

Security with No Other - the Construction of Human Security

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Introduction

What makes something a security threat? What happens to the concept of security, when it against all expectations changes its focus from state to global level? Can the way we perceive security be changed?

During the past decades security has been a highly debated subject both politically and academically. This PhD takes its point of departure from this debate, focusing on the concept of human security as a radical reformulation of security.

The investigation will use the securitization theory developed by the Copenhagen School as basis for a discourse analysis of human security as a speech act, which tries to alter the way we perceive security.

Motivation

The field of security is undergoing a transformation. New reference objects, threats and solutions are being articulated, and new ways of studying security are suggested. All together these developments make a thorough investigation of their content, inconsistencies and consequences warranted.

The human security framework is, in this context, a field of development, which has received surprisingly little academic attention, considering the influence it has on international policy efforts. So far investigations of human security have evolved around three issues:

1. The applicability of a human security framework on specific problem areas in the world.¹

¹ Mingst, Karen A. & Margaret P. Karns (2007): *The United Nations in the 21st Century*. Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 211-238; Bajpai, Kanti (2003): The Idea of Human Security. *International Studies*, vol. 40, (no. 3.), 227; Hubert, Don (2004): An Idea that works in Practice. *Security Dialogue*, vol.

2. Human security as a new security agenda for the UN.²
3. A theoretical debate about the usability of human security as an academic concept.³

Some of the assessments made about human security are that it provides a more efficient policy tool than traditional security conceptualisations, that it is a necessary approach to achieve international peace, and that it answers the challenges of globalization. It has also been argued that human security gives us an appropriate tool for measuring security, that it is a more accurate description of reality, and even that it by instinct *feels* right.⁴

In contrast, the concept has been criticised for being so broad it has no analytical value, for just being the development agenda in a new guise, and for connecting to a dangerous political praxis of applying the security logic to areas that are better dealt with inside a conventional policy frame. Additionally, the argument that the praxis structure inherent in human security is pacifying humans by its inherent top-down approach has been made.⁵

However a coherent analysis of the construction and logic of the concept of human security is still missing. My aim is to create such an analysis, which I believe will benefit from the theoretical aspirations of the securitization theory, while at the same

35, (no. 3.), 351-52; Taylor Owen & Olav Slaymaker (2005). Toward Modeling Regionally Specific Human Security Using GIS: Case Study Cambodia. *Ambio*, vol. 34, (no. 6), 445-449; Kerr, Pauline, William Tow and Marianne Hanson: The Utility of the Human Security Agenda for Policy Makers', *Asian Journal of Political Science*, vol.11, no.2, December 2003, 89-114.

² Axworthy, Lloyd (2004): Human Security: An Opening for UN Reform? In Richard M. Price & Mark W. Zacher (eds.): *The United Nations and Global Security*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 245-259; Gasper, Des (2007): *Human Rights, Human Needs, Human Development, Human Security: Relationships between four international 'human' discourses*. The Hague: Institute of Social Studies; Knight, Andy (2005): The United Nations and International Security in the New Millennium. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, vol. 4, 517-541.

³ Taylor Owen (2004): Human Security – Conflict, Critique and Consensus: Colloquium Remarks and a Proposal for a Threshold-Based Definition. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 35, (no. 3.), 378-80; Buzan, Barry (2004): A Reductionist, Idealistic Notion that Adds Little Analytical Value. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 35, (no. 3.), 369-70; Paris, Roland (2004): Still an Inscrutable Concept. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 35, (no. 3.), 370-71; Paris, Roland (2001) Human Security. Paradigm Shift or Hot Air? *International Security*, vol. 26, (no. 2), 93-95; Krause, Keith (2004): The Key to a Powerful Agenda, if Properly Delimited. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 35, (no. 3.), 348-49.

⁴ Thomas, Caroline (2007): Globalization and Human Security. In *Globalization, Development and Human Security*, Anthony McGrew and Nana K. Poku (eds.). Cambridge: Polity Press. 107-131; Bajpai 2003; Gasper 2007; Knight, Andy (2005).

