WRITING SOUTHEAST ASIAN SECURITY

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THE "WAR ON TERROR" AS A HEGEMONIC SECURITY NARRATIVE AND ITS
EFFECTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: A (CRITICAL) SECURITY ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the (critical) security effects that US Foreign Policy, and in particular the War on Terror (WOT), has had on East and Southeast Asia. This dissertation also articulates an innovative critical security approach that requires a post-structuralism based in Stephen K. White's notion of "weak ontology," and further demands a historically and geographically contingent method of immanent critique that allows us to grapple with the politics and ethics of actually occurring security logics. *As a form of immanent critique rooted in a weak ontological understanding of critical security, this dissertation asks- and answers- the following question(s):* What can a critical security analysis tell us about security/insecurity that a more conventional realist-based security analysis cannot? And more specifically, what can a critical security analysis tell us about the impact that the WOT has had on both state and non-state actors in East and Southeast Asia? In other words, *operating as an immanent critique* in the context of empirical examples in East and Southeast Asia, this dissertation demonstrates that forms of insecurity were constructed and/or abetted by the WOT itself, understood as a hegemonic security narrative, and that these forms of insecurity occurred in concert with the practice of traditional forms of state-centric security.

This dissertation contributes to scholarship in two significant ways. First, it seeks to remedy the relative paucity of *critical* security analyses focused on East Asia and Southeast Asia. Second, this dissertation demonstrates- using the weak ontological immanent critique approach that it outlines- that a deconstructive critical security analysis based in post-structuralist commitments need not be anathema to engagements with pragmatic problems and security issues, nor should it have to preclude the possibility of enacting the politics and ethics that are required to theorize alternative security logics.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Introduction

I started my doctoral coursework in the fall of 2006. The terrorist attacks of

September 11th 2001 were still relatively recent and not since the fall of the Berlin Wall

had a singular event prompted such a firestorm of self-questioning and theorizing in the

academic field of political science and particularly, international relations (IR). What did

September 11th 2001 *mean*? Did the events of that day signal a fundamental shift in the

way the world works? Or in the ways in which we explain and understand the way the

world works? Why is it that the short-form "9/11" itself came to be used as a tidy concept

that "erased the history and context of the events and turned their representation into a

cultural-political icon where the meaning of the date becomes both assumed and open to

manipulation" (Jackson 2005, 7).[1]

Predictably, the hawks of the IR establishment had a heyday of *schadenfreude*

after the terrorist attacks, blithely quashing Fukuyama-esque "post-Cold War" visions of

Kantian peace spreading across the lands. And for critics of the globalization thesis, 9/11

lent credence to their contention that globalization was just a moment- that it was

undermined and delegitimized by the terrorist attacks; or conversely that globalization (if

it existed at all) was actually the root cause of the terrorist attacks. Many felt that Samuel

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[1]   Due to this fact, I will use the term "9/11" when I am referring to the term as it is generally
wielded in mainstream discourse about the terrorist attacks. As I try to deconstruct the security narratives of
"9/11" I will try to refer to the events of that day date as "September 11th", "September 11th 2001," or "the
terrorist attacks," as much as possible. The purpose of this distinction is to make strange our assumptions
about "9/11"- what it means and how it is talked about.

Huntington (1993) had been vindicated as the Cassandra figure that his acolytes had long claimed him to be. And despite the inherent inconsistencies and weaknesses of Huntington's civilizational theories, the message of 9/11 was summarily framed and represented in academic, policy, and media circles as heralding a new era of *clashing civilizations*.

Through this lens, although the US continued to be the world's single super power and "Western civilization" was understood to be the superior incarnation of a linear progression of human history, 9/11 revealed that the US (and by extension Western civilization itself) was under attack by evil forces. The obvious corollary to this is that Western civilization itself is what must be defended. This way of seeing the world after September 11th 2001 signalled a resurgence of ethnocentric and militaristic thinking about international relations, and to a shifted emphasis on borders, difference and otherness vis-à-vis the resurgent importance of "security," which was readily evoked in all of its discursive forms: *national* security, *aviation* security, *border* security, *Homeland* security, *corporeal* security and so on.

Cue the resurgence of *us-versus-them* discourses that rivalled the worst of the McCarthy-era Cold War years. As a student of politics, what I found academically intriguing were the meta-narratives that were emerging from the discourses surrounding the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001. These narratives appeared to possess a set of unwritten rules that necessarily foreclosed alternative ways of seeing and understanding the events of that day. This was observable at all levels of discourse: popular, academic and policy. It was *Good* against *Evil* and *Us* versus *Them*. These sentiments were

deployed in the post-September 11th narratives in a doctrinaire and ahistorical manner. To ask questions about the motivations of those groups that would perpetrate terrorism against the United States was, at best, inappropriate or disrespectful. At worst, it was perceived as sympathizing with or apologizing for Osama bin Laden and the terrorists.

The bombing of Afghanistan and invasion of Iraq represented the cathartic actualization of the "security" that was desired by Americans after 9/11. The American worldview began to pivot around the core ideas belied by George W. Bush's War on Terror (WOT). It became increasingly clear that the WOT was the lone reality upon which the world's attentions were fixated. It seemed, in the first few months after 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan, that no one was thinking, writing, or talking about anything else.

This was the setting in which I was introduced to David Campbell's work, *Writing Security: United States Policy and the Politics of Identity* (1998). In the context of the Cold War, Campbell emphasized that it was the characterization of the external threat of Soviet Communism upon which US national identity became highly dependent. This was achieved through a "scripting" of US identity that was contingent upon its opposition to the identity ascribed to that threat (Campbell 1998, 30-33). Importantly, this threat was "othered" in a visceral way, and depicted as pathological and alien. Ultimately, the emphasis on fear and danger within the Cold War discourse became crucial to its effectiveness at accentuating the scripted identity of the US as a defender of freedom and upholder of Western civilization. Hence, the repetitive articulation of danger in foreign

policy discourses is not just a reference to "…threats to a state's identity or existence: it is its condition of possibility" (Campbell 1998, 13).

Related to Campbell's approach to security, I became interested more broadly in a variety of post-structuralist, feminist and post-colonial critical approaches to IR and security. Here I explored works by authors like James Der Derian, Rob Walker, Simon Dalby, Ole Waever, Jim George, Spike Peterson, Cynthia Weber, Cynthia Enloe, Christine Sylvester, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Sankaran Krishna, Geeta Chowdry and Sheila Nair among others.[2] Hence, what informed my doctoral research focus from the earliest stages was both the critical constructivist theorizing of identities, as well as exposure to a diversity of critical approaches to security more generally. That the WOT presented such a salient opportunity to explore these complex ideas was a given. Most importantly, at the time, it was a relatively novel opportunity. And so, picking up on the ideas of Campbell, I undertook several research projects looking at how the WOT could be read as a powerful post-Cold War narrative, instrumental in scripting the identity of the United States and of *Americanness,* and intrinsically linked to the mobilization of American (and global) support for the wide array of security practices that were enacted under the rubric of the WOT.

In late 2005, and in a nod to Campbell, Richard Jackson published *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language Politics and Counter-Terrorism* (Manchester University Press). *Writing the War on Terrorism* was one of the first critical explorations of the

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[2]   This is not to say that I unquestioningly accept all of the ideas of all of these authors. There is a tremendous diversity of theorizing and analyzing presented by such scholars and as much as I find, within these literatures, ideas that inspire my work, I also find ideas that I would charitably call "problematic."

discourses employed by the Bush administration in response to the terrorist attacks of

September 11th 2001. It was also one of the first analyses to argue that these discourses

were consciously and carefully deployed in order to justify mobilization for Bush's WOT.

While I personally would not argue for the degree to which Jackson believes the political

elite consciously and strategically chose the language that they did,[3] the other main

arguments made in *Writing the War on Terrorism* are persuasive: first, that it was not

inevitable that the September 11th terrorist attacks would be construed as an act of war

that required a national-level military response, but rather, this interpretation and

subsequent actions represented a political choice made by the Bush Administration;

second, that the discourse of the WOT was reproduced and reinforced via its

institutionalization in powerful discursive sites such as the news media, popular culture,

churches and governmental policies; and third, that these WOT discourses were more

than mere words and propaganda, and produced tangible irruptions into the "real" world

of domestic and foreign policies (Jackson 2005).

Jackson convincingly argues these points. He makes a compelling contribution to

the broader argument that, while the most palpable component of Bush's WOT was its

military dimension, an equally significant, if not more significant, aspect of the WOT as it

relates to security/insecurity is that it also operated as a powerful political discourse- one

that I would call a *hegemonic security narrative*. This is because Bush's WOT was more

than just a series of policies and military operations. Rather, it also operated *discursively*-

and "discourse" in this sense "involves not just speeches by politicians… but also the

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[3]   I would argue for a more organic emergence of such discourses, informed by previously-held
historical and institutionalized beliefs about the Virtuous Western Self and the Evil Muslim Other.

symbols they appropriate, the myths and histories they refer to, the laws they pass, the organizational structures they create, the decision-making procedures they follow and the actions they undertake" (Jackson 2005, 19). The WOT as a political narrative was specifically a *security* narrative. That is, a discursive framework within which the definitions and practice of "security" can take shape. It can be seen as a *hegemonic* security narrative because it rather successfully achieved domination in the sense that it is a narrative where its "regimes of truth" (Foucault 1980) were taken for granted as the foundation for policy and public debate. These "regimes of truth" contain powerful political, cultural, and institutional meaning (Geertz 1973; Gusterson 1993) and come to be through "multiple political practices, related as much to the constitution of various subjectivities, as to the intentional action of… subjects" (Campbell 1998, 17).

As mentioned, an academic cottage industry has emerged since September 11th 2001, whereby much has been written on topics relating to the events of that day and to the ensuing WOT. This includes work on the broad subjects of terrorism and counter-terrorism; political Islam; American foreign policy under the Bush administration; the efforts of state authority to legislate and enact "domestic security," and many other related issues. Much of this work has occurred in the so-called "mainstream"[4] of political science and IR, and under the rubric of traditional security studies- where the focus is on the threat of terrorism as an existential threat to the state. It is thus arguable that the WOT- as both practices/policies and as a hegemonic security narrative- operates within a framework of understanding that is closely tied to the mainstream of security studies in

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[4] I define more clearly what I mean by "mainstream" in Chapter I.

both the academic and policy worlds. Importantly then, the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT is inextricably linked to the ways in which "security" and "international relations" are explained and understood.

There is, however, a growing body of literature that utilizes distinctly critical approaches to the study of security and more specifically, to the study of security in the context of terrorism/counter-terrorism as it relates to September 11th 2001. This critical literature is diverse, and it is inter-disciplinary, but most notable about it is a shift in emphasis away from a focus solely on the existential threat of terrorism to the state. Instead, critical security approaches delve into deeper ontological questions about the nature of security/insecurity itself. They also examine the myriad effects that terrorism *and* counter-terrorism, as well as terrorists *and* state authority can have on the production of security/insecurity. As such, these critical security approaches also question the tendency within the mainstream of IR to focus on the state as a predetermined entity and as the sole subject of security. Related to this, a number of critical security approaches also reject modernist and positivist methodologies in favour of emphasizing inter-subjectivity and indeterminacy, and they incorporate non-traditional elements such as discourse and gender into analysis.

The supposition that the WOT, as a hegemonic security narrative, "imposes its interpretation of political reality on… society and rationalizes, legitimizes and normalizes the practices of counter-terrorism," (Jackson 2005, 20), informs my own propensity towards a critical approach to the interrogation of security and security practices in the context of the WOT. The problem of political violence, perpetrated by both state and non-

state actors, has been an ever-present quandary faced by political communities throughout history. As such, questions surrounding the causes of political violence tend to be the focal point of IR scholars, but *critical* voices in explaining and understanding political violence continue to be under-represented in the academic and policy worlds. The point is not to discount the threat of terrorism as far as it does exist. Rather, the point is to ask different questions than ones currently being asked so as to reveal some of the less obvious ways that the threat of terrorism, along with reactions to it, can also manifest itself.

What then, is the contribution that I can make to the critical scholarship relating to security narratives and practices informed by 9/11 and the WOT? What new questions can be explored in order to examine the many implications of such a prevailing hegemonic security narrative: one that was/is so predominant and that serves powerful descriptive, constitutive and performative functions? While theorizing the WOT as a hegemonic security narrative is an important and salient contribution to the critical scholarship of IR, I thought it would be useful to explore empirical examples and cases that could serve to demonstrate the importance of security narratives in shaping identities, framing political "problems," and influencing the lives of groups and individuals. Most importantly, doing so allows us to answer the following central research question: *what can a critical security analysis tell us about the WOT and about security/insecurity?* Put another way, what does a critical security analysis "see," that a mainstream security analysis does not? In order to address this problem, it would be useful to look at examples of how security/insecurity is typically read and understood vis-a-vis the WOT, and then to

offer a critical re-reading of some key examples or cases situated within specific historical and geographic contexts, providing an important form of immanent critique (Browning and McDonald 2011). This, I would argue, is a significant contribution to the larger critical security literature. But how can I introduce this empirical element to a (meta-) theoretical exploration of the WOT as a hegemonic security narrative?

Importantly, we can observe the hegemony of the WOT meta-narrative in different contexts- conceptually, historically, and geographically. In academic and policy circles, we see examples of how the "security" issues of different geographic regions have been framed within the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT. East Asia, and Southeast Asia in particular,[5] is one such region. For a variety of reasons, it is a particularly interesting region in which to direct our attention. First, Southeast Asia has been identified as a "second front" in the WOT, both by academics and policy makers. Second, there is the fact of "strong state" authority, which is understood to be characteristic of many Southeast Asian governments. This has long been of interest to researchers who examine the implications of strong states on different factors such as economic development and the practice of democracy. In the context of the WOT, a host of novel questions arise related to the role that the strong state plays: for example, when Southeast Asian governments co-opt the WOT discourse as a means to silence political dissent, or conversely when (fear of) terrorist activity undermines the legitimacy of the

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[5] "East Asia" here is a largely arbitrary designation that refers to the Western rim of the Pacific, from the Koreas, down to Indonesia. "Southeast Asia" refers more specifically to the members of ASEAN- Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar/Burma. This project is primarily interested in Southeast Asia, but it is often impossible to talk about Southeast Asian issues without bringing China, Japan or Korea into the picture. As such, I will use the term "East Asia" to encompass the larger area, and "Southeast Asia" when I am specifically talking about that part of the region.

elites in these "strong" states. Third, there has been a proliferation of work pertaining to Southeast Asian security as it relates to the WOT, but much of this work resides in the so-called mainstream of IR, and under the rubric of traditional security studies.

Hence, this analysis is undertaken with the view to help remedy the relative paucity of *critical* security analyses focused on East Asia and Southeast Asia.[6] As mentioned, while much has been written about security, terrorism, and US foreign policy in the region, most of it is grounded in decidedly mainstream, realism-based approaches that regard the state as the primary subject of security. These types of analyses essentialize the threat of "terrorism" in ways that fail to problematize a state-centric understanding of security, or recognize that *in*security can arise from state-responses to terrorism. They also do not acknowledge the importance of discourse, nor do they understand the role that discourse plays in the larger security narrative that states and non-state actors both construct and operate within.[7]

It is also worth pointing out that the vast majority of the wider literature on "security" in Asia is not focused on terrorism per se, but tends to center around balance-of-power issues and constructivist analyses of institutional norms and the state-centered security architecture of the region (for example, see the 2003 volume, *Asian Security*

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[6]   *Critical Security in the Asia-Pacific*, the 2007 volume edited by Burke and MacDonald, is one of the only texts, currently published, that specifically contains critical security analyses (including post-structuralist analysis) as applied to East and Southeast Asia. Natasha Hamilton-Hart (2005, 2009) is another Asia scholar who has produced work that is critical of the conventional security discourses in East Asia. Rosemary Foot (2005) is yet another. David Capie (2004) has specifically looked at the effects of the US WOT on Southeast Asia, including its contributions to the anti-democratic tendencies of governments in the region. However, his analysis is largely constructivist, state-focused, and concerned with more traditional balance-of-power matters. And as mentioned Richard Jackson (2005) has produced some really engaging critical security analyses of the US WOT, but has not focused specifically on its effects in Asia.

[7]   A representative cross-section of this type of "mainstream" analysis of terrorism in East Asia can be found in the 2003 volume, *Terrorism in the Asia Pacific: Threat and Response*, edited by Rohan Gunaratna. Gunaratna is widely considered to be an eminent authority and "expert" (a problematic designation, explored in Chapter IV) on terrorism in Southeast Asia.

Order: Instrumental and Normative Features, edited by Muthiah Alagappa). Hence, when one considers that the "critical" security literature on Southeast Asia is a small sub-set of an even smaller sub-set of the existing literature on security in Asia, and that much of the "critical" security literature tends to take a more Habermasian human security approach (of which Cabellero-Anthony's 2005 work is a good example), it is apparent that there is a want for approaches that emphasize critical post-structuralist ways of understanding security- ones that emphasize the importance of intertextuality and intersubjectivity, as well as the constitutive effects of security discourses and practices.

Research Question(s) and Central Argument(s)

This project then, seeks primarily to interrogate the effects that the US-led WOT, as a hegemonic security narrative, has had on East and Southeast Asia- both for state and non-state actors. Utilizing a "weak ontology" critical security approach, which demands a historically and geographically contingent method of immanent critique (which I will explain in Chapter I), I wish to examine the effects that terrorism and counter-terrorism, as well as terrorists and state authority can have on the production of security/insecurity. Hence, the central research question of my dissertation is as follows: What can a critical security analysis tell us about security/insecurity that a more conventional realist-based security analysis cannot? And more specifically, what can a critical security analysis tell us about the impact that the WOT, operating as a hegemonic security narrative, has had on East and Southeast Asian actors in terms of their security/insecurity? In asking this question, I hope to demonstrate that forms of insecurity were constructed and/or abetted

by the WOT itself, understood as a hegemonic security narrative, and that these forms of insecurity occurred in concert with the practice of traditional forms of state-centric security. *In other words, using empirical examples in East and Southeast Asia, I expect to demonstrate that the pursuit of "security" by states, in this case under the narrow rubric of counter-terrorism and in relation to dynamics that emerge vis-à-vis American foreign policy, actually contributes to forms of in-security. Further, I wish to raise the point that there were silences endemic to the WOT security narrative that allowed for many important "security" questions to be ignored.* Again, the point is not to discount the threat of terrorism as far as it does exist. Rather, the point is to ask different questions than ones currently being asked so as to reveal some of the less obvious ways that the threat of terrorism, along with reactions to it, can also manifest itself.

Part 1 consists of Chapters I-III, where I analytically situate my critical approach to theorizing security; review and analyze the prevailing literature on Southeast Asian security; and engage in a critical reading of George W. Bush's WOT as a hegemonic security narrative. In Chapter I, I introduce my affinity for a critical security approach, and argue for the benefits of employing a generally post-structuralist method and ethic, which emphasizes the need to remain reflexive and mindful of inter-subjectivity and inter-textuality in approaching security. In emphasizing these points, such an approach allows for a shifting of the referent object/subject of security and allows for security to be understood in broader ways than merely that of the state in a system of states. Perhaps most importantly, I argue for the strengths of utilizing Stephen K. White's (2000, 2003, 2005, 2009) idea of "weak ontology" in *re*constructing foundations, in order to move

beyond deconstruction and to make space for engagements with the (contingent) empirical "realities" of actually occurring security logics. Focusing on the importance of ontological theorizations of critical security leads me ultimately to deploy a reflexive and inter-subjective method of immanent critique (Browning and McDonald 2011), allowing for engagement with the politics and ethics of security practices in East and Southeast Asia in the specific context of the WOT.

Chapter II focuses on the corpus of scholarship, under the rubric of IR and security studies, that attempts to explain and understand security (and insecurity) in the region. In this chapter, I seek to answer the question of how security/insecurity in East and Southeast Asia is explained and understood, highlighting the debates between realists and constructivists, identifying the conceptual gaps in these prevailing approaches, and introducing the critical voices that are emerging in East and Southeast Asian scholarship. This chapter approaches academic "bodies of literature" as discourses and narratives themselves: frameworks within which the theory and practice of international relations (IR) operate. Approaching academic bodies of literature discursively allows us to recognize that these are not homogenous or monolithic areas of inquiry, as each contain unique and sometimes competing representations of the subjects that they pertain to. Understanding this, it is important to critically engage with these literatures in ways that recognize which voices are privileged and which voices struggle to be heard.

Chapter III examines the powerful constitutive effects of US foreign policy in East Asia during the WOT, and argues that it operated as a hegemonic security narrative, bringing with it significant security implications for the region. This chapter explores

various different ways to define and approach "foreign policy," ultimately arguing for a critical constructivist analysis of foreign policy as informed by David Campbell's (1998) call to reorient our understanding of it. Campbell (1998) sees "foreign policy" as performative and constitutive, and as a boundary-producing practice "central to the production and reproduction of the identity in whose name it operates" (68). As such, it is an integral aspect of the narratives of Self and Other that both construct and define threats and the security practices of states in response to those threats. I then set out the argument that foreign policies operate as discursively constructed "regimes of truth" and that US foreign policy during the WOT operated as such. Finally, Chapter III sketches out the significant aspects of US foreign policy toward East Asia in particular, revealing both the continuities and discontinuities in US policy from before 9/11 and into the post-9/11 era. This is the context in which I situate the empirical cases I deal with in Part 2.

Part 2 consists of Chapters IV-VI, where I examine regional examples and cases to illustrate the valuable contributions of theorizing security critically. Each chapter is conceptually based, and a specific "security" issue is "read" using germane critical security approaches, demonstrating how the very question of security/insecurity becomes profoundly altered from its mainstream explorations in doing so. Chapter IV scrutinizes the commonly held "expert" understandings of terrorism in the region under the rubric of WOT discourses. Specifically, chapter IV challenges three commonly made claims that emerged out of the post-9/11 security narrative and related "expert" discourses on Southeast Asian terrorism. These claims are inter-related and flow into one another: first, that all forms of political Islam necessarily represent an imminent threat of terrorism;

second, that there exists an emerging regional radical Islamist identity with robust organizational and ideological links to Al-Qaeda; and third, that terrorism and violence by non-state actors in the region is best understood as fundamentally irrational rather than political behaviour, and can somehow be responded to in isolation from the social and political contexts of history. Refuting each of these claims from a critical security perspective allows us to see that the identification of Southeast Asia as the "second front" in the WOT, absent compelling evidence in support of this contention, renders a vast territory and its people as a contingent, emergent threat, transformed into epistemic objects by the experts that seek to govern their potentiality for danger. But these epistemic objects, and the shape that they take in our imaginations, *come out of* problematizations of security and not the other way around. And this is precisely why the "expert" discourses that come to "know" these epistemic objects must be open to interrogation since they are part of a wider hegemonic security narrative that inscribes its interpretations onto the bodies of the subaltern.

Chapter V demonstrates that post-9/11 changes in US military and security policy towards the region altered local governments' framing of domestic political issues, as well as the ways in which secessionist groups and political dissidents came to be characterized. Arguably, after 9/11 there was an uptick in regional US military presence and increased security collaboration with key regional state actors, along with a discursive re-framing of US relations in Asia more generally. These developments were heavily influenced by the Bush administration's pre-occupation with terrorism, and they pushed other important political and economic interests down the priority list. We could

observe then, that the security practices and discourses of the WOT allowed for significant shifts to occur in the security logics and practices of governing regimes in the region. This contributed to an escalation of gendered insecurities around US military installations; re-configurations of post-colonial constructions of national identity; increases in anti-American sentiment among local populations; and a discernible rise in particular forms of state repression due to the coupling of counter-terror security policies with notions of "national resilience."

Chapter VI, in turn, looks at the ways in which regionalism and regionalization efforts in East and South East Asia have been affected by the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT and have affected articulations of regional identity. Chapter VI examines the related "securitization" of trade and economic relations between the US and East Asian countries that was observable under the Bush Doctrine (Higgott 2005), as well as implications of the particular type of "securitization" deployed by ASEAN in its approach to regional terrorism (Gerstl 2010). Finally, this chapter looks at how the WOT security narrative has reinforced the "ASEAN-way" of comprehensive security as the means by which "regional resilience" and "national resilience" are concepts deployed by governing elites in order to maintain *regime* security, narrowly defined in ways that engender insecurities for groups and individuals.

Chapter I
Ontological Theorizations in Critical Security Studies:
Making the Case for a (Modified) Post-structuralist Approach[8]

At the outset, it is important to situate my critical approach to theorizing security, which informs the theoretical and methodological commitments related to this project. Accordingly, this chapter is an analytical review of different approaches to theorizing security with an emphasis on the variety of approaches that can loosely be termed "critical."[9] Notably, this chapter highlights the relevance of ontological theorizations in debates about the meaning and definition of "security." In doing so, I seek to call attention to the many nuances of the critical security studies (CSS) literature and ultimately argue the benefits of employing a (modified) post-structuralist[10] approach to security. This "modification" is necessary because there is an inclination within post-structuralist CSS to conflate epistemological commitments with ontological ones. This can be observed in an unsustainable leap, where acknowledgement of the indeterminacy of competing truth claims turns into an avoidance of making any claims at all. In other words, the subject of security can become invisible in the wake of continuous contestations about the hazards of essentialism, and about the meaning of security itself.

The good news is that this is not the inevitable end-point of post-structuralist critiques, nor is it an indictment against the overall benefits of employing them.

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[8] A version of this chapter is to be published in the inaugural volume of the journal, *Critical Studies on Security* (2013- forthcoming).
[9] These "Critical" approaches include a variety of post-structuralist approaches that emphasize the importance of discourse, inter-subjectivity and non-traditional elements of analysis such as gender, and that pose a meta-theoretical challenge to traditional realist ontology.
[10] The term "post-structuralist" is used here in the broadest sense, and refers to those approaches that deconstruct and level meta-theoretical challenges to the presuppositions of a modernist-foundationalist ontology. "Post-structuralist" in this sense includes, but is not limited to, postmodern and/or anti-foundationalist approaches.

Furthermore, this analysis is not meant to detract from the core intention of a post-structuralist ethic, which seeks to interrogate and deconstruct the very meaning of security and the ways in which it is talked about.

Nevertheless, I argue that *deconstruction is only a first step*, and as Baudrillard and Lotringer (1987) have observed, "discourse is discourse, but the operations, strategies, and schemes played out there are *real*." This reflection is crucial to an intellectually genuine post-structuralist ethic, and is an important corrective against the straw-figure postmodernist who becomes an amoral nihilist trapped in discourse, unwilling to meaningfully engage the status-quo due to an interdiction against making foundational claims. The fact that this straw-figure is often *disingenuously* evoked in critiques of postmodernism, does not absolve the proponents of post-structuralist CSS from a need to engage with these concerns. That is part of what this chapter seeks to do. Utilizing Stephen K. White's (2000, 2003, 2005, 2009) arguments for the viability of "weak ontologies," I suggest that a post-structuralist CSS need not be anathema to the making of foundational claims, nor should it be seen as suffering from a paralytic disjuncture from the "real world".

Rather, maintaining critical commitments can mean being reflexive about the inter-subjectivity and indeterminacy of the claims that *are* ultimately made, and of being accountable to them. Most importantly, in this chapter I argue that this weak ontology understanding of CSS proves compatible with the type of "immanent critique" method that Browning and McDonald (2011) advocate for in the practical application of CSS. This method of "immanent critique," informed by a weak ontology, calls for the

examination of particular security logics in ways that recognize their historical, geographical and ideational contingencies. In other words, this method calls for a case-based examination of empirical "realities" in order to move beyond deconstruction towards a reconstructive exercise of imagining alternative (contingent) security logics. Further, it addresses the weaknesses of a CSS that has proven to be ill equipped to grapple with the politics and especially the ethics of security practices.

Notably, due to the emphasis on ontology as an analytical anchor, the "map" of CSS created here looks different from some of the existing formulations, such as those drawn by Krause and Williams (1996), Booth (2005), Mutimer (2007) and Peoples and Vaughan-Williams (2010).[11] Certainly, theirs are invaluable contributions to a now flourishing critical study of security, but the hope here is that by breaking away from familiar categorizations, my arguments about deconstruction/reconstruction and strong/weak ontology can be better explained.

I. Disciplinary Cleavages and the Question of Ontology

There are good arguments to be made against unproblematically essentializing a "modernist" approach to security studies and in doing so, constructing an overly simplistic dichotomy between the mainstream and the rest. Nevertheless, it is a distinction worth (carefully) deploying in order to better illustrate the nuances of the many different ways of approaching the study of security. So, for our purposes, the "modernist" approach

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[11] To be clear, these authors have all "mapped" CSS in different ways. Notably however, we can observe a shared tendency to position CSS against "traditional" perspectives; to articulate a historical periodization of security studies as a field of inquiry; and/or to explore the emergence of different "schools" of CSS from a spatial-geographic perspective ("Copenhagen," "Paris," "Welsh" and so on). This analysis is concerned more specifically with the subtle but significant nuances of varying ontological theorizations in the different CSS perspectives.

here refers to conventional methodologies and security practices that rely mostly on essentialist and foundationalist underpinnings to make arguments about how the world works, and whose "knowledges" are generally self-described as being objectively true. Further, we can say that the "modernist" approach to security as understood in this analysis, refers to "the epistemology, ontology and normative implications of traditional (realist) approaches to security that continue to privilege the state as the referent object of security and the 'threat and use of force' (Walt 1991) as the subject of security" (Brown and McDonald 2011, 2).[12]

Importantly, traditional realist approaches overwhelmingly possess what Stephen K. White would call "strong ontologies," in that their ontological commitments are framed unreflexively and there is little, if any, acknowledgment of their essentially contestable nature. White characterizes as "strong" those ontologies that claim to show us 'the way the world is,' or how God's being stands to human being, or what human nature is. It is by reference to this external ground that ethical and political life gain their sense of what is right; moreover, this foundation's validity is unchanging and of universal reach… strong [ontologies] carry an underlying assumption of certainty that guides the

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[12] It is important to note that the "traditional realism" dealt with here refers specifically to the more conventional, mainstream and essentialist manifestations of structural realism/neorealism as articulated by Waltz (1979) and Mearsheimer (2001). Indeed, in recent years we have seen a re-visiting and re-reading of classical realism spearheaded by Michael C. Williams (2005 a, 2005b, 2006) resulting in a nuanced "realism" that is often called "reflexive realism" to connote the more sophisticated treatment of subjectivity in its formulation. However, the CSS project in particular, and IR theory in general, continues to be constructed around and against the "traditional" study of security as articulated in theories of structural realism/neorealism. The use of this traditional realism as a foil is not meant to ignore recent engagements with realism, nor is it meant to simplistically caricature "realism" writ large. Rather, traditional realism (which I sometimes also refer to as mainstream, conventional or orthodox) is significant here because it represents well the use of strong ontology in theorizations of security, and because it continues to hold such a central place in the mainstream study and practice of security.

whole problem of moving from the ontological level to the moral-political. (White 2000, 6-7).

White (2000) points out that strong ontology is a dominant feature of both pre-modern and modern modes of thought (6). This is the idea that there *is* a First Cause of what is moral and good, which exists "out there," combined with the assumption that this First Cause can be *known*. Hence, the purveyor of strong ontology, or the "modern moral-political subject" is one who is "disengaged from his (sic) social background and oriented toward *mastery* of the world [and]… can *discover*, by the light of *reason*, *universally applicable principles* of justice, grounded in some *foundationalist account* of God, nature, or progress, that can become the object of an *agreement* with other individuals" (White 2003, 209. Emphases in original). Strong ontology is also "foundationalist in the traditional sense" (White 2004, 13), relying on self-evident first principles (whatever they may be) as the basis for knowledge.

However, unquestioned assumptions about what *is* and what can be *known* comprise a double-move that fails to problematize the limits of our knowledge or the confines of our discourse. In response to this, there has been an "ontological turn" perceptible in what White calls "late-modern" thinking. This late-modern thinking can be observed in "a growing propensity to interrogate more carefully those 'entities' presupposed by our typical ways of seeing and doing in the modern world" (White 2000, 4). In other words, a growing recognition of the contingency and indeterminacy of *what* is known and *how* it is known. This understanding of ontology is an important feature of this analysis of CSS. As will be demonstrated shortly, the movements and divisions

within security studies can be better understood using this helpful distinction between the strong ontology of modernity and the late-modern "ontological turn," which brings to the fore the "strengths of *weak* ontology" (White 2000).

The concept of "weak ontology does not so much name a doctrine as gesture toward a thicket of philosophical issues" (White 2004, 11), and refers to an acknowledgement of the fundamental contestability of any theory's ontological commitments. This is not, however, a position that should be confused with the *anti-foundationalism* of Vattimo (2007) or Rorty (1996), which rests on a philosophy of history that casts foundationalism as "violent in its essence [and]… irredeemably destined for annihilation" (White 2009, 811). Rather, the concept of weak ontology aims to emphasize the changeable processes and practices of arriving at one's ontological commitments, where "at issue is not where but *how* you carry your most basic commitments, theistic or otherwise" (White 2004, 7. Emphasis in original).

A weak ontology approach critiques the simplistic bracketing out of contingency and indeterminacy, which a strong ontology requires. Importantly however, a weak ontology approach further recognizes that rejecting any and all ontological commitments, as anti-foundationalist approaches do, is also undesirable. Importantly then, weak ontologies respond to two basic concerns. First, there is the acceptance of the idea that all fundamental conceptualizations of self, other and world are contestable. *Second, there is the sense that such conceptualizations are nevertheless necessary or unavoidable for an adequately reflective ethical and political life.* The latter insight demands from us an affirmative gesture of constructing foundations, the former prevents us from carrying out

this task in a traditional fashion (White 2000, 8. Emphasis added). This "affirmative gesture of constructing foundations"[13] is crucial to debunking the simplistic reconstructive/deconstructive and modern/postmodern binaries as they are often evoked. Such labels can be limiting and are too often used in "disciplinary mud-slinging matches, which can close down discussion and inquiry before a close reading of specific arguments or consideration of the issues involved" (Fierke 2000, 3).

