapore's survival – a theme that remains to this day – is intimately tied to the first meaning, where many if not most areas of social life are endlessly depoliticized – witness the relentless Singaporean (or more accurately, PAP) obsession with technocratization and rational control – in the name of national security and state survival.

By continually politicizing the highly securitized discourse and praxis of human security, critical social movements help to redefine power and power relations in part by variously engaging in the politics of nonviolence, of resistance and delegitimation, of accountability, and of knowledge.[83] By avoiding the totalizing domesticating imperative of which securitized versions of human security seem enamored, movements help to incite to discourse new ways of thinking about human security that hold neither allegiance to the state as an ontological necessity nor commitment to the "inter-*nation*-al" perspective. Indeed, insofar as the securitization concept is inextricably bound to the notion of threats and dangers (notions central to modern discourses), perhaps words and concepts that hold positive connotations might be more conducive, where amelioration of the human condition is concerned. As Ken Booth has suggested:

> "Security" means the absence of threats. Emancipation is the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from those physical and human constraints which stop them from carrying out what they freely chose to do. War and the threat of war is one of those 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.[84]

Booth's proposition deserves more judicious attention than the attenuated discussion I offer here. For my aims, the following two points would suffice. First, the linking of Booth's emancipation notion to security concepts (i.e., comprehensive, cooperative, comprehensive, and human) in currency today, as the authors who cited Booth have done[85], subjects the emancipation notion to securitizing and depoliticizing effects so long as the realist/neoliberal predilection to an ontology of state remains embedded in human and other Asia-Pacific security discourses. In short, the emancipation notion itself needs, paradoxically, to be emancipated from its securitized state. By politicizing the boundaries of existing human security discourse and practice and, in turn, articulating and appropriating new political spaces for new kinds of practices, critical social movements point the way toward emancipation possibilities.

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[82] Andrew Linklater, "The Question of the Next Stage in International Relations Theory: A Critical-Theoretical Point of View," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* vol. 21, no. 1 (1992), p. 88.

[83] These are complex issues the elaboration of which is beyond the scope of this paper. See Walker, *One World, Many Worlds*, pp. 81-114.

[84] Ken Booth, "Security and Emancipation," *Review of International Studies* vol. 17, no. 1 (1991), p. 317. Quoted in Quadir and Shaw, "Southeast Asia in the Twenty-First Century," p. 177.

[85] Quadir and Shaw, "Southeast Asia in the Twenty-First Century," pp. 177-178.

To that end (or, perhaps more apropos, beginning), my second point is a caveat of sorts. Booth insists that it is emancipation, "not power or order," that produces "true security."[86] In so suggesting Booth seems to have adopted, knowingly or not, the liberal humanistic belief that emancipation defines a condition, whether attainable or idealized, wherein true freedom obtains only in the total absence of power. While the desire for such an end to all power is understandable in the light of the liberal proclivity to valuate power in negative terms, it nonetheless seems to me a fallacy to imagine the possibility of political thinking and acting *without* power.[87] After all, to speak of movements politicizing existing security discourses and deploying new modes of thought and action is to employ the language of power and of empowerment.[88] Indeed, it is to refer, ironically, to quasi-securitizing acts and statecraft-like practices as perpetrated by movements – insofar as power is involved – rather than by traditional intellectuals and practitioners of statecraft.

However, movements do not share the constant fixation of statesmen and other practitioners of statecraft to securitize the "borders" of their imagined communities through ceaseless and vigilant surveillance, the institutionalization of the use of force for maintaining order, and the taming of difference and danger both "inside" and "outside." Indeed, unlike state sovereignties, most movements dissolve almost immediately upon the accomplishment of their limited, even parochial, agendas – unless they regroup to resist, once again, newly emerging orthodoxies. Those that persist in their institutionalized states long after having met their original aims either aspire to the kind of ontological status reserved for state sovereignties, or they have been co-opted by the dominant IR and security discourses and legitimated as "international actors," but always as supplements to states-as-actors.[89]

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[86] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," p. 317.

[87] See the exchanges between Habermas, representing the liberal position of power-free emancipation, and Lyotard, representing the poststructuralist position that power is pervasive – a position that has incurred Habermas' accusation (erroneous, in my opinion) that poststructuralists are as such "neoconservatives." See, among others, the essay by Richard Rorty, "Habermas and Lyotard on Postmodernity," in Richard J. Bernstein, ed., *Habermas and Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), pp. 161-175.

[88] Walker, *One World, Many Worlds*, pp. 152-157.

[89] See, for example, Richard K. Ashley, "Untying the Sovereign State: A Double Reading of the Anarchy Problematique," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* vol. 17, no. 2 (1988), pp. 227-262.

Conclusion

The turn to securitization in the discourse of human security, as we have seen above, is a prominent discursive feature of statecraft for managing Asia-Pacific IR. Securitization thinkers wrestle with the important question of collective identity – an issue of particular significance to ongoing efforts to build community in the Asia-Pacific. But whose security and whose (and what) identity? Moreover, their explorations not only reflect a metaphysical or ontological commitment to the state; they also reflect a silence regarding their own "complicity" in producing truth and securitizing or sanitizing that truth from the effects of sustained critical questioning. That is, they participate egregiously in their own practices of statecraft to discipline the domain of human security, and of Asia-Pacific IR more generally. That they do so is, to an extent, surprising in the light of their commendable sensitivity to the contributions of various communities and forces in the ongoing production of truth. What I have adduced above, however, should not be taken as a judgment of the securitization concept, much less that of its articulators, especially Buzan. After all, securitization is a powerful explanatory and analytical concept for dealing with the fundamental issue of how something comes to be constituted and read as a threat, and which players are involved in its articulation. For this the thinkers of securitization – Buzan, Waever, etc. – are to be congratulated and urged on in their continuing efforts to refine and calibrate their concept. What I have simply done here is to highlight particular effects that the securitizing act fosters upon our understanding of the political world of Asia-Pacific through human security discourse – effects that mainstream IR and security studies literature cannot acknowledge without undermining their own foundations. The greater "danger," therefore, lies in the inability or refusal of those in the IR community beholden to longstanding IR categories to allow for new modes of political being and acting that are not domesticated by a state-centered discourse or framed by an embedded realism. A possible avenue of resistance and politicization, and thereby the "emancipating" of human concerns from existing securitized discourses, is that taken by critical social movements.

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