

European Security and Defence Forum Workshop 2:
New Transnational Security Challenges and Responses

Human Security as the One Size Fits All Policy Approach?

Marco Davì

MSc International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science

11 November 2009

This paper was presented at the European Security and Defence Forum (ESDF) organized by Chatham House. Chatham House is not responsible for the content of this paper.

The views expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of Chatham House, its staff, associates or Council. Chatham House is independent and owes no allegiance to any government or to any political body. It does not take institutional positions on policy issues. This document is issued on the understanding that if any extract is used, the author(s)/speaker(s) and Chatham House should be credited, preferably with the date of the publication or details of the event. Where this document refers to or reports statements made by speakers at an event every effort has been made to provide a fair representation of their views and opinions, but the ultimate responsibility for accuracy lies with this document's author(s). The published text of speeches and presentations may differ from delivery.

INTRODUCTION

The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) has undoubtedly proved to constitute an unprecedented area of supranational integration and intergovernmental cooperation, in the form of an exclusive security management institution (Keohane and Wallander, 1999). Central to the enduring success of this process is the convergence between the membership interests and strategic cultures generating a common understanding of contemporary trends and emerging challenges.

Since the launch and development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), now to be incorporated in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) envisaged by the Lisbon Treaty, the EU has demonstrated its capacity to act as a global actor in the realm of security affairs (Gnesotto, 2004; Menon, 2009; *pace* Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2003). The integration process in this peculiar area has generated extensive research aimed at understanding the underlying motivations and mechanisms of integration (Pollack, 2005); exploring its normative implications for democratic governance (Koenig-Archibugi, 2004); assessing its impact (Kupchan, 2000; Posen, 2006) and analyzing the institutional architecture, decision-making procedures and policy-making dynamics (Smith, 2004).

As the literature has highlighted (Bayles, 2008), a significant increase in the EU scope of action and engagement has been dovetailed by a concurrent elaboration and periodic review of a grand strategy document: the European Security Strategy (ESS, 2003). The ESS encapsulates the overall vision of the Union's foreign policy priorities, security posture and far-reaching integration objectives (ESS, 2003; ESS Implementation, 2008). If the engagement in the field necessarily reflects specific responses to contemporary crisis, the doctrinal elaboration conveys a broader understanding of the post-Cold War international system's distinctive political trends, emerging security threats, and further integration objectives, particularly in the (military, as well as civilian) capabilities domain, towards a future defense perspective.

Presently, at a critical juncture in international affairs represented by the latest progress in the EU integration, by a new cycle in Transatlantic relations (Walt, 2009), and by a process of negotiation for an adapted pan-European security architecture (Gebali, 2005), the question of the profile of an upgraded European security and defense policy, of its underlining capabilities, and of the guiding vision inspiring the EU global role emerges in all its salience. A discussion over the *notion* of security analysis the EU adopts serves the

purpose of problematizing the very nature of threats and risks in the post-bipolar world, in order to avoid an uncritical taken-for-grantedness of more traditional approaches.

In seeking to stimulate the debate in such sphere, this paper addresses a specific component of the EU security doctrine that reflects its broader understanding of contemporary challenges: the concept of *human security*, as translated into the ESDP grand strategy and operative posture (Merlingen and Ostrauskaité, 2006). This characterizing principle of the EU vision is significant, as it lies at the intersection of three essential dimensions affecting security policy: the *definition* of what constitutes a *risk* or *threat* to be addressed, the *agreement* upon its *urgency* among the EU membership, and the *identification* of the appropriate *responses*.

In fact, the overall discourse on 'EU and security' has been receptive of the perspective highlighted by and embedded in *human security*, that has served as a theoretical referent for the process of defining the strategic outlook of the Union. Drawing on Buzan and Hansen (2009:39-99; 223), it is possible to appreciate the mutually reinforcing link between the development of the concept, its mentioning in the European Security Strategy, and indeed the identification of the 'telos' of the EU security projection in the world (Kaldor, Martin and Selchow, 2007). This conceptual framework confirms the presence of a nexus between the elaboration of a specific 'EU way to security', the development of its external engagements, and the human security theoretical perspective: therefore, it does seem reasonable to argue for a certain degree of influence of such research project on the broader EU security policy debate (ESS, 2008; Kaldor, Martin and Selchow, 2007; Matlary, 2008).

Theoretical merits (Thomas and Tow, 2002) and adherence to the specificities of the global role of the EU (Telò, 2004; Bull, 1982) notwithstanding, is *human security* an effective analytical tool for properly understanding and aptly responding to contemporary security challenges?