⁵ Pupavac, Vanessa (2005): Human Security and the rise of global therapeutic governance. *Conflict, Security and Development*, vol. 5, (no. 2), 161-81; Hampson, Fen Osler (2004): A Concept in Need of a Global Policy Response. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 35, (no. 3.), 349-50; Owen, Taylor (2004); Wæver, Ole (1997): *Concepts of Security*. København: Det Samfundsvidenskabelige Fakultets Reprocenter, 14-15; Aradau, Claudia (2006) Limits of security limits of politics. *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol. 9, (no. 1), 81-90; Duffield, Mark & Nicholas Waddell (2006): Securing Humans in a Dangerous World. *International Politics*, vol. 43, 1-23; McCormack, Tara (2007): From state of war to state of nature, i Christopher J. Bickerton, Phillip Cunliffe og Alexander Gourevitch (eds): *Politics without Sovereignty: A critique of contemporary international relations*. London: University College London Press, 87; Newman, Edward (2004): A Normatively Attractive but Analytically Weak Concept. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 35, (no. 3.), 358; Thomas, Nicholas & William T. Tow (2002): The Utility of Human Security: Sovereignty and Humanitarian Intervention. *Security Dialogue*, vol 33, (no. 2), 181; Rothschild, Emma (1995): What is Security? In *DÆDALUS: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 124, (no. 3.), 80.

time making a useful development of this theory. In contrast to the previous work done on human security, I believe that a two-sided analysis of the concept, both as a practical and a theoretical tool, would lead to much greater clarity as to what this concept entails, as well as its capacity to change the way security is perceived.

Another tendency that can be identified in the field surrounding security studies is a tacit agreement amongst many traditional security scholars and human security scholars, entailing a division of the field of security into two sectors: state security and human security.⁶ This allows each academic community to solely deal with their own sector. However this strategy is essentially conservative and does not reflect the current political efforts where the two concepts largely interconnect. Nor, does it provide any insights into how the security field is evolving. One of the main aspirations for this PhD is examining this interconnection, and the potential change in the security field, by relating human security to the wider field of security studies.

The project thus has relevance along several lines:

- It contributes to the theoretical development of the securitization theory.
- It provides insight into the assumptions and logic that human security rests upon.
- It participates in the discussion on where security studies are headed and adds to this discussion, by evaluating human security's position in the security field.
- It opens up the question of whether the way security is understood and practised today, is the only possible way.
- It puts emphasis on the choice policymakers and academics have to make when they practise security, by pointing to the inherent assumptions in any security approach.

Research problem

The three main questions the PhD aims to answer are:

1. **How can the theoretical framework of securitization incorporate new ways of perceiving security?**
2. **How is human security articulated and which assumptions and logic does it rely on?**
3. **Which potential does this reformulation of security have to change the way we perceive security?**

The PhD hereby aims to contribute to a theoretical development of the securitization theory, as well as to a better understanding of how human security is conceptualised, and which potential it has to change our perception of security.

⁶ Foong Khong, Yuen (2001): Human Security: A Shotgun Approach to Alleviating Human Misery? *Global Governance*, vol. 7, (no. 3), 231-237; Liotta, P.H. (2005): Through the Looking Glass: Creeping Vulnerabilities and the Reordering of Security. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 36, (no. 1), 49-70; Roberts, David (2006): Human Security or Human Insecurity? Moving the Debate Forward. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, (no. 2): 251.

The theoretical development is offset by the notion that the securitization framework in its original formulation has some limitations: It does not provide tools for analysing the articulated *logic* in representations of security and it is to a large extent unable to include *new* formulations of security. The wish to overcome these problems leads to a development of the theory in a more radical constructivist direction, with a stronger focus on semiotic structures and change.

