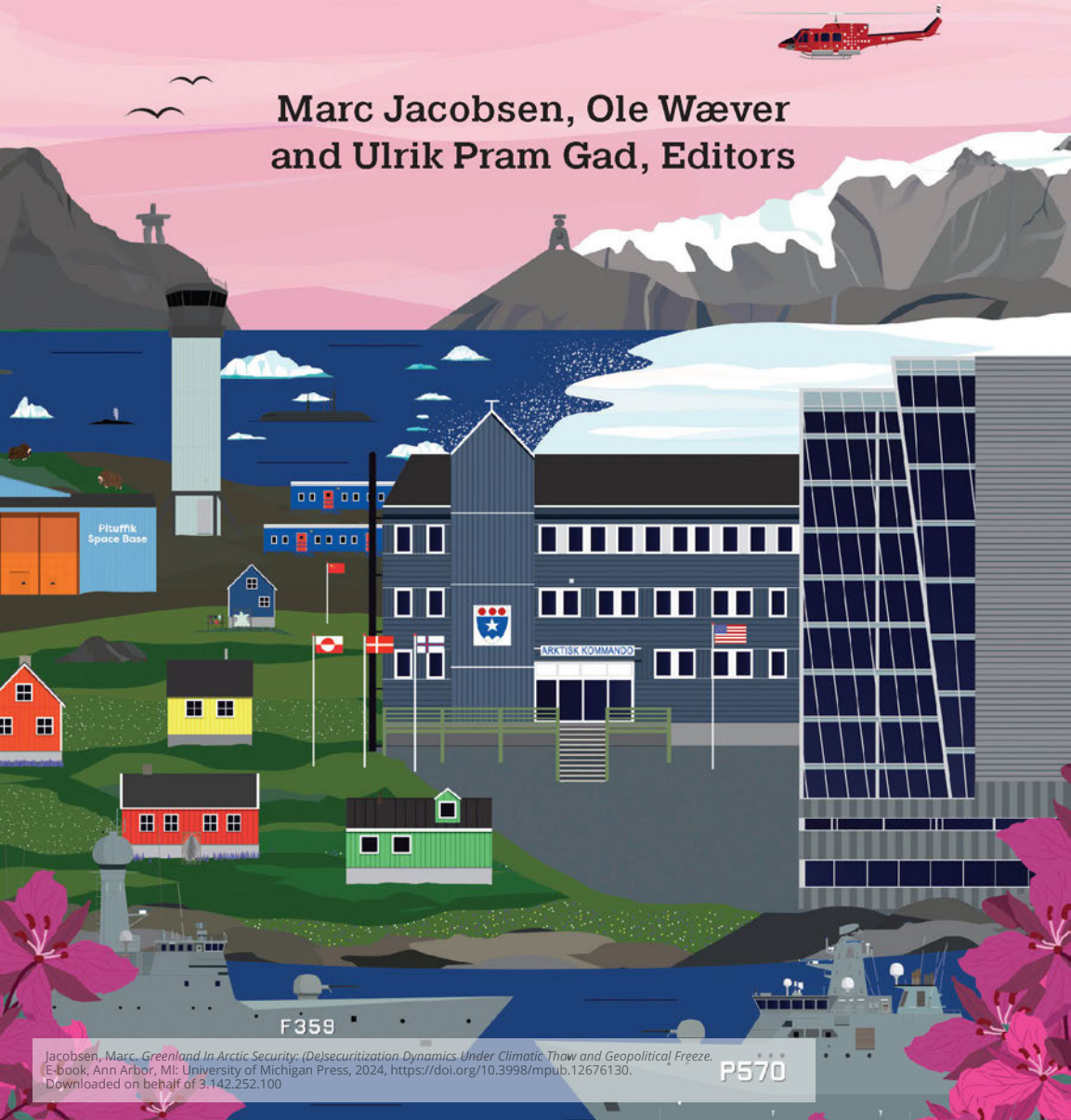


Greenland in Arctic Security

(De)securitization Dynamics under Climatic Thaw and Geopolitical Freeze

Marc Jacobsen, Ole Wæver
and Ulrik Pram Gad, Editors



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*Edited by Marc Jacobsen, Ole Wæver,
and Ulrik Pram Gad*

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Preface

This edited volume started as a welcome social and intellectual network in the spring of 2020, when COVID-19 changed our daily routines and limited our physical engagements to restricted social ‘bubbles’ as instigated by successful securitizations throughout most of the world. In the beginning, we therefore only met online, where one full-day workshop in particular kicked off the project, whereas the second full-day author workshop was a hybrid event held in connection with the conference *Greenland-Denmark 1721+300=2021* in June 2021. In between those two occasions, several of the chapters were also reviewed by peers at University of Copenhagen’s Centre for Advanced Security Theory (CAST) where especially Christian Bueger, Olaf Corry, Jakob Dreyer, Charlotte Epstein, Lise Philipsen, and Anders Wivel provided eye-opening comments on our theoretical ideas and the structure of the book. Similarly, we are particularly indebted to discussions with our chapter contributors and in a joint LSE/DIIS workshop directed by Stefano Guzzini, as well as to comments from the two anonymous reviewers for the University of Michigan Press. Empirically, the book gained a lot from dedicated panels at the ICASS IX conference and from two seminars at Cambridge University’s Scott Polar Research Institute, where Michael Bravo, Nanna Kaalund, and Richard Powell made weighty contributions. We are very grateful for all the comments received!

As we made the last finishing touches on the manuscript in the beginning of 2022, Russia reinvaded Ukraine. Whereas that changed the immediate future for Arctic cooperation, we find that it has not really shaken neither the analyses conveyed by the chapters included in the volume nor the theoretical and methodological points we make in the introductory and concluding chapters. In that sense, we pride ourselves that it pays off to focus analyses on theoretically important cases and approach them in a methodologically informed ways, rather

than chasing day-to-day events. Moreover, we maintain that even if some events have moved on, all the analyses included remain relevant, exactly because they were devised to uncover dynamics that will remain fundamental to understanding Greenland in Arctic security, no matter if the dynamics in question have since progressed through yet another empirical twist or turn.

Lastly, we would also like to thank the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) and the Royal Danish Defence College (RDDC) for their support of the project, as well as the Carlsberg Foundation for funding Marc's work during his postdoc at University of Cambridge. The student assistants at DIIS and RDDC, Malu Rosing and Anna Albinus Skadhede, also deserve a special thanks for their assistance. A few of the figures in the book are reproduced with permission from the Copenhagen School authors, on whose shoulders we stand, and their original publishers. New figures invented and developed for this volume were professionally redrawn by Cecilie Jacobsen. Malu Rosing and Signe Lyngholm Lindbjerg prepared the index for the volume.

Copenhagen, April 2023

Marc Jacobsen, Ole Wæver, and Ulrik Pram Gad

1 | Introduction

Analyzing Greenland in Arctic Security

Marc Jacobsen, Ole Wæver, and Ulrik Pram Gad

Analyzing the Greenland Security Configuration

As the Arctic is getting warmer, ice at sea and on land is melting. Great powers appear ready to conflict over resources appearing from under the ice. Science tells us about this climatic thaw already happening; much commentary and great power strategies want us to believe that a geopolitical freeze is inevitable. Either way, the Arctic region we have known since the end of the Cold War may not be recognizable for much longer. Within these tectonic changes, Greenland is home to the one polity most difficult to fit in traditional categories of international relations theory: the world's largest island formally belongs to Denmark, but the political autonomy of the Greenlandic nation as well as American strategic engagement make Danish sovereignty ambiguous. Moreover, Greenland is the most dynamic piece in the new Arctic jigsaw puzzle: insisting on a course toward statehood, hoping to be able to juggle relations to more metropolises without falling unilaterally under U.S. supremacy. Hence, for a nation of 56,000, Greenlandic security politics might prove surprisingly disruptive, if not to Arctic security as such, then for received ideas of the region and of how security unfolds. With this volume, we offer a fuller and more precise understanding of where Greenland wants to go, but also the limitations to this ambitious polity put by the new Arctic. Our contention is that even if Greenland presents us with a unique clash of scales and ambitions, the way Greenland twists Arctic security provides valuable lessons for how we should approach security in other places off the beaten path in terms of geo-

physical territory, geopolitical position, colonial history, formal sovereignty, and political identity.

To better grasp the role of Greenland in Arctic security—both moving targets—this volume reboots our understanding by presenting an analysis that identifies security dynamics from scratch rather than accepting established labels. Specifically, we look for processes of securitization, that is, how issues and identities in and related to Greenland are elevated to a privileged security agenda, and processes of desecuritization, that is, how these issues and identities may again be allowed back into the humdrum of normal politics or fade to uncontroversial background. Working with the securitization theory (ST) of the so-called Copenhagen School proves fruitful for our understanding of Arctic and Greenlandic security. This theory allows our volume to connect case studies across scales, taking perspectives from great powers to hunters along the coast of Greenland; across sectors, from geopolitical rivalry and climate change to identities, national and Indigenous; and across time, from coloniality to postcoloniality. In sum, we seek to account for and relate all the security dynamics framing Greenland or, in short, portray Greenland as a security configuration.

We also claim, however, that Greenland as an object of analysis provides new insights to the theory. First, the Arctic—centered on an ice-covered yet melting ocean—triggers rethinking of how ST approaches security regions, land-based as default. Second, Greenland—hybrid in terms of sovereignty and transitional in terms of political identity—provides a productive contrast to the standard image of how securitizations tend to ‘freeze’ what it seeks to protect. Theoretically, the analyses set new focus on the potential of securitization theory for understanding how security problems may trigger each other across issues and geography. In other words, the analyses show how ‘mid-range’ security dynamics may unfold between, on the one hand, individual instances of turning something into a security problem, and, on the other hand, grand structures of regional and global security.

As a brief introduction to how wildly differing security dynamics entangle in Greenland, consider the national elections called in the spring of 2021. The trigger for the snap elections was a dispute over whether a potential mining project near the southern town of Narsaq (pop. 2,000) should be allowed or not. Those against felt their livelihood and the natural environment it relies on would be threatened by radioactive tailings and chemicals to be left behind by the mining. Those in favor argued that the extraordinary decision to mine away a

mountain in the middle of a green agricultural district just outside the city limits was necessary to expel the greater evils of regional economic decline and national dependency on Danish subsidies. International media coverage, however, focused mainly on the potential geopolitical implications of the project's realization and of its cancellation. Even though uranium was what drove the local opposition, the company promoted its project as primarily driven by rare earth elements (REE), a commodity pivotal for the technologies that should supplant the fossil fuels changing the Arctic and global climate. REE, however, are also essential for advanced weapon technologies, and the global supplies are largely monopolized by China. Moreover, one of the largest shareholders in the project, located on the North American continent in a territory central to American defense, is a Chinese company with close connections to the state. Thus the election provided a condensed insight into a fine selection of the most important security problematics involving Greenland, covering the full spectrum of soft and hard security politics across most scales and sectors, from local community development and national identity to the international politics and climate of the Arctic and the globe. While the results of the election may have put this particular uranium-infused mining project on hold, Greenland's new government is eager to initiate other mining projects and remains open to investments from China.

The external attention and its security aspects in Greenland and the Arctic also remain intact, providing the Government of Greenland with both new opportunities and risks. This context was clear in the agreement forming a new government coalition after the election. Here, the parties involved stated that “Based on Greenland's geographic location in the Arctic, we will demand greater influence on defense policy. We want to emphasize that . . . nothing can happen about us, without us” (Egede and Enoksen 2021, 14; translation by the author). With this, the new government reiterated a longstanding Greenlandic demand for more foreign policy autonomy, especially when the Arctic is on the agenda (Jacobsen 2019, 2020; Gad 2017). But the text contained more explosives. Tucked in between the reiterated demands for inclusion was a seemingly more radical demand: “We want to emphasize that Greenland must be demilitarized.” Danish observers read this as a frontal attack against the long history of U.S. military presence and the recent American urge to upgrade military capabilities on the island. Later, the Greenlandic minister for foreign affairs clarified that the demand was primarily aimed at the tiny Danish armed forces pres-

ence, only to be relieved of his portfolio, leaving the Greenlandic position unclear for the moment.

The renewed American attention toward Greenland became exceptionally clear to the public in the summer of 2019, when then U.S. president Donald Trump expressed a wish to purchase the island. But behind the scenes both the State Department and the Pentagon had long been gearing up to ensure that Greenland would see the United States as a friend and hence support upgrades to U.S. defenses against reinvigorated Russian military installations in the Arctic and refrain from allowing Chinese infrastructure and influence in Greenland. On the face of it, intensified superpower rhetoric points toward a security dilemma in which mutual mistrust and insecurity accelerate great power competition and continuous (re)armament on both sides. In such a process, there would as a default be little room for other security concerns, and voices of minor powers would be drowned out by military rumble.

The catalyst behind this geopolitical freeze is, of course, the great climatic thaw (Bruun and Medby 2014). The temperatures in the Arctic are now rising at a speed three times the global average (AMAP 2021). The consequences, some already materializing but particularly those projected in the future, of rising temperatures are stimulating a multitude of other security issues relevant in Greenland and globally. For instance, vanishing ice threatens the living conditions for a wide range of Arctic animals and traditional hunters, while rising sea levels—caused by the melting inland ice sheet—threaten low-lying coastal cities around the world (Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2, this vol.). But also this is more complex. Other natural resources become more easily accessible, hence giving way for new business adventures boosting the local economy, thereby indirectly making Greenlandic independence more credible and, hence, indirectly threatening Danish sovereignty.

Often, these security dynamics are analyzed separately. In order to provide a comprehensive overview of what constitutes Greenland as a security configuration, this book adopts a widened security approach bringing together the securitizations and desecuritizations in and in relation to Greenland. Crucially, it brings these dynamics together equipped with an analytical framework, the one provided by the Copenhagen School's securitization theory (ST), which is uniquely devised to observe not just how similar dynamics may unfold in parallel, but also how they are entangled: security does not just *also* unfold

in the environmental sector. The way security unfolds in the environmental sector may be intimately linked to how security unfolds in relation to identities, and identity security may hook up decisively with more traditional securitizations involving sovereignty and armed forces. Moreover, given adequate attention, the theory involves tools for analyzing how these entanglements may shape the overall security landscape in a place like Greenland and in a region like the Arctic.

To prepare for the chapters analyzing these hard and soft security dynamics in and around Greenland and how they relate across sectors and scales, this introductory chapter reviews the state of the art in Arctic international relations scholarship and the place securitization theory holds in this; introduces the core idea and analytical concepts of securitization theory; and discusses how best to conceptualize Arctic and Greenlandic security in terms of the theory. Finally, the chapters that make up the remainder of the volume are introduced.

Securitization Theory in Arctic International Relations

What may today be characterized as a distinct scholarly debate on ‘Arctic IR’ emerged toward the end of the Cold War when the Arctic became a vital strategic arena to both the U.S. and USSR (Young 1985, 160). The first attempt to approach the Arctic with more than a descriptive ambition was probably Oran Young’s contributions to the general development of institutionalist theory drawing on empirical data from the region (Hønneland 2013, xv–xvi). In many of Young’s publications, the 1990s’ rapid regional institutionalization served as recurrent examples on how to cultivate good relations across the old East-West divide with the common purpose of addressing pollution problems—as emphasized by the creation of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy in 1991—and working toward sustainable development, which constitutes the main pillar of the Arctic Council, established in 1996. Following the mushrooming of Arctic institutions, some of the first studies focused on their mandate and memberships and how social interaction supplemented rights and rules in the creation of mutual trust (Stokke 1990; Young 1998). The Arctic Council quickly caught the particular attention of political scientists and legal scholars, who emphasized its importance to constructive interstate cooperation (Byers 2009, 2013; Koivurova 2010), as well as the important roles of nonstate actors such as Indigenous peoples and NGOs within this leading institution, and in

cross-regional diplomacy more generally (Knecht 2017; Loukacheva 2009; Rowe 2018; Shadian 2010, 2017; Tennberg 1996, 2010, 2012; Wehrmann 2017). What this strand of scholarship has in common is a central belief that plus-sum absolute gains have replaced zero-sum relative gains after the end of the Cold War (Osherenko and Young 2005).

Lately, however, scholars who in contrast subscribe to a zero-sum logic emphasize how national power trumps institutional cooperation in the overarching aim of protecting national security and sovereignty. This realist perspective especially gained support following the infamous planting of the Russian flag on the geographic North Pole in August 2007, arguing that it signified a return to classical power politics and growing militarization that could stimulate a new security dilemma in the region (Borgerson 2008; Huebert 2010). In this perspective, the most hawkish argue that the Arctic is merely a subsystem defined by global great power dynamics, where Russia's actions should be seen as part of a grand scheme with the purpose of enhancing its access to natural resources in the region without respecting international law (Cohen, Dolbow, and Szaszdi 2008), while the more moderate realists diminish the saber-rattling and instead plead that Russia gains more from peaceful cooperation than from engaging in violent conflict (Zysk 2011; Olesen and Rahbek-Clemmensen 2014). The latter perspective is shared by many constructivists who claim that all the Arctic states—but Russia especially—are in the best position to exploit the region's natural resources and benefit both economically and nation-building-wise if peace and stability prevail (Rowe and Blakkisrud 2013; Keil 2014).

While realists and institutionalists differ in their orientation toward conflict or cooperation, they often share a state-centered focus where little attention is given to nonstate actors, whether Indigenous peoples, NGOs, substate entities, or polities 'state-like, but not quite' such as Greenland. In continuation, if we take a closer look at the literature about Arctic *security*, it seldom approaches specific Greenland security questions. And when it does, it is usually focused *either* on hard security questions (e.g. Kraska 2011; Tamnes and Offerdal 2014; Zellen 2009) *or* on soft security questions (e.g. Gjørv et al. 2014; Hossain and Cambou 2018; Hossain, Martín, and Petrétei 2018). But as the region has gained interest from a more inclusive school of researchers taking both questions into account when analyzing the wide range of issues and actors affected by climate change in the region—negatively as well as positively—more holistic publications on Arctic security have recently been published (e.g. Depledge and Lackenbauer 2021; Gjørv et al. 2020;

Greaves and Lackenbauer 2021; Heininen 2016; Heininen and Exner-Pirot 2020). While those edited volumes offer tour d'horizons of multifaceted security challenges across the Arctic region, they tend to prioritize nontraditional or soft security issues and leave traditional state-to-state hard security issues to a separate debate primarily driven by think tanks. Related, common for those edited volumes is that they seldom directly discuss their theoretical take.¹

In terms of theory, our volume joins a constructivist IR tradition analyzing security as speech acts and foreign policy as identity representations as, *inter alia*, demonstrated by Geir Hønneland (2017) and Leif Christian Jensen (2016) in their analyses of Arctic international politics in the contexts of Russia and Norway. But even the image of Greenland that appears from this tradition remains fragmented. And, we argue, this lack of a coherent understanding is problematic since within the tectonic changes taking place in the Arctic—due to climate change and new global power balances—Greenland is both the one polity that would be most difficult to fit in traditional IR categories and, related, the most dynamic and potentially disruptive piece in the new Arctic jigsaw puzzle. Identifying sometimes as an Indigenous people, Greenland enjoys the most autonomy of any nonsovereign Arctic territory, situating itself between a colonial past and a future as a sovereign nation-state anticipated to materialize sooner rather than later. There are only a few publications comprehensively analyzing security and international politics in relation to Greenland, and in the rare occasions when Greenland is at the center of attention, the local actors are often placed in the periphery in realist-informed analyses of high politics (e.g. Jørgensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen 2009; Petersen 2009, 2011; Rahbek-Clemmensen, Larsen, and Rasmussen 2012; Mouritzen 2018). Recently, however, a few eclectic realists have joined a handful of constructivists in beginning to mend this gap (Kristensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen 2019a). Like other similar recent book-length contributions (Jacobsen 2019; Gad 2016), the ambition to convey the nuances and peculiarities of the Greenlandic case has been pursued, supported by more or less eclectic theoretical approaches. This volume, in contrast, attempts a theoretically disciplined analysis of what we will call the Greenland security configuration, hence allowing us to both offer a comprehensive overview of the empirical security circumstances Greenland finds itself in, while simultaneously contributing new insights and advancements to ST. Thus we aim to set new standards for Arctic IR scholarship and to offer a more precise and compre-

hensive understanding of each of the various security dynamics around Greenland, how they are related and how they are distinct. Eventually, this should facilitate a smoother maneuvering of the Arctic currently turning from white to blue for practitioners, both from the nascent Greenlandic foreign policy milieu and from their partners. Moreover, we hope to advance ST as a vehicle for similar theoretically disciplined analyses of security dynamics elsewhere. For even if, as we will later discuss, securitization theory was born out of European problematics, it was soon exported and transformed by other parts of the world. Before we do so, we will now first introduce the basics of the theory that all the chapters in the volume take as their theoretical departure.

Securitization Theory: The Basics

ST was born during the 1980s' polarized debate between traditional security studies and various scholars arguing a 'widening' of what counts as security, spearheaded by critical security studies (CSS) (Wæver 2003). On the one hand, ST joined CSS in criticizing the traditionalists for their understanding of security as only taking place within military affairs and only involving states. Both agreed in widening the concept to encompass things going on in spheres traditionally seen as distinct from security, such as the economy, the environment, and identity (Buzan 1983). On the other hand, the explicit ambition of ST was to discipline this extension of what could count as security, seeking "to avoid the slippery slope of 'everything is security,'" by formulating a precise criterion delimiting when things happening outside traditional security domains nevertheless qualified as having a security quality (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 71). As part of a wider constructivist movement, ST saw security as being discursively and intersubjectively constructed (Wæver 1995, 55) in a self-referential and contingent process constantly open for restructuration (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 204). Specifically, ST defined security as the result of speech acts: something becomes a security issue not by virtue of its inherent nature but through the interplay between securitizing actors and audiences (Wæver 1989, 1995).

Until then, critics of traditional security studies, such as CSS or today 'human security', tended to base their case for change on pointing to new threats—environmental, economic—as being more important to actual human beings, and thus motivating a change beyond an

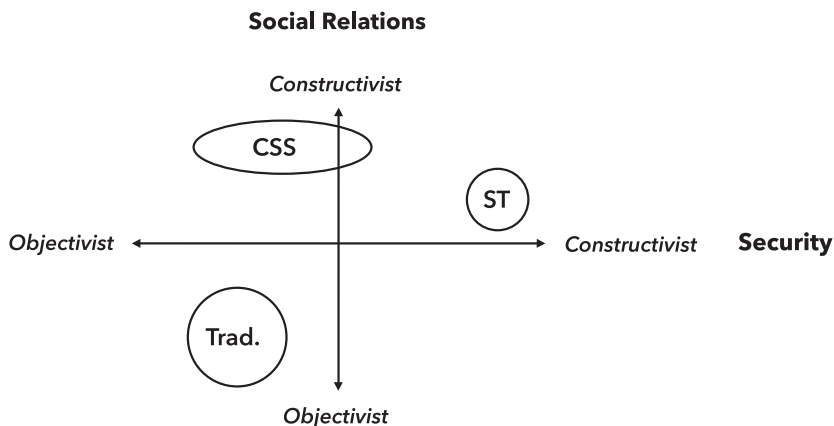


Fig. 1.1. Approaches to security studies. Adapted from *From Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde. Copyright © 1998 by Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., used with permission of the publisher.

order based on traditional state security. But they thereby repeated the operation of the analytical observer enacting ‘threat measurement’ and telling people what were the ‘real’ security urgencies. As illustrated in figure 1.1 (adapted from Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 205), traditional and critical security studies disagree fundamentally about whether social relations in broad generality are given or constructed. These two main opponents in IR theory, however, are alike in embracing a substantial idea about what objectively constitutes ‘security,’ even if they disagree about what that substance is. In contrast, ST posed a radical constructivism regarding the substance of security: Security pertains to whatever an actor can convince its audience of. The political import of this approach was to raise awareness of all participants in the security field, practitioners and analysts, to be aware of their responsibility in deploying the powerful tool of security talk, rather than assuming that they were just reporting on ‘threats’ (Wæver 1999).

Speech Acts of Security, and Desecuritization

ST operates with a continuum for how a given society may deal with an issue, ranging from nonpoliticized (when something is not an issue for public policy or collective action) to overpoliticized (normal) to securitized (allowing exceptional measures) (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde

1998, 23–24). Specifically, according to ST, a securitization happens when a *securitizing actor* with a significant ethos declares a valued *referent object* to be *existentially threatened*, and a relevant *audience* accepts the possible use of *extraordinary means* to avert the threat (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 36). In a standard, Western setting, with a liberal self-understanding, typical extraordinary means to avert existential threats to the standard referent object—the sovereign nation-state—include secrecy, surveillance, border closings, deployment of violent force, and suspension of democratic debate as well as civil and liberal rights that would have been respected if the issue had remained on the lower discursive level of normal politics (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 23–24). These measures are always in play to some extent already, and in some societies to a high degree, so the point about securitization is that a securitizing actor creates an opening for measures that otherwise would not have been possible and that this shift of the boundary of possibility is enacted with a reference to threat and necessity. Even the most powerful actor declaring an emergency situation cannot be sure that it gets away with it; authority is always put at stake in securitizing attempts. In this way, the audience is both decisive (Wæver 2003, 11) and passive since only if the audience explicitly denies the securitization act, it can be concluded that the attempt at securitization was unsuccessful (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 26). The audience's receptiveness to the securitization attempt is related to a series of *facilitating conditions*² like the authority of the securitizing actor, the historical precursors of the articulated threat, and logics internal to the rhetoric of securitization (Wæver 2003, 14–15).³

Once securitized, an issue may undergo a reverse process of *desecuritization*, which takes it to a situation where normal politics prevail, in contrast to a situation when an issue is dealt with through emergency laws and exceptional measures with less room for democratic or other rules of transparency and accountability. It therefore follows that a democratic ethos would pursue an agenda of desecuritization in order to deal with politics through normal procedures. There are various ways for an issue to be desecuritized, but three of the most common are: (1) To simply stop talking about certain issues in security terms, thereby ignoring a securitization, whereby it is inactively placed back at the lower levels of nonpolitics or normal politics. In situations when something has been successfully securitized, however, it is often necessary to actively rearticulate things as being desecuritized (Huysmans 1995, 65; Roe 2004, 284), which is the second way; (2) To actively down-

grade an issue through rearticulating it as not constituting a threat toward a certain valued referent object (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 489); (3) Lastly, and most common, is the situation when one securitization replaces another as the security discourse is redirected toward a new issue deemed more compelling, hence relegating—more or less unnoticed—the first issue to the level of politics or nonpolitics (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 489; Bilgin 2007). The urgency of an existential threat assures—along with the extraordinary character of the means required to avert a securitized situation—that there are only so many things that can be at the top of the security agenda at the same time.

Freezing a Referent Object

The decision to label something a security problem does not necessarily reflect whether the referent object is actually threatened. Rather, it is a political, and often elitist, decision taken with the purpose of legitimizing specific and traditionally state-centered solutions (Wæver 1995, 57, 65). This can happen either ad hoc, from case to case, or it can be institutionalized in the way that persistent or returning threats are dealt with, by for instance the military or bureaucracy in either overt processes open to the public—via for instance parliamentary debates—or covert ones only involving a few privileged actors (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 27–28). A successful securitization may have comprehensive consequences with the potential to alter the everyday lives and political situations on different *scales*—spanning from the global to the individual—by stimulating conflict or by contributing to the containment of dangerous situations by formulating suitable reactions (Wæver 2003, 18–20).

Crucial for the topic of this volume—securitizations involving Greenland—is that securitizing a referent object, in a certain sense, involves ‘freezing’ it: Saying that something is threatened involves a valuation of this something in its current state, as opposed to accepting that it changes. This is particularly clear when identities are securitized; as discussed in the Copenhagen School’s 1993 volume on *Identity, Migration, Nationalism and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, identity is a malleable concept in the sense that there is always a political debate over what constitutes acceptable change of any identity, and the effect of securitization is to forcefully delimit such change. If Danes are migrating to Greenland in huge numbers, one way ahead would be to

develop the concept of Greenlandic national identity to be less ethnically defined and rather value cosmopolitan inclusion; another way ahead would be to legitimize and possibly employ extraordinary means to stop immigration in order to freeze Greenlandic cultural and political identity. The cause of ‘freezing’ is that in a securitized state of being, an issue is constituted as survival or not, i.e., “to be or not to be.” Therefore, the question becomes *whether* it exists, not *how* it exists. This locks down the referent object as a thing with a static meaning.

In principle the ‘freezing’ effect applies to all kinds of referent objects: It is a political choice whether to securitize a potential change, and securitization is the ‘conservative’ choice regarding what change is acceptable. A compelling example offers itself from our volume (Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.): Seen from a traditional idea of what constitutes a state, securitization would have been an obvious choice for Denmark when the U.S. refused to vacate Greenland of its troops by the end of World War II. Instead Denmark opted to reinterpret the meaning of sovereignty in the 1951 defense agreement, which, on the one hand, formally assured Danish sovereignty, while on the other hand substantially allowed the U.S. military unlimited access. In effect, the Danish authorities chose to allow the mutation of sovereignty into something resembling very little any hitherto known concept of sovereignty rather than attempting to ‘freeze’ substantial sovereignty over Greenland by securitizing the U.S. military takeover of the island.⁴ Below we will return to how this peculiar arrangement makes Greenland difficult to fit in when ST analyzes regional security.

The Greenlandic polity, however, conceives of itself as a moving target in a way that raises new questions to ST, given how the ‘freezing’ effect of securitization on referent objects appears as the standard image. Greenlandic political identity is transitional, viewing itself as on its way toward independence (Gad 2005). On the one hand, referent objects with abnormal temporalities are not alien to ST. Early on, the theory was used to pinpoint how Europe’s own past, dominated by sovereignty, power balancing, and conflicting nationalisms was mobilized as the main threat to the integration and existence of the EU and thereby European security (Wæver 1996; Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 179–89). Since 9/11, U.S. projects for ‘nation building’ Muslim countries as a reply to terrorism attacks have exposed the way in which some versions of liberalism read resistance as a threat to its universal validity (Buzan and Wæver 2009; Gad 2010). Later, Holbraad (2012) pointed to the way self-declared revolutionary socialist states securi-

tize identities that are only to be realized in the future; you can securitize in defense of ‘the revolution.’ On the other hand, as detailed below, Greenland’s transition toward realizing its true identity as a sovereign state departs from an already hybrid configuration of sovereignty. As we will return to below and in the concluding chapter, this makes the Greenlandic polity highly slippery as a referent object when a securitizing move attempts to ‘freeze’ it. Is it a specific future ‘state of being’ one defends or is it the process toward it or just protection the possibility of it? The surrounding climatic thaw and geopolitical freeze of the Arctic, equally based mainly on futures yet to be realized, only adds to the elusiveness of Greenland.

Aggregating Securitizations: Sectors, Dynamics, Configurations, Complexes

The 1998 volume *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998) approaches the widening of security dynamics beyond military affairs as a series of distinct sectors with distinct dynamics often spurred by what counts as a valuable *referent object* within the logic of the particular sector and a particular mode for it to be threatened. In the military sector, the referent object is usually the state but may also be other political entities; in the political sector it is an ideology or a constituting principle of the state such as sovereignty; in the societal sector the referent object is large-scale collective identities such as nations or religions functioning independently of the state; in the environmental sector the potential referent objects range from humankind to survival of specific species or habitat; while the referent object within the economic sector varies depending on the scale of the entity, spanning from supranational institutions to the single household whose existence may be deemed threatened by bankruptcy (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 22–23). The sectors are helpful to identify because they each have their particular dynamics—often paradoxes—where for instance defending an identity strangely stabilizes the idea of an identity but also reinforces its constitutive contingency (Wæver 1997) and the economic sector is shot through with the paradox that insecurity is the underlying premise of a capitalist economy (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). The point of identifying sectors, hence, is not to allocate securitizations to any one sector. Rather, sectors should assist in understanding the dynamics coming out of securitizing moves, suc-

cessful or not. In some cases, these security dynamics stay nicely within one sector. In other cases, they cut across sectors.

Either way, one securitization seldom comes alone. Archetypical to theories of international security, the ‘security dilemma’ denotes a situation where one state feels militarily threatened by another and puts up defensive military means, which the other state, however, apprehends as threatening and therefore feels the need to put up its own defensive means, etc., etc. (Herz 1950). This classic is perfectly analyzable with securitization theory (van Rythoven 2020), which, moreover, provides for a more nuanced understanding of cases where the threats for the two parties are in different sectors and still generate a security dilemma. The security dilemma is only one among a series of recognizable dynamics. Sometimes the dynamics among units enter a feedback loop that locks the actors involved in repetitive interaction; ST has discussed the structural result of some of these dynamics as *configurations* or constellations,⁵ ranging in scale from the local (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 484–85) via the national (Wæver et al. 1993) to the global (Buzan and Wæver 2009). The importance of this stems from the basic fact that security is *relational* (Wæver 1997): it is not a quality, attribute, or possession of one unit in itself and for itself; it is always *about* some other(s) who are seen as threats or protectors. Barry Buzan argued (1984) that security was preferable as a central organizing concept to power or peace, exactly because the alternatives tended to become absolutist investments in the system itself: either anarchy was unchangeable (power) or had to be abolished (peace), whereas security pointed to the ongoing configuration of actors. Therefore, one needs analytically to relate the ongoing securitizations to each other and avoid explaining them all away by referring all causality back to some systemic whole. The different securitizations form a configuration that takes on a social reality of its own without having an existence independent of the ongoing securitizations.

One may in principle identify such configurations at all scales from local sets of violent gangs in a neighborhood to ‘macrosecuritizations’ attempting to order security relations on a global scale (Buzan and Wæver 2009). ST, however, has given particular attention to that type of configurations in which “a set of units whose major processes of securitisation, desecuritisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved apart from one another” (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 44, 491; Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 201). As part of developing a theory about regional security, the

Copenhagen School (building on Buzan 1983; Buzan and Rizvi 1986) labeled this type of regionally distinct configurations *regional security complexes* (RSC). This aimed at scaling to the optimal level where all the most important interactions were included without extending to more marginal instances across a gap of less intense security interdependence. Because world security actually does fall in ‘chunks’ for mostly geographical and partly cultural and historical reasons, the level of regional security complexes can stabilize as an organizing center from which one ties domestic, interregional and global security together around the regional focus. After accounting for how ST has been employed in analyses of a variety of societies around the world, we will return to a discussion of how the Arctic and Greenland constitute particularly challenging empirical ground for ST’s theorization of RSCs and therefore particularly fertile ground for developing the theory.

Moreover, this volume will argue, ST holds an untapped methodological potential for analyzing not just structurally locked security configurations, but also security *dynamics*. After all, a securitizing move may trigger not just a feedback loop that locks opponents in. Analysis informed by ST may observe in detail how the securitizing move takes us to this new, gloomy yet stable place. But it may also observe how a stable security configuration is gradually unlocked or rearranged. And it may observe how a securitization triggers a series of further securitizations, without—at least not immediately—feeding back to the original securitization. The concluding chapter will discuss the merits of a few concepts suggested by chapter contributions as means to better grasp such dynamics: *mutually reinforcing* securitizations (Andersson and Zeuthen 2024), security *cascades* (Gad 2021; Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.; Jacobsen and Herrmann 2017); *scalar feedback* (Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2, this vol.), and, more generally, security *transfiguration* (Gad, Bjørst and Jacobsen, chap. 3, this vol.).

Securitization: A European Theory on Tour

The genesis of securitization theory is as Eurocentric as the name ‘Copenhagen School’ hints: As a theoretical framework, it was developed to understand European security dynamics, particularly as they contrasted across and evolved beyond the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the gradual unraveling of the Soviet empire (Wæver and Buzan 2020). The 1989 *European Polyphony* (Wæver et al. 1989) and 1990 *Euro-*

pean Security Order Recast (Buzan et al. 1990) conceptualized post–Cold War security with Norbert Elias as configurations, that is, ‘relations of relations.’ Securitization theory as such was invented as part of academic and political debates in Europe about the widening of the concept of security to new threats and how to analyze this as politics, not only intellectual improvements (Jahn, Lemaitre and Wæver 1987; Wæver 1989, 1995). In 1993, the idea of securitization as a political process entered the collective work of the ‘school’ (Wæver 2012) in an analysis of the way European integration and cross-national migration took on a security character in the context of European nationalisms. An integral point of developing the paradigmatic analytical framework presented in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, however, was to prepare the world tour of securitizations presented in the 2003 sequel, setting out to analyze security dynamics unfolding beneath and relatively independent of the global ones. A formal Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) was first fleshed out around the case of South Asia (Buzan and Rizvi 1986), and the configuration logic was strongly present from the start, because the most powerful conclusion from the analysis was how India and Pakistan were locked into a pattern of mutual insecurity because, beyond specific policies, the very organizing principle of each constituted a security threat to the other.

Later, abundant literature spanning more topics and geographies has found inspiration in the theory. A number of book-length case studies of (de)securitizations within specific countries and regions have not just demonstrated the global span of the theory but also generated insights, critiques, and refinements of it. Indeed, the current volume contributes to what is in effect a comparative research agenda on subregional security configurations and dynamics, so far including, among many others, Cyprus (Adamides 2020), China’s hydropolitics in Mekong (Biba 2018), the Iraq War (Donnelly 2013), Indonesia (Kurniawan 2018), U.S. ‘homeland security’ (McCann and Boateng 2020), North Korean refugees in East Asia (Mikyong 2012), Australia and the U.S.’s military responses to climate change (Thomas 2017), the securitization of the Roma in Europe (van Baar, Ivasiuc, and Kreide 2019), and Russia’s securitization of Chechnya (Wilhelmsen 2016).

Simultaneously, however, some scholars have argued that the Eurocentric roots of the theoretical framework makes it problematic for analysis in other settings (Wilkinson 2007; Bilgin 2007; Vuori 2008; Greenwood and Wæver 2013). No matter how fruitful analyses guided by the framework has or has not been for understanding empirical phenomena across the globe, it is important to note that the theory as

such makes no claim to universality. The theory was devised to study a particular phenomenon—security—which condensed in its core form in a particular place and time (Berling et al. 2021). This phenomenon has spatial and conceptual limits. Not all phenomena take on a character that lends itself to observation as security or securitization; fortunately, some relations just do not present themselves in terms of existential threats and extraordinary means (Gad 2010, 151–65). Likewise, the phenomenon in focus has a genealogy; ‘security’ was not always exactly what it became in its heyday (Wæver 2008). And security as we know it—lending itself to analysis with securitization theory—may have an end; other concepts may be taking over or fusing with security in ways that will in principle make securitization theory obsolete (Berling et al. 2021). So the reach of securitization theory as an adequate depiction of reality equals the reach of the security logic.

More important for our purpose, however, is that the point of doing analysis informed by a theory is not just to be able to check a box by deciding that ‘yes, this instance lives up to the criteria specified in the theory, so I hereby declare it *security*.’ Rather, the point is to learn from when and how the empirical world does not *quite* match the theory. In this view, “a theory is basically a model that can be held against empirical instances to assess structural similarity” (Wæver 2011). It is, of course, important to know *if* the melting of Arctic ice is securitized. It is even more important to know *how* it is securitized, both because it may inform our politics in relation to climate change and because it may inform our conception of how who may be able to securitize what. But it is *also* important to know about partially successful securitizations, surprising misfires (Åtland and Ven Bruusgaard 2009), and ‘weird’ dynamics that resemble those described as ‘standard’ by the theory. When it comes to theory, the proof of the pudding is not just in the eating, the proof of the pudding is also in the making. When asking ourselves whether it makes sense taking ST on tour from its late 20th-century European point of departure, the sense to be made comes not just from deciding whether They do security as We do, but also by learning about how dynamics that resemble the core propositions of the theory come out differently under circumstances further and further removed from the theory’s ideal type (in terms of sector, geography, culture, age, etc.). Does ST tell us something about the dynamics at hand, something new and unexpected that makes it possible for actors to reorient their action? Or does ST’s *failure* to capture a case tell us something interesting about the core of the theory or about the dynamics analyzed? Is it not the case with a lot of theories in both natural and

social sciences that we learn by applying them and then observing anomalies that could not have been found or understood had the theory just been deemed irrelevant; it is exactly the ‘model’ that allows one to see what does not fit it. This is why taking ST out of its ‘comfort zone’ in European post–Cold War security is important. ST’s ongoing world tour is important in telling us both dynamics ‘out there’ that looks more or less like security, but also in telling us about how Europe is more or less provincial and/or how the world may or may not be in a process that will make ST obsolete.

The Arctic as a Destination on the Securitization Theory World Tour

Recently, a steady stream of ‘Arctic securitization studies’ have sprung up as part of increased attention in the International Relations discipline toward the Arctic. The analyses are different in scope, ranging from the overall regional configuration to the individual (de)securitization. Many provide new and important insight made possible by the ST approach, either by presenting new events or by pointing out important aspects of ‘known’ qualities hitherto overlooked. But neither on their own or taken together do they realize the potential ST holds for our understanding of the Arctic; or in reverse: the potential Arctic security dynamics hold for the development of ST. The main reason seems to be that the contributions have come in article or chapter form, making it necessary to highlight one case or one facet of Arctic security and reducing the number of complications in the form of related or neighboring cases, phenomena, and dynamics. ST provides fine tools for analyzing the fate of single securitizing moves and another set of tools for characterizing whole regions in terms of security. But to make the most of the theory, analyses need to trace and document connections from the individual securitizing move across competing attempts, desecuritizations, countersecuritizations, and the patterns they form.

Some contributions take the Arctic as their case study, seeking to characterize it as a region in security terms. Åtland (2008) has convincingly examined how Mikhail Gorbachev’s speech in Murmansk in 1987 was a successful desecuritization act that paved the way for normal politics and the comprehensive institutionalization of the Arctic. Albert (2015) has argued that the increasing number of securitizing moves—rather than successful ones—in relation to the region can be explained as the logic of sovereignty filling the void imagined to be

opening up by the thawing ice. Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg (2017)⁶ examined how the Ilulissat Declaration can be seen as a pre-emptive desecuritization act that successfully minimized the horizontal conflict potential between states while giving way for vertical disputes between the signatory states on the one hand and the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic on the other. In their assessment of the Arctic Council, Greaves and Pomerants (2017) investigated how this leading regional institution, on the one hand, does not function as a securitization actor attempting to construct issues as existentially threatening, but, on the other hand, does use adjectival forms of security language when describing preferred or improved conditions for Arctic peoples, societies, and ecosystems. The thrust of this body of texts is condensed in Heather Exner-Pirot's pleading that the Arctic constitutes "a regional security complex built around interdependence on environmental and ocean issues" (2013, 120). Below, we return to why we—following Wæver (2017)—disagree on the theoretical term, even if we agree with much of the empirical narrative.

Another type of Arctic case study stays within the domestic or national frame, and—like those of regional scope—focuses on a specific securitizing move or a distinct type of securitization. Jensen (2013) has revealed how the concept of security is in fact omnipresent in the Norwegian discourse about the Arctic (Jensen 2013). Åtland and Ven Bruusgaard (2009) have explained how some Russian observers failed to securitize the incident when the Norwegian coast guard tried to arrest a Russian trawler that was fishing illegally near Svalbard. Similarly, Palosaari and Tynkkynen (2015) have analyzed the failed securitization attempt by some Russian actors regarding Greenpeace's attempt to board Gazprom's Prirazlomnaya oil rig in the Pechora Sea. Herrmann's (2017) analysis of the COP21 meeting found that the space for and use of Arctic Indigenous societal security discourses were uneven with the resulting global policy initiatives and did not support the security of current cultural practices and heritage in the Arctic.

A number of case studies similar in scope have been focused on Greenland. Kristensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen (2019b) showed how the Greenlandic uranium debate activates securitization talks in relation to the political, environmental, and economic sectors in what is basically a debate about what kind of country Greenland should strive to be. Rasmussen and Merkelsen (2017) analyzed the same empirical material and found that Greenlandic governmental documents attempted to desecuritize extraction of uranium, while Danish government papers instead sought to highlight the risks related to uranium in

order to keep the issue open to future securitization. Jacobsen (2015) scrutinized how the Government of Greenland has achieved more foreign policy autonomy through securitizing the Greenlandic national identity, hence legitimizing extraordinary rights that do not apply to the rest of the Kingdom of Denmark, in relation to exploitation of marine living resources. Gad (2017) analyzed parliamentary debates about the status of the Greenlandic language, showing how securitizations of the Greenlandic, Danish, and English languages puts Greenland on very different routes toward and beyond independence while forming new alliances in Arctic geopolitics.

All these studies could in principle have been included in this volume as they provide pieces to the jigsaw puzzle we aim to assemble: Characteristics of the Arctic region as such in security terms constitute an important context (albeit one among others) for Greenland. And individual securitization processes in other Arctic societies may inform our understanding of what goes on in Greenland, because the processes may be related or because they may be similar. Our puzzle, however, is of a distinct scope: We aim to provide an analysis of Greenland as a security configuration, in between individual security configurations and the overall Arctic region. Closer to our ambition with this volume, hence, come a few articles charting how security dynamics aggregate themselves in a bit more complex and comprehensive way beyond the individual (de)securitization. Focusing specifically on the effects of climate change in the Arctic, Greaves (2016) has scrutinized how Canadian Inuit frame related environmental and social challenges as security issues, whereas the Sámi in Norway generally do not employ securitizing language in this regard. Watson (2013) has shown how the Cold War macrosecuritization hierarchized numerous other security issues in the Canadian Arctic, which enabled securitizing actors to successfully point to threats in one sector as constituting a threat to a referent object in another sector, thereby resulting in a 'securitization dilemma.' In that perspective, Wilhelmsen and Hjermann (2022) find that Russian rhetoric over the past decade makes it difficult avoiding the conclusion that the Arctic is sliding back into a similar configuration.

In this volume, we aim to further develop this type of scholarship into a characterization of the Greenland security configuration by offering a both deep and wide investigation of the security politics involving Greenland more specifically. To make the most of ST's encounter with the Arctic on its world tour, we need to account not just

for the possible specificity of *Arctic* (de)securitization processes. As we will see from the discussions in the remaining part of this introduction and in the concluding chapter, Arctic exceptionality comes partly from how the distinct Arctic materiality allowed an elevated status for both ecosystems and the Indigenous peoples traditionally dependent on them, and from the uniquely monumental and yet multifaceted change in exactly this materiality currently provoked by climate change. In other words, the Arctic appears as a highly interesting destination on ST's world tour, because security dynamics link across sectors in ways that are perhaps not globally unique, but that stand out with exceptional clarity. But, as we will argue below, within this context of Arctic exceptionality and change, we need to take ST to Greenland, since the distinctly hybrid and transitional political identity of this community provokes and illuminates core elements of ST's account of a standard securitization process.

Arctic Security Configurations

When using securitization theory in the analyses of Arctic security politics, it may at first seem appropriate to use the Copenhagen School's prime concept for analyzing regions, namely that of the 'regional security complex' (RSC). As a handful of scholars have pointed out, however, the Arctic does not appear as an RSC in the authoritative publication on the subject: *Regions and Powers*. Some argue that the omission was already a mistake back then (Exner-Pirot 2013), others that the Arctic has developed into an RSC in the meantime (Kluth and Lynggaard 2018; Padrtová 2017), and yet others that it will eventually become one in the future (Lanteigne 2016, 2020; Chakrabarti 2019; Gibbs 2011); while Greaves (2019) doubles down by suggesting that an Arctic RSC did, indeed, condense but is now ceasing to exist. One of the most forceful statements arguing that the Arctic is an RSC has been made by Heather Exner-Pirot (2013, 120). Though her analysis conveys a convincing story of how region building in the Arctic begins with the management of environmental threats, it appears that her conclusion does not really owe much to the Copenhagen School's concepts she claims to employ in her analysis: security complex and sector. Rather, her argument might have been more convincingly couched in terms of Neumann's theory of region building as imagining communities (1994)⁷ as implemented on the Arctic by Keskitalo (2004, 2007).

Strictly speaking, the Arctic does not qualify as an RSC on the terms of the theory as outlined in Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998) and Buzan and Wæver (2003). The ‘technical’ reason is that the theory works from the premise that RSCs are not overlapping, but territorially exclusive, and that RSC borders coincide with the reach of the involved units, which are mainly sovereign states. The reason behind this technical definition of an RSC is that RSCT was devised as an argument within the discipline of international relations, not to understand region building in general or any region as such, but to establish the possibility and reach of regional security dynamics as a mode of building a coherent understanding of global security structures. Remember that the issue, at that point in time, was to understand a world coming out of a Cold War that had, arguably, for decades been seen to determine most security issues at most scales. “Regions Set Free” was the working title for the 2003 book. The theory ‘needed’ a world map of regions to challenge the dominant (American) top-down global power analysis. Therefore, regions could not be only a ‘perspective’ on issues, which ultimately would mean that the world had an infinite number of regions, one for each issue. In order to challenge the hegemony of global-level-anchored analyses that flowed from a discipline dominated by American scholarship, the theory had to cultivate a conception of RSCs that could adjudicate which ones were to become the building blocks of an alternative map of world security. In this theoretical setup, the Arctic is and was not an RSC because it is neither the primary security context for the super and great powers in the region, nor is it sufficiently marginal to the overarching superpower security dynamics to allow separate regional dynamics to be primary for any lesser actors (Wæver 2017, 132; Østhagen 2021).⁸

For instance, Russia’s primary RSC remains the post-Soviet one together with their participation in global-level security (and interregional dynamics vis-à-vis EU Europe is explosive because of those two levels, as abundantly demonstrated in 2022). Equally, the United States and Canada remain nested in North America, while the U.S. as the last superpower is very active in global security. The main RSC for the five other small Arctic states—Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden—is Europe. Common for all these eight Arctic states is that they do treat the Arctic as a kind of additional arena where they interact both within the same and across different RSCs, similar to interregional dynamics (Wæver 2017, 132), which is also the reason why the Arctic cannot be analyzed as a subcomplex within any one RSC

(cf. Åtland 2007). This is not in itself a failure for the theory, and the ensuing question is whether it is helpful for analyses of the Arctic to study it within a world map of global, RSCs, interregional dynamics, national security, subnational security, and cross-cutting regions. If the Arctic in security terms is a configuration that cuts across the otherwise dominant RSC dynamics, does RSCT provide a useful analytical tool for this non-RSC? If so, what can this tell us about other regional configurations straddling several RSCs, say, the Mediterranean?

While the Arctic is not an RSC on the premises of the theory, it certainly raises some challenges to the theory that are worth elaborating on: The original formulation of the theory on the one hand in principle allows units other than states to register as parties to an RSC, but on the other hand the theory held on to the idea that any point on the globe must follow state sovereignty when allocated to only one RSC. Hence, in the development of RSCT (Buzan and Wæver 2003), particular attention was devoted to cases like Turkey and Egypt, where the regional delineations are difficult. This premise of the theory led Åtland to dismiss the relevance of the RSCT “in its present form” to the Arctic, because “the theory is overly focused on the state level, leaving out transnational regions that could potentially have been subjected to security analyses” (2007, 31). As already noted by Hoogensen in an early review of *Regions and Powers*, “[S]hared security concerns can occur in regions that transcend boundaries, such as the Arctic. The problem is that the Arctic cuts across states, and if forced into regions defined by state boundaries (which it must be according to Buzan and Wæver’s scheme), it becomes lost within the North American, European Union, and Russian complexes” (2005, 273). But, when zooming in on the Greenlandic case, as we do now, it will be clear that Buzan and Wæver’s self-imposed delimitations on how securitizations may aggregate themselves into self-relying complexes create even more complications for our understanding of Arctic security. In the concluding chapter, we will return to a discussion of which consequences to draw from these critiques and complications in the light of the analytical chapters.

Greenland between Regional Security Complexes

When zooming in on Greenland, further theoretical complications emerge from Buzan and Wæver’s (2003) analysis. These complications mainly relate to Greenland’s peculiar situation in terms of sovereignty.

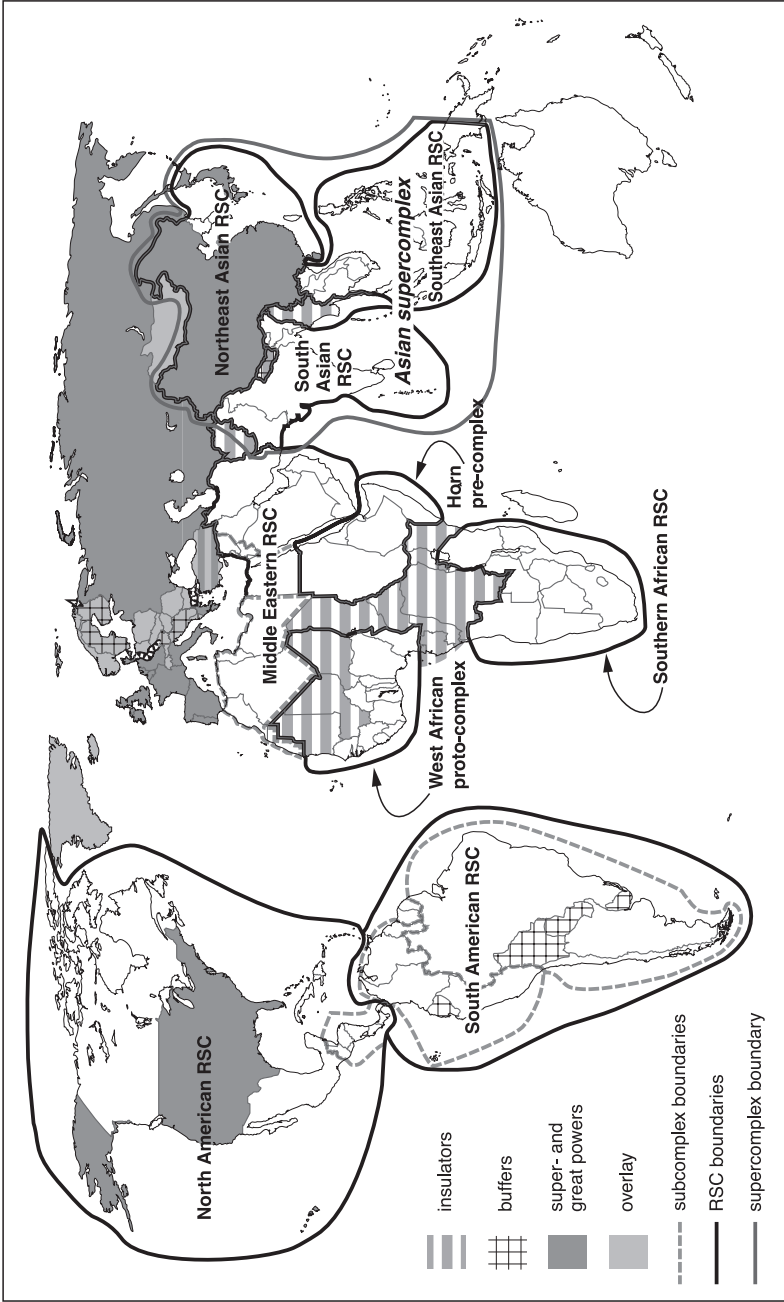
The peculiarity stems from Greenland's relation to Denmark and from the relation of the U.S. to the island. Looking ahead, Greenland is currently in a process, a strive for change, toward more self-determination and eventually full statehood (cf. Gad 2014, 2017; Rasmussen and Merckelsen 2017; Jacobsen and Gad 2018; Jacobsen, Knudsen, and Rosing 2019). If Greenlandic independence one day comes, Greenland will then be the first state whose primary security context is the Arctic (Wæver 2017, 132). For the time being, however, Greenland formally stays on what Jacobsen describes as a mezzanine between independent sovereignty and subordination to Danish sovereignty (2020, 184). On the one hand, Denmark formally holds sovereignty, and specifically foreign, security, and defense matters are reserved for Copenhagen and cannot be devolved to Nuuk. On the other hand, global norms about decolonization have produced a situation where there are clearly decisions—even in the core of security and defense policies—that the Danish state cannot take without Greenlandic consent (Olsvig and Gad 2021). And since devolution can hardly be 'rolled back' unilaterally (Harhoff 1993; Spiermann 2007), what one would take to be a unitary state by reading (only) the Danish constitution as codified in the *Grundlov*, has rather developed into a federation or federacy (Justinussen 2019; Gad 2020). Behind this looms also a distinctly Nordic norm (codified through Norway's independence in 1905, the Aaland Island decision, and Icelandic statehood) that a territorially contiguous population demanding independence will not be denied this by military force, contrary to experiences in, say, Corsica, Catalonia, Chechnya, and the Confederate States in the U.S. civil war. Therefore, the bottom line is that full independence is decided by Greenland, not Denmark. Beneath the ambiguous placement of sovereignty between Nuuk and Copenhagen lies an equally ambiguous relation between Copenhagen and Washington: A 1951 defense agreement between Denmark and the U.S. basically allowed the U.S. military to do what it wanted in Greenland while incantating that none of this would "prejudice to the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark."⁹ The result of these two peculiarities is a number of 'postcolonial sovereignty games' played with Danish sovereignty over Greenland, by Denmark and the U.S. and lately with the increased participation of the Government of Greenland, in varying degrees of concert and conflict (Gad 2014; Jacobsen 2020).

During the Second World War and the Cold War, Buzan and Wæver (2003) found Greenland's security situation part of or similar to the 'overlay' of Western Europe by the global U.S./Soviet conflict (cf. map

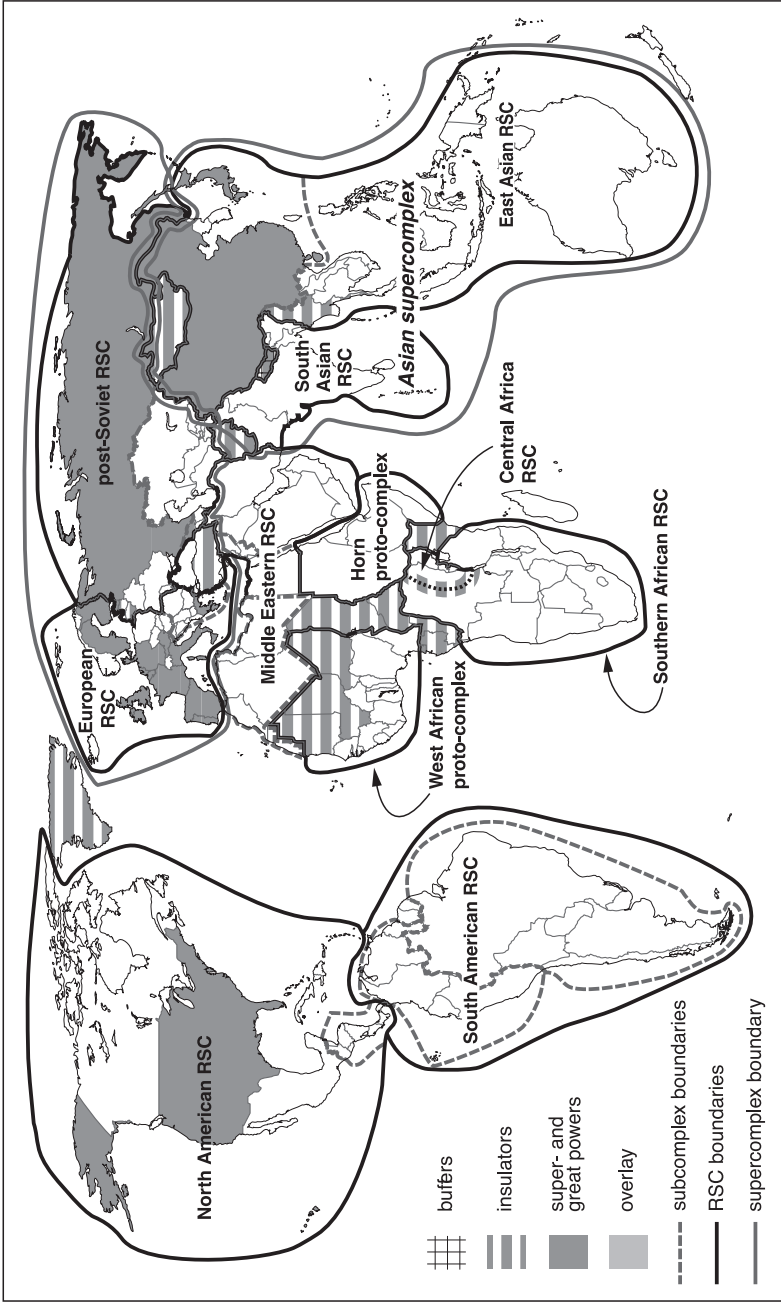
1.1), explaining how “*Overlay* is when great power interests transcend mere penetration, and come to dominate a region so heavily that the local pattern of security relations virtually ceases to operate. It usually results in the long-term stationing of great power armed forces in the region, and in the alignment of the local states according to the patterns of great power rivalry” (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 61; cf. Wæver Lemaitre, and Tromer 1989; Buzan et al. 1990). But in a map (1.2) of post–Cold War security regions, Greenland was, following an analysis never really unfolded in detail, given a special place as an ‘insulator’ located *between* different RSCs,¹⁰ “bearing the burden of this difficult position but not strong enough to unify its two worlds into one” (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 41). This difficult position comes from the peculiar relation Greenland has to sovereignty, as laid out above: On the one hand, Greenland is part of a European RSC, because Copenhagen still has formal sovereignty in foreign and defense matters pertaining to Greenland. On the other hand, as long as the Pentagon sees the island (and perhaps particularly Thule) as a piece of real estate indispensable to the protection of U.S. national security (cf. Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.), Greenland is also part of the North American RSC defined by the Monroe Doctrine to be the secure homeland of the United States. Buzan and Wæver seem to have either violated their own principle of unitary state boundaries or projected backwards a future Greenlandic independence the way they also (with more explanation) placed the Baltic states in EU Europe instead of in the post-Soviet space ahead of formal EU and NATO membership due to the direction of history’s arrow. Indeed, at the very last page of Buzan and Wæver’s world tour of regional security complexes, they call for “book-length studies . . . on single . . . insulators in which it would be possible to operate something close to the full securitisation apparatus” (2003, 488) to underpin, nuance, and revise the world map produced. This volume on Greenland contributes one theoretically potent case to this research agenda.

The trouble that Greenland as a case made for Buzan and Wæver (2003) come out in that it is one of the few places on their world maps where they allow an RSC border to cut right through one state: Greenland and metropole Denmark are different colors in the post–Cold War world. The other example territorially significant enough to be visible

(*following pages*) Map 1.1. and Map 1.2. Patterns of regional security. Maps reproduced from *Regions & Powers* (Buzan and Wæver 2003, xxv–xxvi), with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.



Map 1.1. Patterns of regional security during the Cold War. The legend marks Greenland as "overlayed."



Map 1.2. Patterns of regional security in the post-Cold War period. The legend marks Greenland as "insulator."

on the small map of the world is a tentative Central African RSC cutting into crumbling Congolese sovereignty from the Great Lakes. From that perspective, Denmark—in relation to Greenland—would count as a failed state, not capable of upholding sovereignty over all its territory. But the trouble Greenland spelled for the cartographic summary of the theory might be of a more fundamental kind than withering sovereignty. In the conclusion, we discuss—in the light of our analytical chapters—how Greenland might be read as a case of a postcolonial phenomenon typically not easy to read out of a world map: the little ‘remnants of empire’ left behind by global decolonization, scattered around the oceans (Adler-Nissen and Gad 2013; Cornell and Aldrich 2020).

Analyzing (De)securitization Dynamics in Greenland: Overview of Chapters

In sum, our aim with the book is threefold: First, it draws disparate case studies together to give a full picture of the security dynamics, all together forming a Greenland security configuration. Second, it analyzes specificities of the Greenlandic version of ‘Arctic security’ as shaped under the strained Danish sovereignty, hence scrutinizing the distinct postcolonial characteristics of Greenland which constitutes the most autonomous self-governing nonstate in the region, and possibly the world. Third, each chapter draws attention to and develops different aspects of (de)securitization theory.

In order to speak to these aims, the chapters in this volume are collected to present a tour, not of the Arctic as such, but of security dynamics involving Greenland. Two macro-security configurations present themselves as inevitable for such a tour: global climate change and the current reconfiguration of great powers, both, arguably, anchored elsewhere but impacting distinctly on the Arctic and, hence, Greenland. The analyses collected here, however, stand out by not contenting themselves with reproducing the securitizations performed by the powers that be, whether they are geopolitical, scientific, or of public opinion. In various ways, the chapters portray security as dynamics playing out as actors perform securitizing moves, other actors are interpellated as audience, and yet other actors attempt to reconfigure the rules of the game by insisting to be a relevant audience even if not asked, by redirecting attention to a referent object of their choice, or by making counter- or desecuritizing moves.

In *chapter 2*, Kristian Søby Kristensen and Lin A. Mortensgaard set the stage at the grandest scale by charting how a basic geophysical feature of Greenland—the inland ice sheet—is presented as dangerous. The mapping allows them to study how the climate change macro-securitization both generates and gathers strength from a myriad of securitization as lesser scales. *Chapter 3* turns the perspective on environmental security upside-down, as Ulrik Pram Gad, Lill Rastad Bjørst, and Marc Jacobsen scrutinize the relation between two seemingly isomorphic security configurations: Environmentalist campaigns to save marine mammals have threatened Inuit hunting practices and livelihood, while similar campaigns to keep Arctic fossil fuels underground threaten the economic sustainability of Greenlandic designs for future independence and welfare. While schemes to exempt Inuit and Greenland from general environmentalist threat constructions have had some success in desecuritizing the issues, the transfiguration set in motion by the change of focus from specific species to global climate puts carefully constructed alliances between environmentalists and Indigenous peoples under stress.

A group of chapters deals with the security dynamics of traditional geopolitics apparently destined to return in the wake of the Arctic thaw, beginning with each of the three great powers most discussed in the Arctic, but soon taking the perspective of Copenhagen and Nuuk. Marc Jacobsen and Sara Olsvig's *chapter 4* charts U.S. securitizations of Greenland over two centuries and analyzes how shifting instances have cascading effects at national and local scales, and how Danish and gradually also Greenlandic audiences have been allowed relevance. In *chapter 5*, Julia Zhukova Klausen dissects the rhetorical entanglement of desecuritization and securitization in one recent occasion for understanding the Russian approach to Greenland in Arctic security: a press bilateral briefing in which the Russian and Danish foreign ministers announce a Russian honorary consul in Nuuk. *Chapter 6* by Patrik Andersson and Jesper W. Zeuthen analyses discourse on minerals projects in Greenland to show how the translation of security-like formulations between a Chinese and a Western context may end up escalating.

In *chapter 7*, Marc Jacobsen and Signe L. Lindbjerg analyze the effect in Danish discourse of the intensified great power interest in the Arctic by comparing those whom parliamentarians characterized as threats and allies before and after Trump floated the idea of buying Greenland and how this makes them talk about the Greenland-

Denmark relation in a new way. *Chapter 8*, originally conceived by Rasmus K. Rasmussen but revised and updated for this volume by Ulrik Pram Gad, Sophie Rud, and Marc Jacobsen, analyzes how Greenlandic visions of independence build on sustained efforts to desecuritize not just the region and the country in general, but particularly the equipment and tasks performed by the Danish armed forces in Greenland.

Then a group of chapters focuses on how the future realization of a Greenlandic state affects security reconfigurations with effects on both dual use infrastructure and climate protection. Frank Sejersen's *chapter 9* shows how five consecutive security regimes have been driving the development and redefinition of Greenland's airport infrastructure by valuing very different referent objects ranging from U.S. territorial defense via Danish colonial integrity to Greenlandic postcolonial development. Finally, Nicholas Andrews, Joe Crowther, and Wilfrid Greaves compare in *chapter 10* how the structurally similar yet temporally staggered colonial experiences of Inuit in Greenland and Canada have produced radically different visions of future self-determination and development, which, in turn, open very different spaces for pursuing securitization of highly similar grievances.

Read together, the chapters of this volume aim to offer a fuller and more precise understanding, in terms of security, of Greenland in the new Arctic. But we also aim to speak back to securitization theory on the basis of our analyses of an unusual region and a hybrid polity, both undergoing rapid change. Hence, after condensing our image of Greenland as a security configuration, the concluding chapter discusses the challenges posed by the Arctic to a 'purist' ST approach to security regions, and possible ways forward. Moreover, we unfold the potential of conceptualizing dynamics entangling securitization and desecuritization via a focus on 'mid-range' dynamics' between individual securitizations and grand security structures. Hence we demonstrate how a theoretically disciplined approach allows a multifaceted study of a specific security configuration that enhances our understanding of an entire region.

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NOTES

1. Murray and Nuttall (2014) introduce Arctic international relations by explaining and demonstrating how various IR theoretical approaches can, in a division of labor, illuminate separate aspects of Arctic international politics without speaking back to the theories as such.

2. A separate theory about securitization has branched off, focusing on a micro-sociological analysis of those facilitating conditions, self-declaring as ‘sociological’ in contrast to the Copenhagen School’s ‘philosophical’ (Balzacq 2015) or ‘political’ theory (Wæver 2011; Gad and Petersen 2011). The main difference is to what extent analysis is aimed at tracing all causal connections versus focusing on the political stakes of status transformations in and out of security status.

3. Securitization may further involve various *functional actors*; someone not directly involved in uttering or accepting the securitization as such, but who nevertheless significantly influences the dynamics of the sector where the securitization takes place (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 36).

4. If you as a power holder securitize a threat, you must fend it off, or you lose even more, because you turned it into a test of your standing (Wæver 1995, 53). This often overlooked feature of securitization politics explains why security has not become just an inflationary rhetoric free to be used all the time. During the Cold War, Finland for instance practiced this expertly in relation to the Soviet Union, and Denmark had its own quite extreme experience peaking with the German occupation, where Denmark deemed its neutrality and sovereignty compatible with the occupation by Nazi Germany in order to uphold a locus of residual power to negotiate from (Pedersen 1970).

5. Over time, Copenhagen School texts have begun discussing what was originally called ‘configurations’ as ‘constellations.’ As discussed by Gad, Bjørst, and Jacobsen (chap. 3, this vol.), we intend no change of meaning by switching back to configuration. Nevertheless, the original metaphor connotes more dynamism and malleability than a ‘fixed’ constellation.

6. This and seven other articles mentioned in the literature review were part of the same special issue on *Arctic International Relations in a Widened Security Perspective* edited by Marc Jacobsen and Victoria Herrmann (2017). All articles except one used ST. The cooperation on this special issue, which Ulrik Pram Gad and Ole Wæver were also part of, planted the seed for our work with the present anthology.

7. Inspired mostly by Baltic Sea region building (Joenniemi 1993; Wæver 1993).

8. Østhaugen labels the RSC a ‘positivist theory’ (2021, 3). This is hardly the case. Even if RSC has roots in neorealism, it infuses it with constructivism: RSCs, within the structure of anarchy, are defined not just by power relations (as tendentially positivist neorealism would have it) but also (similar to Wendtian constructivism) patterns of amity and enmity (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 49). Ultimately, RSCs are the other side of the coin of the multitude of dynamic securitizations and desecuritizations. The configurations condition the securitizations, and the securitizations are what the configurations consist of.

9. The 1951 agreement extended a 1941 arrangement made by the Danish

ambassador to Washington during World War II while both he and Greenland were cut off from mainland Denmark under German occupation.

10. The concept of insulator is a development of the classical concept of a 'buffer state' (Partem 1983). A buffer state is, however, placed *inside* a region and plays a role in the internal dynamics of this region, whereas insulators are placed *between* RSCs, where in theory there should be little traffic across. The most obvious cases work through their geography to separate: Mongolia, Nepal, and during some periods Afghanistan. In some periods, however, Afghanistan and Caucasus do not stay detached but are rather penetrated from several sides, but still function as insulators because interventions do not pass through and therefore do not connect RSCs across.

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2 | Dangerous Ice

Exploring the Scales of Climate Change Macrosecuritization through the Greenland Ice Sheet

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Because of climate change, Greenland's massive ice sheet has received much attention in the past decades.¹ The potential sea level rise, locked in the ice, threatens the security and livelihood of numerous subjects across the world. The ice sheet's release of fresh water into the saline North Atlantic adds further worry and attention to the ice sheet's potential effects on earth's 'heat pump' and the entire oceanic system of thermohaline circulation. This attention to the Greenland ice sheet is compounded further by its transformation being visible, almost functioning as climate change 'evidence.' The power of this climate change showcase was reiterated by U.S. secretary of state Anthony Blinken during a visit to Greenland: "Greenland's fjords, ice caps, and sheet ice are powerful reminders of the scale and speed of the climate crisis. . . . And so actually having the opportunity not just to talk about it, not just to read about it, but to actually see it is very, very compelling. This is as urgent as it gets." (Blinken 2021a).

'As urgent as it gets' is no small measure, especially when evoked by a U.S. secretary of state. Picking up on and unpacking this 'urgency,' in this chapter we explore the Greenland ice sheet, its relation to the macrosecuritization of climate change, and its construction of danger. By employing the concept of macrosecuritization, we examine how the Greenland ice sheet is integrated into a complex network of securitizations at multiple scales.

As this edited volume illustrates, securitization theory is accommodating of theoretical developments, debates, and empirical applications (Wilkinson 2007, 8–9). One such development is the concept of *macrosecuritization*, coined by securitization theory instigators Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver themselves (Buzan and Wæver 2009). The grand empirical example of macrosecuritization is the Cold War. Analyzing the Cold War as a macrosecuritization is to understand lower-level securitizations as influenced by the logic of the macro. In the Cold War case the East-West struggle was the macro-threat structuring the securitizing logic for separate conflicts fought across the globe, but the East-West struggle also structured desecuritizing logics entailing peaceful bilateral relations between allied states (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 253).