For some, a commitment to post-structuralism necessitates a permanent state of deconstruction; while for others post-structuralist commitments are modes of inquiry and interrogation that do not necessarily foreclose acts of *re*-construction (Hay 2002). Importantly then, this ontological turn can be observed in a variety of forms, and White cautions against it being over-identified with (an anti-foundationalist) postmodernism, as it often is. This is because postmodernism is only one manifestation of this late-modern ontological turn, and some postmodern thinkers have "failed to attend sufficiently to problems related to articulating and affirming the very reconceptualizations toward which they gesture" (White 2000, 5-6).

White argues that there appears to be an unconscious tendency on the part of some postmodern thinkers to "reproduce in a new guise" the problem of a continuous "frictionless subjectivity within their own stance… [becoming] one of continuous critical motion, incessantly and disruptively unmasking the ways in which the modern subject

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[13]   It is important to distinguish the "construction of foundations" from the philosophical stance of "foundationalism." The latter presupposes that "foundations" are always immutable and universally true/accessible. This is not the case when one constructs foundations using a weak ontology approach, which asserts that "foundational claims" are sometimes necessary, but making claims about what foundations are being assumed as the starting point for analysis is not necessarily the same thing as saying that they are always true. White calls this "non-foundationalism," which again, should not be confused with the "anti-foundationalism" discussed above.

engenders, marginalizes and disciplines the others of its background and foreground"
(White 2000, 6). Hence, White critiques an "anti-foundationalism [that] itself rests on a
claim of certainty that functions in a fashion similar to a foundation" (White 2009, 811).
This critique is a fair one, and weak ontology is a useful concept for unpacking these
tensions. This is because it is meant to "shift the intellectual burden… from a
preoccupation with what is opposed and deconstructed, to an engagement with what must
be articulated, cultivated and affirmed in its wake" (White 2000, 8).
As such,

> … the weak ontologist does not know with certainty that strong
> foundations are false; rather she can merely point to the lack of
> success of any given foundation in being wholly and universally affirmed
> by humankind… this lack of success in the past, however, does not
> demonstrate that the future will hold merely more of the same. (White
> 2009, 811)

Consequently, in (re)constructing foundations it is important to explicitly acknowledge
the contestability and indeterminacy of those foundational claims and "involves the
embodiment within them of some signalling of their own limits" (White 2000, 8).

It is not then enough to "simply declare their contestability, fallibility, or partiality
at the start and then proceed pretty much as before" (White 2000, 8), since this can
encourage a propensity towards essentialization and reification, which weak ontologies
seek to avoid. What is crucial in a weak ontology, is that such an acknowledgement of
epistemological limitations necessarily changes the very nature of the assertions being
made. Therefore, unlike in a strong ontology where foundational claims are asserted
unproblematically and unreflexively, in a weak ontology foundational claims need to be

constantly affirmed, and the ethical function of theorizing resides in its goal of critically

sustaining one's affirmations. As an important corrective to the modernist-traditionalist

critiques against late-modern (and postmodern) thinking, "the affirmation of weak

ontology should not be confused with a stance of continual indecisiveness" (White

2000,14).

There are definite advantages to identifying disciplinary cleavages along the line

of strong versus weak ontology. The strong/weak ontology distinction is useful because it

illustrates a fundamental divergence in the ways of seeing and doing and in approaches to

knowledge production, while simultaneously cautioning against conflating weak

ontologies with anti-foundationalism. In many ways this division can be more useful than

the reconstruction/deconstruction or modern/postmodern ones because there is so much

overlap and interplay along these binaries, whereas the strong/weak ontology distinction

can cross these aforementioned disciplinary labels.[14] With this in mind, the concept of

weak ontology is used to help explain the diversity within CSS and to redress some of the

common critiques levelled against a post-structuralist CSS, which White's protestations

against postmodernism gesture towards.

II. Unpacking Critical Security Studies:
Themes of Critique, Debates Within, and the Question of Ontology

The development of CSS in recent years appears to be related to a growing

awareness that modernist notions of security have perhaps lost their relevance in a post-

Cold War and post-9/11 context. Consequently, security is increasingly being theorized in

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[14]   White (2000) demonstrates this when he shows how the liberal views of George Kateb, the
communitarian views of Charles Taylor, the feminist views of Judith Butler, and the post-structuralist views
of William Connolly can all be said to display/deploy weak ontologies.

a variety of different ways that challenge the ontological footing of mainstream security studies. These alternative ways of theorizing security serve to problematize and destabilize traditional realist understandings of security, as well as its formulations of concepts like "power" and "sovereignty" (Edkins et. al. 2004; Muppidi 2004; Walker 1993). I will not go into great detail in cataloguing the ways in which critiques of traditional realism gave rise to new theorizations of security.[15] Importantly however, there are some common themes traceable in the historical emergence of CSS, which reveal the weaknesses of a security studies grounded in "strong" ontology. These themes of critique are briefly outlined below.

In the traditional realist conception of security that this chapter is concerned with[16], the referent object of security is the state in relation to its weaponry. Security in corporeal/individual/human/philosophical terms is largely absent from the mainstream security discourse of the Cold War and beyond, and this omission can be linked directly to the positioning of the state in its strong ontology. In the late 1970s and early 1980s however, critiques of this orthodox view began to emerge even from within the field. Here we saw Ken Booth's (1979) observations concerning realism's inherent ethnocentrism, introducing the necessity of "enemy images" that serve psychological, sociological and political functions (Booth 1979, 25). Booth's critique raised questions surrounding the inability to separate subject and object, and introduced a fundamental

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[15]   This has been done rather well by Fierke (2007), Mutimer (2007) and Peoples and Vaughan-Williams (2010).

[16]   As elaborated upon in Footnote 12, the "traditional realism" dealt with here refers specifically to conventional manifestations of structural realism/neorealism as articulated by Waltz (1979) and Mearsheimer (2001). In security studies in particular, this mainstream perspective is best exemplified by the field of "strategic studies," with its specific focus on game theory, nuclear deterrence and power relations between states based upon military power.

epistemological problematique, whereby strategic analysts are inherently unable to divorce their ethnocentric self-perceptions from their analysis of the adversary. Coming at the height of the Cold War, this was a bold theme of critique that ushered in important challenges to orthodox modes of understanding security.

Subsequently, other critical voices emerged, including feminist and post-colonial critiques of realist security. Notable examples include V. Spike Peterson's (1992) and Cynthia Enloe's (1990) post-positivist feminist analyses, revealing how the state itself is complicit in an array of exploitative and gendered power relations that are embedded within the very precepts of state sovereignty and security. Related to this, Partha Chatterjee (2005) suggests that there is an inextricable linking of violence to the project of the sovereign state vis-à-vis the wielding of the power of exception over the body and over life. This Schmittian state of exception is the ultimate bio-political exercise in sovereign power whereby state violence is "legitimately" directed towards its own citizens, both literally (corporal punishment in the justice system, for example) and structurally (complicity in gendered domestic power relations) (Edkins 2004; Peterson 1992).

Carol Cohn's (1997) and Hugh Gusterson's (1999) critiques both demonstrated that the realist orthodoxy of the Cold War suffered from conspicuous blind spots, and was incapable of accounting for developments (such as the impending end of the Cold War) that appeared increasingly obvious from other perspectives. And as mentioned in the introduction, David Campbell (1998) notably asserted the importance of discourse, where state identity and perceived threats to that identity do not exist independently of the ways

in which we "talk" about them. This further revealed that orthodox discourses of security possess constructive properties that simultaneously reinforce and re-create the presuppositions of the defense establishment. Such themes of critique further highlight the larger problem of theory *as* practice, i.e. of whether or not security narratives play a role in actually constructing/constituting the security environment, rather than merely describing and managing it, as a realist strategic studies claims to do.

What, then, *is* security? If we were to accept a critical understanding of security as a discursive construction, does that mean that there are no tangible threats to the state or to individual human life? How can these tensions be reconciled with the fact that there are millions who face dangers to their corporeal survival every day? Since we have established that traditional realist security studies does not adequately account for these questions, it is the challenge of innovative critical approaches to address them and to further move forward from simply deconstructing the orthodoxy toward *re*constructing more apposite conceptions of security. This further highlights the importance of ontology in understanding security studies.

Hence, critical approaches to security raise interesting questions about how security is practiced, how security is studied, and what security *is*. Notably there are a wide variety of critical approaches to security, all of which have different ideas about what constitutes security; what the referent object of security is; and there is disagreement about what, if any, "alternative security futures" should look like (Burke and McDonald 2007). "Security" then, is an essentially contested concept (Buzan 1983/91; see also Fierke 2007, 33-35). Furthermore, the "critical" in CSS can refer to an emancipatory

project, to epistemological interrogation, to ontological deconstruction, or to some combination of all three.

In recent years, CSS scholars have been actively engaged in the question of disciplinary boundaries; definitional debates about what it means to be "critical" in the study of security; the emerging problematics that arise in "critical" projects; and in attempting to articulate the politics and the ethics of CSS. A notable effort was made by the C.A.S.E.[17] Collective (2006) to "collectively assess the evolution of critical views of security studies in Europe, discuss their theoretical premises, examine how they coalesce around different issues, and investigate their present – and possibly future – intellectual ramifications" (C.A.S.E. Collective 2006, 443). Browning and McDonald (2011) ask: what is the future of CSS? They are especially concerned with the promise and limitations of the "Welsh School" and the "Copenhagen School"[18] and the politics and ethics of both. Ole Waever (2011) himself has recently delved into interrogating the politics of "securitization." Buzan and Hansen (2009) map the "evolution" of security studies, revealing the problems (and politics) of an ingrained Western-centrism. Booth (2007) and others in the "Welsh School" attempt to articulate the constructed and contingent understanding of the "good" in their CSS. What all of these interventions share is an interest in defining the boundaries of the "critical" in security studies, and perhaps more

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[17]   "Critical Approaches to Security in Europe"
[18]   The "Welsh School" gets its name from the fact that its ideas arose from the Gramscian-inspired works of Ken Booth, Richard Wynn Jones and others associated with the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University. The "Copenhagen School" and the "Paris School" are similarly named. The "Copenhagen School" of critical security emphasizes the social aspects of securitization originating with the work of Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, Jaap de Wilde et. al. who were working out of the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. The "Paris School" refers to critical security ideas inspired by the work of Foucault and originally developed by Didier Bigo et al. from *SciencePo* in Paris.

importantly, their criticality necessitates a profound interest in both the politics and the ethics of CSS.

As Peoples and Vaughan-Williams (2010) point out then, any reader could be forgiven for "wondering what security is and what it means to adopt a critical approach to it" (1). They go on to observe that there is no *one* definition of what it means to be critical as such, "and any rigid definition of the term critical security studies will tell you more about the position from which that definition is attempted than anything else," and so they "take the boundaries of 'critical' security studies to be defined by those who frame their work using this label" (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010, 1).

> Accordingly…we can talk about *a* critical security approach. All of [which] share a dissatisfaction with the analytical and normative implications of traditional security studies with its predominant focus on the territorial preservation of the nation-state from external military threat… there is clearly a need for such a broad-based definition in order to open the door to the range of ways of conceptualizing, understanding and potentially redressing human suffering and insecurity (Burke and McDonald 2007, 5-6).

Hence, while not homogenous, most CSS approaches share overlapping concerns that in one way or another reflect dissatisfaction with mainstream security approaches. *How* the different CSS approaches refute this realist orthodoxy and what they seek to do with that refutation are significant questions.

In my analytical review, there appear to be three successive modes of division within CSS (see Figure 1 on p. 27). Notably, these divisions are not neat and they overlap considerably with one another. In going through these divisions, it can be shown that reconstructive approaches that utilize weak ontology are very promising, but are often

ignored or misunderstood. This misunderstanding arises due to a prevalent tendency to see *all* reconstructive efforts only in the light of *strong* ontologies. On the flip side, there is a corresponding tendency to see all deconstructivist efforts as being synonymous with anti-foundationalism. My perspective instead advocates for the promise of a *re*constructive approach that utilizes a weak ontology for the critical analysis of security. This is a broadly post-structuralist approach, which can bring in post-modern, post-colonial, and post-positivist feminist analyses among others, but does not need to descend into what Connolly (1989) calls a "post-ponism," which "links the inability to establish secure ontological ground for a theory with the obligation to defer infinitely the construction of general theories of… politics" (336). The following takes us through these three modes of division within the critical security literature in more detail, with particular emphasis on the tensions between them.

The first key division in CSS is that between the "broadeners" and the deconstructivists. This analysis is not primarily concerned with the "broadeners," but it is useful to briefly explain how their critiques fit in to the larger picture of CSS. Notably, broadeners wish to expand the security agenda beyond the simple calculus of military threats, *while maintaining the basic worldview of traditional realism*. This agenda sees novel sources of state insecurity arising from factors like the environment, economic relations, disease pandemics, transnational crime, and unchecked migration. Key broadeners referred to here would include Peter Chalk and Alan Dupont, who have both argued that "unregulated people movements" are of concern due to the challenges that they may pose to the integrity of sending and receiving states (Chalk 2000; Dupont 2001).

Notably, broadeners still see the state as a unitary actor and as the referent object of security. In this example, the concern related to these "unregulated people movements" is not for the people who are displaced, but on the impact that they will have on the state and its security. This type of broadening agenda is essentially statist, but is tweaked to account for possible sources of insecurity that are not directly the result of military threats. While this approach is sometimes cast into the CSS category, it still presupposes much of mainstream realist ontology and, as a result, forecloses discussion on alternative understandings of security (Burke and McDonald 2007).

In contrast to the broadening agenda are those approaches that seek primarily to deconstruct traditionally accepted notions of security. In one way or another, such approaches seek to destabilize the presuppositions of traditional realism, and to question the very concept of "security" as an end and as a means. I choose to characterize such approaches as broadly post-structuralist, with a lower-case "p". The term "post-structuralist" is often understood to be synonymous only with an anti-foundationalist postmodernism. Instead, it is used here in the broadest sense of referring to those approaches that, as a point of departure from the mainstream, seek to level meta-theoretical challenges to the structural presuppositions of a modernist (realist) ontology. In this way, "post-structuralism" refers to an umbrella category that covers a wide variety of approaches, which can and does include anti-foundationalist postmodernism, but which includes *re*constructive approaches as well. While this may be contentious, such a formulation is self-consciously deployed due to my assertion that post-structuralism, rather than being seen as a theoretical end-point should instead be recognized as a process

and an ethic; as a valuable mode of inquiry due to its emphasis on deconstruction. In fact, many who reject an anti-foundationalist post-structuralism still basically utilize its approach to deconstruction (see Hay 2002).

Notably, the task of post-structuralist deconstruction is undertaken in response to the inherently problematic aspects of conventional security practices, for example those that use ethnocentric, gendered and unreflexive discourses that create paradoxical scenarios where *in*security occurs as a direct result of the state's "security project". As a consequence, such deconstruction exposes the intrinsically political and ethical nature of security. This is another notable contribution of a broadly post-structuralist critique, since the ontology of traditional realism subverts the ethico-political nature of security practices vis-à-vis its delineation of inside/outside, as well as through the suspension of "normal" politics that regularly occurs under the rubric of security.

The question then arises: Is deconstruction an end or a means to an end? This brings us to the second major division within CSS approaches, and that is the distinction between those approaches that limit their attentions to the deconstruction of orthodox security ontologies, and those that look towards *re*constructing alternative security futures. This is perhaps the messiest division because there is so much disagreement about what constitutes "reconstruction", as well as which modes of critique are engaged in a sort of perpetual deconstruction, and even what the different authors and different approaches in critical security say about themselves and about each other. For example, Burke (2007b), criticizes both Ken Booth, and Ole Waever for "not going far enough" in terms of post-structuralist commitments. Lene Hansen (1997), in defense of post-

structuralist contributions to security studies, has explicitly linked ideas from the

Copenhagen School to a decidedly post-structuralist ethic that on some accounts (such as

Booth's) would go "too far." Jef Huysmans (1998), a self-identified post-structuralist,

defines security in decidedly postmodern terms, but has unproblematically placed the

contributions of Ole Waever alongside the explicitly anti-foundationalist works of James

Der Derian, Michael Dillon, and Michael Shapiro (Huysmans 1998, 228). Such

discrepancies bring to light the complexities and contested nature of so many of the

concepts and ideas in the CSS literature, particularly when post-structuralism is explicitly

brought into the mix. Arguably, some of these discrepancies result from a lack of

recognition among critical scholars of the differences between strong ontology and weak

ontology in reconstructive projects.

But first, let us highlight the theoretical contributions of those CSS approaches

that, for better or worse, appear to be perpetually engaged in acts of deconstruction.

Whereas deconstruction as a first step is a methodological and epistemological double-

move for the purposes of destabilizing modernist theories in order to "make strange" their

presuppositions, there are post-structuralist approaches that take an ethic of

deconstruction even further. These approaches are often referred to, both by their

proponents as well as their critics, as being postmodern (see for example, Ashley 1989,

1996; DerDerian and Shapiro 1989; Dillon 1993; Huysmans 1998).[19] In CSS, such

postmodern approaches often go beyond simply challenging the presuppositions of the

mainstream via deconstruction, and further argue that *any* construction or affirmation of

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19   It goes without saying that it is foolhardy to speak of a unified post-modern approach, but these
shortcuts are self-consciously used for ease of explaining associated concepts.

ontological foundations is itself undesirable, as is any re-visioning of alternative security futures. This is because the modernist trap of reification/ essentialism is seen as intrinsic to *all* foundational ontology, and therefore, ontological claims in and of themselves are interdicted. Hence, while a sizeable faction of CSS is concerned with the construction of alternative security futures, the anti-foundationalist postmodern approach maintains that the appropriate role for theory resides exclusively in destabilizing the concepts of modernity.

"Security" then, from this postmodern perspective, is seen less as something that must be sought out and more as a practice that must be interrogated. This is because it is the practice of security, ostensibly that of the state, which is understood to be the source of *in*security. Notably however, the idea of "insecurity" cast in a postmodern light is equated with uncertainty and contingency rather than corporeal danger; as such insecurity can be seen as part and parcel of the human condition, and is not necessarily something than can or should be avoided (Huysmans 1998). Instead, the focus in postmodern CSS is shifted towards the underlying structural violences and unequal power relations of modernity. This is a powerful contribution, and no other critical approaches seem equipped to engage with these questions on such a basic foundational level.

Admittedly, it is problematic to lump together so many complex ideas under one banner, but there are clearly some shared themes that emerge in a "postmodern" reading of critical security, many of which are laudable. Nevertheless, the postmodern approach outlined here is not without its problems- most notably surrounding the question of ontology- and this raises ethical and political questions. In the introduction, I evoked the

straw-figure postmodern "who becomes an amoral nihilist trapped in discourse, unable to meaningfully engage with the status quo." I pointed out that this straw-figure is often unfairly evoked by those that wish to disingenuously deny the contributions of post-structuralist deconstruction and postmodern critique.[20]

Nevertheless, while the "amoral nihilist postmodern" is an over-played caricature, the real question is whether or not there is actually a danger that this straw-figure could come into being. When post-structuralism itself is deployed unreflexively, I would argue that the answer is *yes*. There is relevance in these broader concerns. It becomes too easy for the postmodern theorist to casually dismiss such concerns, and especially when postmodernism is critiqued on the basis of "external grounds." Such dismissals are intellectually and ethically unsatisfying and at odds with the larger post-structuralist ethic that recognizes self-reflexivity, contingency, subjectivity and indeterminacy. It is arguable that the proponents of a post-structuralist ethic must themselves engage with these concerns in order to remain intellectually genuine. The following attempts to do so.

As mentioned, the particular postmodern approach in question eschews the making of any foundational ontological claims in order to be fully consistent with the project of deconstruction. Furthermore, ontological claims are seen as always already problematic because all knowledge is situated knowledge, and there is nothing that can be objectively known to be true. In other words, all constructed foundations are seen as being inherently modernist and *necessarily* invoking unreflexive claims about what "Is", and this is seen as anathema to the postmodern project. Moreover, such a perspective sees

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20   For example, Booth (2005) issues a rather disingenuous critique of postmodernism/post-structuralism (he does not differentiate between them) that fails to acknowledge either its contributions or its intricacies (270). See also, Mutimer's (2009) critique of Booth in this respect.

all post-structuralist critique as necessarily (and desirably) arriving at this postmodern place. As Richard K. Ashley (1989) once argued[21], "post-structuralism *cannot* claim to offer an alternative position or perspective, because there is no alternative ground upon which it might be established" (278, emphasis added). He went on to assert that "the task of post-structural social theory is not to impose a general interpretation, a paradigm of the sovereignty of man, as a guide to the transformation of life on a global scale…[because] post-structuralism eschews grand designs, transcendental grounds, or universal projects of human-kind" (Ashley 1989, 284). Rather, he argued, the "better course" (313) is to persistently ask questions of the "how" rather than the "what" (281-283), and that the "work of *thought*" (313, emphasis in original) is paramount.

This type of deconstruction then, becomes an end in and of itself, rather than a means to the end of reconstructing more meaningful ontologies. As such, its epistemological and methodological commitments *become* synonymous with its ontological commitments. Ironically, these assertions are actually quite essentialist, and bring to mind White's (2000) point about how some postmodernists end up "reproducing in a different guise the frictionless subjectivities" of modernity that they work so hard to critique. Furthermore, the sweeping resistance to activist projects of "universal" emancipation appears to be a considerable foreclosure against the possibilities for alternative security futures where violences are diminished, corporeal insecurity is reduced, and power relations are destabilized. Such a position is hyper-relativist and, paradoxically, simultaneously conservative and static as well. What is going on here?

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[21] Ashley's understanding of post-structuralism has matured considerably since these earlier formulations. Nevertheless, this particular anti-foundationalist manifestation is often evoked by critics of post-structuralism, and continues to find favour among some post-structuralist theorists as well.

How can we redress the *problematique* that arises when ontology is forcefully removed from our consideration? Whereas a post-structuralist critique lays bare the constructive consequences of "acting *as if*" something exists (Fierke 2007), let me turn this idea on its head and point out that there are also consequences to "acting *as if not*". What are the ethical and political implications of de-ontologizing to the point that theory becomes blind to the tangible social constructions (both ideational and material) that play a role in the practice of security: that are sites of insecurity; that contribute to violences; that reinforce and reproduce hierarchies of power? What use is this "work of thought" if there are subjects that we are not allowed to think about or engage with under the guise of postmodern commitments? These questions are almost pedestrian, and yet, the postmodernist position exemplified by Ashley (1989) above is frustratingly ill equipped to grapple with them.

III. Critical Security Studies and the Strengths of Weak Ontology

This is where *re*construction and the differences between strong and weak ontology come into the picture. "Reconstruction" has long been a problematic term in CSS. This is largely because, in my estimation, it is usually situated in a way that links all foundational claims to the affirmation of *strong* ontologies. As stated earlier, "ontology" refers to "the question of what entities are presupposed by our… theories" (White 2000, 3). When ontological commitments are framed unreflexively, in that there is no acknowledgement of their essentially contestable nature, they comprise a "strong ontology." Hence, reconstruction with a strong ontology necessitates an affirmation of

"the way the world is" by reference to "an external ground" whose "foundation's validity is unchanging and of universal reach [with]… an underlying assumption of certainty" (White 2000, 6-7). The postmodern rejection of reconstruction in this particular guise thus becomes multi-layered: a rejection of certainty; a rejection of making claims about what *is*; as well as a rejection of the idea of an unchanging and universal external ground upon which to build foundations.

In CSS, proponents of the UNDP's "human security" project as well as proponents of the so-called Welsh School both advocate for a reconstructive approach that has tended to deploy strong ontology in making claims. Such strong-ontology reconstructivist approaches are explicitly critical of realist conceptualizations of security, and seek to reconstruct alternative security futures. These alternative security futures are based on novel referent objects of security such as the individual or the environment. The delineation of inside/outside becomes relaxed. Factors like migration, economics and climate change as causes of insecurity are seen in human terms, rather than as threats to the state. There is an emphasis on non-state actors in seeking solutions, and the state as an entity is critiqued for its complicity in the *in*security of many. Many of these contributions to critical security are valuable.

Notably however, these alternative security futures are also based on firm foundational claims based in strong ontology. Through deconstruction based in the social theories of Habermas and Horkheimer, the Welsh School "offers both a powerful critique of the orthodoxy as well as a *clear alternative foundation for thinking about security*" (Smith 2005, 44. Emphasis added). This alternative foundation is explicitly grounded in a

variety of Enlightenment ideals, touted as universal and unchanging, and which provide an *external* ground upon which these alternative security futures are built (Booth 2005, 2007). As Mutimer (2009) points out, Booth's *Theory of World Security* (2007) aims to articulate an emancipation-based critical theory of security that "explicitly seeks to reclaim the enlightenment project of reason and progress, informed by a commitment to a communitarian future which owes much to the vision of Jurgen Habermas" (Mutimer 2009, 12). Further, although Booth is fairly accepting of a pluralist scope of security that might even include Waltz's neo-realism, he has rather harshly excluded what he identifies as "postmodern approaches" for being "invariably obscurantist and marginal, providing no basis for politics" (Booth 2007, 468).

It is this explicit appeal to external grounds as the basis of new foundations that makes the ontology of such CSS approaches "strong," and lends to the sharp exclusion of "postmodern" approaches. But the "certainty" that is required to appeal to strong ontologies can "demand too much forgetfulness of contingency and indeterminacy" (White 2000, 6-7). This brings with it the dangers of new forms of essentialism, leading to the postmodern rejection of the idea of a universal external ground upon which to build foundations. This postmodern position is consistent with what is understood to be the basic post-structuralist ethic: reflexivity. Certainly, this makes it untenable to make unproblematic claims about what *is*. But the question that I pose is this: what about *tentative* claims about what *might be*? The postmodern position elucidated by Ashley would also reject this out of hand. But on what basis?

I argue that the rejection of any and all foundational claims in security studies becomes less tenable when a *weak* ontology is utilized, and as I will illustrate, we can actually see examples of this in the existing CSS literature. As such, an overly simplistic modern/postmodern or reconstruction/deconstruction division does not satisfactorily account for examples of weak ontology in reconstruction. For post-structuralist theorists that employ a weak ontology, deconstruction occurs first: discourse and identity are recognized as intrinsic to the practice, construction and study of security; and security/insecurity is understood as imagined and constructed, but is also tangibly experienced. Such theorizing challenges the basic presuppositions of realism and understands "security" to be a practice that must be interrogated and destabilized, but this is undertaken largely for the purposes of revealing (and remedying) sources of insecurity.

Re-imagining alternative security futures is thus necessary in order to engage with and destabilize power relations (which is desirable), but this endeavour is recognized to be profoundly difficult. This is because these weak-ontology approaches take seriously the post-structuralist assertion that reification and essentialism should be avoided in the making of ontological claims. For this reason, any ontological claims that are made must always remain open to interrogation. In other words, weak ontology theorizing allows the theorist to make claims, but this must be done reflexively. These are tentative claims about what *might be*, as opposed to unreflexive claims about what *is*. These are the weak ontologies, which "demand from us an affirmative gesture of constructing foundations," but which prevent us "from carrying out this task in a traditional fashion" (White 2000, 8).

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One illustrative example of a weak ontology approach in CSS can be found in ideas about "securitization," as articulated by Ole Waever (in Lipschutz, 1995). Notable about this approach is its reliance on post-structuralist modes of deconstruction; its focus on security politics rather than the *end* of security; its critical understanding of threat construction; and its consideration of the state as a "sedimented" entity. Securitization theory sees "security" as a "speech act" and sees that the act of "securitizing" requires the suspension of "normal politics." Particularly interesting about this theory is that it reveals that there are political and ethical implications of something being placed on the security agenda (Buzan, Waever and De Wilde, 1998). *How* and *why* something is placed on the security agenda depends on the authority and legitimacy of those committing the securitizing speech act, and securitizing has successfully occurred only when the receiving audiences of the securitizing message accept it as such. Since the security agenda is largely determined by the state apparatus, the state remains central in this formulation but as a "sedimented" social fact, rather than as a normative reality per se.

"Securitization," perhaps unlike any other "critical" security concept, continues to interest, to perplex, and to challenge those who take critical security seriously. This is because this approach brings elite discourses and the state back into a picture of security that is profoundly reliant on post-structuralist deconstruction. As such, "securitization" is actually quite difficult to "locate" on conventional maps of security studies. It is alternately derided for being too realist on the one hand or not critical enough on the other; for allegedly seeing the state and society as objective realities, out there to be discovered and analyzed (see McSweeney 1996; Burke and McDonald 2007; Fierke

2007); for being "state-centric, discourse-dominated, and conservative" because it is "a curious combination of liberal, post-structural, and neorealist approaches" (Booth 2005, 271); for proffering a "fixed logic" of security requiring that security "be equated in a timeless and abstract sense with a dominant discourse of security" (Browning and McDonald 2011, 8); and for reinforcing ideas of security driven by the discursive strategies of elites (Bigo 2002) and hence, presupposing an essentialized "normal (liberal) politics."

Arguably, this rather discordant chorus of critiques levelled against the securitization approach could be better served by an understanding of the place of weak ontology in its formulation(s). It is not that these critiques are without merit, but rather, that introducing "weak ontology" into analysis allows us to see how aspects of securitization theory that are often deemed to be essentializing and normative are actually contingently-made (weak ontological) foundational claims in many instances, and need not detract from a larger post-structuralist ethic of deconstruction. In defence of their approach and in response to McSweeney's critiques (1996) for example, Buzan and Waever (1997) argue that their treatment of the state is meant to be "pragmatic" rather than objectivist. In other words, they tentatively make claims about the state in order to elaborate upon their concept of securitization. Further, the "normal politics" that is presupposed in securitization theory can be seen as a contingent articulation of the particular "normal politics" in question rather than as a generalized fixed logic of "normal politics" that is presumed always to be true. I will concede that there is still a danger that the concept of "sedimentation" can be taken too far, and the enduring conceptualization

of the realist state as a "pragmatic" sedimented fact *can* risk becoming foundational in a strong ontology sense. But here again we can see the utility in using weak/strong ontology in teasing out the nuances of this approach.

Related to the contingent articulations of the "state" and "normal politics" in securitization theory, another way that I see weak ontology's relevance to CSS theorizing pertains to Browning and Mcdonald's (2011) exhortations for the role of *immanent critique*. Browning and McDonald (2011) point out that in critical security studies, there has been a tendency to work with both "universalizing security logics and under-theorized or limited conceptualizations of progress" (3). That is, there is a dearth of attention paid to the politics and ethics of security, which signals a need for a more nuanced understanding and recognition of the "various ways in which security is conceptualized and practiced in different social, historical and political contexts" (Browning and McDonald 2011, 3). Hence, what this requires is

> a method of [immanent] critique concerned with locating possibilities for progressive change *in existing social and political orders*… [where there is a need] to develop understandings of the politics of security that are *context-specific*; that recognize and interrogate the role of *different security discourses* and their effects in *different settings*; and that come to terms with sedimented meanings *without endorsing these as timeless and inevitable*. (Browning and McDonald 2011, 14. Emphases added)

I would argue that this is ultimately an articulation of the need for a weak ontology approach in CSS. That the exercise is about contingently situating one's theorizations of security in response to *particular cases* and in *particular contexts*. It is not about trying to operate without ever making ontological claims, but rather being very careful not to naturalize particular security logics as being timeless and inevitable. This creates

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opportunities to still engage in the types of foundational ontologizing that is required to cope with the political and ethical problematics of security, but to do so in ways that can help us avoid reifying or essentializing any particular logic of security. This project seeks to do just that. By approaching security problematics in Southeast Asia with a critical post-structuralist sensibility while recognizing the importance of historical, social and geographic contingencies, we realize opportunities to not only identify (using post-structuralist methods of inquiry) a set of security logics that might be otherwise invisible through a realist lens; but we also realize opportunities to engage with the possibilities of alternative security futures in tangible terms. Unlike the castigations of essentialism that an anti-foundationalist postmodern approach might level against this project, an immanent critique rooted in weak ontological understandings of security need not be at odds with a commitment to theoretical reflexivity.

Arguably, operationalizing a weak ontology approach can also be helpful (and perhaps necessary) for navigating the intra-disciplinary exclusions that are too often invoked in the "broad church" of CSS. As Mutimer (2009) asserts,

> …by speaking for some we necessarily speak against others, and the range of those who face oppression, those for whom critical scholarship is written, is too great for them all to be written for at once. My corollary to this observation is that there will be different outsiders who most need critical theory at different times and in different places… [and] from this corollary follows a post-structural critical ethos. While we cannot avoid effecting exclusions in our work, we can resist the temptation to effect them *a priori*. Rather, we need to turn our critical gazes constantly on ourselves to ask if, at each time and in each place, we are theorizing for those most in need. Doing so acknowledges that other outsiders will be excluded by our choices, but has at least the benefit of doing so in a limited and contingent fashion (20).

Once again, I would argue that this is yet another gesture towards weak ontology in critical security. And it is a weak ontology that eschews disciplinary foreclosures and allows us to consider any question, as long as it is done with the corrective that all conceptualizations of self, other, and world are contestable. This allows us to "make foundational claims" when it is necessary, but to do so in ways that are fundamentally different from how foundational claims are made in modernist-traditionalist strong ontologies.

Campbell (1998) recognized this in *Writing Security*, when his exploration of American foreign policy meant that he would have to engage with the idea of "the state". As mentioned, the state is often the producer of security discourses and (one of) the sites of security politics. To ignore this fact in a discussion of threat construction in American foreign policy would be to miss many opportunities for understanding, and arguably, change. But continued attention to the state should not be confused with continued attention to the state *in the same way that the state is understood in traditional realism*. This holds true for what the state *is* and for how the state is *seen*. What is key then, is a complete re-visioning of the state or of any factor in security studies through the epistemological commitments of a post-structuralist ethic, without making the mistake of creating new blind-spots in analysis by acting "*as if not*".

Figure 1: Mapping Critical Security Studies (J. Mustapha)

Security Studies

Traditional Realist Security Studies

Critical Security Studies

Broadeners
New sources of insecurity/ new threats.
Realist ontology largely intact: state-centrism; the role of the military; inside/outside.

Meta-theoretical challenges/ Post-Structuralism

Deconstructive
Challenges the presuppositions of realism.
Questions the very concept of "security" as an end and means.
Introduces the "political" nature of security.