The next aim is to make a discourse analysis of the concept of human security. The analysis of the logic articulated between referent objects, threats and responses, leads to the finding that human security is an articulation, which to a large extent breaks the rules we normally take for granted in security articulations.

The construction of referent objects in the human security articulation is that of a very general and all encompassing human community, and threats are seen as global and broad, reaching from terror to poverty, environmental degradation and HIV/Aids. Following this broad threat perception is the logical recommendation of equally broad responses.⁷

As such, human security rests on both a moral imperative of our common humanity and a logical imperative for a global and broad-based response. This constitutes a logic which is very different from the logic of binary us/them oppositions security articulations normally use. To a large extent, it is a construction of an identity with no Other.⁸

Subsequent to this analysis of the semiotic logic of human security, the PhD aims to evaluate the consequences of human security in relation to the broader security field. Since human security is both defined in academic and political praxis, this assessment evaluates human security as a theoretical framework as well as a political agenda.

The theoretical discussion focuses on human security's internal consistency and its relation to other surrounding theories. This section also includes a discussion of the security analyst as a security actor. The primary theories I wish to evaluate here are poststructuralist theory, gender theory and critical security studies, as these theories all have strong connections to human security theory. I aspire to answer how human security contributes to and benefits from the debate between these schools.

One of the conclusions reached here is that human security, as a theoretical frame, rests on highly political assumptions, with connotations to humanism and utilitarianism. But because this base is so broad, it might be one, which is in fact capable of uniting many scholars as a reasonable normative base. The next relevant question is then whether such a broad semiotic construction will have any theoretical authority in academic circles.

The discussion of human security's political consequences uses the securitization theory's ideas about the audience's accept of extraordinary means, and the context and conventions the security actors must act in relation to. What is the audience for human security? What speaks in favour of and what speaks against its acceptance of the concept? Do the enunciators of human security have sufficient power to affect the agenda of international relations? Does the articulation use a language that is too far

⁷ Philipsen, Lise (2008): *Globale trusler – international respons: En analyse af FN's konceptualisering af sikkerhed*. Institut for Statskundskab, Københavns Universitet.

⁸ Philipsen 2008.

away from traditional security language to be successful? And is it – in the end – even possible to succeed with a political project, which has only weak connotations to the binary oppositions we normally see, as the prerequisite for any linguistic praxis?

Theoretical considerations

My theoretical point of departure originates in a wish to apply the idea of security as a speech act, to the concept of human security. At the same time, it also aims to develop the securitization theory to render it applicable to other security issues and developments in the security field.

In many ways the securitization theory was developed in the context of the security climate existing at the time – this environment has now changed, calling for the securitization theory to be better able to include change and new ways of understanding security.

The securitization framework asserts that a widening of the security field is unwanted on two grounds:

1. On a theoretical level, it makes the concept too broad to be academically useful.⁹
2. On a political level, it constitutes a dangerous praxis of making the military and state centred language of security the sole terms by which we perceive any problems in international relations.¹⁰

Today, however, we see political actors pursuing this line of broadening the security logic to a wide spectre of areas. This leads to the question of how useful a theoretical framework, which refuses to include these developments, actually is.¹¹

I therefore aim to develop the securitization theory by giving it a stronger focus on change; a theoretical development equal to a more radical constructivism. I do this by developing the aspect of framing in the theory, which states that:

The process of securitization is what in language theory is called a speech act. It is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real; it is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done (like betting, giving a promise, naming a ship).¹²

Constructivist strategy

An analysis of how human security as a speech act challenges and attempts to change the way we perceive security, benefits from a constructivist approach. By asserting that everything must be understood as social constructs, constructivist theory supports the assertion that the way we understand security *can* change.

⁹ Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver & Jaap de Wilde (1998): *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 26-28.

¹⁰ Wæver 1997: 14-15; Wæver, Ole (2007): *Debat: Churchill og miljøets sikkerhed*. Kristeligt Dagblad 21/04/07.

¹¹ This is also partly beginning to be recognised. Wæver 2007.