A macrosecuritization is thus a securitization forming from referent objects higher than the middle (nation-state) level (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 257). In its most powerful instance, a macrosecuritization orders lower-level securitizations as an “overarching securitisation that relates, organizes and possibly subsumes a host of other middle-level securitisations” (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 256). With speech act ‘rules’ identical in securitizations and macrosecuritizations, the concept of macrosecuritization has since been applied and developed further in contributions ranging from counterpiracy practices (Bueger and Stockbruegger 2012) to the Bush administration’s legitimization of the 2003 Iraq War (Donnelly 2013).

In this chapter, we focus on the macrosecuritization of climate change by asking how the Greenland ice sheet is securitized. To understand climate change as a macrosecuritization is to see it as a threat construction with referent objects primarily at the global/planetary levels. We, however, are curious about the scales involved in macrosecuritization as a theoretical concept, wanting to question the notion that the structuring logic of a macrosecuritization is only (or primarily) unidirectional from the highest scale and ‘down.’ The focus on scale is further prompted by climate change being an evolving phenomenon. This makes it analytically difficult to pin down *the* moment that climate change became (macro)securitized. Instead of examining when climate change became a macrosecuritization and which actors and audiences deliberate different measures, we examine how and where climate change produces danger. This is what we refer to as taking a ‘scalar approach’ to the Greenland ice sheet and its involvement in the macrosecuritization of climate change. Our attention to scale and scalar processes allows us to examine *where* and *how* macrosecu-

ritization functions, more than *when* (Sjoberg 2008).² As we explain in the next section, we avoid examining the macrosecuritization of climate change from a temporal perspective because of the theoretical implications tied to macrosecuritization as a concept and because of the rapid scientific and social development tied to our empirical focus on climate change.

By applying a scalar perspective to the climate change macrosecuritization of the Greenland ice sheet, we show three things: First, that scales matter in macrosecuritizations. We pay close attention to the structuring logic asserted by the macrosecuritization of climate change at the lower scales, and we show how the Greenland ice sheet is constructed as dangerous to referent objects at a number of scales through clear reference to climate change as the macro-threat. Our point is that the macrosecuritization of climate change is pervasive across a number of scales, and that this in itself is an indication of its empirical importance in international politics. Second, the Greenland ice sheet functions as a threat also to referent objects at higher scales because it has spatial reach. Understood under the macrosecuritization of climate change, the melting ice sheet causes sea level rise, reaching mega-cities and coastal communities across the globe. Third, our attention to scale shows that the Greenland ice sheet easily jumps scale from a threat to referent objects at the individual/animal scale to a threat at the global/planetary scale. This leads us to understand the Greenland ice sheet as a scalar securitizing feedback mechanism. The macrosecuritization of climate change indeed asserts a structuring logic 'downwards' as noted by Buzan and Wæver, but lower-scale securitizations also feed back 'up to' the macrosecuritization by confirming and strengthening its logic as the master threat across scales.

Key to our analysis is thus to explore how the Greenland ice sheet connects to the macrosecuritization of climate change across scales. We do so in four steps. The first section engages with the existing literature on the (macro)securitization of climate change and unfolds our reasoning for taking a scalar approach.³ We do so through an exploration of the geophysical definition of climate change and by visiting the invocation of climate change as existential threat in the Fridays For Future movement. The second section lays out how we define scale and how this ties to the notion of spatial reach. In the third section, we apply our scalar approach, exploring how the Greenland ice sheet produces danger at a large number of scales. A key point of the analysis is to show how the ice sheet assumes many different roles across scales

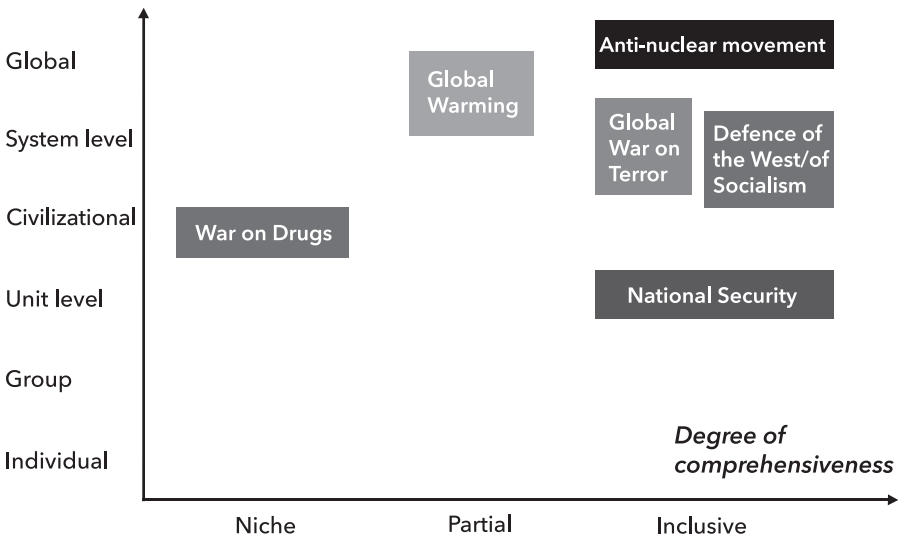
as threat, threatened, threat to itself, and as a spectacular climate change showcase. We bring all this together in the concluding section, summarizing our findings.

Climate Change as a Macrosecuritization: Taking a Scalar Approach

According to Buzan and Wæver (2009, 258–59, and as illustrated in figure 2.1 from their contribution), climate change⁴ is a macrosecuritization, ranging somewhere between the global and system scales. It is partially comprehensive because it has not (yet) been effective in crowding out alternative securitizations across the different sectors of security, which securitize independently or with reference to other macrosecuritizations (2009, 258).⁵ Further, Buzan and Wæver (writing of course in 2009) do not see the macrosecuritization of climate change resulting in “security-style urgency” (2009, 258) in the form of exceptional measures. Here it is worth noting Juha Vuori’s assertion that (macro)securitization can be a slow process, spanning decades and to look for one constitutive moment is perhaps not productive in itself. Rather, a macrosecuritization process may be the result of several key constitutive moments or more prolonged transformations (Vuori 2010, 274) leading to sudden tipping points.

The assertion that the (macro)securitization of climate change is not ‘complete’ because it has not enabled exceptional measures has been a source of empirical investigation and theoretical discussion (Methmann and Rothe 2012; von Lucke, Wellmann and Diez 2014; Corry 2012). Corry (2012) puts forth the distinction between risk and security by suggesting that *riskification* works according to a different grammar than *securitization* does, and that climate change has primarily been riskified. Riskification directs attention to the conditions of possibility of future possible harmful events (risks), in contrast to direct and imminent causes of harm (threats) described by the term securitization (Corry 2012, 246). Methmann and Rothe argue that the logics of security and risk are connected and that they can play out in surprising ways under the “logic of apocalypse” (2012, 327). Applying the logic of apocalypse to climate change positions it as so radical and imminent a threat that linear time may indeed stop. But while the imminent threat of ‘the end of time’ should logically preclude risk-management measures, that does not seem to be the case (Methmann and Rothe 2012). Despite climate change often taking on apocalyptic

Level of analysis/aggregation



z-axis: Degree of support (fraction of relevant population convinced by securitization) is indicated by the darkness of the box for the securitization in case.

Fig. 2.1. The three dimensions of macrosecuritization: comprehensiveness, level, degree of support. Reproduced from Buzan and Wæver (2009, 259), with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

characteristics through biblical imagery and war metaphors (Methmann and Rothe 2012, 328, 336), climate change is most often handled through risk-management measures such as precaution, pre-emption, and preparedness. The construction of a dangerous Other often collapses as soon as solutions are discussed, leaving climate change to be addressed in processual and technological risk-management terms (Methmann and Rothe 2012, 331–37). Others show how a (perceived) overstating of the immediacy or severity of the climate threat can indeed backfire by fueling climate skepticism, again foreclosing exceptional measures (Warner and Boas 2019). What unites these contributions is the insight that “the time element inexorably works against climate securitizers” (Warner and Boas 2019, 1483). Climate change often being presented and perceived as an issue of the future makes it difficult to invoke present immediacy. The time element, the potentiality, and the lack of an external Other seem to characterize the (less than

complete) securitization of climate change. But recent reactions to climate change, such as the global movement of school strikes (Fridays For Future), begun in 2018 by Greta Thunberg, illustrate that the (macro)securitization of climate change is an ongoing sociopolitical process, making it difficult to pinpoint the moment that once and for all securitized climate change, or showed the opposite, that climate change will continue to evade complete securitization.

The school strikes are rationalized as a response to an existential threat: “We strike because we have no choice. We are *fighting* for *our future* and for our children’s future” (Fridays For Future, n.d., emphasis added). Skipping school is an exceptional measure employed in a fight for survival. The threat from climate change cannot be risk-managed by controlling the “conditions of possibility for harm” (Corry 2012, 256). For Thunberg and Fridays For Future, the harm is not potential. Speaking at COP24 in Katowice, Poland, in 2018 while sitting right next to UN secretary general António Guterres, Thunberg stated it clearly: “we are facing an *existential threat* and there is no time to continue down this road of madness” (Thunberg 2018, 0:33, emphasis added). In the same speech, Thunberg reminded her audience that “we are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction with up to 200 species going extinct every single day” (2018, 1:09). The threat is current and the harm is already ongoing.

Talking at the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit (itself an indicator of the acceptance of the securitization of climate change by a substantial audience), Thunberg rejected previous decades’ riskification of climate change: “a 50% risk is simply not acceptable to us—we who have to live with the consequences” (Thunberg 2019, 2:35). Thunberg called for immediate action by positing climate change as a threat at a global scale and attempting to create a “mass identity necessary for securitization” (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 255) based on generational divisions. Thunberg sees climate change as the existential threat, whereas the current generation of political leaders—for Thunberg—represents the “conditions of possibility for harm” (Corry 2012, 256): “if you choose to fail us, I say: We will never forgive you” (Thunberg 2019, 2:55). The *potential* harm exists in one generation’s possible failure to tackle global climate change in order to preserve the planet for Thunberg’s generation. Indeed, it seems that the U.S. secretary of state, Antony J. Blinken, accepts the securitization attempt. In his confirmation hearing he proclaimed, “the existential threat posed by climate change” (Blinken 2021b, 4) to be one of the challenges the State Department will have to tackle during his time in office.

It is tempting to conclude that Thunberg and Fridays For Future have managed what thousands of activists, politicians, and concerned citizens have attempted for decades: bring about the constitutive moment where climate change goes from potential to current threat. This may be the case, but our point is a different one. Fridays For Future shows that an exceptional measure can be to skip school, that immediacy can be a generational question, and that a parent generation can be cast as the external Other. In other words, the securitization of climate change as a sociopolitical phenomenon can take sudden turns, and securitization can unfold in surprising ways. The analytically instructive approach to this development is not necessarily to trace the sociopolitical meaning of climate change over time and to conclude when it has been riskified or securitized once and for all. Such an approach will not illuminate how the macrosecuritization of climate change is already politically potent, irrespective of this constitutive moment. Seeing climate change as a macrosecuritization, rather than ‘just’ a securitization, brings out this potency and prescribes attention to the scalar effects more than the exceptional measures. It lets the dynamics of the macrosecuritization and its underlying securitizations come to the fore, and it focuses less on which actors and audiences deliberate different measures and whether these measures can best be defined and debated through the concepts of security or risk. This is the first reason we approach the macrosecuritization of climate change through scale.

The second reason pertains to climate change as an empirical phenomenon. In the case of climate change, both the scientific definition of the term and the sociopolitical understanding of the term are defined and limited by change over time.⁶ The geophysical definition of *climate* is broadly accepted as the average weather over a longer period of time, often 30 years. *Weather* is defined as short-term atmospheric changes; “climate, however, is the average of weather over time and space” (NASA 2005). The term *climate change* then, indicates that long-term weather averages of daily weather are changing.⁷ In other words, a change in the change over time. On top of this, climate scientists are continuously surprised that the change they are attempting to predict is faster, more volatile, and as such more unpredictable than expected. The Greenland ice sheet is often used as measuring stick of this continuously surprising pace:

Arctic land ice—particularly the vast ice sheet atop Greenland—is thawing faster than current climate models suggest, and could

raise sea levels substantially more than the 3 feet projected by the end of the century in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report released in September. (Katz 2019)

Temporality is at the core of the concept of climate change, and predictions about sea level rise caused by the melting Greenland ice sheet, or time series imagery comparing the extent of the ice sheet, are frequently used examples illustrating this. This presents a challenge for the study of climate change as an empirical phenomenon. Studying and making knowledge claims by applying a temporal, chronological lens to a phenomenon that is scientifically defined by change in change over time risks producing insights that are only relevant until climatologists predict faster and more drastic sea level rises than previously anticipated.

Furthermore, a temporal lens also risks confining the analysis to the chronological development at a particular scale. Focusing on the Greenland ice sheet as a specific and prominent site and instance of climate change allows us to examine the multiple scales involved in the macrosecuritization of climate change. As Sjoberg (2008, 495, emphasis in original) notes, “[l]ooking at a *place* to see the interaction of scales and scalar processes acting on and being acted on by it might be a productive research direction for a scalar approach to global politics.” We, therefore, will not be looking for a constitutive moment in which climate change was securitized, despite a potential political tipping point reached with Thunberg and Fridays For Future. Our curiosity takes a different route to investigate the macrosecuritization of climate change in international politics. We illustrate this route through the analysis below, which lets the ice sheet unfold as dangerous on many different scales.

Scale and Securitizing Ice: How Is the Greenland Ice Sheet Made Dangerous?

In order to examine the dynamics between the macrosecuritization of climate change and underlying securitizations, we focus on the Greenland ice sheet. The ice sheet's role in relation to climate change has received overwhelming attention from politicians, media, and NGOs in the past couple of decades. Collecting and analyzing textual data containing the argument that the Greenland ice sheet is dangerous in various ways allows us to let the empirics speak, while adding analytical

insight on how the Greenland ice sheet works in securitizations at different scales.⁸

Existing research on the securitization of climate change in or relating to the Arctic has identified multiple (de)securitizing actors with different scalar perspectives, such as Arctic states (Watson 2013), civil society groups and NGOs such as Greenpeace⁹ (Gerhardt, Kristoffersen, and Stuvøy 2019; Palosaari and Tynkkynen 2015), and Indigenous peoples' organizations (Greaves 2016; Herrmann 2017). Bjørst (2019) has also shown how Greenlandic politicians have been conspicuously silent, not securitizing climate change, preferring to talk about sustainable development (see Gad, Bjørst, and Jacobsen, chap. 3, this vol.; Andrews, Crowther, and Greaves, chap. 10, this vol.). Similarly, Rasmussen (2019) notes the Greenlandic elite's use of desecuritization as a political strategy in policy areas tied to the realization of Greenlandic independence. It is clear from this that different types of actors make securitizing or desecuritizing moves on behalf of a range of referent objects in relation to climate change and Arctic politics. Building on this, we show how in the case of the Greenland ice sheet too, macroscuritization and the many securitizing actors' arguments are very much questions of scale and how scale relates to far-apart spaces through spatial reach.

'Scale' as a theoretical concept has different meanings across disciplines. In Human Geography, scale as a concept is similar to that often referred to in International Relations (IR) as 'level,' where 'levels of analysis' tends to refer to 'the individual,' 'the state,' and 'the international' (see, e.g., the y-axis label on fig. 2.1). Human Geography, like IR, approaches scale as a hierarchical concept ordered according to size or scope, but unlike IR, it applies a scalar view that includes a greater number of scales spanning from "the smallest unit, the body, to the largest, the universe" (Campbell 2018, e23).¹⁰ More anthropological or sociological contributions have approached scale as a practice through the idea of 'scale-making' (Tsing 2000; Sejersen 2015; Berling et al. 2021), that is, how scale is constructed, practiced, and contested and, not least, how scale comes into being as something that seems true or is uncontested.

We understand scale as defined and bounded by hierarchy and referent objects. Scale is defined by hierarchy, because at the core of the idea of scale lies the possibility of 'upscaling' or 'downscaling.' In other words, scales come into being in relation to each other. The hierarchy of scale is defined by referent objects, which seems to be in line with

the definition used by Buzan and Wæver (2009; see also Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 36). As mentioned previously, macrosecuritization is defined as securitizations with referent objects situated *higher* than the middle level. Further, scale—through the idea of the referent object—requires some form of credible enactment. This follows Berling et al.'s notion that “scale is something you mobilise” (2021, 148) and complies with the idea that “[s]ize or scale seems to be one crucial variable in determining what constitutes a successful referent object of security” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 36).

In this understanding, a scale can be ‘humankind,’ ‘whales,’ ‘a generation,’ ‘the city,’ ‘the European Union,’ ‘the high seas,’ and ‘outer space.’ Politics can be enacted on behalf of all of these. This understanding of scale enables us to explore the role of scale in macrosecuritizations. By investigating securitizations at more than three a priori scales, that is, not limited to planetary, territorial, and individual scales (compare e.g. von Lucke, Wellmann, and Diez (2014) with table 2.1), we account for how the Greenland ice sheet is made dangerous with empirical sensitivity, and we explore how and to what extent the macrosecuritization of climate change structures how the ice sheet becomes dangerous.

The hierarchy of scales may seem obvious, but what makes some of them macro? In other words, what defines the hierarchical order of various scales, and by extension the hierarchy of referent objects? As Berling et al. note, scale may refer to the “more or less expansive spaces of encompassment; spaces of different size” (2021, 142). What we argue here and show in our analysis below, is that threat constructions with referent objects at the macro-scale require some form of worldwide, international, or global *spatial reach* in order to be macro.

The construction of a threat as being dangerous in a variety of far-apart or disparate spaces gives it spatial reach beyond its immediate surroundings. For a threat to have spatial reach, it must be perceived as having some form of potential motion. What we show below is that the ice sheet has motion in its melting. Becoming water allows the ice sheet to reach spaces across the globe. Other examples of threats with a large spatial reach due to their potential motion are missiles or the spread of ideology. The ICBMs of the Cold War, or the American fear of communism, were also presented as threats with large spatial reaches. Or more precisely, it was because of the perceived spatial reach of these threats that they could be presented as threats at higher scales than the middle. In this context, we propose that it is the spatial reach

of the ice—and the danger contained in this—that enables it to be dangerous at higher scales. Tying this back to the concept of macrosecuritization, we argue that the spatial reach of a threat is fundamentally enabled by its macrosecuritization. The melting of the ice sheet comes to make sense through the prism of climate change, showing that the macro-threat asserts a structuring logic downwards. Simultaneously, climate change as a macro-threat is reinforced as the overarching and structuring securitization because of the spatial reach of threats like the Greenland ice sheet. This is what we refer to as the scalar securitizing feedback mechanism.

Below, we construct the network of securitizations associated with the Greenland ice sheet. Key to our analysis is to explore how the Greenland ice sheet connects to the macrosecuritization of climate change across scales. Therefore, we build our analysis with the terms usually associated with securitization theory, looking for securitizing actors attempting to securitize the Greenland ice sheet for a variety of audiences. Following the above, we pay special attention to how climate change makes the Greenland ice sheet more or differently dangerous, as well as how the Greenland ice sheet feeds the argument that climate change is a threat at the planetary/system scale.

Securitizing the Greenland Ice Sheet: Scale, Space, and the Macrosecritization of Climate Change

Table 2.1 maps the many ways the Greenland ice sheet is made dangerous at many scales. The table contains five categories: scale, referent object(s), dangerous meaning of the Greenland ice sheet, securitizing actors, and audiences. The scale in the first column is identified from the referent object and the perceived danger to this referent object, identified in the second and third column, respectively. We do not claim the following is a comprehensive exposition of all securitizing claims connected to the Greenland ice sheet, but that it illustrates salient examples under a threat construction involving climate change or climate change dynamics. The analysis following the table expands on the wider insights by elaborating on how the dangers of the Greenland ice sheet are tied to climate change and which roles the ice sheet assumes under a climate change macrosecuritization as threat, threatened, threat to itself, and as a spectacular climate change showcase.

The following draws out three analytical points from the above

TABLE 2.1. Making the Greenland Ice Sheet Dangerous

Scale	Referent object(s)	Dangerous meaning of the Greenland ice sheet, connected to or reinforced by climate change	Securitizing actor(s)	Audience(s)
Atmospheric	The atmosphere and by extension the ecosystem; the planet; the Greenland ice sheet itself (feedback mechanism). ^a	<i>Ice melt causing:</i> Accelerated heating of the atmosphere because less sunlight is reflected back from earth (albedo effect), which causes ice to melt even faster (feedback mechanism).	Scientists and scientific institutions; governments; NGOs; Greta Thunberg; Greenpeace.	World leaders; governments and parliaments; inhabitants of the planet; 'consumers.'
Planetary	Humanity; 'vulnerable' populations; human civilization; The oceans/oceanic life; coastal populations; the global ecosystem. ^b	<i>Ice melt causing:</i> Sea level rise across the globe, threatening human habitation and clean water and food production with risk of salination of aquifers and agriculture; ice melt changing the salt-balance in the oceans leading to storm surges because of changing ocean currents.	Scientists and scientific institutions; governments; NGOs; Greta Thunberg; Greenpeace.	World leaders; governments and parliaments; inhabitants of the planet; 'consumers.'

(continues)

TABLE 2.1.—Continued

Scale	Referent object(s)	Dangerous meaning of the Greenland ice sheet, connected to or reinforced by climate change	Securitizing actor(s)	Audience(s)
Regional	Regional/international shipping; Indigenous peoples and Inuit traditional and modern livelihoods; Arctic wildlife habitats; the Arctic ecosystem(s); coastal regions outside the Arctic.c	<i>Ice melt causing:</i> Bigger/more unpredictable icebergs; changed regional climate; changed conditions for Arctic wildlife; colder and wetter climate in northern Europe due to a change in the ‘Greenland pump.’	Scientists; international media; shipping industry and shipping-oriented states; coast guards; ‘Arctic’ actors such as regional media, Arctic Council, Indigenous peoples organizations such as Inuit Circumpolar Council, and specialized military units.	Commercial shipping industry; Arctic (Indigenous) constituencies/populations; nature conservancy groups and supporters; populations/constituents in regions.
National	Pacific island states; shipping and fishing industries; Inuit livelihoods/traditional knowledge; economic sustainability of Greenland.d	<i>Ice melt causing:</i> Rising sea levels, threatening to submerge island states; fish migration, threatening (national) industries.	Governments and parliaments; (national) media; Inuit national or regional organizations.	Constituents and populations in Pacific island states; heads of governments and heads of industries negatively affected; communities and families relying on fishing/shipping industry for sustenance; Inuit communities and Inuit organizations; Greenlandic population.

Scale	Referent object(s)	Dangerous meaning of the Greenland ice sheet, connected to or reinforced by climate change	Securitizing actor(s)	Audience(s)
Local	Inuit/Greenlandic population; local maritime economy/fishing industry; populations and infrastructure of coastal (mega)cities (e.g. Tokyo, Shanghai, Jakarta); the local population and the local wildlife/food chain. ^e	<i>Ice melt causing:</i> Changing coastline in Greenland, making landslides (and tsunamis); icebergs breaking off, threatening maritime communities, economy and traffic; fish/food migration, threatening (local) fishing industry; submerging of (mega)cities across the globe due to sea-level rise; exposure of toxic waste from military activities, previously buried in the ice.	Local governments; national governments; parliaments; Inuit organizations; scientists and scientific institutions.	Greenlandic constituents/population; local fishing communities; local communities relying on a stable maritime economy; governments responsible for and populations living in low-lying coastal areas or (mega)cities; national/local constituents likely to be affected by toxic waste exposure.
Individuals/ Humans	Humans/human security. ^f	<i>Ice melt causing:</i> Landslides and tsunamis threatening the survival of the individual; lack of clean water, lack of food, lack of shelter for individuals living in vulnerable coastal areas as a consequence of rising sea levels.	Local and national governments and media; IGOs and NGOs with a focus on human security.	National and local governments; local and national emergency response; Search and rescue and defense organizations; IGOs and NGOs working on improving human security.

(continues)

TABLE 2.1.—Continued

Scale	Referent object(s)	Dangerous meaning of the Greenland ice sheet, connected to or reinforced by climate change	Securitizing actor(s)	Audience(s)
Animals	Fish stocks in fjords, and by extension communities and industries relying on these.g	<i>Ice melt causing:</i> The melt water of land-terminating glaciers affects the amount of nutrients in Greenlandic fjords, which are necessary for fish stocks to survive and breed.	NGOs; scientists; local or national fishing or hunting associations.	Greenlandic authorities; Inuit Circumpolar Council; NGOs such as Greenpeace or World Wildlife Fund.

^a New climate change research suggests that Greenland's glaciers may also be contributing to their own demise through algae growth within the glaciers, causing the remaining ice to absorb rather than reflect sunlight (McDougall 2019).

^b E.g., Borunda (2019), including the citation in the text below.

^c See for instance statements by Dr. Jason Box (and the article itself) on bbc.com by Shukman (2019).

^d See IPCC's special report on the implications of sea level rise on low-lying islands and coastal communities (IPCC 2019).

^e For example, the spread of toxic waste, stored in the ice as described in Colgan (2018) or Qujaukitsoq (2016).

^f For example, the statement by Synolakis in Schiermeier (2017), recounted in the text below.

^g On the dynamics between the melting glaciers of the ice sheet and its effect on local fish stocks, see Bondo Christensen (2017).

mapping of scales associated with the Greenland ice sheet. With these points we aim to unfold the connection between macrosecuritization, scale, and spatial reach as it plays out in the case of climate change and the Greenland ice sheet. First, that the Greenland ice sheet is perceived as dangerous on many different scales, and that this danger is indeed tied to and enabled by climate change. Second, that the ice sheet assumes many different roles under a climate change macrosecuritization including as threat, threat to itself, threatened by other dynamics, and as a spectacular showcase of climate change. Third, assuming different roles allows the ice sheet—in different ways—to obtain spatial reach into far-apart or disparate spaces of the globe.

The Greenland ice sheet appears to easily jump scale. The ice sheet is seen, by many different actors, as being dangerous in many different ways, forms, and in far-apart spaces. Notably, the ice sheet is not only seen as dangerous because it melts, but also because it disappears (as reflective material for instance), and because it breaks into the ocean as icebergs. In this way, the ice sheet becomes dangerous as calving ice, as melting ice, and as disappearing ice. Because of this danger, the Greenland ice sheet—it is argued by securitizing actors—threatens the atmosphere, the oceans of the world, Pacific island-states, regional shipping, global and local ecosystems, Inuit livelihoods, Indigenous knowledge, and local wildlife such as fish stocks. Some of these referent objects are directly threatened by climate change's effect on the ice, while others are threatened as a follow-on consequence of the same. The latter is exemplified in Colgan's (2018) analysis of the myriad consequences of the exposure of toxic waste materials associated with U.S. Cold War bases in Greenland due to the melting of the ice sheet. Evidently, more scales are in play than for both Buzan and Wæver (2009) and von Lucke, Wellmann, and Diez (2014) in their reflections on the scales involved in macrosecuritization.

Importantly, many of the ways in which the Greenland ice sheet is seen as being dangerous are indeed tied to climate change. Most significantly, climate change is what causes the ice sheet to change its physical state from ice to water, making the ice sheet dangerous in new ways and in new places. National Geographic—in itself an authoritative interlocutor in conveying the results of natural science to a broader, international audience—sums up this type of *planet-wide* danger:

Overall, there's enough water locked up in the Greenland ice sheet to add about 25 feet to the world's oceans. It's not likely that such catastrophic loss will happen soon, as in within the next few hundred years. But the whole of the ice sheet doesn't have to collapse to cause massive, planet-wide reverberations. (Borunda 2019)

The ice sheet, however, was also dangerous (and enabling of opportunities) in many ways prior to the notion of climate change, as is well known by Inuit populations across the Arctic (Bates 2007; Medby n.d.; Bruun and Medby 2014, 920). Climate change, however, accelerates or exacerbates these well-known dangers.¹¹ One example of this is the production of icebergs from the glaciers of the ice sheet. The calving of icebergs is not a new phenomenon, but it is accelerated by climate

change, making the local waters even more dangerous to navigate. Equally so with ice sheet withdrawal, which changes local coastlines and renders maps and other forms of navigational knowledge useless or risky to rely on.

According to Hastrup (2018, 72), climate change is causing traditional ways of forecasting and navigating the landscape to break down. The expected variability in weather patterns no longer applies. This is compounded by the change of the landscape caused by the change in the ice. A glacier near Qaanaaq used to be known as ‘Sermiarsussuaq,’ meaning ‘the smaller large glacier’ (Hastrup 2018, 72), but its disappearance has now removed an important local navigational marker.¹² Add to this the effects of changing ice on local animals and local hunting culture, and it is clear that the climate-change-induced changes to the ice sheet are also dangerous and multiscalar below the ‘middle’ scale.

This acceleration of dangers already familiar to the Greenlandic population is also tied to climate change in the aftermath of a devastating local incident in 2017. Here a landslide caused a tsunami that completely destroyed the village of Nuugaatsiaq on the west coast of Greenland. The ice sheet producing icebergs, changing coastlines, and causing tsunamis are all normal phenomena in Greenland, but they are all becoming more significant and more dangerous when understood in the context of climate change. As stated bluntly by one scientist in relation to the Nuugaatsiaq disaster: “earlier, we didn’t really believe such extremes were possible [. . .] but with global warming and sea level rise, such landslides are going to be far more common” (Schiermeier 2017). The ice sheet is partaking in a process that is making events like the Nuugaatsiaq catastrophe commonplace.

Under the climate change macrosecuritization, the ice sheet assumes many different roles as a threat (exemplified above), a threat to itself, threatened by other dynamics, and as a spectacular showcase of climate change. The ice sheet is dangerous to itself because its disappearance accelerates climate change. By disappearing as ice, the ice sheet reflects less sunlight back into outer space (the Albedo effect). This means more heat trapped in the atmosphere, creating a positive geophysical feedback mechanism, accelerating the greenhouse effect that initiated the disappearance of the ice in the first place. The Greenland ice sheet cocreates the process leading to its own demise, being not just a casualty but also a cause of climate change.

Because of all the dangerous effects it produces, and because it is endangered itself, the Greenland ice sheet in and of itself becomes a

referent object threatened by climate change. This is exemplified in the Albedo effect example, but also by the now warmer ocean surrounding Greenland ‘eating away’ at the ice sheet. While the ice sheet threatens ocean currents and oceanic life, the ocean simultaneously melts the ice sheet and its glaciers wherever it comes into contact with it, a kind of “oceanic edge-nibbling” (Borunda 2019). Politics, securitizing actors can argue, needs to be enacted both because the ice sheet itself is in need of protection and because of the myriad existential dangerous consequences of not protecting it. This exemplifies Dalby’s more general point that the separation of humanity (or culture) from nature produces a wish to both protect nature and be protected from it (McDonald 2013, 49).

Moreover, as the Greenland ice sheet itself is threatened, it becomes an effective physical showcase for the effects of climate change; because of its circulability as a visual (Hansen 2011, 52–53; see also Mortensgaard 2020, 145–46) it becomes an indicator of climate change. Asked about the link between climate change and the ice sheet, one oceanographer put it succinctly, “Greenland tends to be an integrator of the climate signal. What we’re seeing is the effects of a warmer atmosphere over the Arctic—as well as probably a warmer ocean” (Borunda 2019). On top of being a geophysical integrator of climate change, the Greenland ice sheet is such an integrator in at least two additional ways. First, the ice sheet is an archive of climatic fluctuations through different geological ages as well as of human activity. Some have even called the frozen sites of the world our greatest libraries, referring to the ice’s recording of events such as volcanic eruptions, nuclear tests, and, most recently, a drop in global carbon dioxide levels during the Covid-19 pandemic (Farrier 2021). Second, the Greenland ice sheet works as a securitizing argument, being an important and spectacular showcase for scientists, activists, NGOs, and international climate diplomacy illustrating concretely what is happening or will happen because of climate change (see also Bjørst 2019). To paraphrase Vuori (2010), the Greenland ice sheet becomes an environmental doomsday clock, slowly but inevitably and very visibly showing that time is running out, providing a metric of an environmental apocalyptic future, which travels easily across space. The archive of the past, contained in the ice, is at risk of being lost as the ice disappears, while the melting of the ice increasingly threatens humanity’s future. Under a climate change macrosecuritization, the Greenland ice sheet is a spectacular showcase of danger to humanity’s past, present, and future.

The ice sheet is intimately intertwined with climate change, and politically it plays into many dangers and plays many different but dangerous roles at multiple scales. That the ice sheet threatens simultaneously the world's oceans, the atmosphere, and Greenlandic villages is a testament to its ability to jump scale and also illustrates how its transformation (i.e., disappearance and melt) gives it spatial reach across far-apart geographical spaces. The effective showcase of climate change that the Greenland ice sheet is, including its ability to travel far as a doomsday visual, also gives it spatial reach, enabling it to reach far-apart or disparate places as an indicator of the threat of climate change. It is the spatial reach of the Greenland ice sheet, enabled by and understood through the prism of climate change, that makes it dangerous for coastal communities and metropolises around the globe, the oceans of the world, or, to paraphrase Thunberg, the future of entire generations.

In sum, the widely cast mapping of how the Greenland ice sheet is made dangerous shows that there indeed are significant structuring effects stemming from the macrosecuritization of climate change. In short: it matters. On the many scales identified, climate change is—in different ways—pivotal to how the ice sheet becomes dangerous. Our exploration also highlights that with the macrosecuritization of climate change front and center, the Greenland ice sheet is integrated in a complex network of securitizations. These work to make the existing characteristics of the ice sheet more dangerous, make the ice sheet dangerous in new ways, across many scales and in new spaces, while at the same time underlining how its own existence is both valued and threatened.

Conclusion

Our analysis highlights the relationship between climate change, the Greenland ice sheet, and security politics in three ways. First, the Greenland ice sheet lends itself to threat construction at multiple scales, and this multiscale threat construction is enabled by the macrosecuritization of climate change. Here the ice becomes dangerous both because it is changing in new ways (melting, disappearing), and because already-known change (e.g., calving icebergs) is accelerated and exacerbated by climate change. Second, the ice sheet assumes many different roles under a climate change macrosecuritization, and

even becomes a referent object itself. The Greenland ice sheet is threatened by climate change, including by its own role in climate change. And third, the Greenland ice sheet is an effective securitizing argument that easily reaches new spaces under a climate change macrosecuritization. In other words, it has spatial reach both as a spectacular showcase of climate change and in its physical transformation from ice into sea level rise.

Our analysis moreover shows that the scales involved in macrosecuritization as a theoretical concept deserve attention and that taking a more granular scalar perspective to the macrosecuritization of environmental processes enables an analysis that is not impeded by the ongoing and potentially disjointed timelines of securitization processes in this sector of the Copenhagen School. By taking a scalar approach we can unfold the political potency of a threat construction at the macro-scale, irrespective of the completeness of related securitization processes at each scale. In a sense, we bypass the question of exceptional measures and the temporal perspective. Instead, we foreground how climate change is already an effective threat construction on a number of scales while also being reinforced as the macro-threat by those same scales.

Additionally, taking a scalar approach to macrosecuritization also brings forth the importance of spatial reach in making a physical instantiation of climate change reach scales above the middle. Emphasizing scale thus allows for macrosecuritization to be not just a sum of its parts, but something that exists in constitution with related and underlying securitizations. As a consequence, unraveling the effect of macrosecuritization requires attention to scale and how scale relates to far-apart spaces. That spatial reach matters in macrosecuritization is substantiated by the notion that the changing nature of an ice sheet on a faraway Arctic island can be constructed as a threat to mega-cities around the world and simultaneously be a threat to the Arctic ecosystem and to itself through the atmospheric feedback mechanism. The relation between scale and spatial reach will need further investigation. What we propose here is that spatial reach is a component in making the ice sheet a threat also at the macro scale(s), and that this spatial reach is enabled by the logic of the macrosecuritization of climate change. It is through the logic of climate change that the ice sheet becomes dangerous as melting ice that can reach the other side of the globe, or as a doomsday visual of high circulability in the form of, for instance, satellite images of the disappearing ice sheet.

Examining how the ice sheet obtains spatial reach across far-apart spaces also shows how the Greenland ice sheet feeds back ‘up’ through multiple scales to the macrosecuritization of climate change, thus maintaining and strengthening climate change as the master threat or the macro-danger. This is what we refer to as the scalar securitizing feedback mechanism.

This unruly—indeed changing—materiality of the ice sheet and the unpredictability of the “parameters on which its behavior depends” (Bruun 2020, 170) were important contributors to the demise of the American attempts to utilize the ice in the security politics of the Cold War. Like then, it seems that despite the best efforts of the climate scientists of today, the ice and its way of changing have still not been made “ontologically stable” (Bruun 2020, 172). Our (limited) understanding of the ice sheet’s ongoing transformation—and by extension the precision, effectiveness, and durability of our solutions to this transformation—shape the threat constructions surrounding the ice sheet. The analysis in this chapter has shown how the very material and physical process of ice melting into water is productive in relation to the macrosecuritization of climate change. Perhaps integrating the material more substantially in (macro)securitization theory could shed light on how (macro)securitizations can be politically powerful even in the absence of external, threatening ‘Others’ and can indicate an opening to further engage the grammar of securitization theory with the scale and reach of its referent objects and threat constructions.

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NOTES

1. The Greenland ice sheet, alongside major glaciers of Antarctica, now have their own Twitter accounts, indicating their importance in communicating about climate change. See for instance: <https://twitter.com/sheetice> (accessed December 5, 2020).

2. We do not strictly follow Sjoberg's (2008, 483–94) six principles for taking a scalar approach. But our approach shares central tenets with Sjoberg's such as paying attention to geography, specific sites/places, and a focus on the relation between the physical and the social.

3. Others have previously approached the relation between sovereignty and mining for Arctic resources through a scalar and sectoral lens (see Jacobsen 2019).

4. Buzan and Wæver (2009, 258–59) use 'global warming' and 'climate change' interchangeably. We use the term 'climate change,' defined as human-caused changes to the climate, global warming being one aspect of this collective term.

5. See also McDonald (2013) on different types of security (national, human, international, and ecological) invoked by discourses on climate change.

6. The distinction between "the scientific agenda" and "the political agenda" regarding the securitization of environmental issues is also noted by Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998, 71–74). We, like Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, also see these two as informing each other and overlapping in analytically important ways.

7. In between 'climate' and 'climate change' lies 'climate variability,' defined as "shorter term climate variations" relative to 'climate change' (NASA 2005).

8. Dalby and Moussavi (2017) have previously shown how a narrow focus on one specific instantiation of ecological degradation can reveal insights on macrosecuritization-securitization dynamics.

9. See also Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998, 77–79) on the role of activists and NGOs as securitizing actors in the environmental sector.

10. Whether 'the body' is the smallest unit in a formulation that puts 'the universe' at its other extreme is of course debatable.

11. For an analysis of the role of knowledge and nonknowledge in the Kingdom of Denmark's Arctic policy, also in relation to climate change, see Mortensgaard (2017).

12. Thanks to Nicholas Andrews and Joe Crowther for pointing us to this and other relevant examples of concrete local effects of climate change to Arctic peoples and Arctic wildlife.

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3 | Security Transfigurations across Sectors

Animals, Climate, and Self-Determination in Greenland

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There is a certain register of self-representation in which actors and fora present themselves as Arctic by talking about a pristine natural environment inhabited by fragile but resourceful human communities (Martello 2004; Rowe 2021). Both ecosystems and communities are (ACIA 2005; AMAP 2017b) threatened by invasive pollution and climate change, but communities are simultaneously threatened by a lack of sustainable development sometimes explained by neglect from far-away metropolises (AMAP 2017a). The Arctic Council largely institutionalizes these narratives, promoting cooperation across borders and scales to achieve sustainable solutions and balances across environmental and societal fragilities. Dissent, whether external or coming from participants or observers in the Arctic Council working groups or wider community, is often formulated as critiques of the priorities or balances between environmental protection, regional economic development, and local needs. Traditional geopolitical rivalry coming back to the Arctic is mostly kept separate from this socioenvironmental register, but the problems promoted are increasingly discussed in security terms in this institutionalized regional discourse (Herrmann 2017; Sam-Aggrey and Lanteigne 2020).

Discussed as security problems, they are also frequently analyzed in security terms. Often a human security framework informs scholarly texts (Gjørv 2021; Stammler, Hodgson, and Ivanova 2020) or a non-committal framing as ‘widened’ or ‘alternative’ security legitimizes the discussion (Jacobsen and Herrmann 2017; Gjørv and Lanteigne 2020).

Even when guided by the Copenhagen School securitization theory (CSST), the full potential of its rigorous and rich analytical framework is seldom unlocked. Sometimes this theory is employed to illuminate distinct episodes or processes in isolation (Gad 2005, 2017b; Åtland 2008, 2009; Greaves 2016; Jensen 2013; Jacobsen 2015; Kristensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen 2019), producing case analyses valuable as such but dubious when used to characterize Arctic security *per se*. If and when ‘macro’ elements of the CSST framework are indeed applied, the basic thrust of the analysis is that the Arctic is at heart an environmental security configuration (Exner-Pirot 2013; Chater and Greaves 2014). These analyses, however, are often selected and applied in what this chapter will argue amounts to an unnecessarily static manner that points attention away from certain dynamics core to Arctic security. In this chapter, our argument is that while Arctic regionalization might have *taken off* from environmental concerns (Keskitalo 2007), what has *shaped* both the security dynamics playing out as a central part of Arctic region building is the way securitizations of ‘environmental’ referent objects have interacted with securitizations centered on identities. Hence, our beef is not with CSST as such but with how those parts of its analytical framework focused on aggregated phenomena has been put to use in the Arctic. Our argument is that we will better understand Arctic security by going ‘back to basics’ and starting security analysis from scratch, by *first* identifying individual securitizing moves and only *then* aggregating patterns of security dynamics. Moreover, such an analysis will better equip us to judge whether the identity/environment nexus found is distinctly Arctic or may be found elsewhere, even if possibly less dominating for the overall security dynamics of a region and, certainly, globally.

The chapter suggests that to pinpoint Arctic qualities, security applicants of CSST one needs to do two things: First, get the relation that the theory conceptualizes between ‘sectors’ and security dynamics right. Second, refocus from snapshots of static security configurations to dynamic security ‘trans-figurations’, that is, to follow how one configuration over time morphs into a related but distinct configuration as securitizing actors change how they talk about referent objects, threats, and means as reactions to opponents in the region or developments elsewhere. To make this methodological point, the chapter performs a detailed analysis zooming in on two distinct security configurations that take on special qualities in the Arctic, namely one on wildlife hunting and one on climate change. The point of the analysis, however,

comes from following how the two configurations are related over time, the latter configuration relating back to the earlier.

The analysis draws on Greenlandic case material. Greenlandic political discourse most clearly presents the dilemmas core to the environment/identity nexus in the Arctic: claiming the speaking position of an Indigenous people while insisting to use this platform to pursue development. Some notions of development do not resonate well with widespread prejudices about Indigenous identity and its relation to Nature. Some Greenlanders avail themselves of the speaking position and speaking time awarded by being inscribed as one among a series of iconic 'species' threatened by human disregard for the Arctic environment: Harp seal pups are presented as victims of the fur industry; whales are victims of exploitation; polar bears are victims of climate change; and 'the Inuit hunter' is featured as dependent on "a vulnerable environment, a dying livelihood, people being at risk of 'losing' their culture and a future that is melting away" (Bjørst 2012, 103). But in other instances, Greenlandic voices—sometimes even the same—have a much less easy fit with the narratives predominant in global environmentalist narratives (Bjørst 2012, 110). The chapter shows how applying the Copenhagen School right may provide a better understanding of the security dynamics coming out of this misfit, provided that the analysis is guided by the right combination of the analytical tools available in its framework. What is at stake, hence, is not just our scholarly understanding of the relation between identity and environmental security, but also the limits for Greenlandic agency or, in other words, the self-definition and right to self-determination of one of the Indigenous peoples participating in Arctic region building.

The analysis is documented by quotes involving securitizing moves, selected from debates and quarrels pitting Greenlandic officials against outside environmentalists.¹ There is a surprising consistency across parties and persons in the rhetoric of Greenlandic government and parliament on these matters,² so the analysis need not account for domestic politicking. There are a few local NGOs focusing on the environment in Greenland (inter alia, Avataq, Urani Naamik), but they have few registered members and rely in some measure on support from outside resources.³ Several international NGOs are engaged in discussions about the Arctic environment while having little presence in Greenland and close to no members locally. Even if some of these organizations would not agree to being lumped together since their concerns are of different scales (animal rights, species conservation, eco-

systems protection, climate), they are often experienced or represented as one of a kind from a Greenlandic or Arctic perspective.⁴ Key in the analysis below is how a number of the largest mainstream groups most active in Arctic affairs (Greenpeace, WWF) have indeed developed concerns across the scales.

The chapter proceeds like this: Before engaging the empirical analysis, separate sections set the Arctic and Greenlandic scene and discuss how to aggregate distinct instances of securitization into structures like sectors and figurations. One section then distills the core figurations party to a configuration of securitizations of animals and hunters, and another section repeats the procedure on a later configuration of securitizations of climate change and development. A final analytical section draws together the relation between the two configurations as a transfiguration driven by environmentalist and Indigenous peoples' representatives as securitizing agents, before the conclusion sums up the argument.

Greenland as a Case of Life and Death in the Arctic

Security is about life and death. Traditionally, military weapons potentially causing death on a mass scale to secure the survival of states has been the core focus for security studies. But decades ago, important parts of the subdiscipline refocused to observe how security dynamics also revolved around other referent objects: lives valued at other scales, other ways of life. Hence, other problems of life and death also in the Arctic lend themselves to security analysis. Environmental activists placing themselves between animals and hunters to prevent killing and in the way of heavy machinery to prevent extraction of resources produce extra dramatic images on the background of Arctic landscapes: Blood on ice. Minuscule bodies opposed to industrial structures in grandiose sceneries of pristine nature. When promoting their stories, Inuit have the benefit of equally captivating imagery, but their stories about what to protect and promote are more complicated. Large parts of current global imaginations about the Arctic rely on two very different but related narratives about the entanglement of humans and Nature:⁵ First, an image of the past in which “vulnerable” Indigenous communities were challenged by the “forbidding” Arctic environment as presented in travel writing and motion pictures (Bjørst 2008a; Fienup-Riordan 1995). And second, an image of the present in which

modern industrialized extraction, production, and consumption unsettle global climate, Arctic species, and ecosystems, as well as Indigenous cultures and local communities.

Mikhail Gorbachev has been credited widely with establishing this current agenda in the Arctic focused on the environment, Indigenous peoples, and sustainable development in a 1987 speech in Murmansk. Really, he instead cleared the ground by discussing in detail the role of the Arctic in the militarized superpower confrontation, mentioning climate phenomena only as metaphors for Cold War dynamics and addressing both the environment and Indigenous peoples only briefly as beneficiaries of possible cooperation once desecuritization had been achieved (Gorbachev 1987). Nevertheless, once the ground was cleared, intergovernmental institutions focused on this agenda, first the working groups under the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy and later the Arctic Council, whose founding Ottawa Declaration laid out its commitment to “the protection of the Arctic environment, including the health of Arctic ecosystems, maintenance or biodiversity in the Arctic region and conservation and sustainable use of natural resources” (Arctic Council 1996). In a footnote, the declaration noted that “The Arctic Council should not deal with matters related to military security” (Arctic Council 1996, note 1). The footnote made traditional military security the absent present in many Arctic fora, but simultaneously created space where human-environmental relations could be discussed in security language (cf. Exner-Pirot 2013).

While the initial priorities for the environmental working groups did not mention climate change, the issue took center stage for their work and led to the consolidation of the Arctic region in international affairs (Exner-Pirot 2013, 122). In scientific assessments and public attention, the Arctic has been featured as the proverbial canary in the global coal mine of climate change (ACIA 2005, 24). But simultaneously, the same processes made for a resource frontier (Nuttall 2017) opened up not least by the self-same climatic changes, soon ripe for utilization. Indigenous peoples’ experiences with surviving in the Arctic for centuries without undermining their own livelihood endow them a certain legitimacy in the discussions about the dilemmas of how to prioritize environmental and developmental concerns, often debated in terms of sustainability (Gad, Jacobsen, and Strandsbjerg 2020; cf. Petrov et al. 2017, 13; Thisted 2020). This legitimacy relies, however, in no small part on defining the Inuit as part of the local ecosystems, which tendentially silences those Inuit voices advocating socioeconomic change

(Bravo 2009). In contrast to this image, as we shall see, Inuit organizations insist on the right of Indigenous peoples to determine their own ways forward rather than being defined by their past (Greaves 2016).

To a large degree, these general narratives on the Arctic condition Greenlanders' attempts to influence global affairs shaping their lives. In one important respect, though, Greenlandic narratives differ from that of other Indigenous peoples (Dahl 2012, 89–94). Greenlanders insist on taking their right to self-determination beyond minority rights against the Danish state. They insist on the right to have, one day, their own state. This ambition works as a touchstone making the dilemmas and collisions latent in those Arctic narratives impossible to ignore in relation to Greenland. Greenlandic political identity pivots around two related narratives:⁶ One narrative pitching a decline of Indigenous culture, referring to a core consisting of language, hunting, and nature, and another narrative describing an all-encompassing modernization process. Most projects promoted by Greenlandic organized interests and politicians support some combination of the two narratives, culminating in visions of enhanced self-determination. In contrast to the global narratives on the Arctic, sketched above, Greenlandic narratives often cast environmentalists as threats rather than allies in defense of Indigenous life in the Arctic. In relation to climate, a Greenlandic double strategy (Bjørst 2008b) does give some room for maneuvering in international politics, but it does not represent a clear picture of what Greenland seeks for the future. The following section argues that how applying the Copenhagen School may provide a better understanding of the security dynamics coming out of this misfit, provided the analysis is guided by the right combination of the analytical tools available in its framework.

Securitization Theory Applied Bottom-up: Cross-Sector Transfigurations

In principle, the basic thrust of securitization theory is to apply its analytical framework bottom-up: Go look for actors who make securitizing moves by telling stories about how some existential threat will obliterate a valued referent object unless we employ some specified means out of the ordinary, then look for how such speech acts are received, and particularly if the possible use of extraordinary means is accepted. Finally, you may start aggregating how the (un)successful speech acts

and narratives promoted by different actors play into each other (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). In analytical practice, however, shortcuts present themselves. In particular, sedimented structures of security or societal differentiation may sometimes be taken for granted by analysts, diverting analytical attention from important empirical phenomena.

Over the past decade, following increased global attention to the Arctic, a whole cottage industry has taken to analyze dynamics in the region in terms of securitization theory (i.a., Åtland 2008, 2009; Albert 2015; Greaves and Pomerants 2017; Gad 2017b; Jacobsen and Herrmann 2017; Jensen 2013; Palosaari and Tynkkynen 2015; Watson 2013; Wæver 2017). As discussed in the introductory chapter, military desecuritization allowed Arctic regionalization to begin with environmental concerns (Åtland 2008; Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017). But what has later shaped Arctic region building, and certainly what has made it distinct from other instances of environmentally based regionalization and possibly discrete from global security dynamics, is the way securitizations of ‘environmental’ referent objects have interacted with securitizations centered on identities. In CSST terms, the dynamics have not been confined to the environmental sector, but they have involved interaction between securitizing and desecuritizing moves in two sectors: the societal (which revolves around identities) and the environmental.

When discussing the environmental sector, CSST literature—on the one hand—observes the promotion of referent objects on a range of scales from individual animals (objects of cruelty) to planetary survival (object of anthropogenic climate change) (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 23, 71; Buzan and Wæver 2009). On the other hand, it seems that means worthy of the label extraordinary have a hard time finding acceptance with audiences traditionally deemed relevant for their possible execution. In other words, lots of alarmist talk and less action, at least on a scale that has the force to define patterns of security in more than niches: animal rights organizations might interpellate their core constituency to radical action, and that may cause serious concern with the objects of that action, but it will seldom take center stage for society at large.

Climate change, of course, is the most discussed contestant for a successful securitization with widespread repercussions (Wæver 2009; Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2, this vol.). Also in Greenland, climate change is characterized as a threat because it leads to the melt-

ing of various types of ice and the derived effects on the living conditions of animals and thus, the local hunters. As we shall see, however, climate change represents a paradox as its effects in the societal sector—in terms of identity threats—prove more diverse.

Crucial to understanding the specificity of the societal sector is how identities work as referent objects of security. Identities are, on the one hand, dependent for their existence on something else being different. On the other hand, difference is also threatening to identities *per definition*, since difference represent a repeated claim that the identity of any identity is contingent: ‘We’ can never be quite secure that ‘we’ will be able to remain who ‘we’ are. Or worse: ‘We’ might not be who we should be; someone—internal or external—might very well be pointed out as blocking our way to realizing our true identity (Wæver 1997; Gad 2010; Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.). The CSST canon notes that empirically, securitizing moves have best chance of success if they describe a threat directed toward a ‘middle range’ identity, more than an individual, less than global humanity, quintessentially the nation or one of its contestants as primary political identity (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). In literature applying securitization theory, the most discussed threats to national identity are migration, influence from neighboring cultures, and risks of being eroded by or encompassed into a more comprehensive and dominant collective identity project (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 121). In the case of Greenland’s national identity, threats to Inuit hunting traditions (Gad 2005; Jacobsen 2014) are, as we shall see, often articulated as deriving from *qallunaat* (white) culture and countries. In global climate security narratives, entanglements between environment and security are obvious too: climate change is posed as a threat to the survival of numerous specific collectivities, but, conversely, also action to avert climate change is presented as a threat to ‘our way of life’ (Salih and Corry 2022). As we shall see, both narratives appear in Greenlandic discourse, but here they are joined by variations which seek to desecuritize in ways that end up denying agency to Greenlanders.

The progenitors of the Copenhagen School have mused on the ontological status of sectors without appearing to have arrived at a definitive conclusion: Wæver discusses sectors as a name for ‘second order observations’ (Wæver 1999) of distinct ‘dialects’ of security talk (Wæver 1997, 356) resulting in security dynamics with “particular physiognomies and privileged actors that differ” (Wæver 2017, 126), implying, perhaps, that sectors may analytically be identified *as* interacting secu-

ritizations or security dynamics clustering into discernible types. In contrast, Buzan (Albert and Buzan 2011) edges closer to awarding sectors a pre-existence; *first* society differentiates itself in sectors, *then* securitizations may be attempted in each through (relatively) different mechanics to (relatively) distinct effects.

The point of this exegetic exercise is just to make the point that typologizing an instance of securitization is not a goal in itself. Nor can one—having typologized an instance of securitization as, for instance, pertaining to the environmental sector—take for granted that ensuing (or preceding) dynamics stay within this sector. It definitively constitutes valuable information to ascertain that a given securitization can be typologized as pertaining to one or another sector, since this points our attention to important dynamics shared by securitizations in that sector. But important dynamics do not necessarily stay within sectoral confines, so if we limit our analysis to typologizing or to intrasectoral dynamics, we may miss what is most important (cf. Wæver 2017, 126). Given that sectors are names for relatively distinct dialects or dynamics of securitization—whether these dialects or dynamics are the result of pre-existing extra-security properties of a societal differentiation or not—they are heuristic devices for identifying distinct dynamics in the empirical analysis of securitization. We shall argue, however, that what is interesting in important security dynamics in the Arctic is that they revolve around a configuration of securitizations *between* the environmental and the societal sectors. Overemphasizing the sectors as such risks blinding the analyst to important dynamics across sectors and to important transfigurations taking place whether inside one or across several sectors.

This makes for a methodological point of more general relevance for securitization analysis: Do not take sedimented structures as given or at face value by arriving at the scene armed with preidentified regions or nicely boxed sectoral dynamics. Added value comes from conducting securitization analysis—yes, through a theoretically informed analytical lens—but decisively ‘bottom-up’ when it comes to empirical observation: beginning by identifying actual empirical securitizations, see how they relate, and build up accounts of their configuration. An equally important methodological point, however, is that when you have identified a configuration of securitizations, even a cross-sectoral configuration, you cannot take for granted that it endures in the same format. Securitization analysis must therefore involve actually doing the bottom-up analysis with an open mind once in a

while, not just reproducing established configurations once identified. Only thus can one account for changes in/of configurations, that is, for *transfigurations*.⁷

Hence, we propose to begin each analysis by observing how individual actors instigate a *security figuration* by having a securitizing move accepted by a relevant audience. The next step is to observe how two or more security figurations may articulate each other in a *security configuration*. Only after detailing a security configuration, you may analytically decide that it is sufficiently independent to qualify as a *security complex* on the terms of the theory (cf. the introductory chapter to this volume). And you may observe if the configuration, complex or not, has a particular affection for a ‘regional’ territory (making it a *regional security complex*), or that it does not. Likewise, only after detailing a security configuration may you determine whether it ‘speaks the dialects’ or exhibits the dynamics characteristic to one or more *sectors*. Finally, repeating the same procedure on a diachronically generated body of empirical material—or two chronologically distinct synchronic bodies of text—allows you to make claims about *transfiguration*; that is, change in or of a security configuration (cf. Andersen 1999, 31).⁸ Figure 3.1 shows (A) a basic security figuration shaped by the rhetorical figure of a securitizing move, (B) one archetypical security configuration, namely that of security dilemma pitting two parties in a mutually reinforcing security relation, and (C) the transfiguration of—in this case—such a destructive security dilemma into another, possibly more dynamic but less explosive configuration. To illustrate how fruitful this methodological reorientation can be, the following sections analyze two security configurations, each beginning with environmentalist concerns with Arctic animals and ecosystems met with countersecuritization on behalf of human communities living in the region.⁹

Hunters Killing Animals, Environmentalists Killing Hunting

Deciding where to begin a story of a dynamic unfolding is never innocent; it involves a measure of assigning blame, be it for deliberately throwing the first stone or inadvertently stepping on someone’s toes. Even if threats to Inuit security and livelihood emanating from European shores certainly began earlier, the distinctiveness of the security transfiguration in focus for this chapter is best conveyed by beginning with the antisealing campaign taking off in the 1950s and culminating

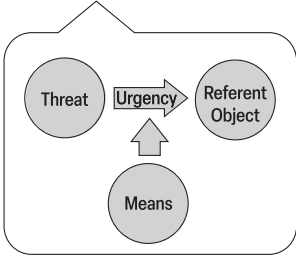


Fig. 3.1A. A security figuration shaped by the rhetorical figure of a securitizing move.

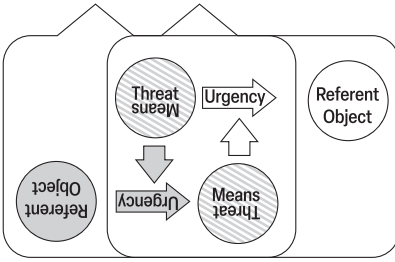


Fig. 3.1B. One type of security configuration: the classic security dilemma.

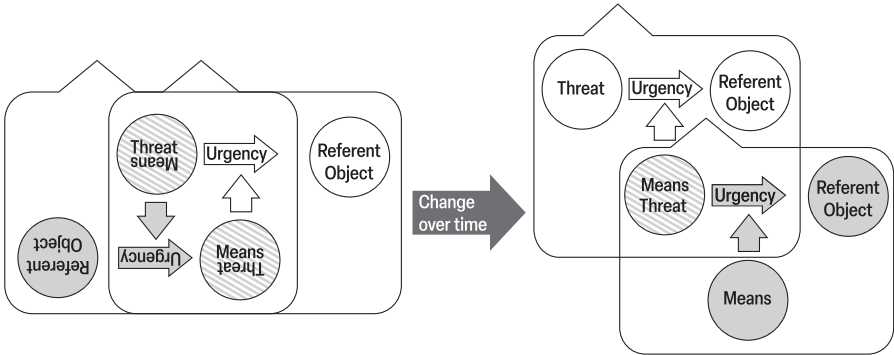


Fig. 3.1C. Transfiguration of a security configuration, in this case from a security dilemma to a different type of configuration, possibly more dynamic.

in the 1980s with Brigitte Bardot hugging a seal pup (Wenzel 1989) and the global market for seal fur basically collapsing (Graugaard 2020b).

Initial Securitization: Hunters Killing Animals

The basic securitizing move underlying these campaigns lives on in public imagination and has been institutionalized in different ways

around the world. For instance, the EU in a 2009 regulation reiterated that seals were “sentient beings that can experience pain, distress, fear and other forms of suffering” (EU 2009, §1) and that they were threatened by “cruel hunting methods” (EU 2009, §1). To avert the threat, animal rights activists have taken the extraordinary measure of intervening physically in the hunt, placing themselves between hunter and prey. Antiwhaling campaigns followed a parallel trajectory and argument, recasting whales as extraordinary and intelligent endangered mammals that needed to be saved (Epstein 2008).

The micro-spectacle of activists placing themselves in harm’s way to save individual animals were, of course, never meant as the solution. The micro-securitizing moves articulated both concerns and means on macro-scales. Restrictions implemented internationally on whaling were primarily based on conservation concerns, saving the species rather than the individual. And in relation to sealing, the extraordinary measure that made a difference has been the suspension of the global markets by public campaigns that succeeded in collapsing demands, and by major economies legally restricting the trade in marine mammal products (Wenzel 1989). Nevertheless, historically, the micro- and macro-securitizations of hunting of marine mammals were closely intertwined. Hence, what is in figure 3.2 illustrated as two distinct securitizations is perhaps best thought of as two ideal types that have in practice been played out in various combined and hybrid forms.

Countersecuritization: Activists Killing Hunting

While the campaigns to save large marine mammals were directed toward threats from commercial hunting performed by individuals and companies from industrialized countries in the East and West, both the resulting restrictions and the collapse of the markets were felt by Inuit in Greenland and elsewhere. Greenlandic parliamentarians of different political colors have engaged in countersecuritizations of antisealing and whaling campaigns when challenged by distinct foreign decisions confining the export of seal products and limiting the quota on large whales. Hunting seal and eating whale feature prominently in dominating narratives about Greenlandic national identity, and foreign restrictions on hunting and export have been given high priority in the annual debates about Greenland’s foreign policy (cf. Jacobsen 2014, 33–34). In that sense, seals and whales are fundamental for how Greenland engages with the outside world. As Greenland’s pre-

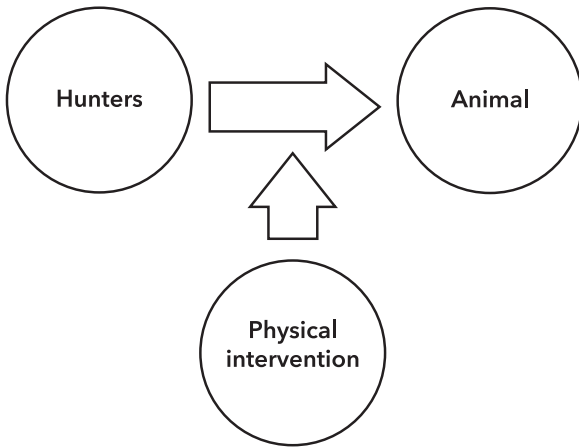


Fig. 3.2A. Animal rights securitization of hunting: Hunters pose an existential threat to individual animals. Extraordinary means: intervene physically between hunter and prey.

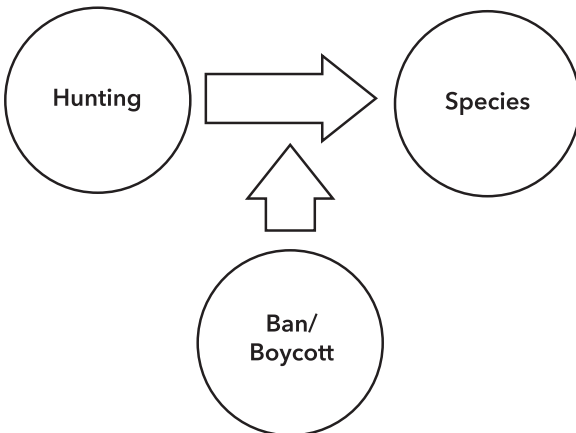


Fig. 3.2B. Environmentalist securitization of hunting: Hunting poses an existential threat to species. Extraordinary means: ban hunting or import or boycott products.

mier stated in 2014: “EU’s Inuit exception on sealskin import, WTO and IWC are crucial cases for the future of Greenland” (Andersen 2014). Hence, in an open letter to the EU Commission and the EU Parliament, the speaker of the Greenlandic parliament argued that “Banning our export of seal skin and denying us our great whale quotas . . . constitute a direct attempt to eliminate Arctic cultures, a thousand years of age . . . in a perfect parallel to the policy pursued by the Conquistadors in South America, 400 years ago” (Motzfeldt 2009; cf. Holm 2009).¹⁰ Figure 3.3 summarizes how this additional threat narrative—still awaiting the culmination in the form of an extraordinary means—complicates the original environmentalist narrative.

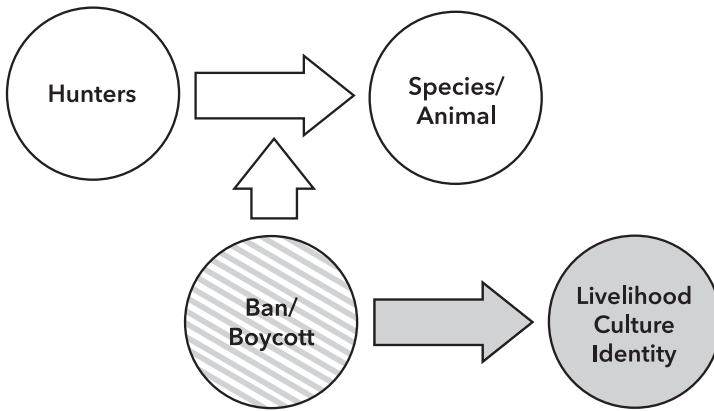


Fig. 3.3. Countersecuritization of hunting: Ban/boycott poses existential threat to Inuit livelihood, culture, identity.

Countersecuritization: In Search of Extraordinary Means

In relation to international regulation of whaling, an extraordinary means was readily available to Greenland. Faced with the IWC issuing a quota of zero humpback whales to Greenland, the government retorted that “hunting of large whales is a vital component of everyday life and culture in Greenland [and] an important part of the Greenland food security” (Government of Greenland 2012). It therefore decided to ignore the IWC decision and, consequently, unilaterally increased its own quota (Jeremiassen 2013). This securitization was rearticulated by the premier speaking in parliament in Nuuk, in what amounts to a textbook example of a ‘societal sector’ securitization of identity: “We will continue fighting for our cultural and historical hunting traditions. We will fight for Greenland[’s right to] catch whales. . . . We defend our way of life, way of thinking and our values, and we do this to defend our rights and identity” (Jeremiassen 2013).¹¹

In relation to sealing, however, responses to the initial securitization performed by animal rights activists have a hard time suggesting effective countermeasures that would both count as extraordinary and be effective. If you are facing the threat of a gun, the extraordinary means of pointing your own gun back appears obvious. If an activist intervenes in ways that threaten the success of your hunt, you might readily think of extraordinary ways of getting him or her to leave. But how do you get faraway consumers and foreign regulators to behave in less threatening

ways? In his letter to the EU, mentioned above, the speaker of the Greenlandic parliament first took aim at the moral standing of the aggressor: “You should be ashamed of yourself, Europe” (Motzfeldt 2009). Later, he issued a convoluted threat to the perceived geopolitical interests of the EU: “Is this the right time to campaign against our traditional way of life and food base, exactly when the Community wants to enter the Arctic as an equal and trustworthy partner” (Motzfeldt 2009).¹² As much as this is an example of security talk, it speaks to the notion that environmental policies can be experienced as postcolonial and a reproduction of old hegemonic structures (Grove 1995, 48). Therefore, it is important to question who environmental security is for? As our model would suggest, the seal ban was not installed for the securitization of Inuit livelihood, culture, and identity.

Desecuritizing the Countersecuritization: The Inuit Exception

Environmentalists as well as national and international regulators, however, largely accepted this countersecuritization. In reply, a special place has been carved out for Indigenous hunting. Recognizing that “whale products play an important role in the nutritional and cultural life of native peoples,” the IWC issues small quotas to distinct communities, mainly in the Arctic, for certain species where hunting is generally not permitted (IWC n.d.). Likewise, the EU as well as mainstream environmentalist organizations deem Inuit sealing morally and legally acceptable (Canadian Press 2014; Humane Society International 2017; IFAW 2017; cf. Graugaard 2020a, 110). While radical animal rights organizations such as Sea Shepherd and Anima continue to prioritize animal lives (Vinding 2009), organizations focused on macro-issues, like Greenpeace and WWF, make a show of actively supporting Greenland in relating to sealing (Seeberg 2013; Søndergaard 2015a). While implementing an otherwise total ban on the import of sealskin products, the EU recognized that “The hunt is an integral part of the culture and identity of the members of the Inuit society” (EU 2009, §14) and devised a so called ‘Inuit exception.’ The distinction of Indigenous hunting thus serves as a move to desecuritize, recasting both the threat to wildlife and to Inuit hunting: Animals might—as individuals or species—still count as valuable referent objects, but threats coming from Greenlandic hunters should no longer count as existential. Correspondingly, Inuit should no longer feel threatened in their livelihood, culture, or identity, since their practices are—as illustrated in figure 3.4—no lon-

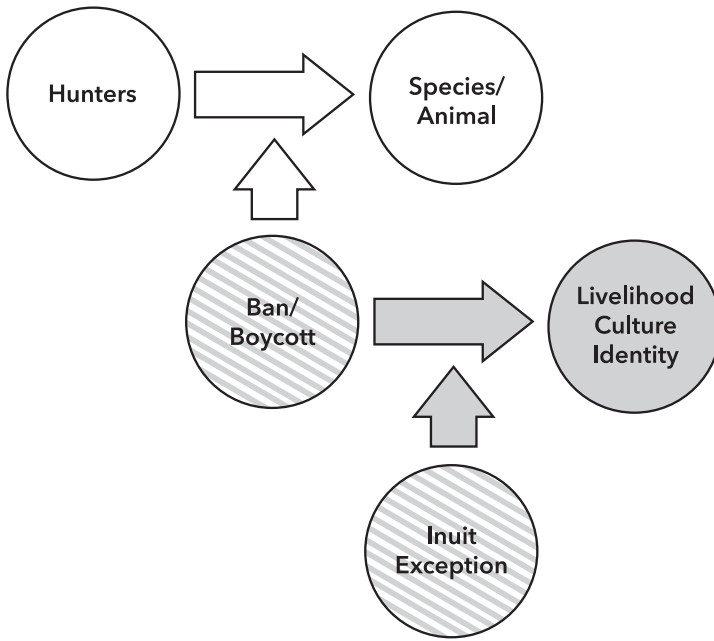


Fig. 3.4. Desecuritization of Inuit hunting. Extraordinary means: Inuit exception.

ger counted as threatening to the animals, and these practices have been exempted from the bans they deemed threatening to their livelihood, culture, and identity.

Countersecuritizing the Means of Desecuritization: Exceptionalism Prohibits Development

The standard expectation, according to CSST, would be that once freed of securitization, an issue will be back to business as usual, back in the realm of ordinary political procedure and debate. Seen from a Greenlandic perspective, however, the move did not really have the desecuritizing effect, since the global markets for sealskin products, once closed down, did not reopen with a renewed demand for Inuit produce (Sommer 2012). Moreover, as a desecuritization, the ‘Inuit exception’ came with a catch in the form of another type of depolitization. On top of its lack of effect in terms of income generation, being desecuritized came at the price of being reconfinned to distinct practices and a specific rela-

tion to Nature. The embrace of mainstream environmentalist organizations, as well as EU's 'Inuit exception' desecuritizing Inuit hunting, relies on a description of practices as 'traditional' and 'sustainable.' The way these two adjectives are related in effect inscribes Greenlanders in a particular relation to Nature.¹³ The 2009 EU regulation delimits the exception to cover "seal products which result from hunts traditionally conducted by Inuit and other Indigenous communities and which contribute to their subsistence" (EU 2009).¹⁴ WWF explains how Indigenous tradition—in contrast to modern practices of both meat production and consumption—safeguards environmental concerns with both animal rights, sustainability of the species, and climate:

Greenlandic sealing is thoroughly sustainable. . . . [B]aby seals [were] for decades . . . slain with clubs in Canada. Not for their meat but only for their skin. That kind of hunting . . . does [not] happen in Greenland. . . . Greenlandic hunting is done based on knowledge of and respect for the animal, and from a climate and environmental perspective this is much more gentle to Nature than the type of production delivering most of the meat we eat from, e.g., cows, pigs or chicken. Moreover, Greenlandic seals live a good life in Nature. They move freely, are born, live and die in a World, which may be full of dangers, but which is their preferred environment. (Seeberg 2013)

In an attempt to fully utilize this desecuritization, the parliament and government of Greenland have turned to actively promoting Greenlandic seal products as sustainable (EM2012/14, 02, 08, 17-02, 08, 46; Kleist 2013, 3). In parallel, arguments relating Indigenous cultural tradition and sustainability—in contrast to industrialized practices—are commonplace in relation to whaling. As a Greenlandic minister for hunting explained to a Danish audience:

Greenlanders' lives are closely connected to marine and land animals. We have been dependent on them for thousands of years for survival in the Arctic[. . . . In contrast, Europeans] go to the supermarket to buy pre-packed meat of farmed animals, slaughtered by others. . . . Here in Greenland, we go into the Nature to catch our food, and we are therefore responsible for our own food supply. (Lyberth 2013)

Speaking to an IWC meeting, another minister for hunting relied on references to 4,000 years of sustainable Greenlandic whaling and its continued importance to Inuit traditions and diet that, she argued, could also lead to less CO₂ emissions, as it would limit Greenland's food dependency on European countries (Hansen 2010). In her speech, she also claimed that:

the term “sustainability” was not invented for fun nor by the UN or other international organizations. The term has existed as long as people have been dependent on natural resources. Perhaps the term has been defined differently from time to time and from one group to another. For example, the lack of oil in European countries in the 17th and 18th centuries caused many large whale populations to be significantly reduced. Today, for example, we find that European countries are those which are most eager to ‘save the whales’. This is gratifying. However, they must be aware not to have an exaggerated attitude towards the countries whose whales they were almost eradicating, especially when [our kind of] whaling is based on the principles of sustainability. (Hansen 2010)¹⁵

Hence desecuritizing hunting practices by basing them in a distinct identity as an ‘Indigenous people’ involves accepting being relegated to a limited spatiotemporal position: You need to perform hunting in a certain ‘traditional’ way,¹⁶ which involves you with Nature in specific ways not immediately open to modern societies.