The focus of this paper therefore concentrates on the *analytical approach* through which 'security' is understood, *threats* are identified, and *security policy*, that provides commensurate *responses*, is defined. The question of the theoretical perspective is critical, as it enables to capture the typology of challenges decision-makers are facing and the environment in which policy is implemented, by problematizing the nature, source, impact and magnitude of threats and offering an interpretative tool for analyzing empirical data. Furthermore, the choice of focusing on the theoretical means for capturing

security challenges, rather than on a check-list of security externalities, also enables to conceptualize the issue of the EU international position and of its security and defense policy as separated from the broader implications of both the Atlantic structures and the US role (Ikenberry, 2008; Caverley, 2007). To paraphrase Hugo Grotius in *De iure belli ac pacis* (1625), this paper will mostly argue '*Etsi NATO non daretur*'.

The paper proceeds as follows. After an introduction on the topic of *human security* as a component of the EU external projection and security discourse, a summary of its academic development is outlined. Subsequently, the paper presents the main criticisms to the concept advanced in the scholarly debate, contrasting the notion of *security* it embeds with the contribution made by *securitization theory* in the field of Security Studies. Finally, it assesses the impact of criticism and advances the argument for the inadequacy of *human security* as an analytical and interpretative perspective for organizing the reflection on security challenges, assisting the elaboration of doctrine and inspiring guidance for operational policy. The paper concludes with a recommendation for re-considering the emphasis placed on *human security*, as an overarching principle for security analysis, in favor of the adoption of a *securitization-based* approach, better equipped to provide an underpinning for policy-makers in terms of heuristics, flexibility, and effective coupling with the EU human rights principled stance. The contribution of *securitization* to a more comprehensive understanding, at national and EU level, of contemporary challenges is then briefly illustrated through examples from the pan-European security agenda and current peacebuilding exercises.

THE EVOLUTION OF SECURITY STUDIES: HUMAN SECURITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Security, although constituting an 'essentially contested concept' (Baldwin, 1997), could generally be defined as the pursuit of freedom from threat or risk (Keohane and Wallander, 1999:21-47). International Relations, as a discipline, has produced different theories conceptualizing this phenomenon along threats dynamics and effects, that have influenced in turn the policy responses to real-world conditions.

For the scope of this paper, it might be useful to summarize the context, both historical and academic, in which the concept of *human security* originated within the realm of International Security Studies before being incorporated into the policy formulation and doctrine elaboration (Buzan and Hansen, 2009).

Apart from some early cautionary notes on the elusive nature of *security* (Wolfers, 1952), this field of study mostly developed, within the mainstream realist tradition (Waltz, 1979), in the form of *material threat analysis* that focused on the military sector and on the state as the only significant actor in international politics, while emphasizing the direct proportionality between military capabilities and resources and threat emergence (Walt, 1991). This stream of thought generated an extensive research program (Strategic Studies) that extensively examined the domain of the use of force, the dynamics of the military sector, and disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

However, the last phase of the bipolar era unveiled the importance of other-than-military sources of threats, while concepts such as comprehensive and cooperative security were advanced in intergovernmental *fora* (Keohane and Wallander, 1999). Seminal contributions (Ullman, 1983) highlighted the relevance of other sectors for security policy, namely the environmental, although the rationale for identifying threats was maintained mostly in materialist terms. Despite the criticism of Strategic Studies advocates (Walt, 1991), a *widening move* developed in the literature, reflecting the progressive loss of preeminence of the military dimension and of the State in security affairs (Sheehan, 2005). Consistently with such turn in the field, the question of different sources of non-military threats led to the analysis of the related targets across different sectors, ranging from the environmental to the economic; from the political to the societal.

Human security appeared in the academic discourse precisely within International Security Studies' evolution from traditional materialistic threat

analysis (military capabilities determining threats) to a wider and deeper understanding of *what* constitutes a threat to *whom*. Moreover, human security reflected the concerns expressed by Critical Security Studies, regarding the level of analysis in identifying the nature of threats, fostering a move away from the inter-state level to the individual, with a distinctive normative and emancipatory aim (Booth, 1992; Sheehan, 2005).

The 1994 UNDP Human Development Report first introduced *human security* in the policy debate describing it as 'safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression' and 'protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life' (UNDP, 1994:23). Therefore, human security, positing the *individual* as the referent object of security, aims at the provision of the minimal condition in which individuals can pursue the fulfillment of human needs as a prelude for the full enjoyment of universal human rights (Kaldor, Martin, and Selchow, 2007).