Re-constructive
(*Strong* [Realist] *Ontology*)
New threats/ new sources of "insecurity": economic, unchecked migration, environment.
Ontology maintains states as unitary actors and **state is referent object of security**.
Role of the military still key in security.
Threats still construed in inside/outside terms.
Continued emphasis on state as primary actor.

Anti-foundationalism/ Post-modernism
Re-constructing foundations is problematic, as is re-visioning alternative security futures.
The role of theory resides in destabilizing the concept of "security," which is the source of "insecurity."
"Security" is a practice that must be interrogated.
Reification and essentialism are intrinsic to any ontology, and therefore, **foundational claims must be avoided**.
The state is a source of insecurity.

Re-constructive
Allows for re-visioning of alternative security futures.
Constructs alternative foundations, distinguishable from realism's emphasis on the military and the state as the sole referent object of security.
The study of security is conceived differently: discourse, identity, politics, ethics etc. become important.

Re-constructive (*Strong* Ontology)
Reconstructed ontology is distinguishable from realism but still makes *strong* foundational claims based on liberal, Marxist, Gramscian or theistic foundations.
Alternative security futures are based on **new referent objects** of security, such as the individual or the environment.
Inside/outside terms are relaxed.
Concepts like "Human security."
Migration, economics and environment as causes of insecurity are seen in human, bio-security terms, rather than as threats to the state.
Emphasis on non-state actors.

Re-constructive (*Weak* Ontology)
Re-visioning alternative security futures is problematic but must be attempted.
Reification and essentialism are intrinsic to the making of foundational claims, therefore such claims must be made with reflexive acknowledgement of indeterminacy and contingency.
(Contingent) foundational claims are not static and are open to interrogation, but are necessary for politics and ethics.
Security is a *practice/means* as well as an *end*.
Security must be interrogated for the purposes of revealing sources of insecurity. Security/insecurity is imagined and constructed but also experienced.
Discourse and identity are intrinsic to the practice, construction and study of security.
The state can be acknowledged, but is not the referent object of security, nor is it necessarily the primary actor.

Conclusions: Beyond "Post-Ponism"

This chapter has situated the analytical perspective of this project by arguing for the benefits of employing a generally post-structuralist approach and ethic, which emphasizes the need to remain reflexive and mindful of intersubjectivity and intertextuality in approaching security. In emphasizing these points, such an approach allows for a shifting of the referent object/subject of security and also allows for security to be understood in broader ways than merely that of the state in a system of states. Perhaps most importantly, I have argued for the strengths of utilizing Stephen K. White's idea of weak ontology in *re*constructing foundations, in order to move beyond deconstruction and to actually engage with the (contingent) "realities" of actual "security" problems. The latent tendency for post-structuralism, and particularly postmodernism, to eschew this engagement is deeply problematic for those that wish to avoid the ethical and political dangers of acting "*as if not*."

Fortunately, there are voices from within a post-structuralist outlook that recognize this, and in CSS in particular we are beginning to see gestures towards a weak ontology approach in theorizing, although it may not be expressed as such.[22] William Connolly, who incidentally is one of the political theorists that White casts as a weak

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[22]   The aforementioned theories on "securitization" and security discourse are examples that can potentially be joined by the type of work being done in International Political Sociology and the "Paris School" on governmentality, risk, aesthetics, borders and biosecurity (for example, see Leander, 2005; Leander and Van Munster, 2007; Muller, 2011); and potentially work on "ontological security" and identity (see Kinnvall, 2004) and work on "reflexive realism" (see Steele, 2007) as well. See also examples of comparative "application" of post-structural analysis like Campbell's (2002) work on Bosnia or Burke's (2008) work on Australia. It is beyond the purview of this chapter to comprehensively list specific examples, but the point is that we can actually see gestures towards "weak ontology" in critical security theorizing in probably more places than we realize. Notably, any CSS analysis that seeks to "engage" with "real world" issues but still coherently maintain an ethic of deconstruction and non-foundationalism would probably require (or already deploys) "weak ontology" in some form.

ontologist, levels a serious reproach against the postmodern propensity to articulate away from, and to under-theorize, potential alternative futures. In his critique of Ashley, Connolly identifies a tendency within the postmodern formulation of issuing

> …an interwoven set of self-restrictions [that reduce] 'post-structuralism' to one perpetual assignment to 'invert hierarchies' maintained in other theories. One might call this recipe for theoretical self-restriction 'post-ponism.' It links the inability to establish secure ontological ground for a theory with the obligation to defer infinitely the construction of general theories of global politics. (336)

Connolly goes on to assert that he prefers to resist simple binary oppositions suggested by such a recipe for self-restriction. Rather, he seeks "not only to invert hierarchies in other theories but to construct alternative hierarchies that do not demand the same relation to truth to enter into the field of contestation" (Connolly 1989, 336). Finally, he points out that Foucault himself, despite engaging in deconstruction refused the label "deconstructionist," and asserts that "there is nothing in the structural imperatives of a 'post-structuralist' or 'postmodern' problematic *requiring* perpetual 'post-ponism' at the level of theory construction and contestation" (Connolly 1989, 337).

Connolly's critique, coming from a perspective sympathetic to post-structuralism, brings to light two important and interwoven points that this chapter has attempted to introduce. First, that acts of reconstruction can be critical in the most fundamental ontological sense, and they do not always have to look like the "strong ontologies" of either modernist-traditionalist theories, or the alternative critical security theories that appeal unproblematically to external grounds to make their claims. Second, and perhaps most important of all, that acts of reconstruction *can* emanate directly from post-structuralist commitments, where deconstruction is seen as both a first step and as an

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ethic to bring to engagement with the status-quo of existing power-relations. This engagement is necessary if we are serious about avoiding a paralytic disjuncture from the "real world," where millions face corporeal insecurity every day. Rather, maintaining critical commitments can mean being reflexive about the inter-subjectivity and indeterminacy of the claims that *are* ultimately made, and of being accountable to them.

In terms of the relevance of weak ontology to the analytical methods of this project, this chapter has demonstrated that a weak ontology understanding of CSS proves compatible with the type of "immanent critique" method that Browning and McDonald (2011) advocate for in the practical application of CSS. As mentioned, this method of "immanent critique," informed by a weak ontology, calls for the examination of particular security logics in ways that recognize their historical, geographical and ideational contingencies. In other words, this method calls for a case-based examination of empirical "realities" in order to move beyond deconstruction towards a reconstructive exercise of imagining alternative (but contingent) security futures. This exercise is about contingently situating one's theorizations of security in response to *particular cases* and in *particular contexts*. This creates opportunities to still engage in the types of foundational ontologizing that is required to cope with the political and ethical problematics of security, but to do so in ways that can help us avoid reifying or essentializing any particular logic of security.

As such, my analysis of the US WOT and of the many-layered critical security effects of the WOT on East and Southeast Asia is predicated on the presupposition that it is not only desirable, but necessary, to situate critical security perspectives within

particular empirical contexts- historical, geographical, and discursive. This is the key to bridging the divide between a postmodern post-ponism that is disengaged from the "realities" of security/insecurity and the pragmatic need to move from deconstruction towards a practical engagement with the world in the hopes of re-visioning alternative security futures contingent upon the empirical realities of specific places and times. Importantly, this exercise is not about trying to operate without ever making foundational claims, but rather being very careful not to naturalize particular security logics as being timeless and inevitable. In the chapters that follow, I attempt to do so.

Chapter II
A critical reading of "security" literature on East and Southeast Asia:
Beyond constructivism?

In keeping with my declared analytical approach, which emphasizes the power of discourse and sees the War on Terror (WOT) operating as a powerful hegemonic security narrative, I contend that academic "bodies of literature" can also be understood as discourses and narratives: frameworks within which the theory and practice of international relations (IR) operate. Approaching academic bodies of literature discursively allows us to recognize that these are not homogenous or monolithic areas of inquiry, as each contain unique and sometimes competing representations of the subjects to which they pertain. Further, within academic literatures there are both dominant voices as well as sites of contestation, and the dominance of some voices does not necessarily reflect their veracity. Rather, the dominance of some voices may principally reflect the extent to which they are in accord with the larger hegemonic narratives of the day. Understanding this, it is important to critically engage with these literatures in ways that recognize which voices are privileged and which voices struggle to be heard.

This chapter focuses on the corpus of scholarship, under the rubric of IR and security studies, that seeks to explain and understand security (and insecurity) in East Asia, and especially in Southeast Asia. In this chapter then, I explore the question of how security/insecurity in East and Southeast Asia is conventionally explained and understood. Obviously, it would be beyond the scope of this chapter to deal with all of the relevant literature that is out there. However, a representative sampling of the security-

related literature pertaining to the region allows us to observe some important trends and commonalities, as well as identify the analytical gaps that exist.

This chapter first examines how the concept of "security" in East and Southeast Asia is broadly defined within the existing scholarly literature. It further outlines the issues that, according to this literature, fall under the umbrella of "security." In other words, what is the scope and meaning of security according to the mainstream-traditional security studies approaches that relate to East and Southeast Asia? "Realism" (the form outlined in Chapter I) and constructivism, dominant in turn, are identified as the two leading scholarly approaches to security in the region. This chapter then sketches out the two "images" of security that are developed through the realist and constructivist lenses respectively. Following this, I explore critiques of both approaches and briefly evaluate the degree to which "critical" approaches to security have emerged within the literature on Southeast Asian security. Finally, I summarize the gaps in the existing literature, and elaborate upon the theoretical contributions I hope to make with this project.

I. The scope and meaning of "Security" in East and Southeast Asia

In answering the central question of how security in East and Southeast Asia tends to be explained and understood, it is pertinent to ask the following related questions: *Who* defines security/insecurity in East and Southeast Asia? *Which theoretical approaches* dominate the study of security/insecurity in the region? *What variables* are considered to be important when analyzing security/insecurity in the region? And finally, *which actors* are privileged in discussions on East and Southeast Asian security/insecurity? As Chapter

I has illustrated, an increasingly multifaceted security studies literature, which includes critical voices, has emerged since the end of the Cold War. The decisions that theorists make about how to define security inform their choices about which issues are placed under the umbrella of security. And because security studies is widely considered to be a policy relevant field, this means that conceptualizations of security by "experts" have practical implications for real people and real situations. In Chapter I, I argued that a focus on questions of ontology is useful for unpacking and deconstructing the specific nuances of "critical" security studies. That is: what are the foundational claims (if any) that are made in theorizations of security, how are these claims arrived at (or presupposed), and what are the implications of making (or not making) such foundational claims? I characterize as "ontologically critical," those theoretical approaches that are self-reflexive about their foundational assumptions. The delineation between "strong" and "weak" ontologies, as outlined by Stephen K. White (2000), allows us to further hone in on these questions.

While the field of IR has demonstrated a growing affinity for criticality, the prevailing literature on Southeast Asian security has not tended to reflect this. This is not to say that critical voices are wholly absent, as this chapter later demonstrates. But a survey of IR security literature as it pertains to East and Southeast Asia reveals a continued reliance upon mainstream-traditionalist theoretical approaches that continue to reify a state-centric understanding of security (Kang 2003). Further, the scope of *what* constitutes security and security issues is dictated by a narrow focus on inter-state conflict and military security (Hamilton-Hart 2009, 2012).

Realist approaches, in particular, have enjoyed a long and entrenched history in East Asian security studies. Up until at least the 1980s it was the dominant, if not the only, approach to scholarship in that field. Arguably, this reflected the fact that matters of inter-state war and peace dominated the practical security concerns of East and Southeast Asian scholars during most of the 20th century. The Indo-China area alone saw three major wars: the First (1945-54), Second (1965-73) and Third (1978-89) Indo-China Wars respectively; and it was the US involvement in the Second Indo-China War that had the effect of generating a large body of related security literature in IR and strategic studies (Peou 2001, 121). Although there were some attempts by Kantian liberals and neo-liberal institutionalists to offer their perspectives to the study of Southeast Asian security during the same period, realism was the undisputed prevailing approach (Peou 2001).

Not surprisingly, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, realist-based security scholarship offered a particularly pessimistic prognosis for East and Southeast Asia. Two widely read pieces in the 1993/94 Winter Volume of *International Security* characterized the region as "ripe for rivalry" and bound for instability and military uncertainty due to the new realities of a now multipolar world (Friedberg 1993; Betts 1993). These predictions were based on a variety of factors, notably: the wide disparities in economic and military power in the region; the vast differences in political systems among East Asian states; longstanding and pre-existing historical animosities between regional actors; and the widespread perception that the region was lacking in robust institutions (Kang 2003).

For Friedberg, the end of the Cold War and the bipolar international system meant that:

> Asia will not lack for crises, whether they are handled well or poorly, in the years just ahead. To the south, disputes over borders and resources (especially oil and natural gas) could engage the interests of Japan, China, and India, as well as the members of ASEAN. The relationship between China and Taiwan may yet be resolved through the use of force. To the north, the future shape of Korea and the manner in which it is determined will be matters of intense concern to Japan, China, Russia, and perhaps the United States, to say nothing of the Korean people themselves. (Friedberg 1993, 31)

Friedberg also predicted an inevitable arms race, as he fully expected that the US role in the region would greatly diminish. Related to that prediction, he posited that Japan would likely re-militarize, which would cause anxiety among its immediate neighbours and the ASEAN members who rely upon US power to "balance" that of Japan's.

Betts (1993) held similar concerns about the status of security in a post-Cold War East Asia. He emphasized the continued importance of balance-of-power politics, which he felt was "up for grabs" with the end of the bipolar Cold War system but he was also worried about the high costs of maintaining US dominance in the region (35). For Betts, US strategic commitments in a post Cold War East Asia were "dangerously vague" and were "sure to invite miscalculation by Asian adversaries and allies" (Betts 1993, 37). This problem would be exacerbated by China, which in Betts' view would surely pose a threat to regional equilibrium in a variety of ways. A particularly interesting feature of Betts' analysis was his observation that a "truncated end of history" in East Asia, ushering in "an era of economic liberalization decoupled from democratization," could have a profoundly destabilizing effect on the region (Betts 1993, 36). Indeed, he observed that

from a realist perspective the "normal development," meaning economic and political

development following a linear pattern of "modernization, of East Asian countries is not

necessarily something to be desired from an American perspective (Betts 1993, 55). In

other words, Western-style economic liberalism and prosperity in East Asia, especially in

China, may run against US interests and may eventually threaten the political and military

stability of the region. As he surmises:

> By realist criteria, a China and a Japan unleashed from Cold War
> discipline could not help but become problems… Japan is powerful by
> virtue of its prosperity…, which creates political friction with
> competitors… China evokes the structural theory of the German Problem;
> even without evil designs, the country's search for security will abrade the
> security of surrounding countries… Individually, countries on the
> mainland cannot hope to deter or defeat China in any bilateral test of
> strength; collectively, they cannot help but worry China if they were to
> seem united in hostility. If China becomes highly developed economically,
> the problem would change. Asia would be stable but unhappy, because a
> rich China would be the clear hegemonic power in the region… and
> perhaps in the world. (Betts 1993, 61)

Such pessimistic analysis became characteristic of the realist security studies literature on

East Asia in the 1990s (Hamilton-Hart 2009, 2012; Kang 2003; Goh 2008).

As the Friedberg and Betts articles exemplify, in the prevailing security literature

there was also a disproportionate amount of attention paid to the role of the US in the

region *from the point of view of US security interests*. This is unsurprising considering

that we are talking about a predominantly American-based security studies literature.

Rightly or wrongly, this body of literature was meant primarily for American policy and

academic audiences. But this is the crux of the "bodies of literature *as* discourses and

narratives" idea. *Who* "security" is defined by and for holds deep ontological significance

for any analysis of security. On a fundamental level, it shapes what "security" itself is understood to be.

Notwithstanding the dominance of realism however, there was a growing discontent with its narrow vision of East Asian security during this period. In response to the pessimistic and limited predictions of the Friedberg and Betts articles "a newer set of more sophisticated counter-arguments were put forward" (Hamilton-Hart 2009, 54). As Hamilton-Hart (2009) points out, these counter-arguments focused on three key issues, which were both theoretical and empirical. The first two issues of concern did not mark a significant departure from the realist perspective, specifically concerns surrounding American security alliance commitments in the region (particularly in relation to Japan); and concerns surrounding the rise of China as an economic and military power. But it was the third issue of concern, specifically *the nature and role of regional institutions*, which ensured that the first two issues would be approached in novel ways. As such, the focus on these three key security issues beginning in the mid 1990s has been instrumental to the emergence of the constructivist[23] approach to East and Southeas Asian security studies, which has now become, in effect, the dominant approach to the study of security in the region. While Betts' realist analysis is dismissive of the importance of institutional arrangements[24], "the most developed critiques of [realist] arguments that Asia is set for

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[23]   This refers to social constructivism, rather than the radical or critical constructivism associated with post-structuralist or post-modern theorizing. The social constructivism in question, which many would trace back to the ideas of Alexander Wendt (even though many social constructivists, such as Alistair Iain Johnston (2003) have moved away from explicitly Wendtian versions) emphasizes the power of ideas, norms and identity in an otherwise realist-conceived world of nation states operating in a default environment of anarchic relations between self-interested units. This style of constructivism will be elaborated upon in the following sections.

[24]   "The most ambitious institutionalist alternative to relying on balance of power to keep peace, hypothetically, is a genuine collective security arrangement. The idea became vaguely popular again as a

unconstrained rivalry revolve around claims regarding regional institutions and cooperation patterns" (Hamilton-Hart 2009, 58).

Indeed, East and Southeast Asian regional institutions and arrangements appear to be of particular interest to IR scholars. It is arguable that the disproportionate attention paid to East Asian regional institutions can be explained by the idiosyncrasies that set them apart from their European and North American counterparts. For example, East and Southeast Asian security and economic regional institutions have historically operated in a decidedly *non* rules-based manner. Despite this fact, these institutions continue to exist and evolve and in some cases, such as with ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), appear to play an important role in moderating regional security relations. This reality erodes the realist dismissal of non-robust institutions and simultaneously brings to the fore the constructivist emphasis on the importance of norms and ideas. The institutional emphasis in ASEAN, for example, has been on consensus building and diplomatic cooperation- much of which takes place under the rubric of Track II (or informal) diplomacy. Furthermore, ASEAN's core guiding principle is member sovereignty via strict adherence to the principle of non-interference in member states' internal affairs.

It is telling then, that the realist prediction of a widespread breakdown in East Asian stability following the Cold War never came to pass (Kang 2003; Hamilton-Hart 2009, 2012; Peou 2001). This "reality" cannot be easily accounted for by realism, despite what its name implies. The trend towards continued regional stability and the unique

result of the end of the Cold War, and has been broached in regard to Asia by Soviet and other proposals, but it does not offer much for Asia" (Betts 1993/94, 73).

features of East Asian regional institutions thus necessarily introduces constructivist questions regarding institutional relationships among East and Southeast Asian states, as well as questions around ideas, institutional norms, and identity. Hence a survey of the literature on East Asian security since the late 1990s reveals a new pervasiveness of constructivist ideas alongside (or ahead of) the otherwise realist ones. As mentioned, this appears to be largely due to the attention paid to regional institutions by many of the IR scholars that currently analyze East and Southeast Asia. It is thus arguable that a growing interest in regional institutions and arrangements after the Cold War, among other factors that will be outlined in the next section, created the space for constructivist approaches to vie for prominence in East Asian security studies.

II. "Images" of East and Southeast Asian Security: Realism and Constructivism

It is not controversial to say that the IR literature on East and Southeast Asian security has tended to be dominated by realism and social constructivism. Both of these approaches can be understood as ontologically "mainstream" in the sense that they unproblematically assert a state-centric scope of security.[25] While realist scholarship had long been the norm for the study of East and Southeast Asian security since the end of the Second World War, the constructivist approach, which emphasizes the importance of institutions and ideas, began gaining more prominence in the mid-1990s (Peou 2001; Acharya and Stubbs 2006; Eaton and Stubbs 2006). As such, we can simplistically sketch out two prevailing "images" of East and Southeast Asian security as represented by

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[25] In Chapter I, I define "mainstream" security studies as it is used in this project.

realism and constructivism respectively. Both of these images frame security/insecurity in specific ways. Each considers certain factors to be important when analyzing security/insecurity in the region, and each privileges particular actors in analysis. As with all categorizations however, it is important to point out that there is much overlap in and between these two approaches and there is no neat delineation between them.

Image 1: Realism and the "Hub and Spokes" Security Model

As Burke and McDonald (2007) have pointed out, the region can be divided into two "distinct- but interconnected security paradigms that are governed by differing normative and structural frameworks and differing levels of great power influence and involvement" (10). They are the "hub and spokes" model of security and the "comprehensive security community" model respectively. As highlighted in the previous section, the main feature of a realist understanding of East and Southeast Asian security is its emphasis on inter-state relationships vis-à-vis the balance of power in the region. In other words, for realists, security in East Asia is largely defined in terms of the state, and the focus is on "great power politicking and military manoeuvring to create a stable regional balance of power" (Eaton and Stubbs 2006, 139).

Hence, the so-called "hub and spokes" model corresponds with the realist image of security in East Asia. This is a security structure of bilateral alliances between the US and East Asian states, dating from the Cold War, "which is focused upon realist frameworks of military deterrence and US strategic power projection" (Burke and McDonald 2007, 10). Evoking the image of a bicycle wheel, the "hub and spokes" model

is so named due to the idea that the security model relies on the US (the hub) projecting its strategic interests outward along the lines of its bilateral security alliances in the region (the spokes). Clearly the image of a bicycle wheel places the US at the center of the East Asian security model, and prioritizes the exercise of US power and interests for the maintenance of stability in the region. "Security" in East and Southeast Asia is thus understood to be synonymous with regional *stability* vis-à-vis the power and position of the US, which is understood to be the most important actor in the region. While the realist image of security in East Asia prioritizes the role of the US, it also identifies Japan and China as the other two major powers in the region, and from a realist perspective "stability in the broader Asia-Pacific region is in large part a function of the behaviour of, and the relationships among, these three major powers" (Ikenberry and Mastanduno 2003, 3).

Ikenberry and Mastanduno (2003) alert us to the prevalence in mainstream IR of the basic premise that security *is* stability, "defined broadly as *the absence of serious military, economic or political conflict among nation-states*" (Ikenberry and Mastanduno 2003, 3. My emphasis). Their edited volume, entitled rather expansively, *IR Theory and the Asia-Pacific* (2003), was meant to be a multi-author and multi-theoretical rejoinder to the ideas espoused in the 1993/94 Friedberg article mentioned above, wherein realist, liberal and constructivist perspectives would be deployed to engage with Friedberg's pessimistic predictions about the region. Despite acknowledging that a realist emphasis on structure alone is not enough to gain a complete perspective on the security challenges in the region, the ultimate conclusion drawn by the editors is that the key security issue in

the Asia-Pacific region continues to be the maintenance of a US-based hegemonic order (Ikenberry and Mastanduno 2003, 436-437). In other words, while liberal and constructivist theorizations of regional security are useful for drawing attention to the ways in which a US hegemonic order might be made "more acceptable to China and other states in the region" (Ikenberry and Mastanduno 2003, 437), the central realist premise of American hegemonic stability continues to be the lynchpin for East Asian security.

The realist approach also tends to eschew regional multilateral organizations such as ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum, and characterizes them as ineffective and irrelevant in assessing East and Southeast Asian security. Some examples of realist analysts who have rejected outright the importance of multilateral regional institutions in East Asian security affairs include Leifer (1999), da Cunha (1996), and Solomon and Drennan (2001). There are realist analysts who use a more "eclectic approach" to analyzing East Asian security "by conceding to the constructivist position that East Asia is more than the story of competing great power relations" (Eaton and Stubbs 2006, 139). However, even these authors (see Alagappa 2003; Buzan 2003; Hill and Tow 2002; Ikenberry and Tsuchiyama 2002; Tow 2004) tend to hold the view that competing great power relations, predicated on state hierarchy as determined by military power is always "prior to alternative forms of order based on more peaceful, less combative principles" (Eaton and Stubbs 2006) such as multilateral organizations.

Hence, we can sketch out the realist image of security in East and Southeast Asia. For realists, security can be defined *as* stability, which is specified as the absence of any major military conflict between states in the region. This condition of security/stability is

derived from a stable balance-of-power, which is determined by the continued presence of a US-based hegemonic order rooted in bilateral security alliances between the US and other actors in the region. China and Japan are also (secondary) major powers, and relations between the US and these two major powers are instrumental in the maintenance of security/stability in the East Asian region. Regional institutions, while perhaps relevant in making US hegemony more "palatable" to China, are largely ineffectual and are not relevant to the question of competing great power relations. This realist image of security in East and Southeast Asia prevailed as the dominant form of analysis from the end of the Second World War until the end of the Cold War.

We did start to see a theoretical shift away from realism and towards constructivism beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Acharya and Stubbs 2006). During this time, students of East and Southeast Asian relations began to diversify their theoretical perspectives and they moved towards constructivism as a means to explain and understand security in the region. This was partly a reaction to a series of historical events that called into question the veracity of relying solely on realist approaches to help understand the region. These events included Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia and the dismantling of the Communist Party of Malaysia in 1989, neither of which could be readily explained by a realist analysis; as well as ASEAN's launch of the ASEAN Regional Forum and the expansion of ASEAN's membership to include controversial member-states like Myanmar, both of which confound realist models of security cooperation. None of these developments were easily explained by neo-realism's limited focus on material forces, military balances, and great power alliances as the sole

determinants of regional security and stability (Acharya and Stubbs 2006). It was not just that realism could not predict these developments, but that realism was technically incapable of even acknowledging them, despite their obvious relevance to "security" and international relations in the region.

The emergence of East and Southeast Asian economic cooperation also brought to the fore the importance of economic considerations for analyzing regional security/stability. While Betts (1993/94) had been concerned that the decoupling of economic development from democratic development would have a destabilizing effect, particularly in the case of China, in many ways it became apparent that the economic relationships between members in the region were actually evincing a stabilizing effect. The growing, mutually beneficial economic interdependence between China and its East and Southeast Asian neighbours has, by many accounts, moderated the perception that China necessarily poses a military threat. This brings in to question the realist presupposition that military power will always be the more important determinant of regional security.

The Asian Financial Crisis of 1997/98 also presented problems for realists (Cheeseman 1999). The widespread domestic unrest that resulted from the AFC and its after-math, some of which was violent and caused the downfall of sitting governments, caused many observers to re-evaluate the very concept of "security." According to realists however, the AFC changed little in terms of regional security, as it did not exacerbate any inter-state tensions or cause any inter-state conflicts. Nevertheless, widespread rioting and political violence in Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines in response to

unemployment, ballooning food prices, and IMF-imposed austerity measures made a mockery of the idea that "security" is a status limited only to the state vis-à-vis its relations to other states. As these developments revealed, not only were economic considerations much more relevant than realists would concede, but the absence of inter-state conflict did not mean that the region's populations were free from violence or *in*security at the most fundamental, corporeal level. At the very least, the economic crisis "…provided an opportunity for the practice and, to a lesser extent, the theory of regional security to be (re)debated and (re)interpreted" (Cheeseman 1999, 333).

Related to the need to re-debate and re-interpret international relations and security in the face of new contingent realities, another cause for an increased theoretical diversity in East and Southeast Asian studies during this period, was the proliferation of novel theories of IR more generally (Acharya and Stubbs 2006). During the 1990s and beyond, realism in general began to face a range of theoretical challengers, including constructivism and neo-liberal institutionalism, as well as from post-modern and other critical theorists. As such, a "ferment of new approaches as well as refinements to the old neo-realist perspectives offered analysts of Southeast Asian relations a wide range of theories from which to choose as they sought to come to grips with the changes that were sweeping across the region" (Acharya and Stubbs 2006, 127).

Image 2: Constructivism and the "Comprehensive Security Community" Model

Constructivist approaches then, began gaining theoretical ground when the realist understanding of East and Southeast Asia failed to account for the myriad changes that

occurred in the region after the end of the Cold War. Constructivists' ability to account

for the importance of institutions filled a large analytical gap that existed in much of the

realist literature on Southeast Asian security. As Graeme Cheeseman has pointed out

> …there was, prior to the start of the economic crisis in July 1997,
> an "emerging consensus" among academics… that: (1) multilateral
> dialogue and institution-building was security enhancing; (2) the "Asian
> way" of proceeding by consensus and seeking to build confidence and
> trust between participants was a more appropriate means to achieving
> regional security than the more formal and rule-bound approaches that
> were being advanced by Western scholars and policy-makers; (3) security
> needed to be seen in comprehensive terms, incorporating non-military as
> well as traditional politico-military considerations; and (4)… the fledgling
> multilateral regional security framework needed to be buttressed by
> continuing bilateral ties and the presence of American military forces.
> (Cheeseman 1999, 384)

Here we see a distinctly constructivist turn in analysis emerging in theorizations of East

Asian security. While there was once a dearth of scholarship that sought to understand the

ideational questions relating to East Asian international relations, we began to see the

burgeoning growth of constructivist readings of regional relations. As mentioned, this

was "the constructivism of Wendt, Katzenstein and so forth, rather than of Onuf and other

more critically inclined theorists, that matters for the leading constructivist works on

Southeast Asian security" (Tan 2006, 251). While "constructivism" is a broad church, the

strand of constructivism employed by most East Asia scholars during this turn is "the one

which takes a similar epistemological stance to those of the rationalist IR schools"

(Katsumata 2006, 187). In other words, East Asian constructivism is a constructivism that

challenges the causal power of structure in favour of the social construction of that

structure, but nevertheless still tend to presuppose that the international system is one of

anarchy between nation-states.

Notably, Asia scholars who subscribe to this sort of constructivism, such as Amitav Acharya (2001) who is widely considered to be the godfather of East Asian constructivism, accord greater causal weight to institutions like ASEAN in assessing East and Southeast Asian security. East Asian constructivists also credit East and Southeast Asia's "state of relative peace to the regulative effect of key ASEAN norms, in particular norms of non-interference, non-use of force and settlement of disputes by peaceful means" (Eaton and Stubbs 2006, 140). Hence, where realists would attribute Southeast Asian stability to external factors, specifically the military power of the United States along with Japan and a rising China, constructivists put much more weight on the East Asian actors themselves and on the socialization between them. In other words, for the constructivists, the importance of local agency and local actors' regional institutions should not be viewed as a mere adjunct to a Great Power balancing act (Acharya and Stubbs 2006, 127). Rather, the conceptions of "power" that determine the shape of a regional security architecture can go beyond the realists' narrow understanding of military power. Hence, for the constructivists, conceptions of power, like all "social facts," do not arise out of an *a priori* state of anarchy but "are constructed endogenously through socialization processes" (Eaton and Stubbs 2006, 146).

This brings us to the constructivist "image" of security in East Asia, which is exemplified by the "comprehensive security" model previously mentioned. As I have explained, the "hub and spokes model" of security corresponds with the realist image of security in East and Southeast Asia. This model sees the maintenance of an American hegemonic balance of power via bilateral alliances as the lynchpin of East Asian

security/stability, which is defined as an absence of inter-state warfare in the region. For the constructivist view however, security is understood as a condition that goes beyond the military dimension, albeit without excluding it (Burke and McDonald 2007). This approach still considers the military dimension to be the most important aspect of security, but *includes* the political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions into a broader conceptualization of security factors. Importantly, this "comprehensive" understanding of security is a core principle of the ASEAN secretariat's and of East Asian regional security cooperation in general. This concept enabled the formation of ASEAN and

> … the emergence of a nascent 'security community' that challenged some dominant strategic norms. Its first members… agreed to eschew the use of force to resolve disputes between them, to respect each other's internal sovereignty (the doctrine of 'non-interference') and to minimize the intrusion of great power competition… from the outset ASEAN constituted a combination of liberal norms in interstate strategic relations and statist norms pertaining to the maintenance of 'internal security,' in which sovereignty … is paramount, and regime security a dominant objective. (Burke and McDonald 2007, 12)

In this comprehensive conceptualization of security, which extends beyond the military dimension, "security" is closely related to the concept of "national resilience," or the idea that domestic economic, political and socio-cultural stability in combination with a norm of non-interference between states is necessary for maintaining the stability of the region. In other words, stable and happy states make for a stable and happy (i.e. free of military inter-state conflict) region.

In his analysis of the formation of the ASEAN Regional Forum, Katsumata (2006) points out that the interests and policies that initiated the ARF were "defined by what can be regarded as a norm of security cooperation in Asia… this norm contains two sets of

ideational elements: common security… (and) the ASEAN Way of diplomacy" (181). The underlying purpose of the regional comprehensive security community is thus thought to be the collective commitment to and reinforcement of such norms and ideas. Security communities then, despite being seen as mere talk-shops by realists, can and do have a causal role in the maintenance of security and stability. In the constructivist image of security, it is the social relationships between state actors that allow them to develop and reify norms such as the ASEAN norm of non-interference, which in turn moderate the otherwise unequal and potentially dangerous power dynamics between state actors that a realist might predict.

Nevertheless, despite constructivism's ability to bring in other factors into consideration, *the state still remains the referent object of that analysis of security* (it is the "state" that is to be "secured" from instability that arises from a multitude of factors). Constructivism may in fact open the black-box of the "unitary" state and seek input from "within" in order to understand inter-state relations, but this exercise is uni-directional, and essentialist in ways that foreclose many questions. What we can see is that "... in granting ontological priority to states, constructivism cannot fully transcend reification because its effort to avoid reifying international anarchy or regions comes at the expense of a reified state" (Tan 2006, 254). The enduring rationalist tendency to couple subjectivity with sovereignty means that the realist shortcoming of treating agency as ultimately pre-given remains a feature of constructivism (Tan 2006). As such, the constructivist image of East Asian security remains "tellingly essentialist, particularly [with] concessions to state-centrism and ideational/normative determinism, both due

partly to an uncritical emulation of rationalist constructivist perspectives in IR theory"

(Tan 2006, 239).