Now the global movement of Indigenous peoples have—with Greenlanders in important roles—spent decades rejecting this identification of indigeneity with tradition, insisting on the right to self-definition and self-determination (Dahl 2012). To be Indigenous might involve coming out of a special relation to a specific landscape, but it includes also the right to determine the development of the community going forward. So desecuritizing hunting practices by inscribing them in a Eurocentric concept of indigeneity really just displaces the threat to another core element of Greenlandic identity: self-determination as a people. When pleading with the EU over sealskins, the speaker of the parliament of Greenland found that the ultimate threat from the regulation would be “to prevent Arctic Indigenous peoples from surviving *in their own manner* by eating seals and whales and birds” (Holm 2009, italics inserted). Likewise, when arguing the right to whaling to the

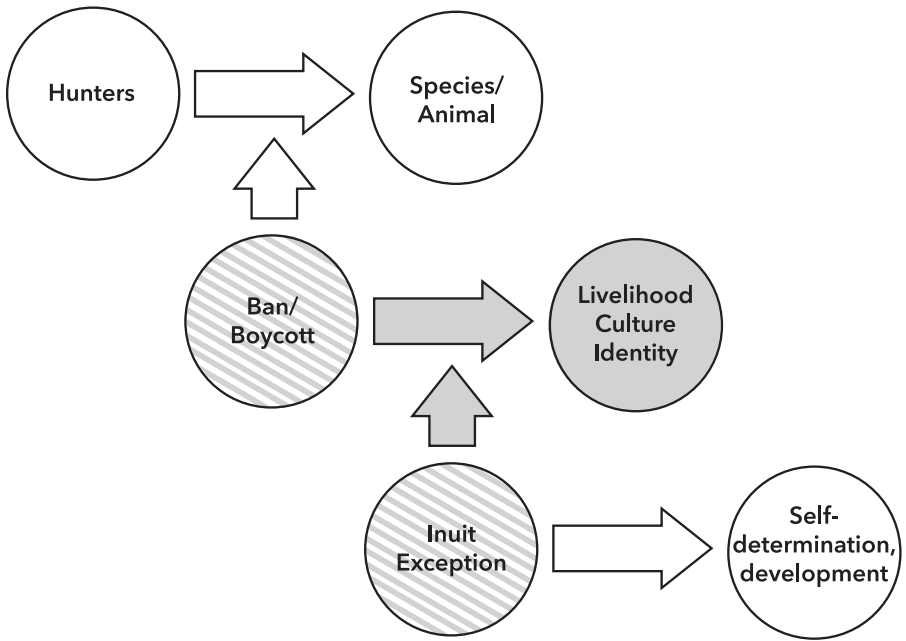


Fig. 3.5. Resecuritization of Inuit exception: Inscription in nature conditioning Inuit exception poses existential threat to Inuit self-determination, development, identity.

IWC, the minister not only pointed toward traditional practices bound to the past. She also articulated the right to self-determination when stressing that “in our aim to implement self-government in Greenland, we need to make full use of all the resources we can get, including all animals caught” (Hansen 2010).

So as a valued referent object in need of protection, the specific hunting practices are only a placeholder, not only for a cultural identity defined by the past but, more acutely, for a political identity to be realized in the future (cf. Jensen and Stepputat 2013, 219). Inuit do not want their local environment (animals) preserved in a way that prevents them from utilizing them as a resource. But neither do they want to have the modes of their utilization preserved in a way that prevents them from deciding their own future. Identity involves more than practices inherited from the past, it involves also the possibility of developing in the future and the right to decide in the present the future direction. As illustrated in figure 3.5, what began as a securitization in the environmental sector immediately set off a dynamic in the societal sec-

tor. When faced with threats from climate change, this more abstract referent object—the *future* identity—makes a desecuritizing truce with environmentalist organizations even more precarious.

Climate Change Threatening Culture, Climate Action Threatening Development

The threats from hunting to individual animal welfare and the survival of species have, arguably, faded from global attention, leaving behind Inuit with largely realized threats to livelihood and self-determination from a collapsing sealskin market.¹⁷ Radical animal rights activists—even if still targeting neighboring Faroe Islands for its *grindadráp*—have redirected their main attention to the agro-industrial complex. Meanwhile, environmentalist and conservationist concerns are increasingly focused on climate change. Whereas climate change challenges traditional ways of hunting, the melting of Arctic ice simultaneously promises to make available hitherto unexploited natural resources, renewable as well as nonrenewable. Minerals in general, but particularly until recently hydrocarbons, have appeared to embody a unique potential to boost Greenland's national economy and hence, according to the government of Greenland (Naalakkersuisut 2019), contribute to the development toward more self-determination. Therefore, securitizations of climate change, depending on how they are pitched, point out very different referent objects as valuable in a way that displaces the fault lines between the securitizing actors pitted against each other in the configuration focused on hunting (cf. Jacobsen 2015, 112).

Initial Securitization: Fossil Fuel Extraction and Emission Causing Climate Change

Of course, the core climate securitization is global in scope, pointing out the global climate as the valued referent object to be protected. Precisely its global nature, however, allow a series of derivative or supporting referent objects, ranging from the global via the regional to the local scale (cf. Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2, this vol.).¹⁸ Figure 3.6A includes but a few of these referent objects along with the preferred extraordinary means advocated by climate activists: banning further extraction of fossil fuels and capping emissions from their use.

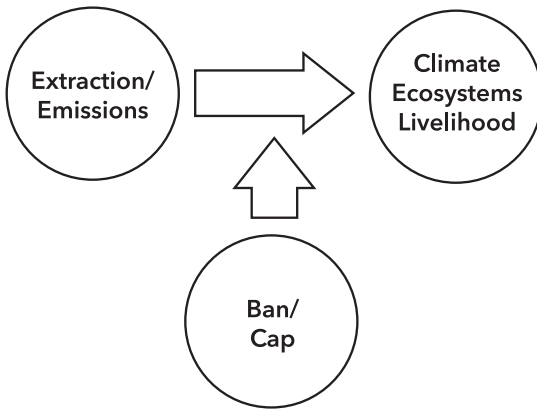


Fig. 3.6A. Securitization of climate change: Fossil extraction / CO₂ emissions pose existential threat to climate, ecosystem, livelihood. Extraordinary means: ban extraction and cap emissions.

As the atmosphere does not differentiate between the sources of greenhouse gases, distribution of the burdens involved in banning and capping (and other, more indirect means) has opened a whole new field of politics. But this field is—as we shall see—also ripe with policies apprehended as sufficiently threatening to warrant securitizing moves aiming to protect valued referent objects from these distributive politics.

Sometimes the referent object invoked to spur the panic necessary for climate security narratives to persuade audiences to accept extraordinary means are indeed ‘global’ but not environmental per se: what is explicitly pointed out as valuable enough to protect is neither climate, nature, ecosystems, nor species but something human, such as economic prosperity and development. Sometimes ‘we’ are less than global; what is threatened is life as we (affluent Europeans and Americans) know it. Other identities, however, may have sufficient legitimacy with powerful global audiences to be promoted as worthy of protection from the effects of climate change (Bjørst 2012). Among these, Arctic Indigenous peoples are not alone, but hold a distinct and prominent place. In the 2004 Arctic Climate Impact Assessment commissioned by the Arctic Council as a contribution to the work of the UN-sponsored global Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Arctic Indigenous peoples “appear as embodiments and harbingers of what climate change has in store for the rest of the world. Standing for and speaking on behalf of at-risk cultures and livelihoods” (Martello 2008, 353). Because of dominant imaginaries about the Arctic (and Greenland) fabricated and repeated over the last 300 years, there is a trend in the international climate change debate to focus on things that suit our global imagination of vulnerability and risk. In other words, environ-

mental knowledge can easily become entangled with imperial knowledge (Grove 1995) and embedded subject positions. In effect, politicians, media, tourists, etc., want to witness climate change in the company of suffering agents. Thus, icebergs, polar bears, and the Inuit are some of the constructed victims that are suitable for our imagination and representations of the Arctic (Bjørst 2012; cf. Bravo 2009). In other words, global framing of climate change involves a specific position in this narrative for ‘local witnesses’ which freezes arguments and possible agency for Inuit (Bjørst 2012).

In continuation, possibly the largest single North American initiative to date to reduce fossil fuel extraction was not legitimized by the threat to the global climate but rather by threats to regional ecosystems and local people in the Arctic. In the waning days of his presidency, Barack Obama met with Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau to announce a ban on oil and gas extraction in the Arctic, “due to the important, irreplaceable values of its Arctic waters for [1] Indigenous, Alaska Native and local communities’ subsistence and cultures, [2] wildlife and wildlife habitat, and [3] scientific research; [4] the vulnerability of these ecosystems to an oil spill; and [5] the unique logistical, operational, safety, and scientific challenges and risks of oil extraction and spill response in Arctic waters” (United States and Canada 2016). Conceivably, environmentalists were thrilled by this extraordinary action as they joined in the securitization of the livelihood of Indigenous peoples to support their primary securitization of ecosystems: “The governments of the USA and Canada have taken a huge and important step towards protecting the unique ecosystems in the Arctic, which are also a vital pantry for the humans living in the region, even while they are increasingly threatened by industrial activities and climate change” (Turnowsky 2016). Greenlandic representatives have long joined in the same securitization. In March 2014, when the UN secretary general visited Greenland, Greenland’s then premier described the visit as:

a unique opportunity to communicate some of those experiences that Indigenous peoples have from [their] meetings with climate change. . . . It is also important to see that the strong, proud culture in the Arctic is threatened because of climate change. . . . Climate change has a direct impact on our daily lives, on the household economy and that we get food on the table. (Government of Greenland 2014)

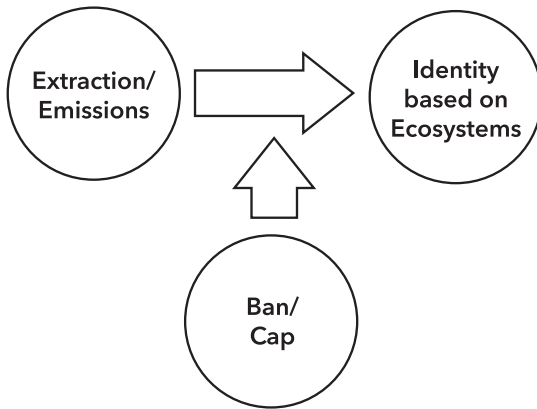


Fig. 3.6B. Securitization of climate change as threat to Inuit identity. Fossil extraction / CO₂ emissions pose existential threat to Inuit identity. Extraordinary means: ban extraction and cap emissions.

Moreover, from another speech by the same premier it is clear that what is at stake is not just ecosystems or material livelihood, but identity: “At the heart of Inuit culture, is the preservation and long-term protection of the living resources, on which life in the Arctic has always depended. These living resources are key to my identity and to that of my people” (Hammond 2014, 10). This variation of the basic climate securitization, illustrated in figure 3.6B, falls well into the overall way in which this securitization integrates referent objects across scales.

Countersecuritization: Ban and Cap Threatening Self-Determination and Development

For a long time, however, official Greenlandic politicians have consistently combined this narrative about the threats from climate change to Inuit identity with another narrative. This second narrative—in a parallel to the security configuration focused on hunting—points out certain measures taken to *avert* climate change as a threat to a different aspect of Greenlandic identity. There might very well be an urgent need to reduce global extraction of fossil fuels and global CO₂ emissions, but according to this second narrative, restrictions on *Greenlandic* extraction and emissions constitutes a threat to Greenlandic development and self-determination.¹⁹ Hence the premier, quoted above, continued to say that “Greenland will not be a passive victim of climate change. A likely scenario for the future of Greenland is an economic growth supported by new large-scale industries and oil and mineral extraction. This will profoundly affect our society and the environment” (Hammond 2014, 3–4). Correspondingly, the immediate reac-

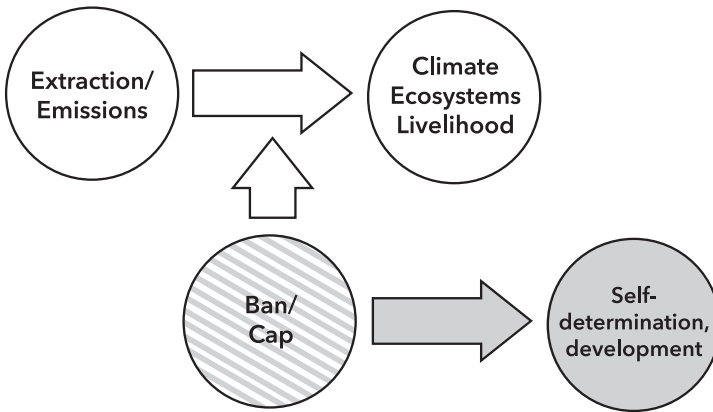


Fig. 3.7. Securitization of climate action: Ban/cap on fossil extraction / CO₂ emissions pose existential threat to Inuit development, self-determination, identity.

tion to the Obama-Trudeau ban on Arctic extraction from a Greenlandic minister was to welcome incoming president Trump's choice of oil executive Rex Tillerson as secretary of state, since "without revenues from non-renewable resource extraction, including oil and gas, Greenland cannot achieve political independence from Denmark" (Bell 2016).²⁰ His approach echoed positions taken by other leading Greenlandic politicians. When Greenpeace boarded a platform conducting exploratory drilling for oil outside the coast of West Greenland, then premier Kuupik Kleist claimed that "[t]his constitutes an obvious illegal act that disregards the democratic rules. . . . The Greenland Government regards the Greenpeace action as being a very grave and illegal attack on Greenland's constitutional rights" (Gerhardt, Kristoffersen, and Stuvøy 2020).

Moreover, as illustrated in figure 3.7, the threat to Greenlandic development and self-determination comes not just from a ban on fossil fuel extraction, but also from a possible cap to Greenlandic CO₂ emissions. While preparing for the COP15,²¹ the same premier insisted that "climate policy must be seen in the context of the overall political objective of a financially self-sustaining Greenland" (Kleist 2009a), explaining that Greenland should "have the same opportunity as other countries which have been able to exploit their oil potentials [. . . and] emit CO₂" (Kleist 2009b, 12). This threat led Greenland to align with the

large group of countries led by China and India securitizing their development at the COP21, as argued by the minister dispatched to Paris:

A precondition for Greenland joining a new global climate accord must be that all countries will have possibilities for growth. As a matter of principle, the polluter should pay for the pollution and its consequences. . . . If Greenland accepts a continuation in a new climate accord of the quota system as implemented under the Kyoto protocol, Greenland will be paying massively for future activities in the raw materials sector and related business activities, while industrialized countries only commit to reducing emissions from already existing activities. (Nyvold 2015)²²

Returning from Paris, the minister seemingly felt left behind by these allies, who agreed to accept emission caps and reductions. Hence, he contracted the scope of the collective identity under threat from developing nations to Indigenous peoples, whom he described as having:

only in very small degree had influence on the harmful climatic change which currently affects the whole globe. . . . Indigenous peoples should not be committed to the same climate goals in the same way as big countries. . . . The international society should in the text of the accord have confirmed that Indigenous peoples enjoy special rights including the right to development. (Søndergaard 2015b)

***Desecuritizing the Countersecuritization:
The Exception of Greenland and the End of Exception***

In conclusion, the government of Denmark—at the request of the government of Greenland—excepted Greenland from obligations to reduce CO₂ emissions in order to “facilitate the goal of creating economic and industrial growth” (Naalakkersuisut 2020).²³ Hence no international obligations in relation to climate change hamper the development of Greenland. In a sense, this was a consequence of the way in which Denmark had moved to desecuritize the threat from carbon restrictions to Greenlandic self-determination. As the minister of foreign affairs for Denmark argued when agreeing to except Greenland from the Danish part of EU emission reduction obligations to be negotiated

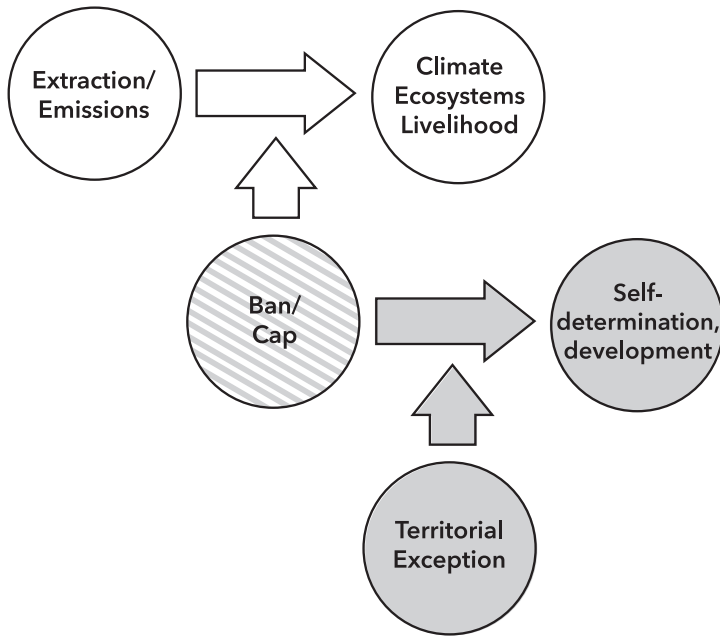


Fig. 3.8. Desecuritization of Greenlandic fossil extraction / CO₂ emissions. Extraordinary means: territorial exception.

at COP15, “[f]or 4000 years, nature has put some restrictions on development in the Arctic. When new opportunities arise, we cannot say that they cannot use them. Then they could as well say to us: You have had plenty of opportunities—now you are not allowed to use any further” (Løvstrøm 2009). Just as when securing animals from hunting, Greenlandic fossil fuel extraction and CO₂ emission are—as illustrated in figure 3.8—exempted from the existential threat. But contrary to the ‘Inuit exception,’ which has not in itself persuaded consumers to buy sealskin, the carbon exemption was accepted by relevant audiences sufficient for averting the threat for some time.

Recently, however, the grounds for this exception have shifted. Following the 2021 elections, the new Greenlandic government asked Denmark to lift the territorial exception of Greenland from the Paris agreement (Lindstrøm 2021a). The new government also announced a stop to oil exploration in Greenlandic waters (Naalakkersuisut.gl 2021). The reasoning behind the change of policies was that given the expected transition to green energy, no companies had lately been willing to

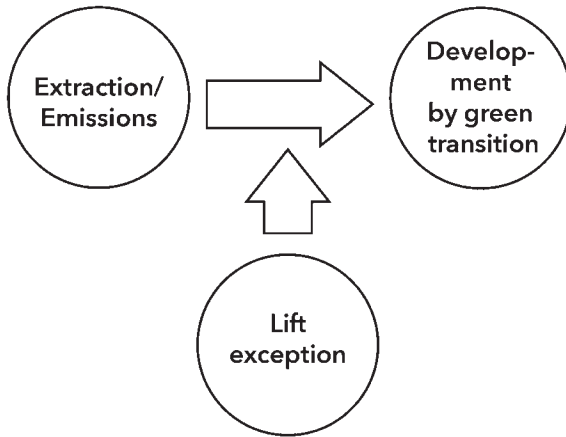


Fig. 3.9. Shortcutting the securitization of Greenlandic fossil extraction to fall in line with Greenland's green image. Extraordinary means: lifting territorial exception and banning extraction.

invest in exploration anyway (Dall 2021), and that the Paris agreement will not pose any limitations on industrial development, since ratification only obliges signatories to report emission goals, not that these will necessarily involve reductions (Lindstrøm 2021a, 2021b; cf. UNFCCC 2021; UN 2022). The Paris Agreement thus seems to be less of a showstopper for growth than suspected by Greenlandic politicians back in 2015, and the agreement might even prove to be an instrument for getting outside support for actions to a green transition and development in Greenland. Hence, even if some politicians attempt to keep the securitization of fossil bans and caps alive (Lindstrøm 2021b), the leading ministers see the pollution of Greenland's 'green' image by 'black' extraction and exceptions as a larger threat to foreign investments and economic development. This way of getting Greenland back in the global mainstream is illustrated in figure 3.9.

The Transfiguration of Environmental/Societal Security in the Arctic

The analyses above charted two Arctic security configurations involving both the environmental and the societal sectors. In important ways, the two configurations can be described as the result of similar dynamics (compare figure 3.4 with figure 3.8): First, securitization of an environmental referent object, then countersecuritization by Inuit, and finally more or less successful desecuritization of Inuit by being excepted from the threat. The two configurations, however, share more than this distinct isomorphism. If observed together with a focus on

the actors involved, the two configurations constitute a security transfiguration. Not just because some of the actors are the same in the two configurations, but also because the parties repeatedly choose to link the two configurations by reminding each other of the roles played in the ‘other’ configuration:

First, an alliance was established by environmentalists and Indigenous peoples’ representatives in relation to hunting, allowing Indigenous hunting—be it seals or whales—on grounds of their being sustainable or otherwise integrated in the natural environment. This alliance has seamlessly continued into an agreement on the need to protect Arctic species and ecosystems against climate change, for their own sake and for the sake of the humans depending on them. But when the accentuation of the Inuit position regarding hunting changes from a defense of a ‘naturalized’ Inuit way of life to defending Inuit’s right to self-determination as the referent object, the alliance with environmentalists is seriously strained. The strain becomes particularly stressed whenever Inuit want to use their self-determination to develop in ways that are at odds with environmentalist concerns with climate change, such as by extracting Arctic oil reserves and emitting CO₂ as a byproduct from other extractive industries.

Moreover, the alliance is undermined by the way Greenlanders link the two configurations on hunting and climate, particularly as concerns the parallel securitizations promoted by the environmentalists. One example can be found in the then premier’s reaction to Greenpeace’s campaign to end oil exploration in the Arctic: “Greenpeace has *once again* succeeded in impeding Greenland’s opportunities to secure the economic foundation for its people’s condition of life” (Gerhardt, Kristoffersen, and Stuvøy 2020, italics inserted). As Gerhardt, Kristoffersen, and Stuvøy sum up the relation: “Interfering with this right [to explore and exploit its subsoil], as Greenpeace has done, is thus seen as a postcolonial and patronizing attempt to once again take the right to self-determination away from the Greenlandic people. Exacerbating this sentiment is the particular history that Greenpeace has had in Greenland with regard to the seal hunt” (Gerhardt, Kristoffersen, and Stuvøy 2020).

Even if the two Greenlandic positions in relation to climate change seem to contrast, they at the same time work in alliance toward the bigger goal of Greenland’s self-determination with regards to both hunting marine animals and extracting mineral resources. Nevertheless, the combination of these two distinct positions appears highly fragile

when transfigured from the hunting figuration to the climate figuration: Warning, on the one hand, that your food security and culture is threatened by climate change caused by excessive CO₂ emissions sits uneasy with, on the other hand, claiming that restrictions on your own CO₂ emissions threatens your right to independently determining your development. Hence, a Greenlandic minister, representing the official government position, felt it necessary to explicitly establish a distance from the Indigenous peoples organization that counts among its members a series of Greenlandic NGOs as well as the Greenlandic parliament:²⁴ “The Inuit Circumpolar Council . . . has failed to deal with Greenland’s interests” (Bell 2016).²⁵

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have analyzed a security transfiguration across sectors: Animals, climate, and self-determination and the distinct ways in which securitizations of ‘environmental’ referent objects have interacted with securitizations centered on identities. Securitizing moves made by European and American actors directed squarely to the environmental sector appear in Greenland as identity threats, but the character of the added dynamics cannot be taken for granted. Sometimes threats to referent objects in ‘the natural environment’ may seamlessly cosecuritize aspects of Inuit material culture valued as core to identity. But sometimes, conversely, the extraordinary means promoted to avert a threat to an environmental referent object registers as an existential threat to different aspects of cultural and political identity. Moreover, actors party to a configuration may actively link it to another configuration by identifying opponents with positions taken in relation to other securitizations.

To adequately account for these synchronic cross-sectoral relations *and* for the diachronic changes in actor configurations requires, first, that sectors are not confining the empirical analysis but are used as stepping stones to study cross-sectoral dynamics, and second, a focus on transfigurations rather than only static configurations. An added value of such an analytical strategy has been to sensitize the analysis also to bottom-up agency, capturing what happens when Inuit do not take up the positions to which they are invited by global narratives but seek to rework them to their own purposes. This focus, we would argue, is pivotal when analyzing and understanding the security dynamics

under climatic thaw and geopolitical freeze in Greenland. The many transfigurations across sectors flesh out securitization and countersecuritization in the politics surrounding Greenlandic decolonization where Greenlandic authorities and Inuit representatives take up delicate positions to impact their room for maneuver. Whereas an Inuit/Greenlandic climate exception might be the right extraordinary means to secure the possibility for development and self-determination, the same exception can be just as harmful for the culturally important hunting traditions and possibly the economically vital fisheries export.

On the one hand, the basic tension between securitization of ecosystems and the right to self-determination and socioeconomic development, is neither unique to the Arctic nor independent of global configurations, including the disagreements between industrialized and developing countries over which part of the uneasy marriage between 'sustainable' and 'development' should be stressed (cf. Gad, Jacobsen, and Strandsbjerg 2020). On the other hand, our analytical approach has made it clear that the distinct constellation of actors in the Arctic has made for an environmental/societal security dynamic that is different from parallel global configurations. Particularly, the exceptionally high profile of Indigenous peoples, and the way this high profile has been accepted by the governments based in temperate zones as necessary for the legitimacy of extending their sovereignty to Arctic territories, has made for different and changing relations to global environmental NGOs.

Greenlandic politicians routinely lump together 'international NGOs' as 'outside environmentalists.' If we accept this crude aggregation, it is fair to say that by and large these forces have historically not fully understood those cross-sectoral dynamics offset by the reactions to their campaigns coming from people living in the Arctic. In effect, their initiatives to save the whales and the seals, to save Arctic species and ecosystems, and to save the global climate come out as a threat to Greenlandic development and self-determination. In other words, the 'we's' and 'our's' 'articulated by environmentalist IGOs (UN 2015) and other authorities based on environmental concerns exclude Inuit and Greenlanders. Hence they easily come to negate Greenlandic identity, both in aspects based on current practices and in aspects based on future ambitions. Being a Greenlander involves not just living among countrymen harvesting marine mammals, but also being part of a nation in command of the resources necessary to imagine a future where self-determination is supported by socioeconomic

development, ultimately culminating in economic self-support and formal statehood.

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NOTES

1. While the argument put forward in this article in the present form remains our responsibility, we are indebted to discussions in the core group of a research project on 'The Politics of Sustainability and Postcoloniality in the Arctic' sponsored by the VELUX Foundation. Particularly, the empirical analysis of the securitizations relating to sealing is informed by research conducted by Naja Graugaard as part of this project. We are grateful for comments on an earlier version of the chapter from the other contributors to this volume as well as from a seminar in the Foreign Policy and Diplomacy Unit at Danish Institute for International Studies. Particularly, Stefano Guzzini's comments were instrumental in getting the argument precise.

2. Except, perhaps, after the 2021 general elections, in which representatives for the incoming government seems to have changed course on Greenland's international obligations in relation to reducing climate change. We will return to this by the end of the chapter.

3. The Greenland chapter of the pan-Inuit organization ICC is highly engaged in discussions about the Arctic environment from a human rights perspective, but while their positions on various matters definitively have resonance (with wider or more narrow strata of the population), ICC is not a membership organization, and their relation to parliamentarian and executive representatives of the autonomous government of Greenland have, at times, been fraught (Jacobsen and Gad 2018).

4. A larger group of 'outside environmentalists' can also be identified by reading the list of NGOs mentioned in the "Appeal to the Greenlandic and Danish Governments and the European Union to Help Protect the Greenlandic and Arctic Environment" released February 10, 2021.

5. This overall image of the Arctic relies on a more extensive discussion in Gad, Jacobsen, and Strandsbjerg (2020). A wider set of narratives is lined up by Kristoffersen and Langhelle (2017), Steinberg, Tasch, and Gerhardt (2015), and Wilson (2007).

6. This proposition is developed in Gad (2005, 2017a) and Jacobsen (2014) building on, among others, Thomsen (1998).

7. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998) introduced the concept of 'constellation of securitizations.' inspired by Elias' concept of 'figurations': "The networks of interdependencies among human beings is what binds them together. Such interdependencies are the nexus of what is here called the figuration, a structure of mutually orientated and dependent people. Since people are more or less

dependent on each other . . . they exist . . . only as pluralities, only in figurations” (Elias 2000 [1968], 481–82). Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde defined ‘constellation’ in parallel, discussing how “it is not the units themselves in a static way that make up the whole; it is the way their movements, actions, and policies relate to each other that forms a truly political pattern at the level of relations of relations” (1998, 191, note 3). In other words, “the constellation is found at the level of interactions of interactions” (Gad 2010, note 71; cf. Buzan and Wæver 2009, note 17). By switching back to Elias’ ‘configuration’ from Buzan and Wæver’s ‘constellation,’ we intend no change of meaning, only ‘configuration’ lends itself better to changing the prefix to ‘transfiguration.’

8. Our ambition is thus separate from but related to Dreyer’s (2019) distinction between, on the one hand, ‘progressive securitization’ in which the referent object is not predefined but in flux during the securitization process, and, on the other hand, ‘conservative securitization’ in which the referent object is temporally pre-existing, spatially delineated, and politically Manichean.

9. Even though the concept of transfiguration involves a claim that something has changed, turning a previous state into a distinct, later state, the quotes included are not presented strictly in the chronological order in which they occurred. Formulations once made echo and may be taken up again, sometimes moving to center stage, sometimes reverting to the fringes of debate. Rather, the rationale behind the selection of quotes has been to explicate the dynamic logic of securitization/countersecuritization/deseuritizations and the reverberations from earlier configurations to later ones. For renditions of several of the quotes contextualized as part of more chronological narratives, cf. Bjørst 2012; Jacobsen 2014, 2015; Graugaard 2020a; Gerhardt, Kristoffersen, and Stuvøy 2020. Quotes from Danish-language sources have been translated by the authors.

10. Parliamentary debates in Greenland include similar threat constructions, such as “the EU legislation as well as the attitudes of more and more other countries are threatening our culture and traditional way of living” (Henningesen in EM2011/14, 02:16:41–02:17:02). For similar narratives promoted on behalf of Inuit elsewhere or in general, cf. Arnaquq-Baril (2016); Inuit Sila (2013); ICC (n.d.)

11. The opposition generally shared the same perspective (EM2013/14; cf. Jacobsen 2014, 33–34, 43–45).

12. The government of Greenland issued similar and more explicit threats of offering its resources and geopolitical position to global competitors in other communication with the EU (Gad et al. 2011, 21).

13. Our argument here relies heavily on the genealogy of how the concept of ‘sustainable sealing’ has emerged, available in Graugaard (2020a), even if we cannot here do justice to the nuances of her analysis. See Gad, Jacobsen, and Strandsbjerg (2020) for a discussion of sustainability as a political concept in the Arctic.

14. Following a WTO decision that supported a Canadian/Norwegian challenge to the initial ‘Inuit exception,’ the EU doubled down with a more detailed description of the distinct character of Inuit hunting (EU 2015, §2)

15. The Faroese *grindadráp* hunting of pilot whales provides a subtle but informative contrast in this regard. Struggling for decades with the *Sea Shepherd* organization, a radical splinter group branching off from Greenpeace to focus on whaling, the government English-language website advances many of the same arguments

as the Greenlandic government: that whaling is a “sustainable, regulated, communal, natural [way to supply] food,” but instructively refrains from labeling the Faroese practice ‘Indigenous’ (Government of the Faroe Islands, n.d.).

16. Graugaard explains how the quest for original ways mandated by EU and IWC regulation is indeed a mirage, since current Indigenous practices are the result of centuries of engagement with colonial projects and capitalist markets: “Even though seal meat plays an important role in sharing economies, in households, and in ensuring food security in the Arctic, the incomes from selling the sealskins are equally important for supporting the lives and families of hunters, tailors, and seamstresses” (Graugaard 2020a, 116).

17. Restrictions on whaling for domestic consumption have—for now—been averted to what seems to be an acceptable level. In 2021, however, a new, local twist to the debacle appeared. The hunters and fishermen’s organization KNAPK criticized the capital municipality for a decision to protect the humpback whales in the Nuup Kangerlua (Nuuk Fiorth) from hunting. The municipality argued that the whales constituted an asset for tourism and recreation, whereas KNAPK saw their protection as a threat to the hunting culture. In effect, they explicitly equated the decision with Brigitte Bardot’s intervention, which has become iconic for the anti-sealing campaign (Schultz-Nielsen 2021).

18. For discussions of the ontological status of scales in parallel problematics, cf. Gad, Jacobsen, and Strandsbjerg 2020; Jacobsen 2020; Berling et al. 2021, chap. 5.

19. Notably, this second narrative is not limited to a narrow elite. Bjørst (2012) relays how, when invited to address an NGO meeting arranged by climate activists in the margins of COP15, two “hunters did not speak on behalf of the climate and nature on a global scale. Now, they were speaking on behalf of Greenlandic society and local dilemmas, about the future of their children and the community as such,” and likewise, two young Greenlanders “could not feel the pollution locally and felt that Greenland’s emissions were so minimal that they do not have an impact on the global environment and people living in other parts of the world.”

20. On Trudeau’s home turf, a parallel dissatisfaction came in a joint statement from premiers of Nunavut and Northwest Territories, describing the extraction ban as a step backwards in the devolution progress, as they were only given two hours’ notice before the official announcement (Dusen 2016). The two premiers argued that “[t]he economies of the two territories are small and depend heavily on resource development as the major contributor to GDP and source of jobs and income for their residents at the present time. . . . All Canadians deserve to share in the opportunities and benefits of living in a sustainable and prosperous Canada” (Taptuna and McLeod 2016). In this way, they protested the Trudeau administration’s overruling of the two northern territories’ interests (Jacobsen 2020, 64).

21. The Conference of the Parties (COP), the supreme decision-making body of the UNFCCC (The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), meets yearly to take decisions that will make the objectives for the climate achievable. The 15th of those yearly meetings, COP15, was held in Copenhagen in 2009 without much progress, while in 2015 COP21 resulted in the Paris Agreement, hailed for setting 1.5 degrees Celsius as a maximum acceptable global warming and extending an obligation to set emissions goals from all industrialized countries.

22. Greenland did not meet its obligations, according to the Kyoto Protocol

(1998), by reducing emissions by 8 percent (2008–2012). Rather, in agreement with the Danish Ministry for Climate, Energy and Building, Greenland's fulfillment of the first commitment period was secured through the purchase of CO₂ credits in 2012.

23. Formally, for the second commitment period (from 2013 to 2020) of the Kyoto Protocol, Greenland was covered by a territorial exception from Denmark's international reduction commitments (Vidal 2016). Likewise, Greenland was exempted from the Danish ratification of the 2015 Paris Agreement (Denmark 2016). Even though one minister for energy had to step down after denying man-made climate change (Krog 2019), most Greenlandic politicians acknowledge that Greenland shares some responsibility for contributing to limiting climate change. A survey found that a majority of the electorate support Greenland's submission to the Paris Agreement and the regulation of industrial CO₂ emissions in Greenland, but in the same survey only minorities supported raising taxes to curb the use of fossil fuels and stopping oil exploration in Greenland (Turnowsky 2019).

24. For a discussion of the complex relation between the ICC and the, formally civic/territorially based, Government of Greenland, cf. Jacobsen and Gad (2018).

25. Even more so, the double narrative leaves the government of Greenland open to attack for double standards. A small example comes from the debates on a projected iron ore project in Mary River, across the Davis Strait in Arctic Canada. On behalf of the government of Greenland, two biologists from the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources submitted that the project "will affect wildlife in Greenland, and probably also for hunting and fishing," listing a range of threats including whale collisions and accidents along the shipping lane as well as disturbances to narwhales and other marine mammals from ice-breaking and noise caused by shipping, but also "oil spills" (Anselmi 2020). An anonymous reader tersely found the objection "hilarious given that Greenland has had no issue approving oil and gas exploration on their side" (Facebook comment on Anselmi 2020). Wæver (2017, 124) notes that it will be more difficult for Arctic actors like Greenland to place responsibility for action against climate threats with faraway governments if they themselves come closer to statehood. In our analysis, the Greenlandic trouble seem to come less from assuming formal statehood and the responsibilities coming with sovereignty; rather it is the decisions and the development ambitions substantiating self-determination that makes for the difficulties.

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4 | From Peary to Pompeo

The History of United States' Securitizations of Greenland

Marc Jacobsen and Sara Olsvig

In the summer of 2019, Donald Trump's idea of buying Greenland drew renewed attention to its geostrategic location and revealed widespread misunderstandings of its current constitutional status. Trump equated the idea to similar past purchase attempts, but since times of colonization Greenland had taken several steps to increase its autonomy. This meant that if a purchase should be proposed, it should have been addressed to the Government of Greenland, which, prompted or not, did not fail to respond on twitter: "We're open for business, not for sale" (GreenlandMFA 2019). While many ridiculed the outdated idea, it soon became apparent that it reflected a more profound shift in the U.S. security perspective on the Arctic region as being embedded in international great power competition with Russia and, especially, China. In response, the United States looked to Greenland with the aim of strengthening its regional presence and securing access to strategically important minerals such as rare earth elements that are critical components in many types of modern and so-called 'critical' technologies.

Whereas the dual awareness of natural resources and convenient military strategic location reflected the root of the U.S. interest in Greenland, the international power relations and the American security perspectives have changed throughout history. The aim of this chapter is to provide the first coherent analysis of the defining acts shaping the development of U.S. security interests in Greenland during

the past 200 years. In order to do so, we dissect how securitization acts and attempts have been carried out at specific times in history by pointing to perceived threats as legitimization of extraordinary means. When doing so, we employ the Copenhagen School's analytical apparatus as explained in the introductory chapter while paying special attention to the scales, audiences, and cascading effects of the particular securitizations. This means that we are extra attentive to whether the perceived threats have been articulated as, for instance, an international, regional, or national matter, whether the securitizations have had effects beyond the described purposes, and who the United States has considered relevant recipients with agency to accept or refuse the securitization act. We believe that these three specific foci—which we will soon explain in more details—provide effective tools in finding answers to our research questions, which are: Why has United States securitized Greenland, how have securitizations been received, and with what consequences?

When answering these questions, we show how securitizations have been discursively constructed as part of overarching security developments in which the U.S. has considered Greenland a geostrategic piece of land in the protection of U.S. self-interests and its balance of power against shifting enemies. As we shall see, the articulated reasons of the securitization acts have varied by sometimes pointing to referent objects at other scales such as 'Western hemisphere,' 'NATO area,' and 'international peace' in the quest to gain acceptance of extraordinary means. The choice of words has to some extent been guided by the congruent agency ascribed to Denmark and Greenland, which at different times in history, and in different ways, have been considered inactive spectators or as part of the relevant audience with power to provide formal or moral support. The U.S. rhetoric, however, has occasionally been a play to the gallery, as the extraordinary means in a few instances have been carried out prior to the rhetorical securitization, hence highlighting the unequal power relationship and the lack of depth of actual acknowledged agency. In other instances, Denmark has both acted as the accepting audience and carried out the extraordinary means even though it jeopardized domestic laws or entailed negative consequences at lower scales. It is important to note that throughout most of the historical period analyzed in this chapter, Greenland was a colony to Denmark, thereby being ruled out in the U.S.-Denmark decision making and deliberations roughly until after home rule was introduced in 1979. By focusing on cascading effects of

U.S. securitizations, we seek to bring attention to some of the derived consequences that, regrettably, are seldom part of analyses of U.S. security interests in Greenland and the Arctic.

Our analysis is divided into the six analytical periods of 1823–1914, 1914–39, 1939–45, 1945–91, 1991–2018, and 2018–21, delimited by the signing of the Monroe Doctrine, the outbreak of World War I, the beginning and end of World War II, the ensuing Cold War, its end, and the most recent, and still active, U.S. security perspective on Greenland and the Arctic where China and Russia are seen as great power competitors. This periodization rests upon a U.S. perspective of widely acknowledged shifts in the American geopolitical visions that have happened alongside U.S. securitization acts and attempts regarding Greenland.¹ Before turning to the analysis of these time spans, we will now explain our choice of theoretical tools and our selection of empirical data.

Scales, Cascading Effects, and Audiences

In continuation of the introduction's basic explanation of securitization theory, we will here focus on *scales*, *cascading effects*, and *audiences* that we find particularly relevant in the effort to get a better understanding of why securitizing acts have been executed, how they have been received, and with what consequences.

First, we are especially attentive to what *scale* the referent object is discursively placed on because it can help us uncover what or who exactly the securitizing actor pointed to as being threatened in the attempt to convince the relevant audience of accepting the use of extraordinary means. Was it, for instance, a threat to 'the West,' to 'regional Arctic peace,' or to 'U.S. sovereignty' that was articulated as the reason for a specific U.S. securitization with relation to Greenland at some point in history? By paying special attention to the prioritized scale in a securitization (attempt), we seek to dissect the given reason for legitimizing the use of extraordinary means and to draw attention to the consequences the prioritization of one scale may have had for entities at other scales given less or no attention in the securitization act. When applying this approach, we rely on Buzan and Wæver's (2009) article in which they lay out connections across the spectrum of scales as spanning from the global to the individual with system, civilizational, unit, and groups covering the middle ground (2009, 259). Among

these, the Copenhagen School has traditionally identified an empirical precedence to egotistical collective units such as—and most often—states and their protection of sovereignty on the national scale when relating to other similar entities through amity or enmity (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 254–55). This does not, however, indicate that referent objects at higher or lower scales than the national are not relevant to securitization processes. Instead, it is a consequence of the challenging process of successfully declaring, for example, ‘humankind’ on the system level or ‘human being’ on the individual level as threatened and particularly devising meaningful extraordinary means to their protection (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 254–55). This is because the relevant audience, the securitizing actor’s scope of power and, hence, the possible extraordinary means are here not as clearly defined as they are within the boundaries of a state, which remains the most powerful unit in Buzan and Wæver’s analysis. In their investigation into what happens above² the scale of collective units, Buzan and Wæver show how international security in a few instances is structured by one single overarching conflict that “incorporate, align and rank the more parochial securitisations beneath it” (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 253), hence obtaining the status of a so-called macrosecuritization. The example par excellence is the Cold War, whereas the Global War on Terror and the current climate change discourse are located on a high scale though not being as all-encompassing due to a lesser degree of widespread acceptance (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 254; see Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2, this vol.). In our analysis, these three major securitizations constitute inevitable elements of the historical context coconstituting U.S. engagements in Greenland. We will show how articulations of these overarching conflicts have differed throughout history due to their perceived relevance but also depending on what the relevant audience would accept as an existential threat.

Our second theoretical point of attention is *cascading effects*, which so far are remarkably seldom highlighted in securitization analyses, though such observations are straightforward to make (cf. Wæver 2017, 126). Thierry Balzacq and Ulrik Pram Gad are among the few who have previously done so, but their uses of the concept differ from one another. In Balzacq’s (2010, 37) inquiry into methods of securitization theory, he uses the concept to explain the cascading effects within a recipient audience, where people may be convinced by their friend’s acceptance of a securitization act and may subsequently convince others, hence continuing the cascade of acceptance and, one may add,

possible refusal of a securitization attempt. In another perspective, Ulrik Pram Gad (2021, 125–27) has used the concept to show how one securitization may trigger a second, which further activates a third, and so on, in his analysis of translations of security cascading at the Thule Air Base. With inspiration from Gad, we seek to develop his approach by pointing attention to two kinds of cascading securitizations, namely vertical and horizontal ones:³ The vertical cascading effect of a securitization is the situation when a securitization articulated at one scale moves to a lower scale, with consequences beyond the initial intention of the securitizing actor. Horizontal cascading effects instead describe the movement from one sector to another as for example when the transformative force of climate change triggers insecurity in several other⁴ sectors (cf. Jacobsen and Herrmann 2017, 7), such as moving from the environmental to the societal, economic, or even military sector if resource scarcity leads to conflict. The horizontal and vertical cascades may happen at the same time, such as when an international securitization of climate change also affects national policies that further cascade onto local households, perhaps by setting new requirements for their daily living. As our analysis will show, there have been examples when a U.S. securitization has been articulated as part of a macrosecuritization to legitimize extraordinary means, which subsequently has had vertical cascading effects on the Arctic region, Greenland, and its population, while simultaneously cascading horizontally from one sector onto several others.

Our third and last theoretical focus is the question of what makes up a relevant *audience*? In ‘Security: A New Framework For Analysis’ it is described as “those the securitizing act attempts to convince to accept exceptional procedures because of the specific security nature of some issues” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 41), while practical examples include “political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists, and pressure groups” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 40). This lack of clarity has led to a call for a better definition of this central aspect of the theory, a call Wæver recognized (2003, 26) by explaining in more detail that a relevant audience is “those who have to be convinced in order for the securitizing move to be successful. Although one often tends to think in terms of ‘the population’ or citizenry being the audience (the ideal situation regarding ‘national security’ in a democratic society), it actually varies according to the political system and the nature of the issue” (Wæver 2003, 11–12). A relevant audience is thus not a fixed category but instead depends on the specific sociohistorical situation and the function that the securiti-

zation is intended to serve, hence in some instances it may be general while in others exclusively elitist (cf. Vuori 2008, 72). A handful of scholars have used the inconsistency of the category as an opportunity to add more details by showing that there may be multiple simultaneous relevant audiences with different characteristics (Balzacq 2005; Stritzel 2007; Salter 2008; Vuori 2008; Roe 2008) and different logics of persuasion requiring distinctive kinds of arguments (Léonard and Kaunert 2010, 58, 73–74). Among these scholars, Salter has suggested that there are at least four types of audiences labeled ‘popular,’ ‘elite,’ ‘technocratic,’ and ‘scientific,’ each with a particular local truth regime (2008, 322), while Balzacq (2005) and Roe (2008) have proposed distinguishing between audiences with the authority to provide formal and moral support to a securitization act. In our analysis, we will pay attention to how audiences are reconfigured throughout different historical stages depending on the context and their related authority, while we will seek to distinguish whether the audiences were then in a position to provide formal or moral support. Unlike the existing body of literature, which focuses on domestic audiences, our analysis adds a new dimension by investigating how foreign audiences (Denmark and Greenland) receive and act on securitization acts and attempts from a superpower (the U.S.) whose hegemonic status usually does not require foreign acceptance. In the quest to maintain alliances and nurture reputation, however, foreign support is important, especially to get and showcase moral support.

Because of our focus on audiences, our empirical data archive contains both communication from the American securitization actors as well as responses from audiences in the U.S., Denmark, and Greenland. Our identification of successful and unsuccessful U.S. securitizations relating to Greenland is especially possible due to the online⁵ version of U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, the present and past web pages of the U.S. Department of State,⁶ and due to references in secondary literature that we stand on the shoulders of. Through these channels, we have found strategies, agreements, speeches, intra- and intergovernmental correspondences by American governments, ministries, and bureaucrats. Responses from the non-American audiences have been found through secondary literature and the respective web-pages of the government of Denmark⁷ and the Government of Greenland,⁸ where speeches and press releases are usually available. In some instances when speeches and press releases were no longer available online, we have used the online search tool Wayback Machine at archive.org/web to reconstruct parts of the archive.

The documents in our empirical data archive differ by originally being targeted at different audiences within or outside public attention. On the one side, official strategies, agreements, and speeches are carefully calibrated communication where nothing is left to chance with the purpose of publicly informing—and perhaps even convincing—a domestic and/or international audience of the U.S. security perspective at the time. On the other side, much of the intra- and intergovernmental correspondences analyzed in this article have been equally calibrated for a small selected audience, but were not meant to be shared with the public. This has happened through official openings of archives, publishing of diaries, or via unofficial sources such as Wikileaks. In between those two kinds of empirical categories, we find articulations reported by news media that may have been prepared for the public but that risk losing some meaning if the reader does not get the exact context. That is why we limit our use of news articles to a few instances in the most recent analytical period.

Now, as we have explained our most central theoretical elements and our collection of empirical data, we will observe them in our analysis of the six periods. The timeline below (fig. 4.1) provides an overview of the six episodes and the most important events within each of them.

1823–1914: The Monroe Doctrine and the U.S. Initial Interest in Greenland

Two hundred years ago, when the Monroe Doctrine was first formulated, Greenland was not explicitly considered within the United States' national security sphere like it is today. Instead, President James Monroe warned European powers that the U.S. would view any attempts to further colonize or otherwise interfere in the Western Hemisphere as a potentially hostile act. He expressed prime concern with the renewed European imperial interests in the Caribbean and Latin America, which he believed posed a threat to both U.S. sovereignty and the American political system (Berry 2016, 106). Drawing a clear antagonistic line between the U.S. and European powers, Monroe unambiguously declared in Congress that “we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety” (Monroe 1823, 13–14). Because his speech was widely accepted and later repeatedly referred to as justifi-

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1721-1914

- **1721:** Colonization of Greenland begins.
- ▲ **1823:** Monroe Doctrine.
- ⊗ **1832:** 1st mention of U.S. purchase of Greenland.
- ⊗ **1868:** Report on the resources of Iceland and Greenland.
- ⊗ **1910:** Ambassador proposal to Roosevelt administration: Swap Philippine islands with Greenland as part of bargain to buy the Danish West Indies. No reply.

1914-1939

- ▲ **1914:** World War I begins.
- ⊗ **1915:** Ambassador's proposal resubmitted to the Wilson administration. Urged to proceed.
- ⊗ **1916:** Peary's unsuccessful securitization attempt of Greenland.
- ⊗ **1917:** U.S. Purchase of Danish West Indies. U.S. recognition of Denmark's political and economic interests in Greenland, not its sovereignty over Greenland entirely.
- **1921:** Denmark declares sovereignty over all of Greenland.
- **1930:** Denmark Prime Minister writing in Financial Times "Greenland not for sale".

1939-1945

- ▲ **1939:** World War II begins.
- **1939:** Greenland Governors request help from the U.S.
- ⊗ **1940:** U.S. Consulate established in Greenland.
- ⊗ **1940:** U.S. Coast Guard protection of cryolite mine in Ivittuut.
- ⊗ **1941:** 1st U.S. securitization of Greenland.
- **1941:** Government of Denmark objecting. Not considered 'relevant audience' because of German occupation. Greenland could engage directly with the world outside Denmark for the first time in 200 years.

1945-1991

- **1946:** Denmark requests withdrawal of American troops from Greenland.
- ⊗ **1946:** U.S. refusal and counter proposal involving purchase of Greenland. Rejected by Denmark.
- ▲ **1948:** Cold War macrosecuritization.
- ⊗ **1951:** Defense agreement between the U.S. and Denmark regarding Greenland.
- ⊗ **1953:** Thule Air Base established.
- **1953:** Change of Greenland's constitutional status.
- ⊗ **1957:** Secret storage of nuclear weapons despite Denmark's ban. Denmark's Prime Minister indirectly accepted this extraordinary mean.
- ⊗ **1958:** Camp Century established.
- ⊗ **1960:** President Eisenhower aired the idea of buying Greenland. King of Denmark replied: "We do not sell!".
- **1979:** Introduction of Greenland Home Rule Government.
- ⊗ **1987:** Upgrade of Thule radar as part of BMEWS. Acceptance from Denmark and the Greenland Home Rule, emphasizing enhanced agency.

1991-2018

- ▲ **1991:** Macrodesecuritization of East-West relations.
- ⊗ **1998:** U.S. securitization of Thule in defense against rogue states.
- ⊗ **2001:** U.S. securitization of Thule as part of GWoT.
- ⊗ **2004:** Igaliku agreement amending 1951 defense agreement, i.a. by acknowledging Greenland's agency. Greenland accepted securitization after discursive upgrade of referent object to 'international peace'.
- ⊗ **2007:** U.S. ambassador in Denmark warns against Chinese interests in Greenland.
- **2009:** Introduction of Greenland Self-Government.

2018-2021

- ⊗ **2018:** On U.S. request, Denmark prevents Chinese involvement in Greenland's airport project.
- ▲ **2019:** U.S. securitization of the Arctic in defense against China and Russia. Denmark accepts.
- ⊗ **2019:** President Trump's idea of buying Greenland. Greenland and Denmark refuse.
- ⊗ **2020 & 2021:** U.S.-Greenland bilateral agreements enhance Greenland's agency.
- **2021:** Greenland questioning Denmark's upgrade of military budget regarding the Arctic.

▲ Global security ⊗ U.S. in Greenland ■ Denmark-Greenland relationship

Fig. 4.1. The history of United States' securitizations of Greenland.

cation for exclusive U.S. interventions, it can be seen as a successful securitization of the referent object ‘our peace and safety’ in the military and political sectors, with European powers as the main enemies. Whereas Greenland was initially not included in this primary security perspective, it shortly after steadily entered the American security horizon, where it occasionally, and more frequently, was mentioned as an area of interest due to, first, its natural resources and, later, its geostrategic location.

The first reported mention of official U.S. geostrategic interest in Greenland happened in 1832, when President Andrew Jackson’s administration floated the idea of buying the island (Geggel 2019). In a time of comprehensive U.S. territorial expansion through the purchases of Louisiana from France (1803), Florida from Spain (1819), present-day New Mexico and Arizona from Mexico (1853), and Alaska from Russia (1867), such an idea was not controversial. Three decades later, Secretary of State William H. Seward rearticulated the idea when he commissioned ‘A Report on the Resources of Iceland and Greenland,’ which provided a detailed examination of why annexing Greenland and Iceland would be “worthy of serious consideration” (Seward 1868, 1) for both political and commercial reasons (Seward 1868, 3). Seward, who had negotiated the Alaska purchase, believed the acquisition of Greenland would be geostrategically important as it could be used to “flank British America for thousands of miles on the north and west and greatly increase her inducements, peacefully and cheerfully, to become a part of the American Union” (Seward 1868, 3–4). In plain words, he would use Greenland together with Alaska to squeeze Canada into being part of the U.S. He further emphasized how Greenland’s “vast fisheries and extensive coasts and numerous harbors, especially with abundant good coal there, must greatly antedate the period when the United States will command the commerce of the world” (Seward 1868, 4), and he foresaw how the world’s largest cryolite ore in Ivittuut would be important in extending the use of aluminum (Seward 1868, 50), which, as we shall see, became an essential element of modern warfare during World War II. Seward’s initiative arose from what he then thought were successfully completed⁹ negotiations with Denmark to buy the Caribbean islands of St. Thomas and St. John in 1867 (Seward 1868, 1), but as the Senate eventually rejected¹⁰ the treaty Denmark had already ratified, the report on Greenland’s resources was never realized.

During the subsequent years, the dual interest in, primarily, the Danish West Indies and, secondly, Greenland grew congruently with Prus-

sian Germany's increasing power and territorial expansion, which caused concern on the other side of the Atlantic. In a letter to his secretary of state, President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903 wrote, "Both the Dutch and the Danish West Indies in America [. . .] will be a constant temptation to Germany unless or until we take them" (Peck 1969, 46; cf. Roosevelt 1903). Consequently, Roosevelt designated an ambassador to Denmark, who shortly after arriving in Copenhagen confirmed the president's concern. He reported, "Prussianized Germany might at any moment seize that little country and [. . .] the Danish West Indies would be German" (Peck 1969, 47; cf. Egan 1919, 54–55). This correspondence can be seen as a securitizing move in which Prussian Germany was depicted as the enemy, potentially threatening peace and safety in the Western Hemisphere and violating the Monroe Doctrine if Denmark and thereby also the Danish West Indies were subjugated. This securitization sought to legitimize the extraordinary means of acquiring Denmark's Caribbean islands, and in an attempt to arrange a quid pro quo bargain, the ambassador proposed to the U.S. assistant secretary of state that they should present the following offer to Denmark (Egan 1910a):

- (1) Denmark to give Greenland to the United States.
- (2) The United States in return to give Denmark the southern group of the Philippines, consisting of the Islands of Mindanao, Palauan, and the small islands south of these.
- (3) Denmark to then surrender these islands to Germany.
- (4) Germany in return to give back to Denmark the northern part of Schleswig.

The ambassador believed that the fulfillment of the strong Danish wish of getting back Schleswig would appease the patriotic pride and pave the way for the U.S. to subsequently buy the Danish West Indies (Peck 1969, 54; cf. Egan 1910b).¹¹ The suggested U.S. purchase of Greenland was therefore part of a more complex exchange of lands serving the ultimate purpose of the Danish West Indies being transferred to the U.S.

1914–1939: World War I, the Interwar Years, and Peary's Securitization Attempt

After five years with no official response from Washington, the plan was eventually resubmitted to President Woodrow Wilson in 1915, who

then encouraged the ambassador to proceed (Peck 1969, 62; cf. Egan 1915; Lansing 1915). Since the plan had originated, however, the opening of the Panama Canal and the beginning of World War I had enhanced the strategic importance of the Danish West Indies. This development was reflected in the protracted negotiations with Denmark in which the U.S. secretary of state threatened to occupy the islands if Germany invaded Denmark before a deal was settled (Peck 1969, 67–68; cf. Lansing 1915, 4). In response, Denmark set a high price of US\$25 million (Peck 1969, 67–68; cf. Lansing 1915, 4) and—crucial for our concern—demanded as condition for a sale that the U.S. should recognize Danish sovereignty over Greenland (U.S. Department of State 1917).

When Robert E. Peary heard of Denmark’s demand, he intervened in the U.S. domestic debate regarding the negotiations, as he feared that American acceptance of Danish sovereignty over the whole of Greenland would neutralize the claim to a large area of the northern part of the island he had made on behalf of the U.S. Because of these claims and his allegedly successful expedition to the North Pole, he had previously been rewarded the ‘Thanks of Congress’ and given the rank of rear admiral, which bore witness to his high status with power to potentially influence both the U.S. government and American public opinion. Using his privileged position, he launched a media campaign targeting both the country’s elite decision makers and a broader popular audience, trying to convince them not to acknowledge full Danish sovereignty over Greenland. Instead, he wanted them to provide formal and moral support to his idea of purchasing Greenland, as he wrote:

Geographically, Greenland belongs to North America and the Western Hemisphere, over which we have formally claimed a sphere of influence by our Monroe Doctrine. Its possession by us will be in line with the Monroe Doctrine, and will eliminate one more possible source of future complications for us from European possession of territory in the Western Hemisphere. Will turning Greenland over to Denmark now mean a repurchase of it later, or will obtaining it now mean closing the incident and placing Greenland where it must ultimately belong? (Peary 1916a)

While quoting major parts of Seward’s report from 1868 as reasons for why acquiring Greenland would also make sense from economic

and political points of view, Peary especially highlighted its geostrategic significance to the U.S. Navy, emphasizing Cape Farewell as an obvious location for establishing a new naval base at the same latitude as Christiania (today Oslo), Petrograd (today St. Petersburg) and Britain's naval base in the Orkneys. Framed within the military and economic sectors, Peary thus tried to pre-emptively securitize the need for Greenland in order for the U.S. to proactively avoid future complications with European powers constituting a threat to the Western Hemisphere (1916a, 1916b). Although he recognized the strategic value of the Danish West Indies in countering the immediate threat from Germany and therefore supported the idea of buying the islands, he pleaded that it should not happen at the expense of Greenland, which in his perspective would only become more strategically important when sea and air power technology advanced, as “[w]ith the rapid shrinking of distances in this age of speed and invention, Greenland may be of crucial importance to us in the future. [. . .] Greenland in our hands may be a valuable piece in our defensive armor. In the hands of hostile interests it could be a serious menace” (Peary 1916a).

Despite his tenacious attempt, neither American politicians nor the public were sufficiently convinced that the U.S. should uphold or expand its sovereignty claims to Greenland at the expense of acquiring the Danish West Indies. Eventually, the Danish West Indies were transferred to the U.S. on March 31, 1917, just 52 hours before the U.S. declared war against Germany (Peck 1969, 74). In response to the demand of recognizing Danish sovereignty over Greenland entirely, the U.S. Secretary of State publicly announced that “the government of the United States of America will not object to the Danish government extending their political and economic interests to the whole of Greenland” (Lansing 1916). What is important to notice, however, is that with this announcement the U.S. did in fact not explicitly acknowledge full Danish sovereignty over Greenland, but merely its economic and political interests. Thus, the demand was actually not met. A few years later, when Denmark asked several other countries to recognize Danish sovereignty over Greenland,¹² the Wilson administration further said that it would not acknowledge any other country's acquisition of Greenland (U.S. Department of State 1941, 38), and following persistent rumors that the U.S. was again considering buying the island (cf. Kaminska 2019), the Danish prime minister, Thorvald Stauning, in 1930 found it necessary to issue a denial in *Financial Times* stating “Greenland not for Sale.”

Although Peary's securitization attempt was largely rejected,¹³ his predictions were nevertheless realized during the interwar years when aviation developments changed military strategic thinking (Berry 2016, 110). Central to this development was, first,—as Seward and Peary had predicted—the manufacturing of lighter aircrafts of aluminum in which cryolite from Ivittuut in Greenland was an important component. With longer possible flying distances, Greenland, secondly, became an obvious refueling spot for transpolar air routes between Europe and North America, and as it, thirdly, constituted a reliable meteorological location for predictions of European weather patterns crucial for all kinds of warfare,¹⁴ its geostrategic importance only increased during the subsequent years (Douglas 1939; Plischke 1943; cf. Berry 2016, 110–11).

1939–1945: World War II and the First U.S. Securitization of Greenland

As World War II broke out in 1939, high-ranking U.S. decision makers once again discussed the pros and cons of purchasing Greenland (Logan 1961, 299), and when Germany invaded Denmark on April 9, 1940, the U.S. geostrategic interest began materializing. First, the U.S. established a consulate in Nuuk on the reason that:

the United States Government, in agreement with the Greenland authorities, concluded that the numerous questions arising with respect to the welfare and needs of the inhabitants of Greenland and of Greenland's exports to the United States could, from a practical standpoint, best be met through the provisional establishment of an American Consulate in Greenland. (U.S. Department of State 1940, 350)

This decision rested on the need for protection of two particular referent objects, namely 'welfare and needs of Greenlanders' and 'exports to the United States,' which were placed on the national scale while respectively being part of the societal and economic security sectors. In a similar vein, the governor of South Greenland requested U.S. protection of the cryolite mine in Ivittuut, as documented in this telegram from the U.S. Consul in Greenland to the U.S. secretary of state, which subsequently ordered the U.S. coast guard to start patrolling:

Called on Governor Svane. Brought up the question of defense of the cryolite mine, emphasized the vulnerability of the mine and expressed fear that sabotage might be attempted by Nazi sympathizers at Ivigtut. He asked whether it would be feasible for an American military detachment to be stationed there as soon as possible, and as an alternative suggested the stationing of an armed ship such as a Coast Guard vessel at Ivigtut. (U.S. Department of State 1940, 366)

Though still a nonbelligerent at the time, the U.S. repeatedly stressed that these decisions were part of U.S. policy to maintain Greenland's neutrality in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine.¹⁵ For the same reason, the Roosevelt administration saw no other option than to continue to enhance U.S. military presence through the construction of air bases when Germany in March 1941 extended their war zone to Greenland's east coast (Archer 1988, 124). Thus it signed an agreement with Denmark's ambassador in Washington, who—in the name of the Danish king but contrary to governmental orders (Lidegaard 1996, 186ff)—granted the U.S. provisional control over Greenland's security with the reason that the “Defense of Greenland against attack by a non-American power is essential to the preservation of the peace and security of the American Continent and is a subject of vital concern to the United States of America and also to the Kingdom of Denmark” (Kauffmann and Hull 1941, 107).¹⁶ With this, a few people from the U.S. governmental elite successfully securitized Greenland as essential to the referent object ‘peace and security of the American Continent’ in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine. They did so with acceptance from a small relevant audience consisting of one single Danish ambassador essentially gone rogue and two governors in Greenland granting formal support. Due to German occupation, the Danish government was excluded as a relevant audience at the time and was therefore not part of the decision-making process.

By labeling the defense of Greenland as ‘essential’ to the American continent, the Monroe Doctrine was thereby for the first time activated in relation to Greenland, where it was used as legitimation for the extraordinary means of de facto pausing Danish sovereignty over Greenland and pave the way for extensive militarization.¹⁷ During the subsequent four years, 4 navy bases and 13 army bases were established (Archer 1988, 124), while 5,795 American military personnel were stationed, altogether constituting 25 percent of Greenland's total

population of 21,412 people in 1944 (Jex 2017). In this way, the macrosecuritization of World War II was decisive for why the U.S. securitized Greenland, which legitimized the United States' provisional formal sovereignty and continued control of the island's military security. Beyond the intensified military presence, the consequences of the securitization also entailed a break with more than 200 years of Danish control, meaning that Greenland for the first time in many years could engage directly with the world outside the Kingdom of Denmark. This experience gave rise to the subsequently growing wish for increased Greenlandic self-determination (cf. Beukel and Jensen 2008, 203), while sowing the seeds for later external acknowledgment of Greenland as an actor in international politics.

1945–1991: The Cold War and the Cascading Effects of U.S. Militarization

With the end of World War II, the government of Denmark requested a withdrawal of American troops from Greenland and an annulment of the 1941 agreement stating that it should “remain in force until it is agreed that the present dangers to the peace and security of the American Continent have passed” (Kauffmann and Hull 1941, article X). Whereas the Danish government thought that those dangers were no longer present, the U.S. government did not accept the desecuritization attempt. Or rather, the U.S. thought a new danger had replaced the previous one, as the Soviet Union had taken up the position from Germany as the main enemy. In the effort to enhance rather than diminish U.S. presence, senators and U.S. State Department officials initiated secret discussions about either purchasing Greenland or trading parts of it with portions of Point Barrow, Alaska (cf. Nelson 1991). In a counterproposal to Denmark, the Truman administration suggested three options (‘Proposal with Respect to Greenland’ 1946; cf. Nielsen and Nielsen 2013, 142):¹⁸

- (1) A continuation of the 1941 agreement allowing the U.S. to officially take over the total defense of Greenland.
- (2) A lease of the existing U.S. bases in Greenland for the next 99 years.
- (3) A purchase of Greenland for the price of US\$100 million in gold.

The Truman administration made clear that a sale “would be the most clean-cut and satisfactory” (Nelson 1991) as it would avoid criticism of U.S. bases on Danish territory while it could benefit the challenged Danish national economy (Nelson 1991). Denmark’s minister of foreign affairs, however, rejected all three options on behalf of the government, characterized the idea as “absurd” (cf. Beukel 2010, 50), and told the U.S. ambassador to Denmark that “[w]hile we owe much to America I do not feel that we owe them the whole island of Greenland” (Lidegaard 2003, 220). This rejection by the relevant audience at the time gained solid support across the political spectrum as all parties in the Danish parliament publicly rejected the mere idea of selling Greenland (cf. Beukel 2010, 49).

Following repeated attempts, the Danish government in 1948 gave up trying to desecuritize the perceived need for Greenland as an essential element in the protection of the referent object ‘the American Continent.’ Instead it tacitly accepted continuous U.S. military presence in Greenland as part of the new macrosecuritization, where the threat of a potential nuclear war between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries constituted an overarching conflict that incorporated, aligned, and ranked other securitizations around the world (cf. Buzan and Wæver 2009, 253). Urged by this development, the securitization of Greenland was formally reconfirmed in a new bilateral defense agreement in which the purpose was stated as being “to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic Treaty area by uniting their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security and for the development of their collective capacity to resist armed attack” (United States of America and the Kingdom of Denmark 1951, art. 1). The referent object was the ‘stability, well-being, peace and security of the NATO area’ while the threat was unspecified ‘armed attack.’ Whereas the main enemy at the time was obviously the Soviet Union, the vague definition of the threat allowed the agreement to stay effective even if the threat picture should change. Or as stipulated in article XIV: “This Agreement, being in implementation of the North Atlantic Treaty, shall remain in effect for the duration of the North Atlantic Treaty” (United States of America and the Kingdom of Denmark 1951). On this basis, the U.S. upgraded and established several military bases and installations in Greenland. One of these was Thule Air Base, which soon consisted of 10,000 American military personnel, airstrips, a modern town, an enormous pier and a range of different military installations (Taagholt 2002).

The new agreement was exclusively between Copenhagen and Washington, which together legitimized the extraordinary means of allowing extensive militarization of Greenland. No Greenlanders whatsoever were acknowledged as part of the relevant audience at the time. Greenlanders, however, felt the derived consequences on other scales and sectors beyond those addressed in the agreement as the securitization cascaded both vertically, from a higher to a lower scale, and horizontally, from one sector to another. As illustrated in figure 4.2, it started with the macrosecuritization of relations between NATO allies and Warsaw Pact countries on the international scale, which first and foremost was a matter of military security. This overarching conflict unfolded on national scales all over the world, where in this case it caused a challenge to Denmark's sovereignty over Greenland, found within the political sector. As a direct local outcome of the macrosecuritization, the Thule Air Base was established in northwest Greenland, where it, on the one hand, served to protect 'NATO area,' but, on the other hand, interfered with the Inughuit's usual hunting grounds, suspending their hitherto living conditions and challenging their societal security. Ending with the individual scale, the cascade simultaneously signified a threat to the local hunter's household, within the economic sector, as their main income from selling seal fur and other hunting products was endangered (cf. Brøsted and Fægteborg 1987, 72).

When the base expanded in 1953, the local community's societal security was further threatened as their 26 households with a total of 166 people were forced to relocate 130 km north to Qaanaaq (Brøsted and Fægteborg 1987, 38, 63–64; Kristensen and Christensen 2009). Whereas the decision to remove the Inughuit people was in line with the defense agreement's article VI—stipulating that undesirable contact between local Greenlanders and U.S. personnel should be avoided—the timing of the execution was notable as it happened less than two weeks before Greenland's status as a colony ceased on June 5, 1953 (Brøsted and Fægteborg 1987, 66ff). After this date, Greenland became an integral part of Denmark through an enactment of the Danish Constitution, whereby the rules regarding repatriation became the same for Greenlanders as for Danes. This meant that the removal could not then have been carried out by the Danish authorities (Brøsted and Fægteborg 1987, 11), which were the ones essentially effectuating the extraordinary means of the American securitization. At the time, the issue was handled quietly by the Danish prime minister, who left the impression that it was a voluntary relocation. While a demand for com-

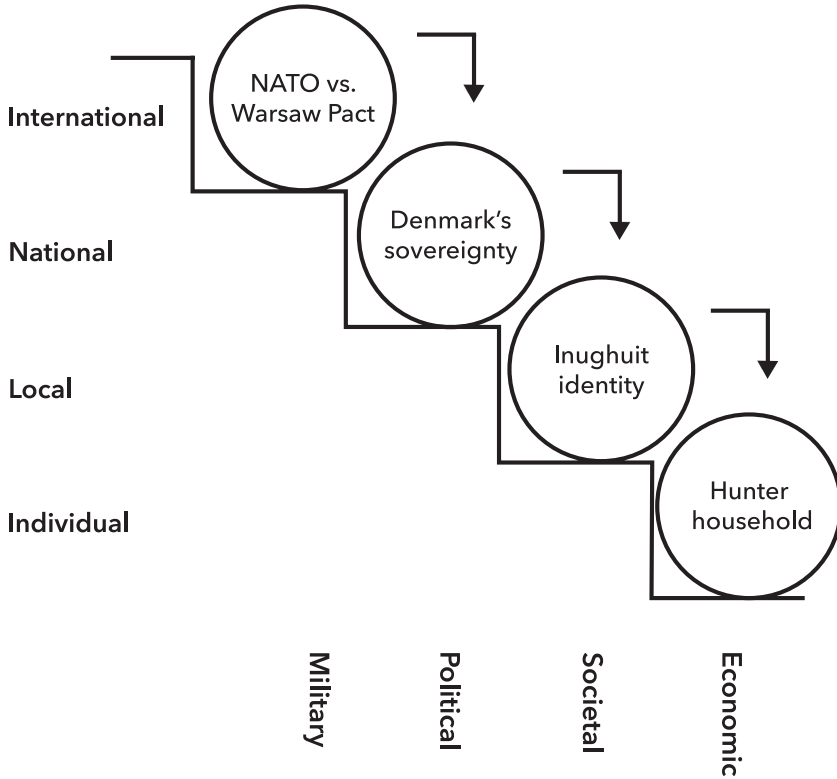


Fig. 4.2. The Cold War macrosecuritization between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries had cascading effects on other scales and sectors. For instance, the establishment of the Thule Air Base broke with full Danish sovereignty over Greenland and had further effects on the local societal security and the individual economic security, where the Inughuit identity and the hunters' households were threatened by the forced relocation. In the figure, the y-axis indicates the different scales and the x-axis the different sectors, while the text inside the circles describes the referent object, which changes as the securitization cascades vertically and horizontally, as the arrows show.

compensation to the Inughuit was already articulated in 1954, it was not before the mid-1980s that the exact circumstances were revealed. This both led to harsh criticism of and to legal action against the Danish state, which in 2003 was required to pay a minor compensation while the prime minister at the time, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, apologized to the Inughuit people (Nielsen 2004, 316, 328).