In the post cold War security environment, as NATO confirmed its role in addressing traditional inter-state threats, the sharp increase of intra-state conflict (Eriksson and Wallensteen, 2004) in which the EU has been involved (Gheciu, 2008), in a broader context of evolution of war into warfare (Kaldor, 2006), has uniquely shaped the Union's understanding of its security (Waeber, 1998). Therefore, the ESDP developed a focus on *human security* to ensure the military and civilian means to meet challenges in post-conflict theaters (ESS, 2003). In fact, its missions have been pursuing different goals in specific theaters, but with a sort of 'specialization' that distinguishes the EU approach to crisis from the US one (Matlary, 2006). If surely this factor reflects the specific availability of capabilities and assets, and a tacit division of labor with NATO (concern of not duplicating the Alliance and hurting US sensitivities), it also constitute the result of the EU *Weltanschauung*, and its focus on the question of human vulnerability that proved to be domestically highly resonant.

Human security therefore has been discussed widely in the literature and has become a prominent reference in the discourse of international organizations and in the practice of actors engaged in post-conflict peacekeeping/peacebuilding or in mediation exercises (Suhrke, 1999). Furthermore, it is important to recall that *human security* may well be just a *concept*, but it nevertheless embodies a quite specific *theory*¹ of *what* 'security' *is*, at which *level* it should be located, of what is being *threatened*, of

1 Non-causal theory, as opposed to the hard positivist causal notion of 'theory' (Buzan and Waver, 2003:83-89).

the typology of *threats*, and of normatively-driven *policy implications*. In fact, the referent object is identified in the human being; threats emerge from a plurality of sectors and are to be understood at the individual level of analysis; the focus is mainly located within the state, the policy outlook is transformative; and the epistemological orientation is mostly empirical, in an attempt of measuring the concept of vulnerability (Buzan and Hansen, 2009:202-205). Therefore, if these aspects are taken into account, *human security* appears to be more than a concept and more than a prescriptive objective, but rather a *paradigm* through which 'security' is understood.

However, despite its analytical and prescriptive merits (McCormack, 2008), the notion of *security* embedded in such logic contains nevertheless a series of problematic questions. In particular, critics have underlined theoretical weaknesses, difficulties in measuring the concept as well as perplexities related to the opportunity of blurring the distinction with human rights.

In fact, taking the UNDP report as a convenient starting point for discussion, it is immediately clear that the scope of the definition is vast. Indeed, the list is so broad that 'it is difficult to determine what, if anything, might be excluded from the definition of human security' (Paris, 2001:90). Moreover, the interconnectedness between the *source* of threat and the *target-value* to be preserved, inherent to the broad conception of human security, conflates dependent and independent variables, leading to research operationalization difficulties. Thomas and Tow suggest that if human security is to become of analytical use it must provide 'tangible threat parameters' (2002:181). This, they admit leads to a position in which a threat hierarchy would emerge somehow arbitrarily. Bellamy and McDonald, in turn, emphasize that following this logic would endanger the comprehensiveness of human rights (2002:374). Finally, Paris (2001) identifies in the function of overarching label for the concerns of 'a jumbled coalition of 'middle power' states, development agencies and NGOs' (2001:88) another reason for the term's ambiguity.

Taking stock of the debate between critics and advocates of human security (Acharya, 2001; Glasius, 2008), it might be useful to challenge the very notion of 'security' it embeds, by introducing another stream of thought of International Security Studies, originated within the widening move with a distinctive constructivist stance (Farell, 2002; McDonald, 2008): *securitization theory*. (Buzan, Waever, and deWilde, 1998). Securitization theory is one of the projects moving traditional Strategic Studies away from 'objective' threat assessment to a wider, *process-oriented conception of security* (Buzan *et al.*, 1998), by looking at how a *securitizing actor* transforms an issue into an existential threat by means of a 'speech act' (Buzan *et al.*, 1998:21). The

process unfolds along a *continuum* stretching from normal politics to the realm of the 'existentially threatening' requiring exceptional measures. Moreover, after a successful securitization of an issue, this can be *desecuritized* and reversed into the dimension of normal politics, which is less conducive to violent conflict (Waever, 1995).

In most cases the object existentially threatened is the state (*referent object*), since it continues to be the main actor in international relations (Buzan, 2008 [1983]). However, the referent object may also be identity, the environment, a political system or the economy, each time at a specific level of analysis (global, regional or sub-state).

In order for the securitization to be successful, an *audience* (domestic public) needs to be convinced that the referent object is actually threatened. Conditions facilitating such acceptance are the form of the 'speech act' and of its illocutionary logic, the position of the securitizing actor and the conditions historically associated with the type of threat (Buzan *et al.* 1998:31-33). Consequently, threats are thought of as social phenomena not necessarily associated with a corresponding material reality: issues become a security threat not for any objective reason, but because they are constructed as such (Buzan *et al.* 1998:24).