But what is the significance of this for the purposes of this project? Why does the

state-centrism of constructivism need to be interrogated? Because, while constructivist

analysis does contribute to the study of East Asian security by emphasizing the

significance of multilateralism and ideational norms as they relate to inter-state conflict,

"constructivist scholarship tends to soft-soap the darker side of the ASEAN-way, and the

essentially statist (and internally coercive) character of its norms" (Burke and McDonald

2007, 13). Importantly, this East Asian concept of comprehensive security, along with the

norms of national resilience and non-interference that are incorporated into its structures,

can also be seen as sources and sites of *in*security. Indeed

> …comprehensive security as 'resilience,' links internal security paradigms
> preoccupied with the (often violent and repressive) defence of regime
> security and territorial integrity with regional frameworks that… extend
> the internal structures into region-wide paradigms that place a primacy
> upon sovereign freedom, non-interference and 'political stability'…
> cooperation in the ASEAN case tends to *strengthen* statist norms and
> insulate regional governments from scrutiny over their approach to human
> rights and internal claims to justice, separatism and difference. (Burke and
> McDonald 2007, 13)

Hence, if ASEAN is a security community according to this view, Burke and McDonald

(2007) caution that it is a community of "economic, political and military elites, and the

security that it provides is morally (and conceptually) incoherent, being too often

premised on the insecurity of others (13).

III. Beyond Constructivism?

So, where are we now on the subject of theoretical approaches to East and Southeast Asian security? Can it be said that the realist orthodoxy of East Asian IR has simply been replaced by a new, constructivist orthodoxy? Acharya and Stubbs (2006) have argued that the answer to this question is "no," and that we are now instead witnessing an emergence of an even greater theoretical pluralism in East and Southeast Asian studies. To proponents of criticality in IR and security studies, this assertion sounds like good news- but is it accurate? In my opinion, the assessment of burgeoning theoretical pluralism in this regard continues to be overly optimistic at this juncture, and it underestimates the continued pervasiveness of constructivist-based approaches in the literature on East and Southeast Asian security. Acharya and Stubbs' position might be explained by the fact that they somewhat optimistically consider English School approaches and neo-liberal institutionalist approaches as being truly distinct from a constructivist approach, and thus count as "critical" alternatives to constructivism. This is a generous reading of such approaches, which actually share some very basic presuppositions and assumptions with the type of constructivism outlined in their analysis. Nevertheless, while I think Acharya and Stubbs' assessment of theoretical pluralism in the East Asian security literature is premature in its optimism, it does highlight the fact that some alternative voices and theories are indeed emerging. Notably, these alternative voices and theories point to and correspond with developments occurring in (critical) security studies more generally, as outlined in Chapter I.

Where are the Critical Voices?

One of the most promising critiques that has emerged in the "critical" literature on East Asian security, is that the prevailing theoretical approaches (that is both realism and constructivism) continue to privilege the state in ways that create blind spots in assessments of security/insecurity in East and Southeast Asia (see Tan 2006; Burke and McDonald 2007; Hamilton-Hart 2009, 2012).[26] As mentioned, realist perspectives see the state as the primary actor *and* the primary referent of security (in that it is the "state" that is to be "secured" from military threats and instability arising from imbalances in military and strategic power). Constructivists in turn, have managed to incorporate other factors, variables, and actors into analysis. Although they still see the state figuring prominently as an agent of the East Asian security architecture, constructivists have been able to bring in institutions, norms, ideas, epistemic communities and social movements into analysis, which realism is unable to do (Acharya 2003; Caballero-Anthony 2005). This is a meaningful contribution and for 20 years or so, as I have argued here, constructivist analysis has been seen as the "critical" edge of the East Asian security literature. Nevertheless, for most of the East Asian constructivists the state is still assumed to be the primary actor and the first point of reference, notwithstanding the ability to factor in non-state factors and actors. The state in constructivism then, remains abstracted as a modern, Westphalian construct- as a sovereign and unitary rational actor and as the primary actor in regional security relations. Further, within constructivism, the state also remains as the singular referent subject and object of security.

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[26]   Tan, as well as Burke and McDonald tend to engage in what I would call weak ontologizing as outlined in Chapter I. Hamilton-Hart, less so.

There are, as of yet, few examples of epistemologically and ontologically critical[27] analyses of security in Southeast Asia. *Critical Security in the Asia-Pacific,* the 2007 volume edited by Burke and MacDonald that I have cited in this chapter, is one of the only existing texts that specifically contains (ontologically) critical security analyses as applied to East and Southeast Asia, and some of the authors in the volume seem to employ a "weak ontology" approach to theorizing security. Rosemary Foot (2005) and Natasha Hamilton-Hart (2005, 2009, 2012) have also produced critical security work, but both are less inclined to venture into ontologically critical engagements with the literature, even when they are advocating for new referents of security. In fact, much of the avowedly "critical" security work tends to take a more Habermasian human security approach (of which Cabellero-Anthony's work is a good example), which is more in line with the Welsh School's strong ontology understanding of "human security." As I have outlined in Chapter I, this is not the "critical" edge of security theory that I am particularly interested in, due mainly to its unproblematic adherences to different manifestations of strong ontology and enduring security logics.[28] It is apparent then, that there is a want for more approaches that emphasize critical post-structuralist ways of understanding security- ones that emphasize the importance of intertextuality and intersubjectivity, as well as the constitutive effects of a larger security narrative. They are starting to emerge, and what is promising about them is that they ask fundamental ontological questions about "security/insecurity" itself. Who or what is being "secured" and does a "secure" state necessarily translate into a "secure" population? Can "security"

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27   "Ontologically critical" in the sense outlined in Chapter I.
28   To be clear, I do not intend to diminish the contributions of these sorts of critical approaches.

and "insecurity" exist simultaneously? What questions have yet to be asked about "security/insecurity" in East Asia, and what questions are *unable* to be asked under the statist rubric of either realism or constructivism, both of which rely on "strong" ontological theorizations of security?

Conclusion: What can this project offer?

A key concept, central to the type of critical security analysis that I seek to pursue, is that the state itself can be a site of, and a cause of, forms of insecurity that neither realism nor constructivism is equipped to recognize. This does not mean that the security of or between states is not relevant in assessments of regional security- rather that it only tells us so much, and it may also preclude interrogations into other forms of insecurity. So for example, Southeast Asia vis-à-vis ASEAN may be a relatively stable and secure region in terms of inter-state conflicts or military concerns, but that particular conceptualization of "security" and "stability" tells us nothing about, for example: the status of those states' democratic apparatuses; the personal safety conditions of their populations; the environmental effects of regional pollution; their policies on migration; or the conditions of gender or race relations- all of which are dynamics that operate in and across borders and do not easily "fit" into a modernist/traditionalist formulation of what constitutes IR or security.

As Hamilton-Hart (2009) points out, there exists in mainstream security studies a "'stability bias'…[where] it is commonplace to see security equated with stability, as an extension of the generalization that instability is associated with insecurity… but

situations that are 'stable' may also be disastrously insecure for many people" (65). This blind spot means that "threats to security emanating from the state and directed against its own citizens or civilians of another nation" (Hamilton-Hart 2009, 64) are ignored. One of the goals of this project then, is to help reveal the silences that exist in the mainstream approaches to security, and ultimately, to add to the critical security literature on East Asian security, which is still in its nascent stages.

Chapter III
A critical reading of American foreign policy in East and Southeast Asia:
The War on Terror as a Hegemonic Security Narrative

The previous chapter examined the various bodies of academic literature that attempt to explain and understand security in East and Southeast Asia, identifying the gaps that exist in the prevailing approaches. Notably, there is a tendency to ignore the idea that the state itself can be both a source and site of insecurity for various populations. The fact of inter-state stability in East Asia does not guarantee the corporeal security of groups and individuals that reside in the region. In other words, the absence of inter-state military conflict is not a sufficient measure or definition of "security." Rather, there are a variety of state practices, vis-à-vis foreign policies and internal security policies that contribute to the *in*security of groups and individuals, variously defined. State practices of foreign and security policy also play a significant role in the constitution of identities and the framing of political problems. In the context of the War on Terror (WOT), US foreign policies under George W. Bush played such a role.

Hence, this chapter seeks to delve into the powerful constitutive effects of US foreign policy in East Asia after 9/11, and argues that the WOT and the Bush Doctrine operated as a hegemonic security narrative with significant security implications for the region. This chapter first explores the various different ways to define and approach "foreign policy," ultimately arguing for a critical constructivist analysis of foreign policy as informed by David Campbell's (1998) call to reorient our understanding of it. Campbell (1998) sees "foreign policy" as performative and constitutive, and as a boundary-producing practice "central to the production and reproduction of the identity in

whose name it operates" (68). As such, it is an integral aspect of the narratives of Self and Other that both construct and define threats and the security practices of states in response to those threats. This chapter then sets out the argument that foreign policies can operate as discursively constructed "regimes of truth" and that US foreign policy during the WOT operated as a hegemonic security narrative. Finally, this chapter sketches out the significant aspects of US foreign policy toward East Asia in particular, revealing both the continuities and discontinuities in US policy from before 9/11 and into the post-9/11 era. Importantly, this exercise demonstrates the powerful role that ideas, beliefs, and narratives play in the construction of policies that can serve to tangibly alter the political and security landscape of a region and its inhabitants. Such an exercise also demonstrates the value of immanent critique rooted in a weak ontology approach to critical security analysis.

I. What is "Foreign Policy"?

In order to have a discussion about how a specific set of foreign policies, during a specific historical period, may or may not have been operating as a hegemonic security narrative, it is crucial to establish a few things. Even if it is impossible to arrive at a set of completely agreed-upon definitions, it is important to examine the presuppositions and basic ideas that are being utilized. A significant first question then, would have to be: what exactly *is* "foreign policy"? And what do we mean when we say we want to analyze it? As Christopher Hill (2003) points out "… Most people… would have little difficulty in accepting that foreign policy exists and that it consists of what one state does to, or

with, other states. To many specialists, however, this conventional wisdom is deeply suspect" (Hill 2003, 1). Hill observes that "foreign policy," as an element of world politics, remains under-theorized and inconsistently understood. This is because comparativists, IR scholars and "public intellectuals" all seem to have different ideas about what it is and what its significance is, which means that "at best… debates are conducted at cross-purposes and at worst that in the area of external policy the democratic process is severely compromised" (Hill 2003, 2).

Arguably however, such an assessment is overly pessimistic. Certainly we can observe that there are problems with the opaqueness of foreign policy making, as well as with the general lack of public interest in the effects of foreign policy, both of which can contribute to a democratic deficit. But in terms of different ways of understanding and analyzing foreign policy, I would argue that there is no *inherent* problem with theoretical pluralism, nor is it somehow incorrect to acknowledge the reality that "foreign policy," as a concept and practice, operates simultaneously on different levels. In fact, there are advantages to developing a variety of different approaches to understanding foreign policy- especially when we consider that the different theories often correspond to distinct ideas about grand strategy and international relations itself (Schmidt 2012). Theoretical pluralism *can* be confusing and messy, as Hill and scholars like James Rosenau (1966) have long asserted, but it can also offer a conceptual richness that a rigid adherence to only one theory can never provide. These different approaches also lend insight into the variously labeled "problems" in understanding global politics such as the problems of

structure/agency (Carlsnaes 1992), inside/outside (Walker 1993), high politics/low politics and so on.

In fact, the study of foreign policy, as a distinct sub-field and leading up to its more current incarnations[29] emerged partly as a reaction to the dominance of structural realism in IR in the mid-20th century (Holsti 1989). As Rosenau (1966) observed, in response to a time when the "external behaviour of nations was considered to be exclusively a reaction to external stimuli… students of foreign policy… emphasized that the wellsprings of international action are also fed by events and tendencies within societies" (28). But Rosenau was part of what Neack, Hey and Haney (1995) called the "first generation" of foreign policy scholars, and thus saw theoretical pluralism as a problem that needed to be solved. Picking up on the behaviouralist and positivist *zeitgeist* of the mid-20th century social sciences, which attempted to approach social and political behaviour in ways that mirrored the methods of the natural sciences, Rosenau was concerned with the inability of foreign policy scholars to utilize and draw upon general theories, and their tendency to only "approach the field from a historical, single country perspective" (Rosenau 1966, 35). Rosenau's "first generation" of what was then called comparative foreign policy (CFP), had as one of its main objectives "a desire to move away from noncumulative descriptive case studies and to construct a parsimonious explanation of what drives the foreign policy behaviour of states" (Neack et al. 1995, 3).

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[29]   Of course, studying "foreign policy" is not actually new, for "as long as there have been political units engaging in relations with other political units, people have thought about and studied the problems of relations with the other or foreign group… new, is the attempt to structure the activities of scholars engaged in the study of foreign policy into a coherent and identifiable field of study" (Neack et al. 1995, 1)

In fact, one might say that Rosenau's search for parsimony was rooted in a need for a strong ontological understanding of foreign policy analysis.

As we now know, this proved ultimately unsuccessful. Despite the best efforts of the first generation of CFP scholars to be systematic, scientific and quantitative, and their hopes to eventually construct a generalized theory of foreign policy analysis, it came to pass that "a shared set of theoretical commitments and the central paradigmatic core of the field never came into focus" (Neack et al. 1995, 4). This was due to a combination of factors including a general moving away from positivism in the social sciences, as well as concurrent theoretical developments in related fields (Hudson 2005; Holsti 1989; Rowley and Weldes 2012). Competing approaches to understanding foreign policy were emerging despite the single-mindedness of "first generation" CFP, and foreign policy was also being studied in a wide variety of ways including through the lenses of international history, comparative country studies, realism and neo-realism, rational-choice, and post-positivist approaches, among others (Hill 2005, 9). These sorts of different approaches eventually contributed to the emergence of the so-called "second-generation" of foreign policy scholars.

This second generation of scholars, engaging in what is now referred to as foreign policy analysis, or FPA, tend to employ "middle-range theories to examine particular areas of human activity such as perception or geopolitics, and is sceptical that an overarching single theory of foreign policy can ever be achieved without being bland and tautological" (Hill 2005, 10). This second generation then, is actually a "broad set of approaches bound together by a common focus on studying foreign policy and an

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eclecticism in theory building" (Neack et al. 1995, 2). This brings us to the fact that more current approaches to understanding foreign policy tend "more and more to see any theory of foreign policy as having to be built in a contingent way, focusing on context, informed by empirical analysis… [and] likely to be conditional and bounded, recognizing that single cause explanations are not sufficient" (Neack et al. 1995 11). Part of what has been acknowledged here, is that "foreign policy" is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon (Rowley and Weldes 2012). As Holsti (1989) and Schmidt (2012) point out, there are several different "models" of decision making and several different ways in which IR theory pertains to foreign policy (Carlsnaes 1992; Rowley and Weldes 2012; Hudson 2005). Whereas the CFP crowd tended to see foreign policy mostly in terms of decision-making, present forms of FPA "extend the subject well-beyond decision-making, and in particular… ensure that foreign policy is seen not just as a technical exercise but as an important form of political argument" (Hill 2005, 10).

And this is where this project comes into a discussion on "foreign policy." I am less interested in the specifics of competing theoretical approaches to analyzing foreign policy than I am in the differently understood aspects of foreign policy itself. That is, in how foreign policy both manifests and influences identities and the framing of political problems. This is because bringing foreign policy into the equation of international politics introduces the important question of "*who acts, for whom, and with what effect*?" (Hill 2005, 2). This evokes three distinct but overlapping images of foreign policy*,* each of which provoke our curiosity in different ways.

First, as the CFP approach presupposed, we can say that "foreign policy" refers more simply to a *set of official policies*, or "the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations" (Hill 2003, 3). Second, we can say that "foreign policy" is a practice by an independent actor (usually a state), which both reflects and constructs internal identities, values, and interests. Third, we can say that "foreign policy" is a set of policies, practices and ideas that are projected outward and also affect others: *their* identities, *their* experiences and *their* policies. My project is most concerned with the third image, and more specifically with how American foreign policy, as the Bush Doctrine during the WOT, acted as a set of policies, practices and ideas that were projected outward and affected actors in East and Southeast Asia[30]: *their* identities, *their* experiences and *their* policies. But in order to conduct this analysis it is crucial to first set out the argument that foreign policies are not only discursive constructions, intrinsic to the creation of national identities and values, but that they can also operate as discursively constructed regimes of truth, which contain powerful political and cultural meaning that come to be through multiple political practices.

II. Foreign Policy as Constitutive Narrative

Based on all three "images" of foreign policy outlined in the previous section, we can see that foreign policies enacted by states are obviously bound up with notions of identity. Foreign policies are not merely an expression of a state's interests. They also simultaneously construct and project an image of a state's disposition- of what a state's

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[30]   It goes without saying that this was not the only region affected by the Bush Doctrine, but it is the only region that I will be examining.

values and motivations might be in pursuit of those interests (Rowley and Weldes 2012).

These projected identities are not static, but rather are subject to change over time in

response to a variety of factors including the constitutive effects of foreign policies

themselves. In other words, existing national identities and interests inform foreign

policy, which constructs a state's image as projected internationally, which in turn

informs domestic manifestations of national identity, which goes back to informing the

creation of foreign policies.

It is the contingency and fluidity of these national identities that are often over-

looked in a conventional foreign policy analysis. Too often, the interests and identities of

state actors are presumed to be static, unchanging, and are approached in an ahistorical

manner. Further, state identities are often presumed always to be *distinct from* and always

prior to the political practices deployed in their name. However, as David Campbell

(1998) cogently argues in his seminal work *Writing Security: United States Foreign*

Policy and the Politics of Identity:

> … it is not possible to simply understand international relations as the
> existence of atomized states that are fully fledged intensive entities in
> which identity is securely grounded and prior to foreign relations. The
> consequence of this argument is a fundamental reorientation of our
> understanding of foreign policy… [it] shifts *from* a concern of relations
> *between* states that take place *across* ahistorical, frozen, and pregiven
> boundaries, *to* a concern with *the establishment of boundaries* that
> constitute, at one and the same time, the "state" and the "international
> system." Conceptualized in this way, foreign policy comes to be seen as a
> political practice that makes "foreign" certain events and actors. (Campbell
> 1998, 61. Emphasis in original)

Importantly, the argument is not that aspects of state identity or threats to a state's

interests would not exist at all without the constitutive effects of foreign policy, but that

the practices of foreign policy themselves play a much larger role in the formation of state identity than a more conventional FPA approach has tended to acknowledge. Thus, foreign policy as it is conventionally understood should "be re-theorized as *one of* the boundary-producing practices central to the production and reproduction of the identity in whose name it operates" (Campbell 1998, 68. Emphasis added). Further, the argument is that all of these processes and signifiers of "us" (national identity, political interests, values, foreign policy) come to be through a constitution of difference, where beliefs or ideas about the *Self* can never be fully divorced from beliefs or ideas about the *Other*- and are in fact contingent upon them. In other words, national identity is performative and *requires* the political practice of "foreign policy," which can also be understood as the exercise of making certain events and actors "foreign."

The Construction of Threat and American Foreign Policy

An examination of American foreign policies over time illustrates the importance of foreign policy discourse to what Campbell calls the "scripting" of identity: the significance of narratives that help to tell stories about who we are. These stories of self have constitutive properties. They do more than tell us who we are or who we fear. They also tell us who we *should* be and who we *should* fear. As Campbell (1998) observed, the "objectification and externalization of danger that are central to contemporary assessments of security and politics… need to be understood as the effects of political practices rather than the conditions of their possibility" (16). Campbell's critique is a powerful one, as he argues that it is deeply problematic to accept the conventional

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understanding that foreign policy is simply a reaction to the realities of external threats that emerge from the ether of the international milieu.

Related to the ideas introduced at the beginning of this chapter, Campbell also challenges the notion that the construction of foreign policies somehow exists independently from the many different theories deployed to understand them. And it is by rejecting a "false demarcation of a theory/practice divide so that theory is outside of the world it purports to simply observe," that we can make possible an interpretive and inter-subjective approach that "… sees theory *as* practice: the theory of international relations is one instance of the pervasive cultural practices that serve to discipline ambiguity " (Campbell 1998, 17). It is this "disciplining of ambiguity" that is particularly salient in theorizing the idea that foreign policies call into being grand narratives of Self and Other that delineate the parameters of identity and the framing of threats. In other words, the "truths" that are taken for granted as the foundation for policy are what Foucault (1980) might call discursively constructed "regimes of truth," which contain powerful political and cultural meaning. These regimes of truth come to be through "multiple political practices, related as much to the constitution of various subjectivities as to the intentional action of predetermined subjects" (Campbell 1998, 17).

But what do these suppositions imply? Is Campbell, along with others who use critical constructivist approaches to foreign policy analysis (see Weldes 1999; Jackson 2006; Agathangelou and Ling 2004; Zulaika 2009; Bennis 2003; Weber 2006; Croft 2006) suggesting that theorizations of foreign policy are *literally* the same as the practices that occur? Does this sort of approach discount the existence of palpable, corporeal

threats to security? Does it reduce everything to a question of narrative, thus discounting

the multiple and complex sources of a state's identity or interests? I would argue that the

answer to each of these questions is "no." As Campbell (1998) himself asserts, "the claim

is not that Foreign Policy constitutes state identity *de novo*; rather it is that Foreign Policy

is concerned with the reproduction of an unstable identity at the level of the state, and the

containment challenges to that identity" (71). It is just one of the many pervasive cultural

practices that exist to discipline ambiguity and as a result solidify the certainty of self. To

use the language of strong and weak ontology, this approach rejects a foundationalist,

fixed logic (or strong-ontology) understanding of the sources of foreign policy or state

identity. Rather, recognizing the contingency and indeterminacy (via weak-ontology) of

both allows us to "see" the vast array of constitutive possibilities that present themselves

vis-a-vis the identity politics of foreign policy.

And this brings us to the question of security and security politics in the context of

foreign policy. The type of analysis advocated for here allows us to "see" the weak-

ontology of security as well, where "security" is regarded as much more than an

axiomatic condition or practice. Rather, "security" is a concept/word/signifier that needs

to be interrogated due to the unique ways in which it is wielded in political discourses and

in foreign policy. Doing so allows us to see that

> …the meaning of security does not just depend on the specific analytical
> questions it raises… 'Security' refers also to a wider framework of
> meaning (symbolic order… or culture… or discursive formation) within
> which we organize particular forms of life. (Huysmans 1998, 228)

Based on Saussure's (1968) ideas of splitting the "sign" into the "signifier" and the "signified"[31], Huysmans (1998) theorizes security using what he calls a "thick signifier" approach, which "focuses on the wider order of meaning which [the word] 'security' articulates" (226). When "security" is understood as a thick signifier, we can better articulate how the story of security "requires the definition of threats, a referent object, and also how it defines our relations to nature, to other human beings and to the self" (Huysmans 1998, 231). Security policy then, like foreign policy writ large, can be seen as a self-referential practice rather than merely assuming an external reality to which it refers. In other words, the signifier of "security" serves "a performative rather than a descriptive force…[and] rather than describing or picturing a condition, it organizes social relations into security relations" (Huysmans 1998, 232).

For the purposes of this project, of particular interest is the notion that the practice of security policy *requires* the definition of threats and organizes and defines our relations to "Others" and to the Self. Huysmans and Campbell both point out, in slightly different ways, that the logical corollary of this notion is that the discursive construction of threat becomes particularly essential to the practice of foreign policy and to the formation of state identity. Following this, the discursive construction of threat is a practice that also externalizes fear and raises the question of who (or what) to fear (or not to fear). Because

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[31]   Huysmans explains the significance of the distinction between Saussure's (1968) "signifier," which is the word, and the "signified," which is a particular *image* that we relate to the word/signifier. Importantly, there is no natural link between the signifier (word) "security" and a particular *understanding or image* of what "security" *is* (the signified). Rather, what is important is that the signifier (word)'security' "has a history and implies a meaning, a particular signification of social relations… it is not the same to say- 'Refugees pose a security question', and to say- 'Refugees are a human rights question'… The meaning of the refugee question differs according to the register [of meaning] in which it is used. Uttering 'security' articulates such a register of meaning… this aspect provides the intelligibility of security- that which makes security *mean something*. This is what 'thickness' refers to" (Huysmans 1998, 228).

this fear is both existential and ontological, "the fear in security stories is a double fear…

it is both the fear of biological death *and* the fear of uncertainty/ the undetermined

condition," (Huysmans 1998, 235. Emphasis added) which echoes Campbell's point

about how there is a pervasiveness of cultural and political practices that appear to exist

in order to discipline ambiguity and as a result, solidify the certainty of self.

At this juncture, it is important to emphasize the limitations of the concept of

"discourse" in this analysis. As explained, foreign policy discourse itself is more than just

words. Rather it refers to foreign policy documentation and policies, as well as to the

social/cultural/political *practices* of foreign policy. It is also not *wholly* constitutive of

material reality. With this in mind, one must take very seriously Dana L. Cloud's (1994)

warning about "the potential political [and ethical] consequences of accepting the idea of

the materiality of discourse" (142). To be clear, Cloud is not discounting the more

"limited claim that discourse is material because it has material effects and serves

material interests in the world," because importantly, "this view does not equate reality

with discourse" (142). Rather, Cloud issues a prudent precaution against "a more radical

shift [where] discourse not only influences material reality, it *is* that reality...[where] all

relations, economic, political, or ideological, are symbolic in nature" (142).

This latter understanding of the "materiality of discourse," as Cloud calls it,

resides in the same politically and ethically incomprehensible space as Richard K.

Ashley's (1989) advocacy of a post-modernism that operates only as the "work of

thought" (313), and that "cannot claim to offer an alternative position or perspective,

because there is no alternative ground upon which it might be established" (278). I argue

against this epistemological approach in Chapter I, agreeing with Connolly's (1989) critique that such a position is a form of "'post-ponism' [that] links the inability to establish secure ontological ground for a theory with the obligation to defer infinitely the construction of general theories of global politics" (336). The problem with this position, along with the attendant idea that discourse (and only discourse) *is* reality, is that it necessitates a paralytic disjuncture from the every day, where millions of people actually do face corporeal insecurity in a variety of tangible ways. Ironically then, such approaches- which at their basis attempt to make-strange the normalized ways that we "see" the world through more conventional approaches to international relations- actually *also* end up obscuring some of the more palpable ways that actors and individuals can face insecurity. This dissertation attempts to bridge this seemingly unbridgeable divide without resorting to rigid and unreflexive foundational appeals or security logics, and to apply the powerful critique of a critical constructivist analysis in ways that allow us to "see" the otherwise ignored political, social and material effects of US foreign policy discourses.

III. US Foreign Policy, the War on Terror, and East Asia

The "War on Terror" as Hegemonic Security Narrative

The WOT featured a set of central narratives that framed the 9/11 attacks in specific ways, *necessitating* America's military responses abroad and security practices at home (Jackson 2005, 2006, 2011; Croft 2006; Jarvis 2008; Jervis 2005). The particularities of the WOT- its narratives, its policies, its manifestations- were informed

by a prevailing pattern of American essentialism and a national style rooted in beliefs and myths about America's role in the world as a responsible superpower. Prior to 1945, the claim had always been that America would "lose its soul" if it went abroad "in search of monsters to destroy," but President Woodrow Wilson turned this idea on its head and promoted the idea that America would lose its soul if it did *not* go abroad in search of monsters to destroy (Daalder and Lindsay 2005, 5-6). As a result, even though America has had periods of isolationism, it can be said that America's foreign policy style since 1945 has been a combination of exceptionalism and [varieties of] liberal internationalism. This manifested itself in different ways under different presidents, but suffice to say that exceptionalism and internationalism have long been the two most notable (and often competing) characteristics of American foreign policy (Pederson 2003; Ruggie 1997; Koh 2003; Farrell 2005; Deudney and Meiser 2012).

Prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it was apparent that George W. Bush's foreign policies were founded on this scripted identity of a general American exceptionalism. From the earliest days of his administration, Bush's foreign policy did not depart substantively from long-held views of US interests. Unlike Clinton's prior emphasis on multilateralism, which marked a brief move away from unilateralism, Bush was much more prone to "hegemonist thinking" (Daalder and Lindsay 2005), signifying a renewed tendency for the United States to act unilaterally (Deudney and Meiser 2012, 35). It is important to note then, that although the events of 9/11 ushered in some notable changes in the landscape of US foreign policy, at a much more elemental level 9/11 served to cement and reinforce the pre-existing scripted identity of an exceptional America. As a

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result, key elements of what we now call the Bush Doctrine were actually rooted in this pre-existing exceptionalist/internationalist scripted identity, with notable emphasis on exceptionalism.

The following chapters examine specific aspects of the Bush Doctrine's effects in East Asia, but for now the Bush Doctrine can generally be summarized as follows: a declared belief in democracy and liberalism at home and the historical "responsibility" to restructure and rebuild the world towards allegedly universal values of democratic freedom; the perception of great threats that can only be staved off by forceful policies that include pre-emption and "preventive" war; the willingness to act unilaterally in combination with the conviction that unilateralism can be both necessary and more effective than multilateralism; and the belief that the US must assert its primacy and hegemony in world politics, whereby "American security, world stability, and the spread of liberalism require the US to act in ways others *can* not and *must* not" (Jervis 2005, 583). Briefly stated, the Bush Doctrine was characterized primarily by unilateralism and the doctrine of pre-emption. Following this, we can observe that Bush's responses to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2011 were shaped by a confluence of factors predicated on a set of beliefs. These beliefs rested upon two key underlying themes: American fear, which arose out of an inflated threat assessment of terrorism; and an American sense of responsibility, which arose out of a latter-day Wilsonian, *mission civilisatrice* to cure the world of its undemocratic ills (Jervis 2005, 580-591).

Even before 9/11, President Bush had expressed the opinion that giving in to isolationism would result in a "stagnant America and a savage world," and that

"American Foreign Policy cannot be founded on fear… fear that American workers can't compete… fear that America will corrupt the world- or be corrupted by it" (Daalder and Lindsay 2005, 36). This relates to Huysman's understanding of security as a thick signifier. As mentioned, "the fear in security stories is a double fear… it is both the fear of biological death and the fear of uncertainty/ the undetermined condition" (Huysmans 1998, 235). It is this latter aspect of Huysman's double fear that was particularly observable within the Bush doctrine. For example, in his letter accompanying the *2006 National Security Strategy* (NSS), President Bush stated:

> …America now faces a choice between the path of fear and the path of confidence… history teaches that every time American leaders have taken [the path of fear], the challenges have only increased and the missed opportunities have left future generations less secure… (2006 NSS)

Such axioms are repeated throughout Bush's NSS and in speeches following 9/11.

Built on this fear, a powerful psychological link between the 9/11 attacks and the drive to depose Saddam Hussein was carefully constructed. The *US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (2006) skilfully conflated the issues of terrorism, ballistic missile defense (BMD), and "rogue states" via the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) procurement by terrorist groups. Related to this, core elements of Bush's 2006 NSS were characterized as preventative or pre-emptive, which marked a clear departure from established international norms. Under Section III of the 2006 NSS, the US sought to "1) *Prevent* attacks by terrorist networks *before* they occur; 2) *Deny* WMD to rogue states and terrorist allies who *would* use them without hesitation; 3) *Deny* terrorist groups the support and sanctuary of rogue states, and 4) *Deny* the terrorists control of any nation that they *would* use as a base and launching pad for terror" (NSS 2006, 12. Emphases added).

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Bush's persistent exhortations against living in fear along with the elevated threat level promoted within the larger security narrative of the WOT, whereby any state or group that *may* have the capability and *may* have the desire to harm America needs to be pre-emptively dealt with, reminds us of Campbell's concept of the "evangelism of fear" (Campbell 1998, 49). It is a continued fostering of anxiety itself that becomes instrumental to the organization of political and social relations in the state's project of security. Here, threats and anxieties are primarily construed and located within the "texts"[32] of foreign policy. In the case of the Bush Doctrine, this was achieved in a way that conflated the supposedly imminent danger of *potential* terrorism with the Hussein regime in Iraq, as well as the *possible* threats arising out of Iran, Syria and North Korea.

Since the foreign policy texts that guide national security relate to the scripting of a particular American identity, then the fact that the Bush doctrine collapsed the fear of terrorism into the messianic responsibility to restructure the world, speaks to the central position of threat in a post-9/11 US identity. And the same foreign policy discourse, typified by statements like "the greater the threat, the greater the risk of inaction" (*National Security Strategy 2006,* 18), was also typified by Bush's oft-stated aspiration to restructure the world toward freedom and democracy. In other words, we can observe that the manifestation of American national identity under Bush as a paternalistic purveyor of freedom and democracy was at least partially constructed by a discourse rooted in threat and fear (Jackson 2005). Threat discourse is thus a powerful tool in the rendering of danger as "the backdrop against which the US policy disposition is regularly vindicated"

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[32]   Texts, both in the literal sense of official foreign policy documentation, and in the non-literal sense of the social/cultural/political practices of foreign policy.

(Loeppky 2005, 87). This is achieved through the construction of the image of the terrorist as simultaneously rational and irrational, which appeals to both the citizen's "reasonable logic of possibility" and "their fear of the unknown" (Loeppky 2005, 88-89).

The practices of security under the Bush Doctrine thus hinged upon a narrative of fear- the fear of terrorist threats and of fear itself- as well as the "responsibility" to be a purveyor of democracy and liberalism abroad. As such, the security narrative of the Bush Doctrine *required* that US hegemony and "homeland security" be aggressively maintained. The corollary to this was a strategy of pre-emptive military action, the utilization of questionable detention and prisoner interrogation practices, as well as the systematic erosion and subversion of privacy and civil rights both within the United States and elsewhere. Herein lay the greatest *problematique* of the Bush Doctrine: items in the Bush Doctrine toolbox--- pre-emptive strikes; extraordinary rendition; the use of waterboarding and other forms of prisoner abuse and humiliation; unlawful detentions of "enemy combatants" at Guantanamo Bay-- actually contributed to "insecurity;" both to America in the sense that these policies would inevitably inflame the passions and provoke the ire of those groups that would seek to do America harm, as well as to the communities subject to the discourses and policies of the WOT. A second-order critique of the Bush Doctrine *problematique* would interrogate the ways in which the pursuit of "security" under the WOT steadily eroded values that are intrinsic to a historic understanding of *Americanness*- such as freedom from the tyranny of government.[33] But all of these moves occurred under the umbrella of the WOT, which operated as a

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[33]   The integrity of the American constitution is called into question when unconstitutional practices such as surveillance of American citizens, become sanctioned by legislative bodies and normalized by the prevailing security culture. What, then, is the "America" being defended from the "evildoers?"

powerful security narrative that framed these sorts practices in ways that legitimized and normalized them.