Another extraordinary means that was kept secret for a long time was the storage of nuclear weapons at Thule Air Base in spite of Den-

mark's 1957 ban of all nuclear weapons on its territory. This happened the same year with formal support from Denmark's prime and foreign minister, H. C. Hansen, who in a handwritten letter replied to the U.S. ambassador's question regarding if he would want to be informed in case the U.S. stored nuclear weapons in Greenland. He wrote:

the U.S. Government is entitled to store supplies, provide for the protection of the area, etc. [. . .] [A]ll materials, supplies, etc. shall be permitted entry into Greenland free of inspection. You did not submit any concrete plan as to such possible storing, nor did you ask questions as to the attitude of the Danish Government to this item. I do not think that your remarks give rise to any comments from my side. (Hansen 1957; cf. DUPI 1997, 277)

By repeating some of the central elements of the 1951 defense agreement and omitting a direct answer to the precarious question, the minister diplomatically formulated an answer that indirectly provided formal support to the extraordinary means of allowing secret storage of nuclear weapons in Greenland despite the public ban. At the same time, his indirect acceptance also worked to fend off the American threat to Danish sovereignty as the storage of nuclear weapons would probably have happened even if he had refused. By replying as he did, the minister thus both refrained from providing a direct formal acceptance while performing as if a refusal of the American wish was in fact a possibility. Nevertheless, Danish law was essentially overruled by the American securitization as part of the overarching macrosecuritization on the international scale. To keep this decision secret for almost 40 years is in itself also an extraordinary means, as it neglected the democratic rights of the Danish public, ignored the majority of Danish parliamentarians who were excluded from the small exclusive group constituting the relevant audience, and did not take into account whatsoever the concerns of the Greenlandic people.¹⁹

The subsequent year, however, domestic debate could not be avoided any longer because a detailed news article (Bartlett 1959) revealed to the public that a transportable nuclear reactor was placed inside the inland ice sheet as part of a new military scientific research base named Camp Century, located 138 miles east of Thule Air Base. The construction of Camp Century had begun without prior acceptance from the Danish government, which was later informed at an informal cocktail party (Nielsen and Nielsen 2013, 150–51).²⁰ This order

of action emphasized how the U.S. militarization of Greenland basically did not depend on Danish acceptance. Instead, the Danish government was merely seen as a relevant audience on the surface, while the U.S. securitization would ultimately override Danish resistance if it should occur. While the Danish parliament eventually provided formal acceptance of the nuclear reactor, it did not consider the question of nuclear weapon storage, simply because it did not know of it. This first came to public attention in January 1968 when an American B-52 bomber carrying four nuclear bombs crashed near Thule Air Base.²¹ This situation yet again compromised the collective and individual security of those Greenlanders who were exposed to nuclear radiation during their participation in the postcrash cleanup (Zinglensen 2015, 157–167), hence again illustrating how the securitization cascaded vertically from the international to the individual scale, and horizontally from the military to the environmental and societal sectors.

While the U.S. generally practiced a ‘neither confirm nor deny’ policy regarding stationing of nuclear weapons (Archer 2003, 134), they claimed that the 1951 defense agreement legitimized their right to do so in Greenland (Petersen 1998, 22), where they—according to a 1957 U.S. Department of Defense report to President Dwight D. Eisenhower—had “quite a free hand” (cf. Villaume 1995, 851). Nevertheless, the U.S. and Denmark entered a supplementary agreement in May 1968 in which it was clearly stated that the U.S. would neither store nor carry nuclear weapons in Greenland without previously informing Denmark.²² During subsequent years, Vice President Nelson Rockefeller showed keen interest in Greenland’s mining potential (Olsvig and Nielsen 2019, 76), while technological advancements within aviation and submarine warfare altered the U.S. military presence in Greenland. Consequently, the U.S. requested an upgrading of its ballistic missile early warning system (BMEWS),²³ a request that caused debate in Denmark and Greenland but ultimately gained formal support from both, hence giving way for the Thule radar upgrade in 1987 (Fischer 1993). This process bore witness to a new role taken up by Greenland after the introduction of home rule in 1979 as a more active part in security and foreign policy discussions with Denmark (DUPI 1997, 3) and as a recognized interlocutor on defense matters with the U.S. (Archer 2003, 135–37). These changes heralded a new period in the U.S. security perspective on Greenland, where negotiations steadily moved from being bilateral to trilateral while old threats vanished and new ones appeared.

1991–2018: The Thule Exception to Arctic Desecuritization

When the Cold War came to an end and the long-lasting macrosecuritization was, thus, desecuritized at the international scale (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 270), the United States' approach to the Arctic went through a similar shift during the 1990s, with more emphasis on environmental protection and cooperation and lesser concern with military threats. This development caused vertical and horizontal cascading effects of desecuritizations in the way the improved international and interstate relations had positive effects on the local living, while regional desecuritization within the military sector allowed room for other types of security concerns such as those caused by climate change (see Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2, this vol.; Gad, Bjørst and Jacobsen, chap. 3, this vol.). Bill Clinton's Presidential Decision Directive of 1994 illustrated well this new American security perspective on the Arctic, as it stated:

The new atmosphere of openness and cooperation with Russia has created unprecedented opportunities for collaboration among all eight Arctic nations on environmental protection, environmentally sustainable development, concerns of indigenous peoples and scientific research. In turn, cooperation in these areas will help reduce the risk of a resurgence of traditional threats. (Clinton 1994, 2)

The newfound perspective was part of increased international environmental concerns and emphasis on the need for sustainable development (Wæver 1995, 62–65; Gad, Jacobsen, and Strandsbjerg 2019), while it contributed to the concurrent regional desecuritization where normal politics again prevailed and interstate sovereignty disputes were contained rather than being subject to new securitization attempts (Åtland 2008; Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017, 20). Geographically located within the Arctic, Greenland would by default be included in the new U.S. Arctic policy. But while the post-Cold War American approach to the Arctic was largely preserved for almost 30 years, Thule remained detached from it. This was visible in the Rumsfeld Commission report, which characterized Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as 'rogue states' that—together with China and Russia—were posing serious military threats to U.S. national security (Rumsfeld 1998). In response to these threats, Rumsfeld recommended upgrading the BMEWS in which

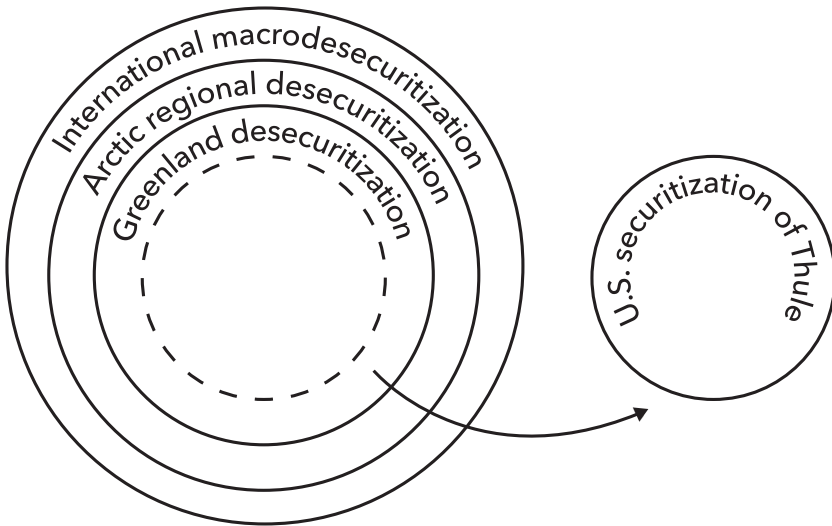


Fig. 4.3. Following the end of the Cold War, the macrodesecuritization of East-West relations cascaded onto the Arctic, where desecuritization within the military sector allowed more room for interstate cooperation regarding environmental protection and promotion of Indigenous peoples' rights. Though geographically located within the Arctic, Thule Air Base remained largely detached from this new U.S. regional security perspective because it was an essential element in the defense against 'rogue states' as securitized by the Rumsfeld Commission report.

the Thule Air Base radar was and is a crucial component. A few years later when this security discourse was incorporated in the Global War on Terror (GWOt) after 9/11, Thule then became part of a securitization on a higher scale, as the Bush administration tried to discursively frame the GWOt as a macrosecuritization with the West and liberal democracies as referent objects. The securitization of rogue states and the GWOt discourse, however, were not as widely acknowledged internationally as the macrosecuritization during the Cold War (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 254), making it more urgent for the U.S. to get support from the relevant audiences before upgrading the Thule radar.

Since the similar request in 1987, Greenland had gained more insight and influence into foreign policy and security matters, *inter alia* through the establishment of a Permanent Committee between the U.S., Denmark, and the home rule, which served the purpose of better knowledge-sharing regarding U.S. military presence on the island (Brown, Hedegaard, and Vesterbirk 1991). This development reconfigured the role of the home rule into being part of a more relevant audi-

ence, though not with sufficient agency to formally refuse or accept the American securitization, but merely as provider or denier of moral support. Conscious of the new status, the home rule in 1999 declared that it expected to participate on equal footing in trilateral negotiations and that it would only accept the upgrade if it did not jeopardize international peace and order (Naalakkersuisut 2000; Kristensen 2004, 13). The U.S. initially distanced itself from this discussion by labeling it an internal matter (Kristensen 2005, 193), while Copenhagen and Nuuk agreed on more equal participation and influence of the home rule as cosignatory on binding agreements under international law (Møller and Enoksen 2003).

This subsequently influenced the trilateral security discourse that shifted primary referent object from ‘U.S. sovereignty’ to the upscaled ‘international peace,’ which eventually secured Greenlandic acceptance of the American securitization. This was sealed by the signing of the Igaliku Agreement in 2004, which amended the defense agreement of 1951 and clearly acknowledged “Greenland’s contribution to the mutual security interests and its consequent sharing of the associated risks and responsibilities” (Powell, Møller, and Motzfeldt 2004, 1) serving their collective aim toward “international peace and peaceful co-existence, and respecting the important contribution of Greenland to this end” (Powell, Møller, and Motzfeldt 2004, 1). With this agreement, the home rule enhanced its authority in foreign and security affairs, while also seemingly achieving the right to decide whether formal support should be given to U.S. securitizations involving Greenland. But, as with the Danish government during the Cold War referring to the defense agreements of 1941 and 1951, this role was only acknowledged on the surface, as a Greenlandic refusal would probably not have had any other effect than weakening the moral support and thereby potentially influencing public opinion in a negative way. The consequences of the U.S. securitization were thus the enhanced appearance of Greenlandic agency and the discursive change of referent object to ‘international peace,’ but the ultimate purpose of the U.S. was clearly to counter intercontinental ballistic missiles from so-called rogue states, constituting the basic securitization of this period.

When the process of replacing home rule with self-government was coming to an end in 2009, Greenland’s enhanced self-determination also occupied increasingly more American attention. As revealed via three Wikileaks²⁴ cables, the U.S. ambassador to Denmark sent detailed briefs to Washington in which he assessed Greenland’s political devel-

opment, other states' growing interests, and the U.S.'s strategic opportunities to win Nuuk's favor. The ambassador warned that if Greenland should achieve independence, the local government would then probably not continue to be a staunch NATO ally—as it is today through Denmark—but instead be part of the non-aligned movement (Wikileaks 2006), which originally refrained from choosing sides during the Cold War. To maintain crucial military presence and to pursue some of the newly reported offshore hydrocarbon riches (cf. U.S. Geological Survey 2007) he recommended improving direct bilateral relations with local decision makers in Nuuk through more frequent visits and, in time, by establishing a more permanent diplomatic presence:

With Greenlandic independence glinting on the horizon, the U.S. has a unique opportunity to shape the circumstances in which an independent nation may emerge. We have real security and growing economic interests in Greenland, for which existing Joint and Permanent Committee mechanisms [. . .] may no longer be sufficient. American commercial investments, our continuing strategic military presence, and new high-level scientific and political interest in Greenland argue for establishing a small and seasonal American Presence Post in Greenland's capital as soon as practicable. (Wikileaks 2007)

The ambassador's recommendation was accompanied by remarks about growing European and Chinese interests in Greenland's natural resources, of which the latter was characterized as a direct competitor with the words: "Our intensified outreach [. . .] will also strengthen our relationship with Greenland vis-à-vis the Chinese" (Wikileaks 2007). This confirmed the U.S. skepticism toward China, as mentioned in the Rumsfeld Commission report, while indicating an emerging awareness of China as a geopolitical threat *in* Greenland, where large state-owned Chinese enterprises were positioning themselves as potential partners in the realization of the island's huge mining potential (cf. Gad et al. 2018; Jacobsen and Gad 2018, 18–20; Sørensen 2018; Andersson and Zeuthen, chap. 6, this vol.). In this way, the ambassador's warning drew the early contours of the later successful securitization of Chinese engagement in Greenland. In spite of the incipient great power competition on Greenlandic soil, however, the ambassador was confident that because of past successful experiences preliminarily culminating with the Igaliku Agreement, "Greenland nevertheless has a

growing appreciation for the logic of geography and its own potential as part of North America” (Wikileaks 2007).

U.S. security concern with China’s engagement in Greenland only increased during the subsequent years, although it was seldom articulated in public and did not lead to any direct intervention from the American side. Instead, the government of Denmark acted as the staunch ally it has been for the past 70 years by accepting the American securitization of China behind closed doors and carrying out the American wish on Greenlandic soil. One example of this surfaced in 2016, when Denmark’s then prime minister, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, refused to sell an abandoned military base in Kangilinnguit (Grønnedal) to a Chinese company, stating that even though it had been for sale, the Danish military suddenly still needed it (Breum 2016; Jacobsen 2019b). As we shall see, the concern later became more explicitly articulated as the Arctic again became a scene for great power competition, hence amplifying Greenland’s geostrategic importance.

2018–2021: Great Power Competition and Pompeo’s Successful Securitization

In 2018, when the expansion of existing and construction of new airports were at the center of comprehensive debates in Greenland (Sejersen, chap. 9, this vol.), potential Chinese involvement yet again caught American interest. Consequently, the U.S. secretary of defense, James Mattis, urged the Danish government to interfere as he believed the situation could risk introducing Chinese military presence in Greenland (cf. Hinshaw and Page 2019; Cammarata and Lipmann 2020). Denmark did so by offering low-interest loans and co-ownership to the Government of Greenland, which ultimately accepted at the expense of sharing the right to decide which construction companies to involve and exclude in the process (cf. Rasmussen and Kielsen 2018). The Danish government thus both acted as the relevant audience accepting and the actor carrying out the extraordinary means of the U.S. securitization of China (cf. Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.). Shortly after, the U.S. Department of Defense chipped in when announcing their intention to also make strategic investments in Greenlandic dual-use airport infrastructure in the effort to “enhance U.S. military operational flexibility and situational awareness in order to address the changing security environment in the Arctic” (Rood 2018). This was a

regional change, which was understood as being closely entangled with other international developments as “[i]n light of world events, the U.S. acknowledges the increasing importance of the Arctic” (Rood 2018). This statement was part of a shift in U.S. military priorities, where Russia and especially China were seen as the main strategic competitors undermining international order, challenging American power, and “attempting to erode American security and prosperity” (Trump 2017, 2) as expressed in the National Defense Strategy.

In an Arctic context, these perspectives were first publicly articulated by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo when he spoke at the Arctic Council ministerial meeting in Finland in May 2019.²⁵ In stark contrast with Clinton’s Presidential Decision Directive of 1994, Pompeo first argued that the council would no longer have the luxury of focusing almost exclusively on environmental research, cultural matters, and scientific collaboration for the next century, because “[w]e’re entering a new age of strategic engagement in the Arctic, complete with new threats to the Arctic and its real estate, and to all of our interests in that region” (Pompeo 2019). After characterizing why the U.S. is an Arctic nation and praising the region’s emerging economic opportunities, he addressed China and Russia as aggressors against ‘our interests,’ seemingly denoting the interests of the U.S., since all but the last one of his 26 mentions of ‘our’ were clearly self-referential. Beginning with China, he ridiculed its claim of being a ‘near-Arctic state,’ warned against its research presence as cover for military activities, and reminded the spectators of how Chinese investments may threaten the political security of the host country. His assessment was repeatedly reinforced with extra-regional examples illustrating the Chinese threat as part of a pattern on the international scale, inciting a new macrosecuritization of East vs. West. For instance, he stated, “China’s pattern of [. . .] aggressive behavior elsewhere should inform what we do and how it might treat the Arctic. [. . .] Do we want the Arctic Ocean to transform into a new South China Sea, fraught with militarization and competing territorial claims?” (Pompeo 2019).

He then turned to Russia, which besides one mention of its actions in Ukraine was only mentioned in an Arctic context and as a threat of military concern due to its rearmament and increased military activity in the region. This securitization had already been accepted by the domestic audience of the Trump administration, which acknowledged the need to fortify U.S. security and diplomatic presence across the Arctic: “On the security side, partly in response to Russia’s destabiliz-

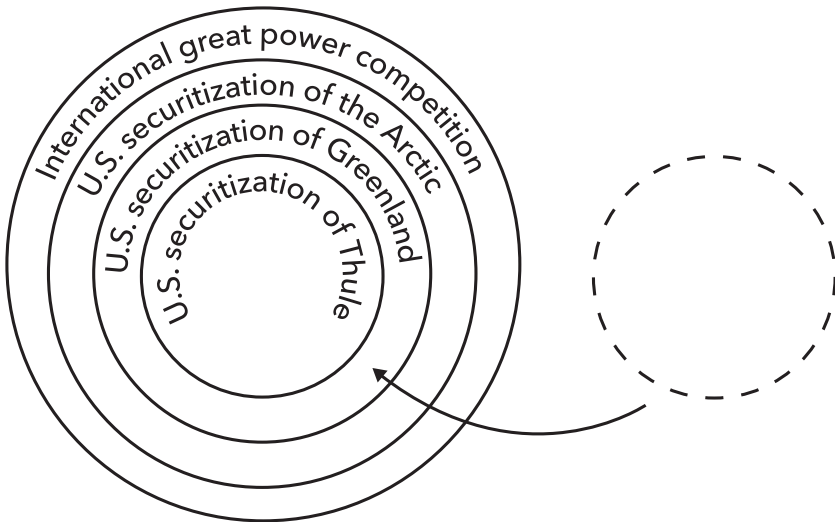


Fig. 4.4. After having been discursively separated, the U.S. security discourses regarding Thule, Greenland, and the Arctic were yet again aligned in 2019, when they were all framed within an overarching perspective of great power competition with China and Russia.

ing activities, we are hosting military exercises, strengthening our force presence, rebuilding our icebreaker fleet, expanding Coast Guard funding, and creating a new senior military post for Arctic Affairs inside of our own military” (Pompeo 2019). With his speech, Pompeo left no doubt that the American security approach to the Arctic was again primarily articulated within the military sector, with ‘U.S. interests’ as the referent object, while also framed within an international scale of global great power competition, giving way for U.S. rearmament in Greenland, the Arctic, and beyond. The Trump administration thereby distanced itself from its post–Cold War predecessors by yet again aligning the American security discourses regarding the Arctic, Greenland, and Thule Air Base, as illustrated in figure 4.4.

On his way home from Finland, Pompeo was supposed to visit Greenland to announce the decision to reopen a consulate in Nuuk, but due to escalating tensions with Iran, the visit was postponed at the last minute (Salama et al. 2019), reflecting how the U.S. securitization of the Arctic region still ranged below the threat from Tehran.²⁶ Instead, the U.S. ambassador to Denmark revealed the plans and explained at a conference in Nuuk that the decision served three particular purposes:

First, it rested upon Greenland's important geostrategic location in the defense of the North American continent against North Korea, among others, a reasoning that echoed the securitization by the Rumsfeld Commission report, which underlined the Thule Air Base radar as a crucial component in the BMEWS. Second, it was a response to regional security threats from Russia and China that reflected how Peary and the defense agreements of 1941, 1951, and 2004 placed Greenland within the North American sphere of influence in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine. Third, it should facilitate new American investments in Greenland within fisheries, tourism, and, not least, the mining sector (Sands 2019), as first reported by Seward in 1868 and later repeated by Peary and others as the geoeconomic reason for why the U.S. should purchase Greenland.

Two months later, the wish to upgrade the permanent U.S presence in Greenland turned out to be more comprehensive than first announced when the *Wall Street Journal* reported that President Trump wanted to purchase the whole island due to "its abundant resources and geopolitical importance" (Salama et al. 2019). Trump verified a couple of days later and reasoned that "essentially, it's a large real estate deal. [. . .] And, strategically, for the United States, it would be nice" (whitehouse.gov 2019a). Although the idea surprised many, the purpose of enhancing U.S. geostrategic presence and securing access to important minerals was in line with similar past attempts, as also highlighted by Trump: "This is something that's been discussed for many years. Harry Truman had the idea of Greenland. I had the idea. Other people have had the idea. It goes back into the early 1900s. But Harry Truman, very strongly, thought it was a good idea" (whitehouse.gov 2019a). But when Denmark's prime minister, Mette Frederiksen, gave the same response as the Danish minister gave Truman in 1946 by characterizing the discussion as 'absurd,' Trump canceled his planned state visit to Denmark (whitehouse.gov 2019b).

Because interstate exchanges and purchases of land had become an outdated practice since 1946, and because Greenland had simultaneously experienced several steps of enhanced agency, the proposal should have been directed to the Government of Greenland in the attempt to gain formal support. This was emphasized by the Danish prime minister, who made clear that "of course Greenland is not for sale, and I would like to say, that I cannot sell Greenland. Greenland is not Danish. Greenland is Greenlandic" (Christensen 2019). Although she refused the particular purchase idea, she simultaneously under-

lined that Denmark would like an even stronger cooperation with the U.S. in the Arctic, where external interest regarding investments and development “also contains a clear security political aspect, which we have to react on” (Frederiksen 2019). In response, she announced—just before her first face-to-face meeting with Trump—that Denmark would allocate approximately US\$235 million to Danish defense in the Arctic and North Atlantic (Mouritzen 2019). With this, Denmark both accepted the U.S. securitization of China and Russia in the Arctic and carried out an extraordinary means of boosting its military budget (cf. Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.).

The Government of Greenland, however, expressed discontent with not having been invited to the meeting with Trump (cf. Breum 2020) and later stated that it would not automatically accept Denmark’s decision to boost its military presence in Greenland (cf. Wester 2021) and instead would pursue demilitarization or no further militarization (Egede and Enoksen 2021a, 14; Egede and Enoksen 2021b, 16; Gad, Rud, Jacobsen and Rasmussen, chap. 8, this vol.). Therefore the realization of the announced military enhancement was parked for some time while the details were once again reviewed. This situation was reminiscent of the process in the beginning of the millennium, where the question of enhanced military presence was object of debate between Denmark and Greenland. Only after entering an agreement would they together inform the U.S. on their collective response to its securitization act. Although Greenland received Trump’s caprice as a neocolonial provocation, the amplified American attention nevertheless subsequently contributed to enhancing the Government of Greenland’s international agency as reflected in its more active and more equal participation in trilateral foreign policy meetings as well as in bilateral economic agreements with both the Trump administration and the Biden administration.²⁷

While President Biden differed from his predecessor by reintroducing the past U.S. emphasis on battling human-caused climate change in the Arctic, the securitization designating Russia and China as regional threats was maintained with him in office.²⁸ In times when such threats cannot be successfully incorporated within a macrosecuritization discourse, support from entities at lower scales are more important for the securitization actor in order to gain legitimacy to carry out extraordinary means. Conversely, if a threat is deemed more immediate, the people constituting the relevant audience may very well be fewer and more exclusive, hence potentially ignoring external

concerns, as was the case during the Cold War. At present, Denmark and Greenland are both treated as relevant audiences with the power to grant formal and moral support, but if the U.S. security situation changes for the worse, and Denmark and Greenland for some reason refuse an American securitization, it would be a serious test of how profound their actual acknowledged agency as a relevant audience in fact is, and of whether Denmark and Greenland respectively will be acknowledged to different extents.

Conclusion

In the beginning of the chapter we asked: Why has the U.S. securitized Greenland, how have securitizations been received, and with what consequences?

Starting with ‘why the U.S. has securitized Greenland,’ the most straightforward answer is that Greenland’s geographic location and its natural resources have been deemed geostrategically important for the protection of U.S. security and its balance of power against external enemies. Whereas the perceived threats have changed throughout the analytical period of almost 200 years, a common finding for each of the securitization acts has been that they have all been closely connected to security developments outside the Arctic region and entangled with securitizations at higher scales. This finding has been facilitated by our special attention to scales, which has helped to clarify whether the threats were articulated as an international, regional, or national matter. With this approach, we have shown how overarching security developments have been important in framing the U.S. pleas for extraordinary means with regards to Greenland: The first successful securitization happened within the macrosecuritization of World War II when the Monroe Doctrine was activated in relation to Greenland in 1941, while the U.S. used the ensuing Cold War to resecure the need for Greenland in the protection of the American continent against the Soviet Union, which replaced Germany as the main enemy. With the global *macrodesecuritization* of the immediate post-Cold War period, the Arctic and Greenland were equally *desecuritized*, while the Thule Air Base was rearticulated within new U.S. securitizations targeting rogue states and, subsequently, as part of the GWoT. Despite American attempts to present these two consecutive securitizations as macro in scope, they did not gain sufficiently wide acceptance (cf. Buzan and

Wæver 2009, 254). Thus it became more urgent to gain formal and moral support from the relevant audiences in Denmark *and* Greenland before upgrading the Thule Air Base radar as part of the BMEWS. Concurrently, a U.S. securitization of China's (potential) engagement in Greenland emerged, which initially took place behind closed doors among an exclusive circle of American and Danish government representatives. Later, as great power competition again dominated the world agenda, the securitization was publicly articulated and used to legitimize amplified American engagement in Greenland and the Arctic, which again are aligned with the purpose of the Thule Air Base.

This brings us to 'how securitizations have been received,' in which the answer depends on who the relevant audience is with power to provide or deny formal and moral support. Unlike the existing body of literature, which only deals with domestic audiences, we have paid particular attention to the relevance of foreign audiences in the shape of Denmark and Greenland, adding new understandings to how U.S. securitizations have been received abroad—at other national scales—and whether their response matter(ed). The first successful American securitization of Greenland at the outbreak of World War II was executed by a small, exclusive group from the U.S. governmental elite, one single Danish ambassador, and the governors of Greenland who—as sender and receiver of the securitization move—agreed that Germany posed an existential threat to the American continent, legitimizing the extraordinary means of de facto pausing Danish sovereignty and allowing extensive militarization of Greenland. While the Cold War replaced World War II as new global macrosecuritization, and Denmark formally reclaimed sovereignty over Greenland, the Danish government appeared to regain the right to decide whether or not to accept U.S. securitizations of Greenland. The U.S. recognition of Denmark as relevant audience, however, was superficial, as exemplified by the U.S. carrying out the extraordinary means before requesting permission from Denmark. Public articulations and the actual acknowledged agency have thus not always corresponded. In step with the macrodesecuritization of East-West relations and the simultaneous gradual enhancement of Greenlandic self-determination, the U.S. recognition of Copenhagen and Nuuk as relevant audiences with the power to provide formal and moral support seems to have become more sincere. Since the 1980s, decisions to upgrade the U.S. military presence in Greenland have not been realized without prior agreements, which moreover have been shaped

by the trilateral dynamics, such as when Greenland successfully changed the referent object to ‘international peace’ as a condition for accepting the Thule radar upgrade. What we do not know, however, is how the U.S. would react to a Danish or Greenlandic refusal of their securitization attempt, which—if articulated in times of more immediate security concerns—would constitute a significant test of how profound or different their roles as relevant audiences actually are.

Answering the last research question regarding ‘what consequences’ the U.S. securitizations have had, we have throughout the analysis and in the previous lines of the conclusion mentioned the extraordinary means the securitizations have given way for. Additionally, our theoretical attention to cascading effects has opened up the analysis to derived consequences, which unfortunately are often omitted by analyses of U.S. security interests in Greenland and the Arctic. More particularly, we have nuanced the concept of cascading effects into consisting of vertical ones happening between scales and horizontal ones taking place between sectors. With this approach, we have shown how the establishment of the Thule Air Base as an extraordinary means of the Cold War macrosecuritization cascaded onto national, local, and individual scales as well as from military to political, economic, societal, and later also environmental sectors, which were not part of the original communication regarding enhanced U.S. military presence in Greenland.

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NOTES

1. For a fuller analysis of the U.S. presence and the history of Greenland, particularly before, during, and after World War II, see Heinrich 2012.
2. The scale below of collective units has been investigated by the expanding literature on human security (cf. Buzan and Wæver 2009, 254).
3. A similar matrix of vertical moves between scales and horizontal moves between sectors has previously been applied in Jacobsen’s (2019b) study of sustainability discourses in Greenland and Nunavut. But neither a focus on securitizations nor on cascading effects were then part of the research.

4. Besides the environmental sector, insecurity caused by climate change effects in the Arctic are often articulated with reference to the societal sector (Herrmann 2017; see Gad, Bjørst and Jacobsen, chap. 3, this vol.; Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2, this vol.).

5. Due to COVID-19 restrictions it was not possible for us to physically visit the U.S. National Archives.

6. <https://www.state.gov/>

7. <https://www.stm.dk/>

8. <https://naalakkersuisut.gl/kl-GL>

9. Originally, the U.S. also wanted to purchase the third island of the Danish West Indies, St. Croix, but the negotiations with the government of Denmark eventually settled on a price of US\$7.5 million for St. Thomas and St. John (cf. Peary 1916a).

10. The rejection was a response to Seward's support of President Andrew Johnson during his impeachment trial (Lansing 1931; U.S. Department of State 2001–2009).

11. The ambassador explained that the proposal was a synthesis of suggestions from influential Danes (Peck 1969, 53). On the one hand, it was reasoned in Denmark's previously failed attempt to trade the Danish West Indies with Schleswig, which they had lost in 1864 (Schepelern 2007), and, on the other hand, Germany's wish to consolidate its position as the only great European power in East Asia (Egan 1910a). In 1902, the United States had offered US\$5 million for the Danish West Indies, but the offer was disapproved by a single vote in the Danish Landsting (Peck 1969, 48).

12. In 1919, Sweden, Italy, Japan, and France met the request without reservations, while the United Kingdom accepted on the condition that they should be consulted prior to any future sale. In 1921, Denmark formally declared sovereignty over all of Greenland, but was challenged in 1931 when five Norwegian trappers claimed sovereignty over a part of east Greenland on behalf of Oslo. In 1933, however, the International Court of Justice ruled in favor of Denmark (Emmerson 2010, 104–5).

13. In 1920, Peary's views found some support when the U.S. leading air strategist, Gen. William E. 'Billy' Mitchell, testified to the Senate that he agreed that it was of great strategic importance to establish U.S. air bases in Greenland and Iceland, which in his opinion would be even more important than the Panama Canal (Emmerson 2010, 123; cf. Fogelson 1989).

14. In the 1930s, German scientists had already completed several studies and developed plans to establish weather stations in eastern Greenland, plans they secretly carried out and preserved until 1943, when they were discovered (Blyth 1951).

15. For example, the U.S. secretary of state explained to the British ambassador that "it would be well in the interest of both countries to bring the Greenland situation up to date as it related to the Monroe Doctrine from the standpoint of this Government" (U.S. Department of State 1940, 353).

16. The agreement's article 1 referred to the Act of Habana, which in agreement with the Latin American republics in 1940 had given the U.S. legitimation to take over the administration of non-American states' colonial territories within the Western Hemisphere, reflecting the Monroe Doctrine.

17. At the same time, the U.S. used the situation to investigate the uranium resources in southern Greenland with a view to creating the first American nuclear bomb, but for unknown reasons the interest was never put into effect (Knudsen and Nielsen 2016).

18. The U.S. interest in purchasing Greenland at that time was kept secret from the public until April 28, 1991, when the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* wrote about it based on releases from the U.S. National Archive (cf. Nelson 1991).

19. The full disclosure of Prime Minister Hansen's indirect acceptance first happened in the mid-1990s, when a Danish journalist discovered the note and made it public (Brink 1997).

20. What was not revealed, though, was Camp Century's end goal, called 'Project Iceworm,' the stationing of 600 intercontinental ballistic missiles, placed inside the inland ice in a 4000 km tunnel system of 135,000 km², operated by 11,000 men (Nielsen and Nielsen 2016, 196–97). Both Project Iceworm and Camp Century were eventually abandoned as the inland ice proved to be too porous for the comprehensive construction within. Project Iceworm was kept secret until 1996.

21. Reportedly, there were not any nuclear weapons stationed in Greenland after 1965, so the B-52 was overflying the country when it crashed (Archer 2003, 133; cf. U.S. Department of State 1999).

22. In the meantime, the idea of purchasing Greenland was discussed yet again in 1955 by the U.S. administration, and in 1960 Eisenhower aired the idea in a conversation with the King of Denmark, Frederik IX, who—as written in the Danish minister of foreign affairs' diary—allegedly punched the minister on his arm and eagerly said, “We do not sell!” (Lidegaard 2014, 1099–1100).

23. Constructed in 1958–1959 and put into use in 1961.

24. Other cables from Wikileaks revealed that the CIA has conducted secret transportations of prisoners in Greenland.

25. One month later, the U.S. Department of Defense published its Arctic Strategy, which contained similar descriptions of the regional security milieu (2019, 6).

26. The first U.S. consulate in Greenland was established in 1940 (Kauffmann 1940) and closed in 1953 (Naalakkersuisut 2020a, 43).

27. Similar mechanisms have occurred in Greenland's bilateral relations with the EU (Gad 2014, 2017) and in its autonomous engagements in Arctic governance (Jacobsen 2015, 2019a, 2020).

28. For example, the U.S. Army issued a chief of staff paper with the title 'Regaining Arctic Dominance,' warning that “The Arctic has the potential to become a contested space where United States' great power rivals, Russia and China, seek to use military and economic power to gain and maintain access to the region at the expense of US interests” (McConville and McCarthy 2021, 15).

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5 | (De)securitizing Discourse and Action in Political Talk and Media Presentation

The Announcement of the Russian Honorary Consul's Appointment in Greenland

Julia Zhukova Klausen

Geographically, the Russian Federation figures as the largest state actor in the Arctic with more than 60 percent of its territory positioned in the Arctic zone divided into eight constituent units that are home to 20 Indigenous ethnic groups. Politically, in the past two decades, the Arctic has been increasingly occupying one of the focal places in Russian domestic and international affairs. Greenland, however, has seldom come into focus.¹ Internationally, the symbolic act of planting the Russian flag on the geographic North Pole seabed and the scientific and judicial participation in the claims related to the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean have been key events. Also, the Arctic is consistently visible in the diverse aspects of Russian domestic politics, such as in the celebrations of the events historically significant to the Russian Arctic, in many state-supported educational and research projects (McDaniel 2017), in the discursive constructions of the Russian national strategy, and its representations in media and public debates (Mehdiyeva 2018).

Many scholars have noted the strongly emerging strategic role designated to the Arctic in Russian politics and commented on how the Arctic strategy seems to be closely intertwined with the construction of the new Russian national identity that discursively spans the nostalgic accounts of Soviet glory, the revival of national pride, the narratives of international cooperation, Russian Arctic exceptionalism, and Arctic heritage (Khrushcheva and Poberezhskaya 2016; McDaniel 2017).

While the aforementioned discursive political and media constructions take place around a variety of concerns and interests shared by all the Arctic states, such as environmental issues, ethnic rights, and industrial and technological development, they do “not exclude military confrontation” and “reiterate the need to reduce threats to national security and ensure stability” (Mehdiyeva 2018, 7).

Recently, this renewed and intensified Arctic interest began to include and intersect explicitly with the issues related to Greenland, its territory, its diplomatic and cultural ties, and its political alliances. For instance, in 2014, Denmark, together with Greenland and then in 2015 with the Russian Federation, submitted to the United Nations’ Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) their respective—and overlapping—claims to a part of the Arctic Ocean seabed, which has added new questions and new perspectives to the Danish-Russian bilateral agenda (Jacobsen 2020, 179–80). Russian media and political commentators have been closely following the latest developments in U.S.-Greenland relations, such as Donald Trump’s infamous idea of purchasing Greenland followed by the announcement of an economic aid package and the re-opening of the U.S. Consulate in Nuuk (See Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). These events have prompted a variety of reactions spanning from formal diplomatic statements—for example the reaction of the Russian ambassador in Denmark, Vladimir Barbin—to the U.S. economic aid package to Greenland (Barbin 2020) to social media discussions disputing the intentions and consequences of these events for international politics, Arctic relations, and Russia’s position in it. Finally, in October 2020, at a press conference in Moscow, the Russian minister of foreign affairs, Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov, together with the Danish minister of foreign affairs, Jeppe Kofod, announced the appointment of the Honorary Consul of the Russian Federation in Nuuk (MFA of the Russian Federation 2020).

While many Arctic researchers agree that “there is no state-to-state competition for territory or resources in the Arctic, and no prospect of conflict either” and that “Arctic is becoming a region marked by cooperation” (Byers and Baker 2013, 5), when it comes to Russia, the “narratives about potential Arctic conflict” where Russia figures as the “bad guy” are still very much alive (Rowe and Blakkisrud 2014, 66), prompting anxiety and adoption of the extraordinary measures to prevent the anticipated Russian aggression (Padrtova 2019, 41). Scholarly works that seek to understand Russian Arctic politics and policies often do it from the geopolitical perspective that strives to identify the stakes of

the involved states in the Arctic and relate to their indications of intent for peaceful cooperation or expressions of military capabilities (Byers and Baker 2013; Hubert et al. 2012).

The interests and aims of this study are a bit different. By focusing on the speech and question-and-answers session by the Russian minister of foreign affairs, S. V. Lavrov, and their representation on the official website of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or MID.RU (MFA of the Russian Federation 2020), I examine the multimodal discursive mechanisms through which Greenland and its national and international affairs are mobilized in Russian political commentary and media contexts. This study is not concerned with estimating the possibility of military confrontation or political cooperation. Nor will it be engaging in predicting how the appointment of the Russian Honorary Consul in Nuuk might impact, escalate, or waver this possibility or discussing the Russian state's intentions in this regard. Instead, it focuses on a single, irreversible, and observable action (Scollon 2001)—interaction during the press conference—that mediate and project Russian politics in the Arctic in connection with Greenland and Denmark. This entails tracing how this action discursively displaces this aspect of Russian international relations from the security agenda and prefigures desecuritizing measures while still relying on the matters of security, potential risks and threats, and the need to attend to them.

The analysis presented in this chapter brings together two theories: *a theory of security*, securitization theory, and *a theory of human action*, mediated discourse analysis. What these theories hold in common is a conviction that language and discourse matter, that they matter to how the reality is constructed and made sense of, and that they matter to how individual and collective, institutional, and territorial subjects and affairs are governed. In this chapter, I examine *how exactly they matter* when it comes to the issues of international Arctic politics, Russian-Danish relations, and Russian-Greenlandic relations. I do not start this examination by presuming that there exists a specific type of (de)securitizing act or technique that is at work in association with the representations of Greenland in the Russian media and political contexts. Instead, I follow how the actors make relevant the issues of security, how they orient to them, how they modify and how they avoid them in political and media interaction that addresses the recent developments in Greenland politics and Russian-Danish affairs. This analytical work allows me to capture the relationship between language and security at the level of detail that is not traditionally included in the scope of main-

stream security analyses. In doing so, I demonstrate how both securitizing and desecuritizing agendas extend across discursive frameworks, media, and interactional sites, embedding this agenda into the practices with which these sites are associated. With its focus on how meanings are ascribed and re-ascribed to the questions of international Arctic politics transforming the security agenda and constituting it in time and space, the following close multimodal analysis engages with those directions of securitization research that call for the *iterative* and *extended* conceptualization of securitizing acts (Oren and Solomon 2015; Philipson 2020).

In December 2020, Miki Brøns, the co-owner of the major Greenlandic business corporation Polar Seafood, was appointed as the Russian honorary consul in Greenland. In the aftermath of the appointment, Mr. Brøns emphasized the apolitical character of the honorary consul's functions and his disconnection from the formal diplomatic and governing structures as well as his upcoming role in strengthening two specific areas of Russian-Greenlandic cooperation, namely commercial fishing and cultural relations anchored in the shared history of Inuit living (Brøns 2021). These two areas of mutual interest and collaboration and their deep historical roots have also been stressed in Ambassador Vladimir Barbin's commentary in connection to the appointment, in line with tourism and sustainable development of the Arctic region and the dialogic approach to dealing with Arctic security (Barbin 2021). The points of the Arctic agenda highlighted above are not exclusive to the appointment of the Russian honorary consul in Greenland but are also linked by academic and political opinion to the upcoming Russian chairmanship of the Arctic Council (Gad 2020).

This chapter focuses on the emerging intersection of established Arctic discourse and agenda of Russia with the matters related distinctly to Greenland and its role in the Arctic. More specifically, I examine how S. V. Lavrov and the MID.RU's representation of his speech and interaction with the journalists construct the Russian international Arctic participation by orienting Greenland and Denmark as relevant Arctic state counterparts or by excluding them from this categorization. This is accomplished through a series of complex discursive strategies mobilizing the past and projecting the future of Russian-Greenlandic and Russian-Danish relations, assigning and removing agency and responsibility to account for the present state of these relations and categorizing them toward or away from the security agenda.

Connecting Securitization Theory and the Analysis of Mediated Action

Securitization research is the scholarly direction that focuses on the set issues outlined above, on how the need in “organizing as a *power* towards the external world” is constructed and maintained discursively as the matter of a persistent state and national concern (Kant, as cited in Wæver 1989). Originated in and shaped by the so-called Copenhagen School, this intellectual approach captures how the notion of security is constructed in speech acts through references to the “developments which in a particularly rapid or dramatic way threaten the sovereignty or independence of a state, not just something harming it, but something threatening to deprive the unit of its capacity to manage by itself [. . .] thereby changing the foundation for everything else; undercutting the political order” (Wæver 1989, 4). This theorization of security has in many ways reformed security studies by shifting away from its conventional definition as the positive outcome of national and international military and political strategy that asserts continuous efforts to maximize it and to perfect its form. Instead, by drawing on the analytical and conceptual resources of the speech act theory (Austin 1962), the Copenhagen School proposed a view of security that highlights the rhetorical and linguistic mechanisms through which international and national matters are removed from the operational and administering scope of the “normal” political procedures by being classified as exceptional, urgent, and unprecedented, as well as how in doing so they become subjected to emergency rationale and techniques. This view includes a critical stance toward the consequences of securitizing acts for “normal democratic rules of transparency and accountability” and introduces the notion of desecuritization and desecurity formulated as the binary opposite of securitization/security (Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017, 17–18).

The analysis presented further produces a nuanced account of the relationship between those concepts that uncovers how its rationale and terms of enactment go beyond a simple dichotomy and that demonstrates the discursive mechanisms through which they become interwoven in a variety of ways in political talk and interaction. This analysis is informed by the ability of (de)securitization theory to grasp theoretically the specific conditions of possibility for political actions, international and national apparatuses, and regimes of truths and knowledges through which certain subjects—individual and institu-

tional actors, cultural groups, territories, etc.—are managed and ruled (Foucault 1970, 1981). In line with a number of scholars engaged in securitization research (Oren and Solomon 2015; Philipsen 2020), I argue that in order to employ this ability, we need to allow the (de)securitization analysis to extend beyond the “speech act” understood solely as thematization of a certain issue or problem within the utterance and limited to it, or as a narrative of the “past and historical processes through which events, identities, and actions come to be constructed” (Saint-Georges 2013, 1). Instead, such an analysis should include discourse and discursive practices to shed analytical light on how discursive categories and memberships interact with the discursive and non-linguistic elements outside the immediate context of a specific text or an utterance. This also requires understanding discourse beyond the mere representation and framing of reality and seeing it instead as a social action that has capacity to make this reality by making the ways we think and talk about its specific aspects and futures durable, recognizable, and normalized.

For the present (de)securitization analysis, which is concerned with the dynamics of Arctic security and Greenland’s role in it, this means examining rigorously the discursive mechanisms through which threats and *appropriate* (i.e., *realizable* and *desirable*) measures to manage them and their consequences (Wallace 2011, 145) are anticipated and linked to Greenland and its population, to Arctic nations, and their territories. The goal of the analysis is not to generate and to generalize a typology of (de)securitization acts associated with the representations of Greenland in Russian politics and media. Rather the analysis aims to provide a close examination of how the actions categorizing Greenland’s and Russia’s Arctic present and projecting their futures are accomplished discursively in relation to the issues of threat and security.

I take up this theoretical and analytical task by connecting (de)securitization theory with the conceptual and methodological repertoire of mediated discourse analysis. This analytical perspective is interested in how individuals, in the course of interactions with each other and with the diverse technologies and materialities, use multimodal discursive and semiotic resources to take actions and how the performative and anticipatory affordances of these actions enable them to produce and change the reality (Saint-Georges 2013; Norris and Jones 2017; Scollon 2001; Wallace 2011). In the proposed analytical framework, (de)securitization is viewed as a discursive practice in

the Foucauldian, both archaeological and genealogical, sense (Foucault 1981). This entails that my examination focuses on tracing “the forms of exclusion, of limitation, of appropriation” of truths that render certain problems and subjects as a matter of security and how these forms are exerted and evaded, modified and displaced. This also means that it is equally interested in making visible and discussing how “series of discourses come to be formed” and what norms and procedures they mobilize to render certain strategies for handling the aforementioned problems and subjects as possible or unreasonable (Foucault 1970, 1981).

Thus, I propose an analytical framework that substitutes a speech act, conventionally seen as the primary unit in securitization analysis, with the notion of mediated action, which allows me to shift the focus from a single utterance and its function to the sequentially and the seriality of the securitization strategies. In doing so, the analysis aims to shift the focus away from the indemonstrable (at least within the suggested methodological approach) successfulness or failure of a specific securitizing case in order to uncover its constitutive potential in the interactional- and conversation-analytical sense as well as its complexity and pervasiveness in the genealogical sense (Foucault 1981). The former involves examining how (de)securitization is accomplished through the language-in-use where each utterance both proceeds and projects the further interaction (Schegloff 1986, 1988). While the latter requires analyzing discursive and interdiscursive assemblages that do not only move politics beyond its normal terms into “requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 24) within the framework of a single argument, but also circulate these categorizations of the existential threats, the forms of their recognition, and of the consent to the suggested methods for their management. The proposed conceptual and methodological way of engaging with the securitization theory informs the empirical detailed study revealing how exactly political action and interaction relate security and insecurity, securitization and desecuritization in practice.

As the analytical strategy formulated above makes visible, the presented analysis relies on a number of methods central to discourse analysis such as critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2001), mediated discourse analysis (Scollon 2001), conversation analysis (Schegloff 1986) and multimodal discourse analysis (Iedema 2003; Kress and Leeuwen 2006). Within this methodological framework, ‘mediated dis-

course' figures as the organizing concept and the primary analytical unit that grasps how discourses anticipate futures by setting constraints, evaluating and rendering possibilities for actions across time and space. In the following analysis, I examine how the actors orient to Arctic futures in the anticipatory discursive work through both reasoning and generating actions that involve projecting certain events, their outcomes, courses of actions, plans, and agendas (Norris and Jones 2017, 29, 157–158; Saint-Georges 2013). The empirical scope of this study is composed by the elements of visual, written, and interactional genres, such as photography, computer-mediated text, dialogue, and speech. To uncover the ways in which the anticipatory discourses are constructed within the framework of this multimodal material, I employ the strategies of *multimodal discourse analysis*. With this approach, I demonstrate how specific modalities and semiotic resources are mobilized by the actors and how these semiotic choices converge with diverse discourses and practices, which in their turn become 'resemiotized' and begin to figure as 'frozen' actions. That is, I trace analytically the translation of meaning from one semiotic field to another and the mechanisms of its embedment with certain objects and environments (Iedema 2003, 29; Norris and Makboon 2015, 43).

In this aspect, the present analysis contributes to the existing body of securitization research that focuses on the "distinctiveness of visual securitizations" (Hansen 2011, 53) and their role in constituting political interventions, and it expands it by highlighting the interaction between visualities and other mediational means, such as written text and spoken interaction. In order to capture this interaction analytically, I attend to the multiple details of text and interaction. Some of these details are associated with the rules of conversational sequence, such as turn taking, uptake, openings and closings that the interlocutors—Lavrov and the journalists taking part in the press conference—mobilize to generate agency, to propose certain accounts about actions, to produce categorizations and to orient toward them. These devices are the focus of *conversation analysis*, which allows me to trace the ways in which they are being used in a regular manner to negotiate interactionally how risks and threats to Arctic peace and stability are discriminated in terms of different national agendas and international actions. It also enables me to reveal how these accounts prefigure the preferred lines for their organization and control (Sacks 1995, 3–4; Schegloff 1986, 1988).

Other devices, such as metaphor, implicature and intertextuality,

inclusion and exclusion, are examined using the strategies of *critical discourse analysis* in order to examine how the (de)securitizing actions and accounts are rendered not only possible and plausible, but also natural and neutral, as well as how these discursive constructs are challenged and destabilized. This aspect of analysis uncovers the discursive tendencies and tensions that make up the textual relations within the empirical data and link them to the relevant intertextual contexts, to the social practices with which these contexts and their discursive conventions are associated, and to those societal structures, institutional sites, and procedures where these practices are accomplished.

It is by liaising between the close analysis of interactional, textual, and semiotic devices mobilized by the actors and the political and media contexts where the discursive work in focus is taking place that I am able to demonstrate systematically and methodologically how (de)securitizing actions are accomplished. This analytical work is informed by and feeds into the performative direction in securitization studies that is concerned with the ritualized and repetitive constructions of securitized issues and threats enacted by the interlocutors across material and linguistic devices, which circulate and expand the security rationale across political realms and practices (Oren and Solomon 2015; Philipson 2020).

Tracing Discourses of (De)securitization: Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Official Russian Communication regarding a Representation in Greenland

One of the most important contributions made by securitization theory consists in providing a deeper understanding of the dialectic relationship between securitizing and desecuritizing, that is, of the methods through which issues are shifted and phrased into and out of the emergency mode, into and out of the threat-defense dichotomy. Moreover, securitization theory captures how the movement of the security agenda back into “the ordinary public sphere” reinvents it in wider terms and in the procedures outside the military apparatus (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 29; Wæver 1995). The latter process is examined further in the more recent securitization research, where it is discussed as “a displacement of a controversy” generated “by shifting a policy issue from one technique of government to another” rather than

between the emergency and ‘normal’ politics (Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017, 16). The following analysis demonstrates the complexity of securitization-desecuritization mechanisms and how they are enacted discursively and interactionally around the issues of Russian-Danish and Russian-Greenlandic relations during the press conference with the Russian minister of foreign affairs, Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov, and the Danish minister of foreign affairs, Jeppe Kofod, in Moscow, on October 9, 2020, and in the presentation of the press conference’s transcript on the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website.

Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg name one of the most obvious ways to desecuritize, which is “to not talk about issues in terms of security, but to ignore securitization and insist that an issue is non-politics or normal politics” (Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017, 18). A large part of the speech given by Lavrov at the press conference is devoted exactly to that: listing directions and practices of cooperation between Russia and Denmark of an explicitly nonmilitary and nonconfrontational character, such as trade, mutual financial investments, presence of the Danish companies on the Russian market, cultural, humanitarian, and educational projects, and political and diplomatic dialogues. In the speech, these ‘benign’ and nonthreatening aspects of Russian-Danish relations are discursively assigned a temporal dimension. They are constructed as practices that have deep and lasting historical roots:

Excerpt 1

Мы отметили, что отношения между Россией и Данией имеют давние традиции добрососедства, взаимоуважения, никогда не омрачались войнами и конфликтами с той поры, когда в 1493 г. был заключен Договор о любви и братстве. Постоянная российская дипломатическая миссия появилась в Дании еще в 1700 г., а в 1893 г. она была преобразована в посольство. Наверное, это одни из самых долгих дипломатических, договорных отношений, которые есть у Российской Федерации с зарубежными партнерами.

We noted that the relations between Russia and Denmark have long-term traditions of good neighborliness, mutual respect, they have never been clouded by wars and conflicts since the time, when in 1493, there has been signed a Treaty of Love and

Brotherhood. A permanent diplomatic mission was founded in Denmark already in 1700, and in 1893, it was converted into an embassy. It is probably one of the longest diplomatic, agreement-based relationships which the Russian Federation has with foreign partners.

In the example above, any potential of threat or insecurity is removed from the articulation of the bilateral relations in focus by repeatedly highlighting their collaborative quality: “good neighborliness” (*добрососедства*), “mutual respect” (*взаимоуважения*), “diplomatic, agreement-based relationships” (*дипломатических, договорных отношений*). This is also achieved by the recurrent references to the diplomatic procedures and institutions: “Treaty of Love and Brotherhood” (*Договор о любви и братстве*), “diplomatic mission” (*дипломатическая миссия*), “embassy” (*посольство*), “agreement-based relationships [. . .] with foreign partners” (*дипломатических, договорных отношений [. . .] с зарубежными партнерами*). The historical continuity of this collaboration is accomplished through the references to “traditions” and through the use of such attributes as “long-term” (*давние*), “permanent” (*постоянная*) and “long” (*долгих*). This long duration of the relations is further qualified by the superlative form of the latter adjective “one of the longest” (*одни из самых долгих*). These categorizations are made factual through the references to the specific dates when the invoked historical events took place.

Importantly, this desecuritizing articulation of the Russian-Danish past is enacted by contrasting it with the bilateral relations characterized by military threat and insecurity: “wars and conflicts” (*войнами и конфликтами*), which are constructed as an alternative that is both not applicable to and unwanted for Russian-Danish relations: “have never been clouded” (*никогда не омрачались*). This presents one in a series of distinct discursive mechanisms through which security and desecuritization become intertwined in the analyzed political talk.

In constructing the desecuritized present relationship between the two states, Lavrov continues to employ the discursive strategies outlined above. He stresses the continuity of their cooperation (“has not been interrupted,” *не прерывался*) and constructs it as the mutually agreed preferred future (“we were pleased to note,” *с удовлетворением отметили*):

Excerpt 2

С удовлетворением отметили, что диалог между нашими министерствами иностранных дел не прерывался.

We were pleased to note that the dialogue between our ministries of foreign affairs has not been interrupted.

Similarly, he proceeds to validate the extent of the ongoing cooperation by emphasizing its factual character, for example, by listing the names of the Danish companies currently operating in Russia (Carlsberg, Rockwool, Novo Nordic, Danfoss, Grundfoss, and Idavang) and providing the exact number of Russian educational institutions and projects that have ties to Denmark.

What is notable, however, is that none of the listed organizational actors or collaborative practices are specific to Greenland's context. Tourism, sustainability, commercial fishing, issues related to culture and identification of the Arctic Indigenous ethnicities highlighted in Ambassador Vladimir Barbin's (Barbin 2021) exclusive interview to Sermitsiaq in connection with the appointment of the Russian honorary consul in Nuuk are excluded from the categorization of Russian Arctic cooperation. Similarly, Polar Seafood, co-owned by the appointed honorary Russian consul, Miki Brøns, is also absent from the list of the relevant actors. This exclusion stands in contrast to the detail with which the Russian-Danish lines of cooperation are formulated and reiterated, making the choices made in establishing the connections between the speech and the contexts and actors outside it meaningful to the analysis (Fairclough 2003).

What is also interesting is that, in the speech, this construction of the collaborative present is closely intertwined with the indication of factors that impair them and threaten their viability, thereby making the desecuritized version of Russian-Danish affairs precarious and contingent:

Excerpt 3

. . . контакты между различными ведомствами, которые сейчас тоже, по сути дела, «подморожены», и не только по причине коронавирусной инфекции.

. . . contacts between different institutions, which are now also, in reality, “slightly frozen,” and not only because of the coronavirus infection.

Excerpt 4

У нас достаточно серьезный товарооборот, но, начиная с прошлого года, он сокращается. В этом году добавились причины, связанные с коронавирусной инфекцией.

We have quite serious trade turnover, but starting from the last year, it has been reducing. This year, reasons related to coronavirus were added.

In the examples above, the stagnation (“slightly frozen,” *подморожены*) and deterioration (“has been reducing,” *сокращается*) of the bilateral relations are attributed to two types of risk factors. One of them is stated explicitly—the ongoing pandemic—which illustrates the moldable quality of the security agenda and shows how it is expanded to include the most recent risks and risks not related to warfare. The other type of threat remains implicit. The implicature is performed through indicating that coronavirus is not the exclusive (“not only because of,” *не только по причине*) and not the single (“reasons [. . .] have been added,” *добавились причины*) threat to cooperation. Despite the implied character of the indicated threats, the metaphor “slightly frozen,” *подморожены*, recognizable as a part of the Cold War discursive repertoire, alludes to a set of security issues associated with this period in Soviet-Western affairs, such as the arms race and nuclear war threat, thereby embedding them into the desecuritization strategy demonstrated in the analysis above. This attests to the fact that proposing desecuritized alternatives does not erase the conventional security agenda and shows how these international scenarios are intertwined in political genre.

The analysis of excerpt 5 verifies how security and desecurity are made to rely on each other by uncovering yet another strategy through which they are being accomplished. This strategy mobilizes the anticipatory capacity of discourse and the organizing function of sequentiality.

Excerpt 5

В 2021 г. к России переходит председательство в Арктическом совете. Мы уделили большое внимание проблематике этого нашего общего региона.

In 2021, the chairmanship of the Arctic Council transfers to Russia. We have paid much attention to the problematics of this, our shared region.

In the example above, the future of Russian-Danish affairs is prefigured and specified by intertwining it with the future of Arctic governance, the functioning and leadership of the Arctic Council. In projecting this future, Lavrov, on the one hand, problematizes it by referring to “problematics” (*проблематике*), while on the other hand, he pre-emptively indicates a set of problems and risks by placing focus on the shared ownership and responsibility for the Arctic region. This is enacted by constructing the common agency through the use of the first person plural pronouns “we” (*мы*) and “our” (*нашего*) and the attribute “shared” (*общего*) as well as by articulating an action with which the problems in the Arctic will be anticipated and dealt with: “have paid much attention” (*Мы уделили большое внимание*), which is an idiomatic phrase used in political talk to denote placing an issue on the international or political agenda. While Lavrov does not say against what exactly the international preventive measures are being initiated in relation to the Arctic region, referring to the abstract state of a problem (“problematics,” *проблематике*), the very next sentence in his speech invokes “questions of security in the Baltic region” (*вопросах безопасности в регионе Балтийского моря*). The rest of the presentation is devoted to matters of national and international security, such as NATO activity close to the Russian state borders and the situation in Ukraine. This sequential proximity of securitizing talk connects it to the indicated Arctic problematics intertwining once again desecuritization discourse that highlights cooperation with the risk of military confrontation and the need to deal with it.

The following analysis uncovers how (de)securitization is enacted when Lavrov begins to address issues related to Greenland. Some of the mechanisms involved in this discursive work are parallel to the ones uncovered in the analysis above in relation to the matters of Russian-Danish relations. More specifically, this includes the projec-

tion of the collaborative present and future through the mobilization of the shared past as well as through the positively charged articulation and normalization of this category. But the analysis also reveals a number of new desecuritizing strategies that are associated with the interactional and visual genres of discourse.

The central position in the composition of the speech is devoted to the appointment of an honorary consul of the Russian Federation in Greenland.

Excerpt 6

Признательны нашим датским коллегам за согласие учредить пост почетного консула Российской Федерации на Гренландии. Кандидатура согласована. Сейчас мы занимаемся завершением бюрократических формальностей.

We are appreciative of our Danish colleagues agreeing to found a post of an honorary consul of the Russian Federation on Greenland. The candidature is agreed upon. Now we are working on completing the bureaucratic formalities.

Noteworthy, while this is the first formal announcement made regarding the appointment of the honorary consul, discursively it is not assigned novelty or news characteristics. On the contrary, the discursive work demonstrated in the analysis of excerpts 1 and 2 weaves the announcement into the already constructed diplomatic and collaborative past and present of the Russian-Danish and Russian Arctic relations, so that it figures as an expected diplomatic act and ‘natural’ measure that would deal with the indicated security risks (excerpt 4). Similarly, while the post of the honorary consul is only to be established, it is discursively constructed as an accomplished act both semantically, through the positively charged terms of agreement and evaluation.

The founding of the post has been approved by the Danish government (“agreeing to found,” *согласие учредить*); the approval has been positively assessed by the Russian government (“we are appreciative,” *признательны*); and syntactically, through the use of an attributive verb in a contracted present perfect form, “the candidature is agreed upon,” *Кандидатура согласована*. Moreover, the scope of the remaining procedures is downplayed by assigning it to the secondary, less

important category of “bureaucratic formalities,” *бюрократических формальностей*, and even those are articulated as being in the active state of completion (“working on completing,” *занимаемся завершением*). This discursive projection of a future diplomatic act into present international affairs becomes even more meaningful if we consider that the announcement is made in the aftermath of the opening of the U.S. Consulate in Nuuk as it brings both events into temporal proximity, hence enabling certain parallelism or symmetry between them.

The uncovered above naturalization of the Russian-Greenlandic diplomatic present and collaborative future becomes challenged when the press conference shifts into the question-and-answer format.

Excerpt 7

Вопрос (перевод с английского): Как бы Вы могли прокомментировать просьбу относительно почетного консульства в Нууке?

С.В.Лавров: Чем объясняется наша просьба к датскому руководству дать согласие на назначение Почетного консула России на Гренландии, для меня странный вопрос.

Мы соседи. Мы хотим сотрудничать. У нас есть достаточно устойчивые экономические, культурные связи с Фарерскими островами и Гренландией. Датское руководство об этом прекрасно осведомлено. И тот факт, что наше обращение с просьбой поддержать кандидатуру Почетного консула на Гренландии была достаточно оперативно поддержана, говорит о том, что в Копенгагене заинтересованы в том, чтобы наши отношения развивались. Мы это ценим.

Question (translation from English): Could you please comment on the request regarding the honorary consulate in Nuuk?

S. V. Lavrov: How our request to the Danish government to approve the appointment of the honorary consul of Russian on Greenland is explained, to me is a strange question.

We are neighbours. We want to cooperate. We have fairly stable economic, cultural ties with the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Danish government is perfectly aware of that. And the fact that our request to support the candidate for the honorary consul on Greenland has been fairly promptly supported, says that

in Copenhagen, they are interested in the development of our relations. We appreciate that.

The shift from a monologue to conversational genre entails that the speaker needs to orient to the action accomplished in the question, so that the meaning-making practices become distributed across interactional turns and interlocutors. The question addressing the appointment of the honorary consul categorizes it as a “request,” *просьбу*, thereby negating its categorization as an accomplished act, proposed by Lavrov earlier. The commenting action prompted by the question (“could you please comment,” *как бы вы могли прокомментировать*) displaces it from the previously constructed position of a natural and expected threat-preventing measure by proposing it as an accountable and requiring account category.

In his reply, Lavrov orients to the aforementioned actions. In paraphrasing the question, he uncovers the request to comment as a euphemism for providing the reasons for the consul’s appointment: “how our request [. . .] is explained,” *чем объясняется наша просьба*, thereby making visible the implication made by the journalist that there can be another agenda at work in relation to the appointment besides the desecuritized collaborative version proposed by Lavrov. He then subsequently dismisses the implication by questioning the very sanity of it: “to me is a strange question,” *для меня странный вопрос* and then shifting back to the same discursive strategy as he extensively employed in the opening speech—the emphasis of the long-term, stable, nonmilitary, risk-free forms of collaboration. This is enacted through the same semantic choices as earlier in the speech, such as the neighbor metaphor and references to economic and cultural ties. Similarly, Lavrov reiterates and upgrades the positive assessment of the request made by the Danish government by assigning attributes stressing its quality and rate: “perfectly,” *прекрасно*, “fairly promptly,” *достаточно оперативно*. The repetition and upgrade of this discursive strategy validates the benign, nonthreatening character of the founded honorary consul post proposed earlier in the speech. What is also interesting in Lavrov’s reply is the repeated use of the first person, plural pronoun “we,” *мы, у нас*. These parallel structures open and close Lavrov’s interactional turn highlighting the agency of the Russian state constructed in relation to Greenland’s desecuritized present and future.

The uncovered anticipatory strategies of spoken discourse mobilized to project the desecuritized version of the Arctic present and

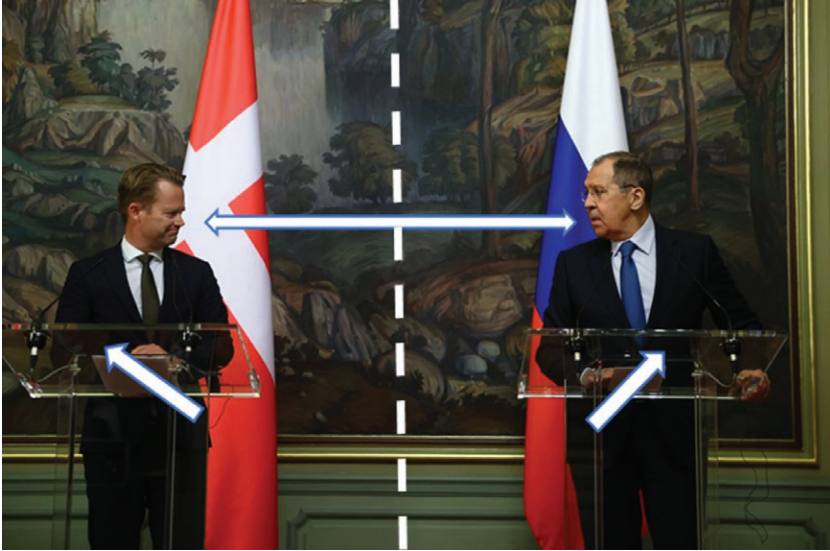


Fig. 5.1. Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov (*right*) and Jeppe Kofod at the bilateral press conference in Moscow, October 9, 2020 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation 2020).

future are anchored in the visual elements of the Russian Foreign Ministry's presentation of the press conference.

A photograph depicting the two ministers at the press conference (figure 5.1) is placed at the top of the web page preceding the transcript. The photograph employs a number of semiotic resources that construct visually the collaborative character of Russian-Danish relations anticipating the discursive work presented in the transcript. For instance, the gaze trajectory and the positioning of the governments' representatives as facing each other project the connection and cooperation which Lavrov systematically mobilizes in addressing Russia's relations with Denmark and Greenland. Kofod's smiling facial expression echoes the approval and positive assessment by the Danish government that Lavrov repeatedly invokes in connection to the founding of the Russian honorary consul post. The symmetrical use of the layout visible in the positioning of the actors in the middle ground as well as of the prompts on the background and on the foreground conveys equality and balance in relation to how the three mediated practices are executed:

- a. the bilateral relations between the two states symbolically represented by the Danish and Russian national flags on the background of the photograph;
- b. the communication between the governments portrayed by their two representatives placed on the middle ground; and
- c. the media and political genre of press conference, which is marked through the foregrounded speakers' tables that also extend the space captured in the photograph toward the audience, indicating implicitly their presence and participation in the interaction.

The analysis above demonstrates how political and media talk as well as material objects (such as tables and flags), which embed “frozen actions” (Norris and Makboon 2015) converging with the practices and discourses of national sovereignty and international politics, become resemiotized into different genres (photography and written transcript) and different media format (web page). The resemiotization distributes the discursive mechanisms of (de)securitization across institutional contexts and practices as well as the physical and computer-mediated spaces associated with them.

What is remarkable, however, is that Greenland is excluded from this disposition. In the paradigmatic relations constructed in the image through the resemiotized symbolic act of flagging, Greenland is absent as a relevant actor. This absence is semiotically and relationally significant, as it is marked by the inclusion of the Danish and Russian flags, which turns it into a meaningful act of discursive deselection (Fairclough 2003).

What is also noteworthy is that throughout his speech and responses to the journalists' questions, Lavrov systematically refers to the appointment of the Honorary Consul “on Greenland,” *на Гренландии* (excerpts 6 and 7). In the Russian language, the spatial preposition “on,” *на*, is used with the geographical names that denote a region or a geographical unit, such as an island or a continent. In contrast, preposition “in,” *в*, is used with the names of the cities and countries. Through this repeated syntactical choice, Greenland is classified as a geographical and regional entity rather than a self-determined political actor. The classification paired with the semiotic exclusion addressed earlier reduces the role assigned to Greenland in the diplomatic and cooperation scenarios with Russia that are formulated in the context of the analyzed political and media event.

In the speech as well as in Lavrov's answers during the press conference, the desecuritized presence and future of Danish-Russian relations is not articulated as given. The following analysis makes visible how they are being constructed as conditioned by Denmark's and Western active participation in their execution. This is enacted through a two-part discursive structure that is systematically employed throughout the whole conference and in which the speaker first introduces a desecuritized measure initiated or exercised by the Russian Federation, then formulates a condition for its success or a factor that impairs it, attributing those to Denmark or other Western actors (e.g. NATO). Table 5.1 illustrates this structure by collecting some examples where it is at work in relation to Russian relations to Denmark and Greenland.

In excerpts 8 and 9 (table 5.1), Lavrov names a number of desecuritized measures aimed at both prevention of a military confrontation (maritime and space incidents prevention treaties) between the states and at the promotion of antimilitary alternative (an expansion of collaboration). In doing so, he highlights the active role and the agency of the Russian state (referred to by the pronoun "we," *мы*) by emphasizing how committed the Russian Federation is to the successful application of these measures ("we are ready," *мы готовы*; "we have been suggesting," *мы [. . .] предлагаем*), the extent and the length of this commitment ("in all the directions," *на всех направлениях*; "multiple times" *множественно*; "for a long time," *давно*). These measures then become constructed as either limited or determined by Danish participation ("along which our Danish colleagues are open for it," *на которых наши датские коллеги к этому открыты*), or dependent on it ("we count on that [. . .] Denmark will consider," *рассчитываем, что, [. . .] Дания рассмотрит это наше предложение*), or is hindered by it ("are still thinking," *все еще думают*). This discursive work attributes to Denmark an agency which stands in contrast to the one assigned to Russia: e.g. the persistence of the Russian state is being juxtaposed to Denmark's sluggishness ("are still thinking," *все еще думают*) and the long-term Russian initiative is contrasted to the prospective character of Danish participation ("will consider," *рассмотрит*). Moreover, it is also compared and contrasted to the conduct of the other international actors ("just as our other neighbors with whom we have such treaties," *как и другие наши соседи, с которыми у нас есть такие соглашения*), thereby categorizing Denmark's response, or lack of such, to the proposed measures as irregular and noticeable in the international arena.

TABLE 5.1. Discursive Construction of Agency and Responsibility in Desecuritizing Russian Relations to Denmark and Greenland

	Desecuritizing measure initiated or exercised by the Russian Federation	Condition for the success of the introduced desecuritizing measure or a factor that impairs it
<i>Excerpt 8</i>	<i>В целом мы готовы продвигать сотрудничество на всех направлениях,</i> In general, we are ready to expand the cooperation in all directions	<i>на которых наши датские коллеги к этому открыты.</i> along which our Danish colleagues are open for it.
<i>Excerpt 9</i>	<i>. . . мы давно предлагаем заключить с ними двустороннее межправительственное соглашение об избежании непреднамеренных инцидентов в морском пространстве между нашими странами и в воздушном пространстве над этими водами.</i> . . . we have been suggesting for a long time to sign with them a bilateral agreement between governments on the avoidance of the unintended incidents in the sea area between our countries and in the space above these waters	<i>Рассчитываем, что, как и другие наши соседи, с которыми у нас есть такие соглашения, Дания рассмотрит это наше предложение.</i> We count on that just as our other neighbors with whom we have such treaties, Denmark will consider our said suggestion.
	<i>Дании мы делали такое предложение многократно.</i> We have been making this suggestion multiple times.	<i>Наши датские коллеги все еще думают.</i> Our Danish colleagues are still thinking.

The analysis above demonstrates how the potential of discourse to assign and distribute agency, power, and responsibility is at work in the practices of international Arctic politics. It also reveals how this potential is applied to highlight the enthusiastic and effective character of Russia's approach to organizing its collaboration with Denmark and to contrast it to Denmark's participation, which is marked as lacking initiative and engagement.

Conclusion

The analysis above made visible the complexity of the dialectic relationship between *securitizing* and *desecuritizing* strategies and demonstrated how they discursively rely on each other when enacted by the actors. The analysis allowed me to provide the empirically generated evidence for the theorization of desecuritization associated with the Copenhagen School. This theorization is distinct not only from the notion of *security*, as a security problem treated with relevant measures, but also from the concepts of *insecurity*, that is, unaddressed (or inadequately addressed) security issues, and of *asecurity*, the situations when security rationale and discourse are irrelevant to the conditions of possibility shaping the problem (Wæver 1995, 1998).

In this chapter, I demonstrate how this distinction and desecuritizing category are enacted discursively in political talk. This analytical work made visible how a desecuritized future of the Russian-Danish and Russian-Greenlandic relations are systematically and repeatedly made conditioned by the course of the Western Arctic participation and Denmark's will to make use of the desecuritizing, nonmilitary potential of cooperation strategies proposed by the Russian government. Another important observation involves showing how the production of (de)securitized accounts is distributed across the past, the present, and the future of Arctic politics. The ability of discourse practice to converge and compress the time-space scales and relations within the scope of a single mediated action is realized in connection with the appointment of the Russian honorary consul in Nuuk. In Larov's announcement and during the press conference, this development in Russian-Greenlandic relations is naturalized and enacted as an anticipated measure based on the continuity and persistence of the collaborative tradition defining the *past* of the Russian-Danish relations. At the same time it is mobilized to naturalize and anticipate the *future* of these relations away from the security vocabulary and rationale. Finally, the chapter demonstrated how within its empirical scope the desecuritizing action is never mediated separately from the security agenda and how such devices as metaphor, sequentiality, and contrast are employed to connect the matters of security, risk, and threat to the categories, procedures, and practices associated with the other political and organizing techniques. Moreover, the analysis showed how this also takes place across temporal lines where the past and the current risks, such as the Cold War agenda and the Covid-19 pandemic, are linked to highlight the precarity of the desecuritized futures.