A securitization approach presents a series of policy-relevant advantages arising from its theoretical design that actually reflect established practices in statecraft. First, it overcomes the unitary actor assumption of the 'billiard ball' (Wolfers, 1962:19) responding to external forces, as it allows the analyst to see the preferences and priorities of different actors within a state. Secondly, it proves to be flexible across sectors and levels, so to be employed in tracking security constellations encompassing different typology of actor, threats and response dynamics. Finally, it upgrades the notion of 'security dilemma' (Herz, 1950) generated by perception of threat and insecurity leading to an action/reaction inter-state dynamic: if a threat is conceptualized as a construction, as opposed to a material reality, then there is a possibility of desecuritization.

SECURITIZATION THEORY: AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH FOR POLICY

In light of the contribution of the constructivist research agenda to International Security Studies, it is possible to contrast *securitization* and *human security* as analytical tools for strategic thought. As far as the relationship between *human security* and *securitization theory* is concerned, a framework encompassing the essential dimensions of security enables a meaningful comparison between theories and concept originated in the academe (Buzan and Hansen, 2009). By isolating the dimensions of source of *threat*, *referent object*, position of the *state*, *sectors*, *epistemology*, and inherent view of security *policy*, it is possible to capture the elements of the different theories, or conceptualizations, put forward in the literature, highlighting relationships, derivations and divergences (Buzan and Hansen, 2009:8-34).

Following such approach, the research agenda of *human security* situates within International Security Studies as one of 'oppositional' orientation (Buzan and Hansen, 2009:13-14): 'security' is used to point out a *transformative* alternative to the *status quo*, namely *human rights protection*, to be pursued through the provision of 'freedom from threat' to the individual, enabling the fulfillment of basic human needs from a condition of vulnerability. Consequently, in spite of critical differences and even of epistemological incommensurabilities due to dichotomous alternatives (ad example, between positivist, reflectivist or radical post-positivist epistemologies), the *comparability* between different streams within International Security Studies can undoubtedly be sustained (Buzan and Hansen, 2009:262-265).

If the early criticisms of *human security* focused on aspects inherent to its conceptual paradigm, the *inter-paradigm* criticism from a *securitization* perspective intends not to simply subsume its inherent conceptual structure with an incommensurable theoretical alternative. Rather, its purpose is to stress the lack of a thick notion of 'security', beyond the simple objectivist translation of the traditional concept of 'freedom from threat', thereby furthering the theory's own argument. In fact, *human security*, by shifting the focus from the state-centric military sector towards the individual², innovatively *deepens* the level of analysis and *widens* the range of threats. However, it does not provide a re-conceptualization of 'security', retaining an objectivist and materialist notion, albeit at lower levels of analysis. From this

² I.e. the individual is identified as the referent to object of security, as opposed to the state (Sheehan, 2005).

consideration it then seems reasonable to identify further weaknesses by comparing *human security* with *securitization*.

First, by overlooking the *state* as an actor in the international arena, *human security* risks to underestimate the continuous importance of power politics in the globalized world and the role of the security dilemma. The EU, by developing a defense identity and by upgrading the scope of its foreign relations, might result in generating a security response by other powers, threatened not by its mere capabilities, but more on identity, legitimacy and ideology grounds (Clark, 2005). Consequently, the need for understanding and possibly managing this arising pattern points instead to the theoretical apparatus of *securitization* as this conveys a clear sense of *relationality* of security affairs, considers both *material and ideational* factors, and encompasses different *sectors*. For examples, the divergence in terms of human rights/liberal democracy might lead to a mutual sense of threat in the political sector, while issues of ethnic minorities might menace identity and create a sense of threat in the societal sector, along with the more traditional patterns of the military sector related to capabilities (Buzan and Waever, 2003; Giegerich, Pushkina, and Mount, 2006). Securitization thus provides a versatile tool for the whole spectrum of security relations, across the interplay of actor, sectors and levels.

Secondly, as a *securitization* approach shows (Buzan, Waever, deWilde, 1998; Sheehan, 2005), *human security* by deepening the level of analysis to the individual, paradoxically objectifies threats, missing the dimension of their relational social construction. Moreover, it is conducive to a legitimization of the proliferation of security claims as the arena of exceptional politics. These potential flaws might lead to a sub-optimal understanding of the security dynamics even in the field for which human security seems better designed for, namely peacekeeping/peacebuilding (Jarstad and Sisk, 2008). In fact, the notion of *security* so conveyed might unintendedly lead to perverse effects, by igniting a specific type of 'security dilemma' at the societal level that would compromise the goal of conflict resolution that human security's emancipatory stance actually seeks.