Even a cursory examination of American foreign policies over time illustrates the importance of foreign policy discourses to what Campbell calls the scripting of identity: the significance of narratives that help to tell stories about who "we" are. These stories of *Self* have constitutive properties. But they also tell stories about the *Other*, and these stories have constitutive effects as well. American identity is not the only identity being "scripted" by American foreign policy narratives. Rather, American foreign policy narratives also play a role in scripting the identities of those various actors that are the subject of US foreign policy discourses. They further frame political and security problems in specific ways. Due to the hegemonic position of the US and the significant influence of US policies in shaping world politics, US foreign policy narratives are uniquely positioned in terms of their impact and effects on the rest of the world. The WOT in particular, has left an indelible mark. As Jackson (2005) observes, the discourses and narratives of the WOT "prevented the consideration of alternative paradigms and approaches to counter-terrorism; the inbuilt logic of the language, and the privileging of only certain kinds of knowledge… circumvented the kind of in-depth, rigorous and informed debate that a complex political challenge such as terrorism requires" (188).

US foreign policy and the Bush Doctrine in East and Southeast Asia

During the Cold War, America's official security policies in East Asia were predicated on establishing successful, pro-capitalist liberalized economies "to stand as a

bulwark against communist expansion, which led them to pour aid and investment into [the region]" (Beeson 2007a, 4). This integrated foreign policy approach, characterized by a merging of military purpose with economic tools, was executed as a "hub and spokes" model of bilateral strategic-military relationships in efforts to contain communism in Asia.[34] As a result, many of Washington's economic policies during the Cold War were actually offshoots of American strategic-military goals. After the end of the Cold War however, and particularly under the Clinton administration, American foreign policy became more economics-focused than it had been during the decades-long confrontation with the Soviet Union.[35] American foreign policy during the Clinton administration was thus characterized by the relative subordination of conventional strategic policy to neoliberal economic interests. Clinton's oft quoted dictum- "It's the economy, stupid"- informed much of his administration's policies both at home and abroad. The approach of American policy makers during the Clinton period "…[was] replete with assumptions about the need to make the world safe for the liberal economic enterprise" (Higgott 2004, 429). This approach also rested upon the fact that the US was the world's unrivalled military superpower- a moment that allowed Washington to pursue these neoliberal economic goals unhindered by military distractions.

Freed from the operative and narrative strictures of the Cold War, US foreign policy during the Clinton era was thus "open-textured" and especially commercially focused, and this was observable in his administration's policies towards East and

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[34] The "hub and spokes" model is explained in Chapter II. See page 61.
[35] Recognizing that some of what might be called "conventional" strategic-military concerns continued to have a place in post-Cold War US foreign policy. This was evidenced in the examples of military intervention in the former Yugoslavia and the strong involvement of the Clinton administration in the Oslo Peace Accords regarding Israel-Palestine.

Southeast Asia (Dittmer 2002). Observers of American East Asia policy during this period would cite the significant trend away from a strategic-military focus in the region and towards a distinctly neo-liberal economic approach to engagement (Acharya 1999; Christoffersen 2002; Dibb et al. 1998; Higgott 2004; Rosenberger 2001). The focus was on upholding the stability of the status quo in East Asia, which was favourable to American economic and political interests, and which was underwritten by policies favouring economic growth and trade liberalization (Chistoffersen 2002). As with US foreign policy writ large, in East Asia specifically there was also "a preponderance of the multilateralisms geared towards neoliberal economic globalization" (Dibb et al. 1998, 18).

In the late 1990s and following the Asian financial crisis, US foreign policy in the region shifted even further away from strategic-military matters as the US secured its economic primacy in the global economy, both functionally and ideationally where

> …the US had enjoyed a decade of steady growth, the high tech boom was in full flight and the Asian Economic Miracle had run out of steam across the board. Following sustained stagnation in Japan and financial crisis in other parts of Asia the "miracle" was pronounced dead. The atmospherics of the US-Asia relationship saw Asian hubris of the early 1990s give way to American *schadenfreude* in the late 1990s. US preponderance was firmly established- unipolarity seemed to be more than just a moment (Higgott 2004, 428).

The newly elected Bush administration took over at an apex of American military, ideational and economic pre-eminence.

While Clinton had taken advantage of the post-Cold War moment of American strategic primacy in order to pursue largely economic objectives, Bush instead took for granted America's moment as an unrivalled economic superpower. He criticized what he

saw as Clinton's apparent lack of priority setting, and did not approve of the way that the Clinton administration had dispatched troops to various areas with no clear benefit to American national interests (Daalder and Lindsay 2005; Deudney and Meiser 2012; Bush 2010). Under Bush, concerns with nuclear proliferation, missile-defence and strategic balance-of-power matters were re-incorporated into national policy documents and into policies towards various regions, including East Asia. For the Bush administration, it was not just about re-prioritizing security. It was also about re-prioritizing an active pursuit of national interest (Bush 2010). Hence, in East Asia the Bush administration set its sights on China as a potential military-strategic concern. North Korea also gained renewed attentions under Bush's national security agenda. The pre-9/11 Bush approach to Asia was thus characterized primarily by a containment strategy for China, as well as continued efforts to moderate North Korea's nuclear designs.

Importantly, Bush's pre-9/11 East Asia strategy was highly dependent upon the US-Japan security relationship (Christoffersen 2002) which, as mentioned in Chapter II, was a post-World War II artefact and lynchpin of US strategic policy in the region. The continued importance of the US-Japan relationship was evidenced by numerous declarations to that effect in national security documents, speeches, and policy meetings. For example, a joint statement by President Bush and then Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori on March 16th 2001 states, "…the U.S.-Japan alliance is the foundation of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region," and the two leaders "reaffirmed the particular importance of maintaining close consultations and coordination regarding North Korea, both bilaterally and trilaterally with the Republic of Korea." On June 30th 2001, Bush and

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then newly elected Japanese PM Koizumi issued another joint statement re-affirming the US-Japan Security Treaty. Among other things, they "…emphasized the importance of encouraging China's constructive role in the international community and… working with the Republic of Korea to achieve peace on the Korean peninsula, furthering non-proliferation efforts around the globe."

    With the unintentional bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, US relations with China had already begun to deteriorate under Clinton. Bush's further policy changes towards East Asia brought with them an even further deterioration of those relations. On April 2nd 2001, a Chinese fighter jet collided with an American EP-3 spy plane over the South China Sea. The EP-3 was forced to make an emergency landing on an airfield on Hainan Island, China. The Chinese aircraft and pilot were lost in the incident. The US crew was not immediately returned to the American authorities and the Chinese government declined all access to the EP-3 plane in the days immediately following the collision (Slingerland et. al. 2007). The event precipitated a political crisis between the two countries, which was resolved 11 days later upon the return of the crew to the US. Following the crisis, Bush issued a statement that included the assertion that

> … China's decision to prevent the return of our crew for 11 days is inconsistent with the kind of relationship we have both said we wish to have. As we move forward, the United States and China will, no doubt, again face difficult issues and fundamental disagreements. We disagree on important basic issues such as human rights and religious freedom…I will always stand squarely for American interests and American values. And those will, no doubt, sometimes cause disagreements with China.
> (*Remarks by President Bush Upon the Return of U.S. Service Members*, Press Conference, Rose Garden, Washington DC, April 12 2001)

The EP3 spy-plane incident was followed by official US support for an independent

Taiwan, the re-introduction of BMD onto the American national security agenda, and a

gradual rolling-back of US participation in East Asian multilateralism more generally.

Hence, up until 9/11 all signs pointed towards a US foreign policy in East Asia

that was mostly defined by the strategic containment of China. On September 4th 2001,

just days before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the White House issued a press release

announcing that officials from Washington and Beijing would meet "in the coming

weeks" to discuss the subject of ballistic missile defence and China's own development

of offensive nuclear forces. This planned meeting appeared to be in response to growing

concerns in both countries that the other may present an offensive military threat. Indeed,

the Bush administration appeared to be pursuing a containment-focused approach towards

Chinese proliferation, as evidenced by the fact Washington planned to

> … make clear that the U.S. missile defence program does not threaten China but seeks to counter limited missile threats from rogue states and the danger of accidental or unauthorized launches. Only those foreign parties with hostile intent toward the United States have grounds to fear U.S. missile defence…No one should try to blame the modernization of China's offensive nuclear forces on our missile defence efforts. China's ongoing modernization effort was initiated years ago... [Our] missile defence is an important element of our broader strategy to combat proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction. The export of Chinese missile technology continues to be a concern, as does the Chinese build-up of short-range ballistic missiles… (*U.S., China to Discuss Missile Defence*, Statement by the White House Press Secretary, White House Press Release, September 4th 2001)

But then the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001 occurred, and a new stratum of

security discourse was added to articulations of American foreign policy around the

globe, often overtaking other issues on the agenda. A single day and its events signalled a

profound shift in the narratives surrounding American interests, including those in East Asia. Notably, the scheduled discussion regarding Chinese missile technology never took place. When American and Chinese officials did finally meet in October of 2001, the talks were primarily on shared concerns about terrorism. Missile defence was briefly mentioned in subsequent statements by the two governments, but the promised challenge to China's development of nuclear forces never materialized. Instead, the two declared their allegiance in the newly conceived WOT (Cox 2012).

The events of September 11, 2001 signalled an important discursive shift in the Bush Administration's foreign policy priorities, despite the lack of any substantive geopolitical change. As mentioned, Bush's response to 9/11 was to cement a foreign policy doctrine that reflected and reproduced the dual beliefs of American exceptionalism and internationalism. The ensuing *National Security Strategy* and *National Strategy to Combat Terrorism* under the Bush administration crystalized the twin doctrines of unilateralism and pre-emption. Further, terrorism and counter-terrorism became the overwhelming pre-occupation of American foreign policy, mostly to the detriment of other policy issues. Despite nothing substantive actually having changed in US relations with various regions around the world, the overriding fact of 9/11 meant that a whole host of foreign policy issues fell to the bottom of the foreign policy agenda (or disappeared entirely). This was definitely the case for East and Southeast Asia.

As exemplified by the changing tone of US-China relations regarding BMD, American foreign policy in East Asia after 9/11 took on a different cast. First, there was a marked withdrawal of US involvement from economic multilateralism in the region. The

US also began to actively ignore human rights abuses in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia that had previously held a more prominent place on the diplomatic agenda of US envoys to the region. Washington re-established relations with the Indonesian military, sold them weapons, and began pressuring the Indonesian government to enact extra-judicial measures in their crack-down on local militant groups. Washington also re-established a controversial military presence in the Philippines under the Visiting Forces Act, and dispatched US troops to the Southern districts to help the local military in their counter-terror operations against Muslim separatist groups. After 9/11, US advocacy for democracy in Myanmar/Burma also appeared to fall off of the agenda. Finally, US support for the "counter-terror" operations of many of the governments in the region- including China- meant that local dissident groups of any political stripe could be brutally repressed beyond international reproach, as long as they were officially labeled as terrorists by the relevant government authorities.

As mentioned in Chapter II, despite the lack of inter-state conflict in the region, the potentially *de*stabilizing effect of US foreign policies at both the state and non-state level tends to be ignored or under-theorized in the prevailing literature. While it is often "… commonplace to see security equated with stability, as an extension of the generalization that instability is associated with insecurity, …situations that are 'stable' may also be disastrously insecure for many people," and this blind spot means that "threats to security emanating from the state and directed against its own citizens or civilians of another nation" are too often invisible or ignored (Hamilton-Hart 2009, 64-65).

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Conclusion: Even more questions

This chapter examined the powerful constitutive effects of US foreign policy in East Asia during the WOT, and has introduced the idea that the WOT under the Bush administration operated as a hegemonic security narrative that brought forth novel (critical) security questions for the region. I have argued that the Bush Doctrine under the WOT operated as a powerful narrative, involving "…not just speeches by politicians… but also the symbols they appropriate…, the myths and histories they refer to…, the laws they pass…, the organizational structures they create…, the decision-making procedures they follow and the actions they undertake" (Jackson 2005, 19). The WOT was specifically a *security* narrative- a discursive framework within which the definitions and practice of "security" operated. Finally, the WOT was a *hegemonic* security narrative because it achieved a degree of cultural domination in the sense that its "regimes of truth" (Foucault 1980) were taken for granted as the foundation for policy and public debate in a specific historical moment.

The notion that the WOT operated as a hegemonic security narrative carries into the arguments made in the following chapters, where I engage in the type of immanent critical security critique advanced in Chapter I. This entails examining relevant empirical examples and cases in contingent historical, geographic and social contexts. An immanent critique based in a critical security approach buttressed by weak ontologizing seeks to ask- and answer- hard questions about "real" places and "real" people. Who or what is being "secured" and does a "secure" state necessarily translate into a "secure"

population? Can "security" and "insecurity" exist simultaneously? What questions have yet to be asked about "security/insecurity" in Southeast Asia, and what questions are we *unable* to ask under the statist rubric of conventional approaches?

The following chapters seek to grapple with these questions. For example, in Southeast Asia, the WOT ushered in a renewed concern with Islamist terrorist threats in the region. Notably, although separatist militancy and terrorism has long existed in the region, the historical moment of the WOT meant that the security threat of terrorism was interpreted and framed in specific ways- ways that actually increased the danger that regional terrorist attacks would occur (Cotton 2003; Gershman 2002). Under the narrative of the WOT, the threat of terrorism became elevated to a status incommensurate with its actual risks and hazards (Hamilton-Hart 2005; Kadir 2004; Sidel 2008; Wright-Neville 2004). And the specter of terrorism and the security politics of the WOT provided opportunities for state governments in the region to frame their internal security policies in ways that allowed for a host of human rights violations and the suppression of political dissent (Cotton 2003). This is explored in the following chapter.

As I have mentioned, one of the primary goals of this dissertation is to reveal the silences that exist in a conventional understanding of security- one that prioritizes narrow state-centric views of security and further ignores the role that the state's pursuit of security can have in the production of *in*security. Crucially however, in doing so and consequently in addressing fundamental (weak) ontological questions about "security/insecurity" itself, this dissertation seeks to undertake a critical security analysis

rooted in a post-structuralist ethic without falling into the "post-ponism" cautioned by

Connolly (1989) or the discursive reductionism cautioned by Cloud (1994).

Chapter IV
A critical reading of (the threat of) political Islam in Southeast Asia after 9/11:
"Expert" taxonomies, epistemic objects, and the mapping of emergent threat

This chapter examines the construction of threat in post-9/11 Southeast Asian

security politics, and particularly the perceived threat of terrorism posed by political

Islam in the region. The previous chapter introduced the idea that the War On Terror

(WOT) operated as a hegemonic security narrative that had constitutive effects on identity

formation of the Self; perceptions of the Other; the framing of political problems; and the

pragmatic policy responses to those problems. As others have argued as well[36], I maintain

that US foreign policies vis-à-vis the WOT had a pervasive impact on global security

politics and on the perception of threats everywhere. In the case of Southeast Asia, it can

be observed that despite a lack of any substantial change in the larger geopolitical

dynamics of the region immediately after 9/11, the WOT nevertheless brought with it an

important discursive shift in US relations and security practices within the region.

What is important about this shift, is that the new security narratives of the WOT

shaped and constructed conceptualizations of threat in ways that elevated the perceived

threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia to a status incommensurate with its actual risks. This

occurred due to a combination of "common sense" perspectives on terrorism encouraged

by "expert" discourses as framed by the narratives of the WOT; and the related dynamics

of regional Southeast Asian security politics. With this in mind, in the context of the

WOT, this chapter seeks to interrogate the construction of threat in Southeast Asia and

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[36]   For example, see Beeson (2007b); A. Burke and McDonald (2007); J. Burke (2003); Capie (2004); Croft (2006); Foot (2005); Gershman (2002); Goh (2008); Hamilton-Hart (2005, 2009); Higgott (2004); Jackson (2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2011); Jarvis (2008); Jervis (2005); Loeppky (2005); Mueller (2006); Sidel (2008); Wright-Neville (2004); Zulaika (2009).

the commonly held "expert" assumptions regarding terrorism in the region. This chapter casts doubt onto three commonly made claims that emerged out of the post-9/11 security narrative and related "expert" discourses on Southeast Asian terrorism. These claims are inter-related and flow into one another: first, that all forms of political Islam necessarily represent an imminent threat of terrorism; second, that there exists an emerging regional radical Islamist identity with robust organizational and ideological links to *Al-Qaeda*; and third, that terrorism and violence by non-state actors in the region is best understood as fundamentally irrational rather than political behaviour, and can somehow be responded to in isolation from the social and political contexts of history.

Critical engagement with these claims, however, is only a first step. As this dissertation is meant to be an exercise of geographically and historically contingent immanent critique from a weak ontological critical security perspective, I am further concerned with the practical implications of these expert claims, particularly the emergent ripple effects of the various policy responses by states to the specious identification of an elevated post-9/11 threat of regional terrorism in the particular context of the WOT. These questions will be explored in more detail in Chapter V. In the mean time, it must be emphasized again that that the point of this analysis is not to discount the threat of terrorist violence in Southeast Asia as far as it does exist. Rather, the point is to ask an alternative set of questions about terrorism and state responses to terrorism- different questions than ones traditionally asked by the "experts"- in order to reveal some of the less obvious ways that terrorism, along with reactions to terrorism, can influence the security/insecurity of groups and individuals. Although separatist militancy and terrorism

has long existed in the region, this chapter is concerned with the ways that the historical moment of the WOT allowed the threat of terrorism to be significantly re-framed in ways that actually increased the possibilities for *in*security, critically defined.

I. "Experts" and the construction of threat

Who are the "experts"?

When we acknowledge the inter-subjectivity inherent in knowledge production, the notion of "expertise" brings political and ethical questions into the foreground. To paraphrase Robert Cox: *knowledge* is always for someone and for some purpose. "Expert" discourses play a powerful role in setting political agendas. "Expert" knowledge and language can become tools to both exclude individuals who are non-experts, and to exclude ideas that cannot be spoken of in that same language of expertise (Cohn 1987, 708). "Expert" discourses can "inevitably draw boundaries around themselves by celebrating certain kinds of statements while excommunicating others, which then take on the status of 'subjugated knowledges'" (Gusterson 1999, 326). Notably, the nature of these "expert" discourses is instrumental in constructing the parameters of a security "problem" and of constructing particular logics of security. But who are the "experts"? What version of "common sense" do they put forward? What constitutes "legitimate" knowledge about terrorism, and can these knowledges ever claim "objectivity" or "authenticity"?[37]

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[37] The scare-quotes that pepper this paragraph are used self-consciously. They are meant to connote the contestability of these terms and concepts.

Before addressing these questions, it is important to emphasize that the suggestion being made here is not that there is some sort of monolithic "orthodox" approach to studying terrorism that can be corrected by some equally monolithic "critical" approach to studying terrorism. There are some very real problems with creating and/or re-enforcing an exaggerated dichotomy between mainstream/orthodox terrorism studies and a more critical approach to studying terrorism (Horgon and Boyle 2008; Gunning 2007a, 2007b), or as it is sometimes characterized, a dichotomy between "problem-solving" and "critical" terrorism studies (Gunning 2007a, 2007b; Jackson 2007a, 2007b). With this in mind, it is perhaps better to suggest, as Gunning (2007a) does, that this "dichotomy" between the "mainstream" and "critical" is much better conceptualized as a *continuum*. And along this continuum, among the many different experts and scholars who study, theorize and conceptualize terrorism, there are varying degrees of reflexivity, a variety of methodologies being used, and a host of competing motivations behind the questions being asked.

Hence, while this analysis seeks to identify, critique, and interrogate the prevailing "expert" discourse on terrorism in Southeast Asia, it also seeks to actively avoid the construction of a straw man "terrorism expert" while engaging in such critiques. It is, however, beyond the scope of this chapter to comprehensively engage with the relevant debates that are occurring under the umbrella of "Critical Studies on Terrorism."[38] Rather than reproducing them here in any great detail, suffice to say that it is important to remain

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[38] There is a research program and academic journal specifically dedicated to this task: Routledge's "Critical Studies on Terrorism" journal, which was founded in 2008. As part of its mandate, the journal aims to "recognize the inherently problematic nature of the terrorism label, employ a critical-normative perspective broadly defined, and challenge accepted orthodoxies."

aware of the complexities and nuances of critiquing terrorism expertise in its more conventional incarnations.

It is reasonable to say that there are a few significant common threads that emerged in the more conventional expert discourses on post-9/11 terrorism in Southeast Asia. A deconstruction of these common threads reveals a shared reliance on modernist and positivist ontological underpinnings to make arguments about how the world works, and a tendency to presuppose the objectivity of the "knowledge" that is produced. As Gunning (2007a) asserts:

> In its most 'uncritical' manifestation… a 'problem-solving' approach [to studying terrorism] does not question its framework of reference, its categories, its origins, or the power relations that enable the production of these categories… It is state- centric, takes security to mean the security of the state rather than that of human beings, on the assumption that the former implies the latter, and sees security in narrow military or law-and-order terms, as opposed to the wider conception of human security, as for instance developed by critical security studies… It … ignores social and historical contexts; if it did not, it would have to account for the historical trajectory of the state… The problem-solving approach is positivist and objectivist, and seeks to explain the 'terrorist other' from within state-centric paradigms rather than to understand the 'other' inter-subjectively using interpretative or ethnographic methods. (371)

In other words, in the mainstream "expert" opinions on Southeast Asian terrorism, there is a reliance on *strong* ontology- specifically in foundational assumptions regarding the nature of security (understood as *stability among states*, and the *safety of the state* from external and/or existential threats), and regarding the function and nature of the state as the primary actor in the international system.

With this is mind, the following sections examine three commonly made and inter-related expert claims about terrorism in Southeast Asia, with particular emphasis on

the first claim relating to the perceived threat of political Islam. Unyielding devotion to these claims meant that they took on the axiomatic status of unquestioned "truths" in the WOT security narrative in Southeast Asia. This sort of "uncritical" approach to security, as Gunning calls it, results in a perspective that is blinkered to the many ways that the "securing" of the state is actually implicated in the creation of various forms of insecurity.

Expert Claim #1:
All forms of political Islam represent an imminent threat of terrorism

America's post-9/11 perception of the so-called "Muslim World," is an important factor in assessing the security narrative of counter-terrorism. Under Bush, despite occasional assertions to the contrary, Muslims along with Islam itself were commonly identified as the primary locus of terrorism. Both in "acts," as in: *terrorism is primarily perpetrated by Muslims*; and in "causes," as in: *Islam is the primary cause of terrorism.* Hence, in the WOT discourses espoused by the US foreign policy and mainstream academic establishments, we could observe a particularly narrow understanding of the relationship between Islam and international terrorism.

One of the most conspicuous problems with the "expert" knowledge on terrorism then, resides in an overly simplistic characterization of the religion of Islam (Hamilton-Hart 2005; Jackson 2005; Sidel 2008). Conventional discourses suggest that terrorism appears always to exist on the spectrum of this religion in particular and as such, "Categories such as *moderate, fundamentalist, militant* and *terrorist* are sometimes presented as potentially progressive stages through which individuals may move" (Hamilton-Hart 2005, 312). Therefore, the solution is simply to keep all Muslims from

getting to that end-point on the continuum. The "threat" of terrorism is seen to emanate directly from religiosity itself. Hence, the perception that Muslims are becoming *more* Muslim (whatever that means) is automatically seen to also signal an increased threat of terrorism.

Zachary Abuza's academic work on terrorism in Southeast Asia is quite emblematic of this tendency. Along with Rohan Gunaratna and Angel Rabassa among others, Abuza is widely renowned as a leading academic expert on terrorism in Southeast Asia. These terrorism "experts" are routinely consulted by policy-makers and oft-quoted in the media- both in the US and in Southeast Asia. Abuza has also served as an advisor to the US State and Defence departments and has been impressively prolific, producing many articles, books, and studies on the subject of al Qaeda and terrorism since the early 2000s.[39] He is known for conducting risky field work, where he purportedly garners access to high-ranking local politicians and influential organizational Islamists as part of his research, most of whom speak to him anonymously. Indeed, the jacket of Abuza's ominously titled volume, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (2003a), features an endorsement by Gunaratna proclaiming Abuza's willingness to "risk his own life" to get "high-quality" information on Southeast Asia's terror network. This all lends to his perceived credibility, and Abuza's opinion and policy advice is sought out by foreign policy and intelligence communities in the United States and around the world.

A closer look at Abuza's writing on Southeast Asian terrorism, however, reveals that his work is mired in some very basic problems. Notably, his writing is rife with

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[39]   See Abuza 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2005, and his frequent contributions to the Jamestown Foundation's publication, *Terrorism Monitor*.

factual errors, mis-translations, and mis-spellings- and it appears as though he does not

speak any of the regional languages that he is transliterating (Sidel 2007). Further, his

over-reliance on anonymous sources and his penchant for using unsubstantiated statistics

to bolster his claims makes it very difficult to assess the veracity of his assertions. [40] I am

not suggesting that he is fabricating evidence, but I take issue with the presentation of

ideas confidently buttressed by "factual evidence" that cannot be verified as such.[41]

Considering that he is a "visiting guest lecturer at the Foreign Service Institute, US

Department of State and at the Department of Defense's Joint Special Operations

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[40]   Rohan Gunaratna's "expertise" is also problematic in similar respects. Like Abuza, he is regarded by policy-makers and the media as an expert on terrorism. He was invited to testify at the 9/11 Commission, and has also been consulted by British and Australian defence and intelligence services in the context of the WOT. Gunaratna currently heads up the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. A 2003 investigative piece by Gary Hugh in the Australian newspaper *The Age,* however, revealed that some of Gunaratna's declared credentials are, at worst, fabrications or, at best, exaggerations. Hugh (July 20th 2003) reports: "Gunaratna, 42, had ridden a wave of success driven by the basic laws of supply and demand - there were not enough experts to meet the demand from the media and publishers for intelligence analysts able to provide a catchy quote or headline… Gunaratna and others who belong to this new breed of media-friendly commentators, who blur the distinction between academic analysis and politics and base research on information from anonymous intelligence sources, are causing concern in some circles… his credentials in biographical information published in books, magazines, newspapers and on the internet, are at first glance impressive. His book *Inside Al Qaeda* states: "Rohan Gunaratna, the author of six books on armed conflict, was called to address the United Nations, the US Congress and the Australian Parliament in the wake of September 11, 2001. He is a research fellow at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, St Andrews University, Scotland. Previously, Gunaratna was principal investigator of the United Nations' Terrorism Prevention Branch and he has served as a consultant on terrorism to several governments and corporations." After *The Sunday Age* made detailed checks on Gunaratna's biographical details, he confirmed last week that there was no such position as principal investigator at the UN's Terrorism Prevention Branch and he worked there in 2001-02 as a research consultant. He also confirmed that, rather than directly addressing the UN, Congress and the Australian Parliament, he had actually spoken at a seminar organised by the parliamentary library, given evidence to a congressional hearing on terrorism and delivered a research paper to a conference on terrorism organised by the UN's Department for Disarmament Affairs."
[41]   Hugh, for *The Age* (July 20th, 2003) also reports: "David Wright-Neville is senior research fellow at the Centre for Global Terrorism at Monash University and until 2002 was a senior terrorism analyst in the Office of National Assessment. Although he won't comment directly on Gunaratna, or any other individual analyst, he says that, like in any other profession, the abilities of so- called terrorism experts ranges from the very good down to questionable… He says problems arise when analysts don't make it clear when they leave the secure ground of known facts and enter into their own extrapolation when commenting to the media… Another factor, says Wright-Neville, is the use of unidentified intelligence or security sources by some analysts. Not all intelligence organisations are equally reliable and, particularly in some south-east Asian countries, can be highly politicised and running agendas for their governments. Individuals in intelligence agencies can selectively leak information to analysts - or to the media - to influence public debate. "The context in which information is obtained is vital," he says."

University,"[42] and that the national and international media regularly consult him for his commentary on terrorism, these problems with his work are unsettling.

To be very clear, this is not meant to be an *ad hominim* attack on Abuza, nor is it meant to imply that he has conducted his research or his analyses in bad faith. Further, I myself am sceptical of any claims to achieving value-neutral objectivity in academic analysis, and am not suggesting that his work *requires* positivist rigour in order to offer valid or cogent interpretations of the world. As expressed in Chapter I, my understanding is that all social and political "knowledge" is inter-subjective and necessarily situated. What makes Abuza's work frustrating to read from this perspective is not so much that it lacks objectivity or scientific rigor. Rather it is that his approach is the type that *commands authority on the very basis* of its supposed objectivity and rigor- when it is clear upon closer inspection that a remarkable amount of inter-subjective understanding and interpretive analysis informs his conclusions. Here again, we see the folly of a "strong ontology" approach to knowledge production.

I bring up Abuza as a fine example of the type of "expertise" that feeds into largely spurious notions of what terrorism means for Southeast Asia and what Islam means for terrorism. And it is these sorts of notions that feed into the security narrative that this analysis seeks to deconstruct and interrogate. We can see in Abuza's large body of work, a tendency to assume that political or "radical" Islam will always represent a threat of terrorism. In another ominously titled article, "Tentacles of Terror: *Al-Qaeda*'s Southeast Asian Network" (2002), Abuza makes hay with what he calls a growing threat

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[42]   Abuza's faculty profile, Simmons College Department of Political Science and International Relations, http://www.simmons.edu/undergraduate/academics/departments/political-science/faculty/abuza.php

of "radical Islamicism" in Southeast Asia, which, as the title suggests, he surmises is slowly extending its grip all throughout the region. Just what "radical Islamicism" *is* remains quite difficult to ascertain. According to Abuza, the radicalization of Islam in the region is evidenced and/or caused by a disparate array of factors: widespread "economic dispossession"; a lack of political freedom or outlets for political dissatisfaction; the "spread" of Wahhabi and Salafi Islam; the "failures of secular education"; and the seemingly hundreds of thousands[43] of Southeast Asian Muslims attending parochial religious schools in Pakistan and universities in the Middle East (428). And while he acknowledges that Wahhabi and Salafi "Islamicists" are a "distinct minority" in Southeast Asia, he then goes on to claim that "in many cases they [radical Islamicists] have shaped the agenda" (2002, 428). According to what evidence? Abuza himself provides no persuasive substantiation of this alarming claim.

In fact, there is little indication that the tiny minority of Wahhabi/Salafi Muslims, who make-up an insignificant percentage of the region's *250 million* Muslims have "shaped the agenda" of the region. On the contrary, this small group of "radicals" remain a marginalized and fringe element in Southeast Asian politics and have actually steadily declined in influence and power since the 1990s (Gershman 2002; Kadir 2004; Jayasankaran 2002; McKenna 2002; Sidel 2008; Wright-Neville 2004). As Gershman (2002) pointed out at the time, immediately after 9/11 and the 2002 Bali bombings, there was no indication that any form of "Islamic" terrorism in Southeast Asia was state-

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[43]   Abuza is inconsistent and often vague with his use of numbers.

sponsored, and the extreme diversity of Muslims in the region continued to work against

the establishment of a politically violent fundamentalist hegemony by any one group (62).

Abuza ignores just this: the extreme diversity of Muslims and Islam in the region and the

minority of opinion within this extreme diversity that may or may not support political

violence. This blind spot is understandable when one examines Abuza's apparent views

on terrorism and radical Islam. A survey of his work implies that for Abuza, radical Islam

is both fringe and ubiquitous, amorphous but organized, not everywhere and yet

potentially everywhere. In other words, it is a particularly protean concept, its

significance varying depending on how it is framed in Abuza's own analyses. As Sidel

(2007) adroitly points out:

> … Abuza positions himself as an alarmist, conservative critic of liberal
> appeasement in Southeast Asia, deriding the complacency of U.S.
> policymakers, other foreign observers, and Southeast Asians themselves in
> the face of implacable, insidious [Islamist] enemies… Abuza's case
> remains profoundly one-sided and unconvincing… Abuza does not make
> up his facts; he simply distorts their significance by scrupulously,
> systematically eschewing comparative historical analysis.

This assessment of Abuza is perhaps a bit severe, but Sidel's point is well made: that

Abuza's "expert" perspective on what he calls "Islamicism" in Southeast Asia suffers

from a tendency to both over-simplify political manifestations of Islam and to presuppose

the threats posed by them. And he is not alone in these tendencies, as a cottage industry of

Southeast Asian terrorism "expertise" has emerged after September 11th 2001.

It becomes a natural step to assign threat to "Islam," writ large, when terrorism is

assumed to come out of the potential of *any* Muslim to become violent. So for Abuza and

other "experts" like him, despite the "distinct minority" status of the Muslim sect or

group that exhorts violence in the name of religion, its existence nevertheless implies the possibility that more and more Muslims are in danger of falling under its influence. This is because when such radical groups are seen as an *endpoint on a continuum*, as opposed to a distinct belief system that is altogether separate (Wright-Neville, 2004; Kadir, 2004; See also, Kratochwil, 2005), then *any* evidence of increased religiosity in the larger mainstream group (such as increased attendance at Islamic universities or increasing numbers of Muslim women donning the hijab) is viewed with suspicion and fear.

This is perhaps more so when evidence of organized politicization amongst Muslim groups is observed. Gunaratna (2004) goes so far as to claim that the more Muslims get to know about Islam, the more likely it is that they will become violent. As he asserts,

> … With more news in the media about Islam, the Muslim public's awareness of Islam will increase. The number of Muslims directly supporting violence will remain very small, but there will be more support for a Muslim way of life, especially the implementation of Sharia… furthermore, the need to wage *jihad* in support of their suffering brethren will rise among the politicized and radicalized segments of the Muslim community. (Gunaratna 2004, 158-159)

This statement is self contradictory, because despite the hollow assertion that only a small number of Muslims will support violence, Gunaratna nevertheless also asserts that more awareness of Islam will lead not only to a desire for Shariah governance, but to violent jihad as well.