These uncovered aspects of desecuritizing strategies contribute to shaping a more analytically informed and nuanced understanding of (de)securitizing mechanisms by showcasing a variety of ways in which the security agenda and repertoire are made durable and expanded to new areas of political and societal engagement even when it is accomplished through the actions where the security is unmarked or explicitly marked irrelevant through the proposals of alternative, desecuritizing, and cooperation-based accounts.

The use of the Russian honorary consul in Greenland, opening in the mediation of the naturalized desecuritized accounts of the Arctic past and prefiguring its futures away from the security agenda, demonstrates how this diplomatic act is assigned an instrumental role of defining the course and the manner of Russian-Danish, and more broadly, Russian Arctic relations.

The reduced role assigned to Greenland is also maintained through syntactical choices that attribute it to a regional and geographical area rather than to a sovereign national and political category. This discursive categorization echoes the debates in relation to the use of prepositions “on” and “in” to spatially refer to Ukraine and, thereby, its articulation as either an autonomous country or “a *kraïna* (‘borderlands’) of Greater Russia” (Popescu 2014, 223). These highly intense debates have been part of an ongoing political confrontation between Russia and Ukraine flagging the power of discourse to position the state actors on the international arena and highlighting that nation-states recognize this power. Thus when in the formal announcement of the honorary consul appointment, Greenland is being discursively assigned a regional or geographical status, it proposes a specific configuration of Russian-Greenlandic bilateral relations where Greenland does not figure as an autonomous partner. It also mobilizes patterns of language use that have been challenged in other political contexts as “imperial models” (Danylenko and Naienko 2019).

The positioning of the Greenland-related development as peripheral to the other aspects of Russian Arctic affairs is fortified by the so-called “significant absences” in the data of Greenland agency and representation (Fairclough 2003, 37). As the analysis makes visible, this exclusion of Greenland from the paradigmatic relations established in the text, such as between the symbolic representations of state and nationhood through flagging or the practices and actors listed in categorizing the Russian Arctic participation, is systematic and, thereby, marked and meaningful.

I do not in any way assert that the identified patterns and strategies of

Russia's positioning and representation of Greenland are defining or generalizable aspects of how Russian government and politics approach the present and envision the future of its relations with Greenland. Nor am I interested in making such projections. I do however argue that in the analyzed material, Russian connections to Greenland are predominantly formulated through the prism of Russian-Danish relations. I claim as well that the mechanisms through which this is being accomplished are certainly meaningful to the concrete mediated actions, actors, and contexts associated with the international and political developments in focus. In addition, I argue that the presented detailed empirical analysis and the strategies it revealed are important for understanding the preferred lines of discursive construction and semiotic signification for which the actors reach in a regular and recognizable manner when they assign meaning to these developments and propose how it would be appropriate and possible to make sense of them. This understanding would enrich and be useful to the research that is interested in examining how Russian-Greenland relations are enacted in other contexts and in relation to other practices and how it compares to the ways in which other international actors organize their communication and cooperation with Greenland.

NOTE

1. Similarly, Russia is given almost no attention in Greenland's foreign policy (Jacobsen and Gad 2018, 16).

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6 | How China Left Greenland

Mutually Reinforcing Securitization Policies and Chinese Mining Plans in Greenland

Patrik Andersson and Jesper W. Zeuthen

Chinese interest in Greenland has grown in the past decade. Examples include investments in potential mining projects (Andersson, Zeuthen, and Kalvig 2018), a bid by a large state-owned company to assist in the refurbishment of airports (Simpson 2018; Sejersen, chap. 9, this vol.), and a controversial attempt by a Chinese mining company to acquire an abandoned Danish naval base (Breum 2016) to facilitate its activities in Greenland. Greenland's rich mineral deposits have been a focus of Chinese interest. In 2016, a Chinese company partly owned by a subdivision of China Geological Survey invested in one of Greenland's potential rare earth projects, the Kuannersuit (Kvanefjeld) project. Rare earth elements, often referred to as the 'vitamins of modern industry,' are considered essential in the EU, the United States, China, Japan, and many other countries because of their importance in producing a wide range of high-tech products, including advanced communications and consumer technologies, emerging 'green' technologies, and advanced military weapons. Then, in 2017, Chinese activities in the Arctic received an additional boost when the region was officially incorporated into the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)—China's signature foreign policy and strategy for international development—with the introduction of a 'Polar Silk Road.' As discussed by Jacobsen and Olsvig (chap. 4, this vol.), the U.S. has responded with a series of exceptional measures aimed at countering Chinese influence in Greenland, measures that point to a resecuritization of the country in U.S. politics. Although attempts at securitizing U.S. interests in Greenland are shaped in part

by perceptions of China's Arctic strategy and security agenda in the region, very little is known about the degree to which Greenland or the Arctic more broadly are in fact viewed as security priorities in Chinese politics. Vuori (2008) has argued that in the Chinese context, securitization, that is, the justification of extraordinary political intervention to mitigate a potential threat, is reserved for issues that are perceived as existential threats to the survival of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). It would not appear that anything close to this would emerge from conflicts in or about Greenland in any near future. This, however, does not mean that Chinese engagement in Greenland is not enabled by forms of policymaking that are framed as exceptional in China's authoritarian system.

This chapter studies how the Kuannersuit project is framed by the Chinese and Western investors in the project. Based on analysis of company documents such as annual reports, press releases, and company presentations, we show how framing is tailored to different audiences to accomplish different goals and how this tailoring may backfire if read by anyone other than the intended recipients. At the Chinese domestic level, we argue that Chinese companies use strategic framing, including references to Chinese industrial policy and foreign policy strategies, as a means to access specific forms of policymaking. Chinese actors that engage or seek to engage in Greenland are able to frame policies and investment plans as being part of China's mission of becoming a leading global industrial and economic power. Materials directed toward Western audiences, most of which are produced by the Australian license holder of the project, highlight the Chinese investor's world-leading expertise in processing technology as a strength of the project. At the same time, vague statements of future European processing—which seem to partly contradict statements in Chinese-language reports—and recent efforts to highlight the role of non-Chinese investors in the project (Sermitsiaq 2020), suggest an awareness of how Chinese involvement in the project is viewed as both a selling point and as increasingly politically problematic. We conclude by arguing that while framing projects as serving national objectives creates opportunities for Chinese actors that seek to engage in the Arctic, it also has the potential to trigger securitization discourses in the states controlling the Arctic. Language that Chinese actors use domestically to elevate and add political priority to their projects is not intended as securitization in the Chinese context. When transmitted to the West, however, this language can be mistaken for securitization

and is often cited as evidence of a coordinated Chinese master plan for the region. In the end, this leads to increased competition over who gets to invest in Greenland, or it may result in Chinese investors pulling out as a result of the sensitivity that Danish and U.S. actors attach to Chinese investments, rather than as a result of competition.

Securitization and Chinese Politics

Securitization is about elevating specific issues into exceptional issues. In the West, this approach is mainly applied in relation to objects that are external to the democratic and ‘normal’ domestic political system and perceived as constituting a threat to ‘normalcy.’ In the case of China, it is well documented how a specific form of very direct governance circumventing the usual bargaining between competing bureaucratic bodies is in place when an issue is perceived as a threat to the state’s vital interests, such as stability and party state survival (Vuori 2008). This focus on the state’s vital interests is also seen in China’s long history of political campaigns that are carried out because they address issues highly placed on the policy agenda that are seen as very important for the country’s development, but not necessarily for its security, such as poverty alleviation, food safety, or various industrial objectives (Looney 2020). By comparing three similar cases of dam building, Mertha (2008, 2009) has demonstrated that it is as much the framing of a case as the actual political problem that can trigger the form of governance applied. In all of Mertha’s three cases the focus changed from the initial aim of meeting important state objectives (securing energy). In one case ‘state stability’ became the referent object (public protests from those evicted formed a threat), in another the referent object was ‘cultural preservation’ (the dam could destroy cultural heritage), and in the third the ‘environment’ (the dam could reduce CO₂ emissions but on the other hand destroy precious nature). Each referent object gave access to different sets of actors and offered different rooms for maneuver. In the case where ‘social stability’ was the referent object, paramilitary forces were called in and there was no room for bargaining. The natural preservation case, however, allowed for an extended debate, which in the authoritarian context is truly exceptional. This link between framing and policy process is thus not confined to those external or internal threats that are regarded as security issues for the Chinese state. Framing of cases as exceptional or at least special is in

fact the foundation of the dominating approach for understanding policymaking in China since the 1980s: the bureaucratic bargaining approach. Following this approach, the framing of issues under a specific policy agenda is one of the main channels for bureaucrats and policymakers to address the issues they want (Lieberthal and Oksenberg 1988). By framing issues under relevant policy agendas, they gain priority and access to specific channels of policymaking. Some processes, such as dam building, may become ‘normalized’ and only result in the creation of, for instance, a category of relocated citizens who gain particularly strong bargaining power. Other cases that were once part of a security issue, such as the governance of minorities, are not likely to become normalized. When policymaking is normalized again, the categories, such as relocated citizens or highly prioritized industry, still exist, and they become building blocks of the ‘normal’ bureaucratic bargaining process. They may potentially be reused in another policy campaign or in a case of securitization. Exceptional politics become the norm (Zeuthen 2020).

An important element of the bureaucratic bargaining approach is the division of the bureaucracy into parallel departmental sectors. The sectors at work within the bureaucratic bargaining framework are in principle possible to physically identify on an organizational diagram of the Chinese bureaucracy. The opportunity for framing occurs when a lower level of the bureaucracy meets a higher level where divides between different sectoral departments may be more refined and, thus, imply an opportunity to make a form of policy implementation more appealing to one segment of the bureaucracy than to another. The fragmented bureaucracy in China, when meeting international relations, introduces its (in a Chinese context fully normal) mixture of economic and political logic to actors that are not used to it. Roselle, Miskimmon, and O’Loughlin (2014) argue that a state’s soft power capacity relies on the political system in which the narratives it attempts to construct is embedded, as well as the political system in the recipient communities. Through this lens, China’s soft power capability may be very limited, and narratives deployed to recipient communities may easily damage its soft power capability, because they are interpreted as part of an overall offensive strategy. The narratives may contribute to increased securitization in the recipient communities. Australian mining companies, like those active in Greenland, are used to having to lobby governments both at home and overseas, but they are not used to dealing with partners that are listed on stock exchanges and at the

same time have an organizational structure that is officially integrated into the CCP. This challenges both non-Chinese companies and the Western states in which Chinese mining companies operate, whose responses may in turn cause Chinese companies and the Chinese state to become more cautious about engaging in Greenland. Depending on the reactions from the Western states, it may lead to increased politicization and eventually to actual securitization on the Chinese side.

We argue in this chapter that Chinese-Western encounters in the Greenlandic mineral sector has triggered a series of mutually reinforcing securitization policies, a process that is at least partly driven by (mis)perceptions of the others' security priorities.

Framing of a Chinese Mining Project in Greenland

From the Chinese side, two policy sectors with relatively independent bureaucracies and policy agendas are at play in Greenland: the foreign policy sector and the mineral/mining sector. The task of the foreign policy sector is to engage with foreign states while the mineral/mining sectors define goals for mining that state-owned and semi-state-owned mining companies need to fulfill. In the Kuannersuit project, these two sectors overlap, and therefore Chinese mining companies need to address both the policies defined by these two sectors as well as the expectations set out by international mining companies and investors and state authorities in Greenland and a number of other Western states.

Chinese Policies for the Arctic and the Rare Earth Sector

Since 2017, the Arctic has been formally incorporated into China's overarching foreign policy strategy, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI, formerly known as "One Belt, One Road," a closer translation of the unchanged Chinese term), as the "Polar Silk Road" (Xinhua 2017). The establishment of BRI as a national foreign policy strategy—and the incorporation of the Arctic into this strategy—means that Chinese companies seeking government support for their Arctic investments are now required to address policies defined by the foreign policy sector. That there is no clear definition of what constitutes a BRI project creates opportunities for Chinese companies in a wide range of industries to frame their overseas investments as serving BRI.

In China, the rare earth sector is part of the mineral resource sector. China has a long history of issuing plans for mineral resource development. This includes setting targets and quotas for production of selected minerals (Andersson 2020). From a state planning perspective, the goal of the mineral sector is to provide Chinese industry with the raw materials needed to ensure economic development, national security, and the normal functioning of society more broadly, but also to support a number of specific industrial policies. Different minerals are subject to different degrees of regulation in the Chinese system. The rare earth sector is regulated by a quota system consisting of quotas for both mining (extraction of ore) and processing (smelting and separation), to which only six large enterprises—the ‘six big’¹—have access.

Studying the Framing of the Kuannersuit Project

The Kuannersuit project is located in the Ilimaussaq intrusive complex in south Greenland. It is claimed to hold the second-largest deposit of rare earth oxides and the sixth-largest deposit of uranium in the world. Although classified as a large tonnage, low-grade deposit (Sørensen et al. 2018), the rare earth ratio makes Kuannersuit positioned for the high-end market segments (Andersson, Zeuthen, and Kalvig 2018). Kuannersuit is one of around 30 advanced-stage rare earth exploration projects outside of China (Kalvig and Machacek 2018). The license holder is the Australian firm Greenland Minerals A/S, owned by Greenland Minerals Limited (GML).² In 2016, Shenghe Resources Holding Ltd, a company based in Chengdu, China, took a 12.5 percent ownership of GML. Shenghe was founded by a research institute under China Geological Survey—the Chengdu Institute for the Comprehensive Utilization of Mineral Resources (CICUMR)—which is also Shenghe’s largest shareholder and whose director serves as the chairman of the company (Zeuthen 2017). As shall be explored below, the ambiguous status of Shenghe as neither fully private nor fully state-owned is of importance not only for its strategies when engaging overseas but also for how its investments are perceived in recipient countries. Shenghe, through cooperation with some of the ‘six big,’ has access to Chinese rare earth quotas, but possibly less so than the ‘six big’ themselves.

For the past few years, GML has been seeking regulatory approval for the Kuannersuit project from the Greenlandic authorities. The project is highly controversial in Greenland due to environmental concerns, par-

ticularly because uranium will be an inevitable by-product of the project. The question of how to deal with the uranium has been a source of tension between Denmark and Greenland, and it continues to be a divisive political issue in Greenland today (Bjørst 2017). GML reached a significant milestone in September 2020, when the project's environmental impact assessment was approved for public consultation (McGwin 2020). It faced a major setback in February 2021, however, when disagreement over the project and its environmental impact caused the governing coalition to collapse (Reuters 2021). A snap general election was implemented in April 2021, which saw the opposition party Inuit Ataqatigiit emerge victorious. Inuit Ataqatigiit ran on opposition to the Kuannersuit project and has promised to put a halt to the project (DW 2021). The project will need parliamentary approval in Greenland before a mining license can be issued, and in November 2021 the Greenlandic parliament voted to reimpose the ban on uranium mining (McGwin 2021). Hence the future of the project now looks uncertain.

In order to study investors' framing of the Kuannersuit project, we collected and analyzed materials from Shenghe and GML published between 2015 (one year before Shenghe invested in the project) and 2021, including annual reports and company presentations, all of which were publicly available on the internet. Annual reports are documents prepared by companies to inform investors and creditors about the important activities of the company during the past year, the financial situation of the company, and its future plans and goals. For publicly listed companies like Shenghe, such annual reports are mandatory and are required to be publicly available. For Chinese companies political status directly affects their creditworthiness, so fulfillment of policy goals can be part of the evaluation included in such annual reports (Shen, Firth, and Poon 2016). Presentations of the project delivered by GML or Shenghe in different contexts allowed us to study the framing of topics not discussed in annual reports (for example, while Shenghe's annual reports contain few details about the company's arguments for investing in specific projects, such questions have been addressed in company presentations) and how framing is tailored to different audiences. The analysis also draws on conversations with staff at Greenland Minerals A/S and researchers and managers connected to Shenghe and the Chinese mining sector more broadly carried out by the authors between 2017 and 2020. Finally, news articles in Chinese, English, and Danish containing interviews with the companies are also part of the analysis.

Framing the Kuannersuit Project in China

In Shenghe's annual reports, the company's overseas activities, including its investment in the Kuannersuit project, are presented as serving China's raw material strategy and industrial policy, as well as the company's own development needs. The reports highlight that the company is working with a resource (rare earths) that is not only "strategic" (战略性) and "indispensable" (不可或缺) for modern industry everywhere (Shenghe Resources 2016, 8; 2017, 10; 2019, 28) but are also linked to and supporting a number of major Chinese national development strategies. They include references to several industrial policies, such as "Made in China 2025" and China's plan for developing "strategic emerging industries." For example, Shenghe's 2015 annual report states that "Following the successive implementation of national strategies such as [the plan for] strategic emerging industries, 'Made in China 2025' and 'Internet Plus', the development of emerging industries such as smart manufacturing, high-end equipment, new energy vehicles, industrial robots, and 3D printing is accelerating. Rare earths are important basic materials supporting the development of these industries" (Shenghe Resources 2016, 17). Shenghe's annual reports for 2019 and 2020 both highlight that rare earths are officially classified as "strategic minerals" (战略性矿产) in the National Mineral Resources Plan (2016–2020), one of the key documents for the macro-planning of mineral resources in China. It also highlights that rare earth functional materials are part of the new material industry, one of nine "strategic emerging industries" in the Strategic Emerging Industry Key Products and Services Guidance Catalog (2016 Edition) (Shenghe Resources 2020a, 10; 2021, 10). The label 'strategic mineral' has a specific meaning in the Chinese context. It refers to minerals that have been identified as crucial for ensuring economic security, defense security, and the development of emerging high-tech industries (State Council 2016, 14). It is part of a system of labels and categories that are used to attach different degrees of priority or importance to different mineral raw materials (Andersson 2020). Assessments of mineral 'criticality' are common in most modern economies. In the EU, for example, 'critical raw materials' refers to raw materials that are considered to be of great economic importance for the European economy and subject to high supply risk (EC 2018). In China, however, not all 'strategic minerals' are deemed 'strategic' primarily because of high supply risk; rare earths are among a group of minerals labeled by Chinese experts as 'advanta-

geous strategic minerals’ (优势战略性矿产), minerals for which China holds significant market power and influence (Andersson 2020; Wang 2009; Chen and Wang 2007).

Both Shenghe and CICUMR frame their activities as serving China’s foreign policy objectives and strategies. For example, Shenghe’s annual reports for 2017 and 2018 list being a “practitioner” of BRI (一带一路的践行者) as part of the “company development strategy” (Shenghe Resources 2018, 32; 2019, 29), a formulation that is also listed on the company’s Chinese-language website (Shenghe Resources 2020b). China’s foreign policy strategies are referenced in other materials by Shenghe/CICUMR or by Chinese researchers who are connected to the institute. An article from CICUMR frames the institute’s overseas activities in Greenland and elsewhere as both a response to government strategy and as serving the company’s own development needs: “Actively ‘going out’ and conducting mineral resource cooperation overseas is not only an inevitable requirement in responding to the call for constructing ‘One Belt One Road,’ but also the only way to expand overseas markets, enhance core competitiveness, and continuously develop and grow into an international mining brand” (CICUMR 2019). This framing of Shenghe as carrying out BRI, which, as noted above, since 2017 also includes the Arctic, paraphrases policies originally spelled out by CCP general secretary Xi Jinping. Reinvoking these formulations may be a way of making Shenghe part of the foreign policy sector and ensure access to state credit institutions focused on China’s overseas engagement. At least, this was presented as a motivation when one of the authors interviewed leading researchers and part of the management of Shenghe and CICUMR in 2017. References to national foreign policy initiatives, however, could also simply be the result of Shenghe needing to show that it delivers on multiple policy agendas.

Shenghe’s 2020 annual report stresses how international projects help diversify supply channels of rare earth concentrates and secure rare earth resources for the company’s downstream businesses, including rare earth smelting and separation (Shenghe Resources 2021, 11). Investment in rare earth companies at home and abroad, including in GML, “reserves abundant rare earth resources for the company’s development” (Shenghe Resources 2021, 11). Shenghe has claimed that it invests in projects abroad because of regulations and restrictions at home. Due to strict extraction quotas in China, Shenghe is unable to domestically acquire the ore it needs for its downstream

smelting and processing business, which has been described as the “company’s main business” (Li 2017). Chinese mining and processing of rare earths overseas are not yet restricted by any quota system, and rare earth concentrates extracted abroad and processed in China may also be exempt from the quota system. A person from Shenghe’s secretary office told a domestic Chinese business journal that “There are designated plans for domestic mining and smelting, [but] there are no restrictions in this regard abroad. Therefore, the company seeks some overseas mining and smelting enterprises. This is beneficial for the development of the company” (Li 2017). Since Shenghe has limited access to national rare earth quotas, this appears to be a likely motivation for Shenghe to engage overseas (Zeuthen 2017), and this is also in line with how a researcher associated with CICUMR explained it to one of the authors in 2019. When asked in certain contexts about its motivations for investing overseas (especially when asked by critical non-Chinese researchers), the company may be aware that citing domestic quotas and restrictions as the main motivation will be regarded as less sensitive than claiming it is part of a far-reaching Chinese master strategy. To receive official support for its overseas engagement, however, the company has to frame its activities as important not only for the company’s own development, but also for national objectives and strategies.

Framing the Kuannersuit Project to International Investors

Most of the presentations of the Kuannersuit project on the global scene are made by GML, the mother company of the license holder, Greenland Minerals A/S. In annual reports and presentations to investors, GML portrays their Chinese partner as a fast-growing and internationally oriented company that brings to the project world-class processing technology and a global customer network (GML 2020b, 2019, 2018a, 2017). GML also highlights how Shenghe, which is described as a “public company” (i.e., a company open for investment on a stock exchange), has a “strong balance sheet” (GML 2020c) and that it “holds Chinese production quotas for the mining and separation/refining of rare earths” (GML 2017, 10). GML’s annual reports for 2016 and 2017 include some discussion of Chinese domestic policies and plans for the rare earth sector. The 2016 report notes that the rare earth industry is considered to be of “strategic significance” in China and that the government is tightening control of the industry to secure future supply,

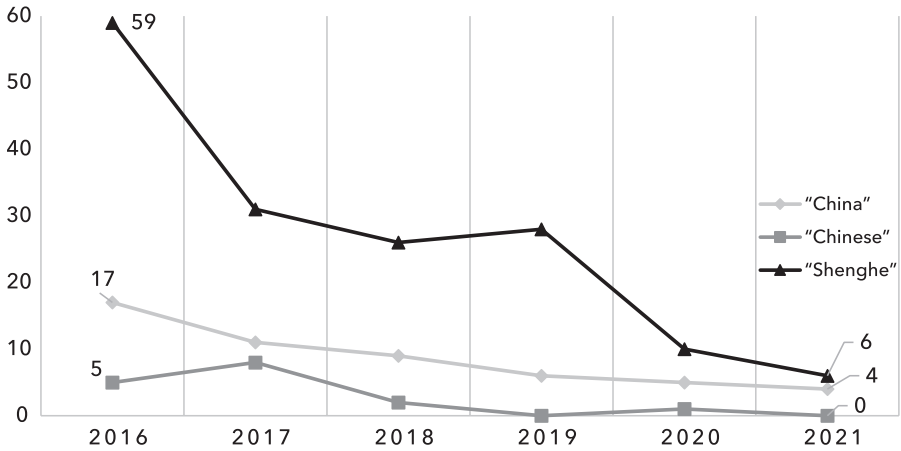


Fig. 6.1. References to 'China,' 'Chinese,' and 'Shenghe' have decreased over time in GML's annual reports.

including by limiting domestic production and encouraging companies to develop resources overseas (GML 2017, 12–13). The aim of these discussions seems to have been to demonstrate how developments and trends in the Chinese rare earth industry will have a positive impact on the Kuannersuit project and that the project has official support in China. The reports for 2018, 2019, and 2020 do not contain such discussions, which could simply be because there were few major Chinese policy changes to report to investors for those years. But it could also suggest an awareness on the part of GML that framing the project to international investors as enjoying political backing in China or as being part of a Chinese national resource strategy is becoming increasingly politically problematic (see below). As more attention is given to marketing, there is in the two latest reports and in recent presentations instead a stronger focus on how the project will work with and benefit European industry (GML 2021, 8–9; 2020b, 2, 13; 2020a, 2020d).

GML presents Shenghe's motivation for investing in Kuannersuit as follows: "For Shenghe, investment in Greenland Minerals is aimed to secure access to rare earth resources outside of China which are capable of supporting a range of rare earth businesses, facilitating long term growth opportunities" (GML 2020c). This appears to be in line with how Shenghe frames its motivations in Chinese-language materials.

In the social impact assessment for the Kuannersuit project, GML has presented different scenarios for processing. In its preferred sce-

nario, two stages of processing will be conducted in Greenland, while the most advanced and technically demanding processing will take place outside Greenland (GML 2018b, 99). Although final processing is expected to be carried out in China, which is where the required technology and expertise is located, GML and Shenghe also state that the long-term goal is for processing to take place in Europe. In one of few presentations directed to European investors, Shenghe states that it “hope[s] to work with European industry in areas of construction, processing and materials fabrication” (Hu 2019). In an interview with the Danish newspaper *Berlingske*, Shenghe chairman Hu Zesong stated that while processing of intermediate products may initially be carried out in China, a European processing strategy is the aim in the longer term (Winther 2020). Statements of future European processing lack specific details and are presented more as an ambition than an actual plan. Although processing in Europe may be a serious long-term consideration for GML (and Shenghe), such statements seem at least partially designed to address concerns that the Kuannersuit project will simply end up further reinforcing China’s dominant role in the supply chain. This is supported by what appears to be an effort by GML to highlight the role of non-Chinese investors in the project (Sermitsiaq 2020). Given intensifying efforts in the U.S. to establish supply chains independent from China, Chinese involvement in the Kuannersuit project is not only a selling point for GML but may also be viewed as politically problematic, especially considering China’s increasingly vocal threats of “weaponizing” rare earths. In May 2019, Xi Jinping made a high-profile visit to a rare earth magnet factory in Ganzhou, Eastern China (Johnson and Groll 2019). The visit and subsequent media coverage in China were widely interpreted as a warning to U.S. officials that China may leverage its control over rare earths in the ongoing U.S.-China trade conflict (Johnson and Groll 2019). Moreover, the worsening relations between China and Australia, described by some observers as having deteriorated beyond repair (Verrender 2020; Hu 2020), could potentially further add to the political complications going forward. How Chinese participation in a rare earth project can be framed as either a strength or a weakness becomes evident when comparing it with the other major rare earth exploration project in Greenland, the Killavaat Alannguat (Kringlerne) project, which has been promoted by its owner Tanbreez, another Australian company, as *not* requiring any Chinese involvement (Dempsey 2019).

Reactions in Recipient Countries and the Chinese Response

For a Chinese company like Shenghe, framing an overseas mining project as aligning with official government priorities may be helpful for gaining political credit, attracting investors, and obtaining financial support from Chinese state banks, particularly at a time when multiple companies or agencies are competing over increasingly limited government resources. In the recipient countries, however, references to controversial Chinese industrial policies such as “Made in China 2025” or foreign policy projects such as the BRI or the “Polar Silk Road,” may instead reinforce perceptions that Chinese companies—whether state-owned or nominally private—are operating abroad not solely based on a business logic but also to carry out the long-term strategies of the CCP. The very real (and growing) integration between the CCP and the organizational structure of Chinese companies, via overlapping leadership structures (as seen in Shenghe) or through the presence of party committees in companies (Blanchette 2020), contribute to these perceptions. As a result, investments of Chinese companies, as well as the activities of other Chinese actors, are often perceived and portrayed as advancing Chinese economic, political, and security interests in the Arctic. These images can then be invoked to securitize Chinese investments in the Arctic. At the 2019 Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland, U.S. secretary of state Mike Pompeo described China’s development of Arctic infrastructure as “part of a very familiar pattern” of “develop[ing] critical infrastructure using Chinese money, Chinese companies, and Chinese workers—in some cases, to establish a permanent Chinese security presence.” He also referred to a warning from the Pentagon that China “could use its civilian research presence in the Arctic to strengthen its military presence, including deployment of submarines to the region as a deterrent against nuclear attack” (U.S. DOS 2019b).

Chinese policymakers are aware of how the country’s industrial policies and foreign policy projects, as well as the various labels and concepts associated with these, are being perceived abroad, and they have made efforts to reshape the global narratives surrounding them. In 2015, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Commerce issued a joint statement in which they established that the Chinese name “One Belt One Road” (一带一路) was to be translated in external official documents as “Belt and Road Initiative.” Apart from dropping the word ‘one,’

which was deemed inappropriate for describing the global scope of the project, the statement insisted that the term “initiative” be used, not “strategy,” “agenda,” “project,” or “program” (Sina 2015), as those were thought to induce more suspicion. References to “Made in China 2025” in Chinese media and official documents have been toned down since 2018 following criticism from the U.S. and other Western countries (Zenglein and Holzmann 2018). This seems to have affected the framing strategies of Chinese companies, including Shenghe, who removed references to “Made in China 2025” in its annual reports from 2019 and onwards, after referring to it in all the previous reports from 2015 to 2018. Shenghe’s labeling of itself as a “practitioner of the BRI” is present in the Chinese version of the “message from the chairman” on its website, but it is missing from the English version of the same message, which otherwise appears to be almost identical. A possible explanation is that Shenghe does not wish to portray itself as an implementer of government strategy to foreign audiences. Moreover, in a conversation with a group of Chinese Arctic scholars in October 2019, one of the authors was told that Chinese official discourse may de-emphasize the term “Polar Silk Road” because of concerns that the poor relationship between Europe and Russia may prevent Scandinavian countries from endorsing it.³

What is happening in Greenland could be described as a process of mutually reinforcing securitization policies (figure 6.2) in which different Western and Chinese understandings of security and state interests, and the different needs for framing that this creates, have resulted in a gradual buildup of securitization measures in both the West and in China. Chinese framing of Arctic projects as important for objectives within the mineral/mining and foreign policy sectors, which, as noted above, is used to access specific forms of policymaking but does not amount to securitization in the Chinese context, is understood and portrayed in the West as evidence of a centrally coordinated Chinese approach to the region. The response has been particularly forceful in the U.S., where the securitization of Greenland as a strategic territory has coincided with the securitization of rare earths as a critical resource. Indeed, several instances of U.S. political intervention in Greenland in recent years—all involving China—suggest that the country has already re-entered the field of U.S. exceptional policymaking (see Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). In 2016, the U.S. is believed to have pressured Denmark to reject an offer by a Chinese company to acquire an abandoned Danish naval base in southwest Greenland (Matzen 2017). In 2018,

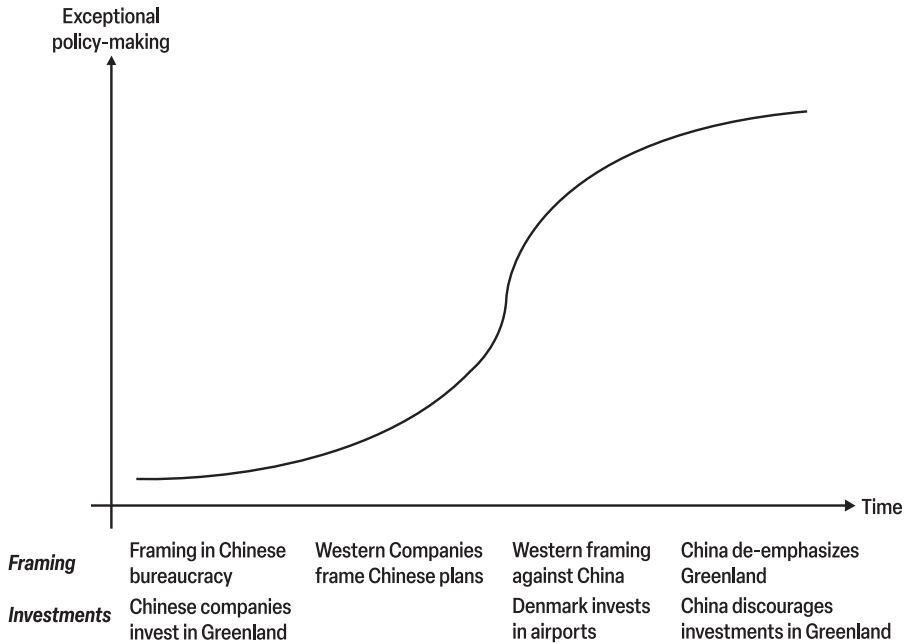


Fig. 6.2. The degree of exceptional policymaking increases as Chinese investments in Greenland become a sensitive issue for both the West and China. So far mutual interpretations of framings have contributed to intensifying securitization.

U.S. and Danish concerns over a bid by a large Chinese state-owned company to assist with the refurbishment of Greenlandic airports prompted the Danish government to finance half of the estimated cost (Simpson 2018. See Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.; Sejersen, chap. 9, this vol.). In September 2020, a year after the U.S. Department of State had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government of Greenland concerning cooperation on mineral resource governance (U.S. DOS 2019a), President Trump issued an executive order aimed at reducing reliance on “critical minerals” from “foreign adversaries.” The order highlighted U.S. dependency on China for multiple critical minerals as “particularly concerning” (Exec. Order No. 13953 2020). These U.S. and Danish responses then feed back into Chinese perceptions of the security risks and benefits of investing in Greenland.

In the end, these developments will likely lead to increased competition over who gets to invest in Greenland, or it may result in Chinese investors pulling out not as a result of competition, but as a result of the sensitivity that Danish and U.S. actors attach to Chinese

investments. A person who has been engaged in previous Chinese investment plans in Greenland told one of the authors that there are currently no further Chinese investments planned in Greenland, because these investments were regarded as sensitive by Denmark. This is an ironic observation since it is perhaps typically assumed that references to “political sensitivities” are made by Chinese actors to describe how certain forms of engagement with the West are regarded as problematic in the Chinese system.

Conclusion

Chinese mining plans in Greenland connect types of actors that are not usually cooperating. These actors belong to different realms of policy-making and are part of epistemic communities in China and the West that are almost completely isolated from each other. These relations connect different forms and needs for framing in ways that easily lead to misinterpretations. Chinese companies wanting to invest in Greenland need first to present what they are doing as part of a grand strategy to raise funding, and then they need to convince Western states that their real focus is on capital optimization. The reason for both forms of framing is the perception of what state security interests are. The supply of selected minerals to China is part of a political bargaining process where the survival and progress of the state is always presented as the ultimate goal. The discourses associated with this bargaining reflect this. Western observers may forget, however, that many other issues, such as poverty alleviation in rural China, food security, etc. are also framed as essential state interest that could threaten state stability if not dealt with. These initiatives are just less relevant to foreign states. Reframing mining projects as nonpolitical is not a trustworthy pattern to follow for the Chinese mining companies, so they often appear nonprofessional and untrustworthy in the eyes of Western observers. This may further contribute to the buildup of securitization measures from Western states against the Chinese interest in Greenland. In the end, Chinese foreign policy makers who are more closely connected to Western policymaking discourses encourage Chinese investors to refrain from investing in Greenland. In return, it appears, Western governments increasingly encourage Western companies to invest, and increasingly contribute with direct state support, dealing with Greenland in the way that they fear China will.

Theoretically, this chapter has sought to link the Chinese bureaucratic bargaining with securitization theory. The bureaucratic bargaining process elucidates some of the undemocratic political processes that constitute normal governance in China. These processes happen in a semipublic space, and thus in a very amputated form contribute to form the Western pictures of what Chinese mining companies do and how they address geographic areas. In the process of bureaucratic bargaining, the things said about Greenland and minerals from Greenland affect Western views on China as an actor in the Arctic in a way that in their eyes makes China's interests in Greenland a security issue. This adds sensitivity to the way in which Greenland and minerals from Greenland are dealt with from the Chinese side, thus making Chinese mining in Greenland more a matter of China's central state politics than they probably were at the outset. Chinese mining in Greenland becomes regarded as a security issue by all parties involved in the process. This process then "self-reinforces" in a process of escalation in which both the West and China regard the issue as sensitive and in potential need of intervention from increasingly higher levels of state.

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NOTES

1. The 'six big' are China Northern Rare Earth, China Southern Rare Earth, China Minmetals, Xiamen Tungsten, China Aluminum Corporation, and Guangdong Rare Earth. In December 2021, a new company, China Rare Earth Group, was established by merging the rare earth units of China Minmetals, China Aluminum Corporation, and China Southern Rare Earth, so the 'six big' became the 'four big.'

2. In November 2022, Greenland Minerals Ltd changed the company's name to Energy Transition Minerals Ltd. In this paper we will use the name Greenland Minerals Ltd (GML) because that name was still in use when our data collection concluded.

3. The idea of an Arctic 'silk road' was supposedly proposed by a Russian minister (Tillman, Yang Jian, and Nielsson 2018) and the "Polar Silk Road" has become a symbol of Sino-Russian cooperation in the Arctic.

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7 | Denmark's Security Perspectives on USA, China, and Russia in Greenland

How Great Power Threats Made Danish Politicians Talk about Independent Greenlandic Agency

Marc Jacobsen and Signe Lyngholm Lindbjerg

Since 2017, shifting Danish governments have listed the Arctic as one of their top foreign and security policy priorities. With this, Danish attention toward Greenland has equally increased, as its geographic location and their shared realm legitimize Denmark's status as an Arctic state. Consequently, Denmark has developed a foreign policy identity narrative more oriented toward the northernmost region, while seeking to sustain relations with the government in Nuuk. This development happened partly in response to the increased great power competition between the United States, Russia, and China, which has altered the regional security dynamics and amplified Greenland's geostrategic significance. While Russia is upgrading its military capabilities and bases, China seeks influence through strategic investments, research initiatives, and by portraying itself as a 'near-Arctic state' (see Andersson and Zeuthen, chap. 6, this vol.). In response, the two latest U.S. administrations have securitized these engagements and have thereby paved the way for enhanced American presence, which altogether caused a security dilemma and more frequent diplomatic exchanges (see Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). Whereas other chapters in the present anthology analyze the Chinese, Russian, American, and Greenlandic perspectives on this development, we¹ will here scrutinize the official Danish reactions in 2018 and 2019. We therefore ask: *How does Denmark relate to the United States, China, and Russia when discussing Greenland and the Arctic, and how have revised great power relations affected the Danish-Greenlandic relationship?*

Informed and inspired by securitization theory, we wish to move our research beyond a mere description of how great power movements in Greenland and the Arctic are interpreted and possibly alter the Danish foreign policy identity narrative by also looking at how the changing security milieu has led to new initiatives within this context. More specifically, we will analyze if any securitization attempts have been carried out with reference to events happening in and with relation to Greenland, and, if so, what concrete extraordinary means they have resulted in. As we will show, Russia and China were securitized in each their way, as their respective militarization in the Arctic and potential involvement in Greenland's airport project were described as constituting threats to 'regional peace' and Greenland's political security. Encouraged by the United States, Denmark carried out the extraordinary means in both instances by increasing its military budget and by giving an offer to the Government of Greenland that it could not refuse. Whereas these situations underlined the close transatlantic alliance, the enhanced U.S. interest in Greenland also led to a noticeable change in how the U.S. was characterized in the Danish political discourse. Thus our qualitative investigation into the words used in the debate reveals how the narrative became more negative in 2019 following Donald Trump's idea of buying Greenland and the associated intensified U.S. security perspective on the region. In some instances, the historically close relationship with the U.S. was even described in antagonistic terms, pointing to the American endeavors as a potential threat to the 'coherence of the Realm.' But due to the self-determination of Greenland and the power of the U.S., Denmark could not intervene in the same way as it did with the Chinese interest. Instead, more attention was given to strengthening bilateral relations with the self-government through greater acknowledgment of Greenland's international agency, a development that both changed the representation and accelerated a development toward more equal relations within the Realm. Before proceeding to the analysis, we will now first explain how we theoretically connect securitization and foreign policy identity narratives as well as presenting our empirical data archive.

Foreign Policy Identity Narratives and Securitization Theory

When analyzing how parliamentarians describe their attitudes toward the United States, China, and Russia in relation to Greenland, we are

interested in how the Danish foreign policy identity in this regard is shaped through a discursive process. This interest has its departure in a tradition of international political sociology analyzing foreign policy and international politics as driven by identity narratives of who ‘we’ are, a construction created in relation to several external ‘others’ whose differences delineate the discursive boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Gad 2010; Hansen 2006; Neumann 1996; Wæver 1994, 2002).² In this understanding, ‘identity’ is always a representation because belonging to a particular nation means to identify with the discursive representation of being, say, ‘Danish’ and presuming that others take part in the same imagined community (Anderson 1983). Although these narratives are contingent constructions, they have to be relatively consistent in order to appear meaningful and to gain acceptance from the relevant audience, and therefore their basic elements of what constitutes the national ‘self’ are solid while depictions of ‘others’ are more changeable (Wæver 2002, 37–40). The “degree of otherness” ranges from antagonistic enemies that pose an existential threat, to nonthreatening agonistic competitors who share fundamental values, to close allies and friends. These categories are central in our analysis, and we will therefore provide a more detailed explanation of how they differ from each other:

Philosophically speaking, for an identity to exist, it is necessary for it to have an *antagonistic* or radical ‘other’ (Connolly 1991, 64f; Derrida 1988, 52). Sociologically, politicians have created such enemy images throughout history by depicting external countries, political-, or ethnic groups as inherently evil, abnormal, irrational, primitive or dangerous, hence constructing them as being threatening (Hansen 2006, 34). In a securitization perspective, it is the (perceived) existential threats from such antagonistic ‘others’ that are used to legitimize certain security policies (Wæver 1995), while the promise of protection is what warrants the existence of the state and sustains control over its citizens (Campbell 1992, 12, 50; Wæver 2002, 26). Thus securitization (attempts) are essentially about the survival of a collective identity that is deemed threatened by an external ‘them’ or ‘that’ (Neumann 1998, 16–17), whose negation demarcates the collective ‘we’ as being something valuable in the world (Wæver 1994). In full-fledged cases of securitization, the purpose of designating existential threats is to justify extraordinary means that would normally not be tolerated but that are brought into use in order to reinstall security (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 21). To look for these instances of radical otherness is to look for

negative and critical expressions regarding how 'others' are characterized as being threatening, dangerous, worrisome, concerning, or challenging. Whereas the construction of enemies is crucial for a securitization act to be successful—and thereby are a central element in the creation of security policies—foreign policies are, however, formed within a more complex set of self/other constructions (Gad 2010; Hansen 2006; Neumann 1996; Rumelili 2007; Wæver 1994, 2002).

Agonistic (Mouffe 1993, 4) or less-than-radical (Hansen 2006) 'others' as categories nuance the identity narrative beyond the binary good/bad dichotomy to make room for friends, acquaintances, role models, partners, and allies (Hansen 2006, 37, 39). Within securitization theory, relations with these nonthreatening 'others' are dealt with through the means of normal politics, adhering to a more moderate foreign policy construction in which the purpose for policymakers is to gain acceptance of particular foreign policy moves while contributing to the (re)construction of what defines their nation (Wæver 2002, 25). To look for utterances regarding less-than-radical 'others' is to identify discourses of differences which do not constitute threatening dimensions. In the most negative end of the less-than-radical spectrum, 'others' may be deemed hostile but still manageable, while in the positive end 'others' are described in neutral or positive terms such as neighbor, partnership, cooperation, agreement, ally, or friend. The characterization of a specific 'other' may change throughout time from antagonistic to agonistic, which would then be the result of a successful *desecuritization* act in which the relevant audience accepted a new portrayal of the 'other' as no longer constituting an existential threat. One example of this is the end of the Cold War, when the U.S. and USSR/Russia developed a more agonistic relationship after decades of being each other's worst enemy. More recently, the relationship has, however, developed in the opposite direction—from agonistic toward antagonistic—in which the two countries yet again securitize the 'other' as constituting a threat, though not to the same extent as during the Cold War. As our analysis will show, there are also examples of oscillations describing the same 'other' as being agonistic and antagonistic depending on the topic of discussion.

When analyzing how parliamentarians describe 'others' and how these narratives shape their self-image of Denmark, we are equally attentive to who is included and excluded in the discursive representation of the collective 'we.' This is especially noteworthy in the context of the Arctic, where Denmark tells complex stories about itself in

the effort to stabilize the narratives about degrees of otherness. The Danish identity narrative is here sometimes more comprehensive through encompassing the selves of Greenland and the Faroe Islands in a collective ‘we’ known as the Realm or the Kingdom of Denmark. This special postcolonial construction where the two former colonies have some self-determination and strive toward more autonomy—while Copenhagen still holds the final say in security and defense matters—demands special attention because the representation of this distinctive relationship is essential to Denmark’s legitimacy in Arctic affairs. This relationship will be scrutinized by the end of the two analyses to show how the Danish interpretation of the great powers’ engagements in Greenland alters the foreign policy identity narrative in this context.

The empirical data primarily consists of the parliamentary debates³ regarding ‘Arctic cooperation,’ which take their departure in a written review by the minister of foreign affairs while they are also, naturally, affected by current affairs (Folketinget 2011). Methodologically, this analytical starting point corresponds well with the theoretical approach because politicians in such debates are often (put) in situations where they (have to) mobilize the most possible rhetorical power, while frequently drawing on basic narratives about who ‘we’ are in the aim to gain legitimization and enforce specific policies (Wæver 2002, 41–42). The debates on ‘Arctic cooperation’ have taken place annually since 2011 when Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands published their first Arctic strategy following the end of their Arctic Council chairmanship. Subsequently, the debates developed in both scope and detail: The first couple of years, the security aspects were mainly about environmental security, food security, and safety⁴ at sea, while the ‘others’ referred to were usually the EU and the Nordic countries. As the Arctic later gained increasingly more attention—accelerated by a foreign policy review portraying Denmark as an ‘Arctic great power’ (Taksøe-Jensen 2016)—a more diversified security outlook emerged with more attention to geostrategic interests and the dynamics within the Realm, as well as the connection between the two perspectives (Jacobsen 2021). Throughout the years, Danish parliamentarians have persistently characterized Denmark’s primary interests in the Arctic and Greenland as those of ‘sustainable development,’ ‘peace,’ and ‘low-tension,’ of which the latter is often emphasized by referring to the Ilulissat Declaration as a Danish initiative that desecuritized the issue of sovereign rights in the Arctic Ocean (cf. Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017).

The analysis will particularly focus on the debates of 2018 and 2019 as we—by following the Danish media coverage and in accordance with several chapters in the present anthology—have observed an intensified great power attention toward Greenland and the Arctic during those years, hence piquing our curiosity about how this may have affected the related Danish political discourse. With these empirical and theoretical considerations, we will now turn to the analysis of how the great power engagements in Greenland and the Arctic were interpreted by the Danish parliamentarians in 2018 and 2019 and how they possibly affected Denmark's foreign policy identity narrative in this regard.

2018: Russia Threatening 'Arctic Peace,' Denmark Accepting U.S. Securitization of China

In the 2018 parliamentary debate about 'Arctic cooperation,' the main security concerns regarding the great powers' engagement in Greenland pertained to China and Russia. Starting with Russia, the government's official approach, as expressed by then minister of foreign affairs Anders Samuelsen, was to maintain a two-track strategy where Denmark was tough on sanctions following the Crimea⁵ crisis while seeking dialogue and pragmatic cooperation in the Arctic and thereby preserving it as a so-called 'low-tension area' (Folketinget 2018, 38). This kind of 'Arctic exceptionalism' (Young 1992, 13–14), where regional cooperation is maintained despite geopolitical tensions outside the region (Exner-Pirot and Murray 2017) reflected an approach similar to several of the other Arctic states (cf. Heininen et al. 2020). Russia's military upgrade in the Arctic, however, was an object of grave concern for several parliamentarians who highlighted the re-establishment of an old Soviet base on Franz Josef Land just 1000 km east of the Thule Air Base. By emphasizing this increased militarization, as well as pointing to the risk of potential spillover from conflicts outside the region, they challenged the narrative of Arctic exceptionalism, as exemplified in this speech:

[I]n the past couple of years, with an increasingly aggressive foreign policy from for instance Putin's side, we need to look into a possible intensification of the level of conflict in the Arctic with strong concern. [. . . W]e need to pay attention to increased Rus-

sian military activity in the Arctic region. This might raise the question of whether we should increase our military presence in the Arctic, of course without contributing to an escalation of the militarization of the region. We have to send a clear signal that we stand together in the Realm—that we stand together in the Arctic where we will of course not let ourselves be pressured. (Folketinget 2018, 6–7)⁶

With terms such as “increasingly aggressive,” “intensification of conflict,” and “violations,” a clear characterization of Russia as an antagonistic ‘other’ was created, contrasting the self-image of Denmark as a prominent peace advocate. This narrative was largely shared by a majority of the other political parties who pointed to Russia’s enhanced military presence in the Arctic as the main threat to the referent object ‘regional peace,’ while a few uttered how it also had associated security concerns for Greenland due to its geographical vicinity (Folketinget 2018, 2, 7, 9, 24, 28, 29). Whereas no politicians contradicted this securitization of Russia in the Arctic, none of them explicitly shared the allusion that Danish armament would be an adequate response. Hence the securitization of Russia did not immediately lead to any extraordinary means from Denmark, but was instead articulated as a regional problem that the U.S., Britain, and Norway were some of the first to meet through military means. In contrast, several parliamentarians instead warned against contributing to the intensified security dilemma and emphasized Denmark’s endeavor to return to low tension in the region (Folketinget 2018, 2, 5, 8, 12, 18, 19, 25, 29, 34, 38), as expressed by one parliamentarian characterizing the Arctic armament as “very very disturbing. This applies both to what we see from the Russian side and what we see in Norway. Here we should try to pressure [them] with a friendly and loving smile so we yet again create low tension instead of armament—at least that we do not participate in the armament because it would be very unfortunate for the Arctic if that is the way forward” (Folketinget 2018, 29).⁷

China was often mentioned along with Russia when the speakers portrayed their main security concerns in Greenland and the Arctic. This concern was not directly about military threats but more about how China’s engagement in the region through strategic investments, research initiatives, and diplomatic moves could cause tensions that eventually could pose a threat to the referent object ‘regional peace.’ This situation is well exemplified in this articulation:

[T]here is actually reason to be worried about the tendency toward growing tensions in the Arctic these years. [. . .] In January, China published their first Arctic strategy, in which it is established that the Arctic, according to the Chinese understanding, cannot be viewed as a defined region, and that it is not up to the Arctic states to decide the rules and norms of the region. China also has a role to play, they say, when it comes to research, sailing, resource extraction, fisheries, laying of cables and pipelines, etc. That is—compared to how it has been in the past—something brand new and much more offensive from the Chinese side. (Folketinget 2018, 2)⁸

The implicit meaning here was that the Arctic *is* a defined region, it *is* in the hands of the Arctic states to decide the rules, and that China has no right to try to redefine the region in order to normatively sustain its attempt to get a foothold. The remarks “according to them” and “according to the Chinese understanding” indicated that he did not share the Chinese perspective, and when describing their approach as “offensive,” the speaker simultaneously implied that their way of engaging conflicted with and perhaps even threatened the way the Arctic is governed. While this narrative was in line with the Danish Defence Intelligence Service’s 2018 risk assessment (2018, 37–38), the other parliamentarians oscillated between characterizing China’s Arctic engagements in antagonistic and agonistic⁹ terms, as illustrated in another speech expressing some understanding for China’s Arctic endeavors while using distancing language to characterize their course of action:

The fact that the Chinese are interested in the Arctic is of course not a secret and it is fully understandable. Every time China and Japan are going to sell their goods in Europe, they could save 40 percent of the transportation [distance] by sailing North instead of South, so that provides an obvious interest in what is happening in the area. The fact that the Chinese then are flexing their muscles and spreading their money all over the world is of course neither a secret, and that is possibly one of the reasons they are now actively saying that they feel they are a natural part of the Arctic. I do not share that view at all. (Folketinget 2018, 4)¹⁰

This speech illustrates well the Janus-faced role China plays as one of Denmark’s main ‘others’ in the Arctic, where its interests were both

deemed legitimate and as posing a threat to the regional governance regime. When the debate moved from a regional perspective to focusing on Greenland, however, the characterization of China tilted more toward the antagonistic side in accordance with the American securitization of potential Chinese engagement on the island. In 2018, a concrete example unfolded when the state-owned China Communications Construction Company participated in the tender regarding airport expansions in Nuuk and Ilulissat (see Sejersen, chap. 9, this vol.).¹¹ Subsequently, the Danish government offered an agreement to the Government of Greenland that rendered superfluous Chinese participation and gave Denmark the right to decide which construction companies to involve and which to exclude in the process (Aagaard 2019).¹² China was not mentioned a single time in the agreement but, as later documented, the U.S. secretary of defense, James Mattis, had encouraged intervention in a meeting with his Danish counterpart, Claus Hjort Frederiksen, to whom he expressed concern that the situation could risk leading to Chinese military presence in Greenland (cf. Hinshaw and Page 2019; Cammarata and Lipmann 2020). With this, the Danish government both acted as the relevant audience accepting and the actor implementing extraordinary means made pertinent by the American securitization of China. A few days after the Danish intervention, the U.S. Department of Defense followed through by publishing a letter of intent via social media expressing interest in financing dual-use airports in Greenland, a line of events well summarized in the following articulation:

[I]n continuation of Denmark's work with avoiding Chinese financing of new airports [we] experienced that the U.S. Department of Defense—perhaps a little surprisingly—entered the field and announced that they are ready to analyze and possibly invest in Greenlandic airports. I say all this because it illustrates what happens in the Arctic area these days, namely that the big actors take steps that risk increasing the tension. (Folketinget 2018, 2)¹³

Throughout the debate, the mentioning of the U.S. was merely connected to the Greenlandic airport project (Folketinget 2018, 4, 9, 13, 16, 25, 36) and, in passing, to the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement (Folketinget 2018, 32), which were both described in neutral terms. The most detailed characterization of the U.S.'s role as an 'other' in the context of Greenland was delivered with these words:

Greenland is after all positioned where Greenland is positioned, and Greenland is a close neighbor to both the U.S. and Canada, and since the U.S. is our ally, it is obvious that they are a part of it. They solve a great number of tasks for us, including surveillance and other things, and I therefore think that the Americans in many ways play a natural part and have also in many ways been a shield for the Greenlandic population for many years. [. . .] I think the Americans have to be preferred over some of the others that have been mentioned. (Folketinget 2018, 4–5)¹⁴

Here, the U.S. was described in friendly terms through words with positive connotations such as “ally” and “neighbor,” which are typically associated with having a close cooperation. Words like “natural” and “obvious” further indicated that this was a solid relationship that should not be questioned and was not likely to change. Characterizing the Americans as a “shield” signified that the U.S. was considered a strong, important, and close ‘other’ with the power to ensure existential protection of the referent object “the Greenlandic population” against outside threats. On this ground, the speaker suggested that the U.S. should be preferred over “some of the others that have been mentioned,” hereby using distancing language consequently presenting those ‘others’ as less relevant and less legitimate compared to the U.S. As this statement was articulated in connection with the debate centered around the airport project, it clearly alluded to China, thereby indirectly endorsing the Danish government’s acceptance of the American securitization.

In sum, Denmark’s relations with the three great powers in the context of Greenland and the Arctic in 2018 were as follows: Russia was characterized in the most antagonistic terms due to their enhanced militarization, which was primarily seen as a threat to the referent object ‘regional peace,’ and secondly as causing associated security concerns for Greenland due to the short distance between the bases on Franz Josef Land and in Thule. The description of China oscillated between being ‘agonistic’ and ‘antagonistic’ as they were generally welcomed in the region, whereas the American securitization of Chinese attempts to engage in Greenland was accepted and acted upon by the Danish government. Lastly, the characterization of the U.S. was kept neutral while the few more nuanced depictions emphasized its role as a close ally. These relations to the three main ‘others’ are shown on the right-hand side of figure 7.1. Now we will turn to the left-hand side of

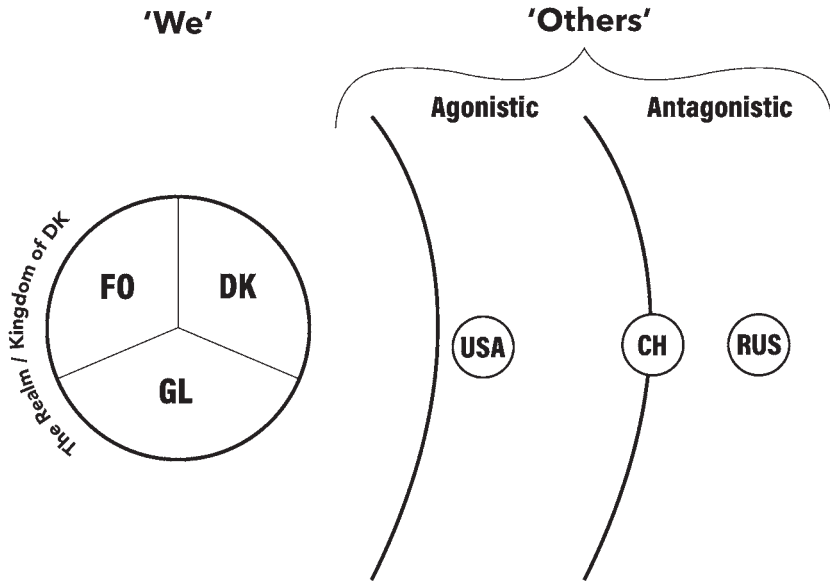


Fig. 7.1. Denmark's main 'others' in the 2018 parliamentary debate were Russia (RUS), which was largely described in antagonistic terms, USA, which was characterized as a close ally, and China (CH) which oscillated between the categories 'antagonistic' and 'agonistic.' Denmark (DK), Greenland (GL), and the Faroe Islands (FO) were often collectively represented as a unit under the titles 'the Realm' or 'the Kingdom of Denmark.'

the figure, indicating how the parliamentarians spoke about the collective 'we' in the same debate.

'We' Anno 2018: 'Kingdom' and 'Realm' as Popular Collective Signifiers

What is remarkable in its difference from other similar foreign policy debates in Denmark is that when the Arctic is on the agenda, it is not sufficient for Denmark to be just Denmark. Instead, the 'we' also encompasses Greenland and the Faroe Islands in the collective signifier known as 'the Realm' or 'the Kingdom of Denmark,' as this construction is what legitimizes Denmark's central role in Arctic politics (Jacobsen 2016).¹⁵ This discursive representation is illustrated in figure 7.1 as an entity consisting of three slices, which—depending on the topic discussed and the relevant audience present—were highlighted to different degrees. One example of leaving out the details of

the 'we' in the representation of a solid and special entity was exemplified in a speech:

There is no doubt that [. . .] the development in the Arctic is something that has contributed to making the Kingdom of Denmark more than a small-state. [. . .] It is a massive responsibility which rests on the only nation, the only Kingdom, which is a member of both NATO, the EU, and Arctic Five. No other country in the entire world is. Maybe we should take it a bit more seriously. (Folketinget 2018, 13)¹⁶

This quote is interesting for at least three reasons: First, the argument that the Kingdom of Denmark is more¹⁷ than a small state is uncommon in Danish political discourse and can be seen as an echo of a foreign policy review characterizing the Kingdom of Denmark as an Arctic great power (cf. Taksøe-Jensen 2016). Second, the representation of the kingdom as *one* nation is remarkable as Danes, Greenlanders, and Faroese speak different languages and have different cultural customs that are usually not grouped together, though there are, indeed, close ties of family and friendship between the three nations. Third, the memberships of NATO, the EU, and Arctic Five only hold true for Denmark proper, as both the Faroe Islands and Greenland are not members of the EU, while only Greenland makes Denmark part of the group of the Arctic Five that signed the Ilulissat Declaration. The statement's eclecticism and lack of nuances served the purpose of boosting the representation of the 'we' as someone special and as a unit. This identity narrative of being unique in the Arctic was seconded by several other parliamentarians, continuously referring to 'the Kingdom' and 'the Realm' as special and responsible in contrast to the irresponsible 'others,' as exemplified in the following statement: "The great powers of the world want to enter the Arctic and take advantage of the new opportunities for making money, but not all of them have the necessary understanding for the nature and peoples of the Arctic. Thus, it is very important that the Kingdom has a strong voice in the Arctic cooperation" (Folketinget 2018, 2).¹⁸

Whereas the use of 'kingdom' and 'realm' are common within this political discourse, some parliamentarians also directed their attention inwards, as exemplified in this articulation: "When the Kingdom speaks with one voice and cooperate strongly regarding the Arctic, it provides an opportunity for us to benefit from the many opportunities which the

area holds” (Folketinget 2018, 19).¹⁹ Later in the same speech, the same speaker further nuanced what he meant by “one voice,” as he said, “It should not be taken for granted that the Kingdom has such a strong voice as we do today. It requires that we continue to focus on the area, and that we continue to have a strong internal cooperation with our fellow members of the Realm, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands” (Folketinget 2018, 19). As here revealed, the collective ‘we’ consists of not just one ‘self,’ but multiple ‘selves,’ as the first ‘we’ referred back to the Kingdom, which encompasses all three actors, while the second ‘we’ only referred to Denmark, as he called for more cooperation with Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Like many other statements in the debate, this one also constructed a strong and powerful ‘we,’ but at the same time called for more “internal cooperation,” thereby drawing some attention toward the diversity within what was first presented as a unity.

When the Greenlandic and Faroese members of the Danish parliament participated in the same debate, the diversity of the Kingdom was even more outspoken, as they challenged the narrative of the collective ‘we’ through clear articulations of ‘us’ and ‘them’ *within* the collective signifier, hence elucidating their differences and respective agency. This was well-illustrated in the following statement:

Very often Greenland feels overlooked and is not invited to the table when topics that have to do with Greenland are discussed—when Denmark is talking with the U.S. about possible airport building or armament in the Arctic areas, where Greenland is mentioned but is not at the table. After all, Greenland makes up a significant part of Denmark’s foreign policy. What needs to be done in order to ensure that this equality can become stronger? (Folketinget 2018, 33)²⁰

In this way, Greenlandic parliamentarians expressed discontent with not being sufficiently involved in foreign policy questions pertaining to Greenland, characterizing the Danish-Greenlandic relationship as unequal while in the process of separating. The ‘we’ in Danish political discourse regarding Greenland and the Arctic anno 2018 proved to be porous when Faroese and Greenlandic parliamentarians had their say²¹ in the same debate. Rather than being constantly incorporated in the same ‘we’ as illustrated in figure 7.1, their respective agency and mutual differences were more outspoken, which more clearly formed three separate positions, as illustrated on the left of figure 7.2 below.

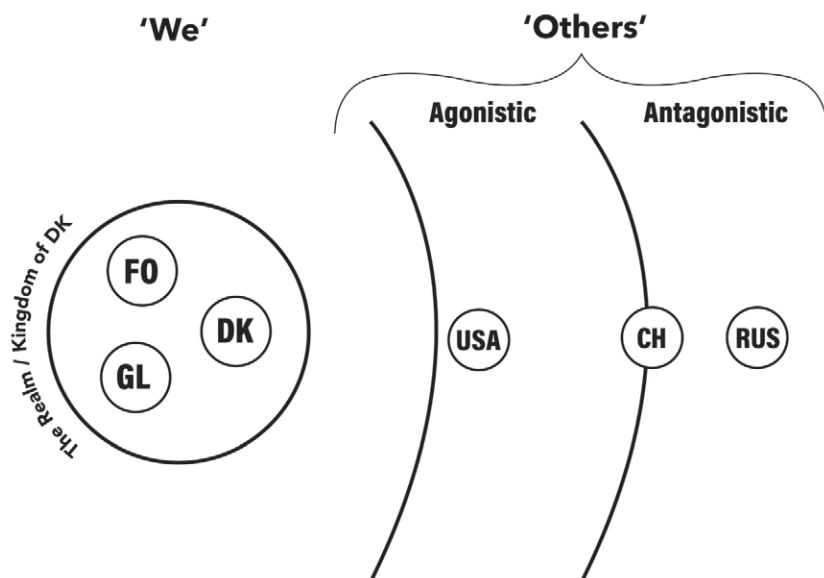


Fig. 7.2. Greenlandic and Faroese members of the Danish parliament challenged the discursive construction of 'the Kingdom' and 'the Realm' as the main 'we,' hence causing porosity in the attempt to represent the three as a unit and instead emphasizing the respective agency of Denmark (DK), the Faroe Islands (FO), and Greenland (GL).

As we shall see in the next part of the analysis, the development toward a rhetorically more equal relationship between Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands only became a more prominent object of debate from all sides of the parliament. This happened when the external geostrategic interest in Greenland became more outspoken, causing more gloomy Danish perspectives on the regional security development as well as its effects on the sustainability of the Realm.

2019: Oscillating Characterizations of the U.S. and Status Quo for China and Russia

The 2019 parliamentary debate on 'Arctic cooperation' marked a noticeable shift in the discourse regarding how Denmark relates to the great powers in Greenland and the Arctic. The main reason behind this

development was the intensified great power competition as revealed in a series of events that hardened the rhetorical front between East and West, increased militarization of the Arctic, and deteriorated regional cooperation. This development challenged the past widespread belief in 'Arctic exceptionalism' as clearly reflected in the written review by the new minister of foreign affairs, Jeppe Kofod. He described the new situation with the following words:

Disagreements and conflicts originating in other parts of the world can also be expressed in the Arctic as the region can no longer be separated from the great power competition that also applies in other regions. [. . .] Altogether, the Kingdom's and the other Arctic states' objective of low tension has been challenged, and it is necessary for the Kingdom to address the geopolitical development and the challenges it poses. (Folketinget 2019, 1)

The most profound change from the previous year was the intensified attention toward the renewed American engagements in the Arctic, with Donald Trump's caprice of buying Greenland a few months earlier as a frequent reference point. In relation, the American securitization of China and Russia in the Arctic as well as the enhanced U.S. military presence in the Arctic altogether affected the debate in the Danish parliament. This change was reflected in the number of times 'USA' or 'America(n)' were mentioned, as they more than tripled from the previous year while the respective numbers for China and Russia remained more or less at the same level, as illustrated in table 7.1.

Whereas the quantitative overview displays the intensified Danish focus on the U.S., the qualitative investigation into the words used in the debate reveals how the narrative regarding the U.S. became more negative than the previous year. Though still characterized as a close ally, the use of antagonistic and agonistic terms to describe this relationship emerged, resulting in an oscillation between categorizations as both an ally, a competitor, and in some perspectives even a (potential) enemy. This oscillation was visible in the following statement: "Of course we are allied with USA, but we are at the same time a nation which, along with the other Nordic nations, has fought for non-armament and peaceful relations, and that gives us a special responsibility in that part of the world" (Folketinget 2019, 9).²² Contrasting the U.S. with the strong explication of the peaceful self-understanding implied that they were not equally peaceful and opposed nonarma-

TABLE 7.1. Mentioning of Denmark's Main Others

Mentioning of main 'others'	2018	2019
USA / America(n) ^a	22	77
China / Chinese	35	38
Russia / Russian	37	31

^a 'American' covers the two Danish words 'amerikaner' and 'amerikansk' of which the first is used to describe an American man or woman while the latter more broadly defines the nationality of things as well as persons. The same goes for 'Chinese' and 'Russian,' which in Danish are respectively divided into 'kineser' and 'kinesisk,' and 'russer' and 'russisk.'

ment in the region. At the same time, the use of the word “but” diluted the meaning of “of course,” suggesting that the alliance with the U.S. was not as manifest and unconditional as first stated. The general expression, however, was that the historically strong alliance across the Atlantic should be preserved, but that one ought to be aware of the potential consequences of obeying an American wish for enhanced military presence, as argued in another statement:

I believe that we will see the Americans pressure us in the future—it may be in terms of military presence or influence regarding the new airstrips. [. . .] We must acknowledge that the Realm will get squeezed if the Americans insist. So one may say that it is about defending the areas of the Realm in a way which deters the Russians from being aggressive, but not to an extent where they become so frightened that they may do something because they feel pressured. (Folketinget 2019, 15–16)²³

The choice of the word “pressure” connotated an unequal relationship where the more powerful part to some degree forces the weaker part to do something it would otherwise not have done. As such it was a critical utterance that simultaneously portrayed the U.S. as an ally and a competitor, as it encouraged Denmark to act against its own preference of not contributing to a military armament race. At the same time, the quote also illustrated the clear antagonistic characterization of Russia as a threat to the referent object ‘the sovereignty of the Realm,’ in case Moscow interpreted the expected military upgrade as being too offensive.

A few months after the parliamentary debate, Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen announced—prior to a meeting with Donald Trump—that Denmark would allocate approximately US\$235 million to Danish

defense in the Arctic and North Atlantic (Mouritzen 2019), which was realized in February 2021. With this, the securitization of Russia led to the extraordinary means of boosting Denmark's military budget, which many parliamentarians had opposed. But in response to the American pressure for increased military spending and the U.S.'s even more antagonistic interpretation of Russian actions in the Arctic, a relatively broad parliamentarian consensus was reached. Thus, despite the more critical utterances regarding U.S. actions in Greenland and the Arctic, Denmark acted on the American demand just like it had done the previous year regarding the involvement in the financing of Greenlandic airports. However, the increased military budget was mainly spent on enhancing the surveillance capacity with drones, satellites, and radars, which could be interpreted as an attempt to not provoke Russia too much while at the same time trying to preserve some of the identity narrative about promoting peace and low tension in the region.

Whereas the threat from Russia was seen as a military matter, several parliamentarians similarly expressed concern regarding a potential threat (Folketinget 2019, 2, 5, 13, 15, 16, 32) from the U.S., which, however, should instead be understood in political terms as a threat to the referent object 'coherence of the Realm.' Another statement demonstrated this perspective:

The Americans have shown interest in opening a consulate in Nuuk and I think that is something we can all be happy about. Because they say they wish to do it in order to contribute to language teaching and generally exciting cultural exchange. And that of course sounds really nice. But when it is coming from a country that starts and ends its sentences with 'America first,' I believe you need to be more than naïve, if you cannot see that this is about massaging the Greenlandic and the Danish public for the purpose of at a later time being able to kick the door open which they have already put a foot in. (Folketinget 2019, 13)²⁴

Addressing the U.S. diplomatic²⁵ moves and use of soft power accompanying its wish to enhance military presence in Greenland and the Arctic, the statement illustrated a clear skepticism toward the American intentions and called for more attention to the possible consequences it may have. Several other politicians expressed similar suspicion, but two,²⁶ from each end of the political spectrum, were the ones most strongly and most persistently calling for attention to what

they articulated as threats to Greenland as well as the Realm. They made similar utterances during the subsequent years when the U.S. followed through by providing a so-called aid package of US\$12 million to Greenland in 2020 (cf. Krog 2020),²⁷ and when the Biden administration in the summer of 2021 continued the same approach through investing US\$10 million in direct cooperation with the Government of Greenland (cf. Svendsen 2021).²⁸ Whereas these two politicians from each side of the parliament shared the same mistrust of the U.S., the official position of the Danish government was only welcoming toward the close ally as here exemplified in a statement by the minister of foreign affairs:

I expect [. . .] a much higher degree of American interest in Greenland, also with the opening of a consulate for the first time since the 1950s. And the cooperation we will have in the Kingdom and especially between Greenland and the U.S. contains a lot of opportunities, so I am looking forward to developing that. (Folketinget 2019, 42)

This narrative clearly differed from the other narratives in the debate by using words like “cooperation,” “opportunities,” and “looking forward to,” which created a much more positive and friendly attitude toward the U.S., hence indirectly refusing the attempt to securitize the American engagement as a threat to the political security of Greenland and the Realm. Similarly, the minister also signaled a diplomatic attitude toward China in the aim to maintain and balance relations with both great powers at the same time, as he stated: “We have a positive view of China’s active engagement in the region. Both Greenland and Denmark can gain something good from the cooperation with China in the Arctic, both in relation to the Arctic Council and to the potential commercial activities, but of course we do not want to be naïve” (Folketinget 2019, 39). This statement illustrated well the general characterization of China in the 2019 parliamentary debate, which like the previous year oscillated between being agonistic and antagonistic, with the positive approach linked to economic opportunities and the negative one connected to China’s claim of being a near-Arctic state and the perceived threats associated with potentially enhanced Chinese presence in Greenland (Folketinget 2019, 16, 20).