Consequently, this paper argues for an approach aimed at striking a balance between the traditional security concepts and a more constructivist perspective, at the level above the individual in order to avoid a sort of 'atomization' of security claims. A *securitization* perspective would enable to address the recurrence of power politics' threats (Buzan *et al.*, 1998), while understanding and possibly solving its socially constructed roots, underlining

the ultimate goal of 'desecuritizing' issues, rather than to characterize them in terms of existential threats.

In addition, *securitization theory* offers a more sophisticated explanation of how threats are perceived at the national level, transmitted, negotiated upon and finally Europeanized, to result in the EU security policy and operative decisions. Two examples from current affairs might illustrate the potential limits of human security and the versatility of securitization theory in expressing an analytical tool for understanding security challenges and guide policy responses.

First, at the more traditional inter-state level, considering the state of post-bipolar relations at the pan-European level, and specifically the foreseeable trends of EU-Russia relations, *securitization theory* offers a comprehensive depiction of the multidimensional constellation of security questions. It can in fact provide an explanation for the increased Russian concerns over both the proximity of material capabilities of the West, mainly through Atlantic enlargement, but also over the principled stance of the EU on human rights (Buzan and Waever, 2003), both as part of its direct engagement with Moscow, and as part of its Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) (Browning and Pertti, 2008). Furthermore, it can identify in energy relations a potential source of risks that the EU might be facing (Belkin, 2007), if the issue derails from a partnership negotiation agenda into a matter of confrontation. Finally, securitization captures the Georgia war of 2008 as a reminder of the lasting importance of military crisis and as proof of the resonance of the 'near abroad' in Russian foreign policy and identity. In comparison, *human security* can undoubtedly analyze the pattern of political violence, highlight major human rights violations and underline structural sources of insecurity and vulnerability, but seems less persuasive in its account of state behavior or even the identity dynamics in the post-Soviet space.

Secondly, at the sub-state level of societal violence and civil warfare, as in the case of the EU engagement in the Western Balkans, apart from capturing the unfolding of security relations among societal groups along ethnic lines, *securitization* also suggests a conflict resolution tool compatible with the democratization effort carried out after the initial direct interim-administration phase. In fact, a *desecuritizing move*, bringing back ethnic and societal relations into the realm of normal politics, is compatible with the promotion of human rights, democratic governance and consociational constitutional state structure carried out in liberal peacebuilding (Jarstad and Sisk, 2008).

Human security, albeit unintendedly, by theorizing *individual* security claims, might foster a proliferation of relations marked by an 'existentially exceptional' attribute. This in turn, instead of automatically generating a condition of respect for human rights, could actually create the potential for conflict. This drawback is due to the underconceptualized notion of *security*, seen as pertaining individuals rather than states in terms of precondition for human rights and not as the condition of 'exceptionality'. This point further underlines *human security's* intertwining with the normatively dense debate on humanitarian intervention and responsibility to protect in which human security is concerned (Gasper, 2005; Kaldor, Martin, and Selchow, 2007). In this respect, it has been suggested that what we gain from the human security discourse is that it allows 'human rights to be discussed in places where the term causes difficulties' (Buzan, 2004:370), since human security entails an 'emancipatory and empowering framework that gives sovereignty to people and challenges existing power frameworks' (McCormack, 2008:123). However, the use of the term *security* to promote human rights might prove redundant, unless human rights could become securitized as such, by a significant number of like-minded states, generating a 'macrosecuritization' in the political sector at a global scale (Buzan and Waever, 2009).

Summing up the argument so far, *securitization theory* proves to be able to provide explanations for the dynamics at the sub-state level, while retaining the coherence about its notion of security as a social construction arising from a 'speech act'. Moreover, it is an innovative approach, compared to material threat analysis, offering a richer understanding of international politics through its constructivist perspective, yet avoiding the transformational aim of the critical approach inherent to human security. Finally, through the idea of *desecuritizing move*, it allows for the return of issues in the realm of normal politics, which is compatible with a human rights based peacebuilding.

Instead, the *human security* perspective, despite capturing the nature of political and structural violence on vulnerable human beings, has the limit of casting solutions in terms of normative prescription (emancipation) and of showing some difficulty at providing explanations of security patterns stemming *from* the individual *to* superior levels. In fact, at the regional and global level of analysis, human security seems to lose its salience, while securitization enables for a full-range appreciation of security relations, while highlighting the intersubjective dynamic of threat construction.