The difficulty with this sort of simplistic analysis is that the problem of terrorism becomes defined in terms of Islamic religiosity, rather than in terms of the political, historical and social context of these groups. As Sidel (2008) notes, this leads to the

equating of *descriptions* of terrorist activity in the region with *explanations* of terrorist activity in the region where "the over-arching tendency has been to assume that simply by pointing the finger at [a group like *Jemaah Islamiyah*] an adequate explanation has already been provided" (342). This denotes a fundamental lack of acknowledgment or understanding of a historical social and political process that has long been inimical to the political goals of "Islamists," who may or may not be prone to violence.

As Suzaina Kadir (2004) argues, "one can argue that the dynamics of state–society relations within the Muslim world, and its impact on domestic as well as international security, are not new… scholars were already debating on the compatibility of Islam and democratic practice long before the events of 9/11"(202). Viewing the dynamics of Muslim politics solely through the lens of 9/11 and the WOT produces a limited and ahistorical reading of the complex and rich terrain of religion and politics in Southeast Asia (or elsewhere for that matter). As Kadir (2004) points out

> … Muslim politics in Southeast Asia has been evolving into one that is increasingly more complex and dynamic. It has been affected by forces of development, globalization and Islamization. Development and globalization has allowed for the flowering of Islam in the region but also of different versions and competing strands of the religion vis-à-vis one another. In the process there have been contests for legitimacy and authority but also growing awareness and insecurity regarding religious identity… Muslim politics has also been shaped by more explicit political dynamics including the nature of state–society interaction between the regime and the Muslim community. (219)

Kadir's main point here is that the politics of Islam in the region are far more complex than the more conventional understanding, which sees "Islamization" as a singular and linear force. As such, rather than signaling a simple movement toward an inevitable end-

point on the imagined continuum of Islam from moderation to extremism, we can see that "Islamization [is] not the simple process of return to the golden age of the religion, or towards fundamentalism, per se… [but rather], it introduces increasingly complex strands, ranging from liberal interpretations to fundamental discourses and practices" (Kadir 2004, 210).

Hence, while many Islamist groups may in fact hold views that are at odds with Western-style liberal values on a variety of social, political and economic issues, they are not necessarily also terrorists. Nor do their religious ideas necessarily signal a rejection of participation in existing (ostensibly liberal) democratic structures. One such example is the *Parti Islam se-Malaysia*, or PAS, an Islamist opposition political party in Malaysia, which is often clumsily lumped in and tenuously linked to illegal militant groups such as *Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)*, *Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia (KMM)* and *Abu Sayyaf*. Another example is *Nadhatul Ulama (NU)*, an Indonesian Islamist organization with 30-35 million followers, and one that has actively and consistently supported anti-terrorist efforts by the Indonesian government (Gershman 2002, 64). NU is Indonesia's largest Muslim organization, and yet it represents an interpretation of Islam that supports secularism in government, is committed to democracy, and rejects the idea of imposing Shariah law upon Indonesian society (Kadir 2004).

Other analysts are also wary of the characterization of Southeast Asia as a "key-theater for terrorist activity" (Wright-Neville 2004, 27). In a critique similar to Sidel's (2008) observation that terrorism experts often conflate description and explanation, Wright-Neville (2004) surmises that "the bulk of terrorism-related research consists

mainly of a cataloguing of individual terrorists and the organizations and networks to which they belong," and there is little, if any, "understanding of the complex inter-play of cultural, economic, political and economic social forces that lay behind it" (29). In response to the "exaggerated sense of threat that rests largely on a failure to account for nuanced differences in the nature of Islamist politics in the region" (27), he offers a compelling typology of Islamist organizations in the region, where he categorizes the disparate groups under the tentative headings of "Islamist Activists, Islamist Militants, and Islamist Terrorists,"

As Figure 2 (below) illustrates, there are varying degrees to which an oppositional Islamist political group can or should be classified as being synonymous with a terrorist group. What is important to point out here is that Wright-Neville is not implying that these are all groups that reside along the afore-mentioned dubious sliding scale of Islam from "moderate" to "terrorist." Instead, the typology is meant to indicate that in trying to understand the wide variances in behaviours and propensities toward political violence among the different groups, it is necessary to recognize and understand that these are groups with different (and in many cases completely disparate) beliefs about the role that violence can or should play in political opposition.

It is true that in Southeast Asia we have observed that "*some* activists have become militants and *some* militants have become terrorists" (Wright-Neville 2004, 42). But activist political groups like PAS and even militant groups like MILF are substantially removed from the wholesale rejection of secular state authority as held by terrorist groups like JI, and additionally, the leadership and beliefs of groups like PAS and

MILF are "… clearly uncomfortable on religious and other grounds with the

dehumanizing logic that inspires the JI's embrace of mass casualty terrorism" (Wright-

Neville 2004, 42). These distinctions are important because they cast serious doubt onto

the aspersion that all Muslims- especially politicized Muslims- are always already in

danger of becoming terrorists, especially when we consider the fact that

> …the overwhelming majority of Islamic political organizations in
> Southeast Asia fall within a category described as 'activist.' Such groups
> are dedicated to altering or replacing the political hierarchy and its policies
> and to infuse national politics with a more Islamic flavour, but they do not
> seek to change the principles that underpin existing political and/or
> democratic frameworks…Activists prefer to work 'with the system,'
> agitating within existing legal and political norms…" (Wright-Neville,
> 2004, 32)

Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, a more nuanced understanding can help to

avoid the clumsy formulations and policy recommendations in response to militant

Islamism that include calls for "more inclusive American diplomacy and outreach to

'moderate' Muslims, as if the problem was largely a PR bungle" (Hamilton-Hart 2005,

314). Such formulations also undermine the political quality of movements for self-

determination, or opposition to long-standing suppression by local governments. This can

serve the unintended consequence of unfairly marginalizing legitimate groups who have

democratic political support among certain populations (Cotton 2003).

Classification	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Degree of Political Alienation
Activist	Nahdatul Ulama	Sisters in Islam	Philippine Association of Islamic Ulamas	Moderate
	Muhammadiyah	Muslim Youth of Malaysia (ABIM)	Islamic Movement for Electoral Reform and Good Government	
	KISDI (Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World)	Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)	Moro National Liberation Front	
Militant	Hizbut Tahrir	Al Arqam (Banned)	Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly	High
	Front Pembela Islam	Islamic Revolution Cooperative Brigade (Banned)	Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)	
	Laskar Jihad (Disbanded)	Al Ma'unah (Banned)	Abu Sayyaf Group (Proscribed)	
Terrorist	Jemaah Islamiyah (Proscribed)	Jemaah Islamiyah (Proscribed)	Jemaah Islamiyah (Proscribed)	Extreme

(Figure 2-Typology of Islamist Groups in SEA- Wright-Neville 2004, 32)

Expert Claim # 2:
There exists a radical Muslim Southeast Asian identity, with robust organizational links to Al-Qaeda

Related to the claim that political Islam always portends an imminent threat of terrorism, conventional "expert" analysis further alleges that terrorist groups in Southeast Asia are not only part of a cohesive regional network of violent Islamists, but that this network possesses global terrorist linkages to Al-Qaeda as well. Further, when terrorist organizations are conflated with non-violent activist and militant organizations, as commonly occurs, a questionable picture of a vast and unified terrorist network emerges.

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This depiction of Southeast Asian Islamism suggests that violent manifestations of political Islam with linkages to Al-Qaeda lurk ominously around every corner (Collier 2006; Hamilton-Hart 2005; Jackson 2005). After reading works by scholars like Gunaratna or Abuza, one could be forgiven for assuming that the region is a dangerous and violent hotbed of militant Islamist fervour, where the threat of terrorism is ever-growing and always imminent.

Gunaratna (2003) claims that Al-Qaeda, through "physical and intellectual contact" with Islamist groups in Southeast Asia, has "created a mission and a vision for the Islamists to create a caliphate comprising Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia and Mindanao" (145). In order to convincingly illustrate this dangerous state of affairs, he deftly catalogues the actual violent acts committed by regional Islamist groups[44] alongside a litany of allegedly planned but unsuccessful large-scale attacks[45], as well as the presumption that future attacks against various sundry "Western" targets are to be expected (146-153). Gunaratna's "threat trajectory" analysis of what he calls a network of "Al-Qaeda's associate groups in Southeast Asia" (147) reads more like a simple index of who went where; who spoke to whom; who went to the same madrasah/training camp/mosque in Afghanistan in the 1980s; who lived in the same country at the same time; and so on, rather than actually being based on compelling evidence of a cohesively organized and purposeful regional network of terror. This sort of

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[44]   Gunaratna mentions the 2002 Bali and Marriott bombings; the 1994 bombing of a Philippine Airlines flight to Tokyo, which killed one and injured 11 passengers; as well as a number of church bombings, kidnappings and regional violence in Indonesia and elsewhere.
[45]   Gunaratna alleges that various terrorist groups had been drafting plans to assassinate Pope John Paul II and President Bill Clinton during their visits to the region; as well as plans to execute a simultaneous bombing of 11 airliners in the Asia Pacific in 1995. Note that all three of these plans were alleged to have happened well before 9/11.

analysis is an example of Sidel's, Hart's, and Wright-Neville's shared observation that descriptions of Islamist groups are too often presented as explanations for their actions, with little demonstrated "understanding of the complex inter-play of cultural, economic, political and social forces that lay behind it" (Wright-Neville 2004, 29).

A more careful and more critical examination of the trends among active terrorist groups in Southeast Asia reveals that linkages with Al-Qaeda's international terror network, as they are understood in conventional "expert" discourses, are tenuous at best. There is a sizeable body of academic work that shows how these groups were never as cohesive, as unified, as ideologically homogenous, or as well-organized as they are often portrayed in the alarmist analyses of "experts" like Abuza or Gunaratna (see Beeson 2007b; Collier 2006; Gershman 2002; Hamilton-Hart 2005; Jackson 2005; Sidel 2008; Wright-Neville 2004). Take, for example, the status of JI, whose members were responsible for the 2002 terrorist attacks in Bali, the Jakarta Marriott bombing, and the Jakarta Australian Embassy bombing. As destructive as these attacks were, their execution does not actually provide *de facto* support for the common hypothesis that JI *must* be functioning as Al-Qaeda's operatives in Southeast Asia.

Evidence actually points to the fact that these attacks, though conducted by individuals and groups claiming JI affiliations, were not in fact carried out by anyone operating within the larger JI hierarchy, nor were these attacks executed in the well-coordinated and organized fashion that might be expected from an Al-Qaeda operation. Instead, the JI itself "… is deeply divided over such operations, which are the initiative of a few ultra-militants drawing on diverse personal networks, not a cohesive corporate

entity" (Collier 2006, 28). Sidel (2008) further makes the salient observation that if the conventional expert (mis)characterization of terrorist threats in Southeast Asia was even close to accurate, we would have seen (and would continue to see) far more terrorist attacks and violence than we actually do.

The pervasive "expert" tendency to heavily exaggerate or misrepresent the degree to which regional linkages to Al-Qaeda exist, contributes greatly to the hegemonic security narrative of fear in WOT discourses. A sense of urgency and imminent threat is largely created, not by terrorism itself per se, but by the repetitive claims that Southeast Asian terrorist activity is increasing in strength and fervour. That Southeast Asian terror is no longer confined to local groups with localized grievances and localized goals, but has instead acquired an international and more threatening dimension via a web of highly organized linkages with Al-Qaeda itself (Hamilton-Hart 2005, 305).

As Michael Dillon (2007) asserts, common sense regarding global terrorism stresses "the very certainty of its radical uncertainty" (9). Indeed, through the security practices of states vis-à-vis the WOT, both material and discursive, we are persistently reminded that "we do not know when terrorists may strike, we do not know how they will strike, and we do not know with what terrifying effect…we only know for sure that they will strike" (9). This is key to understanding an observable move in security practices instantiated by the WOT- where a "toxic combination of [geopolitics and biopolitics]" (10) means that there is a need to govern and fear the "emergent lives [that] are capable of moving out of phase with themselves and becoming other than they were," (14). This is when

> … it is not what a body is that makes it biopolitically a threat, then, but what a body *might potentially become*. Pluripotent, we simply do not know, because we have not yet seen an end, to what body of any description- individual, collective, cellular or machinic- might become. Hence the hypersecurity of *becoming-dangerous*. (Dillon 2007, 24. Emphasis added)

Accordingly, we can see that there exists a "discursive power of consecutive 'what if?' statements," that have the effect of equating potential threats with imminent ones (Loeppky 2005, 91).

Importantly, it can be politically useful, both for governments and by groups and individuals who are prepared to use terrorist tactics, to claim stronger linkages to *Al-Qaeda* than actually do exist. In attributing global importance and scope to localized and disorganized terrorist groups and individuals, the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT actually grants them more currency in their ability to invoke fear, due to the perceived imminent likelihood of these bodies "becoming-dangerous." This is despite the fact that the basic concerns and tactics of Islamist groups in Southeast Asia, both violent and non, did not necessarily undergo any substantive change following the terrorist attacks against the United States of September 11th 2001 and the ensuing global WOT.

Expert Claim #3:
Terrorism in Southeast Asia is best understood as irrational and/or sick behaviour rather than political behaviour

The "expert" discourses on terrorism tend to portray the phenomenon of terrorism primarily in pathological terms, disconnected from historical or political context. The emphasis then, is placed on the perceived irrational nature of terrorism as "a mental

disease propagated by demonic preachers" (Hamilton-Hart, 2005, 317). In keeping with

this, the language of the WOT discourse is deployed to construct the identities of

Americans and the terrorists in stark opposition to one another where

> …the terrorists- 'enemy aliens'- were created as evildoers, savages and
> barbarians, cruel and inhuman, while Americans were constructed as
> innocent, decent, kind, loving, peaceful, united and heroic. The function of
> this language is to establish clear boundary markers between 'them' and
> 'us'- between citizens and aliens, foreign and domestic, inside and
> outside… it functions to demonise and dehumanise the enemy to such an
> extent that any counter-violence towards them appears acceptable and
> proportionate. (Jackson 2005, 5).

Hence, pathologizing terrorism serves the dual purpose of stripping the enemy of their

humanity, which in the process reinforces "our" humanity, as well as avoiding any

serious comprehension of the political, social and historical claims of radicalized groups.

This is because threat is often characterized as alien and pathological and the use

of medical "contagion" discourse imbues these threats with an agency that is

disconnected from its root causes (Campbell 1999). We also see in the governing of

terror, the "widespread medicalization of security discourse and practices from

asymptomatically ill beings and preventative medicine to asymptomatically dangerous

beings and preventative war" (Dillon 2007, 26). Such characterizations suggest that the

"prevention" of threat requires that (potential) danger is something that needs to be

contained, quarantined and exterminated, rather than somehow engaged with in the

present. And they further reinforce the contingency of identity on difference- the need to

resort to extreme forms of alterity to articulate and legitimize one's own identity

(Connolly 1991), and presumably one's own pursuit of security. Such depictions of

terrorism create blind spots in the analytical literature and in the proposed solutions or

responses to terrorism outlined in official policies. When the primary cause of terrorism is always and only understood to be a pathologized form of radical Islam, what follows is a wilful ignorance of the politics surrounding both terrorism and responses to terrorism (Collier 2006).

Relatedly, within the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT, America tends to be portrayed as a benevolent hegemon and a victim of pathological and ideological hatred, rather than as a source of foreign policies that provoke reactions (both positive and negative) in different parts of the world, and that continue to bear consequences into the present. For example, the funding and support that the US government and military provided to mujahidin groups in Afghanistan in the 1980s has received very little attention in the relevant "expert" literature on the origins of Al-Qaeda, nor has there been much attention paid to the ways in which US security and economic policies have negatively affected civilian populations in many different parts of the world (Hamilton-Hart 2005, 314; Sidel 2008). Scholarly efforts to explore the potential *causal* effects of US foreign policy in fuelling anti-American sentiment and political disenfranchisement, both of which can contribute to the emergence of political violence, can come with the risk of being seen as anti-American or worse, as sympathizing with the terrorists (Jackson, 2005).

This absolute disavowal of the role that US foreign policy itself plays in the formation of oppositional sentiments against the US is notable in the official policy documents delineating the security strategy of the WOT. The Bush Administration's *National Security Strategy* (2006) was dismissive about any possibility that the

motivation for terrorist activity could arise in response to American hegemony or American empire. As section III of the 2006 NSS unequivocally stated, "we must be clear-eyed about what does and does not give rise to terrorism" (2006 NSS, 9). According to the NSS, among the laundry list of things that do *not* give rise to terrorism are poverty, hostility towards US policies in Iraq, and the Israel-Palestine conflict. To counter any growing misgivings that the WOT itself may be a contributing factor to fomenting more conflict, the NSS was again, unequivocal:

> … terrorism is not simply a response to our efforts to prevent terror attacks. The al-Qaida [*sic*] network targeted the United States long before the United States targeted al-Qaida. Indeed, the terrorists are emboldened more by perceptions of weakness than by demonstrations of resolve. Terrorists lure recruits by telling them that we are decadent and easily intimidated and will retreat if attacked… (2006 NSS, 10)

Among the things that *do* cause terrorism and fuel the resolve of terrorists, according to the NSS are: a lack of democracy; "blaming others for problems"; "keeping old wounds fresh and raw"; and of course, religious ideologies that justify murder (2006 NSS).

In other words, all causes of terrorism and explanations for terrorism are understood to be exogenous to the US and to US foreign policies. Along with this "common sense" about terrorism and Islam, comes the fact that deeper and more meaningful understandings of the historical/political complaints that inform terrorism become bracketed out and excluded from the security narrative. In place of these deeper engagements with the politics of terror, the presiding force informing the security practices of the WOT is, quite simply, fear of the contingent threat posed by life. Hence, we can observe that "the more effort that is put into governing terror, the more terror comes to govern the governors" (Dillon 2007, 8).

Conclusion: "Here be Monsters!"

This chapter looked at the construction of threat in post-9/11 Southeast Asian security politics, and particularly the perceived threat of terrorism posed by political Islam in the region. In the case of Southeast Asia, it can be observed that despite a lack of any *substantive* change in the geopolitical dynamics of the region immediately after 9/11, the WOT nevertheless brought with it an important discursive shift in US relations with the region. Notable about this discursive shift, is that the new narratives of the WOT shaped and constructed conceptualizations of threat in ways that elevated the perceived threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia to a status incommensurate with its actual risks. This occurred due to a combination of "common sense" perspectives on terrorism encouraged by "expert" discourses as framed by the narratives of the WOT, and a more general tendency to identify the unknown (Dillon's emergent/contingent) as that which must be feared.

With this in mind, in the context of the WOT, this chapter contested three commonly held "expert" assumptions regarding terrorism in the region that emerged out of the post-9/11 security narrative and related "expert" discourses on Southeast Asian terrorism. First, I demonstrated that not all forms of political Islam necessarily represent an imminent threat of terrorism. In fact, very few forms of political Islam in Southeast Asia show any indication of supporting or deploying terrorist tactics as part of their assorted political agendas. The tendency to conflate all forms of political Islam with fanatical terrorism, paints a falsely homogenous and ominous picture of what is actually a

very complex and rich terrain of religion and politics in Southeast Asia- much of which has nothing to do with terrorism.

Second, I showed that we really do not see an emerging regional radical "Islamist" identity in the region, nor is there any real indication that Islamist groups in Southeast Asia possess any robust linkages with Al-Qaeda. What is presented as "evidence" of Southeast Asia's Islamist linkages to the global Al-Qaeda terror network, is in fact a patchwork of facts and details that at best indicate that there are some overlapping interests here and there. Third, I put into question the oft-made claim that terrorist violence by non-state actors in the region is best understood as fundamentally irrational rather than political behaviour, and can somehow be responded to in isolation from the social and political contexts of history. Rather, the tendency to medicalize and pathologize terrorism is part of a biopolitical security move that removes the rational agency from political terrorism and in doing so, allows for a reading of terrorism where the "generative principle" of the formation of security is contingency and fear (Dillon 2007, 9). Governing terror then, becomes an effort to govern the unknown, where the unknown is always dangerous and its danger is always imminent.

Which brings me to the tongue-in-cheek title of this concluding section: "Here Be Monsters." On early European cartographic records of charted and explored territory dating from the mediaeval period, it was not uncommon to see depictions of dragons and sea serpents on the unknown areas and edges of the known world. This "unknown" terrain was, as a matter of course, marked with danger. In the popular imagination, the term *Here Be Monsters* or *Here Be Dragons* is often attributed to these early maps, to

connote a region of land or sea that has yet been uncharted, remains unknown, or is reputed through folklore or explorer travelogue to be home to all manner of dangerous beasts.

In fact, while illustrated depictions of various monsters and serpents have been observed on many different mediaeval maps, along with inscriptions that specifically reference the presence of scorpions, lions, hippos, elephants and the like (George 1969, Allen and Griffiths 1979) - there is only one known cartographic artefact where the actual Latin phrase *Hc Svnt Dracones* has been inscribed.[46] This inscription can be found on the valuable Hunt-Lenox Globe, which now finds its home in the New York Library as part of its collections of rare artefacts. Of unknown origin, the Hunt-Lenox Globe was purchased in France in the 1800s and is widely believed to date back to the early 1500s (da Costa 1879). The Hunt-Lenox Globe includes illustrations of serpents, large whale-like creatures, and even an image of a drowning man and capsized ship, all of which are depicted as hazards of the ocean. Most intriguing is the aforementioned phrase *Hc Svnt Dracones*, a small inscription on an area of the map that is marked, appropriately enough for our purposes, as the Eastern coast of Asia or what may possibly be the Indonesian island of Sumatra (da Costa 1879).

The Latin phrase *Hc Svnt Dracones* is often translated to mean "Here Be Dragons" and may refer to the Komodo lizards of Indonesia. But in fact, the phrase may actually refer to Marco Polo's account of a supposed race of men called the "Dagroians" of the Kingdom of "Dagroian" and according to Polo's travelogues "were a people who

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[46] http://www.geog.ucsb.edu/events/department-news/891/inhuman-geography-here-there-be-dragons/

once charged against the Irish, feasted upon the dead and picked their bones" (da Costa 1879, 536). Similarly, The Borgia Map (ca 1430) has a serpent figure in Asia with an inscription that reads "*Hic etiam homines magna cornua habentes longitudine quatuor pedum, et sunt etiam serpentes tante magnitudinis, ut unum bovem comedant integrum*" ("Here also are enormous men having horns four feet long, and there are serpents of such magnitude that they can eat an ox whole").[47]

What is so fascinating about these depictions of the unknown- both as sensationalistic travelogue and as unexplored, uncharted territory where there may be "monsters" lurking- is that the "unknown" is always represented as that which must be feared.[48] The unknown, by virtue of being unknown and especially as a racialized and exotic unknown, always already holds the potential of danger. And in order to govern (secure) this danger (terror), the "unknown" must become known. And this is where the powerful role of the "experts" comes in to play.

As Dillon (2007) asserts, "you cannot secure anything unless you know what it is… integral to the problematizations of security are the ways in which people, territory, and things are transformed into epistemic objects" (12). The identification of Southeast Asia as the "second front" in the WOT, is another incarnation of these sorts of Dark Continent discourses, where a vast territory and its people are viewed as the contingent, emergent threat, and are hence transformed into epistemic objects by the experts that seek to govern their potentiality for danger. But these epistemic objects, and the shape that

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[47] http://cartographic-images.net/Cartographic_Images/237_The_Borgia_World_Map.html
[48] Indeed, Susan Strange's (1982) well known piece "*Cave! Hic Dragones: A Critique of Regime Analysis*" comes to mind with this phrase. Notably, it was so called because the article was meant to warn readers of the unknown "dragons" that we must "watch out for" (479) which are lurking in the study of regimes.

they take in our imaginations, *come out of* problematizations of security and not the other way around. And this is precisely why the "expert" discourses that come to "know" these epistemic objects must be open to interrogation since they are part of a wider hegemonic security narrative that inscribes its interpretations onto the bodies of the subaltern.

US WOT policy in Southeast Asia- informed by "expert" opinions that serve to reinforce negative presuppositions about the connections between Islam and terrorism- fundamentally misconstrued the wide variety of "Islamist" movements in the region, the majority of which do not espouse violence as part of their agendas (Hamilton-Hart 2005; Hugh 2003; Leheny 2005; Gershman 2002; Beeson 2007b). Furthermore, there are good arguments for why the threat posed by radicalized Islam in Southeast Asia is not nearly as great as it is often portrayed. Notably, there is no indication that any form of Islamic terrorism in Southeast Asia is state-sponsored, and the extreme diversity of Muslims in the region works against the establishment of a fundamentalist hegemony by any one group (Gershman 2002, 62). The fact that immediately after 9/11 "intensifying US involvement in Southeast Asia reflect[ed] a somewhat hysterical tone … about the strength and scope of the terrorist threat there" (Gershman 2002, 61) contributed to an obfuscation of a variety of social and political issues that local populations were grappling with, sometimes in opposition to their own governments.

Written in 2002, a widely read *Far Eastern Economic Review* article adroitly pointed out the ironies of a WOT discourse that was simultaneously preaching freedom while supporting fundamentally anti-democratic practices:

> …amid media reports that [the] *Al-Qaeda* network is deeply entrenched in Southeast Asia, the US has deployed troops in the Philippines, praised Singapore and Malaysia for jailing suspects without trial and is pushing Indonesia to follow suit… but many people are now saying that US efforts to battle global terrorism are in danger of doing as much harm as good… driven in part by its own political considerations, the US has plunged into domestic politics in a way that threatens to make complex issues even messier and harder to solve… (*FEER*, April 18 2002)

As Leheny (2005) points out, "There is little evidence that these fundamentalist movements have succeeded in socially regionalizing Muslim Southeast Asia…. But through unintentional action or simple mishap, the US government and other states might [have succeeded] where Al-Qaeda itself has not- in encouraging the creation of an Islamist region" (252). Heavy government crackdowns can have a poignant mobilizing or uniting effect, and if the US military is seen to be complicit in any government's confrontation with radical groups in the region, this could one day be a rallying point for the Islamist leaders that *are* interested in regionalizing or globalizing their linkages and grievances. (Leheny 2005).

This type of cycle, where marginalized and suppressed politics become radicalized vis-à-vis undemocratic acts of oppression, has been witnessed on countless occasions in the authoritarian countries of the Middle East which was, after all, the "first front" in the WOT and is now the site of the "Arab Spring." Indeed, stirrings of an "Asian Spring" have begun to emerge (Kassim 2012). The "expert" discourses that guided US foreign policy after the attacks of 9/11, and that still find currency with some American and Southeast Asian policy makers, appear blinkered to this simple historical lesson.

Chapter V
A critical reading of Southeast Asian responses to the War on Terror:
Gender, (national) identities, and constructions of (in)security

After 9/11 US security and military relations with East and Southeast Asia shifted in crucial ways in response to the perceived escalation of terrorist threats in the region as framed by the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT. Notably, after 9/11 there was an uptick in regional US military presence and increased security collaboration with key regional state actors, along with a discursive re-framing of US relations in Asia more generally. These developments were heavily influenced by the Bush administration's pre-occupation with terrorism, and they pushed other important political and economic interests down the priority list.

While the previous chapter interrogated some of the common claims made by the "experts" on terrorism and security in Southeast Asia, and looked at how those claims were intrinsic to the WOT security discourse, this chapter looks at some of the consequences that this WOT discourse has had *for and on* the region. In terms of the relevance of a weak ontology approach to this analysis, "seeing" these effects requires the use of an immanent critical security critique. Broadly speaking, this post-structuralist critical lens is what allows us to see that the state itself[49] can be a source of and site of insecurity for groups and individuals. This approach also provokes us to ask questions about the construction of identity and the importance of gender. And in terms of the "practical application" of this approach, it is weak ontologizing that allows us to engage

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[49]   Importantly, the "state" refers both to the US government as well as local regional governments in Southeast Asia.

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with this particular and contingent set of circumstances, these distinctive forms of state, and these distinctive security logics without essentializing any of them.

First, this chapter examines the impacts of a renewed military presence in Southeast Asia after 9/11, and particularly in the Philippines. The WOT brought with it a reversal of what had heretofore been a growing trend of the *withdrawal* of US military interests from the region. As a result, the WOT has re-entrenched the gendered insecurities experienced by populations living around US military bases. It has also reignited complex debates and questions around national sovereignties and identities as the US military presence triggers a variety of post-colonial anxieties. The central argument here is that the positive effects arising from the withdrawal of US military interests from Southeast Asia were reversed vis-à-vis the WOT. As such, local populations must now grapple with the intensification of long standing insecurities that they had heretofore been on the road to overcoming.

Next, this chapter looks at rising anti-American sentiment resulting from the WOT, which increases the chances that terrorist violence aimed at "Western" targets will occur. Relatedly, the second section also demonstrates how the WOT security narrative became a convenient discourse under which local governments could clamp down on political opposition or expressions of democracy that challenge the status quo. In other words, this chapter is concerned with the ways in which local insecurities are amplified under WOT policies that trigger more US military presence in the region and that provide a discourse with which local regimes can justify repressing local populations.

I. The WOT and changing US- Southeast Asian military relations:
Gendered insecurities and constructions of (national) sovereignty

As explained in Chapter III, the "hub and spokes" model of US regional security policy remained largely in place after 9/11. This meant that there was a continued political commitment to a model of regional stability based on state-to-state bilateral security arrangements between the US and regional state actors. This was true from the American perspective, as well as from the perspective of regional state actors who continued to "look to Washington to play a stabilizing role in regional security" (Capie 2004, 241). From a realist, state-centric perspective, this meant that nothing much appeared to have changed in the larger East Asian regional security architecture after 9/11. However, important changes were in fact occurring, most notably at the bilateral level in the area of US military relations with key Southeast Asian states identified as the "second front" in the WOT- the Philippines in particular- and to a lesser degree, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Under the former Clinton administration, it could be observed that the force structure of US military defence strategy had already shifted away from Cold War manifestations towards more of an emphasis on "lightly armed rapid reaction forces and a reappraisal of the world wide system of US bases" (Camroux and Ofken 2004, 166). This was in keeping with the so called Revolution in Military Affairs or RMA, and the attention paid to the emergence of "new threats" in the international system such as sub-state warfare and terrorism. Under Bush in turn, East Asia saw a "gradual repositioning of forces," with no major new base development but a definite increase in "virtual bases"

through joint military activity (Camroux and Ofken 2004, 166), and the provision of targeted military aid seen to benefit efforts to combat terrorism in the region.

While the election of the Bush administration ushered in an era of US foreign policy that tended more generally to use "militarization as [its] preponderant policy tool" (Pempel 2008a, 557), it was the perceived threat of terrorism that ultimately ushered in a notable increase in American military presence in Southeast Asia after 9/11. Importantly, the events of September 11th 2011 did not suddenly introduce the threat of terrorism into Southeast Asia, and Washington's newfound interest in terrorism in the region had been preceded by long held local concerns. Malaysia (then Malaya) and Singapore have both had a lengthy history with terrorism, dating as far back as the 1940s during the Malayan Emergency (1946-1960), where British Commonwealth forces and local law enforcement engaged in counter-insurgency against the guerrilla tactics of the Malayan National Liberation Army (the MNLA- which was the militant wing of the Malayan Communist Party). Malaya and Singapore had also faced low intensity warfare and terror tactics during the *Konfrontasi* with Indonesia in the 1960s. Singaporean civilians were the victims of terrorism in 1974, when Japan's Red Army hijacked a passenger ferry (Tan 2003, 222). Looking even further back, what is now the Philippines has seen violent unrest and independence movements amongst the Muslim populations in the Southern regions of the archipelago since the Spanish occupation in the 1500s (Rogers 2004). Central governing authorities in Thailand and Indonesia have also faced confrontations with various secessionist movements, many of whom have used guerrilla and terrorist tactics at different points in history and some of which continue to do so into the present.

Historically then, political violence and terrorism in Southeast Asia has been perpetrated for a variety of different aims and goals, under a variety of different historical contexts, and by a variety of different groups. This context of a long and varied history of regional terrorism is important because it provides a reference point for any understanding of how so-called "Islamist" terrorism fits into the regional security picture after 9/11. More importantly, it allows us to better appreciate how the problem of terrorism in Southeast Asia has been re-framed and prioritized in particularistic ways in US relations with regional governments. As James Cotton (2003) points out "most narratives of Southeast Asia's place in the WOT *begin* with the arrests of individuals in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines suspected of links with Al-Qaeda" (148, Emphasis added). There are varying accounts, but it is known that in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, there were a number of confirmed arrests and detentions by local authorities in Southeast Asia of suspected terrorists who were alleged to have links to Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. These included 25 alleged members of *Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia* (KMM) in Malaysia; 15 alleged members of *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) in Singapore[50]; several Arab nationals alleged to be a terrorist sleeper cell in the Philippines; 25 foreign nationals under suspicion of terrorism in Thailand; and in September of 2002, the further arrests of 19 suspected members of JI in Singapore.

Indeed, the conventional security focus tends to be on these specific instances and groups, and conventional terrorism experts such as those reviewed in Chapter IV tend to speak of terrorism in the region solely in terms of a post-9/11 WOT context and in terms

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[50] It is worth noting that the official White Paper produced by the Singaporean government detailing the evidence against the JI 15 (and their transnational linkages) has been widely used by conventional terrorist experts as a source of information grounding subsequent analyses of terrorism in the region.

of threats to American and Western interests from "Islamists." To the extent that pre-9/11 terrorist activity is considered in analysis (as in the case of the arrests in June 2001 of 25 alleged members of KMM in Malaysia), it tends to serve the teleological purpose of "proving" that Southeast Asian Islamists would necessarily become part of a wider Al-Qaeda network and agenda (see Gunaratna 2003; Abuza 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2005). Hence, there is forgetfulness and/or ignorance of the uniquely situated circumstances of the various non-state groups that espouse violence in the region.[51]

At the same time, the security narrative of the WOT has contributed to a general re-framing of the various state responses to terrorism in Southeast Asia, and of bilateral security and military relations between local governments and the US. Before 9/11, terrorism in the region was largely viewed as a crime rather than an act of war, requiring a law-enforcement response rather than a military one (Rogers 2004, 16). Further, local governments and elites were routinely chided by Washington for their use of anti-democratic practices in efforts to "counter" anti-government opposition- Islamist or otherwise. For example, then US Vice President Al Gore drew ire from the region's elites when at the 1998 APEC summit in Kuala Lumpur, he famously denounced the Malaysian government's ill treatment of former Deputy PM Anwar Ibrahim, most notably his extra-judicial detention under the draconian measures of the Internal Security Act (ISA)- the same act which has since been applauded by US officials as an effective counter-terrorism tool (Noor 2003). The 1990s also saw wide-spread criticism from the West of what has been called the "Singapore School" of soft-authoritarianism, which prioritizes

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[51]   It should be noted that an exhaustive historical account of terrorism in the region is beyond the purview of this project. Brief historical references are made as necessary, but are by no means meant to be comprehensive.

economic growth and the maintenance of domestic political order over the civil and human rights of individuals. With this in mind, it is interesting to note the changes in US-Southeast Asian military and security relations after 9/11, and in particular the boosted US military presence in the region.