As in the 2018 debate, Russia’s military upgrades in the Arctic were in 2019 interpreted as antagonistic by both the government and the

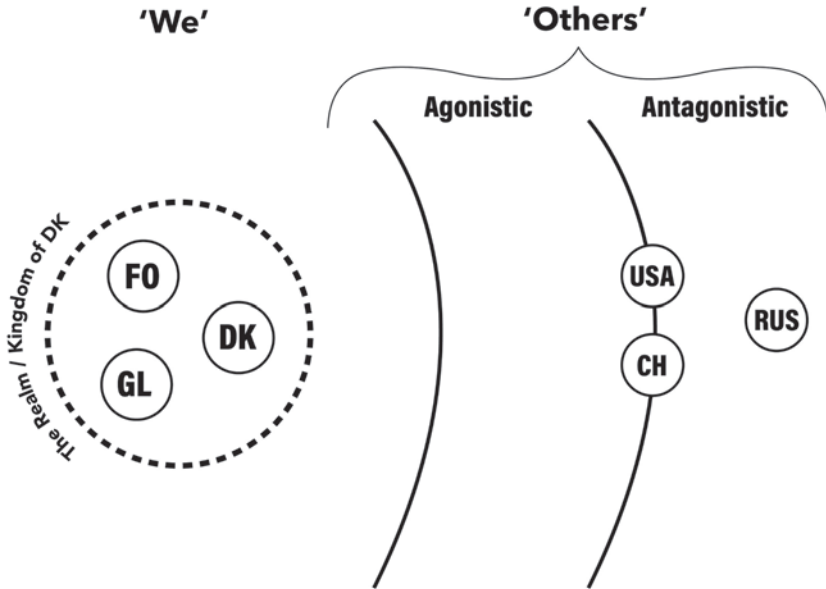


Fig. 7.3. In 2019, the parliamentarians' portrayal of Russia (RUS) and China (CH) remained the same, while the characterization of the USA oscillated between being characterized as an ally, a competitor, or an enemy. As a consequence of the enhanced American interest, Denmark (DK), Greenland (GL), and the Faroe Islands (FO) were more often articulated as three separate countries, nations, or even states, hence highlighting their respective agency and strive for more mutual equality.

majority of parliamentarians, who contrasted the Russian behavior with the Danish aim of peace and the “goal of low tension,” hence sustaining this identity narrative. Unlike the previous debate, though, the securitization of Russia led to the extraordinary means of increasing Denmark’s military budget. As shown, this happened in response to the U.S.’s more antagonistic view on China and Russia, while the accompanying American interest in Greenland and the Arctic led to new Danish initiatives and to a change in the political discourse regarding the U.S., which oscillated between the U.S. being described as an ally, a competitor, and a potential enemy. These changes in Denmark’s relations with the great powers in the context of Greenland and the Arctic are illustrated on the right of figure 7.3. We will now analyze how these portrayals of the three big ‘others’ affected the ‘we’-narrative, as shown on the left of the same figure.

'We' Anno 2019: Enhanced Acknowledgment of Greenland's Foreign Policy Agency

The extraordinarily intensified attention from the U.S. in 2019 caused an unprecedented consensus among the parliamentarians that Trump's idea had only enhanced the Danish-Greenlandic relationship, which was described in more emotional terms with emphasis on what they believe connects the two—and the Faroe Islands—within the Realm, as exemplified in this statement:

There are signs in sun and moon that the world, also besides the U.S. and China, is showing interest in Greenland, and this means that we need to stay together as a realm—two countries woven together by history and the thousands of families that make up the Danish-Greenlandic community. [. . .] So there are bonds that tie us together. That is why it is important that Denmark shows in every way possible that we care about the Realm, and that we support Greenlandic interests, because there should never be contradictions between Greenlandic and Danish interests. Internally we can disagree on many things, but externally we are a unity, like a family that may have big fights but still sticks together when it really matters. (Folketinget 2019, 5–6)²⁹

Here, the construction of closeness was strong, with the uses of “bond,” “tied together,” “community,” “unity,” “family,” “stick together,” and “internally,” used in a clear dichotomous us/them narrative where attention from external actors like the U.S. and China make the internal ‘us’ stand together despite ‘our’ internal disagreements. As in the 2018 debate, the collective ‘we’ referred to in this and other similar statements encompassed Denmark, Greenland, and, to some extent, the Faroe Islands, but unlike the previous year, their relationship was described in more detail, with emphasis on their respective agency and a prevalent wish of aiming toward more equality. This was expressed through the words chosen describing the ‘we’ as a family,³⁰ while other parliamentarians characterized Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands as “three separate nations” that would all benefit from continuously joining forces in the Arctic.³¹ One politician went one step further in his characterization of a more equal relationship when articulating that “It is my impression that both in the Faroese and in the

Greenlandic societies there is a growing [. . .] feeling—and perhaps it is almost the same in Denmark—that we are three small states with common interests [and] that it will strengthen us if we stand together by these” (Folketinget 2019, 36).³²

A noticeable difference from the 2018 debate was the more prevalent articulation of both Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands instead of automatically referring to the Realm or the Kingdom of Denmark as the collective ‘we.’ This can be seen as part of a move toward a more equal relationship, as they were more often put in the same category and recognized as three entities rather than one unit, as indicated with the dotted line in figure 7.3. This development can be seen as a result of the attempts to securitize the intensified American engagement in Greenland as a potential threat to the referent object ‘the coherence of the Realm.’ Though not giving way for extraordinary means that would intervene in the American endeavor, it instead intensified the Danish focus on how to preserve a continuously close relationship with Greenland through enhanced acknowledgment. Hence instead of directly confronting the perceived threat, the main effort was to make the referent object more resilient. This development was different from what securitization theory would normally expect, as the extraordinary means in such a situation would usually involve demanding obedience from the subordinated polity within the Realm. Due to the power of the U.S. and the self-determination of Greenland, however, the extraordinary means was instead to further acknowledge distinct agency of the Government of Greenland in the effort to extend the expiration date of the Realm.

As part of the relevant audience, the Greenlandic and Faroese members of the Danish parliament recognized this change toward being included on a more equal footing (Folketinget 2019, 24, 33, 46), as exemplified in the following speech:

President Trump recently gave Greenland much needed attention [. . . F]or many, it was an abrupt awakening [reminding us] that we shall not take our realm for granted. More than ever before there is a need for fighting for a more equal partnership, not by dwelling on the past, but by looking forward. [. . .] The government handled Trump’s offer to buy Greenland really well. Together with Greenland, they stood side by side. Naalakkersuisut declared Greenland ‘open for business but not for sale.’ I do not think we have heard the last words from this episode. We

need to handle soft power and an increased charm offensive from the American side together. At the same time, Greenland needs room for maneuver and the possibility of doing foreign policy on areas of responsibilities taken over as stated in the Act on Self-Government. (Folketinget 2019, 23–24)³³

With this statement, the speaker articulated the discursive construction of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ where Danes and Greenlanders stand together in opposition to the increased American engagement, which was described in more antagonistic terms in comparison with the 2018 debate. At the same time, she addressed a long-standing Greenlandic wish of gaining more foreign policy autonomy and urged the Danish government to work toward more equality in the relationship with Greenland. Denmark’s minister of foreign affairs acknowledged this wish by stating in the debate that “I think it is really important to ensure equality and sharing of information regarding the Kingdom’s foreign and security policy. And that is something I want to emphasize” (Folketinget 2019, 40).

Outside the parliamentary debate, the emphasis on more equal relations within the Realm was manifested in a series of foreign policy events where Greenland and the Faroe Islands played a more active role than they used to. Three events especially bear witness to this development. First, the Greenlandic and Faroese ministers of foreign affairs participated in the official meetings with U.S. secretary of state Mike Pompeo in 2019 and 2020, as well as in the 2021 meeting with his successor, Antony Blinken, gaining the opportunity to express their own respective perspectives as well as appearing more autonomous in international politics. Second, the three governments agreed in June 2021 that in the Arctic Council, Greenland would be the first to speak and sign any documents, followed by the Faroe Islands, and lastly Denmark. Third, in October 2021, they signed a terms of reference for the creation of a special contact committee for foreign, security, and defense politics with special relevance for Greenland and the Faroe Islands. In the words of Premier Múte Bourup Egede of Greenland, this:

testifies to our common interests in strengthening cooperation across our countries. Not least to deal with the diversity of the countries’ own interests and the countries’ common interests. At the same time it will strengthen Greenland’s active participation

in international relations in the globalized world, one may say that it will create more ‘elbow room,’ of which I have high expectations. (Naalakkersuisut.gl 2021)

Although Trump’s idea was received as a neocolonial provocation, in its wake Greenland and to some degree the Faroe Islands have benefited from the intensified international attention which since then materialized into concrete agreements. In Denmark, the external interests simultaneously brought renewed attention to the Realm as its coherence and continuous development is alpha and omega for Denmark’s status as an ‘Arctic state.’ At the end of the day, Denmark would be roughly as Arctic as China or the United Kingdom without the close relationship to Greenland. Addressing this underlying reason why Denmark has a significant say in Arctic affairs was previously seldomly articulated but has recently become a more frequent point of observation across the political spectrum, well assisted by the amplified great power attention toward Greenland and the Arctic.

Conclusion

By combining securitization theory and the tradition in international political sociology for studying identity politics, we have investigated the narratives of ‘we’ and ‘others’ in the 2018–2019 Danish political discourse regarding Greenland and how specific articulations pointing to referent objects as being existentially threatened gave way for extraordinary means. In this way, we have scrutinized how the great power movements in Greenland and the Arctic affected the Danish foreign policy identity and the related relationship with the Government of Greenland in Nuuk as well as displaying some of the consequences of these discursive changes. Through paying special attention to identity narratives and securitization language in the qualitative analysis, it has been possible to identify how the amplified American interest caused a more reserved if not skeptical attitude among parliamentarians toward the U.S., while the government simultaneously met American demands of countering Chinese and Russian influence. By supplementing the analyses of how the external ‘others’ were characterized with an internal investigation into how the ‘we’ was represented, it has further been possible to show how perceived threats altered the formal representation and influence within the Realm. In this way, it has been possible to

combine an analysis of horizontal relations (between states) with an analysis of vertical relations (within a state) to show how the first affect the latter in the special postcolonial constellation currently known as the Realm.

More concretely, we have shown how Russia most constantly was characterized in antagonistic terms because of its military upgrade, which was articulated as a threat to, primarily, the referent object 'Arctic peace' and, secondly, as an associated threat to Greenland due to the nearby location of the Thule Air Base. At the same time, the narrative regarding China oscillated between an agonistic description largely pertaining to China's engagement in regional governance and a more antagonistic characterization mainly connected to Chinese endeavors in Greenland, where the potential involvement in the comprehensive airport project was articulated as a threat to Greenland's political security. In both cases, the government of Denmark carried out extraordinary means after having accepted American securitizations: First, regarding the airport project, the Danish government did so by intervening in the process through entering a deal with the Government of Greenland that granted Denmark the right to decide which construction companies to include and which to exclude in the project. Second, regarding the Russian armament, Denmark effectuated the extraordinary means of boosting its military budget with US\$235 million despite a widespread wish among the parliamentarians of not wanting to take part in the militarization, which was characterized as being against the Danish self-description of being a prominent regional peace advocate. In an attempt to cope with this incongruity, the decision was framed as a desecuritization move with the purpose of protecting regional peace and stability. Following this logic, Denmark armed to protect 'low tension.' It was done so, however, mainly through improving the surveillance capacity, which can be interpreted as an attempt to balance the American demand with the consideration of not provoking Russia too much.

Whereas these two situations underlined the importance and power relations of the transatlantic alliance, the enhanced U.S. interest in Greenland also led to a noticeable change in how the U.S. was characterized in the Danish political discourse after Trump's purchase idea and the associated American initiatives in Greenland and the Arctic. Although the U.S. was continuously described as a close ally, a more varied narrative emerged with articulations oscillating between portraying the U.S. as a friend, a competitor, or a (potential) enemy. While

the positive articulations described the U.S. as a strong and important ally that protects the Greenland population against outside threats, the negative articulations pointed to the enhanced engagement as a threat to both the political security of Greenland and to the referent object 'the coherence of the Realm.' Because of Greenland's high degree of self-determination and the relative power of the U.S., it was not an option to directly confront the perceived threat by intervening to hinder this development. Instead, the Danish government and parliamentarians across the political spectrum directed their attention toward enhancing their relationship with Greenland through acknowledging Greenland's international agency and promoting a more equal representation of the Realm. This was counter to what securitization theory would normally expect of extraordinary means, which, in this perspective, usually involves dissent and concentration of authority in the hands of the sovereign. Rather than demanding obedience from the subordinated entity, this particular case has been a surprising example of the contrary movement leading to further acknowledgment of Greenland's distinct agency in the attempt to make the referent object 'the coherence of the Realm' more resilient.

FUNDING

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NOTES

1. The research for this chapter builds upon Marc Jacobsen's (2019a, 2019b) PhD dissertation and Signe Lyngholm Lindbjerg's (2020) MA thesis by investigating more recent parliamentary debates and using securitization theory.

2. As part of this tradition, Greenland's national identity politics have previously been scrutinized by Gad (2005, 2009, 2017a, 2017b), while subsequent scholarly works have further analyzed how these identity narratives are used in the establishment of Greenland's international relations (Gad et al. 2018; Jacobsen 2014, 2015; Jacobsen and Gad 2018; Olsvig and Gad 2021). Other related analyses have shown how Danish politicians portray their relationship to Greenland (Gad 2008; Jacobsen 2019b) and how these identity narratives altogether change the Danish-Greenlandic relationship (Gad 2014; Jacobsen 2019c, 2020).

3. Videos and transcripts of these debates are available via the Danish parliament's web page. The duration/transcription length of each respective debate is: (2018), 2 hours, 10 minutes / 39 pages; (2019), 2 hours, 26 minutes / 47 pages. In the

references, we refer to the page number of the articulations. All speeches are in Danish and have been translated into English by us.

4. In Danish there is only one word for security and safety. That is 'sikkerhed.' A similar lack of linguistic nuancing has been observed by Leif Christian Jensen in the Norwegian High North securitizing discourse, where some issues were debated in security terms though in English they would rather be considered a matter of safety (Jensen 2013, 92).

5. See Rahbek-Clemmensen (2015) for a more detailed analysis of the Realm's Arctic perspectives in the light of the Crimea crisis.

6. Erling Bonnesen from the Liberal Party.

7. Rasmus Nordqvist from the Alternative.

8. Nick Hækkerup from the Social Democratic Party.

9. The more agonistic characterizations were often in connection with highlighting of the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean, which was signed the same year by China, Japan, South Korea, the EU, Canada, Iceland, Norway, the U.S., and the Kingdom of Denmark on the latter's initiative. It was explicitly mentioned in the debate by politicians from Liberal Alliance, the Conservative People's Party, and the Liberal Party.

10. Henrik Brodersen from the Danish People's Party.

11. This was not part of the minister of foreign affairs' annual report on 'Arctic cooperation,' but it was, however, a prominent reference point throughout the parliamentary debate, where politicians from the Social-Liberal Party, Liberal Alliance, the Social Democratic Party, Javnaðarflokkurin, Tjóðveldi, and Nunatta Qitornai highlighted it as important and shared the understanding that the Danish involvement was encouraged by the U.S. (Folketinget 2018, 2, 9, 13, 16, 25, 27).

12. In a similar episode from 2016, then prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen refused to sell an abandoned military base in Kangilinngit (Grønnedal) to a Chinese company, though it was for sale. Instead, a Danish need for the abandoned base was suddenly formulated and the base was brought back into use by the Danish military (Brøndum 2016; Breum 2016; Jacobsen 2019d).

13. Nick Hækkerup from the Social Democratic Party.

14. Henrik Brodersen from the Danish People's Party.

15. Whereas 'the Realm' is the most common reference in domestic debates, 'the Kingdom of Denmark' is most often used externally. This distinction has previously been an object of debate since 'the Kingdom of Denmark' highlights Denmark's authority, downplays political complexities, and ignores the international agency of Greenland and the Faroe Islands (Jacobsen 2019b, 2021). We use 'the Realm' as the English version of the Danish word 'Rigsfællesskabet' because it is the official translation used in the Act on Greenland Self-Government as well as in the speeches by the current prime minister of Denmark. Previous prime ministers, however, have instead either used the term 'Unity of the Realm' or 'the Danish Realm,' which put more emphasis on Denmark's authority and ignores the diversity of the Realm. The direct English translation of 'Rigsfællesskabet' is literally 'Community of the Realm,' which according to Gad is "a constitutional oxymoron connoting both imperial hierarchy and communal bonds" (2020, 43). The Faroese term for the same construction is 'ríkisfelagsskapur,' which connotes solidarity and companionship as in the Danish term, while the Greenlandic version 'naalagaaffeqatigiin-

neq' means 'something you do with the one who decides' (Lennert 2006, 1; cf. Gad 2020, 30).

16. Martin Lidegaard from the Social-Liberal Party.

17. For a theorization of ways for small states seeking to be more than small states see Carvalho and Neumann (2016).

18. Henrik Brodersen from the Danish People's Party.

19. Naser Khader from the Conservative People's Party.

20. Aleqa Hammond from Nunatta Qitornai. Aaja Chemnitz Larsen from Inuit Ataqatigiit expressed similar discontent (Folketinget 2018, 33).

21. Parliamentarians from Javnaðarflokkurin and Tjóðveldi also articulated discontent with what they characterized as an unequal relationship between Denmark on the one hand and Greenland and the Faroe Islands on the other hand (Folketinget 2018, 26, 27).

22. Martin Lidegaard from the Social-Liberal Party.

23. Karsten Hønge from the Socialist People's Party.

24. Karsten Hønge from the Socialist People's Party.

25. The U.S. consulate opened in Nuuk in June 2020.

26. Karsten Hønge from the Socialist People's Party and Søren Espersen from the Danish People's Party.

27. In 2020, Hønge stated: "They have clearly crossed the line. The prime minister must take initiative to get clear lines in the relationship with USA. A line must be drawn in the inland ice" (cf. Krog 2020), while Espersen said, "Normally, when you offer that kind of economic boost it is to developing countries. Thus, this kind of offer is an insult to Greenland and to the Realm" (cf. Krog 2020).

28. In 2021, Hønge stated, "USA's attitude toward the Realm is provocative. It is quite clear that the U.S. wants to divide the Realm" (Svendsen 2021), while Espersen said "The U.S. wants to buy popularity and fawn upon the Greenlanders. It is unacceptable that the U.S. is trying to gain influence" (Svendsen 2021).

29. Bent Bøgsted from the Danish People's Party.

30. Similar family metaphors have previously been used by Danish politicians to infantilize Greenland (Gad 2017a, 36–44).

31. Thomas Danielsen from the Liberal Party and Karsten Hønge from the Socialist People's Party (Folketinget 2019, 3, 13)

32. Martin Lidegaard from the Social-Liberal Party.

33. Aaja Chemnitz Larsen from Inuit Ataqatigiit.

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8 | Greenland's Desecuritization of Security and Defense

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In recent years, Greenland has become an arena for increased geopolitical and economic competition between the United States and China. On the one hand, China has tried to strategically invest in mineral extraction and satellite systems (Brady 2017; Andersson and Zeuthen, chap. 6, this vol.) while the U.S., on the other hand, has reopened its diplomatic representation in Nuuk and signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on mineral exploration (Naalakkersuisut 2019; Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). These external interests are part of a regional development in which the Arctic security landscape is experiencing a rapid transformation from a path of diplomatic cooperation to intensified economic and military competition. Russia also takes active part in this competition through (re)building military capabilities in the region (Devyatkin 2018; Olesen et al. 2020). In response to Russian rearmament and to China's attempts to sustain its polar ambitions as a "near-Arctic state" (SCIO 2018), the U.S. has sharpened its rhetoric as illustrated in the portrayal of the region as being in an "era of strategic competition" (DoD 2019), hence leaving some observers with fears that the situation could lead to a "new Cold War" in the Arctic (Cohen, Szaszdi and Dolbow 2008; Jacobsen and Herrmann 2017).

Within this overall image, one particular development with possible implications for the entire Arctic regional security balance stands out: The case of potential Greenlandic independence (Sacks et al. 2021). Greenland is currently part of the Kingdom of Denmark and, through this, automatically a close ally with the U.S. and member of NATO,

because Copenhagen (still) holds the ultimate say on foreign, security, and defense matters. As Greenland actively strives toward becoming a sovereign nation-state, it raises the question of what will happen to the defense obligations of this vast territory on the North American continent in the case of full economic and political independence from Denmark? It is a question¹ that suddenly appeared less theoretical when Donald Trump articulated the idea of purchasing the big island due to its geopolitical importance and natural resources (Salama et al. 2019). In Greenland, this event brought light to how parts of the political independence movement are mainly focused on the *economic* preconditions for independence. For instance, former premier Aleqa Hammond stated shortly after that the U.S. should instead “begin by paying for the presence at Pituffik airbase” (Hansen 2019),² while Greenlandic parliamentarian and later minister of foreign affairs Pele Broberg said that the American offer should be taken seriously as a way of crowding out the current Danish block-grant (Veirum 2019).

This chapter examines how the Government of Greenland and Greenland’s political parties envision the future of Greenland’s security framework. These visions are largely characterized by desecuritization in the sense of downplaying security and defense aspects of Greenlandic independence and instead highlighting economic aspects and civilian solutions. The tendency to downplay security as a mode of governance is underscored by the fact that defense and security issues have traditionally not played central parts in Greenlandic politics. As Jacobsen and Gad note, “When Greenlandic politicians make (rare) demands for military investments in Greenland, arguments mostly relate to services provided for civil purposes (fisheries control, search and rescue, oil spill response, etc.)” (Jacobsen and Gad 2018, 16). Additionally, the authors observe “the near-total absence of Russia in Greenlandic foreign policy narratives” (Jacobsen and Gad 2018, 16),³ while the idea that war and conflict is something imposed on Greenland from the outside rather than being an indigenous phenomenon. Both the focus on the civilian aspects of defense policy and the dismissal of adversarial thinking emphasize the prevalence of desecuritization.

The chapter begins with an introduction of the theoretical concepts—desecuritization and sovereignty games—guiding our investigation and the legal-constitutional background upon which Greenland seeks to desecuritize policy areas in order to gain more control over other areas that may help securing the path toward independence from Denmark. The subsequent analysis is divided into three parts:

The first part unpacks the Government of Greenland's complex constitutional-legal relationship with Denmark and how international relations have been desecuritized in bureaucratic practice. The second part analyzes how desecuritization was applied by the Government of Greenland in order to tone down the security implications of recent controversies over Chinese and U.S. engagements. The third part identifies the narratives underlying the desecuritization moves made in parliamentary debates and coalition agreements between 2017 and 2021: One narrative where independence is framed solely as economic and fiscal self-sustainability, and two narratives connecting a past as "peaceful Inuit" with calls for establishing Greenland as a future demilitarized zone. The concluding section sums up the tactics employed to forward the desecuritization strategy.

Sovereignty Games and Desecuritization

In Greenland's national identity discourse, 'sovereignty' plays a fundamental but dual role: At present, sovereignty is ultimately, and to much discontent, in the hands of Denmark, whereas full and rightful Westphalian sovereignty awaits the future state of Greenland (Gad 2017, 17). In this way, questions of sovereignty are the very essence of the continuous postcolonial negotiations taking place between Nuuk and Copenhagen, and issues of security and defense are central to these negotiations, since authority in these matters are traditionally understood as part of the core of sovereign statehood. Sovereignty, in this regard, is not just a spatial and juridical concept, but also one that defines the identity and room for maneuver of states as well as non-states (cf. Aalberts 2004, 2010, 2012; Adler-Nissen and Gammeltoft-Hansen 2008; Adler-Nissen and Gad 2013, 2014; Fierke and Nicholson 2001; Jacobsen 2020). Approaching these negotiations over sovereignty as a language game allows a grasp of the various strategic moves made by not only states proper but also constitutional hybrids like the Government of Greenland (Adler-Nissen and Gad 2014, 16; cf. Aalberts 2012, 94; Adler-Nissen and Gammeltoft-Hansen 2008, 7), particularly as they engage in foreign policy (Loukacheva 2007, 5, 109; Petersen 2006). Following this, we understand sovereignty as a claim to authority, while sovereignty games are all those practices, rules, players, and moves that unfold to uphold such a claim, particularly when faced with opposing claims.

In the game analogy, the players taking part share the same understanding of what the rules are. The constitutive rule is the binary sovereignty understanding usually referred to as Westphalian sovereignty, separating states from nonstates. Regulative rules evolve throughout the game (cf. Aalberts 2012, 92–95), potentially altering criteria for who can and cannot be part of international agreements while amending the roles of the players (Adler-Nissen and Gad 2014, 18). As default, adding the urgency of the security label to an issue tilts the playing field for such games in favor of the current holder of sovereignty. Conversely, taking the security-ness out of an issue allows a greater room for creative practices beyond sovereign control.

Desecuritization is the opposite dynamic of securitization as the process constitutes “a limitation to the use of the security speech act” (Wæver 1995, 9) by which an issue is discursively brought back to the realm of normal politics where democratic rules of transparency and accountability prevail. The common view is thus that desecuritization is more democratically desirable because it revokes the extraordinary means instigated by a past successful securitization act, hence serving the purpose of taking “security out of security, [and] move it back to normal politics” (Roe 2004, 285). Desecuritization processes are found in different shapes that can follow objectivist, constructivist, or deconstructivist routes (Huysmans 1995, 65–67). The most obvious one is the case when a securitization attempt is ignored by the relevant audience, which instead insists on discussing the issue as a matter of normal politics or nonpolitics, the latter signifying that something is not an issue of public policy (cf. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 23–24). If a successful securitization act has already occurred, it is, however, necessary to actively rearticulate the issue as no longer being securitized (Huysmans 1995, 65; Roe 2004, 284). This can happen through two different processes in which the political community either “downgrades or ceases to treat something as an existential threat to the valued referent object” (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 489).

The history of nuclear weapons is a good example of the first desecuritization process where a threat issue is being actively downgraded. During the Cold War, nuclear arms and their inherent ‘mutual assured destruction’ was deemed an existential threat by both U.S. and Soviet leaders. Accordingly, nuclear armament was the epitome of national security of both superpowers. After the end of the Cold War, however, nuclear weapons ceased to be considered an existential threat by these political communities and were downgraded to the level of other soci-

etal risks and handled with the governance tools of 'normal politics.' The latter process, where a political community stops treating an issue as an existential threat to the valued referent object, can be found in the 2008 Ilulissat Declaration, with its lack of references to Arctic militarization (Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017). The declaration was signed by the five Arctic coastal states and emphasized the Arctic as a low-tension region where disputes are resolved peacefully, building on "mutual trust and transparency" rather than "a new comprehensive international legal regime" (Ilulissat Declaration 2008). Even though militarization and great power rivalry were never directly mentioned in the text, the clear aim of the declaration was to avoid militarization and conflict in the Arctic, which then was the center of hardened regional interstate rhetoric in the wake of Russia's flag planting on the geographic North Pole seabed nine months prior.

In the aim to analyze how desecuritization is employed as part of Greenlandic sovereignty games with Denmark, it is important to also have analytical sensibility to what is *not* mentioned directly in the text but merely alluded to. One example is the text of the Ilulissat Declaration that never mentions militarization, while another is the above-mentioned statement by Aleqa Hammond in which she framed the U.S.-Greenlandic relation in economic terms, thereby downplaying the crucial issue of security policy (alliances, bases, etc.). The dissection of both articulations and particularly allusions is assisted by narratological categories (Greimas 1971; Rasmussen and Merckelsen 2017), asking who are, in securitizing moves, cast as a threatening foe and who as helper assisting in averting threats to valued referent objects, whether present or to be realized in the future. The analysis is based on close readings of three types of texts:⁴ Greenlandic coalition agreements, parliamentary debates, and politicians' statements to media regarding Greenland's future defense policy. The analytical period covers 2017–2021, during which two particular public and parliamentary defense debates took place in 2017 and 2021, while coalition agreements were made in 2018 and 2021.

Greenland's Desecuritization Strategy in Sovereignty Games with Denmark

The constitutional-legal arrangement between Denmark and Greenland is complex and can be hard to grasp for outsiders. The Kingdom of Den-

mark, a constitutional monarchy, consists of Denmark, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland, forming what is known as the Realm. The Faroe Islands and Greenland are autonomous territories with home rule (attained in 1948 and 1979, respectively) by which these two (micro) nations have had authority over their domestic policy. Yet Denmark, represented by the government in Copenhagen, ultimately controls foreign, security, and defense policy for the entire Realm. Specifically, the basic division of labor between Denmark and Greenland is described in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Act on Greenland Self-Government. The latter in effect amends the former by providing the self-government with some foreign policy room for maneuver including the competencies to “on behalf of the Realm, negotiate and conclude agreements under international law with foreign states and international organisations, including administrative agreements which exclusively concern Greenland and entirely relate to fields of responsibility taken over” (Government of Denmark 2009, §12).

But because it is not crystal clear what agreements *exclusively* concern Greenland and *entirely* relate to fields of responsibility taken over, the definition is open to different interpretations that may give rise to attempts to move the boundary of what the Government of Greenland can do internationally without involving Denmark (Jacobsen 2020; Olsvig and Gad 2021). That Denmark still claims the final say in foreign policy questions has on several occasions spurred controversy, because there is no clear dividing line between what constitutes foreign policy and what constitutes economic or trade policy with international implications, issues which, according to the Self-Government Act, would be under Greenlandic authority. Accordingly, the two countries have had quite different perceptions and interpretations of when economic, trade, and investment issues entail foreign policy or security aspects. This has been painfully evident in the uranium dispute from 2009 to 2016 (Kristensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen 2019; Rasmussen and Merckelsen 2017; Vestergaard and Thomasen 2015) and in the recent quarrel over airport financing from 2017 to 2019 (Bislev et al. 2018; See Sejersen, chap. 9, this vol.). Furthermore, Greenland has challenged the framework by striving for more direct bureaucratic and political control over the foreign policy field (Jacobsen 2015, 2019; Jacobsen, Knudsen, and Rosing 2019; Kleist 2019; Olsvig and Gad 2021).

This constitutional-legal framework has, thus, resulted in a sovereignty game (Adler-Nissen and Gammeltoft-Hansen 2008; Gad 2017; Jacobsen 2020) between Greenland and Denmark where the ultimate

aim for Greenland is independence. As Gad and colleagues note on this perception: “Denmark stands in the way of Greenlandic independence” (Gad et al. 2018, 3). Using securitization theory to understand this game makes it clear that independence is the valued referent object for Greenland, and that Denmark to some extent can be seen as a threat to this goal. This basic securitizing move is illustrated in figure 8.1.

Moreover, we can analyze the recent controversies over what constitutes foreign, security, and defense policy under the terms of the constitutional arrangement as a manifestation of this underlying game. The practices that possibly change the regulative rules of this sovereignty game unfold in political and diplomatic discourse, altering step-by-step Greenland's authority as a player in international politics. In this game, securitization and desecuritization moves are used as strategies for independence. And applying the securitization analytical framework elucidates the narratives through which the Government of Greenland frames independence. Basically, Denmark—every now and then—moves to securitize a distinct Greenlandic step toward economic or foreign policy independence. This is illustrated in figure 8.2.

Seen in isolation, Greenland would clearly apprehend such a Danish move as a threat to the valued referent object of future independence, rendering countersecuritization an obvious choice. Seen in relation to the overall logic of the sovereignty game with Denmark, however, the Greenlandic strategy is to *desecuritize* pertinent policy areas in order to either gain more control or to keep the status quo. This paradoxical manifestation of the underlying securitizations is illustrated in figure 8.3. In effect, Greenland has pushed for more foreign political autonomy in order to secure its economic interests regarding fishery and foreign investments by delineating these areas from security policy (see Kleist 2019; Bianco 2019).

The analytical sections substantiate this argument that foreign and defense policy issues are being purposefully desecuritized by how the strategy is advanced in practices at three levels: The first section introduces Nuuk's continuous bureaucratic and diplomatic ambitions to conduct foreign policy. The second section analyzes how desecuritization was promoted by the Government of Greenland in the recent controversy over airport funding. Finally, the third section explicates the narratives informing the Greenlandic moves, first explaining the preference for economic framings and then tracing the role played by the character of the ‘peaceful Inuit’ from a defense against militarization in general to a recent offense against Danish military presence.

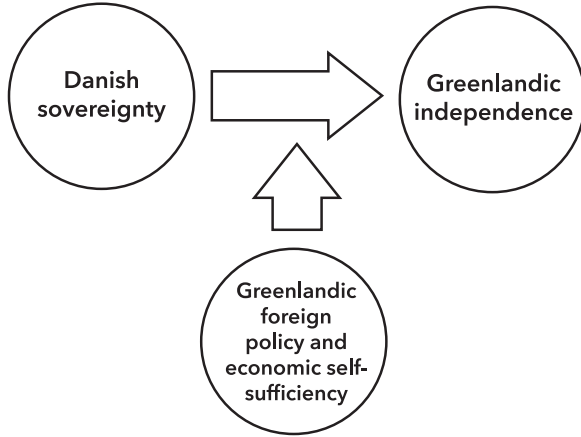


Fig. 8.1. Greenlandic securitization of Denmark as a threat to Greenlandic independence. Means to avert the threat: conducting independent foreign policy and working toward economic self-sufficiency.

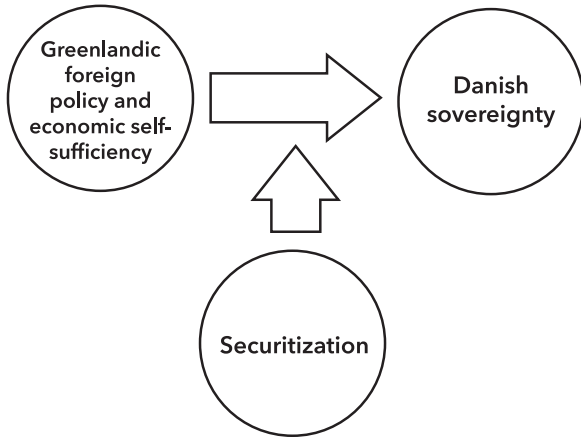


Fig. 8.2. Danish securitization of Greenlandic foreign policy decisions aimed at economic self-sufficiency as threat to Danish sovereignty. Means to avert the threat: securitization (formally pulling decisions back under Danish jurisdiction).

A Room of One’s Own: Greenland’s Diplomatic Ambitions and the Desecuritization of Foreign Policy

Control over foreign affairs is a notable point of contention and at the heart of constitutional-legal controversies with Denmark. For Greenland, foreign policy has implications for economic policy with international ramifications such as exports and foreign investments. Additionally, this policy field holds a particularly important symbolic value as proof of the coming independence. As the then minister of finance, Vittus Qujaukitsoq, said in a speech in Nuuk in May 2019 at the Future Greenland conference: “The ultimate political goal must be that Greenland takes over as much responsibility within these fields as possible”

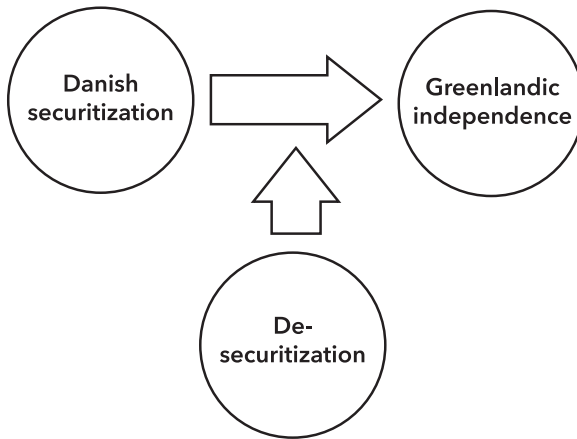


Fig. 8.3. Greenlandic securitization of Danish securitization as threat to Greenlandic independence. Means to avert the threat: desecuritization.

(Qujaukitsoq 2019). Further corroborating this is that foreign policy (i.e., international relations and trade policy) is mentioned in all coalition agreements since 2014.⁵

Within the current constitutional-legal setup, however, foreign policy independence is not possible and so far the Government of Greenland's strategy has included engaging in forms of paradiplomacy with representation in UN's forums of Indigenous peoples via membership of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (Jacobsen and Gad 2018). Under the existing legal framework, it has also established (quasi)diplomatic representations in Iceland, Denmark, the U.S., the European Union, and China (Kleist 2019). Moreover, the Government of Greenland has confidently renamed the department responsible for its foreign relations "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs" to its international stakeholders while keeping the less pretentious "Department of Foreign Relations" in its Danish-language communication (Jacobsen 2020; Kleist 2019; Naalakkersuisut 2019). It would seem that such a display of symbols associated with a real sovereign state would violate the constitutional red line that stipulates that Greenland's foreign policy falls under Denmark's authority. Denmark, however, has had no specific interest in curtailing Greenlandic efforts to secure foreign investments and trade, and no official Danish criticism has been made of the name change. This follows the overall policy of the Government of Denmark formalized in the 2003 Itilleq Agreement, which specifies that the Greenlandic home rule must be part of decisions involving foreign and security matters (Møller and Enoksen 2003; see also Naalakkersuisut 2019; Jacobsen

and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.).⁶ This probably dampens the Danish urge to securitize international matters with no clear defense or security aspect seen from the Danish perspective.

Additionally, the general strategy of shifting Greenlandic governments seems to have been consciously toning down defense and security policy aspects while emphasizing trade and economic aspects. Exemplary is how the 2018 coalition agreement stated that the foreign policy goal of Greenland is to work for “world peace, welfare and prosperity” and “how we as international citizens can participate in the global competition on trade and research” (Naalakkersuisut 2018a). The unequivocal rhetoric of international trade and peace is a desecuritization move aimed at securing foreign political autonomy and maneuvering room with the current constitutional setup. For roughly a decade following the 2009 introduction of self-government, Greenland primarily based its attempts to avert the dependency on Danish subsidies on hoped-for Chinese investments in the mining sector (Rasmussen and Merckelsen 2017; Gad et al. 2018).

While Greenlandic aspirations in international matters without clear security implications for the entire Realm have been consciously ignored by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister’s Office, these actors have in other instances intensely contested Greenlandic authority over domestic policy seen to have security implications and foreign policy ramifications. This has, indeed, been the case with uranium exports, the Chinese airport investments, and a planned Chinese purchase of the abandoned naval base Grønnedal (Breum 2016). So although the Itilleq Agreement stipulates that all foreign and defense policy pertinent to Greenland must involve the Government of Greenland, the realities are that the Government of Denmark has felt compelled to follow a rigorous interpretation of the legal-constitutional framework when considerations to allies or international regimes outweighed the internal relations within the Realm. This dynamic has long been the main reason of the ongoing security controversy between the two.

The Airport ‘Game’: The Loss of the Chinese Dream and Revival of the U.S. as Sponsor

One instructive instance of the sovereignty game emerged in late 2017 around the plans to build two new Atlantic airports in Nuuk and Ilulis-

sat (see Government of Denmark and Naalakkersuisut 2016). What began as a triumph for Greenlandic-Chinese paradiplomacy ended in an impending security controversy with Denmark and the U.S. The row began when then Greenlandic premier Kim Kielsen ventured on an official diplomatic visit to Beijing in October 2017. During these meetings, Chinese banks purportedly showed interest in financing the airports on the premise that the construction was done by a Chinese company (Hinshaw and Page 2019, 18). Later, the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) was invited to make a bid on airstrip development in Nuuk. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, U.S. officials were alarmed to find out that China was about to get a military foothold so close to the American homeland. Allegedly, the Government of Denmark was contacted, which resulted in media reports citing “officials close to the discussion” for relaying that “Beijing must not be allowed to militarize this stretch of the Arctic, [U.S. secretary of defense] Mr. Mattis told his Danish counterpart Claus Frederiksen at a meeting in Washington in May 2018” (Hinshaw and Page 2019).

During the summer, the Government of Denmark concocted a plan to crowd out Chinese state investments by offering Nuuk cheap development loans through Danish state funds while stressing the grave security implications. In a joint statement, the Danish prime minister rhetorically made it clear that it—and the U.S.—considered the airports a matter of foreign and security policy:

I agree with the considerations behind the desire for an improved infrastructure in Greenland; considerations about, competitiveness, business development and better growth conditions for tourism. The total airport project can have *foreign and security policy perspectives that range beyond Greenland*, and for a number of years it will seize large resources in Greenland's economy. (Joint statement, quoted in Turnowsky 2018b, emphasis added)

In theoretical terms, the statement is a move toward securitizing Chinese investments in Greenlandic airports as an existential threat to the kingdom's alliances. In effect, the Greenlandic premier's arm was twisted by both threatening him with risk of bearing responsibility for jeopardizing Danish-U.S. relations *and* offering Danish funding to Greenland. The latter formally constituted an extraordinary means, as the size of Danish annual subsidies had been frozen since the 2009 agreement. This Danish strategy was a success, as one can read from

the words used by the Greenlandic premier to convey his acceptance of the Danish securitizing move:

I am very pleased with the openness and positive attitude I have met from the prime minister in our discussions on this topic. I am glad that the prime minister shares my understanding of the importance of infrastructure for growth. Our discussions on cooperation on the airport projects are based on the current division of competencies between the Greenlandic and the Danish authorities and the wish for equal cooperation. On that basis, Naalakkersuisut will take a positive view of the cooperation with the [Danish] government on the possibilities for Denmark contributing to financing parts of the airport projects. This contains some exciting perspectives, both for the realization of the airport project; but also for developing our mutual cooperation. (Joint statement, quoted in Turnowsky 2018b)

The Greenlandic premier's decision to cave in to Danish demands was, however, not without political cost, as the independence party, Partii Naleraq, left the coalition in protest, resulting in a governmental crisis (Lihn 2018). The Danish-U.S. securitizing move, however, seems to have deterred China from investing further in the projects, and the CCCC, which was named as a main bidder for the contract, officially pulled out. Additionally, a high-ranking Chinese general, Li Quan, stated in a news report that "China has a one-Denmark policy" (Turnowsky 2019), probably signifying that Beijing respects Danish supremacy over Greenland's foreign policy in a broad sense.

The airport game ended up more explicitly about security, rendering economic goals (China) less important than security (U.S.). Compared with earlier sovereignty games focusing on uranium extraction (Rasmussen and Merckelsen 2017) and mining in general (Gad et al. 2018), this has meant a redistribution of roles. Here the Government of Greenland's desecuritizations of China and foreign policy had the concrete aim of securing specific investments while avoiding Danish interference. In relation to uranium, Greenland saw Denmark as a threat, trying to hinder China assisting in Greenland's economic development. In the joint statement's conclusion to the airport game, China was rather cast as a threat.

Greenland's abandonment of its desecuritization of Chinese investments has rearranged the tectonic plates of U.S.-Danish-Greenlandic

relations, shaking China's position as a viable investor while bringing the U.S. to the fore as a new sponsor and not just a security provider (Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). The closure of this sovereignty game underscores the U.S. strategic interest in Greenland, and it can in turn explain the current shift in Greenlandic foreign political outlook toward North America in its strategies for acquiring foreign investments. The U.S. is now part of both Greenland's and Denmark's stories as a 'helper.' But, curiously, the U.S. sustains almost opposite foreign political aspirations, helping Denmark with its general security and Greenland with its independence designs.

While these strategic desecuritizations are carried out at the level of the Government of Greenland's foreign policy bureaucracy, we also find desecuritization moves made by Greenlandic politicians in the political debate, which is the focus of the final analytical section. Here we shall see how the double casting as helper in two opposing narratives displace rather than resolve tensions. On the one hand, if the U.S. increases its role as more of an economic sponsor for Greenland, it risks being named as a threat to Denmark's ambition of being a "major Arctic power" (Government of Denmark 2016; 13; cf. Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.). On the other hand, if the U.S. stresses that its assistance concerns the military defense of Greenland as part of the North American continent, it risks unsettling Greenland's desecuritization of security, which is a core element in the island's fragile relation to Copenhagen.

The Narrative Sources of the Desecuritized Defense: A Self-Sustaining Economy, the Peaceful Inuit, and a Demilitarized Zone

Greenlandic politicians have traditionally not highlighted defense investments or the relevance of adversarial thinking to Greenlandic foreign policy discourse (Jacobsen and Gad 2018). Greenlandic politicians' statements on defense policy are therefore an important place to examine how the political elite works to "take security out of security." In this section, we turn to examples from the 2017 and 2021 political discussions on defense policy in order to investigate the underlying narratives of desecuritization. Desecuritizations of defense and security made by Greenlandic politicians and parties are mainly framed rhetorically within three discourses, which we term the "self-sustaining economy" narrative (e.g., Naalakkersuisut 2018b), the "peaceful Inuit"

narrative (Jacobsen and Gad 2018), and the “demilitarized zone” narrative. In the following, we will link these three narratives with desecuritization statements on Greenlandic defense.

One recent installment in the debate on Greenland’s future defense began when the then minister of finance drew the subject into the independence debate in a seminal speech at University of Greenland, in early 2017 (Breum 2018). From here, the issue made its way to the official political agenda as part of the parliamentary debates in June 2017 on the mandate of the Constitutional Commission and the subsequent discussions on what kind of sovereign nation Greenland shall be. The speech by the minister of finance contained a number of desecuritizing moves building on the “self-sustaining economy” narrative. The core of this narrative is that independence is only possible when Greenland can free itself from the annual US\$576 million block grant provided by the Danish state (Naalakkersuisut 2019, 8). The phrase “self-sustaining economy” entered the independence discourse around the year 2000, became central to the work of the Committee on Self-Government (e.g. Self-Government Commission 2001), and has since been used extensively by the Government of Greenland to frame the economy of independence, such as in relation to the need for mining revenues and investments (Naalakkersuisut 2012). As Gad and colleagues note, the size of the block grant has been taken as a sign of dependence by the Greenlandic politicians (Gad et al. 2018, 7). Danish expenses for the defense of Greenland are currently approximately US\$150 million annually (Rasmussen 2019), and this cost is not counted as part of the annual subsidies to the Government of Greenland but paid by the Danish government via its defense expenditures. This additionally provides the Government of Greenland and policy elites with an incentive for keeping these costs out of independence deliberations.

The economic logic of the narrative was at stake when the minister of finance downgraded Denmark as insurer of the territorial defense of Greenland when he said, “The Danish defense today is not the actual defense of Greenland. Should there arise a real threat to our country from hostile powers, it is defended by the United States. It is the reality all knows but nobody discusses” (cf. Breum 2018). Hence, the U.S. entered this Greenlandic security narrative as the helper who will avert a potential security threat, pointing to the aforementioned role reversal in this new sovereignty game. An equally pertinent consequence of his claim of the kingdom’s ineptitude in the defense of Greenland, however, is that it downgraded the perceived need for defense spending on

the island. This, in turn, would render an independent Greenland's economic obligations to defense smaller than the status quo, a clear sign of the "self-sustaining economy" narrative's logic. By undermining the value of Denmark's role as security provider, the minister thereby downplayed the significance of defense in the future autonomy from Denmark.

The minister further linked the desecuritization of defense with the foundation of independence by stating that "Greenland is just one of the world's last colonies, which has not yet become independent. So, what does it mean for the defense of a future Greenland? The short answer is: not so much" (cf. Breum 2018). This is an apparent desecuritization move of the "downgrading" type where the threat issue is ignored. And it possibly even represents an attempt to pre-emptively desecuritize Greenlandic defense (see Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017, 25) and the threat from Russia. In this way, his speech also countered the increasingly intense Danish securitizations of Russia in policy papers on Arctic security by the Danish Defence Intelligence Service (DDIS 2015, 2016; also see Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.). The idea the minister promoted is that Denmark has no reason to further securitize Greenland's geopolitical position because any real military threat would be impossible to counter by the Danish defense anyway.

Similarly, the link between the "self-sustaining economy" narrative and political elites' desecuritization of defense is also visible in the 2018 coalition agreement between the four parties, Siumut, Atassut, Partii Naleraq and Nunatta Qitornai (Naalakkersuisut 2018a). Under the heading 'Security and defense policy' the coalition agreement stated, "The parties in the coalition acknowledge that our geopolitical position holds great significance for defense policy" and the agreement stipulated the following:

341. The coalition parties stand firm, our country as an independent state must be a member of NATO.

342. The coalition parties share the goal that we take over the right to conduct negotiations related to the U.S. military presence and, hence, make our own agreements.

343. The conditions of the service contracts in the civilian area of Pituffik, Thule Air Base, and most recently around the base supply agreements, the coalition parties will pave the way for Naalakkersuisut to enter into an agreement with the U.S. to

ensure that our country gains more from the U.S. military presence.

344. The coalition parties will continue to work to ensure that our country's defense is based on its own people and under our own flag. We must increasingly engage our young people and adults who would like to work for and can participate in our country's defense, e.g., in fishing inspection and in the Sirius sledge patrol.

345. The coalition parties will therefore also work to ensure that educational programs are also initiated aimed at controlling our own borders.

346. The objective of the coalition parties is to ensure that, when inspecting our fishing territory, there are always two ships, which together carry out the necessary inspection. This will then happen in East Greenland and on the West Coast. This requirement will be addressed with the Danish government as soon as possible. (Naalakkersuisut 2018a, 38–39)

Economic aspects of defense are emphasized throughout the text. Even though the text begins with talking about NATO and U.S. military presence (items 341 and 342) it soon becomes clear that these matters are hardly apprehended as being of urgent importance to the defense of Greenland. Most articulated is the reference to missing income from the U.S. military presence and the loss of revenue from the infamous base maintenance contract on the Thule Air Base to an American contractor (item 343). This issue has been a source of grave frustration for the Government of Greenland, as it meant that Greenland's provincial treasury faced a loss of about ten percent of its total tax revenues (Jacobsen 2016; cf. Breum 2015).

Furthermore, the inclination to focus on fishery inspection, upholding of sovereignty, and border control while leaving out the cost of the NATO membership (item 341) and military capabilities is consistent with the general desecuritizations examined in this chapter. Even though the wish to increase the number of naval vessels (item 346) indeed amounts to 'real' defense policy, this mentioning seems primarily relevant for the current arrangement with Denmark, and it is explicitly aimed at civilian fisheries inspection. In conclusion, the 2018 coalition agreement illustrated how the "self-sustaining economy" narrative is active when the political parties and the Government of Greenland

frames nondefense as part of security and defense policy. The aim of the text seems to be getting as much *symbolic* defense (border patrol and upholding of sovereignty) as possible without having to accept securitizations of, say, Russian buildup of air force capabilities, which may involve the acceptance of potentially expensive and intrusive defensive means.

While the “self-sustaining economy” narrative is, thus, prevalent both in Greenlandic agenda setting and policy making around defense, the more ideological “peaceful Inuit” narrative was active when defense policy was discussed in parliamentary debates on independence in the summer of 2017. The basis of this narrative is an understanding that “we, the Inuit, are peaceful; war and military affairs are not our affairs; at most it is a problem imposed upon us from outside” (Jacobsen and Gad 2018, 16). Evidence of this can be found in the discussion between parliamentarians Ane Hansen (Inuit Ataqatigiit) and Justus Hansen (Demokraatit) on the role of Greenlandic defense. Justus Hansen introduced the idea that Greenlandic soldiers should take part in international operations. Allegedly, he was alone in these ambitions for Greenlandic activism. Ane Hansen said in reply: “We have always been a peaceful nation, and our role in the world community should be to spread the message of peace. We must not participate in wars” (Turnowsky 2017). Again, desecuritization is the preferred strategy in matters of defense: the message of peace over international activism. Furthermore, the debate revealingly focused on ‘soft’ defense areas such as search and rescue and border patrol, which were discussed above ‘hard’ military capabilities (Turnowsky 2017).

In the parliamentary debate, this narrative of Greenlandic identity was clearly employed as an argument. This identity-based narrative on Greenlandic security in turn refers to two larger narratives, one about the Inuit as the incarnation of the ‘noble savage’ (Fienup-Riordan 1995) and one about the Arctic as a unique area of intercultural and diplomatic cooperation with a special place in international affairs. This foreign policy discourse has been termed ‘Arctic exceptionalism’ as “states that comprise Arctic international society have intentionally negotiated a regional order predicated on a more cooperative framework than they pursue with each other elsewhere, and have endeavored, implicitly, to compartmentalize relations there” (Exner-Pirot and Murray 2017, 51). This, for instance, entails the idea that the Arctic must be a nuclear-free zone and the necessity of widened cooperation in envi-

ronmental matters. Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg (2017) also connect Arctic exceptionalism to desecuritization as an international governance strategy, beginning with Gorbachev's famous 1987 Murmansk speech (Åtland 2008).

The latter narrative, of the Arctic in general and Greenland in particular as an exception from a conflictual world, came to new prominence after the 2021 elections. But this time it was repurposed to aim specifically at the expulsion of the Danish defense forces rather than the overall threat from great power rivalry. The more parsimoniously worded 2021 coalition agreement between Inuit Ataqatigiit and Naleraq stated how "The coalition will work to ensure that Greenland appears increasingly independent on the foreign policy scene. [. . .] We shall develop our international network of representations with a view to increasing trade. [. . .] Based on Greenland's geographical location in the Arctic, we will demand greater influence on defense policy. We want to emphasize that Greenland must be demilitarized, and that nothing should happen about us without us" (Egede and Enoksen 2021a).

The quote clearly indicates the continued relevance of the "self-sustaining economy" narrative, but it also shows how Greenland insists on having its own considerations in security and defense policy. More so, it explicates how external initiatives, particularly those originating in Copenhagen, are framed as a threat to Greenland's increased self-awareness and independence (Olsvig and Gad 2021). What was most shocking to Danish observers, however, was the demand for demilitarization, but as observers who mastered the Greenlandic language later clarified, it rather meant 'no further militarization' (Egede and Enoksen 2021a, 14; Egede and Enoksen 2021b, 16; cf. Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.).

The shock regarding the demilitarization announcement should be seen in the light of the Danish decision to upgrade its military presence with a so-called Arctic Capacity Package of approximately US\$235 million in response to a U.S. demand for better surveillance of Greenlandic airspace and North Atlantic submarine traffic. This Danish acceptance of the U.S. securitization of the Arctic (cf. Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.) was, however, met by Greenland's countersecuritization: The "nothing should happen about us without us" slogan, reiterated again and again by Greenlandic politicians, stressed how Greenland increased its demands to gain insight and involvement in policymaking processes. The resonance for the demand, of course,

being the past as proof that without Greenlandic insight, defense measures on Greenlandic soil can turn into threats to Greenlanders (cf. Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.).

Substantially, the demand for demilitarization was potentially extremely radical if taken to mean a demand for the abolishment of the Thule Air Base. Following the publication of the coalition agreement, the incoming minister of foreign affairs was quizzed by Danish journalists on the meaning of this demand. His answers were gradually developed to explain how Greenland eventually ought to move toward what he called “the Icelandic model.” Within the current constitutional arrangements with Denmark, this would involve developing a civilian Greenlandic coast guard that should take over most of the tasks performed by the Danish defense in Greenland. Eventually, an independent Greenland should have a separate NATO membership without developing its own national defense (Broberg in Wester 2021). By emptying the Danish defense forces of tasks servicing the Greenlandic civil society and by stressing that in the event of war, “It’s the Americans who will be coming, when they see the need to have anyone posted” (Broberg in Andersen 2021), the minister meant to demilitarize Greenland, not as a universal principle but as a way to disentangle Greenland from Denmark. Even if the minister was soon relieved of his foreign policy portfolio and the negotiations over the Danish Arctic Capacity Package resumed, the episode serves to highlight how desecuritization of security remains a central strategy—promoted by a variety of tactical moves—in Greenland’s struggle for independence.

Conclusion

Currently, outside the Government of Greenland’s legal jurisdiction, foreign policy and defense policy play an important symbolic role in the independence debate. The Government of Greenland and the political parties have treated foreign and defense policy as a valued referent object that must be desecuritized. This strategy is concurrent with the logic of the sovereignty game with Denmark, in which Greenland desecuritized crucial policy areas in order to either gain control or keep the status quo.

Our analysis shows that for the Greenlandic political elite, ‘defense’ is a referent object only insofar as it is linked to sovereignty and independence. For Greenland, defense is considered a threat to indepen-

dence because defense is expensive and currently not factored into the financial cost of independence by the Government of Greenland. The reason for this strategy is twofold: First, if defense is securitized it is harder for Greenland to move it (back) into the realm of normal politics. Second, when Denmark securitizes defense, it additionally bears a risk of a future cost for Greenland in military expenses. This is probably why the topic of NATO membership in all statements is only mentioned briefly and without any reference to cost.

The Greenlandic elites' preference for desecuritization can, thus, be seen both as a strategy in the sovereignty controversy with Denmark and as political thinking based on the self-sustaining economy narrative. Furthermore, the propensity to desecuritize defense can also be seen on the backdrop of a deep-rooted romantic vision of a peaceful Arctic, which ties in with the narrative of the peace-loving Inuit nation. In this, it is a national obligation to counter militarization and war, and desecuritization of defense is the perfect response to this call. The resultant political thinking of this clearly has implications for the ongoing considerations in Nuuk regarding the U.S. as an alternative to Denmark as sponsor. Based on the findings in this chapter it seems likely that Greenland will base its strategy for independence on economic rather than geopolitical considerations. There is no doubt that the gravity of security and defense in Greenlandic independence will be downplayed rhetorically by the Government of Greenland in the coming deliberations. Time will show how far this strategy is viable in the context of U.S. securitization of the region and Russian aggression.

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NOTES

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1. Regardless of the recent spat between Denmark-Greenland and the U.S., most observers and scholars assume that Greenland will stay allied with the U.S. in some form (see Breitenbauch 2019; Gad 2019), which affirms past consensus on the subject (see Turnowsky 2018a; Breum 2018).

2. Hence Hammond referred to the Thule Air Base maintenance contract, which in 2014 was given to an American company instead of a Danish/Greenlandic one.

3. Similarly, Greenlandic society and authorities get very little attention within the Russian discourse on Arctic security (cf. Klausen, chap. 5, this vol.).

4. All texts analyzed are in Danish. The articulations observed may or may not have been translated to Danish from a Greenlandic original; we are responsible for the translation from Danish to English.

5. Coalition agreements in the Greenlandic parliamentary system equals a program for official government policy.

6. This agreement was amended in 2005 with an administrative accord that specifies a cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen and the Department of Foreign Relations in Nuuk.

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9 | Infrastructural (Re)configurations and Processes of (De)securitization

The Fluctuating Roles and Positions of Airports in Greenland

Frank Sejersen

When the Greenlandic authorities in 2017 announced that they wanted to expand and construct new airports, it was also made apparent that such a development plan would stand out as one of the biggest investments in the history of the country. The Danish authorities met the proposal with concern. They argued that it was an understandable decision but financially exceptional and a quite risky one. Later, when Greenland announced that it would consider taking China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) into consideration as construction entrepreneur, great concern was aired by both the United States and Denmark. Chinese involvement in the development of what was perceived as critical infrastructure in Greenland was interpreted as a potential threat to the geopolitical dominance of the United States, Denmark, and NATO in the northwestern part of the North Atlantic region (See Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.). Suddenly, Greenland had to navigate a complex geopolitical field. The Greenlandic authorities' strategy was to understate the potential impacts a Chinese company would have. Historically, airports in Greenland have been entangled in political and security agendas in quite complex ways. The chapter will show how airports in Greenland have entered oscillations of securitization and desecuritization under different government regimes. The analytical framework is organized in such a way that it brings infrastructure and (de)securitization together.

This chapter investigates oscillations of securitization. Such an analytical focus not only points to processes of securitization, desecuritization, and resecuritization but also to how these oscillations are integral parts of different government regimes and techniques of government. Desecuritization may work by “shifting a policy issue from one technique of government to another” (Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017, 16; Wæver 1995), and one of the ways this takes place is when new agendas emerge in arenas that are securitized. Moreover, oscillations of securitization point at how different areas of government are entangled and how different regimes may in fact overlap and coexist. The analytical focus on the (de)securitization of and through infrastructure also draws our attention to the use of infrastructure as a generator of hope and transition and hence the sociotechnical imaginaries that are prompted by different government regimes as part of desecuritization. This chapter critically investigates the relation between securitization processes and the installations of new airport infrastructures as well as the airports’ integrative, distortive, and legitimizing functions in government regimes. The analysis of airports shows how four different kinds of government regimes invest in Greenland’s airports and thus how they, through diverse practices, evoke dissimilar materializations of infrastructure and different configurations of the world. The four regimes that the analysis will identify are the following: ‘the global,’ ‘the imperial,’ ‘the centripetal national,’ and ‘the centrifugal national.’ The shifts in regimes are also associated with changes in the understanding of referent objects. The global regime is linked to the historical period of World War II and the Cold War, where military agendas were dominating. The imperial regime emerged as part of the Danish modernization initiatives in Greenland starting in the 1950s. The centripetal (inward-looking) and centrifugal (outward-looking) regimes relate to different political nation-building ideas pursued by the Greenlandic authorities starting from 1979.

In Greenland—and in the Arctic in general—oscillations of securitization are deeply linked to processes of colonization and decolonization as well as shifting ideas of center-periphery relations (Gad 2017; Rosamond 2011). The Arctic has taken up different positions within government regimes and ascribed different values. Narratives about the North, the frontier, the North Pole, the Arctic, Inuit homelands, etc. are formulated in a complex setting of discursive understandings of risk and opportunity, belonging and responsibility, pasts and futures, as well as ‘us’ and ‘others’ (Sejersen 2021). While much security talk

about the Northern Hemisphere is concerned with geopolitical issues, the way the issues are approached are also maintaining and creating ‘regions,’ ‘nations,’ and ‘people’ (Sejersen 2015). The chapter’s historical analysis of airports in Greenland will point to these emerging and shifting understandings.

Infrastructure as Focus of Analysis

In securitization theory (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998) the emphasis is often put on how understandings of security processes are the results of social interaction between social agents. Vigneau (2019) thus argues that “the security status of an object is neither predefined nor permanent, it is continually constructed by the two-way relationship between agents claiming to have authority to assert the security quality of an issue (securitizing agents) and agents determining the issue of this security move by deciding to comply with it or to reject it (audiences), in a specific context” (2019, 191). When these ideas of securitization are brought into the same analytical framework as infrastructure, the two-way relationship gets a material dimension. Such a dimension may, for example, show how concrete material outcomes of the aforementioned interaction may not only maintain and routinize securitization discourses (as a kind of infrastructural momentum) but also be creatively reconfigured and used by agents in processes of desecuritization. By bringing materiality together with securitization theory, infrastructures may emerge as ‘important,’ ‘critical’ and ‘essential,’ out of material-discursive practices (Aradau 2010). This means that airports, for example, materialize in different ways according to their discursive entanglements and network relations. The same airfield in Greenland may, thus, materialize in quite different ways according to the government regime it is integrated in. Materiality—in this perspective—is not given (although the material indeed has its own agency (Barad 1998; Bennett 2010)) but worked out, contextualized, and embedded in transactions (e.g., technical, legal, bureaucratic, and political) by particular securitizing agents within specific areas of government (e.g., military, health, production, transport, etc.). Hence, infrastructure enters many types of relations with the social and may “contribute to generating temporality structures that ensure the coherence and stability of social order” (Preda 1999, 355). This understanding of infrastructure underlines the chapter’s analytical attention to

how securitization relations and materialities interrelate and how infrastructures come to play a role by both enabling and constraining particular securitization configurations (Aradau 2010, 492–93).

The primary focus is on infrastructures that relate to human mobility because these infrastructures play a pivotal role in promoting, managing, controlling, and ordering human activities. Indeed, societies are formed by the transportation practices made possible by the infrastructures (Bærenholdt 2007, 95). In relation to processes of securitization, infrastructures of human mobility often come to play a role in several ways: infrastructures can both be actively singled out as the particular focus of concern (often referred to as ‘critical infrastructure’) but also as a means to protect what society points out as important and threatened. Thus, in a securitization perspective infrastructures may play the role as the threatened referent object itself or the role as the instrument to protect a referent object. Analytically speaking, it may be difficult to clearly separate the two roles, and infrastructures of human mobility (present or anticipated) can be linked to other analytical areas of interest like urbanization, nation making, identity, public health, or the like. This chapter will investigate the relation between processes of securitization and infrastructures of mobility and how these processes are linked to images of ‘the state,’ ‘the population,’ ‘the nation,’ and ‘the citizens.’ The particular focus is on the role of airports and the matrix of airports in the processes of (de)securitization of Greenland from World War II until today. The chapter uses securitization theory as an analytical strategy to draw the attention to different historical interpretations of threats to valued referent objects and to show how historical government regimes organize and get practiced through infrastructure. Specifically, the chapter uses securitization theory to focus on the dynamic relation between security and identity making (Wæver 1994). When Arctic states pursue infrastructural projects it can be seen as a kind of statecraft that may lay out future potentials for society, but it may also be a way to perform the state itself, and through this particular kind of statecraft perform conceptualization of ‘the population,’ ‘the economy,’ ‘the market,’ ‘the regions,’ the ‘economic spheres,’ and ‘centrality and periphery.’ Hence, infrastructural investments and uses become closely linked to shifting projects of identity making, state building, and nation building. The understanding of what constitutes risk and threat to valued objects has indeed affected infrastructural priorities and ways of perceiving political agents.

To analytically unfold these valued referent objects and their securitization in different regimes, the chapter concentrates on the narrative oscillations in ‘security talk’ (Sejersen 2021) pursued by agents that are dominant in creating hegemonic discourses that legitimize infrastructural initiatives, investments, and practices. These oscillations, however, reflect more than merely changes in the understanding of particular securitized objects; they reflect changing understandings of central identities and what may be considered legitimate actions. Hence, securitization theory is used in an unorthodox way as an analytical strategy to identify what is considered important for society and how identity evolves when ‘security talk’ is taking place (see also Gad 2017).

In a securitization perspective it is interesting to focus on how specific material practices matter, and how they come to matter for particular purposes and relations (Barad 2007). It is analytically productive to link securitization processes and infrastructural practices (Aradau 2010), because infrastructural arrangements may emerge as concrete (and visible) manifestations of escalating or retrenching security talk.

Infrastructures, though, are not only empirical objects. Fundamentally, infrastructures are relational, and anthropologist Brian Larkin (2013, 329) argues that infrastructures “are things and also relations between things.” If infrastructures are understood in such a way, we can link the physical within a much larger network of relations and systems of meaning beyond the actual infrastructural technical installation. Infrastructural projects have a close connection to other projects (e.g., of the state) in such a way that investments in infrastructure simultaneously can be understood as investments in futures for particular referent objects. Therefore, infrastructure can be said to have a sort of double nature. First, infrastructures are installed to underpin the mobility of stuff that is thought of as important for society: people, machinery, oil, data, etc. Second, the mobility of stuff underpinned by infrastructures is expected to move society as a whole or in parts in certain directions. As an analytical object, we can approach ‘infrastructure’ as constituted as real and imagined, at the same time. It is more-than-material (Reeves 2017). Infrastructures at once “integrate a multiplicity of disjunctive elements” and “spin out new relations” (Jensen and Morita 2016). As materials, infrastructures point to things beyond themselves: they are ‘partial objects,’ as Julie Chu (2014) describes them. The state can use infrastructure both to manifest itself as the provider of actual protection and services, and to install the image of the state as legitimate protector/provider and the population as recipi-

ents of those services. Hence the state not only organizes and alters space in the name of protection/security but also organizes and alters society and human bodies through these infrastructures.

The chapter unfolds how airports in Greenland are always part of and dependent on a greater narrative organized around fear, risk, threat, concern, anticipation, hope, dream, and expectation. Thus, near and far futures, little and big futures, are constantly present in discussions of present, planned, or anticipated developments of airports (Sejersen 2015). In the words of Larkin (2013, 32), “[i]nfrastructures [. . .] exist as forms separate from their technical functioning. They emerge out of and store within them forms of desire and fantasy and can take on fetish-like aspects that sometimes can be wholly autonomous from their technical function.” Quite often, it is this promissory quality that—in the case of airports—is enchanting and affectively overdetermined. The analytical attention to such quality will be pursued in the chapter to understand what happens when infrastructures are seen as entwined with processes of (de)securitization (Jacobsen 2019; Jacobsen and Herrmann 2017).

The abovementioned points about the relation between infrastructure and identity have been developed into a more elaborate analytical framework by Sulfikar Amir (2007), who works within the field of science and technology studies. He suggests that infrastructure can be analytically approached by considering three ways infrastructures work: (1) how infrastructures function as a medium of integration, (2) how infrastructures have a distorting function, and (3) how infrastructures legitimize regimes. Amir’s idea is that infrastructure is deeply linked to ideology and nationalism because infrastructure binds together communities, both as imagined and in reality. In his case, he links ideology, nationalism, and infrastructures together with the term ‘technological nationalism.’ In a securitization perspective, this approach can be quite productive, as it speaks to how government regimes and securitization processes conjunct.

Infrastructure as a Medium of Integration

Amir (2007, 284) understands infrastructure to be integrative in the sense that it creates a grid that functions as a symbolic system “that provides a network of templates through which a society identifies itself.” Thus, infrastructure is entwined with ideology. The analysis will

investigate the particularities of relations between infrastructure, ideology, and identity making. In nation building, infrastructure may connect people and regions and hence evoke ideas of proximity and break down boundaries but also establish new boundaries and hierarchies, creating zones of marginality and periphery. Amir does not see an infrastructural technology as “merely [. . . a] physical object,” but sees it as “constituted by collective symbolism through which social and cultural materials such as language, histories, myths, and utopias are blended together. Within such a repertoire, technology becomes a medium of an imagined community” (2007, 284). Consequently, the study of infrastructures (airports) and securitization processes also becomes a study of how nation-building projects or ideological projects are pursued by means of ascribing value to infrastructure and the processes through which they materialize.

Infrastructure and Its Distorting Function

The idea of technological nationalism that Amir puts forward also underlines the way infrastructure can play a distorting role. By this he means that (as an ideology) infrastructure distorts our imagination. We are twisted, so to speak, and it becomes hard to think of alternatives. Infrastructure has the tendency to limit choices on the one hand and to stimulate some choices as natural, necessary, and inevitable on the other hand (2007, 284). The path dependency that is created with infrastructures also points to the ‘we’ that is created and maintained (Sejersen 2015). The distortion function of infrastructure is a distortion of our social imaginaries. When using infrastructure as an analytical lens to study (de)securitization, the distorting function of infrastructure points the attention to barriers to alternative thinking about ‘the social’ and how existing and new infrastructures critically can be mobilized to rethink ‘the social.’ One might say that not only do ‘we’ work with infrastructure; infrastructure works with ‘us’ (Jensen and Morita 2016).

Infrastructure as a Way to Legitimize Regimes

Infrastructural initiatives are linked closely to ideological projects and social ontology and often mediate between ideology, hope, and promises. It is this mediative role that makes infrastructure powerful, attrac-

tive, and interesting when studying securitization. As anthropologist Madeleine Reeves (2017, 731) points out, “[i]nfrastructures are not only the outcome of particular articulations of the material and the social: as unstable interventions in social life, infrastructures also co-constitute the social itself, fostering new articulations of public and new imaginations of who ‘we’ who access this infrastructure might be.”

Following this line of thinking, the mobilization of new or existing infrastructures in political rhetoric linked to acts of securitizations not only entangles the political with the infrastructural but also and always includes the social. Infrastructure (physical as well as discursive) creates people, users, stakeholders, nations, and states, as well as friends and enemies. Indeed, the proximities, flows, gaps, and conjunctions created by infrastructure have been essential to legitimize regimes, their ideologies, and values, throughout the 20th century. When studying infrastructure and securitization, it is therefore important to address the question: What regime is legitimized and given incitement by the installed infrastructure which was part of a process of securitization? What are the securitization rationalities that underlie infrastructures, and what kind of promises of subject positions can they stimulate?

How Airports Came to Matter in Greenland

The following analysis will focus on how airports in Greenland came into being and came to matter under different government regimes’ securitization moves. The *integrative*, *distorting*, and *legitimizing* functions of airports as infrastructure in processes of (de)securitization are important organizing devices for the analysis. Consequently, the analysis also investigates how shifting (de)securitization and infrastructural materializations are linked to how society thinks and produces itself and others. The dynamic nature of the relationship between infrastructure and (de)securitization processes becomes apparent when infrastructure is analytically approached as practiced rather than given. In securitization theory, one of the main points of departure is that “[s]ecuritization ultimately means a particular way of handling a particular issue, processing a threat through the security format. Thus, the security quality does not belong to the threat but to its management” (Wæver 2011, 472). Hence, an analysis of oscillations in (de)securitization is closely linked to how government regimes, their ratio-

nales and techniques produce, understand, and manage objects of threat and referent objects. Infrastructure does, indeed, take up an important role in this management.

Airports in Greenland as Buffers in Military Defense: The Global Regime

As part of the developments of the early period of World War II, the U.S. saw a need for supporting Great Britain with military equipment (primarily military aircrafts) in the country's war against Nazi Germany. To get the airplanes to Great Britain as safely as possible, the U.S. decided to establish airports in Greenland as a midway transit hub. This infrastructural initiative was also seen as a defense against a possible German presence and invasion of Greenland (particular in East Greenland). In 1941, the Danish ambassador Kauffmann signed a treaty with the U.S. giving them permission to establish airfields, navy bases, radio stations, and weather stations in Greenland (see Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). Indeed, this contract can be seen as an act of securitization of the North, where Greenland as an island suddenly stood out as geopolitically important in the defense of America and its allies in Europe against the highly expansionist military powers of Nazi Germany. Immediately following the signing of the treaty, the U.S. started to establish airbases in Greenland (Bluie West 1 in Narsarsuaq, Bluie West 8 in Kangerlussuaq, Bluie East 2 near Ammassalik (East Greenland), and Bluie West 4 at Fiskerøset). The airbases constituted an infrastructural system that linked them together strategically and formed the basic infrastructural ground on which all other (and smaller) installations were to be linked up to. Overall, the U.S. established nine stations on the west coast and five stations on the east coast (Jensen 2019, 32). By this huge and extraordinary infrastructural initiative, Greenland was whirled into the global game of geopolitics to a much larger extent than before. But because the object of threat was Nazi Germany, these infrastructures were not meant to serve the interests of the Greenlandic population nor the colonial relation between Greenland and Denmark, but were primarily set up as a defense and transport hub for the geopolitical interests and defense strategy of the U.S. The securitization discourse legitimized the presence of military forces and the use of military rationality.