CONCLUSION

Having assessed the debate around *human security* and its potential influence on the EU discourse in contrast with *securitization theory*, it is possible to outline some policy implications, in an attempt to bridge the 'two worlds of international relations' (Hill and Beshoff, 1994) - academics and practitioners - by summarizing the argument in favor of securitization as a convenient instrument for understanding new security challenges faced by the EU.

As a flexible tool for interpreting and systematizing intelligence data on possible threats or risks, *securitization* emphasizes the role of politics in critically modifying the profile of security relations: threats are not necessarily the product of mere material military capabilities or other tangible externalities, be it environmental, societal, economics or political. The social process of construction of the threat by means of security utterances, or securitizing moves, directed at an audience and literally defining *what* is menaced by *whom*, highlights the fact that security is the result of the casting of issues in the realm of the existentially threatening, taking it out from the agenda of normal politics. This means that threats might be less objective than expected, but also that not everything that constitutes a potential for violence will be treated as if it were a security concern. This will depend on the success of the securitizing move. In turn, the latter consideration leads to the fact that, as dynamic process, securitization can be *reverted*. Consequently, if a link between security and conflict can be drawn, then a possible tool for conflict management and resolution is to be found.

Therefore, the above characteristics of securitization show that this analytical tool is better equipped to assist policy formulation and implementation. First, it actually reflects an established practice in statecraft in dealing with security, i.e. dealing with perceptions, and actors' motivations, as well as on the spiraling model of action/reaction. Secondly, it brings politics back in, underlining both the relationality of security, and the responsibility for casting issues in 'Schmittian' exceptionality terms (Williams, 2003). Thirdly, it is able to operate with the whole range of sectors of human agency (economic, environmental, societal, political, and military) as well as at the different global, regional, sub-state levels. It avoids the danger of atomizing security by engaging at the individual level, while not normatively denying a role for human rights, since it is mostly a positive analytical tool. Fourthly, its sophisticated version of security is more amenable to actual translation in the policy debate, if compared with emancipatory Critical Studies, as it enables to track down security constellation and to appreciate the regional clustering of

security relations (Buzan and Waever, 2003). Securitization seems less prone to blur the scope of its inquiry with Conflict Studies and represents an innovative contribute compared to material threat analysis. As far as the limits of such an approach are concerned, it is fair to acknowledge the fact that it cannot explain the inherent reason for the inception of securitizing move by an actor. However, it still retains the analytical potential to account for the process, identifying and separating threats, referent object, and the dualism 'actor-audience' within the 'speech act'.

In conclusion, this paper has highlighted a few potential weaknesses regarding *human security* as an analytical instrument and as an overarching approach for understanding contemporary challenges that EU is facing, in relation to the development and implementation of its security identity and role. Despite aptly capturing violence dynamic in the post-bipolar world, being highly resonant in domestic politics, and normatively suggesting objectives for intervention, human security results in being problematic. Its notion of security retains an objectivist stance, without providing an explanation for the *process* of emergence of threats, as well as in defining the referent for the threat and in legitimizing a proliferation of the sources of vulnerability. If contrasted with securitization theory, its focus on the individual leads to a proliferation of security utterances (Buzan *et al.*, 1998) and makes it unsuitable to operate across the whole *spectrum* of sectors and levels, weakening its internal coherence. Moreover, the normative implication for human security seems to unintendedly blur the too important domain of human rights and to interfere with Conflict Studies and humanitarian intervention. Finally, even in the dimension in which human security seems better equipped to provide a policy guidance, namely post-conflict theaters, its unproblematic notion of security might endanger the ultimate goal of peacebuilding. In fact, contrary to securitization, the emphasis on individual security claims, instead of a simple respect for human rights, might propel instability by casting issues in the domain of the 'existentially threatening'.

In light of the aforementioned shortcomings, this paper argues for *securitization* as more suitable approach to security policy, particularly for an actor such as the EU, involved in a series of commitments aiming at peace consolidation, and facing a full range of possible challenges: from non-state actor violence, state failing, and ethnic strife, to more traditional power politics.