But why do we care about US military presence in Southeast Asia? What can a critical security analysis reveal about the post-9/11 re-invigoration of American militarism in the region? Again, it must be emphasized that this is not meant to be a conventional security studies analysis. There is a surplus of literature out there that catalogues, summarizes and analyzes US-East Asian state-to-state security relations with the express purpose of examining the "balance of power" or the "security order" in the region. But the purpose of this dissertation is to use a *critical* security perspective to pull out the stories of (in)security that would not otherwise be commonly told in the particular context of Southeast Asia and the WOT. In the case of the increasing US military presence in Southeast Asia, a focus on the Philippines is warranted in the respect.

The US-Philippines military relationship has undergone a remarkable renaissance as a result of the post-9/11 moment. It is a relationship that has continued to strengthen into the present, bringing with it stories of security that relate to constructions of post-colonial national identity and sovereignty, as well as the profoundly gendered implications of militarization. As of 2012 *Operation Enduring Freedom*, the defence "stability and support" collaboration between the US armed forces and the armed forces of the Philippines, enters into its 10th year (Swain 2010). This continued and sustained collaboration is quite the accomplishment considering the fraught history between the

Philippines and its former colonizer; the substantial cooling of US-Philippine relations in the 1990s; as well as considering the fact that under the Philippine constitution there are stringent prohibitions against US military operations on Philippine soil (Capie 2004; Camroux and Ofken 2004; Rogers 2004; Swain 2010). Notably, the closure of the Clark and Subic US military bases in 1991 and 1992 respectively, and the subsequent withdrawal of American troops and American military aid from the Philippines once made a close collaboration like *Operation Enduring Freedom* seem highly unlikely.

It was significant then, that in January of 2002, the Bush administration deployed 660 US troops and personnel to the Mindanao region in the southern Philippines with the full support of the Philippine Senate (Rogers 2004). The US Special Operations Command Pacific formed this *Joint Operations Task Force-510* to assist the 4000 members of the local military in hostage rescue and counter-terrorist operations against *Abu Sayyaf*, a militant Islamist separatist group operating out of Jolo and Baslilan (Swain 2010). *Abu Sayyaf* had recently escalated its hostage taking operations and terrorist activity in the area, including the kidnapping of 21 hostages, 10 of whom were Western tourists, from a Malaysian resort on the island of Sipadan. After the initial support operation was launched, the Bush administration went on to provide over 100 million USD in military and development aid to the Philippines (Capie 2004), in contrast to the relatively paltry 1 million USD or so a year that had been directed towards the country's armed forces during the 1990s (Rogers 2004; Simbulan 2010; Swain 2010; Winter 2011).

The renewed security friendship between the US and the Philippines became well established within months after this first of many post-9/11 "joint operations task force"

exercises. These military exercises were euphemistically labelled *Balikatan* ("shoulder to shoulder") exercises, in an obvious effort to assuage local concerns around US forces re-establishing military bases and putting combat troops on the ground, both of which contravene the Philippine constitution's prohibitions against such activity (Simbulan 2010; Winter 2011). Further, the *joint* exercises, training, and the provision of military aid in combating terrorism in the Southern Philippines were all carefully framed by both the US and Philippine governments as cooperation between two allies in the WOT rather than as an American infringement against Philippine sovereignty (Swain 2012). As additional reinforcement of the renewed friendship, President Bush formally addressed the Philippine Congress on October 18th of 2003 and stated that the US and the Philippines "are bound by the strongest ties two nations can share" (Rogers 2004, 15), and declared the Philippines a "Major Non-NATO Ally" (Swain 2010, 7). This was an important signal that the Philippines had become the key Southeast Asian military ally in the WOT, and the ongoing success of *Operation Enduring Freedom* into the present indicates that the WOT was an important catalyst for this re-kindling of the bilateral military relationship.

In order to appreciate the political and historical significance of this revitalized US-Philippine security relationship, it is important to place these developments within a larger historical context. In doing so, it becomes possible to see the peculiar opportunity presented by 9/11 and the WOT, especially considering the degree to which (opposition to) American military presence in the Republic has been intimately linked to expressions of Philippine identity and sovereignty (Winter 2011). The US has long held strategic interests in maintaining a military presence in the Philippines- the Clark and Subic Bay

Naval Bases were the first and second largest overseas US military installations during their time. The Subic Bay Naval Base played a role in many notable military operation in modern US history, including the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War (Anderson 2006). The protection of shipping routes along the Pacific Rim of Asia is of great logistical benefit to US interests- both in security and trade. And the emerging traditional security challenges around China and North Korea further reinforce the need felt by Washington to secure a physical presence in the strategically favourable conditions of the Philippine islands. But US military presence in the archipelago in the late 20th Century became eroded by a growing sense in the Philippines that the presence of US military bases in the republic was an affront to Philippine sovereignty and identity, leading ultimately to the formal expulsion of the US military in the early 1990s.

Notably, American military presence in the Philippines can be traced as far back as the US capture of the islands from Spain during the Spanish-American War in 1898 (Rogers 2004). From then until the Philippines was granted independence in 1946, the archipelago remained a US colony- a period that included a bloody 5 year Philippine-American War which ended badly for the Philippine revolutionaries and entrenched deep mistrust and hostility amongst Filipinos towards their American colonizers. After Philippine independence and the end of World War II, US-Philippine military relations fell under the regulation of the *Military Bases Agreement* (MBA) of 1947 and the *Mutual Defence Agreement* (MDA) of 1951. The MBA originally granted the US a 99-year lease to establish, maintain, and operate US military bases under full American control on

Philippine soil. This lease period was shortened in 1966 with the Ramos-Rusk Agreement due to growing national sentiment that the presence of US bases was an affront to Philippine sovereignty. The re-negotiated MBA was set to expire in 1991. Leading up to its expiration, the MBA was subject to renewal negotiations between the US and the Philippines under Presidents George H. W. Bush and Corazon Aquino respectively. An initial agreement was struck to extend the lease for 10 more years, but strong opposition to the renewal led to the Philippine Senate ultimately refusing to ratify the new agreement and it was formally rejected. Following extensive damage to the Clark Air Base from the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in June of 1991 and the failure to renew the lease under the MBA, the Americans left Clark and Subic bases and the MBA was officially terminated on December 21, 1992 (Swain 2010).

This signalled a significant downturn in the US-Philippines military and security relationship, which endured throughout most of the 1990s. However, this nadir in bilateral relations was followed by a tentative rapprochement in 1998 when the very pro-American Josef Estrada signed the *Visiting Forces Agreement* (VFA). The VFA and its later conceived cousin, the *Mutual Logistics Support Agreement* (MLSA) of 2002 have proven to be controversial because they legally restored a US military presence in the Philippines, allowing for "increased military cooperation and resumption of combined military exercises" (Swain 2010, 6). The VFA in particular, is much maligned by a variety of groups ranging from right-leaning Philippine nationalists, who see the VFA as a fundamental infringement on Philippine sovereignty; to organized feminist movements who see the VFA as creating insecurity for Philippine women; and to disparate groups on

the left who voice their opposition largely in terms of resisting what they regard as US imperialism and the human rights abuses associated with US military presence in the Philippines (Simbulan 2010, Winter 2011, Lacsamana 2011).

One of the most contentious aspects of the VFA is that it allows for the US government to retain legal jurisdiction over American military personnel accused of committing crimes while in the Philippines, and further exempts American military personnel from local visa and passport regulations. These aspects of the VFA are to remain in place except in "cases of particular importance to the Philippines" (VFA Article 5, section 3(d)). However, this exception is on a case-by-case basis and can only be invoked by Philippine authorities within a brief 20-day period after a crime has been committed. On balance then, the VFA grants expansive extra-judicial authority to US military personnel while on Philippine soil, with only a few difficult to enact exceptions (Simbulan 2010; Winter 2011; Lacsamana 2011).

Further, there are good arguments to be made that the VFA, the MSLA and the ongoing *Balikatan* exercises operate in a contentious grey area of what is constitutionally and legally permitted by the existing laws of the Philippines. The permitted "activities" of US forces are ill-defined in the VFA, and the VFA does not specify the duration of US "activities" or the number of US military personnel allowed in the country at any one time (Simbulan 2010, 154). Indeed, the high profile protest resignation of Philippine Navy Lt. Senior Grade Gadian and her subsequent testimony before the Philippine Senate's Legislation Oversight Committee on the VFA in 2009, corroborates suspicions

that the US has been operating militarily, outside of the confines of both the Philippine

Constitution and the VFA itself (Simbulan 2010).

The Philippine Constitution (Article XVIII Section 25) expressly prohibits foreign

military bases, facilities, or foreign troops "except under a treaty duly concurred by the

Senate," which in the case of the VFA and according to the Philippine Supreme Court

must be strictly for joint military and training. Yet, in her sworn affidavit and testimony

in front of the Philippine Senate, Gadian alleged the existence of secret US facilities

operating *inside* Philippine army bases in Mindanao

> …foremost among them is Camp Navarro… [where] the US Joint Special
> Operations Task Force is based, with two permanent structures that are
> guarded by US Marines, and into which Filipino officers cannot simply
> enter or have access. This is considered a principle 'forward operating
> base' of the US forces in the Philippines, although the US government
> does not officially acknowledge its existence…(Simbulan 2010, 153)

These secret or unacknowledged "bases within bases" are significant to a critical security

analysis of US military presence in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, particularly with

regards to the powerful constitutive role that security narratives play in the post-colonial

politics of sovereignty and identity.

Such zones of indeterminate jurisdiction, geographic or discursive, are liminal

spaces that can be interpreted as part of what Anna Stoler (2006) calls the "imperial

formations" of the United States (128); that are the

> … macropolitics whose technologies of rule thrive on the productions of
> exceptions and their uneven and changing proliferation. Critical features of
> imperial formations include harboring and building on territorial
> ambiguity, redefining legal categories of belonging and quasi-membership,
> and shifting the geographic and demographic zone of partially suspended
> rights… imperial formations give rise both to zones of exclusion and new
> sites of- and social groups with- privileged exemption. (Stoler 2006, 128)

As such, it is arguable that the VFA along with the "unofficial" bases of the US military in the Philippines are aspects of these "imperial formations," where zones of territorial and procedural ambiguities have created both legal and geographic spaces for the "privileged exemption" of the US soldier.

The implications of this were brought into sharp relief by the highly publicized 2005 alleged sexual assault of a local woman by US marines near the Subic naval base. In November of 2005, Suzette Nicolas, a young woman with a business and accounting background who ran a family canteen in Zamboanga, reported to the police that she had been gang-raped by a group of US Marines in Olongapo City near Subic Bay. Nicolas, or "Nicole" as she was publicly known during the trial, had been out drinking with a female cousin along with several US servicemen. The soldiers were identified as members of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Force who were stationed in Okinawa. The four soldiers in question had just completed *Balikatan* exercises with the Philippine military and were on leave at the time of the alleged rape (Lacsamana 2011, 206). The subsequent events are subject to varying accounts[52] but the local courts ultimately decided that there was

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[52] It is not necessary to delve deeply into the details of the case here, but it is worth noting that the known and corroborated events are as follows: "The alleged gang rape… took place close to midnight on the evening of 1 November 2005. Nicole had travelled to Olongapo City from Zamboanga with US Marine Christopher Mills. According to testimony by various parties at the trial, on the evening of the alleged rape, Nicole, Mills and Franco ate a small amount of pizza at around 6:30 pm and then went to the Neptune Club with a friend of Mills identified in court as Garcia, where Mills proceeded to order a series of high-alcohol cocktails for himself and the women. Nicole, who quickly became very drunk, was spotted during the course of the evening dancing with Smith. Later in the evening, the members of the party were separated; Franco and Mills searched for Nicole in the club and surrounding streets to no avail. She turned up later that night at Alava Pier. Several witnesses claimed to have seen a Kia Starex van pull up at the pier: two Caucasians emerged from the van, carrying Nicole by her hands and feet, 'as if she were a pig', commented one witness (a phrase that would later be picked up in the literature produced by Task Force Subic Rape). Nicole was dressed only in her shirt and underwear. A third Caucasian picked up a pair of jeans and threw them towards Nicole. It was later reported that Nicole had a used condom stuck to her underpants. The witnesses called the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority to report a 'possible rape.'" (Winter 2011, 385)

enough evidence to prosecute the US servicemen under Philippine rape laws. The case of the *People of the Philippines vs. Chad Carpenter, Dominic Duplantis, Keith Silkwood, and Daniel Smith*, or the Subic Bay Rape Case, as it came to be known, became a flashpoint for the ongoing debate on the legitimacy of the VFA and the wide-reaching implications of the US presence in the Philippines. The case was significant because it highlighted both the ill effects of an increased US military presence on local communities (especially women), as well as the "privileged exemption" that the VFA automatically grants to US soldiers that are accused of crimes while in the Philippines.

With respect to the debate on Philippine sovereignty and the constitutional legitimacy of the terms of the VFA, the Subic Bay Rape Case highlighted one of the most contentious aspects of the VFA- specifically the provisions which allow for US servicemen to remain under US jurisdiction except in "cases of particular importance to the Philippines." In fact, after the initial arrests, the US argued that the accused marines should be held in custody at the US embassy as per the default provisions of the VFA. Further, "the VFA, combined with a rumoured offer of a US$80 million aid package, put the Philippine government under considerable pressure not to prosecute" (Winter 2011, 371). Nevertheless, in a rush to stay within the limited time frame required to maintain custody of the US soldiers, in June of 2006, the four Marines were brought to trial in a Makati Regional Trial Court. This initiated a long and contentious trial and invited the attention of feminist activists including the well-known activist lawyer, Evalyn Ursua. Ursua was one of the drafters of the Philippine's 1997 rape law, and she came to represent Nicolas in the case (Winter 2011, Lacsamana 2011). Three of the accused

servicemen were eventually acquitted, but the charges stuck to Lance Corporal Daniel

Smith, who was convicted of rape on December 4th, 2006 and sentenced to life in prison.

Initially hailed as a victory for both Philippine sovereignty and women's rights, the

conviction of Daniel Smith was the first time a US soldier had been successfully

prosecuted and sentenced for the rape of a local woman.

Ultimately however, contrary to both Philippine law and the ruling of the

Philippine courts, Smith was quietly removed from Makati prison over the Christmas

break and handed over to the US embassy where he then lived in US custody for two

years, preparing for his appeal. As a further blow to the court ruling, Nicolas herself

issued a sworn affidavit in March 2009 in which she inexplicably (and rather

incoherently) recanted portions of her testimony. As part of her statement, Nicolas wrote

that her "conscience" was bothering her, "realizing that I may have in fact been so

friendly and intimate with Daniel Smith at the Neptune Club, that he was led to believe

that I was amenable to having sex or that we simply just got carried away… I would

rather risk public outrage than do nothing to help the court in ensuring that justice is

served" (Aurelio and Bordadora, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, March 18th 2009). A month

later, a division of the Philippine Court of Appeals (CA) made up of Associate Justices

Remedios Fernando (chair), Myrna Dimaranan-Vidal and Monina Arevalo-Zenarosa

acquitted Smith of all charges. They deny that their acquittal had anything to do with

Nicolas' affidavit and was instead the result of a "careful and judicious perusal of the

evidence on record," and stated

> … What we see was the unfolding of a spontaneous, unplanned romantic episode with both parties carried away by their passions and stirred up by the urgency of the moment caused probably by alcoholic drinks they took… Suddenly the moment of parting came and the Marines had to rush to the ship. In that situation, reality dawned on Nicole what her audacity and reckless abandon, flirting with Smith and leading him on, brought upon her." (Philippine CA decision quoted in Pazzibugan, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 04/24/2009)

It was reported that Suzette Nicolas left the Philippines shortly after the CA's decision to acquit Smith, and is widely believed to have immigrated to the United States with her American boyfriend, whom she met after the trial (Punongbayan, *Philippine Star* 03/19/2009).

Not surprisingly, Nicolas' amendments to her original testimony, which many have interpreted as a recantation, and the decision by the Philippine CA to acquit Smith of all charges only served to re-ignite the debate surrounding the sovereignty of the Philippines in relation to its former colonizer, the United States. Why, many have since asked, did the Philippine government hand Smith over to the Americans after he had been tried and convicted of a crime under Philippine law? Why did Nicolas suddenly cast doubt onto her own testimony- which as many have pointed out- occurred within days of the first official private conversation between President Obama and President Arroyo? The Subic Rape Case and "Nicole" herself had unwittingly become a powerful avatar of Philipine national identity and feminist solidarity, and became

> … a symbol of the 'collateral damage' brought about by the VFA… the direct result of manipulation of both her and the judicial process by powerful US interests, supported by the corrupt Philippine state. The Subic rape case, the VFA and continued Philippine dependence on the United States have become irrevocably linked in a large section of public opinion. The more than one-century-long saga of militarization, prostitution, violence against women and US interference with Philippine sovereignty

> has thus been dramatically brought once again to the fore… It is a messy and depressing story, in which poor Philippine women, as usual, have fared the worst. (Winter 2011, 384-85)

Interestingly, the symbolic significance of "Nicole" has endured despite the "recantation" by Nicolas and despite Smith's acquittal by the CA.

Nicolas continues to receive the public support of her former lawyer Ursua, who was fired shortly before the "recantation" was issued. Nicolas also continues to receive the support of the broad-based coalition of 17 feminist organizations united under the banner TFSR (Task Force Subic Rape); the support of the Communist Party of the Philippines; and the support of nationalists within the Philippine senate who continue to lobby against the VFA. To Nicolas' supporters, her "recantation" was anything but. Rather, it was further evidence that she had been victimized and subjected to political pressures beyond her control- and perhaps had even been the subject of a cover-up or conspiracy (Goodenough *CNS.com* 03/19/2009). As a spokesperson from GABRIELA, a prominent feminist group in the Philippines, has stated, the widespread belief among Nicolas' supporters is that her "sudden change of heart is unfortunate," but that they "were not angry with her" for events "that made her a victim of three aspects: rape, the government, and the VFA" (Lacsamana 2011, 211).

For many of her supporters, what actually transpired between Smith and Nicolas that night in November of 2005 had become less important than the fact that Philippine national identity and sovereignty had now been ascribed onto the body of "Nicole." As such, defending her honour, staking out her rights, and seeking justice for her had become synonymous with the project of securing the sovereignty of the Philippines in the face of

the "imperial formations" of the United States after 9/11. Consequently, the fact that the US servicemen Nicolas had originally accused of rape were granted extra-judicial treatment through the VFA and ultimately escaped prosecution altogether, can be read as the inevitable "privileged exemption" that is ensured via the various "imperial formations" of the United States.

And of course, the Subic Bay Rape Case was not just about sovereignty and nationalism. It also revealed the profoundly gendered effects of the US military presence as well. As mentioned, Nicole and her case had become a symbol for a broadly conceived feminist-led activist coalition who have long argued that the presence of US soldiers in the Philippines has led to widespread insecurity for women (Winter 2011, also see http://subicrapecase.wordpress.com/about/). It is important to note that the Subic Rape Case was not the first time the sexual abuse or assault of Filipina women around US military bases has been documented. As Lacsamana (2011) points out, incidences of sexual assault perpetrated by U.S. servicemen against Filipino women and girls is not uncommon around US military bases. She sites several examples, including a US soldier who was allowed to leave the country despite his involvement in the child trafficking of twelve young girls in a prostitution ring in Olongapo; a US soldier who escaped prosecution for the rape and murder of twelve year old Rosario Baluyot; and "a much larger pattern of militarized violence, comprising approximately 2,000 reported cases in the post World War II period, that never reached Philippine courts" (Lacsamana 2011, 205).

In critical feminist scholarship, it is not novel to link the exploitation and insecurity of women to the existence of foreign military bases or to the workings of international relations more generally. As Enloe (1992, 2000) and others (see Peterson 1992; Moon 1997; Sturdevant and Stotlfutz 1993; Santos et al. 1998; Santos 1992; and Sjoberg 2010 for example) have asserted, the relationship between the exploitation of women and militarization is not accidental, nor is it particularly exceptional. Rather, the security practices of the state are profoundly linked to women's insecurity and in the case of foreign military bases in particular, "they are engineered both through explicitly performed and reinforced cultures of masculinity within the military, which include the presumption that local women are exotic recreational commodities to be consumed, and through the actions or inactions of occupying forces and local states, who either fail to sanction sexualized violence against women or actively encourage it" (Winter 2011).

What happened at Subic then, is not unique. Reports of sexual assault and abuse of women and girls by servicemen are widespread in any location where a foreign military base exists, as evidenced by the experiences of women living around the Subic and Clarke, Okinawa, and South Korean US bases in East Asia (Lacsamana 2011; Magdoff et al. 2002; Enloe 2000). But, while it is not novel in *feminist* scholarship to recognize the inherent linkages between women's insecurity and militarization, these linkages tend to be ignored altogether in conventional security analyses. A critical security perspective however, reveals that when shifting security narratives (in this case, those related to the WOT) promote a heightened US military presence, we must consider

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these sorts of implications- even if they do not fit into a conventional state-focused understanding of what it means to be "secure."

The situation in the Philippines in the context of the WOT is notable because in many ways it is a microcosm for the types of ill-effects that can come along with US military presence. As mentioned earlier, prior to 9/11 there had been a gradual but definite withdrawal of US military interests in the Philippines- much of it spurred by nationalist, anti-imperialist and/or feminist sentiment among the populace concerned with the implications and effects of the US military presence on Philippine soil. The WOT itself is not unique in creating gendered insecurities, but is notable in this respect because it provided the perfect scenario for a renewed continuation of American imperial formations in Southeast Asia. And the heightened gendered insecurities produced by increased US military presence intersect with and bring forth complex questions relating to expressions of Philippine sovereignty and identity. Further, due to the special attention paid to the threat of terrorism perpetrated by Muslims in the specific context of the WOT, the increased US military involvement in counter-terror operations has also contributed to a myopic framing of security "problems" within the Philippines to the detriment of other issues.

As Swain (2010) points out, in terms of lethality, strength and coherence of purpose, Muslims in Mindanao are not actually the most dangerous insurgent group in the Philippines. Mindanao Muslim separatists

> …do not constitute a majority of the population, even in the South, nor do they constitute a single, coherent threat... the most dangerous insurgent group is the Communist Party's New People's Army (listed as a terrorist group by the US government), the descendants of the Hukbalahap

> Rebellion of the late 1940s and early 1950. [They] are located principally in central Luzon [and] they have been waging a guerrilla war with the central government since 1967, with the objective of overthrowing the existing system and replacing it with a communist state… the communists achieved their greatest following in opposition to Marcos…[but] under [Aquino and Ramos], the strength of the communist appeal declined. (Swain 2010, 11)

Here again, we can observe that 9/11 and the WOT opened up space for a reordering of security priorities and entrenchment of American imperial formations. The combination of reduced support for the communist movement and the heightened unpopularity of Muslim separatism after 9/11 meant that despite the misgivings of nationalists and feminists, Washington was able to rely on elite and popular goodwill to shore up some much needed support for its WOT in the Philippines (Leheny 2005), allowing the US to re-establish a boots-on-the-ground military presence in Southeast Asia.

The situations in Indonesia, Malaysia, and to some degree in Singapore and Thailand were more complicated but also saw marked changes in military and security relations with the US. Indonesia and Malaysia, unlike the Philippines, are principally Muslim countries, and Singapore and Thailand border Muslim countries and have close relations with them. In fact, the governments of these countries (with the exception of Singapore) have historically expressed discomfort with US military bases in the Philippines. Nevertheless, the WOT meant that the issue of US military presence in Southeast Asia came to the fore on the regional security agenda. Hence, after 9/11, the Singaporean government enthusiastically welcomed more American warships to Changi Naval Base and the Malaysian government softened its general stance on American military presence as well (Capie 2004).

As mentioned in Chapter IV, in Indonesia, several high profile terrorist attacks on Western targets (most notably the Bali bombings) lent credence to fears of terrorism in the region. As a result, the US also re-established military relations with the Indonesian government, which had previously been suspicious of US military presence in any capacity. Prior to 9/11, Washington was itself highly critical of the Indonesian government and the Indonesian Army's (TNI)[53] human rights abuses, especially with regards to the East Timor situation and sectarian violence in Aceh, and had cut-off all military ties with the country. The post 9/11 security mindset however, led to a US Congressional move to resume military aid to Indonesia under the auspices of supporting counter-terrorism (White House Press Release, Jan 6th 2001).

II. Regional responses to the WOT-
Anti-Americanisms, "national resilience," and state repression

While largely welcomed by elites in Southeast Asia, the increase in American military presence and aid to the region has generally been viewed with suspicion by Southeast Asian populations. As demonstrated in the previous section, along with US military interests come forms of insecurity experienced by local populations, notably a set of profoundly gendered insecurities as exemplified by the highly publicized Subic Bay rape case. The security politics and narratives of the WOT and US foreign policy also created a historical moment that allowed for increased state repression of marginalized political groups in the region, many of which did not and do not necessarily espouse or condone political violence. This has added to the insecurities experienced by certain

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[53]   *Tentara Negara Indonesia- Indonesian Armed Forces.*

segments of the population, as well as contributed to a notable rise in public anti-American sentiment (Pempel 2008 a, b). Such sentiment has not been confined to dissidents and separatists, but has found expression in pro-democracy movements and the general population as well.

This was largely attributable to American complicity (or at least the perception of American complicity) in human rights abuses and harsh suppression of political dissidents by local authorities. This is relevant for two reasons. The first is the fact that rising anti-American sentiment could potentially increase the chances that terrorist attacks against "Western" targets will actually occur. The second is the fact that the WOT security narrative became a convenient discourse under which local governments could clamp down on political opposition or expressions of democracy that challenge the status quo.

As Camroux and Ofken (2004) point out, in this regard Malaysia is widely thought to be a big, if not the biggest, "political winner" in US-Southeast Asian relations since 9/11. It is notable that relations between the two countries' leaders improved considerably following 9/11[54] and "much to [then] Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir's satisfaction, human rights issues, an old bone of contention between the Clinton administration and the Malaysian government, have since then ceased to be at the top of the US' foreign policy agenda" (Camroux and Ofken 2004, 170). To cooperate with the

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[54] It is worth noting that after 9/11, governments in the region, including Malaysia, continued to express anti-American sentiment and in some cases even increased their anti-American rhetoric, especially after the US invasion of Iraq. However, this sentiment was largely expressed for the benefit of local audiences and did not actually reflect the degree to which the functional relationships between regional governments and Washington were actually improving in some key respects (Capie 2004). The disconnect between the rhetoric directed at domestic audiences and the actual level of support granted to Washington in security and intelligence indicates the importance these governments place on the "internal" stability of their regimes, which is reflected in the idea of "national resilience."

counter-terrorism efforts of the Americans, the Malaysian government provided Washington with "extensive overflight rights, intelligence, and defence and law enforcement cooperation" (Capie 2004, 237) and in return, Washington indicated strong support for "terror-related" arrests by the Malaysian government under the country's controversial *Internal Security Act*, which provides for indefinite detention without trial. This is the same Act that was stridently criticized by American delegates at several past APEC meetings prior to 9/11. In 2003 alone, Malaysian authorities apprehended 48 alleged Muslim extremists who were said to be members of both *Partai Islam SeMalaysia* (PAS), which is a legal political party and part of the formal opposition, and the *Kumpulan Mujahideen Malaysia* (KMM), which is an illegal militant organization with suspected links to terrorism. PAS leaders and democracy advocates, while strange bedfellows in many respects, have together repeatedly denied any substantial connection of PAS membership to the KMM, and a wide coalition of opposition voices (including non-Islamist, pro-democracy groups) demanded that the detainees be put on trial rather than being held under the ISA, "but it [was] obvious that the government [felt] little pressure to provide a full explanation of the security threat facing the country" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 18 2002). On more than one occasion, Malaysian politicians invoked the US PATRIOT Act as justification for the legitimacy of the ISA. This is despite the fact that the ISA is also used to detain non-Muslim political "dissidents," has been around since 1960, and was actually enacted by the British colonial government during the *Malayan Emergency*.[55]

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[55] Over 10 000 people have been arrested under the ISA since its enactment. (Aliran ISA Watch, http://www.aliran.com/oldsite/monthly/2001/3e.htm)

The Thai government at the time was also implicated in several disturbing human rights abuses in their difficulties with the Muslim minority in the South. In 2004, Thai police rounded up several hundred members of the southern Muslim population after civil disturbances, which were in response to government crackdowns in the region following a string of attacks by militant insurgent groups. In a disturbing turn of events, at least 78 of the detainees died due to dehydration *en route* to Bangkok, because they had been placed in the back of non-air conditioned, unventilated trucks for several hours in the tropical heat (*Amnesty International* 2004). The incident caused an uproar among human rights groups, including in neighbouring Malaysia. Between 2004 and 2007, the secessionist insurgency of Muslim populatons in the Southern provinces of Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani resulted in the deaths of at least 2,000 people (*New Straits Times*, 14 February 2007). Unfortunately, the cycle of bombings and crackdowns only seemed to escalate. In early 2007 in particular, Thailand saw a sharp increase in secessionist terrorist bombings in Bangkok and in several areas in the South (*Reuters* 16 February, 2007). Regional analysts linked the escalation of violence by southern militants directly to the fierce crackdown on them by the Thai government.

Not only did these developments threaten the economic livelihood of a population that thrives on the tourist industry to survive, but they also strained good relations with neighbouring Malaysia. The Muslim Thais in the Southern regions possess an affinity for their Malay neighbours due to shared ancestry, religion, a high incidence of inter-marriage, and a relatively large number of dual citizens (although this is actually illegal in both countries). The Malaysian government had indicated a willingness to help with the

problem, but found itself in the delicate position of not wanting to be associated with militant Muslims in the international arena, and in particular under Washington's gaze. Furthermore, domestic opinion in Malaysia was overwhelmingly critical of the Thai authorities' crackdown on the militants, which was widely perceived as being disproportionately harsh and anti-Muslim in nature, and there was a lack of support for their government's involvement in helping the Thai authorities (*New Straits Times*, 14 February 2007).

The flip side of these sorts of repressive moves by the state apparatus against "Islamists" and anti-government opposition was the fact that in Indonesia, President Megawati felt constrained by the Islamist parties in her coalition government (Hafidz 2002, Jones 2003). She was less likely than her Southeast Asian counterparts to counter terrorism using extra-judicial tools, and demurred from engaging in harsh, anti-constitutional crackdowns on activist and militant Muslim groups in Indonesia (who, as indicated in Chapter IV, may not necessarily be prone to violence). She was widely derided by Washington and the American media for this restrained approach to counter-terrorism, and her recalcitrance was read by many uninformed observers as evidence that "moderate" forces in Indonesia were being figuratively held hostage by the ever-strengthening force of regional Islamism (Capie 2003, Desker 2002). This is not to say that terrorists were not prosecuted under the law in Indonesia. The perpetrators of the Bali and Marriott bombings were brought to justice in Indonesian courts, and very publicly so. But where once Indonesia was widely hailed by Western observers as one of the largest functioning democracies in the region (albeit a messy one), the hegemonic security

narratives of the WOT re-cast the country as a hotbed of Islamist fervour and an unchecked breeding ground for terrorism. Megawati, according to this narrative, was not simply operating within the confines of law and the constitution, but rather, her hesitance to invoke PATRIOT Act-like tools was instead portrayed as "evidence" that "Islamism" is winning the hearts and minds of Southeast Asians (Capie 2003, Desker 2002).

Conclusion: "resilience" as repression and regional notions of security

The post-9/11 period saw a marked increase in regional state repression of groups and individuals under the aegis of a newly legitimized, extra-judicial and very broad umbrella of "counter-terrorism." And Bush's WOT coalition-building in East Asia "impacted on the distance Asian countries have been able to maintain in relation to the US" (Camroux and Ofken 2004, 163). After 9/11 and under the auspices of the WOT, "…where it has felt appropriate the United States has sought to strengthen governing regimes and thus states in dealing with internal opposition" (Camroux and Ofken 2004, 164). This has meant the suppression of not only Islamist groups but of anti-government opposition more generally. As Kadir (2004) points out, the processes of contestation within Islamic movements, and between Islamic movements and governments are only "being complicated by the direct intervention of the US-led WOT in the region… this is because the WOT focuses almost exclusively on *increased state control* as the best means to eradicate potential terrorist threats" (201. Emphasis added). It is this increased state control which is of particular interest in a critical security analysis, because the WOT has legitimized the Southeast Asian penchant for "national resilience" (Emmers 2009) as

being the benchmark for security. And "national resilience" includes the need for governments to enact a wide variety of anti-democratic and extra-judicial practices in the name of security and the integrity of the state.

Interestingly, "national resilience" undergirds regional approaches to security as well, which raises thought-provoking questions about the ASEAN-way of understanding security. This leads into the issues and questions explored in the following chapter. These questions pertain to the effects that the WOT and its contingencies have had on *regional* dynamics. Did American policies towards the region under the WOT have an impact on regional identity or related notions of security? How did 9/11 and the WOT affect regional institutions as well as efforts towards further regionalization? Did the WOT security narrative affect trade and economic relations in the region? A critical security approach to these questions prioritizes the ways in which discourses and ideas play a crucial constitutive role in practices of security and the construction of identities. A critical security approach is also concerned with the ways in which the security project of the state (or region) generates various forms of insecurity for non-state actors. Chapter VI explores these questions.

Chapter VI
A critical reading of East Asian regionalism after 9/11:
Regionalism, Securitization, and the resurgence of the "strong state."