¹² Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 26.

This stems from an understanding of power as both a positive, productive force and a negative disciplining force. Power is never entirely determining, but always comes along with resistance.¹³ In this vein, discourse is understood as the temporary fixation of contingent relations.¹⁴

Instead of seeing security as something, which can be measured and defined, this approach focuses on the creation of meaning in ongoing articulations.¹⁵ As Nietzsche puts it, *only that which has no history can be defined*¹⁶. The concept of security does indeed have a history, and this PhD examines exactly the praxis in which security is constructed. Only does it not focus on the history of the past, but examines how history is attempted changed at present.

Constructivists argue that we create meaning in the world by writing narratives, where some actors and events are portrayed as important, while others are exempt. An otherwise unintelligible, complex world is reduced and ordered into a more understandable logical whole.¹⁷ Along these lines, human security is one way of making security comprehensible.

Since the discursive field is fluid, open and impossible to fixate, there is room for political praxis and change. Discourse and politics are fundamentally intertwined, because the unstable character of the discourse is the precondition for politics. Any attempt to fixate linguistic relations through discursive articulation is political, and this battle to determine the discourse is exactly what constructivist research agendas focus on.¹⁸

A research strategy with focus on discourses rests on the assumption that we can not see the world as it is, but only have access to it through discourses. This does not mean that the outside world does not exist, only that we can not know what it is, because we only have access to these discursive representations.¹⁹ Discourse can thus be defined as:

Practices (words and other actions) which play an active role by giving phenomena meaning, by being inherently normative (that is, having inbuilt ideas about right and wrong) and by silencing (that is making it more difficult to understand the phenomenon in other ways).²⁰

Language plays a large role in the constitution of meaning in the constructivist ontology; as language constitutes what the object is to the subject. Discourses express

¹³ Torfing, Jakob (1999): *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Zizek*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers; Winther Jørgensen, Marianne & Louise Phillips (1999): *Diskursanalyse som teori og metode*. 1. udg. Frederiksberg: Roskilde Universitetsforlag: 23.

¹⁴ Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 1999: 69.

¹⁵ Winther Jørgensen & Phillips (1999), 13.

¹⁶ Nietzsche, Friedrich (1956): *The Birth of the Tragedy & The Genealogy of Morals*. New York, Doubleday, 212.

¹⁷ Malmvig, Helle (2002): *Sovereignty Intervened: Constitutions of State Sovereignty during Interventionary and Non-interventionary Practices in Kosovo and Algeria*. Copenhagen: Det Samfundsvidenskabelige Fakultets Repocenter, 14; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 1999: 14.

¹⁸ Åkerstrøm Andersen, Niels (1999): *Diskursive analysestrategier: Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann*. København: Nyt fra Samfundsvidenskaberne, 92; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 1999: 37.

¹⁹ Laclau, Ernesto & Chantal Mouffe (1985): *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso: 108.

²⁰ Collins, Alan (2007): Glossary. In Alan Collins (ed.) *Contemporary Security Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 421.

themselves in various ways, but are more easily recognisable in language, because the rationality of the discourse is made explicit here. While language constitutes the rules the discursive battle happens in reference to, it also provides a tool in the constant struggle to define reality. Linguistic representations are thus not only a reflection of reality, they also constitute reality.²¹

The discourse also fixates the production of subject positions, from where individuals or groups are in an authoritative position to create meaning. In international relations important subject positions are states, state leaders, diplomats and international security organisations, who are thought of as being capable of acting meaningfully in relation to security, war and peace. But the discourse also limits these subject positions – they cannot say anything and still expect to be taken seriously. The discourse, so to speak, provides the conditions of possibility for the actors.²²

Assumptions of the securitization theory

One of the main assumptions of the securitization theory is its objectivist approach to reference objects. While the theory has a constructivist attitude to the way threats and responses are constructed, it claims that reference objects will always securitize themselves and that the reference objects can largely be assumed to be states, nations or ethnic groups.²³ This focus on middle size entities is based on empirical observations and the argument that these entities are externally differentiated from others, while at the same time having an internal socially constructed identity.²⁴