After World War II, the U.S. and Western Europe saw the spread of

communist interests and powers emerge as a new existential threat to liberal democracy and market capitalism. When nuclear arms and their inherent ‘mutual assured destruction’ became the core organizing mechanism of securitization—and thus deemed an existential threat—the geopolitical landscape of the Cold War reconfigured the importance of Greenland. Indeed, the island came to be an integral component in the escalating power struggles between the Western world (often called First World) and the Eastern bloc (often referred to as Second World) that were seen worldwide (Jacobsen 2013). The reorientation of the securitization of the Arctic manifested itself as a process of hectic militarization and the extensive development of military infrastructures. Indeed, the Arctic became a nuclear frontline (Tamnes and Holtsmark 2014) or a kind of defense buffer against enemy threats. As such, the Arctic was not seen as a coherent region, but rather as a northern frontline or outpost of different states (Østreng 1992).

The military systems developed by the U.S. included infrastructures in areas in Inuit homelands in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. In Greenland, the construction of the Thule Air Base (1951), the experiment with bases under the inland ice (Camp Century (1958)) and the construction of the Distant Early Warning system (DEW line (1957)) are but three examples of an increased militarization of postwar Greenland that was the direct result of the Cold War macrosecuritization complex (cf. Buzan and Wæver 2009) between the East and the West. The infrastructural investments and developments in relation to the air force base in Thule were gigantic and involved the forced relocation of the Indigenous community living in the area in 1953 (Christensen and Kristensen 2009). This security game and Greenland’s role and position in the government regime were further institutionalized when Denmark entered NATO in 1949 and when Denmark made a new defense agreement with the U.S. in 1951, which stipulated that Denmark’s defense of Greenland was to be pursued in cooperation with the U.S. These institutional steps underlined Denmark’s (and therefore Greenland’s) subscription to the rationalities of the First World, which increasingly emerged as a community with a similar ideology and entangled infrastructure.

The military presence in Greenland resulted in an emerging interest among private and public agents in being linked to the military institutions through servicing contracts. In 1960, Denmark, for example, established the company Air Greenland A/S to link into this military structure. Even though the company’s primary purpose was to

underpin U.S. military interests, it gradually started to pursue more nonmilitary assignments (Jensen 2019, 49).

In 1949, the U.S. gave Denmark permission to use the military airport in Narsarsuaq for purposes of civil nature (Ancker 1995), and it thus became possible to reduce the travel time between Denmark and Greenland from 14 days to a couple of hours. In 1955, the Scandinavian Airlines System's Polarrute used the military base Sondrestrom as a hub on its way from Copenhagen to Los Angeles, and since then the airport Sondrestrom (later Kangerlussuaq) has become the most important gateway to Greenland. Later in 1959, the airport of Narsarsuaq was primarily used for civil purposes, and the administration was taken over from the U.S. by the Danish institution Greenland's Technical Organisation (GTO) (Jensen 2019, 39).

The historical period demarcated by World War II and the Cold War was a period of conflict of global scale that was perceived as having an existential nature as expressed by American vice president Henry Wallace in a speech to the U.S.-based International Free World Association in May 1942: "This is a fight between a slave world and a free world. Just as the United States in 1862 could not remain half slave and half free, so in 1942 the world must make its decision for a complete victory one way or the other" (Wallace 1943, 12). The 'slave world' represented by the Nazis and later the communists (the Second World) legitimized the elaboration of a government regime that had an expansive and excluding nature on the one hand, but an inclusive approach toward so-called allies of the 'free world.' The increased civilian use of military infrastructure in Greenland can be seen as a reassertion of this alliance and free-world solidarity. Although the object of threat did not change, the particular way of handling and processing the threat through the security format changed. Denmark did not think of establishing its own airports but entered into a more dual governmental use of airports established on military needs and logics. Even though the military airports distorted the ways that effective infrastructure in Greenland could be perceived, the increased dual use opened up a new kind of integration between Denmark and Greenland that, furthermore, improved Danish presence and control in Greenland. Dual use of airports can be seen as a kind of desecuritization, as more agendas and rationalities have to be taken into account when considering how to approach and manage issues understood as threats. The exceptionalism of the regime legitimized through the discourse of the binary world constituted by the 'slaves' and the 'free' as well as the East and the West was challenged as

new agendas and rationalities entered the infrastructural scene. The military infrastructure, however, constituted a kind of infrastructural momentum and made up the basic matrix within which the civil traffic was to operate. Consequently, the emerging public transportation was configured in accordance with the logics and priorities of the particular securitizations that took place during wartime.

When disarmament was mobilized by the U.S. and USSR in 1989 (Åtland 2008), the Pentagon decided to close the DEW stations, and later in 1992 it was decided that the airbase Sondrestrom should be demilitarized and handed over to Greenland. This took place on October 1, 1992, and the airport was renamed Kangerlussuaq Airport. Airport infrastructure that was formerly set in motion as part of an extensive securitization process legitimized and practiced based on military rationality was taken out of its exceptional position. The air traffic system was moved and replaced in a new domain not characterized by the exceptional strategies of Cold War securitization ideology.

Airports and the Reformation of the Welfare of the Population in Greenland: The Imperial Regime

The postwar reconstruction and cementation of ‘the free world’ conflated with broader agendas for development and modernization. The establishment of the United Nations as an international forum “to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom” (United Nations 1945) legitimized large-scale investments in new infrastructure worldwide. In 1954, Denmark announced that Greenland’s colonial status had ended and that Greenland now was to be seen as an integral part of Denmark. As part of this new status, processes thought of as modernization were initiated in Greenland that were also aimed at creating social progress and better living standards. In particular, and as a result of two reports published in 1950 (G50) and 1964 (G60) respectively, by two Greenland Commissions, huge investments were made in the name of modernization in order to boost economic development, urbanization, education, public health, welfare improvement, and social reform (Dahl 1986a). The process, set in motion and controlled by Denmark in 1954, was a kind of double exceptionalism: First, it directly had to address the Danish politics of exceptionalism in its former colony (it was administered in radically different ways than in the rest of Denmark), and second, it had to initiate an exceptional and

large-scale development plan that could recalibrate the Greenlandic society in order to integrate it into Denmark and the world in new ways. Due to this double exceptionalism, there were many concerns about the potential consequences for the Greenlandic population if the development was “too fast” or “too radical.” Danish prime minister Hans Hedtoft and later the Danish minister for Greenland Johannes Kjærbøl were confident that the exceptional reform plans would work, but they were also open about the potential devastating costs it might have on individuals and Greenland as a whole (see analysis by Bjørnson 2016).

These two commissions’ respective reports and the following processes gave birth to a new take on the development of infrastructure of Greenland. Furthermore, the development process itself also required an elaborate infrastructure in order to implement the recommendations of the commission. Infrastructure became both the goals and means of modernization. Therefore, the development of airports could be seen as part of future making.

Between 1960 and 1977, the air traffic increasingly dominated human transportation between Denmark and Greenland (Jensen 2019, 41–42). Hence, airports took up an important integrative role in the Kingdom of Denmark. Internally in Greenland, though, the transport system was still based on marine transportation, which was vulnerable to weather conditions. Due to increased problems with recurrent sea ice in southern Greenland, the Danish Air Force (Flyvetroppernes Grønlandsgruppe) was asked to be responsible for civil internal air transport (1951–58, Jensen 2019, 43) in order to break the time-distance predicament (too much time was ‘wasted’ on traveling). In 1960, the ministry entered an agreement with the Canadian company Eastern Provincial Airways to take care of the internal air traffic, with Søndrestrom as the central hub. Because of the absence of airports in communities, an airplane would use a pair of skis in winter and a pair of floats in summer (Jensen 2019, 43) in order to land on water. In 1962, Air Greenland took over the responsibility of internal traffic, and in the following year Air Greenland implemented an internal transport system based on the use of helicopters. Unlike airports that serviced airplanes, the airports needed for helicopters (the so-called heliports) did not require large investments. Establishing these heliports also cemented the status of the locations, and in the following years the towns of Ilulissat, Sisimiut, Aasiaat, Qaqortoq, Paamiut, Nuuk, and Maniitsoq were, by the means of infrastructure—among other things—

turned into centers of development, which was also planned as part of G60. Later, heliports were constructed in other locations, and Greenland started to be more connected than ever before (Jensen 2019, 44; Lauritzen 1985). From 1970 to 1977 air traffic dominated the transport system. Due to increased pressure on the traffic infrastructure, an airport was established in Nuuk in 1979. It was the first airport constructed outside the government regime following a military ideology, and quite different rationales and agendas were at play. One reason for the pressure on air traffic was the large number of Danes that moved to Greenland to take part in the work. In 1975, Danes constituted roughly 20 percent of the population in Greenland (approximately 10,000 Danes and 40,000 Greenlanders) (Dahl 1986a, 317).

The establishment of airports in an infrastructural integrated matrix can be seen as a symbol, a manifestation, and a leverage of the Danish plans for modernization of Greenland as stipulated in the G60 (Jensen 2019, 48) and the Danish ambition of creating a welfare society in a Greenland accessible by infrastructure. Furthermore, the infrastructure was intended to underpin the growth of the new fishing industry (Nielsen 2017). Indeed, airports started to play an important role in a new government regime that emphasized welfare development, which was installed with exceptional speed. The object of threat in this regime was the (visible) consequences of underdevelopment of a part of the otherwise developed and internationally recognized welfare state of Denmark.

Jensen (2019, 49) argues that Denmark's priority of infrastructural development in a few towns was a way to put pressure on the small communities and to make people move to bigger towns. The new infrastructural investments in centers not only suggested possibilities, but gave direction as well, and they can be seen as a technology of government (Dean 1999) that involves a particular way of understanding Greenland as a society and centralization as a pivotal rationale. This rationality was rooted in the ideology of hyper-modernism and legitimized on the basis of the development (growth) paradigm existing at that time.

The complex oscillations between securitization and desecuritization in the post-World War II period are linked to the reinterpretation of the kind of threats that had to be managed within a security framework. First, the rationale of military defense and confrontation dominated, as the U.S. global military security concerns laid down the infrastructure as a means to avert the threats from Germany and the

Soviet Union. The emerging entanglement of military and civilian activities promoted by a dual use of airports in Greenland can both be interpreted as a kind of desecuritization, as more agendas were allowed to be inscribed in the infrastructures, and as a securitization of Danish *imperial* concerns. The latter urged for the use of military infrastructure to service the population and to secure against the threat of marginalization, radical decolonization, and underdevelopment. Denmark felt the pressure and need to integrate Greenlanders in its welfare state and to make it an 'equal' part of Denmark and Danish values. Closely entangled with the processes following this kind of securitization and desecuritization, the Danish plans to modernize and develop Greenland moved the attention from Greenland as a *geographical location* to a *place of living*. The exceptionally elaborate Danish strategies to improve the health of the population and develop the society discursively changed the focus to societal and individual risk. During the 1950s and 1960s, airports turned from being nodal points in a militarized government regime to nodal points in an exceptional societal development initiative carrying its own risks. A number of central airports took up a double role both servicing civil air transportation and still being part of the military infrastructural matrix. Postwar militarization and modernization went hand in hand, and this link created a double nature of infrastructure. Transport infrastructure installed as part of a military security ideology was closely being entangled with welfare security rationales. Hence, military frontiers and welfare frontiers became closely connected even though they addressed different objects of threat.

Airports as Infrastructures of Emerging Nation Building: The Centripetal National Regime

Increasingly, Inuit in Greenland perceived the Danish G60 modernization plans as a new kind of colonialism and an erosion of Greenlandic identity, way of life, and right to self-determination (Dahl 1986b). In Greenland, Danish control was perceived as destructive to the personal and collective welfare of Greenlanders. Seen from the point of view of Greenlandic political activists, a total reformation of the relationship to Denmark was needed (Olsen 2005) to avoid running the risk of destroying Greenlandic culture. The political mobilization in Greenland to protect Greenlandic self-determination and cultural values led to the

establishment of the Greenlandic home rule in 1979, which can be seen as an extraordinary political initiative and agreement. In fact, it was seen as such a paradigmatic change in the decolonization process that some referred to it as a revolution (e.g., Larsen 1992; Lynge 2004) because it basically reconfigured the Greenland-Denmark relationship. Indeed, this new political relation was internationally unique within the field of Indigenous politics (Dahl 2012). In the years after the establishment of home rule, the political attention of the Greenlandic parliament focused on countering the process of centralization that had been initiated as part of the Danish modernization plan G60.

This postcolonial political move against Danish control, attitudes, and strategies was also reflected in the infrastructural priorities related to airports and the responsibilities taken by the home rule authorities. The underpinning of small communities was integrated in the political strategies of the home rule (Tobiassen 1998), and—among other things—the ship traffic was maintained even though it had been planned to be phased out. Furthermore, the Greenland authorities tried to connect the small communities into the airport infrastructure by the use of helicopters (Jensen 2019, 59; Taagholt 2009, 282). In 1985, the responsibility of airports and heliports was handed over to the home rule of Greenland (Jensen 2019, 56), apart from the two airports that had military as well as civil functions (Kulusuk in East Greenland and Kangerlussuaq in West Greenland), which in 1986 were put under the responsibility of the State Airport System [Statens Lufthavnsvæsen] (Ancker 1999, 122). The same year, the Greenlandic parliament decided to expand the helicopter service to small communities outside the shipping season (Jensen 2019, 56). Even though the Greenlandic authorities continued to strengthen the air traffic by investing in infrastructural developments in regional centers, this decision to include small communities in the air transport infrastructural matrix has been interpreted by Jensen (2019) as a parallel process of Greenlandic nation building. It was a nation-building process that emphasized the inclusion of all citizens no matter where they lived, and thus also a manifestation of a political choice to support a particular lifestyle associated with Greenlandic culture that can be pursued outside the bigger Greenlandic towns. Furthermore, the coordination and responsibility of the country-wide air traffic was increasingly taken over by Greenlandic authorities. As a consequence of this increased control over airports, the Greenlandic Airport System *Mittarfeqarfiit* was established in 1988.

Immediately following the establishment of Greenlandic home rule

in 1979, the new Greenlandic authorities invested much effort in creating and stabilizing a regime that could address the perceived threat of cultural destabilization through sociotechnical installations. In his opening speech to the community conference (Bygdekongressen) in 1980, the acting head of the Greenlandic government (Landsstyreformand), Moses Olsen, announced that “We must cooperate to make the small communities develop from oblivion to attention at the same level as the rest of society—from being stern sailed to equal development” (1980, 3, translation by the author). The regime was designed to underpin the inclusion of the population no matter where they were living. Arctic researcher Søren Forchhammer calls it an “ideology of rural development” (1997, 7) based on a solidarity principle (Forchhammer 1997, 197): “The meaning of the word was roughly that in the new Home Rule of Greenland no one was inferior, and no one was superior, all were Greenlanders and all were even.” This kind of regime can be seen as a particular kind of way to secure the emerging Inuit nation by pursuing strategies with a centripetal orientation. It can be termed as centripetal because the legitimization of the new infrastructural relations is based on an inward-looking perspective underlining internal integration, control, and a leveling of internal differences. The system of airports was designed to serve the construction of an integrated Greenlandic community. Airports were one of the tools to drive nation building in Greenland, with an emphasis on Inuit livelihoods. Self-government was placed as a central motif in securing rights to cultural and societal self-determination on a nationwide scale. The development of airport infrastructure followed this rationale.

This political nation-building project materialized civil airport infrastructure as closely connected to military infrastructure (the so-called ‘dual-use’). Such an entanglement can, for example, be seen in the case of Kangerlussuaq, where the civil tasks became the responsibility of the Greenland home rule in 1991, even though it was still considered part of the military defense system (Jensen 2019, 57–58). In the infrastructural possibilities and choices of the Greenland authorities, the military rationales were still relevant. The Thule Air Base, however, was not open for civil transit and therefore the air infrastructure in northern Greenland was quite limited and was an Achilles heel for the nation-building project of Greenland. To address this problem, and as a kind of compensation for the forced relocation of the local Inuit population in 1953, the Danish state paid for and built an airfield in Qaanaaq in 2001. By doing so, Greenland could now claim to be able to

service all of its population and thus challenge the U.S. air traffic hegemony in northern Greenland. Greenland has kept this airport open even though the high prices are keeping the local population from using it to the extent anticipated (DR Nyheder Online 2001). The airport, therefore, seems to be a strong symbol of the presence of the Greenlandic welfare state, a Greenlandic national community as well as Inuit sovereignty in a region saturated with and dominated by military ideology. The Greenlandic presence underlines how infrastructure can be used to address a security threat, in this case a threat against the integration of a Greenlandic nation (the referent object).

Airports not only give passengers mobility, but they carry hope and political projects as well. Furthermore, the different configurations of infrastructure are based on different regimes of legitimization. Where the modernization process in the 1960s and 1970s was directed at optimizing the imperial presence of the Danish welfare state in Greenland through centralization in order to develop and integrate Greenland according to Danish values, the infrastructural priorities during the home rule period (1979–2009) were characterized by an increased ambition to underpin Inuit nation building and welfare through a process of combined emphasis on both centralization and decentralization. Consequently, the home rule's strategy was to improve internal relations and respect for a variety of Greenlandic livelihoods existing within the nation and thus to directly deal with a perceived existential threat of cultural destruction due to foreign (Danish) dominance.

Airport Developments in Nuuk and Ilulissat as a Lever of Greenlandic Independence: The Centrifugal National Regime

During the 1990s, it was repeatedly argued by Greenlandic politicians that Nuuk's airport should be expanded and turned into an Atlantic airport replacing Kangerlussuaq (in some scenarios Kangerlussuaq would even be closed). The ambition was not only to reorganize the transport system, improve capacity, reduce travel time, and reduce costs but also to cement Nuuk as the nation's capital. In the ambitious plan, airplanes would depart for Denmark six days a week and there would be several planes flying to Canada as well. This expansion of the airport had also been an integral part of Nuuk's ambition and city planning. After the economic assessments became public, a heated debate quickly dominated the media, where pros and cons were evaluated, both specific

issues (e.g., what are the costs of such a project?) but also more systemic issues (e.g., does this new system favor particular regions at the expense of others?). The Greenlandic government underlined in its economic statement (1997) that the goal of developing the country should be pursued by having a geographical and solidarity-based holistic approach where responsible socioeconomic criteria should make it possible to have a free choice when it comes to place of residence (Landsstyret 1997, section 3.2.1). In other words, the population should—independent of place of residence—be offered similar opportunities and frequency of transportation. This way of thinking clearly reflects how the Greenlandic government continued to think of infrastructure closely together with nation building and equal welfare opportunities for citizens. The airports were made an integral part of the Greenlandic state's techniques of government. In that respect, the proposal was much in line with the home rule ambitions and the legitimization of the *centripetal* national regime. There were, however, some major differences from the ways of understanding airport infrastructure in this new government regime, which can be termed a *centrifugal* national regime.

When Greenland established self-government in 2009, it was a large step toward increased self-determination compared to the possibilities the Home Rule Act laid out. The ever-present wish to gain more independence from Denmark was reboosted after the introduction of the Act on Greenland Self-Government, and this idea has been dominating political discourse ever since. Later, in the beginning of the 2010s, a Transport Commission was asked to investigate the traffic system with the aim of supporting the process of increased economic independence from Denmark. Thus, its task was to reflect on the link between transport infrastructure and economic development of Greenland and ways to strengthen that relationship. The task of the commission (as defined by the Government of Greenland) was to analyze the profitability of the infrastructure on the basis of a nationwide economy (Transportkommissionen 2011, 463). The object of analysis became the 'independent nation,' which also emerged as the object of interest. The welfare security of citizens nationwide, which had been the object of security interest until then, was—if not replaced—then challenged with this new referent object: the 'independent nation.' The suggestions from the commission were based on a rationale of economic profitability and logics of centralization. Five towns were singled out as infrastructural centers, and this ideology of centrism was intended to boost economic

development to the benefit of the national economy headed toward more independence. The political ambition of an independent nation formed a new way to approach security risk. First, the ambition was moved by the idea that status quo was not an option, because the national economy of Greenland was at risk of falling into an increasing gap between income and expenses. Second, it would require an exceptional political and financial move that potentially could break the country. The change in securitization discourse resulted in suggestions to prioritize infrastructural investments in a few regions while still maintaining a strong obligation to serve all inhabitants. Even before the commission had finalized its work, it was met with criticism from several mayors (Qeqqata Kommunia 2010), who argued that it was likely that the commission would suggest the development of airports in Nuuk and Ilulissat at the expense of the rest of the country. In another criticism from a former mayor in South Greenland (Skolemose et al. 2010), the fear was that a closure of Narsarsuaq airport would not only weaken air service in southern Greenland but also put Qaqortoq in a new central and unjust position in the region if the town were to get an airport of its own. Thus some of the local politicians feared that the commission's economic rationale would skew Greenland. The new regime was organized around a more centrifugal understanding of nation building that had an outward looking perspective. The sociotechnical system did still enforce integration within Greenland, but the new referent object—the independent nation—created a need to reduce external dependency (on Denmark) and to boost external relations to other external partners. In this perspective, Greenland needed more airports that could handle larger international airplanes. These airports were to be located where the economic turnover of foreign visitors and partners would be optimal: Nuuk and Ilulissat. The Danish military, however, continued to underline the strategic military importance of the Kangerlussuaq airport and entered an agreement in 2019 (Principaftale med Forsvaret om fortsat brug af Kangerlussuaq Lufthavn 2019) to prevent Greenlandic authorities from closing it down.

When the plans for the extension of the airports in Nuuk and Ilulissat were decided upon, the Danish prime minister expressed great concern in the Danish media about the exorbitant financial investments (Klarskov 2018). Later, when the construction work was taking place, the Greenlandic political parties Inuit Ataqatigiit, Partii Naleraq, and Demokraatit also criticized the escalating expense of the construction (Sørensen 2021).

This dream of an independent and economically self-sustained Greenland created a new rationality where the independence of the nation took center stage and legitimized the huge expenses. Critical voices saw it as a potential threat to the welfare security of citizens spread out in a vast territory and thus a threat to the centripetal strategy pursued by former Greenlandic governments.

To create a new Greenland with a substantial growth economy that was less economically dependent on Denmark, Greenland also started to search for new international partners. The vision fostered a rethinking of Greenland's global position, and Greenland's international diplomacy expanded accordingly. Particularly, technical and economic partners necessary for the development of airports were in focus (apart for partners in extractive industries). The decision to expand the airports in Nuuk and Ilulissat in order to meet the technical requirement of the transatlantic airplanes (longer airfields) required huge investments. Furthermore, the infrastructure projects would require outside entrepreneurs. These two airports point to a new emphasis on a partly centralized development strategy that should/could drive the economic development of the whole country. The two airports took up an important role in securing the nation from the threats of economic dependence and future economic predicaments. The political party Inuit Ataqatigiit argued that "We acknowledge that Nuuk—to a large degree—is a locomotive for the rest of the country. [. . .] Greenland needs a growth based Nuuk" (2018). The development of airports emerged as infrastructures of hope (Sejersen 2019) where the self-sustaining nation had center focus. The Danish government condoned the strategy to strengthen economic development but was concerned about the investments needed (25 percent of GDP).

In an international tender round related to the construction of expanded airports in Nuuk and Ilulissat, the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), 70 percent owned by the Chinese state, was prequalified. That kick-started a situation in which several official voices raised concern, and the construction work of airports was suddenly securitized in a new way. The U.S. secretary of defense openly warned Denmark that there would be a risk of a Chinese military presence in Greenland if CCCC were chosen (Olesen et al. 2020, 34). The Danish Defence Intelligence Service (Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste 2019, 17) also concluded in a report that because of the close connection between Chinese companies and the political system in China, there are particular risks linked to comprehensive Chinese invest-

ments and engagement in Greenland. One risk was that the impact of large-scale investments from China presumably would have a large impact on a society the size of Greenland. The fear was also that Greenland would become an integrated part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is a Chinese ambition to establish a worldwide infrastructural network with China in the center (Andersson and Zeuthen, chap. 6, this vol.).

In the beginning, Denmark and the U.S. saw their long-term geopolitical dominance and alliance in the region challenged by a potential presence of China as an emerging superpower. Hence the referent object of regional political-economic stability (seen from the perspective of U.S. and Denmark) was perceived as being threatened. The U.S. put political pressure on Greenland/Denmark to keep the Chinese company (and potential investments) away from Greenland (Hinshaw and Page 2019a, 2019b). This can be seen as an exceptional securitization move, as it questions the right of Greenland to make its own and independent decisions with respect to infrastructural investments. Greenland, however, tried to desecuritize the issue by emphasizing that foreign investments in infrastructure could not jeopardize government control and hence the political authority of Greenland was not at stake if foreign investors wanted to partner up with Greenland (see also Bislev, Gad, and Zeuthen 2018; see Gad et al., chap. 8, this vol.). The former minister of finance and later leader of the Greenlandic political party Nunatta Qitornai (not part of the government, nor any longer in parliament), Vittus Qujaukisoq, also made it clear that Denmark had no say in Greenlandic infrastructural decisions (cited in Klarskov 2018). Additionally, it was clearly stipulated by Kalaallit Airports that to make a security situation out of an expansion of civil airports was “pure speculation” (cited in Jørgensen 2018). Furthermore, the company stressed that if CCCC were to get the contract, they should meet the same requirements as any other potential international contractor. Thus, Greenland’s strategy to desecuritize the potential Chinese presence was to turn the process of materialization into a contractual relation where technical aspects were at the center. The contract discourse also underpins the idea of an exchange relation embedded in the commercial market-based domain. This approach to the issue resembles what James Fergusson calls the “anti-politics machine” (2002), where highly political issues are depoliticized by recasting the issue as a technical issue and by moving the issue to another policy area where different techniques of government exist.

In the economic (commercial market-based) policy area, the risks are framed differently with respect to the understanding of duties and responsibilities. This desecuritization strategy is, according to Gad et al. (chap. 8, this vol.), one that Greenland often follows in order to downplay the security and defense aspects of national independence while instead highlighting economic or cultural aspects. Gad and colleagues see this tendency as a mode of governance having independence (and the engagement in international partnerships) as a referent object. Consequently, Danish (and U.S.) securitization moves were seen as a threat to this goal. To mediate the escalating conflict and to bypass the Chinese interests, the Danish prime minister decided to enter an agreement with the Greenlandic premier involving a large Danish investment in the infrastructure project, possibilities for Danish loans, and Danish co-ownership of the Greenlandic company that was to manage and run the infrastructure project (Kalaallit Airports). This political move by the Greenlandic premier and Danish prime minister was met with frustration from the Greenlandic party *Partii Naleraq* (Lihn 2018), and the party withdrew from the government collision in protest, interpreting the agreement as Danish neocolonial interference in Greenlandic politics and sovereignty. The agreement can, indeed, be seen as a reminder of the imperial regime and a reminder of the fact that political and colonial histories are still glued to infrastructural development projects in Greenland. The national centrifugal regime pursued by Greenland points to a paradox. On the one hand, the creation of new international partnerships and a new global outward-looking position is a productive step away from the dependency on the former colonial power. On the other hand, such a regime may in fact challenge the security and government rationales inherited from previous regimes, which still are understood (by Denmark and the U.S.) to play a stabilizing role. No matter how hard Greenland tried to desecuritize its infrastructural development projects with Chinese partners, old rationales of former regimes are glued to the political room of maneuver. Consequently, the co-presence of new and old rationales may challenge Greenland's postcolonial strive to make autonomous decisions.

Conclusion

Airports are vital infrastructure for states and citizens. Hence, airports often come to play a crucial role in processes of (de)securitization. Due

to Greenland's geopolitical position in the Arctic and North Atlantic and its own dependency on aircraft as a pivotal means of transportation in the national traffic system, infrastructural developments related to airports have been given special attention in Greenland since World War II. Historically, the airports and their evolution have been enrolled in quite different government regimes. This chapter has analyzed how airports have materialized and been integrated in shifting government rationales during World War II, the Cold War, the period of Danish modernization (1950–70), the Greenland home rule resisting Danish (colonial) policies (1979–2009), and lastly during self-government (2009–). In the latter period, Greenland is trying to reposition itself in the world and to gain more independence from Denmark. These historical periods are often fleshed out on the basis of institutional shifts of regimes, and their demarcation is dominating in most literature on Greenland. The chapter shows, though, how these periods are preoccupied with different infrastructural changes and different oscillations of securitizations and desecuritizations. The chapter also shows how different regimes often coexist.

Oscillations of securitization and desecuritization clearly emerge during these periods, and in each period the referent object, and the existential threat to it, change or are ascribed different values. That has had consequences for how airport infrastructures materialized. The highly escalating U.S. military agenda with its global outreach to protect the 'free world' dominated and set the rationality of airport development in Greenland during and after World War II. The extraordinary American economic investments in Greenland produced a matrix of airports that laid the ground for nonmilitary use as well. Even though this global regime was succeeded by later government regimes, it was present in the background and could emerge (as it did) and influence other regimes. In the 1950s, Denmark started to rethink infrastructure in Greenland as part of a government rationale that was imposed to reconfigure (in Danish rhetoric: evolve) Greenlandic society, which was considered way behind the rest of Denmark in all societal matters. Greenland was considered underdeveloped and thus a threat to Danish ideas of national equality and international prestige. This rationality was organizing airport infrastructure on Danish ideas of centralization and progress, which were laid out in elaborate modernization plans. These plans put small and remote communities and their way of life in a marginal position. Even though welfare was a central driver in the Danish 'imperial regime,' the focus of orientation was the idea of a

Danish-controlled and Danish-defined welfare. Infrastructural priorities carried the shadow of Danish dominance. With the establishment of Greenland's own government in 1979, the referent object under threat and the rationale of materialization was primarily the welfare of all Greenlandic citizens no matter where they lived. The centripetal national regime installed by the home rule authorities of Greenland maintained the focus on the welfare of the Greenlandic citizens, but radically changed the referent object that was to take center stage. Welfare and progress were to be defined by Greenlanders, and the Danish threats to Greenlandic culture were to be ended. The perceived threats against Greenlandic culture and lifestyles were counteracted by reorganizing the airport infrastructure. The emerging Inuit nation-building processes were reflected in inward-looking infrastructural priorities that included all communities. This centripetal orientation had Greenlandic culture as the major point of reference.

In 2009, however, the Greenlandic ambition to gain more economic independence from Denmark fostered a new kind of postcolonial rationality of centralization. In contrast to the Danish imperial regime and the national centripetal regime, this new political regime was based on an idea of securing Greenland as an economically viable and independent nation. In order to pursue this state-making ambition, Greenland engaged internationally and looked for new partners. The chapter defines this new national outlook to the world as a centrifugal orientation. Seen from a Danish and American perspective, this new international orientation and partnership making was securitized because one of the potential new partners was a Chinese company. The U.S. and Denmark saw it as a dangerous partner because it could give China a foothold in Greenland. Despite Greenland's attempt to desecuritize infrastructural developments by situating them in the policy area of economy (commercial contracts) and the responsibility of the self-government, the Danish government intervened in airport infrastructural developments. By doing so, the national centrifugal regime that was the new signature of the Government of Greenland was overruled by other policy and security interests that pointed to other referent objects. Even though the Greenlandic government in practice could continue airport development as intended, the case shows how different regimes may (have to) coexist.

This chapter points at how infrastructures can be seen as important parts of any government regime. Furthermore, it shows how any kind of regime pursues its rationalities, ambitions, and strategies through

different materializations of infrastructure. Thus the same infrastructures (like airports) are—through different kinds of materialization—entwined in several regimes with different rationalities. The shifting regimes install new rationales and reconfigures the referent object that is perceived to be under threat. These—often radical—systemic changes in regimes result in oscillations of securitization and desecuritization, and in Greenland the oscillations have required the coexistence of different regimes.

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10 | (De)securitization, Independence, and Normal Politics in Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat

Nicholas Andrews, Joe Crowther, and Wilfrid Greaves

Though much is written on security in the Arctic, there remains limited analysis of the security interests and strategies of Arctic Indigenous peoples. Existing scholarship emphasizes the varied approaches of Arctic Indigenous peoples toward securitization as a method of mobilizing power to defend their interests. Some Indigenous peoples and organizations have attempted to construct issues as existential threats to their survival, while others have not. Given interrelated threats to the survival and well-being of Indigenous peoples across the Arctic, particularly those related to colonialism and climate change, their differing approaches to securitization present an empirical puzzle: Why do some peoples attempt securitization as a political strategy while others do not?

This chapter offers a comparative analysis of security politics in the Inuit polities of Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland) and Inuit Nunangat in northern Canada, respectively. Using securitization theory, we argue these Inuit polities have differed in their use of securitization as a political strategy to elevate their highest priority issues. While not monocausal, a relationship exists between colonial history and modern decolonial politics that makes securitization less desirable in Kalaallit Nunaat but more appealing to Inuit in Inuit Nunangat. Despite similar social characteristics and their contemporary attainment of high degrees of political autonomy, 250 years of Danish colonialism in Kalaallit Nunaat produced a popular movement for Greenlandic independence, whereas the relatively brief period of direct colonialism in

Inuit Nunangat during the 20th century resulted in no Inuit independence movement. We outline conceptual and empirical links between these colonial histories, contemporary independence movements, and differing approaches to securitization by Inuit in Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat in light of their distinct political priorities.

The first section outlines research on Indigenous peoples and securitization and presents a modified approach to securitization theory that accounts for both the common structural position of Indigenous peoples within state contexts and their distinct political priorities. The second section compares the colonial histories and contemporary movements for Inuit self-determination in Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat, culminating in their unequal pursuit of full sovereignty and independence. The third section examines Inuit and securitization in the Arctic. Employing examples from geopolitical and environmental security claims, it outlines how Inuit have resisted dominant military securitizations but differed in their own efforts at countersecuritization. We argue that whether Inuit have pursued securitization to mobilize action on their most urgent priorities relates to their differing emphasis on political independence. Independence for Kalaallit Nunaat requires economic development and foreign investment that necessitates maintaining ‘normal politics’ antithetical to the crisis connotations and emergency measures associated with securitization. By contrast, without the goal of independence and the associated fear of undermining their desired political future, Inuit in Canada have been free to attempt their own countersecuritization to dominant security discourses, albeit with limited success. The conclusion summarizes the theoretical and empirical contributions of this analysis for the study of securitization and Arctic Indigenous politics.

As non-Inuit and non-Indigenous scholars, we do not speak on behalf of Inuit nor seek to impose our own views of Arctic security. Rather, we aim to reflect the perspectives that different Inuit actors have publicly expressed of their own interests, priorities, and visions for the future. Our goal is a critical contribution to research on securitization in the Arctic that connects Inuit peoples’ colonial experiences and contemporary realities in order to demonstrate how historical and ideational factors influence political and security politics even in the face of similar material conditions, including fundamentally different decisions over what and whether to frame particular issues as security threats.

Constructing (Indigenous) In/Security

As outlined in the introduction to this book, securitization theory provides a compelling framework for explaining the social construction of security issues. While subject to many internal debates and disagreements, securitization generally envisions all potential issues falling on a spectrum from depoliticized-politicized-secritized. Issues can move from politicized to securitized, but also from securitized back to politicized, or “normal politics,” through the reverse process of *desecuritization*. The stakes of such movement are high: securitizing an issue (re) produces a particular social meaning of in/security that can entail political and normative trade-offs, including between security practices and other values such as liberty, democracy, or justice. For example, as discussed below, accepting climate change as an existential threat requires trade-offs in terms of ceasing the practices responsible for producing anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, notably the consumption of fossil fuels, large-scale nonrenewable resource extraction, and land-use changes (Greaves 2021). Though permissible in the context of normal politics, if climate change were effectively securitized it would be logically and functionally impossible to maintain the practices of “carboniferous capitalism” that have caused it (Dalby 2013). In effect, there are costs and consequences to any successful securitization, and certain practices may be precluded or prohibited while others are legitimated.

Not everyone is equally able to engage in securitization, which as a “structured field” characterized by unequal “social power” differently shapes actors’ capacities to securitize various issues (Balzacq 2005, 190–91; Buzan, Wæver, and De Wilde 1998, 3). Identity thus mediates the interests and experiences of individuals and groups, affecting how they experience in/security and whose securitizing moves can succeed (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004). Greaves (2016a, 2016b) has shown that Indigenous peoples’ security claims are structurally excluded from achieving securitization success, that is, being accepted by the state or other power holders. While various Indigenous actors have identified threats to their continued survival and well-being, these efforts have failed to mobilize an adequate response from their respective states. In fact, states consistently reject exceptional measures in response to security claims that identify damage to Indigenous lands and lives from natural resource extraction, lack of authority over their traditional territories, or global warming (Greaves 2018). In sum, due to

what is by definition Indigenous peoples' nondominant status within the settler or colonial contexts in which they reside, securitization is unavailable as a strategy to defend their interests against the states they reside in.

The analysis in this chapter diverges from but complements prior research on Indigenous peoples and securitization. While the few studies examining Indigenous peoples and securitization typically focus on the power of state security claims over those of Indigenous peoples (Greaves 2016a, 2018; Hossain 2016; Szarejko 2021), there is a prior step in the study of securitization that is often overlooked: the very decision to frame a given issue as a security threat. Securitization is a discursive choice; if no issue is inherently a security issue, and other means exist to affect an appropriate state or political response, then factors that influence the initial decision to securitize or not are also salient for securitization analysis. The remainder of this chapter compares the conditions under which two similar Indigenous peoples, Inuit in Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland) and in Inuit Nunangat in northern Canada, have diverged in their pursuit of securitization as a strategy to achieve their political goals. Our analysis suggests that material dangers to life and well-being are *not* a sufficient condition for groups to attempt securitization. Securitization can conflict with other social and political priorities, and security per se is not always the highest goal of Indigenous self-determination. In the following comparative analysis of Inuit security politics, the objective of political independence conflicts with the logic of securitization. A more complete understanding of Indigenous peoples and security thus requires assessing both material and ideational factors that underpin the desire to securitize, and differentiating between distinct groups on the basis of their historical experiences and contemporary agendas.

Inuit Nunaat: Context and History

Inuit Nunaat, the transnational Inuit homeland, has a long and complex colonial past.¹ Around the 11th century CE, Inuit ancestors from the Thule culture migrated east from Alaska along the coast into the Arctic Archipelago and Greenland, encountering and eventually assimilating the Dorset/Tuniit people who already resided there (Petersen 2001, 320). Despite being among the last territory reached by Inuit, Greenland was the likely site of first contact between Inuit and Europe-

ans. Norse settlements in southwest Greenland were established after 982 CE and coexisted with first Tuniit then Thule/Inuit peoples for centuries, before losing contact with Europe and collapsing by the 1400s (Nuttall 2017). The oft-cited date for modern Denmark's colonial sovereignty over Greenland is 1721, when the missionary Hans Egede returned with the goal of spreading Christianity and finding the lost Norse settlements. By 1733, Moravian missionaries had joined those from Denmark-Norway and further expanded European settlement, including the eventual Greenlandic capital of Nuuk (Lüdecke 2005). Over the next few centuries, interactions between Europeans and Inuit increased as more settlements were established. By the late 1700s, Kalaallit Nunaat was divided into two colonies—North and South Greenland, respectively—directly administered from Copenhagen. Danish authorities created legal divides between Inuit and Europeans, such as banning interracial marriage and excluding Inuit from waged employment, forcing them to maintain traditional subsistence practices of hunting and fishing with limited incorporation into the monetary economy (Rud 2017). Nonetheless, in the primary inhabited region along the west coast, Inuit were largely integrated into the colonial economy by the mid-19th century, including a measure of social welfare and public education provided by both state and church.

Around the same time, Europeans were also making inroads into the archipelago and coastal regions west of Greenland that constitute Inuit Nunangat and would much later become part of northern Canada. From 1719, whaling ships were active in the Davis Strait between Greenland and Baffin Island, and by the mid-1800s year-round whaling stations brought intensified interaction between Europeans and local Inuit (Bennett and Rowley 2004). While Inuit were not yet colonized, their contact with Europeans resulted in illness and the overhunting of whales, which reduced the animal populations for Inuit hunters and encouraged a shift toward trade in other animals such as seals and walrus. This transition impacted Inuit immensely, and the fur trade became a mainstay of the northern economy by the 1900s (Wright 2014).

Whaling and Christianization had profound effects on Inuit and the extension of European colonialism into the North American Arctic. The whaling industry resulted in permanent European settlement, while religious missions led to more direct governance by state authorities. Southern parts of Inuit Nunangat were included in the Rupert's Land tract granted to the Hudson's Bay Company, and com-

pany officials and Christian missions became involved in (re)education initiatives and health services and worked alongside the Northwest Mounted Police to enforce new laws and policies, ultimately altering the ability for many Inuit to practice their traditional cultures and ways of living (Burke 2017). Sovereignty over the lands that became northern Canada were transferred from Great Britain between 1870 and 1880, though the federal government did little to assert this claim (Smith and Lackenbauer 2014). The region was only modestly explored over the following years, often by non-Canadians, and by 1900 the extent of Canada's Arctic territory remained unclear. Despite assuming formal sovereignty, Canada at first exercised little control over this massive area, though this would not last. By the mid-20th century Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat were governed as quintessentially colonial possessions of Denmark and Canada, respectively. With Danish sovereignty over Greenland affirmed by the International Court of Justice in the 1930s, the two Inuit polities soon embarked on different political trajectories. Though emerging from similar material contexts, ideational factors related to the social production of distinct priorities were about to diverge in ways that would inform future Inuit security politics.

Inuit Autonomy and Self-Determination

Kalaallit Nunaat

During the colonial period from the mid-1800s onward, the relationship between Kalaallit Inuit and Denmark changed as a result of broad sociocultural forces. These included greater connectivity among Inuit family groups, founding of public education institutions, growth of Kalaallisut-language media, establishment of voluntary and cultural organizations, and, after 1908, of elected municipal councils (Petersen 2001, 323–24). This helped produce a common ethnic and cultural identity that united Greenlanders while differentiating them from Inuit elsewhere, who remained more independent from settler-colonial societies in Canada, Alaska, and Russia until the 20th century. After 200 years of religious and resource-driven colonialism, the geopolitical and strategic significance of Greenland exploded as first the Second World War then the Cold War intensified Danish and American military activities on the island. These included the contentious establishment of the Thule U.S. air base, which required the removal of local

Inuit from the area (Kristensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen 2018; see Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). In 1953, Greenland's formal colonial status ended when it was integrated into the Kingdom of Denmark, gaining representation in its parliament. This integration, when Greenland preferred to remain a colony, fueled an anticolonial Greenlandic cultural and political movement that ultimately ended in an agreement for Greenlandic home rule in 1979.

Home rule afforded Greenlanders expanded powers and considerable autonomy; it established a separate parliament (Inatsisartut) and government of Greenland (Naalakkersuisut) and led to its departure from the European Community in 1985 following a popular referendum (Gad 2014). But home rule had a limited effect on the distribution of political and economic power that heavily favored ethnic Danes (Petersen 2001, 325), and a second referendum led to a new Self-Government Act in 2009 that further increased Greenlandic autonomy. Inatsisartut and Naalakkersuisut gained control over mineral resources and the right to govern police, civil law, and aspects of the coast guard, should they so choose; decisions over future independence were also devolved solely to the Greenlandic people (Shadian 2010). Self-government provides for an annual block grant from Copenhagen of nearly EUR500 million, but leaves several important issues to Denmark, including defense, foreign policy, criminal justice, and immigration (Grydehøj 2020). The powers transferred to Naalakkersuisut clearly established Greenland as an autonomous polity, but reflected a more-than-30-year campaign to achieve not just autonomy, but independence.

In the 1960s and 1970s, many Greenlanders returned home from studying in Denmark informed by the anticolonial ideas and movements that led to the unraveling of European imperialism. This raised the level of political consciousness on the island, paved the way for a strong nationalist movement to emerge, and led to home rule (Grydehøj 2016). As in other global contexts where peoples developed new national identities formed through hybrid Indigenous and foreign influences, colonial institutions afforded an opportunity to achieve political power in pursuit of a project of national independence (Anderson 1983). Since home rule, efforts to gain independence have centered on political parties that draw on essentialized imaginings of Greenlandic identity as a distinctly Inuit community, defined on the one hand as “evolv[ing] around two basic narrative figures: a figure of the decline of traditional culture and a figure of modernization,” and on the other in definite contrast to Denmark (Gad 2009, 144–45; Jacobsen and Gad

2018). The largest and most successful electoral party in Greenland, Siumut, was formed in 1977 from a movement originally united around nationalist slogans like “Greenlandization” and “Development in Greenland on Greenlandic terms,” and its membership largely consisted of young Greenlanders who opposed Danish development policy in Greenland (Dahl 1986; Larsen 1992). Siumut held the premiership of Greenland (Naalakkersuisut siulittaasuat) from 1979 to 2009 and again from 2013 until April 2021, when the Inuit Ataqatigiit party, which also favors independence and previously governed from 2009 to 2013, was elected for the second time. In effect, since home rule Greenland has only been governed by pro-independence parties, and assuming full sovereignty eventually has been the stated objective of every Greenlandic government. Unsurprisingly, a 2018 poll found more than two-thirds of Greenlanders support full independence in the next two decades (Breum 2019). Due to the prior institution building under Danish colonial rule, the structures for a Greenlandic state have long existed, it just remains for Kalaallit Inuit to fully claim them.

Inuit Nunangat

The political trajectory of Inuit in Canada is very different, with the establishment of representative government lagging Greenland by decades, and Inuit institutions by nearly a century. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, most Inuit in Canada resided in the Northwest Territories (NWT), a vast region shared with numerous other Indigenous peoples and eventually a substantial non-Indigenous population. Northern Canada was governed directly by Ottawa as a series of colonies until the 1970s, and during the 1950s and 1960s federal policies produced lasting harm, including forced settlement in permanent communities, separation of Inuit children and parents through the residential school system, and government-sanctioned culling of sled dogs, which diminished Inuit capacity to practice traditional livelihoods (Goldring 2015; QIA 2010). Pressures for democratization, self-government, and Indigenous rights increased, but “direct rule from Ottawa denie[d] [Northerners] the regional political representation and authority enjoyed by the majority in the south” (Burnet 1987, 185). The first fully elected legislative body in NWT, including a majority of Indigenous members, was not installed until 1975, and executive decision making was not transferred to the elected leader of the territorial legislature until 1986.

In response to this system of colonial administration in which they lacked even the federal right to vote until 1960, Inuit became increasingly active in pursuing self-government. In contrast to Greenland, however, it was first necessary to establish Inuit-specific institutions, particularly in the eastern Canadian Arctic, where Inuit formed a large demographic majority. Only then, with new institutions in place to represent the interests of Inuit nationally and serve as a locus for community and regional organizing, could “Project Nunavut” be pursued by the younger generation of southern-educated leaders who emerged from the social and cultural traumas of the 1940s and 1950s (Légaré 2008, 341–42). The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) was founded in 1971 to represent Inuit in negotiations with the federal government, supplemented in 1982 by the Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN), which took over the mandate for negotiating Inuit land claims with Canada. In 1993, TFN was superseded by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) as the legal representative of Inuit in Nunavut, and in 2000 ITC became the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the national organization for all Inuit in Canada.

Empowered by a landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision, Inuit and other Indigenous peoples forced the government of Canada into a new policy of negotiating comprehensive land claims agreements. The first of these was signed in 1975 with Inuit and Cree in northern Quebec, followed by four other Inuit land claims agreements: the 1984 Inuvialuit Final Agreement, 1993 Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, 2005 Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, and 2006 Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement (Dombrowski et al. 2016). These modern treaties transferred money and title over land to new Inuit organizations and devolved powers over a range of matters including culture and identity, environmental and wildlife management, the public sector, and taxation to four Inuit self-governing regions, in exchange for the extinguishment of Inuit sovereignty in favor of the Crown (Alcantara and Davidson 2015; Bernauer 2015). The federal government supports programs in Inuit communities and to Inuit governments and organizations, including approximately CAD\$1.7 billion per year in transfers to the government of Nunavut.

Alongside Greenland, the creation of Nunavut in 1999 as a full territory within the Canadian federation resulted in two de facto Inuit polities in the eastern North American Arctic. Yet despite similar histories of colonial imposition, Inuit in Canada have never expressed a comparable desire for independence as those in Kalaallit Nunaat. Although

united by a shared sense of Inuit identity across Inuit Nunangat, it has been harder in Canada than in Greenland to imagine a single, autonomous Inuit polity because Inuit do not reside within a single contiguous territory or jurisdiction. The establishment of separate Inuit governments, representative organizations, and land claim corporations, with a corresponding division of legal title and financial resources, reflects the differentiation of Inuit living in different regions of Canada (Bennett et al. 2016, 637–40).

The concept of ‘sovereignty’ features prominently in discussions of the Canadian Arctic, and Inuit have asserted themselves within that discourse by reminding Canada that its Arctic sovereignty claims are underpinned by Inuit prior occupancy and jurisdiction (Nickels 2013; Simon 2009). But even when Inuit have been frustrated with Canadian actions, the assertion of “Inuit sovereignty” stops well short of calls for independence (Jacobsen 2019, 64–65). Many Inuit embrace a narrative of “First Canadians, Canadians First” to express their contemporary identities as both ancestral rights-holders in Inuit Nunangat and Indigenous citizens of Canada (Kusugak 2013, 17). As the CEO of one of the Inuit land claim corporations testified to Parliament: “Notwithstanding the colonialism that marred the historic interaction of Inuit and the Canadian state, Inuit are proud Canadians” (quoted in Greaves 2016b, 49). The changing name of the national Inuit organization underscores this point: The shift from the aspirational Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (“Inuit will be united”) to the declarative Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (“Inuit *are* united in Canada”) after the creation of Nunavut illustrates a general satisfaction with the degree of Inuit self-determination in Canada (ITK n.d.). Thus despite their similarities as peoples with historical experiences of colonial domination transformed more recently into self-government and political autonomy, Inuit in Canada and Greenland diverge with respect to their desire for full independence and internationally recognized sovereignty. These distinct political preferences, in turn, have affected Canadian and Kalaallit Inuit responses toward security in their homelands.

Inuit and Arctic Security

Distinct from their own later efforts to reframe the meaning of security, Inuit were profoundly affected by state-centered military securitizations and strategic practices from the mid-20th century onwards.

During the Second World War, the American military presence increased in Inuit territories across Alaska, Canada, and Greenland (Kikkert and Lackenbauer 2020). During the Cold War, superpower nuclear competition meant that Inuit were unable to determine the conditions of security within their homelands. A pattern across both Greenland and northern Canada was for decisions taken on national security and strategic grounds to have harmful consequences for Inuit. For instance, in 1943, the U.S. military installed a weather station at the Greenlandic village of Pituffik; its transformation into the Thule Air Base resulted in the forced relocation of Inuit from the area (see Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). The relocation remains controversial, as does the stationing of American nuclear weapons in Greenland and environmental damage related to the Thule Air Base, such as radioactive contamination from the crash of a nuclear-armed B-52 bomber in 1968 (Doel 2016; Kristensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen 2018). To this day, Thule essentially operates as a U.S. exclave, unable to be closed by either Naalakkersuisut, as it lacks control over foreign and defense policy, or by Denmark, due to a 1950s era NATO defense agreement with the United States (Ackrén 2019).

The story is similar in Inuit Nunangat, particularly with respect to the construction of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) radar line. The DEW line comprised 63 radar stations across the North American Arctic, two-thirds of them in Canada, with the primary purpose of providing early warning of incoming Soviet bombers (Hird 2016). DEW line stations began closing in 1963 after becoming partially obsolete, but their impacts continued for decades. In addition to the social and economic upheaval they caused, environmental contaminants from DEW line construction such as asbestos and PCBs have been found in soil, water, air, and animals throughout Inuit Nunangat. For instance, in Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, a Cold War-era military dump within the city limits contains industrial military waste from decommissioned DEW line stations (Hird 2016; Lackenbauer and Farish 2007). The forced relocation in the 1950s of Inuit from Quebec to Ellesmere Island far to the north to serve as “human flagpoles” supporting Canada’s Arctic sovereignty also produced lasting harm and reflected trade-offs between state-centric, Cold War military securitizations and Inuit well-being (Makkik 2009; Marcus 1991; Tester and Kulchyski 1994).

Notwithstanding these harms, militarization was instrumental in developing infrastructure, shifting popular perceptions of the Arctic, and facilitating later scientific research, much of which emphasized

environmental protection (Lackenbauer and Farish 2007). Most politicians in Greenland had a “pragmatic” attitude toward American military installations, leading some scholars to note that Greenlanders could, and perhaps should, view them as also defending their own security (Taagholt and Hansen 2001, 61). Military facilities such as Thule, Goose Bay in Labrador, and DEW line stations also provided important sources of local employment and service provision. But during the 1980s, advocates increasingly challenged the military nature of Cold War securitizations in favor of countersecuritizing moves focusing on human and environment-centric conceptions of security (Nickels 2013; Simon 2009). Inuit and other Indigenous peoples argued Arctic militarization came at their direct expense, such as through damage to human and animal health from chemical pollutants and environmental contamination, low-flying aircraft, and military facilities located in ecologically sensitive areas (Erasmus 1986). Their critique called for an end to military activities in the Arctic, including the deployment of nuclear weapons, and for a shift toward “redefin[ing] the notion of security in broad terms of collective security for all peoples and states” (Simon 1989, 35). After decades of dominant (re)productions of national security in the Arctic that did not protect their lives, lands, and collective well-being, Inuit voices were at the fore of efforts to articulate alternative security claims on behalf of themselves and the environment as referent objects to be defended.

More recently, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), the transnational NGO that represents Inuit internationally as a permanent participant at the Arctic Council, released a 2010 Arctic Policy, which states that military activities in the Arctic Ocean pose unacceptable environmental and other security risks, and reiterates late-Cold War era calls for an Arctic zone of peace.² The ICC insists that the location and operation of military bases must go through an assessment process in order to prevent adverse environmental impacts and that “safeguarding of the Arctic environment must take precedence over military exercises and activities” (Simon 1989, 29). These developments reflect ongoing contestation of Arctic military securitizations within Inuit Nunaat and have fueled ongoing debate over the appropriate meaning and methods of implementing security in the Arctic and for Inuit (Greaves and Lackenbauer 2021). In the remainder of this chapter, we examine the different actions of Inuit in Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat with respect to securitization and the maintenance of normal politics in their homelands.

Kalaallit Nunaat: Normal Politics and Independence

Even with self-government, Kalaallit Inuit lack the political authority to fully securitize issues for their homeland. Defense and security policy remain the purview of Denmark, though they have been developed with significant Greenlandic input since Greenland achieved home rule: “The Danish government kept the Home Rule Administration informed to a greater degree than before and consulted it on foreign policy and security policy matters affecting Greenland” (Taagholt and Hansen 2001, 55). Though often dissatisfied with its role in formulating Danish foreign and security policy vis-à-vis Greenland, Naalakkersuisut has not articulated a distinct conception of security for Greenlanders. In this respect, Greenlandic authorities have eschewed their own countersecuritizations while periodically seeking to desecuritize dominant military-strategic securitizations emanating from Copenhagen and Washington, DC (see Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4, this vol.). This is especially noteworthy in light of the widespread focus on climate change within other Arctic security discourses and the specific threats for Inuit posed by climate change (Sejersen 2015; Greaves 2016b; Greaves and Lackenbauer 2021).

Neither Denmark’s 2011 Arctic strategy nor its 2022 foreign and security strategy presents climate change in security terms (Jacobsen 2022). The former states “the main goals of the Arctic strategy are to ensure a peaceful, secure and safe Arctic, with sustained economic growth and development, with respect for the vulnerable Arctic climate, environment and nature and close cooperation with our international partners,” adding that the Arctic’s “opening up to the world” means “new challenges and new opportunities,” including how to “improve the living conditions” of Arctic Indigenous peoples (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2011). In Naalakkersuisut’s own foreign policy strategy,³ climate change is briefly mentioned just twice, even though it has been at the very center of Arctic politics for at least three decades. Popular concern over climate change among Greenlanders is still relatively high, but it is overshadowed by economic and social issues such as employment and cost of living (Ackrén and Nielsen 2021). Overall, official climate change and security discourse in Greenland is surprisingly limited, particularly compared to other Arctic polities and Inuit institutions.

Instead of framing climate change as a security issue, Greenlandic discourse emphasizes a right to economic development, depicting

Greenland among the less-developed states within global climate negotiations. Former premier Kim Kielsen stated in a June 2008 interview, when he was environment minister, that Greenland was “not a developed country yet” and that “to be self-sustaining, it is hard not to do something which will emit more CO₂—then again, it has to be as little as possible” (Bjørst 2008, 26–37). During the United Nations COP15 meeting in Copenhagen in 2009, former premier Kuupik Kleist noted the importance of “common but differentiated responsibilities” as a strategy for Greenland, and in 2010 that “we are especially interested in having rights that enable development. You have to clarify which countries can reduce their enormous use of energy and give room to others” (Bjørst 2018, 128–29). He added a new component at COP16 in Mexico by advocating for special provisions for developing countries and Indigenous peoples, including, of course, Greenland. During COP16, Greenland began to discuss issues of climate and development *as an Indigenous people*, effectively utilizing for the first time its heightened autonomy under self-government and its unique standing to speak as the voice of Kalaallit, and Arctic Indigenous peoples more broadly, within multilateral climate negotiations (Jacobsen 2015). This voice, however, was not used to advance a particular conception of security in Greenland or for Inuit.

Instead, this heightened legitimacy was used by Greenland to influence policy and decision making pertaining to the intersection of climate change and economic development. Greenlandic policymakers have used the island’s low overall emissions as a justification for carboniferous growth within a discourse of sustainable development (Jacobsen 2019). Prioritizing self-determination and ‘Greenlandization,’ “the *economic self-sustainability* for Greenland offered one very local and situated perspective [. . .] with Greenlanders positioned not as victims or witnesses, but as ‘*potentially marginalized citizens*’ of the world fighting for their right to sustainable development” (Bjørst 2018, 126, emphasis in original). The Greenlandic perspective on Arctic economic development illustrates the more general point that in many contexts, “far from being mere victims of the impacts of industrial development, Indigenous peoples are participants in, and increasingly beneficiaries of, the development of the Arctic resource frontier” (Nuttall 2010, 23). In this perspective, political autonomy is only the first step in a Greenlandic national vision that transforms the long legacy of colonial subordination into a modern collective identity that eschews further victimhood, including that entailed by climate change. The

embrace of development as a means of resisting victimhood is explicit: At the 2014 Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Iqaluit, Greenland's representative stated that "Greenland will benefit from the new economic opportunities which climate change also makes possible. [. . .] Greenland will not be a passive victim of climate change" but needs a "building of resilience" to manage the impacts of climate change (Kingdom of Denmark/Greenland's Delegation to the Arctic Council 2014). To that end, in 2013 Inatsisartut lifted a 25-year ban on uranium mining in Greenland, and in November 2020 Naalakkersuisut opened new areas off the western coast for oil and gas drilling, though the ban was reinstated by the new government after the 2021 election. The pursuit of economic development is a requisite part of normal, nonsecuritized politics in which climate change produces opportunities for Greenlanders, not threats to them.

Just as climate change is linked to economic development, development is tied to the desire for independence. Greenlandic politicians, particularly from the party Siumut, routinely claim development is not only necessary to finance independence from Denmark, but that new development brings independence closer to reality (Wilson 2017, 512–13). Most Greenlanders support independence, but polls suggest most would be opposed if it lowered their standard of living (Breum 2019), making development a popular prerequisite for independence. Many academics support this assessment. Gad argues that since 2001 Greenland has followed a "double climate strategy that argues for growth and industrial development in Greenland," but this should be recognized as part of an "ongoing nation-building process with a growing self-image of Greenland as being on the path to full sovereignty and independence" (Gad 2014, 99; see Gad, Bjørst and Jacobsen, chap. 3, this vol.). Bjørst (2018, 131) notes that extractive industries may be the *only* road to economic development, and thus independence. Rasmussen (2019, 12) also considers it "very likely that Greenland will base its strategy for independence on economic rather than geopolitical considerations." Climate change is thus downplayed as a threat because acting upon it, such as by limiting opportunities for carbon-intensive economic development, would also threaten the possibility of political independence for Kalaallit Nunaat.

If economic development requires the maintenance of 'normal politics' vis-à-vis the changing climate rather than a shift to the emergency footing required by securitization, then the Greenlandic strategy demands a qualified approach toward climate change advocacy. This

curbs the degree to which Greenlanders are prepared to articulate climate change as a security issue with existential implications for their homeland. Since achieving home rule, the political priority in Greenland has not been more security, but greater autonomy and eventually development of an economy that can fiscally support independence, even if this means increasing Greenland's greenhouse gas emissions and thus contribution to global climate change. The primary political objective in Kalaallit Nunaat, as reflected through the electoral success of the Siumut and Inuit Ataqatigiit parties and broad public support for independence, is therefore antithetical to the invocation of emergency associated with securitization. Expanding the extractive development necessary to fund independence, and thus finally ending the long relationship with Denmark, is a greater political priority for Inuit in Greenland than attempting to mobilize political and discursive resources through a strategy of attempted securitization.

The Greenlandic preference for desecuritization and maintenance of normal politics is also evident with respect to other actors' attempted securitizations. In its pursuit of foreign investment to fund development and thus facilitate independence, Greenland has courted aspiring Arctic actors including China. This has provoked concern from Denmark and the United States over the security and defense implications of Chinese investment in strategic Greenlandic infrastructure projects (Andersson, Zeuthen, and Kalvig 2018). In 2019, a Chinese state-owned company withdrew its bid to build two new airports in Greenland in the face of Danish and American concerns that it would compromise their national security interests in the North Atlantic (See Sejersen, chap. 9, this vol.). Although the project was supported by then-Premier Kielsen, the United States pressured Denmark to intervene to prevent the projects, with one "high-ranking Danish official" stating "we are deeply concerned. China has no business in Greenland" (Matzen and Daly 2018; Hinshaw and Page 2019; see Jacobsen and Lindbjerg, chap. 7, this vol.). By contrast, Greenlandic officials pushed back against the securitization of Chinese investments, with the same article quoting one saying: "In Greenland we don't suffer from China anxiety, like they obviously do in the government in Copenhagen. [. . .] They lack an understanding for Greenland's need for investments, and we can sense a big interest in China for our projects." Greenland's domestic needs, it implies, should outweigh the security concerns of other states from being imposed on Greenlandic territory.

The response to former U.S. president Donald Trump's surprise pro-

posal in 2019 to purchase Greenland from Denmark without having consulted either party also underscored the preference for business as usual over securitized politics. While noting that Greenland remains committed to membership in NATO, Kielsen indicated that “any military expansion or change that involves Greenland can only happen if we are part of the decision making. Our people do not want installations in Greenland that would make us a prime target in the case of larger conflicts” (Breum 2020). In this instance, the Greenlandic desecuritizing move is twofold: that their self-determination be respected with respect to further militarization of their homeland, and that militarization by foreign powers not result in an actual reduction of physical security for Greenlandic people. In both cases—whether of Chinese-built infrastructure or militarization and Greenland’s strategic geopolitical location—Naalakkersuisut and members of Inatsisartut indicated that securitization contradicts their desire for normal politics that is inviting to foreign investment but not foreign conflicts. Even in the context of existing security and defense policies that implicate Greenland in military relationships with NATO allies, Naalakkersuisut’s preferred approach is to do nothing that might alienate businesses from investing in Greenland due to concerns over future potential conflicts (Rasmussen 2019).

Inuit Nunangat: Securitizing Climate Change

The Inuit perspective on security in Inuit Nunangat is very different. In the context of their newfound autonomy, Inuit political actors in Canada became active participants in Arctic security discourses, though they had virtually no direct role in the development of security policy. Greaves (2016a, 2016b) has shown that Inuit securitizing moves depict threats to the natural environment, Inuit culture, and their political autonomy within the context of the Canadian state. As noted before, Inuit argued more than 30 years ago that Canada’s approach to Arctic issues “on the basis of defence and military considerations [. . .] too often serve[s] to promote our *insecurity*,” whereas for Inuit “Arctic security includes environmental, economic and cultural, as well as defence, aspects” (Simon 1989, 36, 67, emphasis in original). More recently, statements and published writings from Inuit leaders reflect how Inuit view security in holistic terms that connect individuals, communities, and the land (see Nickels 2013; Greaves 2016b, 40–41). They also make a clear link between increased state interventionism by the federal

government in the 1940s and 1950s and the resulting “decimation of Inuit security” due to chronic poor housing, malnutrition, ill health, suicide, substance abuse, and decline in land-based cultural and subsistence activities (Nungak 2013, 14). Overall, Inuit security discourse in Canada emphasizes the interrelationship between environmental changes, colonialism, and modernization.

Inuit in Canada, however, have particularly attempted to securitize climate change. Survival for all three of the primary Inuit referent objects—the environment, cultural identity, and political autonomy—are linked to human-caused environmental change. In the early 21st century, virtually all Inuit securitizing moves identified either direct or indirect impacts of climate change as the source of threat (Greaves 2016a, 465). Inuit leaders are unambiguous about these climate-related threats. For instance, Mary Simon—former president of ICC and ITK, and the first Indigenous governor general of Canada—identified many issues as crucial for the Inuit future, but reserved securitizing language for climate change: “The urgency surrounding mitigating the impact of climate change grows with the almost daily news. [. . .] Arctic ice is melting three times faster than models had earlier predicted—and the earlier predictions were alarming” (Simon 2009, 256). Terry Audla, Simon’s successor at ITK, notes “climate change at a rate and of an intensity that appears unprecedented, and well outside Inuit cultural memory, creates insecurities of an entirely new nature, generating concerns about the sustainability of large aspects of our inherited and acquired patterns of life [. . .] our very sense of who and what we are as Inuit” (Audla 2013, 8). Sheila Watt-Cloutier, another former president of the ICC, concurs that “human-induced climate change is undermining the ecosystem upon which Inuit depend for their cultural survival [. . .] threaten[ing] our ability far to the North to live as we have always done in harmony with a fragile, vulnerable, and sensitive environment,” and notes “changes to our climate and our environment will bring about the end of the Inuit culture” (quoted in Smith and Parks 2010, 7–8).

Political autonomy as self-determining Indigenous people is seen as vital *to* security for Inuit and to ensuring the capacity to provide security *for* Inuit against rapid social change, economic modernization, and cultural assimilation. Inuit leaders explicitly identify Canada’s past policies as harming their security, and some associate incomplete implementation of land claim agreements with undermining their

security (Kuptana 2013, 10–11). But because the primary Inuit security concern in Canada is for the environment and associated Inuit ways of life, environmental impacts have motivated Inuit to limit or block extractive industries. This includes a successful campaign to halt seismic testing for oil and gas in the waters off Victoria Island, ultimately supporting a 2016 federal moratorium on new offshore oil and gas leases despite no prior consultation with Inuit, and contesting the expansion of a Baffin Island iron mine in 2021–22. Similar regulatory efforts were made in Kalaallit Nunaat until the late 1970s, but after home rule and again after self-government these concerns receded in favor of the view that Greenlanders should extract natural resources in a sustainable manner (Schriver 2013). By contrast, having achieved a degree of political autonomy within Canada, Inuit repeatedly sought to securitize environmental harms, even at the cost of lost opportunities for economic development.

Importantly, this attempted securitization did not succeed. Despite their efforts, Inuit have been excluded from the institutions and processes primarily responsible for producing Canadian security and defense policy (Greaves 2016a). The mechanisms of this exclusion vary, but they include limited consultation with Arctic Indigenous peoples and correspondingly few opportunities to express their security claims to the authoritative audience for securitization in Canada: Parliament. For instance, in the four years following the release of *Canada's Northern Strategy* in 2009, the four House of Commons committees that held hearings pertaining to Arctic climate change, sovereignty, and security heard from only a small proportion of Inuit or Indigenous witnesses.⁴ Substantively, these witnesses testified that views of Inuit and other Arctic Indigenous peoples had not been consulted prior to the release of Canada's Arctic policies and are not reflected in them. But the considerable efforts made by Inuit political actors reflect a willingness to invite exceptional politics—with corresponding effects on the business environment, investment opportunities, and economic growth in their regions—in order to secure stronger federal action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. That strategy, however, required advocating within the context of Canadian federalism. We find no evidence that a strategy of independence-seeking has ever been seriously pursued by Inuit in Canada.

Conclusion

This chapter has compared Inuit security politics in Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat. Our analysis connects the colonial experiences of Inuit and their contemporary movements for autonomy and independence with the use of securitization as a strategy for political mobilization. Inuit in Kalaallit Nunaat have sought to desecuritize both climate change and geopolitical issues because securitization undercuts their primary goal of independence. Greenland's ability to finance independence requires building a self-sustaining economy free from Danish funding, which in turn depends on attracting foreign investment. Economic growth requires promotion of business as usual—including continued development of carbon-intensive economic activities such as offshore oil and gas—which is incompatible with official depictions of climate change, in particular, as existentially threatening the future of Greenlandic people. The shift from normal to securitized politics can constrain as well as enable the options for state action, and in this case, securitization would impede Naalakkersuisut's desire—shared by a majority of Greenlanders—to promote economic development as the route to greater political freedom. Toward this goal, securitization is a barrier, not a help.

By contrast, Inuit in Canada have used social capital and political voice gained through self-government and devolution not to pursue independence, but to attempt securitization, particularly of climate change. Without a dream of full independence haunting the wings, and therefore without any immediate prospect of losing funding from the federal government, Inuit in Canada can attempt to securitize climate change as an existential threat that must be addressed by rejecting high-carbon economic development. Although not successful at persuading the authoritative audiences of Parliament or the Cabinet, the strategy signifies a different valuation of full independence and, perhaps, more acute concerns over the direct and indirect impacts of climate change. It also suggests greater satisfaction with the political status quo and current degree of Inuit autonomy within Canada than Greenlanders feel within the Kingdom of Denmark.

Our analysis is instructive in several ways. First, it shows that even when people(s) share similar cultures and collective interests, their decisions to attempt securitization are mediated by other aspects of their identities and sociopolitical contexts. These contexts are shaped by material and ideational factors that can produce variation in the

desirability and feasibility of differing political strategies, including securitization, between what are otherwise most similar cases. The theoretical implications of these findings are significant. While questions around the interactions between “brute” material dangers and social identity have been important areas of debate within securitization theory (Balzacq 2005, 2011; McDonald 2008), our comparative analysis shows the limits of materialist analysis for securitization studies. The material dangers associated with Arctic climate change are well understood in both Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat, yet the fact of objective hazards to individual and collective Inuit survival and well-being are insufficient to mobilize securitization; other interests or preferences can intervene. In their watershed text, the founders of securitization theory observed that specific communities experience in/security differently “depending upon how their identity is constructed” (Buzan, Wæver, and De Wilde 1998, 124). By analyzing the ideational factors that inform distinct Inuit peoples, politics, and priorities, this chapter reiterates the significance of social identities for mediating the specific, contextual processes through which issues are (re)produced as existentially threatening or not. For Inuit, underlying similarities of culture, geography, historical experience, and contemporary relations have evidently ceded, at least in part, to distinct conceptions of political community and collective interest, notably the different orientations toward the question of political independence in Kalaallit Nunaat and Inuit Nunangat. The differing valuations of independence, in turn, affect their relative preference for securitization.

Second, our analysis provides further empirical support for the proposition that there is no unified or monolithic Indigenous or Inuit conception of security, with likely relevance for other regions. While there is a wide array of Indigenous worldviews and political structures globally, even Indigenous peoples who are closely related but have been separated by diverse colonial processes of boundary making and nation building may now express distinct attitudes and political dispositions as a result of their experiences. The meaning and conditions of security for Indigenous peoples will thus differ according to their circumstances, and it is neither analytically correct nor normatively appropriate to universalize views or preferences across them. Another implication of this chapter is that Indigenous peoples’ achievement of self-governing political institutions approximating the form of sovereign states may not necessarily produce anticipated shifts in economic or social practice. If becoming a sovereign state requires Indigenous peoples to engage in

extractive capitalism to participate in the global economy, then those Indigenous states will behave in similar ways to other sovereigns. Systemic pressures within the global economy may incentivize particular modes of behavior that compromise Indigenous cultural norms and values and make Indigenous polities less distinctive than they initially appear. This means that Indigenous peoples' pursuit of statehood, as in Kalaallit Nunaat, could contribute to the "Westphalianization" of global and Arctic politics and the erosion of nonstate and nonterritorial Indigenous forms of governance (Shadian 2010).

Third, our analysis underscores the importance of considering the costs and benefits of *not* securitizing objective material hazards. While some securitizations, such as Chinese investment in Greenlandic airports, are not objective and their nonsecuritization would not necessarily result in objective material harm to Inuit, this is not the case for all issues. Most obviously, of course, Arctic climate change is occurring and will continue well into the future regardless of what actions Inuit take, but the preparations Inuit societies make, how their economies will be affected, and whether Inuit assume the responsibility of increasing their contributions to global warming or pursue more sustainable political economies, are all implicated in decisions whether to securitize (Greaves 2021). Even peoples and polities who are acutely aware of their vulnerability to climate change may be invested in pursuing economic policies that maintain the status quo and exacerbate climate-related impacts on human and nonhuman life. This underscores the profound challenge of mobilizing an effective international response to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, when even those most affected by the changing climate express their ambivalence about shifting away from economic dependence on fossil fuels because of their valorization of an even greater political goal than decarbonization. Overall, this chapter illustrates the complex interactions of security, politics, and ideational and material phenomena that drive social change, and it shows that 'Arctic security' remains a contested and divisive discourse among Inuit living in their circumpolar homelands.

NOTES

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1. We use the terms *Inuit Nunaat*, *Inuit Nunangat*, and *Kalaallit Nunaat* in the following ways: *Inuit Nunaat* refers to the transnational Inuit homeland encompassing territory in Greenland, Canada, Alaska, and Russia; *Inuit Nunangat* refers

to the Inuit homeland in Canada, comprising four self-governing Inuit regions; and Kalaallit Nunaat refers to the territory of Greenland in the Kalaallisut (Greenlandic) language. When discussing Kalaallit Nunaat in a geographic or historical/colonial context, we may refer to it as Greenland (Grønland).