In the complex, interdependent global security environment of today, apt analytical tools assisting the elaboration of policy translate into an effective identification of threats, risk, and in the preparation of commensurate

responses. As a *sui generis* actor simultaneously representing an unprecedented post-modern evolution of international politics (Cooper, 2003), the EU has the unique possibility of experimenting an equally innovative approach to security affairs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acharya, A. 'Human Security: East versus West', *International Journal*, 2001, 56:3, 442-460
- Bailes, A. J. K. 'The EU and a 'better world': what role for the European Security and Defence Policy?', *International Affairs*, 2008, 84:1, 115-130
- Baldwin, D. A. 'The Concept of Security', *Review of International Studies*, 1997, 23:1, 5-26
- Belkin, P. 'The European Union's Energy Security Challenges', Congressional Report, Congressional Research Service, Washington DC, 2007
- Bellamy A. J., McDoanld, M. "The Utility of Human Security': Which Humans? What Security? A Reply to Thomas and Tow', *Security Dialogue*, 2002, 33:3, 373-377
- Booth, K. 'Security in Anarchy: Utopian Realism in Theory and Practice', *International Affairs*, 1992, 67:2, 527-545
- Browning, C. H., Pertti, J. 'Geostrategies of the European Neighbourhood Policy', *European Journal of International Relations*, 2008, 14:3, 519-555
- Bull, H. 'Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1982, 21:2, 149-170
- Buzan, B. and Hansen, L. *The evolution of international security studies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009
- Buzan, B., Wæver O. 'Macrosecuritisation and security constellations: reconsidering scale in securitisation theory', *Review of International Studies*, 2009, 35:2, 253-276
- Buzan, B. *People, States, and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, Colchester, European Consortium for Political Research Press, 2008 (1983)
- Buzan, B. *The United States and the Great Powers*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 200
- Buzan, B. and Wæver, O. *Regions and powers: the structure of international security*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003
- Buzan, B., Wæver O. and de Wilde, J. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Lynne Rienner, 1998
- Caverley, J. 'United States Hegemony and the New Economics of Defense', *Security Studies*, 2007, 16:4, 598-613
- Cerny, P. 'The New Security Dilemma: divisibility, defection and disorder in the global era', *Review of International Studies*, 2000, 26:4, 623-646
- Clark, I. *Legitimacy in international society*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005

- Cooper, R. *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-first Century*, London, Atlantic Books, 2003
- Cornish, P., Edwards, G. 'The strategic culture of the European Union: a progress report', *International Affairs*, 2005, 81:4, 801-820
- De Larrinaga, M., Doucet, M. G. 'Sovereign Power and the Biopolitics of Human Security', *Security Dialogue*, 2008, 39:5, 517-537
- Dunne T., Wheeler, N.J. 'We the Peoples': Contending Discourses of Security in Human Rights Theory and Practice', *International Relations*, 2004, 18:1, 9-23
- Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, M. 'Why a Common Security and Defence Policy is Bad for Europe', *Survival*, 2003, 45:4, 193-206
- Eriksson, M. and Wallensteen, P. 'Armed Conflict 1989-2003', *Journal of Peace Research*, 2004, 41:5, 625-636
- European Union High Representative for CFSP 'A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy', Brussels, 12 December 2003
- European Union High Representative for CFSP 'Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: providing security in a changing world', Brussels, 12 December 2008
- Farrell, T. 'Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of a Research Program', *International Studies Review*, 2002, 4:1, 49-72
- Gasper, D. 'Human Rights, Human Needs, Human Development, Human Security: relationships Between Four International 'Human' Discourses', *Institute of Social Studies Working Papers*, 2007, 445
- Gasper, D. 'Securing Humanity: Situating 'Human Security' as Concept and Discourse', *Journal of Human Development*, 2005, 6:2, 221-245
- Gebali, V.-Y. 'Growing Pains at the OSCE: The Rise and Fall of Russia's Pan-European Expectations', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2005, 18:3, 375-388
- Gheciu, A. *Securing civilization? The EU, NATO, and the OSCE in the post-9/11 world*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008
- Giegerich, B., Pushkina, D., Mount, A. 'Towards a Strategic Partnership? The US and Russian Response to the European Security and Defence Policy', *Security Dialogue*, 2006, 37:3, 385-407
- Giegerich B. 'Not Such a Soft Power: The External Deployment of European Forces', *Survival*, 2004, 46:2, 163-182
- Glasius, M. 'Human Security from Paradigm Shift to Operationalisation: Job Description for a Human Security Worker', *Security Dialogue*, 2008, 39:1, 31-54
- Gnesotto, N. (ed.) *EU Security and Defence Policy: The First 5 Years (1999-2004)*, EUISS, 2004