The preference for certain reference objects creates a bias in the theory. To say that the creation of threats is a subject for investigation, while the creation of reference objects are not is, as David Campbell notes, a political choice:

We ... have to ... change the starting point for the debate in order to understand that the claim that some issues are political and others aren't is in itself highly political. To analyze the nature of claims in security discourses about what is security and how a security problem is a security problem appears to me one of the most politicizing projects one can conduct.²⁵

Exactly because of the political consequences of the chosen analytical framework, it is important to choose one that is capable of including as many articulations as possible: The broader the frame, the lower the risk of determining the outcome of the analysis. To make the reference objects entities, which can be established ahead of the analysis, means that you ignore the political battle wherein these objects are constituted, and consequently makes the theory unable to account for change.²⁶

I therefore propose to develop the securitization framework to include any kind of reference objects, only to be determined by the articulations in the given texts.

²¹ Shapiro, Michael J. (1989): Textualizing Global Politics. In: James Der Derian & Michael Shapiro (ed.): *International/Intertextual Relations*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 13-14.

²² Malmvig 2002: 15-16.

²³ Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998, 36-39, 205, 245; Wæver, Ole (1997), 349.

²⁴ Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 36-39.

²⁵ Campbell in Langskov 2002: 55.

²⁶ Huysmans, Jef (1998a): Revisiting Copenhagen: Or, On the creative Development of a Security Studies Agenda in Europe. *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 4, (no. 12), 494.

Another problem in the securitization framework is that it only focuses on successful securitizations. A successful securitization is conditioned on accept from the audience, sufficiently extraordinary means and the status of the securitizing actor. This again limits the possible speech acts to be examined. The evaluation of when a security articulation is accepted, which means are extraordinary enough and who has the sufficient power to securitize, adds a large amount of normativity into the analysis.

I do view these aspects of securitization as relevant factors to evaluate. However, in order not to determine the analysis from the outset, I evaluate these factors in a discussion subsequent to the identification of the discourse, rather than using them as criteria for when something can be analysed as a securitization.

My methodology, therefore, is to view discourse as a social phenomenon that is developed and changed through intersubjective negotiations and battles. This recognition of security as an ongoing battle acknowledges the importance of change and is essential, because the focus of this PhD project is on how the security concept is changed through discursive praxis.

A semiotic research strategy

This more radical constructivist approach however, amounts to a very wide and open theoretical framework. In order to achieve a more distinct theoretical frame, I use the linguist Norman Faircloughs critical discourse analysis. This framework has several advantages in relation to my research program: It has a focus on semiotic constructions and it is capable of analysing change by virtue of including the surrounding field of discourses. This is done by perceiving discursive praxis as consisting of three dimensions:

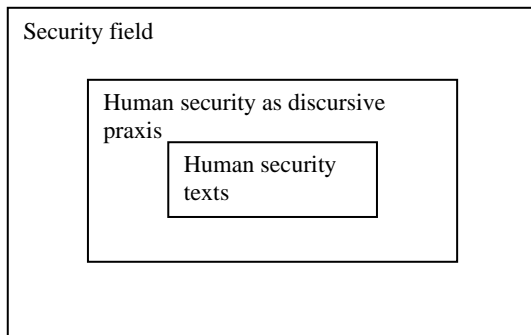
1. It is a text
2. It is a discursive praxis
3. It is a social praxis²⁷

The discursive praxis in this approach is seen as happening in relation to specific texts and in relation to the surrounding field. When analysing discourse, all these aspects must be included. The analysis therefore involves considerations of the semiotic and linguistic characteristics of the texts, the discourse and logic articulated in the text, and finally, considerations regarding to which degree the discursive praxis reproduces or changes the existing discursive order.²⁸

This framework can easily be appropriated to my research question, as illustrated below:

²⁷ Fairclough, Norman (2003): *Analysing Discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. London: Routledge, 3-9, 14; Chouliaraki, Lilie & Norman Fairclough (1999): *Discourse in late modernity – rethinking critical discourse analysis*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 38; Fairclough, Norman (1995): *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold, 54.