2. In 1987, Soviet general secretary Mikhail Gorbachev outlined a vision for Arctic cooperation which famously called for the Arctic to be transformed into a zone of peace, which many scholars believe was a turning point in U.S.-Soviet relations that aided in the normalization of Arctic relations and helped end the Cold War (Åtland 2008).

3. The former Naalakkersuisut argued that Greenland does not need an Arctic strategy since its foreign policy is per definition first and foremost an Arctic policy (cf. Jacobsen 2020, 176–77).

4. The number of Indigenous witnesses each committee heard was: the Standing Committee on National Defence (8/30), the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (6/41), the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development (2/17); and the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (25/33). All data drawn from the Parliament of Canada: (<http://www.parl.gc.ca>).

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11 | Conclusion

Learning from Greenland in Arctic Security

Ulrik Pram Gad, Ole Wæver, and Marc Jacobsen

Lessons from the Security of an Unusual Polity in an Unusual Region

Securitizations alter the social situation: authority is put at stake, extraordinary means are legitimized, and Others are pointed out as threats. In short, security is inherently a relational concept. Given these properties, it is no surprise that securitizations seldom come alone. Various audiences may protest rather than accept; alternative authorities may promote alternative visions and programs; those pointed out as threats may countersecuritize. To capture how individual securitizations relate, security theory (ST) suggests the concept of ‘security configuration.’¹ The analytical procedure involves mapping and relating different (de-)securitizations to show how they have historically triggered or transformed each other, and especially how they sometimes come to stabilize each other and thereby produce a meta-stable formation.

In principle, an analyst may start disentangling a security configuration anywhere. Traditionally, analyses of national security began with the threats to a particular nation-state, and the most intelligent versions soon included the perspective of any threatening Others to avoid spiraling into security dilemmas (Wolfers 1962; Wæver 1989). After the Cold War, security studies widened its agenda to focus on more than states, and securitization theory was conceived to pinpoint the threat/defense rhetoric and the effects of it that gives a phenomenon within this wider focus its security character. At the same time,

regional security complex theory (RSCT) pointed out the regional level as a scale on which patterns may be found. In principle, a regional security complex (RSC) is identified and described in the same way as any other security configuration. The purpose of RSC analysis, however, is to find out which units make up a regional security complex, distinct from global configurations, and what are the dynamics among them, distinct from global dynamics. Hence, although RSC analysis necessarily includes all scales—from domestic, via unit-to-unit (state-to-state) and interregional to global—attention is centered on the regional scale; any attention given to other scales are means to an end: to identify factors that condition those regional dynamics.

In contrast, when approaching a security configuration without the purpose of pinpointing regional patterns and delimitation, all scales have equal standing (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 201; Buzan and Wæver 2003, 12f, 51f, and especially 491; Wæver 1989). For instance, it might be discovered that a domestic security issue is really the key to the larger pattern, the one motivating actions by the main players and the most continuously influential issue. Another theoretical concept coming out of such an analysis, following how securitizations link, is that of ‘macro-securitizations’ (Buzan and Wæver 2009): attempts to pitch threat/defense measures as relevant for a good greater than the individual nation-state, and hence enroll others in the cause as participants or just as accepting audience. For instance, the war on terror of the 2000s was primarily about U.S. domestic security, and secondarily about other states vying for global superpower status by hooking up with the U.S. securitization. The war on drugs is primarily a domestic issue that shapes some interstate and regional dynamics (especially in the Americas and Central Asia), but not much the global dynamics. Such macro-securitizations have given rise to configurations located, in terms of scale, between regional and global, as they do not follow regional delineations (horizontally) and are often driven by other scales than the regional (vertically).

Security configurations can also be identified below or between the national and regional scale, or similar in scale to regional but not respecting the borders of regional security as defined by RSCT. For those part of such configurations, it may of course be important to understand them in order to be able to maneuver them with a view to avoid unwanted escalation. But, as laid out in the introductory chapter, even for RSCT, certain nonregional foci for analysis are particularly fruitful: those polities and territories that work as insulators between

regional security complexes. Greenland, according to Buzan and Wæver's analysis of post-Cold War security (2003), is such an insulator. Doing a configuration analysis around Greenland means to map the main securitizations and desecuritizations that interact with Greenland at the center.

Our introductory chapter, first, promised an empirically fuller and more precise understanding of where Greenland wants to go, but also the limitations presented to this ambitious polity by the new Arctic. As contributions to this aim, the chapters have employed and developed select parts of securitization theory to analyze distinct sets of the security dynamics framing Greenland. The first task of this concluding chapter is to draw together these studies in one coherent portrait of the security configuration centered on Greenland. Our second claim was that securitization theory could learn from being confronted with Greenland, a hybrid polity in transition from coloniality to postcoloniality, situated in the Arctic, a region made up of a distinct configuration of actors set in distinct material conditions that are rapidly changing. To follow up on this claim, the conclusion goes on to distill the tools from securitization theory for understanding how security dynamics may unfold, particularly at scales between, on the one hand, individual instances of turning something into a security problem, and, on the other hand, grand structures of regional and global security. Separate sections below discuss, first, what conceptualizations the chapters have suggested for these dynamics, and, second, where the Arctic region leaves securitization theory's idea of RSCs. The final section condenses how the lessons learned from applying securitization theory on Arctic and Greenlandic dynamics—and from the theoretical considerations accompanying it—can be employed both analytically to better approach security dynamics in other places, and in practice to better maneuver the new Arctic.

A Greenland Security Configuration

Based on the chapters presented, we claim that four dynamics characterize Greenland as a security configuration: dynamics set in motion by climate change, geopolitics, decolonization, and regional hybridity. Since neither Greenland nor the Arctic represent a security *complex* in the sense that it can be characterized and analyzed as *one* more or less closed circuit of security relations (see introductory chapter), none of

these dynamics present themselves as inevitably primary when understanding or presenting the configuration; each dynamic interacts with the other dynamics. One dynamic comes from the way climatic thaw catalyzes many other security developments as vanishing ice causes new threats and opportunities across scales and sectors from local community development and national identity to international politics and the climate of the Arctic and the globe. A second dynamic comes from the geopolitical freeze in the region, which is mainly a spillover from global great power competition between the United States, China, and Russia. A third dynamic stems from the way in which Greenland is a polity in transition from a colonial past to an envisioned future as an independent state. Finally, distinct effects come from how Greenland constitutes a hybrid polity as it is geographically located within the Arctic region and part of the North American continent while constitutionally connected to Denmark, which is in Europe. Depending on Greenlanders' present and future decisions on their way toward independence, the island may later constitute a different kind of hybridity than it does today. Notably, such potential repositioning already influences the current security configuration.

Climatic Thaw

In relation to Greenland, one distinct effect of climate change is to establish a circular security interdependence between the island as such and the rest of the world, as detailed by Kristensen and Mortensgaard (chap. 2, this vol.): Greenland's inland ice sheet constitutes at once a referent object for the threat from a warming climate and—when melting—an existential threat to a host of other referent objects across scales, across sectors, and across the globe. The ice sheet itself is threatened by rising temperatures, but its melting also constitutes a threat to the Arctic ecosystem through the atmospheric feedback mechanism. While a number of effects stay within the environmental sector, consequences and securitizing acts soon spin out to other sectors, spaces, and temporalities as the ice sheet is, *inter alia*, securitized as potential (= time) threats to megacities around the globe (= space) and to their industries and inhabitants, with all that entails (= sectors). By using a scalar approach, Kristensen and Mortensgaard show how the vanishing ice sheet functions as a powerful integrative symbol within the global macrosecuritization of climate change and, notably, how securitizations do not

merely cascade top down but also feed back up to the higher scales where they, ultimately, contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of climate change as a macrosecuritization.

Zooming out from Greenland proper, ‘the great Arctic thaw’ involves the melting of not just the inland ice but also of permafrost and sea ice. While melting Arctic permafrost may have colossal effects on the global climate due to the methane emissions unleashed, these deposits are mainly in Siberia. While effects in Greenland are, initially, local—literally the undermining of infrastructure—these effects may easily spread across sectors, since, for instance, airstrips deemed essential for military use may start cracking up and sliding away (Humpert 2019). The accelerated reduction of the Arctic sea ice involves its own (negative) feedback effects with the global climate, particularly in the form of reduced albedo effect (less ice to reflect the sun’s rays back out of the atmosphere). For the Arctic region as such as for Greenland as a whole, however, less sea ice means increased accessibility for outsiders. This envisioned ‘opening up’ of the Arctic has both set in motion a dynamic beginning with geopolitical superpower securitizations, but also intensified the postcolonial dynamic between Greenland and Denmark, which can be understood as an exchange of moves that count as threats to the other party’s identity.

Before we turn to these two dynamics that primarily play out in the military and political sectors, however, we need to add important nuances to how ‘environmental’ securitizations play out, in the Arctic in general and in Greenland in particular. This concerns how what from a Southern perspective is apprehended as an environmental security problem, is in an Arctic perspective intimately linked to securitizations of identity, to how Greenlanders see threats to their cultural traditions and future self-determination. In other words, rather than an environmental security dynamic, we see a dynamic across the environmental, societal, and ultimately political sectors. Of course, in a number of instances, both individual Greenlanders and their representatives agree to take up the subject positions awarded by global environmentalist discourse as victims of climate change and outside pollution. However, Gad, Bjørst and Jacobsen (chap. 3, this vol.) show how some securitizations of referent objects in the environmental sector (animals, ecosystems) may point out aspects of Inuit material culture (hunting) as threats, leading to countersecuritizations to defend Inuit identity and practices. Reformulating the threat in ways that exempt Inuit practices—such as when only *commercial* sealing and whaling is

targeted—hardly provides relief. Moreover, it entails a freezing of Inuit identity and practices as *traditional*, which in itself is a threat to Greenlandic self-determination and development, an equally important aspect of Greenlandic political identity. The dilemma imposed on Greenlanders by this dynamic reaches its zenith in relation to climate change: On the one hand, Greenlandic discourse values hunting and other cultural practices dependent on ice and frost. On the other hand, it simultaneously values economic growth and business development as a necessary means to realizing the ‘true’ identity of Greenland as an independent nation-state. Economic development has a much less easy fit with global environmentalists’ securitization of climate change, as it intervenes with the plans of further industrialization constituting a crucial element in the continuous state-building process.

This dependence of environmental securitizations on identity securitizations is confirmed by Andrews, Crowther, and Greaves’ comparison of Greenlandic security politics with that of Canadian Inuit. In sum, Greenland desecuritized the issue of climate change because it undercuts their overarching independence aim, which in general requires economic growth and the maintenance of ‘normal politics.’ In contrast, Inuit leaders on the other side of Baffin Bay try to securitize climate change as an existential threat to traditions and livelihood that requires an exceptional means of rejecting high-carbon economic development, a securitizing move that has not yet been accepted by Canada’s Parliament or cabinet. The authors argue that these contrary preferences are rooted in different colonial experiences and different orientations toward the question of political independence. Whereas Greenland’s struggle is firm and long-standing, Inuit in Canada do not pursue statehood whatsoever. These different visions affect and reflect their respective preferences for securitization or normal politics, although they share a proper understanding of the material hazards associated with climatic thaw in the Arctic.

Geopolitical Freeze

While the current geopolitical freeze in the Arctic may be accelerated by the beginning climatic thaw, the basic securitizations driving it are old. There might be ideas that new riches are appearing from under the sea ice, but there are also legal frameworks and techno-diplomatic procedures in place to allocate rights to them. Increased marine traffic—civilian and military—may cause conflict, but the prospects in

terms of neither volume nor acceleration are overwhelming. At heart, both the higher pitch of great power rhetorics and evolving facts on the ground seem to have less to do with what is *in* the Arctic than about well-known threat/defense dynamics pertaining to the defense of Russian and American homelands. In parallel but less acute, the U.S. portrays possible Chinese investments in Greenland as potentially having dual use and, moreover, as constituting a win in a Chinese/Western global rivalry over resources and influence.

None of these basic threat conceptions, however, are particularly new, as Jacobsen and Olsvig (chap. 4, this vol.) show by parsing the defining acts shaping the U.S.'s security perspective on Greenland during the past 200 years. Two constant motives have been Greenland's geographic location and its abundant natural resources, which are deemed geostrategically important for the protection and power of the U.S. The specific articulations of the reasons *why* Greenlandic territory and resources were important have changed depending on the international context and on who constituted the relevant audience of the securitizing moves at the time. Hence the specific articulation of the American securitizations used to legitimize extraordinary means on Greenlandic soil have been shaped by both what macrosecuritizations were promoted and by what agency were ascribed to Denmark and Greenland. World War II, the Cold War, the Global War on Terror, the threat from so-called 'rogue states,' and the current great power competition have all been crucial for the specific articulation of the U.S. need for Greenland. With these macrosecuritizations, the referent objects changed from 'Western Hemisphere' (1916) to 'American Continent' (1941) to 'NATO area' (1951) to 'Liberal democracies' (2001) to 'international peace' (2003) and back to 'U.S. interests' (2019). When the U.S. looks north and east for threats from Europe and Asia, the territory, airspace, and waters of Greenland inevitably come into view as necessary parts of its defense and, conversely, as a threat if controlled by others. On the one hand, the effects of the significant status changes of Greenland during the development from colony to self-government are noteworthy. On the other hand, it is clear that 'U.S. interests' in its various guises have been embedded in all the articulated reasons no matter at what scale or sector the securitizations have been rhetorically placed within by American securitizing actors. In that sense, the U.S. has—as 'the resident great power'—put the geopolitical securitization dynamics in motion, both now and earlier.

In contrast, when reading Russian security discourse on the Arctic,

Greenland almost disappears. First, ‘the Arctic’ is a domestic affair in Russia, and an important one, since Russia’s economy basically depends on resource extraction; most of the resources are in Siberia and the Russian Arctic land mass. Second, as the ice is receding, the defense of this hinterland needs to be upgraded. Unfortunately, some of these installations, even if their initial purpose is defensive, can be read by the U.S. as potentially offensive in relation to particularly the Thule Air Base and its crucial role in defense against missiles coming in from anywhere between North Korea and the Kola Peninsula, where Russian nuclear weapons are stationed. So third, the nuclear posture of those two incidentally involves the Arctic in security dynamics that are not about the Arctic as such.

A final reason for the absence of Greenland from Russian securitizations is, as Klausen (chap. 5, this vol.) makes clear, that—beyond domestic issues—the Arctic is treated exclusively as an interstate matter, directing Moscow’s attention and rhetoric at Copenhagen rather than Nuuk. The intensified American engagement in Greenland has, indeed, caused reactions from the Russian ambassador to Denmark when Trump’s purchase idea made headlines in Russian media, as it did all over the world. In the official communication from the Kremlin, however, the agency of the Government of Greenland is rarely recognized. Nevertheless, the recent opening of a U.S. consulate in Nuuk prompted Russia to initiate the much less significant appointment of a Greenlandic businessman to be the honorary consul of Russia in Greenland. In her detailed dissection of the communication regarding the appointment, Klausen shows how the syntactical choices of Russia’s and Denmark’s ministers of foreign affairs, the symbolic representations, and the very actors present and absent from the press conference altogether emphasize how Greenland does not figure as an equal subject, but rather as an object to be discussed between states. At the time of speaking, both the Russian and Danish governments still agreed to uphold what has become known as ‘Arctic exceptionalism’ by emphasizing good interstate relations despite disagreements outside the Arctic and even military buildup in the region. As we will return to below, however, Klausen’s analysis shows how particularly Russian desecuritizing rhetoric is subtly but repeatedly underpinned and made conditional on securitizing alternatives.

Even before Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Arctic exceptionalism depended on all parties accepting a ‘split screen,’ with deliberations on low politics in the Arctic Council and intensified saber rattling coming

closer and closer to the region. At the time of writing, while no dramatic buildup or events have taken place in the region, Arctic exceptionalism has formally been put on hold, symbolized by the pausing of all activities of the Arctic Council. Only history will tell whether we will look back at the year 2022 as marking the end of an era that began with Mikhail Gorbachev's 1987 speech in Murmansk, where desecuritized and desecuritizing regional cooperation was facilitated by the nuclear superpower configuration receding to the background.

But even in the happy event that Russia returns to civilized international intercourse in time to save the Arctic Council, great power rivalry will still involve a potential for securitization in Greenland and the Arctic. Moreover, this potential kicks in way 'below' military affairs and need not begin with aggression as such. China clearly wants a say in Arctic affairs and a stake in its resources. The security dynamics coming out of this interest, however, is less than straightforward. Dissecting the communication regarding the Kuannersuit rare earth project in South Greenland, Andersson and Zeuthen (chap. 6, this vol.) show how the involved companies presented the project's characteristics and intended outcomes differently to different audiences. The Western company developing the project proudly announced the Chinese involvement in order to substantiate the viability of the project in the context of global rare earth elements supply chains largely monopolized by China. Meanwhile, in texts meant for Chinese consumption, the Chinese investor used securitization-like rhetorics that resonate with the ideological language underpinning Communist Party rule to match priorities of regulators and state-backed financial sources. Such double-sided communication fed a securitization discourse among Western states with the U.S. as the main securitization actor, which further led to a gradual buildup of securitization measures on the Chinese side. Andersson and Zeuthen dub the process one of mutually reinforcing securitization policies, as it has resulted in more hostile rhetoric on both sides and in reluctance from Beijing toward supporting Chinese mining investments in Greenland. The U.S. reply has involved not just encouraging Western companies to engage in the realization of Greenland's mining potential but also—a comparatively extraordinary means for a market-based economy—to provide direct state support to distinct projects. Ironically, the securitization has made the U.S. deal with Greenland in the same way as China is criticized for doing. U.S. intentions of limiting or even preventing Chinese engagement in Greenland could be fulfilled for the time being while China looks elsewhere to be

part of Arctic developments. The U.S. initiatives, however, have scrambled Danish ideas about who's a danger to its relation Greenland, while—as we will return to below—Greenland has, in its search for relief from the economic threats to its project of national independence, turned attention back from China to the West.

Sovereignty Rematerializing

On the one hand, Jacobsen and Lindbjerg (chap. 7, this vol.), in their analysis of Danish government positions and 2018–19 parliamentary debates about Arctic geopolitics, show how the Danish government accepted the U.S. securitization of the two very different types of threats from both Russia and China in the Arctic. The acceptance of the threat narratives leads Denmark to not just accepting but implementing what might in the specific context be counted as extraordinary means. In reply to U.S. interpretations of Russia as a threat in the Arctic, Denmark boosted its military budget after decades of pocketing the 'peace dividend' of the end of the Cold War. In reply to China, Denmark intervened in Greenland's extensive airport project with the aim of preventing Chinese involvement by financing the project in excess of the standard subsidies to Greenland.

On the other hand, the intensified American attention during those years—culminating in Trump's acquisition attempt—caused a more reserved or even skeptical attitude toward the U.S. as not just a friend, but also a competitor or even a (potential) enemy threatening the coherence of the constitutional relation between Greenland and Denmark, what is known in Danish as 'the Community of the Realm.' Fundamentally, some parliamentarians presented U.S. engagement as a threat to Danish sovereignty over Greenland, in principle a perfectly securitizable situation. Due to Danish dependency on the U.S. for security, however, Danish protests or veto were hardly an option. Instead, as a weak version of Danish reactions to U.S. insistence on a military presence in Greenland during World War II and the Cold War, Denmark reconceptualized sovereignty to be almost purely formal. Hence, as long as foreign activities are accepted by Denmark, no infringement of sovereignty has happened. This time, however, Danish sovereignty is being hollowed out from the inside: Jacobsen and Lindbjerg (chap. 7, this vol.) also tell us how the Danish government and parliamentarians increasingly explicitly acknowledged Greenland's international agency and repeated incantations of the neces-

sity of fostering a more equal relationship within the Realm in the effort to make the bond more resilient toward external influence. Particularly in foreign and security politics, Greenland's high degree of self-determination has been difficult for Denmark to reject, given the security problems cascading down on Greenlanders from U.S. bases accepted by Danish authorities. The Danish desecuritization of these particular twin threats to Danish sovereignty over Greenland logically end with the emptying of formal sovereignty.

The great power competition and its deriving dynamics, however, appear different when seen from Nuuk, even if desecuritization is also key to Greenland. As Gad, Rud, Jacobsen, and Rasmussen (chap. 8, this vol.) show, Greenland's shifting governments and politicians have continuously treated matters apprehended by Danish governments as foreign and defense policy as objects of desecuritization. The immediate rationale behind this approach is to keep the issues discussed within Greenlandic jurisdiction rather than leaving authority to Copenhagen. Politicians rhetorically downplay security aspects of defense and foreign policy variously by referring to peaceful Inuit tradition and identity, to Arctic exceptionalism, and to future Greenlandic independence in the shape of economic self-sufficiency. Below the immediate turf war over jurisdiction lies the impossibility of Greenlandic society putting up a meaningful military defense of its territory and the overwhelming cost of just taking over the current activities of the Danish armed forces in Greenland, which has not been factored in the Government of Greenland's 'budgeting' of the financial cost of independence. In essence, it would constitute a threat to the independence process if defense and foreign policy were securitized. Thus, the Greenlandic preference for military desecuritization unites a vital tactic in the sovereignty games with Denmark with the strategic goals of a peaceful region.

But demilitarizing and desecuritizing Greenland is both difficult and costly because civil Greenlandic society has in distinct ways been structured by and has therefore become dependent on military infrastructure. This is most evident when it comes to air traffic, which is vital both domestically and internationally as no two Greenlandic cities are connected by road, and no ships carry passengers abroad. Sejersten (chap. 9, this vol.) analyzes how airports have been objects of securitization and desecuritization as part of shifting government rationales and techniques. The initial construction of airstrips in Greenland was

framed by the U.S. agenda to militarily protect the ‘free world’ against totalitarianism during the Second World War and the ensuing Cold War. Soon, however, these airstrips constructed for military purposes were from the 1950s to the 1970s used by Danish authorities to reconfigure Greenlandic society in accordance with ideas of centralization and progress. These modernization schemes were also meant to protect Danish sovereignty from international criticism of Danish colonialism and from demands that decolonization take the form of Greenlandic independence. After the introduction of home rule in 1979, an intensified nation-building processes involved the inclusion of all communities in the air traffic structure, serving to counteract the threat from Danish centralization initiatives to Greenlandic culture as lived and embodied in the dispersed settlements. In parallel with self-government replacing home rule in 2009, a new postcolonial rationality of centralization emerged to secure the prospects of Greenland as an economically viable and independent nation-state. In this current state-making endeavor, Greenland plots new international air connections as a way to diversify its external relations in order to avert the threat to the realization of independence coming from a unilateral dependency on Denmark. As we shall return to shortly, however, old securitizations prove difficult to erase once materialized in the concrete form of airstrips.

Greenland, as a polity and a territory, exists in a space expanded by a delicate combination of securitizations and desecuritizations in the political and military sectors: On the one hand, U.S. geopolitical discourse and nuclear strategy precludes a fundamental military desecuritization. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the practical implications have largely been delimited to a single spot: the Thule Air Base. On the other hand, Danish discourse on national identity and decolonization is part of a Nordic tradition that makes secession of national minorities difficult to securitize explicitly:² It might be default for a state to view secession as a securitizable situation, but a Nordic nationalist ideal of coincidence of cultural and political borders are seen as default, and moreover, Nordic self-identity as a benevolent force for good in the world does not square easily with top-down management of colonial possessions. Greenland’s drift toward independence (Jacobsen, Knudsen, and Rosing 2019), hence, is in this discourse what one would normally expect, and the Greenlandic authorities are established as an audience whose acceptance of securitizations is necessary.

A Security Configuration: Entangled (De)securitization Dynamics

We embarked on this research project with the ambition of drawing together disparate case studies to provide a holistic picture of the many security dynamics that together form the Greenland security configuration of entangled securitizations and desecuritizations. At this stage, however, we need to make two related concessions: First, what we have presented is *a* Greenland security configuration rather than *the* Greenland security configuration. Second, this is so not least because we have consciously unleashed the analytical apparatus of securitization theory to observe not just those securitizations, and their mutual dynamics, that have without discussion been successful. Included in our analyses, hence, have also been less-than-successful securitizing moves, and in many of the chapters, these dynamics that *could* more or less easily turn into or produce fully fledged securitizations, have played the main role. By making this analytical choice, we have opened the analysis to a large number of issues, potentially securitizable across scales and sectors. We maintain that we have included and focused on the most important ones, but we acknowledge that others could employ the same theoretical approach to draw up slightly different, yet still reasonable images of Greenland in Arctic security.

In sum, we claim that added value comes from understanding security dynamics surrounding Greenland as a configuration. We may focus on partial dynamics, analyzing, for example, the role of the Thule Air Base in a purely military perspective, and the conflict between Inuit and environmentalists as an environmental/identity dynamics. But we understand each dynamic better if we allow the links between them into our analysis. In the Greenland security configuration, many of these links relate to the Greenlandic ambition to emerge as an independent state, and the way in which a number of securitizations performed by others present themselves as threats to the progress of the independence project: militarization past and present, climate change and climate mitigation, immigration, and lack of manpower may all be discussed as existential threats to a future Greenlandic welfare state. But also, conversely, how possible Greenlandic independence make others, particularly the U.S. and Denmark, move to avert or shape that development with a view to avoiding future threats or insecurities stemming from, say, Chinese influence or infrastructure in Greenland.

Moreover, we claim that more added value comes from being attentive to how this security configuration is changing or, put in terms we

will discuss below, how a transfiguration is taking place. What was in principle Danish sovereignty, partly evaporating under U.S. pressure, is slowly rematerializing as Greenlandic sovereignty. Greenlanders are pressing three core priorities—military desecuritization, future independence, and Indigenous culture—flexibly advancing one over the other as new opportunities arise: When multinational companies wanted to extract minerals in Greenland before the introduction of home rule (which would, under that legal framework, benefit Danish state coffers), Greenlanders protested the projects as threats to their environment. But when jurisdiction was transferred to Nuuk (along with potential revenues), Inuit's inherent capacity for stewardship would secure environmental sustainability (Schriver 2013). When the U.S. wanted to upgrade the Thule radar around the year 2000, Greenland's immediate answer was that this would constitute a threat to peace, but a few years later, Greenlanders accepted U.S. securitization in order to advance several steps toward self-determination (Kristensen 2005).

Finally, we note that materiality plays into both the configuration and transfiguration of security around Greenland. Equally important, however, materiality comes in at least three different types: First, we have geophysical materiality. The Arctic is geophysically exceptional from most of the world by being largely frozen. This has given Arctic security a particular character. But with the Great Thaw, the Arctic is gradually becoming less geophysically exceptional. This contributes yet another particular character to Arctic security. Second, human technologies have the capacity to facilitate securitizations. The Arctic only became militarily relevant when nuclear weapons were combined with intercontinental flights and missiles. Digging deeper, both the feasibility of establishing a military base at Thule and now the Great Thaw are ultimately the result of the invention of engines running on fossil fuels. Third, once materialized, human inventions, constructions, and habits harbor their own inertia. The U.S. and Danish armed forces have precluded the closing down of the airstrip in Kangerlussuaq, originally built exactly there because of the supreme weather conditions of the location. Keeping this uniquely functional airstrip open, however, threatens to undermine the economic viability of the newly enlarged airports in Nuuk and Ilulissat and the role they are envisioned to play in Greenlandic economic state building. And even if Greenlandic skies and airports are open for traffic in all directions, almost all intercontinental passengers go to Copenhagen, following family ties and cultural habits, alas undermining efforts to diversify Greenlandic dependency

away from Danish dominance. Below, we return to the implications of particularly the two first types of materiality for ST's concept of regional security complexes. First, however, we will discuss contributions to ST's conceptualization of dynamics and configurations at scales in between individual securitizations and region.

Dis-Entangling Entanglements: Looking for Dynamics of (De-)Securitization

One of our main arguments for why one should use ST is that its analytical apparatus facilitates analyses of entangled securitizations between different sectors and scales. Having synthesized the empirical findings of the analytical chapters into one portrait of 'a Greenland security configuration,' the task is now to abstract the approaches and theoretical advancements that allowed these analyses and their synthesis. As noted in the introduction, a common feature of the analyses collected in this volume is that they have not contented themselves with reproducing the securitizations performed and upheld by the powers that be, whether they are geopolitical, scientific, or of public opinion. The chapters, in various ways and particularly in combination, portray security as dynamics involving more actors, each aiming to securitize, desecuritize, or in more complex ways reconfigure existing security figurations and configurations. In other words, the chapters draw on—and develop—tools from securitization theory to understand how security dynamics unfold at scales between, on the one hand, individual instances of turning something into a security problem, and, on the other hand, grand structures of regional and global security. Our contention remains that our particular object of analysis—Greenland, hybrid in terms of sovereignty, transitional in terms of political identity, and set within a region undergoing radical changes in terms of both materiality and outside attention—has provided a fertile ground for observing such mid-range dynamics. Moreover, Greenland has also been an illuminating case in relation to how securitization and desecuritization are not just contrasting ideal type processes but also intimately entangled in practice at a variety of scales. In this section, we discuss, first, the variety of midrange dynamics identified, and secondly, how attention to such dynamics may be combined with analysis of security transfiguration and finally, the entanglements of de-/securitizations.

Midrange Dynamics of Security

Most applications of securitization theory in the Arctic tend to either focus on individual (de)securitizing moves or attempt to summarize one overall characteristic of Arctic regional security. As a crude summary of securitization analyses working on other parts of the world, it seems reasonable to say that they coalesce in three types: Most seek to judge ‘securitization or not’ in individual cases, a few discuss regional security dynamics in terms of securitization theory, and quite a bunch distill how individual securitizations relate to overall macrosecuritizations (most pertinently for the decade following 9/11, the relations between securitization of terrorism, migration, and Islam). These are valid foci producing interesting and important analyses. We would argue, however, that securitization theory harbors the potential to even better understand how security dynamics unfold. Key to unlocking this potential is a focus on ‘midrange’ dynamics between, on the one hand, the processes surrounding the individual securitization and, on the other hand, the structural quality of a regional or global security configuration. Between them, the analytical chapters of this volume have identified, discussed, developed, conceptualized, and analyzed a number of such phenomena under the labels ‘mutually reinforcing securitizations’ (Andersson and Zeuthen, chap. 6), ‘cascades of security’ (Jacobsen and Olsvig, chap. 4), ‘scalar feedback’ (Kristensen and Mortensgaard, chap. 2), and ‘security transfigurations’ (Gad, Bjørst and Jacobsen, chap. 3).

Common for those concepts is that they denote relations between (de)securitizing moves, or, in other words, processes that are dynamic in the sense that they involve change, but structured in the sense that change is not random; rather there is a logic to change. At least, the change and the relations can be ordered according to an analytical grid leading to a better understanding of the dynamics. Moreover, some of the concepts denote phenomena in which the change unfolds according to an identifiable relational logic between actors or (de)securitizing moves or processes. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the archetypical example of such a dynamic is well known from security studies as ‘the security dilemma,’ in which the mutual fear leads to escalation because pre-emptive moves are rational when stakes are high and the intentions of the opposing party cannot be known. Securitization theory, however, has ample tools to scrutinize how other dynamics at the same level may lead elsewhere. By paying special

attention to how securitization acts may activate others, the analytical gaze also opens to include other derived consequences of the securitization originally in focus, hence facilitating more holistic analyses that draw attention to some of the unnoticed implications of a successful securitization.

Crucially, such dynamics can only be identified as a synthesis of a number of analytical steps; analyzing the speech acts of one securitizing actor and the possible acceptance of one audience is not enough. One needs to analyze the interplay between more actors, probably taking turns as speakers and audience. One instructive example of how fruitful such a double focus is comes with Andersson and Zeuthen's identification of *mutually reinforcing securitizations*, which unfolds how differing understandings and framings of security and state interests in China and the West have caused a gradual buildup of securitization on both sides. Speech acts meant for one (domestic) audience with one intended effect ('below' the threshold of securitization) trigger a process in which defensive measures on the one side are perceived as offensive measures on the other side. On the one hand, what Andersson and Zeuthen observe hardly amounts to a classical security dilemma. On the other hand, it is easy to imagine how the mechanism identified could play an important part in an overall security dilemma, and how it could possibly even be what triggers one in the first place.³

Dynamics, however, need not be self-reinforcing. A securitization need not spark a process leading back to itself. Power might be distributed so that problems *cascade* down a hierarchy. Gad (2021) lays out how the U.S.—to fend off the existential threat from Soviet nukes—implemented extraordinary means at Thule, which in turn posed itself as an existential threat to Danish sovereignty over Greenland. In turn, the extraordinary means chosen by the Danish authorities to avert the U.S. threat met the Inughuit as an existential threat. Jacobsen and Olsvig (chap. 4, this vol.) reconceptualize the process to show how the cascade involves not just a vertical movement of security down a hierarchy but also a horizontal movement across sectors, from the military via the political to the societal.

When reading the chapters of the volume together, similar phenomena stand out: U.S. securitizations have been received by allies and enemies, interpreted, and 'passed on' in transformed forms. The beginning of a cascading effect or a feedback mechanism, however, is not always straightforward to identify, as a new security situation may have multiple epicenters. For instance, the U.S. securitization of Russia and

China in the Arctic is part of a more diversified security perspective with a broader spatial and temporal scope than covered in this book. Russia, on the one hand, is an old foe whose diminished power position after the end of the Cold War means that it is today primarily a regional threat, although its engagement in Syria, interference in the 2016 U.S. election, and the invasion of Ukraine to different degrees jeopardize American interests. China, on the other hand, is a more recent and more comprehensive rival whose actions in the Arctic are interpreted as part of a current global power struggle manifesting itself in multiple disagreements of political, military, and economic significance. Sino-American disagreements across borders and sectors thus may fuel each other while their international and regional power struggles reciprocally influence one another in what could perhaps be described as a set of mutually reinforcing securitizations. The events highlighted in the analyses are, indeed, important for getting a better understanding of what constitutes the geopolitical freeze in Arctic security, but to use them as analytical starting points is a dubious choice, which both analyst and audience should be aware of. This holds true for the individual analyses as well as for our editorial curation of the order and content of this volume.

Moreover, a ‘blame game’ is a standard element of appeals to international audiences. In essence, this is one core point of macrosecuritizations, which seeks to “incorporate, align and rank the more parochial securitisations beneath it” (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 253). If a macrosecuritization is successful internationally, this ‘incorporation, alignment, and ranking’ will affect the formulation and likelihood of success of individual securitizing moves, but also structure how these security figurations engage each other in security configurations. Kristensen and Mortensgaard, however, point to the flip side of the relation between macrosecuritizations and securitizations at lesser scales: Macrosecuritizations may seek to order ‘downstream,’ but they also depend on these lower-scale securitizations to maintain their statuses. Climate change, understood as a globally induced change on the Arctic, simultaneously constitutes a facilitator and a threat to different referent objects, which can be analyzed across sectors within the same geographical setting, across national boundaries, and in a global perspective of how the melting inland ice is understood and used. The envisioned effects of the melting of the inland ice sheet feeds back up through multiple scales to the macrosecuritization of climate change, hence confirming and strengthening its logic as the master threat

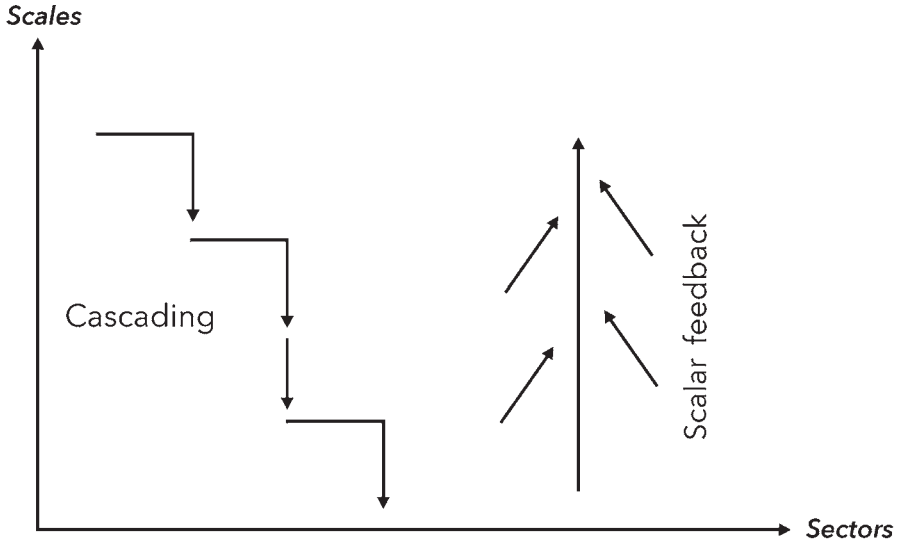


Fig. 11.1. Two examples of midrange dynamics of security: securitizations ‘cascading’ down from macro-scale and across sectors. ‘Scalar feedback’ from lower-scale securitizations to macro-securitization. The *y*-axis order scales from micro to macro. The *x*-axis signifies different sectors, however it does not indicate specific sectors, as they—unlike scales—do not present themselves in a specific order.

across scales. Without *scalar feedback*, macrosecuritizations fail. Also in this analysis, it remains an analytical choice whether one begins the analytical narrative with the macrosecuritization and proceed to the lower-scale securitizations that it makes possible, or begin with the lower-scale securitizations and trace how they make the macrosecuritization credible and durable. Vertical feedback may stay within the confines of one sector, but most likely it may—like in Kristensen and Mortensgaard’s analysis—crisscross between sectors at various scales.

Transfiguration of Security

Taking one step up in abstraction from types of midrange dynamics, Gad, Bjørst, and Jacobsen advocated detailed analyses of individual securitizing moves, reactions to them, and especially their reiteration over time in order to identify *security transfiguration*. The very basic methodological point is that to observe change, the analyst needs to establish two (or more) snapshots of how security is structured. One important reason to restate this basic point, however, is that in principle

the analyst *also* needs to go through the same analytical steps in order to claim the opposite of change, that is, constancy. In other words, the call for a disciplined focus on security transfigurations is a warning against taking for granted that received wisdom—in the form of well-established instances of security dilemmas, regions, or other configurations—remains constant. The mere labeling of a phenomenon—‘the currently increasing great power rivalry in the Arctic region’ or ‘the conflict between environmentalists and Indigenous peoples’—involves a risk of reification: analysts take it for granted and take it as a given a priori in analysis. Every now and then, however, new analyses need to go back to data and check whether the configuration still holds in practice, lest security analysis ends up contributing to freezing conflicts rather than to transfiguring them, hopefully into less antagonistic incarnations.

The chapter by Gad, Bjørst, and Jacobsen focuses on security transfiguration at a midrange scale straddling two sectors and involving two sets of actors, representatives of Greenland pitted against outside representative of a Western voice speaking in universal terms. In principle, however, such analysis can be applied at all levels from individual securitizing moves or figurations (successful or not), via dyadic configurations and regional complexes, all the way up to macro-configurations. Without employing the term, Jacobsen and Olsvig’s chapter can be read as charting the transfiguration of the security configuration of the U.S., Denmark, and Greenland over centuries, mainly driven by U.S. securitizations but involving various others as threats, and at times allowing limited Danish and increasingly Greenlandic agency. Sejersen’s chapter charts the same transfiguration but from a perspective, infrastructure, which allows a greater focus on Greenlandic agency. Jacobsen and Lindbjerg also observe one single recent transfiguration of the same configuration seen from the Danish perspective.

Going forward, disciplined analyses of security transfiguration should be informed by—and identify more—midrange dynamics like the ones discussed above (mutual reinforcement, cascades, scalar feedback) or in the literature: security dilemmas; securitization dilemmas (van Rythoven 2020); spiraling securitizations (Bello 2022). In this regard, Andersson and Zeuthen’s chapter can be read to tell us how a transfiguration of one security configuration into another was the result of one specific midrange dynamic: the mutual reinforcement of securitization-like rhetorics meant for domestic audience into a securitization of an international configuration.

Entanglements of Securitization and Desecuritization

There is a credible argument to be made that the current overall dynamic in the military sector in the Arctic is indeed driven by a classic security dilemma (Winther 2021): Given the receding ice, Russia needs to reinforce the protection of its Arctic land masses and natural resources. But the U.S. notes that some of the weapons and facilities Russia establishes in the region can *also* be used to take out important U.S. defensive measures (most notably the Thule Air Base, which plays an important role in the defense of the North American continent against incoming nuclear missiles). When zooming in on relations below this dynamic, however, the effects of great power competition in the region exhibit more complex entanglements of securitizing and desecuritizing moves.

On the one hand, following a reconceptualization of the traditional security dilemma on social-constructivist terms as a ‘securitization dilemma,’ Wilhelmsen (2020; cf. Wilhelmsen and Hjamann (2022)) argues that the mutual homogenization of the Other as only threatening across all issues is important for current escalation in the Arctic. On the other hand, an example of more fine-grained entanglement of securitization and desecuritization comes in Klausen’s analysis of the communication regarding the appointment of the Russian honorary consul in Greenland. On the face of it, the presentation was characterized by desecuritizing language when the respective ministers of foreign affairs portrayed the relationship between Denmark and Russia. But, as Klausen points to, it is exactly because of the changing regional security discourse that the two ministers actively use desecuritization language in order to pre-emptively counter a spillover or active attempts to securitize Dano-Russian relations. Nevertheless, at the same time they articulated past, current, and possible future threats to the status quo in the shape of military conflict or events unforeseen, hence alluding to the precarity of the current relationship. And in a number of instances, particularly Russian articulations of desecuritization with hypothetical resecuritization were formulated in a way that could easily be read as threats à la ‘now peaceful interaction is possible because x, but conflict is an ever-present option if x ceases to be the case.’

A more complex entanglement is distilled from Greenlandic policy formulations by Gad, Rud, Jacobsen, and Rasmussen. As default, the worsened interstate rhetoric in the region is ignored by the politicians in Nuuk.

Moreover, they not only prefer just highlighting economic aspects of Greenlandic independence and foreign policy, but they insist on desecuritizing even defense policy, either by focusing only on the civilian tasks performed by the Danish Army in Greenland or by calling for demilitarization. By preventing a securitization, the Government of Greenland avoids decision making gravitating back to Copenhagen, which formally has the last say on foreign policy and defense matters pertaining to Greenland. Securitization of both defense policy and of Greenland's future independence are implicitly taken as existential threats to the continuation of the process toward sovereignty. But to avert that threat, rather than promoting extraordinary means, the only way forward is to insist on *desecuritization*. Desecuritization thus constitutes at once an important tactic in the sovereignty controversy with Denmark, a central element in the profound political thinking of working toward a self-sustaining economy, and a strategic goal for Arctic politics.

Meanwhile in Denmark, the American overtures to Greenland have been described by Danish media and some parliamentarians as a threat to the coherence of the Realm, or in other words to the sovereignty of Denmark over Greenland. The default expectation one would take from securitization theory would be a reaction consisting of a hardening of control and concentration of authority. As Jacobsen and Lindbjerg's analysis demonstrates, however, the result is the opposite: a more widespread acceptance of Greenland's international agency and promotion of more equal relations between the 'parties to' the Realm. This surprising development is rooted in a combination of two historical processes, detailed in Jacobsen and Olsvig's chapter: First, the peculiar sovereignty arrangement developed immediately after World War II in which the U.S., in return for *de facto* military sovereignty over Greenland, accepted Danish sovereignty *de jure*. Second, the delegitimization of colonial arrangements that in Greenland, so far, has culminated not in Greenlandic independence but in severe restrictions on what Denmark can do with its formal sovereignty over the island.

Taken together, the Greenlandic and Danish attempts to *desecuritize*—rather than *securitize*—to protect a referent object provide a productive contrast to the standard image of how securitization tends to 'freeze' the referent object it seeks to protect. Denmark might want to protect its sovereignty over Greenland, but it can only do so by *not* securitizing and freezing it. Greenland wants to secure its future independence, but to further that aim, it needs by all means to stay out of

securitization, at least in the military sector. The empirical influence of such moves against or at least tangential to attempts from superpowers to organize global and regional security relations by promoting a macrosecuritization will vary. But the mere variations and *not* falling in line keeps open alternatives. Looking beyond Greenland and the Arctic, further studies should look for similar dynamics in relations between postcolonizers and postcolonies in other regions equally experiencing extensive external attention. Only then will we know if the dynamics are unique to the hybrid and transitional postcolonial relation between Greenland and Denmark, couched within an Arctic region marked by a changing climate and straddling European and North American security regions. This brings us back to the question of how regions may be relevant to security analysis.

When Is a Region (Important)? Lessons from Greenland and the Arctic

Before deciding how best to do regional security analysis, particularly when it comes to the Arctic, we need to conclude two discussions opened up in the theoretical parts of the introductory chapter and by the empirical analyses: First, we sort out how different theories of region and of security combine in analyses of Arctic security. Second, we use the Greenlandic case as a lever to pry open some basic assumptions in RSCT in order to begin a discussion about different kinds of materiality and technological development, and how much it means that these play out differently in the Arctic.

Theories of Region and Theories of Security

Navigating the debates, referenced in the introductory chapter, over whether there is such a thing as an Arctic RSC—and if so, what it consists of—might be easier keeping in mind a number of distinctions: Most basic is the distinction between, on the one hand, theories that take regions as given, and, on the other hand, theories that observe how regions are socially constructed. A more subtle distinction, though, concerns how, on the terms of the theory, a region is constructed: Does the theory suggest that the analyst study how a region is socially constructed by social interaction in general—possibly privileging conscious visions for and attempts at region building—and then

afterwards study how security unfolds within this socially constructed region? Or does the theory—as ST in Buzan and Wæver’s version (2003, 48)—analytically aggregate a region (an RSC) *by* mapping securitizations and security dynamics *only*?

There are important roles to be played by both kinds of analyses, but they should not be conflated (cf. Buzan and Wæver 2003, 48): ‘region building’ is politically important—also important for security issues—but any region, given or constructed, is not necessarily an RSC or vice versa. In the late 1980s and 1990s, a number of different actors came together to elevate ‘the Baltic Sea Region’ to a more powerful status. This was both a reaction to and an impact on security relations during this highly dynamic period, but it did not imply that the Baltic Sea was or became an RSC because the decisive actors in the region had their main security concerns elsewhere. The concept of RSC is an analytical concept that captures something that actors might not have an interest in mobilizing politically and sometimes might even have a distinct interest in denying. For instance, in the Middle East, many actors prefer to emphasize ‘Arabic’ or ‘Islamic’ as aggregate terms and push especially Israel out of the conceptualization of their region, but a mapping of security concerns and dynamics would inevitably place Israel as part of the RSC.

‘Objective’ analyses of regions as existing before politics, in culture, geography, or history, are typically region building that does not speak its name. For instance, arguments in Europe about the true delineation of the continent has often been a playing ground for political agendas about emphasizing or de-emphasizing East Central Europe and especially for placing Russia or Turkey within or without (Wæver 1989). This gives critical bite to both kinds of analyses of social construction: those that focus on the discursive struggles around the regional signifier and those that map how actors *de facto* link up in a regional configuration through their securitizations and desecuritizations. In our reading, most applications of RSC on the Arctic proceeds on the assumption that an Arctic region exists and, hence, does not really adhere to the basic procedures prescribed by ST. That is all fine and may produce insightful analyses, but to a certain degree it muddies the waters and makes for less than fruitful exchanges when arguments are put forward in a theoretical language whose premises the analysis presented does not adhere to.

A final round of questions, however, comes from the relevance of the self-imposed delimitations Buzan and Wæver include in their definition of an RSC in order to advance their argument for the relative

independence of the regional level in relation to global security dynamics: First, that the strictures of geography make it imperative to award monopoly to one RSC over any piece of territory. Second, that sovereign states are decisive for delimiting RSCs. In essence, Buzan and Wæver's approach to regional security is formally—given its integration of securitization theory—agnostic to the role of the state, but pragmatically their analysis is state-centered, partly because they need to be in order to convincingly make their argument vis-à-vis the dominance of global security, but also partly because of their state-agnostic analytical lenses observe a state-centric practice.⁴

In our introductory chapter, we referenced a discussion in Arctic security studies of how state centrism kept RSCT from understanding the Arctic as an RSC. In a certain sense, illustrated in figure 11.2, the point of departure for this body of scholarship is the opposite of what a 'pure' implementation of Buzan and Wæver (2003) would imply: These Arctic scholars focus on the Arctic as a region that is given, and pragmatically they observe lots of security dynamics, many of which coalesce in the region and often revolve less around states. Based on these observations, it is a presumption that the Arctic ought to be an RSC, and something is wrong with the theory if it cannot see this. Withholding RSCT status may be a problem—or a benefit—for the Arctic, but as shown by figure 11.2, this is not a problem for the theory as such. RSCT approaches the question of regionness through the lens of security, and therefore one should not establish an Arctic security region prior to one's security analysis. It is therefore possible that the Arctic is important in security analysis but not as an RSC. However, adjusting RSCT so that it becomes able to capture an RSC that did not register as such previously warrants a discussion of what would be gained and lost by such an adjustment.

In the introduction, we also discussed how Buzan and Wæver had trouble fitting Greenland as a unit into their (2003) analysis of both Cold War but particularly post-Cold War security regions. We will now take this puzzle as a starting point in our discussion of the added value of an alternative or revised version of the regional theory. In sum, we will advance the idea that a version of RSCT that more radically embraces the impetus of securitization theory to aggregate securitizations bottom-up is better equipped to understand security dynamics in the Arctic. Later, we will argue that several characteristics of Arctic and Greenlandic security suggests that such a less 'purist' approach to regional security might be of more general relevance.⁵

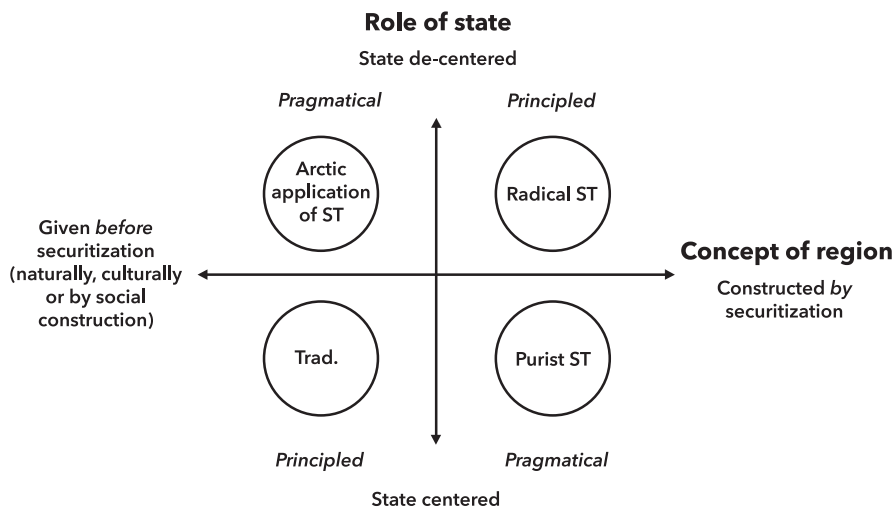


Fig. 11.2. Approaches to regional security.

Regions and (Post)colonial Islands

As mentioned, the Danish state is one of the few examples visible on Buzan and Wæver’s (2003) world maps that is allowed to be part of more than one RSC, since Greenland is in North America and Denmark is in Europe. This uniqueness, however, might be the result of what one could call a ‘cartographic trick of mind.’ On at least one account, Greenland is less alone than the maps suggest. Simply because the remaining members of the category are so small that they do not register on the grand scale employed in the *Regions and Powers* survey. This might be less troublesome if it only concerned the maps illustrating the volume. But the maps in a sense are indicative of the way the analysis camouflages the phenomenon. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, Greenland might be read as a case of a postcolonial phenomenon typically not easy to read out of a world map: the little remnants of empire left behind by global decolonization, scattered around the oceans retained under, British, French, Dutch, U.S., etc. sovereignty (Adler-Nissen and Gad 2013; Cornell and Aldrich 2020).

These small European (post-)colonies have very different conditions because of different attitudes held by both colonizer and colonized, but also because of their different neighborhoods (Adler-Nissen and Gad 2013). French Guiana is the only of these territories large

enough to join Greenland in being discernible on the world maps, but the territory blends better in visibly with the same legend as the rest of South America, and no regional conflicts warrant explicit discussion. In the treatment of the origins of the North American RSC, Buzan and Wæver note that a number of islands in the Caribbean are held by European powers (2003, 279), and their discussion of post-Cold War security in the Caribbean revolves around the trade-off for tiny islands between engaging threats from, on the one hand, armed drug traders and, on the other hand, the U.S. as neighborhood policeman/bully (2003, 290–91). But the two threats—from criminality and from U.S. interventions—are never related, even if retaining European sovereignty might for some of these island polities be a way of dodging this general dilemma of Caribbean security (cf. Oostindie 2013; Adler-Nissen and Gad 2013). Gibbs fixates (2011, 56–60) his criticism of Buzan and Wæver on the Malvinas/Falkland Islands, a piece of British territory embedded in a South American RSC, significant enough to cause a war too serious to ignore in an account of military security.⁶

A whole different picture emerges in the South Pacific, which Buzan and Wæver categorize as an ‘unstructured security region’ since “local states have such low capability that their power does not project much, if at all, beyond their own boundaries; and[or] geographical isolation makes interaction difficult (for example, islands separated by large expanses of ocean)” (2003, 62; cf. 64). ‘Unstructured’ is thus part of the theory, not an ad hoc deflection, but it does take the case out of the world map of RSCs proper. This categorization, nevertheless, ignores how particularly the U.S. and France ‘are’ in and of the region by virtue of ‘their’ islands. Buzan and Wæver insist that ‘outside’ superpowers remain in a region ‘by choice’; they could opt to go ‘home’ (2003, 81).⁷ French national ideology, however, would have a hard time accepting such a retreat (Holm 2013), and the Dutch actually tried to rid themselves of their Caribbean postcolonies, who, however, preferred to hang on, insisting on their constitutional rights to do so (Oostindie 2013). Greenland is but an unusually large one of these postcolonial anomalies, and the widespread existence of the phenomenon alone warrants critical rethinking of the way ‘purist’ RSCT ignores how faraway great powers have based their intervention in regional security on naval power and particularly those ‘permanent hangar ships’ in the form of colonized islands (Doel, Harper, and Heymann 2016).

*The Relational Importance of Land and Water;
Technological and Climatic Shifts*

As a wider phenomenon these (post)colonial islands point to a deeper problem, namely the way RSCT is focused on land territory in a way that does not necessarily fit the Arctic well. Human life does take place mostly on land, and human settlements are rarely on or in the water as such. Hence, the units of the RSCs identified in Buzan and Wæver (2003) are based on land. Even islands are land, not water. It is perfectly possible for a securitizing actor to securitize a threat coming ‘out of the blue,’ from across water (Vikings after their raid on Lindisfarne), from space (aliens), or from pure imagination (Jewish conspiracies), and power asymmetries may even make it possible for one side to force its autogenic security concerns on others (cf. Campbell 1992). But feedback mechanisms facilitate the formation of a configuration, that is, a pattern of interlocking securitizations, not to speak of a complex, a configuration dominating a region and largely comprehensible according to its own dynamics. And feedback only comes from connections, two-ways and repetitive. The question of relative importance of sea vs. land mass in human intercourse is therefore first one of connections: Are interactions, whether amiable or conflictual, denser and more intense over water or land?

History obviously has an abundance of individual cases of political communities and rivalries that are connected via land—from the first Mesopotamian polities—as well as those that were mainly unfolding around lakes or oceans, as much of classical antiquity around the Mediterranean. In addition to individual variations, economic and military historians have traced long waves in the relative advantages of one over the other, driven by technological development. In the first years of the 20th century, the founders of geopolitics, Halford Mackinder and Rudolf Kjellén, argued that with the arrival of railroads, land mass was decisively becoming pivotal and sea secondary (Mackinder 1904; Kjellén 1916). For the past two centuries, the dominant security patterns in the world have tended to tie continents together more tightly than ocean-centered regions. Still today, when mapping global security dynamics especially in the military sector, the main factor shaping the clustering is “the stopping power of water” (Mearsheimer 2001). Global security is mostly clustered around land, not water. Where islands are used in the penetration of regions by outside powers, their importance

comes exactly from serving as a steppingstone closer to faraway coasts and archipelagoes. Cuba, Diego Garcia, Guam, and Tahiti each played or plays such a role and, as mentioned by Jacobsen and Olsvig (chap. 4, this vol.), the reason why the U.S. was keen on acquiring the Danish West Indies was the fear that particularly St. Thomas would come to play the same role for Germany in what would come to be known as World War I. The airports built in Greenland were pivotal for reducing the distance between America and Europe during World War II. Nevertheless, while the general pattern is that land facilitates interaction, it does not preclude that water-born dynamics can be central in special cases where water provides the only connections; the South Pacific and the Caribbean are subcomplexes of that kind.

Some referent objects of securitization can be (or be in) the sea *per se*, most notably in the environmental sector, where the pollution of seas was among the first objects for protective cooperation, and in the military sector where naval control is important. Increasingly, something similar is happening in the economic sector, where exclusive economic zones (EEZ) may become gradually more important relative to the land as such for states in the Arctic, including Greenland.⁸ Moreover, states can claim an extended continental shelf zone in cases where the geologic continental shelf exceeds beyond the 200 nautical miles, which, in short, is what Russia, Canada, and the Kingdom of Denmark have done in the Arctic Ocean (cf. Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg 2017, 22). An analysis of Greenland's EEZ would therefore both activate sovereignty questions as well as economic, environmental, and other security interests that—depending on the further development—could be securitized in the attempt to secure new resources. Simultaneously, however, the same area may be used for search-and-rescue missions across national boundaries (cf. the agreement negotiated in 2011 under the auspices of Arctic Council), hence potentially constituting a *desecuritized* referent object. These are ways in which sea itself becomes the referent object for securitizations and regional configurations including RSCs therefore potentially organized around sea nodes instead of land nodes. Nevertheless, this is still marginal compared to the importance of sea becoming important as the connector of land-based referent objects and threats.

The increasing importance of water does not necessarily come from shifts in technologies and the ensuing ease of interactions as implied by classical geopolitics. As a point of intersection between the social construction of regions and security regions, it is also possible

for increasing symbolic appeal to lead to more interaction along certain lines. Especially in the 1990s, efforts to increase cooperation in the Baltic Sea region, Barents Sea region, and Black Sea region reactivated favored historical (or mythical) periods such as the Hanseatic League and the Pomor trade. The emotional appeal of Arcticness is stimulated by global trends including climate change and a general valuation of Indigenous politics. In the 1990s, the Barents, Black, and probably especially Baltic Sea regions gained parts of their appeal from a geopolitical thaw: they were built where cooperation had until recently been impossible due to the Cold War. Similarly, Arctic regionalism draws momentum from its relative novelty, in this case favored by both climatic and geopolitical thaws. And although it is analytically distinct from security interactions, they can be causally connected in the sense that deliberately seeking each other out can become part of security dynamics. For emotional mobilization of new geographic imaginaries, waters seem to have more appeal these years than land masses.

In much of the Arctic, land is generally not hospitable; with sea transport dominant, maps of ‘nearness’ would historically center on coasts or seas (Sörlin 2018, 272). As discussed earlier, however, the region was only drawn into military security as aviation technology matured. Intercontinental flights increased connectivity globally but even at current levels, cost pushes any transport of quantity to ground level. Moreover, given the absence of economies of scale in the Arctic—due to the small and dispersed population—most flights pass *over* the Arctic. In much discourse on the Arctic this physical isolation of each Arctic population center is pointed out as a threat to economic development as well as to health and food security. But in relation to COVID-19, it offered the opportunity of defensive ‘island strategies’ of isolation to postpone and control the arrival of the pandemic (cf. Steenholdt, Rud, and Gad 2023). On the one hand, with sea ice receding, maritime transportation is destined to increase in the Arctic; on the other hand, like air traffic most will be intercontinental, and if touching Arctic destinations at all, it will mostly be to extract resources from isolated mining sites or the like. Even if the quality of internet connections in the Arctic varies a lot, they have radically altered the isolation/connectivity configuration with effects on not just health security and identity projects, but also core aspects of traditional political security dynamics: As recently as the first decades of the Cold War, Danish intelligence services excluded known Danish communists from taking jobs in Greenland to avoid subversive influence and intelligence gathering (Nissen and Pelt 2009). Now, the

Danish Defence Intelligence Service warns that Russia directs cyberespionage operations toward Greenland (FE 2021, 27) and points at the threat to the political security of the Danish-Greenlandic connection from disinformation distributed on the internet, exemplified by a forged letter from a Greenlandic minister to a U.S. senator in support of Trump's acquisition bid (FE 2021, 27; Ritzau 2019).⁹ And both the government of Greenland and its largest enterprise, Royal Greenland, suffered severe cyberattacks that shut down democracy and business respectively for weeks (Hyldahl, Olsvig, and Kilime 2022).

In sum, technological shifts in the physical transport of people and goods that has changed security relations globally has entered the Arctic slowly and unevenly. Most often they have been introduced to serve the purposes—military or extractive—of outside powers rather than humans living in the Arctic. Similar tendencies have been observable when it comes to information and communication technology ever since telegraph cables in the 1860s were plotted to cross southern Greenland to connect Europe and North America without anyone conceiving the idea that Greenlanders might want to be hooked up (Abildgaard 2022). The introduction and operation of new technologies to the region again and again proves challenging even for the most powerful of those outside powers, the U.S. armed forces: snow and ice is a different terrain for both marine and land traffic; the northern lights interfere with standard radio communication; remoteness and lack of redundancy opens distinct challenges for cybersecurity (Doel, Harper, and Heymann 2016; Trump, Hossain, and Linkov 2020). On the one hand, less frost and ice, and expansion of communications technologies, will likely make Arctic conditions less exceptional in terms of connectivity. On the other hand, the lack of density of population *in* the Arctic will mean that increased connectivity will first and foremost bring outside threats and conflicts closer to Arctic communities with limited resources to conjure up extraordinary means on the scale necessary to alter intruding security dynamics.

Do Securitization Analysis Bottom-up to See If a Configuration Is Indeed a Complex

The rationale for exclusive RSCs, however, was never that *all* securitizations stay within boundaries. Securitizations and desecuritizations do crisscross all over the globe. Nevertheless, the arguments were first that they actually *do* cluster: If one imagines all instances of securitiza-

tion drawn on a world map, some areas would be densely colored and others only crossed by a few lines (and then some nongeographic at all). Secondly, because security is relational and security concerns and remedies by one actor often feed into security concerns by others, they are often circular in a group rather than endless chains. Given that one of the main purposes of security analysis is to assist in management of these interactions to avoid unnecessary escalations (security dilemmas, for instance), it is important to group together those securitizations that are most strongly connected. Thirdly, the establishment of RSCs as a strong concept was meant to challenge the dominant tendency in international security analysis to overprivilege the global and the national, and therefore it was reasonable to invest in a concept at the regional level that would lend this level ontological standing. In principle, there would be no problem in allowing a bit of overlap here and there, except that if one does this, it is hard to see where to stop (and it would elevate extra-regional powers like the U.S. to ‘co-owners’ of all regions). One could then put a regional perspective on issue after issue, but there would be no distinct regions.

Against this background, our solution to the challenges to RSCT posed by Greenland and the Arctic are twofold: First, we suggest loosening the demands related to sovereignty so that nonsovereign territories can be included in an RSC (and bring their [post]colonial capitals as externally involved). To release the special treatment for external actors tout court would undermine the central aim of allowing independent regional dynamics as part of a global analysis and the related strategic purpose of reducing overemphasis on superpower dominance in analysis (in a U.S.-dominated discipline). For getting the relative independence of regional dynamics right, it is therefore better to loosen the sovereignty factor and include those territories that are in a region and thereby bring in the colonial powers in an indirect way, but not fully as immediate members.

Second, a ‘radical’ ST approach to regions would build networks of securitization bottom-up. This does not begin from RSCs as geographically given. Thereby, it is an empirically open question when the result of aggregating securitizations is, indeed, an RSC or some cross-cutting security configuration. It may very well be helpful for both analysis and management of security to observe logically limited, relatively independent security configurations with a certain affinity to a certain (regional) territory without necessarily monopolizing it. While a securitization necessarily involves the elevation of some threat over others,

having expanded the analytical focus to include not just those in possession of a formal monopoly on legitimate violence—as ST laudably does—there might reasonably be a variety of prioritized threat/defense measures interacting *or not interacting* on any given piece of the globe. Taking seriously the way security dynamics should—according to the securitization components of the theoretical framework—be aggregated from scratch, nothing seems to preclude that more than one set of interacting securitizations could cohabit and speak across each other in the same piece of land. Imagine a remote plot on the coast of northeast Greenland. An animal rights activist seeks to block a hunter from killing a polar bear. The Government of Greenland issues a license to drill an oil well at the exact same spot, aiming for revenue that will secure a Greenlandic welfare state independent from remaining bonds to Denmark. And right over your head, a Russian missile en route to Washington is miraculously intercepted by the U.S. missile defense system. These three episodes may definitively be analyzed as security dynamics involving interacting securitizations. There might be relations across the three episodes, but mere geographical coincidence hardly ascertains that there are. Closer analysis would be warranted to decide whether one or more of the three dynamics make sense on their own, without taking the others into account. It is likely that the most productive way of studying both the Arctic and Greenland is therefore more inclusive security configurations where both global/transnational issues like climate change and external actors are part of the pattern (Wæver 1997, 125). Such configurations could be added to a global map of ‘purist’ RSCs and major powers.

Theoretically allowing distinct configurations territorial affinity without necessarily demanding territorial monopoly probably has additional benefits. First, it sensitizes the analysis to actors who call for acceptance of means that may surely be identified as extraordinary even if they do not necessarily come from a traditional security toolbox when facing what they describe as existential threats to referent objects they value (cf. Hoogensen 2005, 273). Similarly, it may facilitate analysis of the ‘silent security dilemmas’ involved in region-building projects—like the Arctic—which is substantially a means to desecuritization (cf. Eriksson 1994a, 25; 1994b, 68; Åtland 2007, 29), but where every explication of this goal risks putting attention back to the military security dynamics, which nonmilitary cooperation seeks to escape. In conclusion, apart from offering this ‘radical’ version of how to do regional analysis with securitization theory, we hope that our discus-

TABLE 11.1. Theories of Region and Theories of Regional Security

Theory of region	Ontology of region	Relation of security to region	Epistemological role of analyst
<i>Traditional approaches to regions</i>	Given (by natural geography, history or culture)	Security dynamics play out within naturally/culturally given regions	Uncover objective conditions for security problems to arise and be managed within given regions
<i>Social constructivist 'region building'</i>	Socially constructed	Security dynamics play out within socially preconstructed regions	Uncover intersubjective conditions for security problems to arise, be managed, and dissolved within socially preconstructed regions
<i>Typical Arctic RSC analysis (referencing Buzan and Wæver)</i>	Naturally given and/or socially constructed	Security dynamics play out within naturally given or socially preconstructed regions	Uncover objective/ intersubjective conditions for security problems to arise, be managed, and dissolved within given regions
<i>'Purist' ST RSCT (Buzan and Wæver 2003)</i>	Socially constructed by securitizations within limits both natural (distance) and political (sovereignty)	Security dynamics add up to distinct regions, i.e., 'security regions' are constituted by securitizations	Uncover intersubjective conditions for security problems to arise, be managed, and dissolved, possibly by reconfiguration of region(s), however within the limits of given natural geography and concept of sovereignty
<i>'Radical' ST regional security configuration analysis</i>	Socially constructed by securitizations	Security dynamics add up to distinct regions, i.e., 'security regions' are constituted by securitizations	Uncover intersubjective conditions for security problems to arise, be managed, and dissolved, possibly by reconfiguration of region(s) and/or sovereignty configuration

sion of the various approaches, summarized in table 11.1, will make the differences clearer in theoretical debates on regional security in general and Arctic security in particular.

Next on the Security Agenda: Comparative Transfigurations and Hard Fits

If Greenland one day finally ‘freezes’ its constitutional fluidity by declaring sovereignty, it will find itself in a region under climatic thaw and geopolitical freeze. This new state will instantly be aware of the challenges stemming from the surrounding great powers and their impulses toward militarization and will try to actively manage the potential spill-down from these overarching dynamics to the extent possible. Already now, as the Government of Greenland gestures toward future sovereignty, they are busy thinking through how to take security dynamics into account (Jacobsen 2020; Olsvig and Gad 2021). When doing this, it is necessary to build policy on a solid analysis of the global system as well as the main interactions and balances between the global and the regional (Wæver 2017, 133). Such an analysis needs to conclude in the abstract to be operational, but in order to be precise it needs to be solidly anchored in an intimate understanding of the security concerns of each relevant stakeholder.

The empirical ambition of this volume has been to offer a coherent and comprehensive image of the security dynamics involving Greenland. A central message, however, is that this configuration is in flux; in many ways it is indeed best understood as a transfiguration. One obvious implication of this is that new analyses will soon be needed. And since change comes from more than one source, and dynamics cannot be expected to stay within one sector or at one scale, the analytical net will soon again have to be cast widely. A single example of recent developments will suffice: The Government of Greenland has (as noticed by Gad, Bjørst, and Jacobsen in chap. 3 in this volume) taken up a new role in fighting off climate change: dropping oil exploration but instead advertising to be ‘open for business’ in service of the global green transition by supplying rare earth elements and hydropower. Simultaneously, the European Commission is establishing an office in Greenland in an effort to raise the “geopolitical necessity” (EC 2021, 2) of countering the transformation of “the Arctic into an arena of geopolitical competition and harming the EU’s interests” (EC 2021, 2). And the Russian

war against Ukraine raised the security stakes of both ambitions by securitizing energy (Berling 2022) and thereby the green transition, and by putting Arctic exceptionality on hold.

The theoretical ambition has sprung out of an engagement with Copenhagen School securitization theory particularly in three aspects: First, the school's work on regional security pointed out Greenland as one among a handful of difficult cases in need of better understanding, both because they take on an atypical role between regional security complexes, but also because the complexity of this position meant that misunderstanding them might challenge the theory on its own terms. Our discussion of Greenland in Arctic security was fruitful in three ways; it led us to clarify the theoretical differences in approaches to regional security in the Arctic; it suggested that 'purist' Copenhagen School RSCS should take better account of the role played in regional security by postcolonial islands for outside powers' engagement; and we outlined how to approach regional security configurations through a more 'radical' application of securitization theory.

Second, by showing the complications and implications of the security dynamics framing a polity that might seem peripheral in terms of power and population size, as well as marginal in terms of postcolonial categories and processes, we invite analyses of cases elsewhere that present themselves as hard fits for the theory. In that sense, we have presented an analytical strategy that offers itself for replication and inspiration in other cases, allowing analyses to speak back to the theory from the specificities of the configuration under scrutiny. In other words, we advance that there is much to learn not just about regional security but also about security dynamics in general by doing comprehensive studies of how securitizations relate in configurations centered on single polities, particularly if the object of analysis is strategically selected.

Third, our analyses have shown that developing a focus on 'mid-range' security dynamics can open up a fruitful new research agenda: the classic security dilemma and the related securitization dilemma are important examples of such 'midrange' dynamics that make us understand how one securitization can lead to another, and in these cases lead back to itself and put the involved parties in a place we should struggle to avoid. But securitization and desecuritization come in other recognizable patterns: cascading down scales and across sectors, feeding back upscale, mutually reinforcing each other. And some of these patterns lead to more benign places. Understanding better the

inner logic of such different ‘midrange’ dynamics may make grand geopolitical freeze less of a self-fulfilling prophecy and may perhaps make for better decisions that may help us stop the climatic thaw that is destroying the Arctic as we know it.

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NOTES

1. Our introductory chapter and Gad, Bjørst, and Jacobsen (chap. 3, this vol.) explain why we here prefer ‘configuration’ over the label used in many, later Copenhagen School writings, ‘constellation.’

2. The Danish government did send a naval ship to the Faroe Islands in the wake of the 1946 referendum on independence, but the affair was a good deal more complex than the timing would suggest (Asgaard 1990).

3. For an example of such a process, see Wilhelmsen and Hjermann (2022).

4. RSCT was exactly presented as a way to make the degree of state-centrism an empirical question, in contrast to either neorealism or globalization theory, which settles this prior to analysis. The RSCT “framework does not predefine that states are *not* dominant. It is perfectly possible that the world is still largely state-centric, even if our framework is not” (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 45).

5. We take the label ‘purist’ from Gibbs’ (2011) parallel critique of Buzan and Wæver. Gibbs, however, draws different conclusions than us from dismissing the sovereignty delimitation as he prioritizes a traditionalist geopolitical approach to territoriality over the social construction of threats.

6. Salter and Mutlu’s (2013) ST analysis of Diego Garcia seems less damaging for the RSC part of the ST enterprise.

7. The theoretical purpose of this move is primarily to tame the American imperialism of defining themselves into almost all regions of the world as an equal member. The theory therefore privileges local polities as constitutive of an RSC with external powers as—often important—add-ons to the structure given from within the region.

8. The EEZ may involve the maritime area up to 200 nautical miles from shore and give states special rights regarding exploration, exploitation, conserving, and managing living and nonliving maritime resources (UN.org (n.d.), article 56).

9. Danish Security and Intelligence Service emphasizes that “It is highly likely that the letter was fabricated and shared on the Internet by Russian influence agents, who wanted to create confusion and a possible conflict between Denmark, the USA and Greenland” (PET 2022, 18).

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