- Hagman, H. C. 'European Crisis Management and Defence: The Search for Capabilities', *Adelphi Paper*, 2002, 353
- Hertz, J. 'Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, 2:2, 1950, 157-180
- Hill, C. and Beshoff, P. *Two worlds of international relations: academics, practitioners and the trade in ideas*, London, Routledge, 1994
- Ikenberry, G. J. (2008) 'State power and international institutions: America and the logic of economic and security multilateralism' in Bourantonis, D., Ifantis, K., Tsakonas, P. I. (eds.) *Multilateralism and security institutions in an era of globalization*, London, Routledge, 2008, 21-42
- Jarstad, A. K. and Sisk, T. D. (eds.) *From war to democracy: dilemmas of peacebuilding*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008
- Jones, S. G. 'The Rise of a European Defense', *Political Science Quarterly*, 2006, 121:2, 241-267
- Kaldor, M. *New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Global Era*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2006
- Kaldor, M., Martin, M. and Selchow, S., 'Human Security: A New Strategic Narrative for Europe', *International Affairs*, 2007, 83:2, 273-288
- Keohane, R.O. and Wallander, C.A. (1999) 'Risk, threat and security institutions' in Haftendorn, H., Keohane, R.O. and Wallander, C.A. (eds) *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, 21-47
- King, G., Murray, C. J. L. 'Rethinking Human Security', *Political Science Quarterly*, 2001, 116:4, 585-610
- Koenig-Archibugi, M. 'International Governance as New Raison d'État? The Case of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy', *European Journal of International Relations*, 2004, 10:2, 147-188
- Kupchan, C. A. 'In Defence of European Defence: An American Perspective', *Survival*, 2000, 42:2, 16-32
- Manners, I. 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2002, 40:2, 235-258
- Matlary, J., 'When Soft Power Turns Hard: Is an EU Strategic Culture Possible?', *Security Dialogue*, 2006, 7:1, 105-121
- Matlary, J. 'Much ado about little: the EU and human security', *International Affairs*, 2008, 84:1, 131-143
- McCormack, T. 'Power and agency in the human security framework', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2008, 21:1, 113-128
- McDonald, M. 'Securitization and the Construction of Security', *European Journal of International Relations*, 2008, 14:4, 563-587

- Menon, A. 'Empowering Paradise? The ESDP at Ten', *International Affairs*, 2009, 85:2, 227-246
- Merlingen, M. and Ostrauskaité, R. *European Union Peacebuilding and Policing: Governance and the European Security and Defence Policy*, London, Routledge, 2006
- Merlingen, M., and Ostrauskaité, R. 'ESDP Police Missions: Meaning, Context and Operational Challenges', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 2005, 10:2, 215-235
- Mörth, U., and Britz, M. 'European Integration as Organizing: The Case of Armaments', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2004, 42:5, 957-973
- Paris, R. 'Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?', *International Security*, 2001, 26:2, 87-102
- Pollack, M. A. 'Theorizing the European Union: International Organization, Domestic Polity, or Experiment in New Governance?', 2005, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 8:3, 57-98
- Posen, B. R. 'European Union Security and Defense Policy: Response to Unipolarity?', *Security Studies*, 2006, 15:2, 149-186
- Salmon, T. 'The European Union: Just an alliance or a military alliance?', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 2006, 29:5, 813-842
- Sheehan, M. *International Security: An Analytical Survey*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 2005
- Smith, M. E. 'Institutionalization, Policy Adaptation and European Foreign Policy Cooperation', *European Journal of International Relations*, 2004, 10:1, 95-136
- Suhrke, A. 'Human Security and the Interests of States', *Security Dialogue*, 1999, 30:3, 265-276
- Telò, M. *L'Europa potenza civile*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2004
- Thomas, N., Tow, W.T. 'The Utility of Human Security: Sovereignty and Humanitarian Intervention', *Security Dialogue*, 2002, 33:2, 177-192
- Ullman, R. 'Redefining Security', *International Security*, 1983, 8:1, 129-153
- United Nation Development Program (UNDP), *UNDP Human Development Report*, NewYork, 1994
- Walt, S. M. 'Alliances in a unipolar world', *World Politics*, 2009, 61:1, 86-120
- Walt, S. M. 'The Renaissance of Security Studies', *International Studies Quarterly*, 1991, 35:2, 211-239
- Waltz, K. N. *Theory of international politics*, Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley, 1979
- Wæver, O. 'Security, insecurity, and asecurity in the West European non-war community', in Adler, E. and Barnett, M. (eds.) *Security Communities*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, 69-118

Wæver, O. 'Securitization and Desecuritization' in Ronnie Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security*, NY, Columbia University Press, 1995

Williams, M. C. 'Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics', *International Studies Quarterly*, 2003, 47:4, 511-531

Wolfers, A. *Discord and Collaboration*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962

Wolfers, A. 'National Security' as an Ambiguous Symbol', *Political Science Quarterly*, 1952, 67:4, 481-502