²⁸ Fairclough, Norman (2001): The Discourse of New Labour: critical discourse analysis, in M. Wetherall, S. Taylor & S. Yates (eds.) *Discourse as Data. A guide for analysis*. London: Sage, 241-42; Fairclough 2003: 35-38.



Research agenda

The articulation of human security is thus seen in lines of Fairclough's theory as a relation between single communicative events – texts²⁹ – and the social praxis surrounding it, here the security field.

Empirical considerations

The securitization framework states that dominant discourses are easily recognisable, as they constitute such powerful articulations that they will stand out in most media.³⁰ I use this assumption as a basis for a more structured selection of texts. This is done by applying a citation search showing which articles are generally the most used. These texts are then assumed to be the most dominant in the discourse.

Here a search for academic articles can be made by using the citation search in *Social Sciences Citation Index*. Besides this, I wish to look at some of the current published newspaper articles by proponents of human security. This can be done by searching citations in the international newspaper database *Factiva*. Also, I wish to make a selection of the most commonly used reports from the practitioners of human security. This can be done by using *Google Scholar* citation search, combined with the search machines of these institutions e.g. *UNBISnet*.

Finally, I would like to investigate spoken discourse by undertaking interviews with some of the actors who practice human security. This can point to whether human security is actually a concept used in daily praxis, or, if it is only a formal concept with no direct political effect.

Conclusions

The value of this PhD is first and foremost a thorough examination of the concept human security and its theoretical and political aspirations and possible consequences. This will lead to a better understanding of this complex concept and the way security studies are developing today. As stated above, research into human security so far has been scant and dispersed, lacking an analysis of the assumptions and logic this concept relies on, as well as a discussion of, what this reformulation of security might lead to.

²⁹ This happens in an evaluation of the organisation of the text, syntax, grammatical and semantic features and the use of words. Fairclough 2003: 89-116, 241-61.

³⁰ Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 177.

As a prerequisite for undertaking this analysis, a development of the securitization theory into a more radical constructivist direction that opens up for an analysis of change will be undertaken. I consider this theoretical framework, which is applicable to any conceptual security analysis, to be a substantial achievement of this PhD.

Security is generally defined by what creates insecurity - understood as the threats articulated in a given discourse. Security makes no sense without threats, and therefore the existence of insecurity is a precondition for security. In this way the two concepts are each other's conditions.

In the traditional security discourse, this dichotomy is the base the state's monopoly on violence is built on. Without insecurity and the state's role as a security creator, the state has no role. Human security builds on this dichotomy as well, but uses it in an argument for a shift of sovereignty away from the state. On basis of a claim that security threats today are global and interconnected, the concept of human security argues that security efforts must change to this level as well.

Besides this security/insecurity dichotomy, security articulations are usually supported by the construction of an identity community. The semiotic dichotomies used to create this community are typically identity/difference, inside/outside, self/other and universality/particularity, making a clear identity understood as being different from a radical other.³¹

In this way, security is traditionally closely linked to the construction of a national identity established in opposition to another identity – typically another national identity, or as under the Cold War, the West against the Communist Eastern bloc.³²

In the human security discourse, however, such clear identity constructions cannot be found. With humanity as a whole as the reference object, there is no clear Outside and no Other.³³ This articulation constitutes a radical reformulation of security. Not only does it reformulate the three categories of reference object, threats and solutions, it is also an attempt to completely dissolve the binary identity constructions that security is usually based upon. This identity construction, without an extreme Other to create a security community against, can be criticized for being a semantically weak security construction.³⁴

Instead, human security articulates binary oppositions between a complex security understanding and a simple one. The logic builds on an opposition between the much broader categories of pluralism, humanism, solidarity and universalism on one side and realism and nationalism on the other. And instead of the fear of an extreme other, it is the fear of complex and global threats that unite this identity community.³⁵

³¹ Walker, R. B. J. (1993): *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Campbell, David (1998): *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (2. ed.), Manchester, Manchester University Press.

³² Bartelson, Jens (1996): *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (reprint). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Hansen, Lene (1994): *The Conceptualization of Poststructuralist I.R. Theory*. København, Institut for Statskundskab, Københavns Universitet.

³³ Thomas & William 2002: 177-192.

³⁴ Barry Buzan 2004: 369-70.

³⁵ Makinda, Samuel M. (2005): Security in International Society: A Comment on Alex J. Bellamy and Matt McDonald. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 40, (no. 2), 275-288; Huysmans, Jef (1998b): The Question of the Limit. Desecuritisation and the Aesthetics of Horror in Political Realism. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 27, No. 3, 569-589; Philipsen 2008.

All together this makes for a very unclear and complex security definition, connected to the fact that human security is defined in both negative and positive terms: Security is seen, not only as the absence of threats, but also as the existence of a complex global network ranging from educated, healthy individuals to democratic states and the upkeep of a human rights regime, secured by the international community. Human security thus opens up the question of, whether it is possible to move beyond the construction of difference in identity formation.³⁶

In addition to these unclear binary oppositions, human security also has a very blurred theoretical background and seems to rely on both traditional security conceptualizations and critical ones alike. Human security is an articulation, which places itself in the midst of all the problems that the international society faces today, and claims to have a solution to them. Therefore it has to relate meaningfully to all these problem areas.

Theoretically, human security benefits from a closer connection to poststructuralist theory, because of the shared assumption that security is not a constant concept. However, the inherent normativity in human security is at odds with the empty ontology of constructivism. This incongruity also makes the relation between my own theoretical approach and the subject investigated a necessary discussion to take, since this approach obviously also comes with its own assumptions.

In relation to gender theory, both theories struggle with the same problems of pacifying the referent object, but also have the same advantage of making the powerful statement with reference to human suffering that the way we understand and practice security must change. However, from this direction, attempts to turn human security's top down approach around and thereby empowering the referent objects, have also been made. In this way, a stronger attachment to gender theory could be useful for human security.³⁷

The relation between human security and critical security studies is complex. Essentially, human security can be seen as an example of critical security studies, as it is a critical challenge to the way we understand security.³⁸ At the same time however, human security, in its all-inclusiveness, fails to give the powerful and clear statements of right and wrong that often characterise critical security studies.³⁹

Here human security has another inconsistency: Along with its insistence on a human referent object, it refuses to throw away all together the statecentric security logic. This paradox can partly be explained by a discrepancy between the idea structure and the praxis structure in the UN framework.⁴⁰ Whether this dilemma can be overcome is another important discussion to be taken in the evaluation of human security's ability to change the security field.

³⁶ Hall, Rodney B. (1999): *National Collective Identity: Social Constructs and International Systems*. New York: Columbia University Press; Rae, Heather (2002): *State Identity and the Homogenization of Peoples*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Sassen, Saskia (2006): *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

³⁷ Hoogensen, Gunhild & Kirsti Stuvøy (2006): *Gender, Resistance and Human Security*. *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, (no. 2), 207-228.

³⁸ Smith, Steve (2005): *Critical Explorations*. In Ken Booth (ed): *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

³⁹ Mutimer, David (2007): *Critical Security Studies*. In Alan Collins (ed.) *Contemporary Security Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 53-72.

⁴⁰ Foong Khong, Yuen 2001; Liotta, P.H. 2005; David Roberts 2006; McCormack 2007: 84-87.

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Bajpai, Kanti (2003): The Idea of Human Security. *International Studies*, vol. 40, (no. 3.), 227.

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