As with the previous chapter, a weak ontology critical security approach will be used to examine the ways in which the WOT, operating as a hegemonic security narrative, had critical security implications for the framing of the regional politics of trade and security in East Asia along with related patterns of regionalism. Without essentializing any particular security logic, state structure or regional institution as being immutable, this chapter first delves into the ways in which regionalism and regionalization efforts in East and South East Asia have been affected by the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT and had an impact on articulations of regional identity. Second, this chapter further examines the related "securitization" of trade and economic relations between the US and East Asian countries that was observable under the Bush Doctrine (Higgott 2005), as well as the particular type of "securitization" deployed by ASEAN in its approach to regional terrorism (Gerstl 2010). Finally, this chapter looks at how the WOT security narrative has reinforced the "ASEAN-way" of comprehensive security as the means by which "regional resilience" and "national resilience" are concepts deployed by governing elites in order to maintain *regime* security, narrowly defined in ways that engender insecurities for groups and individuals, which has been a central argument advanced by this dissertation.

I. East Asian regionalism and regionalization after 9/11: "Asians Only"?

This section examines some of the ways that the WOT as a hegemonic security narrative has affected East Asian regionalism and regionalization, particularly in the realm of ideas and pertaining to questions of regional "identity." Helge Hveem (2006) defines regionalism as "the body of ideas promoting an identified geographical or social space as the regional project" (72). Regionalism may be thought of, first, in primarily ideational terms and as a normative view of the benefits of developing a shared set of values, norms, goals and policies among the people and governments of a specific corner of the world (Söderbaum 2003; Camroux 2006; Kim 2004). Second, regionalism may be thought of in institutional terms. That is to say regionalism involves the formation of transnational institutions that allow for regular formal interactions among states in a geographic area (Pempel 2005). *Regionalism* then, is generally associated with a policy program and generally leads to both formal and informal institution building. For example, the promotion of trade liberalization has been one of the main objectives of regional agreements in recent history (O'Brien and Williams 2007).

Regionalization on the other hand, specifically refers to the processes that actually build concrete patterns of transactions and relationships within a regional (usually geographic) space (Hveem 2006, 72). Here we can say that regionalization means the process of creating linkages that lead to increased cooperation, integration, or convergence across national boundaries in a particular geographic area and that serve to "knit" the region together (Hettne and Söderbaum 2000). Of course, the two definitions- regionalism and regionalization- are related in that in order for the idea of a region to be

translated into concrete action it must be institutionalized. This process, in turn, may have a significant impact on the development of ideas about the most appropriate way in which a specific region should be advanced. In this section, we are primarily interested in how (and if) the ideational aspects of East Asian regionalism have been affected by US foreign policies and the WOT after 9/11.

Although its post-Cold War variant has been going on for over 20 years, the regionalism we see now is often referred to as the "new" regionalism (Hveem 2006; Palmer 1991; Coleman and Underhill 1998; Hettne and Söderbaum 2000). "New" regionalism is contrasted with previous "generations' of regionalism, which were strongly premised on the idiosyncrasies of the state system from a realist perspective. Many of the regional projects under the "old" regionalism were created to serve security objectives alongside economic growth. From the perspective of trade liberalization, these regional arrangements posed challenges to multilateralism since their "doubly embedded liberalism allowed them considerable freedom to impose barriers vis-à-vis non members" (Hveem 2006, 75). In other words, the "old" regionalism was relatively inward looking (O'Brien and Williams, 2007; Drache, 2000). This was true for "old" regionalism in both developing and in developed areas. In contrast, the "new" regionalism is open and outward-looking, and generally understood to be compatible with and complimentary to trade liberalization and neoliberal globalization (O'Brien and Williams 2007; Palmer 1991). Furthermore, the new regionalism is made distinct from the old on account of it not being a movement towards territorially based autarkies but rather representing

concentrations of competitive political and economic power competing in the global economy, with multiple inter and intra-regional flows (Mittelman 1996).

East Asian regionalism leading up to 9/11 is sometimes also categorized as "new" in this way, though not in the sense of being "bottom-up" regionalism in the way that Shaw and Söderbaum (2003) would use the term. This is because East Asian regionalism continues to be primarily state driven. "New" regional arrangements however are not homogenous and can show differences in the way they are formed (state-led or bottom-up) and the extent to which they are institutionalized and formalized. Although regionalism in East Asia continues to be state driven, it has tended to be "new" in the sense of having an outward orientation. Importantly, this "new" East Asian regionalism tends to be much less formalized than the "new" regionalism in Europe and North America (Stubbs and Reed 2006).

As elaborated upon in Chapter II, East Asia has been of particular interest to students of politics for precisely this reason: this distinctively informal approach to multilateralism and regional institutions. In contrast to the formality of their European and North American counterparts, East and Southeast Asian security and economic regional institutions have tended to function in a consensus-grounded and non rules-based manner. Despite the predictions of realists at the end of the Cold War and the admonitions of those who prefer more formalized arrangements, East Asian regional institutions such as ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) continue to play an important role in regional relations. As such, East Asian regional institutions have continued to perplex and challenge established notions about how regionalism is "supposed" to work. This is the

context in which we can examine the impact that the WOT has had on East and Southeast Asian regionalism and especially on ASEAN and APEC.

Keeping in mind the outward-facing orientation and the relative informality of both regional groupings, it is notable that East Asian states were (and are) still in the process of an ever-evolving regional project. Prior to 9/11, the groupings were still finding their footing and dealing with competing ideas around questions of regional identity and the geographical (and ideational) scope of regional groupings (Pempel 2005; Ravenhill 2001; Stubbs 2000; Thomas 2012; Wesley 2001). During the first half of the 1990s the two dominant conceptions of the region were first, an expansive transpacific view embodied in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and; and second, a more limited Southeast Asian view institutionalized in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which would later be expanded to include the so called "plus three" of China, South Korea and Japan.

Relating to the second conception of the region, in 1990 then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad had called for a wider but explicitly East Asian-oriented institution, but at the time was sidelined by US diplomatic pressure and a lack of interest on the part of potential members (Stubbs 2002; Stubbs 2009). Nevertheless, the latter half of the 1990s saw some de facto changes occur to that effect. During this period and into the first few years of the new millennium, a distinctly East Asian association in the form of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) - the ASEAN members plus China, Japan and South Korea - emerged (Stubbs 2002). Added to the mix in the post-9/11 period was a gradual rolling-back of US involvement and engagement in East Asian economic multilateralism,

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which stemmed at least partially from the securitization of post-9/11 US foreign policy (Higgott 2004), which is explored in the next section. Washington's general withdrawal from multilateralism under Bush, signalling a (modified) re-entrenchment of the hub-and-spokes model of bilateral relationships, ushered in further questions about the competing visions of the region that were in some senses only beginning to emerge.

While it was generally agreed by the original participants of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) that a wider East Asian regional association was necessary, there was never a clear consensus on what form the association should ultimately take. Indeed, its primary purpose was never properly established (Stubbs 2002; Stubbs and Mustapha 2013). As a result, different ideas and views of how East Asian regionalism should evolve began to emerge. The view that gained the most strength came out of the second of the two regional visions mentioned above and was solidified with the formation of the APT: that of an exclusively "Asian," relatively compact region, rooted firmly in the existing APT framework. This view remains the dominant conception of the region held by most ASEAN members as well as China (Chin and Stubbs 2011; Thomas 2012). The particular motivations of China and of the ASEAN members (vis-à-vis China) in supporting this conception deserve attention. There is a complex array of economic and strategic motivations that are woven together in this shared conception of East Asian regionalism. At its core, there is a concern with the potential for domination by non-Asian actors such as the US and Australia, and there is also a need to balance the China-ASEAN relationship as both potential threat and potential opportunity (Callahan 2005). But it is the rejection of "Western" membership in this vision of the region that is notable, because

it has led to the refusal of a wider vision that would regard the APT as a building block on which to construct a region that would include *non*-Asian members.[56]

But what are the factors that have knitted together this Asian region, which as Baldwin (2004) has pointed out, resembles the messiness of a "noodle-bowl" with its seemingly ad hoc, messy, criss-crossing, and under-formalized regional arrangements?[57] Importantly, early on in the ongoing East Asian regional project there was the emergence of a broad recognition of a shared set of values, norms, goals and policies among the people and governments of East Asia, which leant credence to an "Asians only" view of the region. Two distinct sets of events were understood as being influential to the conception of an East Asian regionalism. First, globalization and mobile capital brought regional actors together in the face of "outside" pressures. Multinational companies that were engaged in light industrial manufacturing for export, had realized that parts of East Asia were particularly conducive to greater profitability. However, there was also a sense within the region of the need to manage these economic processes so as not to be sideswiped by the forces of globalization (Hveem 2006; Leu 2011; Stubbs 2012). This view was, of course, underlined by the events of the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997-8 and the more recent global financial crisis that began in 2007.

Second, the end of the Cold War brought notable changes to regional relationships in East Asia. To some extent the Cold War in East Asia had been on the wane for some

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[56]   This view of the region has tended to be promoted by Japan, Australia, and to some degree, Singapore but lost favour immediately after 9/11 as outlined below. Importantly, both views see the construction of a region as a way of managing diverse, but common economic, political, and military challenges, although each tend to see these challenges in different ways, and requiring different actors.
[57]   Baldwin was referring to Free Trade Agreements, but the "noodle bowl" metaphor also works when one considers the degree to which East Asian regional and bilateral relations more generally display overlapping relationships, divergent interests, and different levels of cohesion and/or formalization.

time – perhaps since the US-China rapprochement of the early 1970s or the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 (Betts 1993). But Cold War anxieties in the region eased markedly in the late 1980s when Vietnamese troops withdrew from Cambodia and, later, with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Clearly the survival of variants of communism in China, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia does mean that there are aspects of the Cold War that live on in the region. Significantly though, the veritable end of the Cold War meant that the US changed its relatively relaxed economic attitude towards its 'allies' in East Asia by subsequently demanding that they liberalize their economies and introduce Western-style democratic reforms (Stubbs 2000; Beeson 2007a; Betts 1993). Prior to 9/11, there were also calls for some of these same countries to show a greater respect for individual political and human rights.

Since 9/11 there have been two further significant developments that have had an impact on visions for the future of East Asian regionalism in the context of the WOT. As mentioned, after 9/11 we witnessed a deconstruction of the existing Asia Pacific economic region via a new variant of the "hub and spokes" model of US involvement (Higgott 2004; Baldwin 2004), which I talk more about in the following section. Whereas the Cold War conception of the hub and spokes model was primarily strategic in nature and was characterized by a web of bilateral relationships between the US and its allies in Asia, the post-9/11, WOT-era hub and spokes model was modified. Specifically, there was a proliferation of US bilateral economic agreements in East Asia (albeit securitized ones), while at the same time, Washington was avoiding any meaningful or substantive

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participation in multilateral economic fora such as APEC (Christofferson 2002; Higgott 2004; Leheny 2005).

Where the US did continue to engage in multilateral efforts we saw clear attempts to steer the regional agenda away from economic cooperation and towards the security anxieties of the WOT. So, for example,

> … at the 2 APEC summits following 9/11- Mexico in October 2001 and Shanghai in October 2003- Bush made the WOT the central focus of his meetings with Asian leaders, the trade liberalization being left, much to the annoyance of some Asian leaders, on the backburner…. APEC had become just another forum for coalition-building in geopolitical terms. (Camroux and Ofken 2004 165)

This re-orientation of American participation in East Asian multilateralism, and notably Washington's marked departure from it, had the effect of pushing East Asian regionalism and notions of regional "identity" away from an expanded Asia-Pacific vision and back towards the "Asians Only" vision. To be sure, the "Asians Only" vision had already gained traction prior to 9/11 and the WOT for a variety of reasons, but the new dynamics of Washington's regional stance further cemented this vision. Individual ASEAN countries felt safer maintaining both strategic and economic relations with the US at the bilateral level- but as a group there were fears that letting the "Westerners" in to the core regional grouping would pose a potential threat to the ASEAN-way of regionalism and might invite incursions into East Asian state sovereignty.

Other pressures from the US and the West also buttressed the "Asians Only" model. The idea that values, norms and goals that ASEAN set out and which on the whole, its Northeast Asian neighbours also accepted, had developed over a fairly lengthy period of time (Stubbs 2002). These values, norms and goals revolved around ideas as to

how states should relate to each other, the role of major powers in the region, and the best approach to economic development. Such ideas relate to the fact that the ASEAN members have been able to set-out a widely accepted code of conduct for regional relations. This regional code of conduct was formalized in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), originally signed at the first ASEAN summit in Bali in 1976. The TAC is considered to be ASEAN's benchmark treaty and it sets out principles by which those who accede to the Treaty deal with the wider world and especially with one another. These principles are: respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations; the right of states to be free from external interference; non-interference in the affairs of one another; the renunciation of the threat of force; and the peaceful settlement of disputes (www.aseansec.org/).[58] In addition to this formal code of conduct ASEAN members developed an informal code that governs regional interactions more generally. This is often referred to as the 'ASEAN Way' and involves "a high degree of discreetness, informality, pragmatism, expediency, consensus-building, and non-confrontational bargaining styles" (Acharya 1997, 329; see also Capie and Evans 2003).

It is worth noting that the values, norms and goals that the TAC and the ASEAN Way embody have a distinctive post-colonial lineage. The TAC principles and the ASEAN Way approach echo the principles enunciated at the Bandung Conference of 1955, which brought together leaders from 29 Asian and African countries leading to the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement. The ten principles set out in the 1955 Final

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[58] It is notable that until just recently, the US had refused to sign on to the TAC. Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton signed the TAC on behalf of President Obama on July 22nd 2009.

Communiqué from the Bandung Conference are what provided the basis for the TAC

later on.[59] Further, both the Bandung Conference and ASEAN were influenced by two

important historical factors. First, the vast majority of leaders who met at Bandung

represented countries that had experienced Western colonial subjugation, which has led to

a general unwillingness to now serve the interests of the major Western powers. Second,

many of the leaders attending the Bandung Conference felt that their countries were

pawns in the Cold War confrontation. There was a collective sense of the need to express

opposition to the pressures that the Cold War visited on those countries that the United

States and the Soviet Union sought as allies (Mackie 2005).

Indeed, the Bandung principles underscored this point by stating that there should

be a general respect for sovereignty, justice and international obligations, and that

disputes should be settled by peaceful means (Mackie 2005). Hence, there was a general

sense among the Bandung participants that they had an opportunity to rethink

international relations and to conduct international relations in a way that meshed with

their values and interests (Widyatmadja 2005). These foundational ideas about the

conduct of international affairs were instantiated in ASEAN as it began to flesh out the

way in which its members felt that regional and international negotiations and relations

should be approached. It is interesting to note that relatively recently there were some

suggestions by key ASEAN leaders that the principle of non-intervention, heretofore

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[59] These included an emphasis on non-intervention in the affairs of other countries; respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations; the equality of all races and nations, large and small; the right of all states to collective self-defence but not in order to further the interests of great powers; and the promotion of mutual interests and cooperation. Moreover, the Bandung Conference deliberations were conducted in a manner that later came to characterize ASEAN meetings. For example, contentious issues were avoided; informality was encouraged; and the importance of wide consultation, compromise, and consensus-building was stressed (Acharya 2005; Mackie 2005).

sacrosanct, perhaps needs to be revised (*New Straits Times*, "PM: Revise ASEAN Non-Interference Strategy." 09 Aug 2006). This was largely a response to the issue of how to deal with the regime in Burma/Myanmar at the time, but may have provided further impetus for the protection of an "exclusive" "Asians only" regionalism. This is because due to the aforementioned colonial/Cold War experiences of the ASEAN actors with the "West," a revision of the sacrosanct non-interference principle within ASEAN would *necessitate* this exclusion of Western actors. Put another way, several key APT countries would have been wary of allowing US or Australian inclusion in an organization whose mandate would expressly permit those countries to interfere in the internal affairs of APT members.

Significantly, the common experiences of the ASEAN members in terms of colonialism and the pressures of the Cold War are also reflected in the way that the ASEAN members view power (Hund 2003). Clearly ASEAN members recognize that the major powers have an important role to play in the region, but there are differences between (and probably within) ASEAN countries on how this fact should be managed or understood. On the one hand, Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew, has emphasized the value of having the United States as a partner in balancing a rising China (Hund 2003, 388). And while Emmers (2003) may be correct to note that "analysts should not underestimate the persistence of realist beliefs among political leaders" in the region (6), we still saw at the 2006 APEC meeting in Hanoi, that Asian leaders rejected the "securitization" of the APEC grouping as espoused by the US (*New Straits Times*, "PM Urges APEC to stick to trade, not N. Korea." 19 November 2006).

Further, a strictly neo-realist formulation of power is not very appealing to ASEAN members. As Eaton and Stubbs (2006) have pointed out, ASEAN members are 'B' states that have traditionally been the object of domination, coercion, and pressure. The question then, has been how to exercise power and shape their own world without the material capabilities that are normally associated with the exercise of "power" in the international system. One argument, of course, is that power should be seen as "the ability to resist change, to throw the costs of adaptation on others" and that, "characteristically, the ability to resist change requires fewer resources to be placed on the line than the ability to bring about change" (Brown 2001, 92). But ASEAN members are not simply in the business of resisting change. Indeed, they seek to build East Asian regionalism *not* in order to protect the status quo, but to guide change in a direction that benefits their long-term interests (Eaton and Stubbs 2006).

With this in mind, we can say that on balance post-9/11 US foreign policy did not appear to fundamentally alter East Asian regionalism in very obvious ways. For the most part we could observe a general continuation of pre-existing regional dynamics.[60] This included broad patterns of economic and security cooperation between the US and the region, and among the region's members as well. However, it would be a mistake to miss the subtle but significant shift on several fronts. First, as I have outlined here, after 9/11 the American tendency has been to over-emphasize security issues (and counter-terrorism in particular) in bilateral relations with East Asian states while simultaneously broadly

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[60] This general tendency towards continuity can perhaps be best explained by the surprisingly robust path dependency displayed by East Asian institutions due to what Pierson (2000) might call "institutional stickiness" resulting from a combination of factors relating to internal socialization and organizational culture.

withdrawing from multilateral relations. Second, the combination of these two factors encouraged a pendulum swing away from an expanded vision of East Asian regionalism that would include non-Asian actors, towards a more limited "Asians Only" conception of regionalism that has been instantiated by the ASEAN plus three grouping. Finally, both the "securitization" of US bilateral relations with East Asian countries and the logics of regional and "state" security that result are implicated in the perpetuation of forms of insecurity vis-à-vis state repression. This is explored below.

II. The securitization of economic and regional relations: "Comprehensive Security" and the Strong State

As introduced in the previous section, in the aftermath of 9/11 and within the context of the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT, Washington set about securitizing its international economic and trade relations with East Asia (Higgot 2005, 2004). As we have seen, the concept of "securitization" as articulated by the Copenhagen School usefully suggests that "security" is a practice and a "speech act," and that to securitize something is significant due to the suspension of "normal politics" that invariably results. How and why something is placed on the security agenda depends on the authority and legitimacy of those committing the securitizing speech act, and securitizing has successfully occurred when the receiving audiences of the securitizing message accept it as such. Since the security agenda is largely determined by state leaders, the state remains central in this formulation but as a "sedimented" social fact, rather than as a normative "reality" (Buzan et. al. 1998). As I have suggested, seeing the state in these terms does not preclude critical analytical commitments like contingency

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and indeterminacy as long as we understand this formulation of the state in terms of weak ontology. Doing so means that we can still engage with the behavior of states in ways that allow us to avoid reifying the state as a presupposed essential entity, or necessarily treating the state as the subject of security.

With this in mind, we can better understand how Richard Higgott (2005) and others have argued in various ways (see Beeson 2007a, 2007b; Ikenberry 2002, 2004; Capling 2004) that aspects of the WOT under the Bush doctrine effectively resulted in the securitization of post-9/11 economic discourse and trade policy. As such, during the WOT key "elements of US foreign economic policy [became] subsumed within the wider contextual discourse of the US security agenda" (Higgot 2005, 426). In this foreign policy approach, economic policy was used as both an overt and covert arm of security policy. Hence, securitization in this instance was used "to justify the imposition of conditions and measures in the area of foreign economic policy that would not usually be considered the norm in the policy domain… [and notably] the securitization discourse is one of reward and threat." (Higgott 2005, 427)

In contrast, during the late 1990s we saw more of a subordination of security policy to economic policy, and from the view of American foreign policy makers, this approach "was replete with assumptions about the need only to make the world safe for the liberal economic enterprise" (Higgott 2005, 429). However, the election of the Bush Administration and the post 9/11 declaration of war on terrorism consolidated the growing trend in the opposite direction that was already observable at the end of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. As such, the subordination of economic policy to security interests

occurred "with massive accentuation following 9/11" (Higgott 2005, 429) and dovetailed

with Bush's existing tendencies towards unitlateralist-idealist policies "under-written by

US military power, and not by the collective approval of a wider (international)

community" (Higgott 2005, 431). Here, as mentioned, we began to see a gradual

withdrawal from, and ambivalence towards, multilateralism in general; and in instances

where the US was still involved in multilateral and bilateral efforts towards economic

cooperation, economic policy was increasingly framed as a security problem or question.

In other words, under the auspices of the WOT, Washington wielded bilateral

economic agreements as both carrots and sticks to solidify support for the US *security*

agenda under the WOT. And this happening worldwide. For instance, in 2003 (then) US

Trade Representative Bob Zoellick testified at House Agriculture Committee Hearings on

international trade negotiations that a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with New Zealand

was "very unlikely" due to a combination of sensitive agriculture issues and "some things

done recently" (Hearing Transcript, House Agriculture Committee 2003, 23). It was

widely believed by trade observers in New Zealand, the US, and elsewhere, that the

"things" referred to by Zoellick included the continued refusal to allow US ships carrying

nuclear materials to traverse New Zealand's waters, as well as (then) Prime Minister

Helen Clark's vociferous opposition to the US war in Iraq (Mustapha 2007; Higgott 2005;

Caplan 2004). By way of contrast, the US-Australia trade agreement was fast-tracked

during this same period (Beeson 2007b; Caplan 2004; Higgott 2005), which was regarded

by many as a reward for the unwavering support that Australia had offered for the Iraqi invasion in particular and the WOT in general.[61]

In June 2003, Zoellick further alluded to this securitization shift in the Bush Administration's post-9/11 trade policy. In a speech to the Institute of International Economics in Washington DC Zoellick asserted that "a free trade agreement [with the US] is not something one has a right to. It's a privilege. But it is a privilege that must be earned via the support of US policy goals… [the Bush administration]… expects cooperation- or better- on security issues" (cited in *Asia Times* 2005). Further, during this same period Washington was penalizing, in other ways, countries that did not provide support to the military coalition for the invasion of Iraq. This included the withdrawal of foreign aid (Tago 2008). In this sense, when a state's behavior was seen to be "inconsistent with the 'expectation' of the US government [it became] the target of punishment by the United States" (Tago 2008, 380). As such, the securitization of US-Southeast Asian bilateralism and multilateralism was felt in various ways by local actors. This included the hijacking of trade and economic interests by a narrow security agenda and/or via exclusion from the benefits of US trade and aid in response to levels of support provided to the WOT effort.

Another type of "securitization" arising from the WOT and 9/11 pertained to regional policy responses to the (perceived) escalation of the threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia. As the relationship between "securitization" and politics is usually

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[61] It is worth pointing out that the politics of the American WOT, while clearly responsible for fast-tracking a FTA agreement that many were doubtful would actually occur (see Beeson, 2007b: 222-224), also compelled the Australian government to agree to rather unfavourable terms for the FTA. This was driven by "Howard's desire to strengthen Australia's political and strategic links with the US, and objective that had assumed an even greater importance with the WOT…" (Caplan 2004 quoted in Beeson 2007b: 223)

understood vis-à-vis the Copenhagen School, positioning something as a security problem often results in the exceptional suspension of "normal" politics and its replacement with security politics. In a related but slightly different manoeuvre, as Gerstl (2010) convincingly argues, *as a region* the ASEAN nations were compelled by the WOT to securitize terrorism in particular ways with the intention of deliberately depoliticizing counter-terrorism activities in order to overcome unique regional political challenges. As such, since 9/11 ASEAN has reacted in a two-fold way to the complex political obstacles that stand in the way of closer counter-terrorism cooperation between ASEAN member states, and between ASEAN and non-ASEAN states such as the US and Australia (Gerstl 2010). First, ASEAN members securitized the terrorist threat specifically as a trans-national *crime* and second, ASEAN members engaged in deliberate attempts to depoliticize its counter-terrorism policies through a consciously ASEAN-way approach, which prioritizes the principles of non-interference and sovereignty and tends to be regime-centric. [62]

Further, this deliberate move to depoliticize counter-terrorism cooperation served the specific needs of the ASEAN governing regimes at the sub-state level as well. Although it was the case that in the US, the UK, and in Australia leaders felt the political need to "discursively portray terrorism as an existential threat in order to justify new legislative measures to limit certain individual rights in the WOT" (Wolfendale 2007 quoted in Gerstl 2010, 60), this was not a necessity for the Southeast Asian governments

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[62] Interestingly, the Americans were doing the exact opposite. Before 9/11, East Asian terrorism was generally framed as trans-national crime in American security policy, but after 9/11 and as part of the WOT it was a necessary maneuver to frame Southeast Asian political Islam and secessionist terrorism as relating to Al-Qaeda. I explored some of this discursive switching in Chapters III and IV.

that already practice more (soft) authoritarian forms of government. Rather, more important for ASEAN countries were the priorities of maintaining regime stability and in some cases, reducing the perception by local populations that there exists an unfair anti-Muslim bias in counter-terrorism practices, while simultaneously convincing Washington that there exists a serious and concerted effort by ASEAN to combat regional terrorism. As such, Gerstl (2010) demonstrates that securitization does not always mean a straightforward moving away from "normal" politics to security politics. Rather, under certain circumstances securitization can actually lead to forced exclusion of politics through *depoliticization,* which allows for a formerly politicized issue to be regarded instead as a security issue "that is best dealt with through non-political, technical measures" (62).

In the case of ASEAN, this has several effects. First, it allows for a greater resolution of the difficult-to-reconcile theoretical and political tensions that exist between state, regime, and human security in the region. Second, it allows for greater consensus among ASEAN state leaders who would otherwise be hesitant about sharing sensitive security information with one another, and who grapple with their own intra-regional security tensions. Third, the technocratic and seemingly apolitical nature of the co-operation helps to maintain the "Asians only" vision and to assuage local fears of slavish capitulation to American interests. And fourth, it serves as a "deliberate move to limit the scope and sensitivity of human security as a matter of discourse and policy" (Gerstl 2010, 54) because it is presumed that the continued subversion of the human security discourse is required for the continued maintenance of regime legitimacy.

This last point is particularly noteworthy because it is important to remember that ASEAN's vision of security has always been based on national stability and regime security rather than on individual security. The ASEAN vision of security is known as "Comprehensive Security," which is a state-centric, top-down understanding of security that subverts the security of individuals as an adjunct to regime security. And as Acharya (2004) and others (see Caballero-Anthony 2005; Noor 2003) have pointed out "Comprehensive Security" has in fact been primarily used as an instrument of regime legitimization in Southeast Asia. So on the one hand, framing regional terrorism as an existential threat to the state would be politically risky for the ASEAN grouping as it would necessarily then introduce difficult questions pertaining to the limits of sovereignty and the possibilities for state intervention; while on the other hand, framing regional terrorism as a threat to the safety of individuals or as a violent expression of otherwise legitimate political grievances would necessarily then introduce questions around human security and human rights. Framed either way, none of the potential outcomes is particularly compatible with the political and security goals of ASEAN member states-both as a group and as individual governing regimes. The solution then has been to frame regional terrorism as a criminal activity and as a practical problem that requires only a politically "neutral" technocratic response.

From a critical security perspective, this is significant on several levels. First, when a security issue is taken *out* of the realm of the political (as opposed to when its politics are re-framed), there can be "no genuine political debate about the counter-terrorism approach" (Gerstl 2010, 62) at all and in the case of ASEAN, this

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"depoliticization strategy is evident with regards to ASEAN's treatment of political Islam" (Gerstl 2010, 62) in particular, which as outlined in Chapter V has resulted in repressive state measures against political dissidence more generally- whether or not a legitimate threat of terrorism actually exists. Further, "while depoliticization seems an adequate method for the deepening of counter-terrorism co-operation in Southeast Asia, it is an inappropriate means for the strengthening of human security in this region, as is ASEANization" (Gerstl 2010, 69). And it is here where we can see that the dangers of a comprehensive security approach that buttresses the further consolidation of the ASEAN "strong state" to the detriment of individuals and groups residing within these states.

We see hints of this *problematique* if we briefly look at some of the ways that US policies under the WOT rather quickly re-framed Washington's policies towards China- which is the foremost strategic and economic player in the East Asian region as a whole. As outlined in Chapter III, Bush's pre-9/11 policies towards China reflected a general concern with the strategic implications of China's plans for their development of offensive nuclear forces. The bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade (under Clinton), the EP3 spy plane incident in April of 2001, and Washington's official recognition of an independent Taiwan had already marked a distinct deterioration in the Washington-Beijing relationship leading up to September 11th 2001 (Slingerland et. al. 2007). Hence, the pre-9/11 US approach to Asia was characterized primarily by the strategic containment of China. In fact, just one week prior to the September 11th terrorist attacks, it was announced that officials from Beijing and Washington were to "meet in the coming weeks" to discuss shared concerns about each other's nuclear designs . The

meeting took place as scheduled, but instead of ballistic missile defence and nuclear weapons, the talks were almost exclusively centered on "shared" concerns around terrorism in the wake of 9/11 (Mustapha 2011). Beijing was quick to express support for the WOT, and Washington acknowledged and welcomed this support (Cox 2012). This gave Beijing the opportunity to divert American attention away from its missile defence plans as well as its regionalization efforts with Central Asia under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

After 9/11, the counter-terrorism aspect of the SCO's agenda gained more prominence and received verbal endorsement from US officials in the Bush Administration, who had been otherwise suspicious of the grouping.[63] And related to the endorsement of the SCO's anti-terror agenda, Beijing used the post-9/11 moment to crack down much more openly and brutally on the Muslim Uighur minority in Xianjing Province. Here we continue to see that China's treatment of the Uighur population has become cloaked in post-9/11 anti-terrorist rhetoric, allowing for the international tolerance of a level of Chinese state-violence against its own citizens that would otherwise be condemned. As such, 9/11 and the WOT not only altered the trajectory of the Sino-American relationship, but it also brought with it (critical) security implications associated with state repression.

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[63] It is beyond the purview of this project to delve into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in great detail. Briefly stated, the grouping, which is primarily centered around Central Asian security concerns and includes the membership of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan was viewed primarily with suspicion by Washington prior to 9/11. Among the main causes of this suspicion were the plans for joint military cooperation among its members and the fact that the grouping was ostensibly formed to serve as a counter-balance to NATO in Eurasia. The SCO itself has sought to maintain distance from the US- rejecting its application for observer status in 2006, for example.

Conclusion: "National Resilience" and state repression

As introduced here and in Chapters II and V as well, notions of regional security in Southeast Asia relate very much to notions of "national resilience" and the "strong state" that tends to characterize the region. In Southeast Asia and in keeping with the constructivist view of the region, security tends to be understood as a condition that still considers the military dimension to be the most important aspect of security, but *includes* the political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions into a broader conceptualization of security factors (Burke and McDonald 2007). This is the afore-mentioned "comprehensive" understanding of security, which is a core principle of the ASEAN charter and of East Asian regional security cooperation in general. This concept is what ultimately enabled the formation of ASEAN as a regional "security community" whose members agree to respect each other's internal sovereignty via the doctrine of 'non-interference,' and "to minimize the intrusion of great power competition" and committed to "the maintenance of 'internal security,' in which sovereignty … is paramount, and regime security a dominant objective. (Burke and McDonald 2007, 12).

In this "comprehensive" conceptualization of security then, "security" is closely related to the concept of "national resilience," or the idea that domestic economic, political and socio-cultural stability in combination with a norm of non-interference between states is necessary for maintaining the stability of the region and the strength of individual regimes. In other words, to flip the comprehensive regional security model around, a stable and happy region (i.e. free of military inter-state conflict and unwanted "outside" intervention) makes for stable and happy governing regimes. In his analysis of

the formation of the ASEAN Regional Forum, Katsumata (2006) points out that the interests and policies that initiated the ASEAN Regional Forum were "defined by what can be regarded as a norm of security cooperation in Asia… this norm contains two sets of ideational elements: common security… (and) the ASEAN Way of diplomacy" (181). Neither of these norms pose a threat to the governing regimes of ASEAN members, and in fact, both reinforce their authority. As such, we can observe a style and understanding of Southeast Asian security regionalism that remains "tellingly essentialist, particularly [with] concessions to state-centrism and ideational/normative determinism" (Tan 2006, 239).

But what is the significance of this? Why does the state-centrism and distinctive ASEAN*ness* of regional security need to be interrogated? Because, as outlined in Chapter II, this reading of Southeast Asian security, which emphasizes the significance of multilateralism and ideational norms as they relate to inter-state conflict, "… tends to soft-soap the darker side of the ASEAN-way, and the essentially statist *(and internally coercive)* character of its norms" (Burke and McDonald 2007, 13). Importantly, a critical reading of this Southeast Asian concept of comprehensive security reveals that along with the norms of national resilience and non-interference that are incorporated into its structures, ASEAN security regionalism- reinforced and consolidated by the WOT- is a source of and a site of insecurity.

This is because "comprehensive security as 'resilience,' links internal security paradigms preoccupied with the (often violent and repressive) defense of regime security … with regional frameworks that… place a primacy upon sovereign freedom, non-

interference and 'political stability'" (Burke and McDonald 2007, 13). And as such,

ASEAN regionalism

> … tends to *strengthen* statist norms and insulate regional governments from scrutiny over their approach to human rights and internal claims to justice, separatism and difference… if this is a security community, it is a community of economic, political and military elites, and the security that it provides is morally (and conceptually) incoherent, being too often premised on the insecurity of others. (Burke and McDonald 2007, 13. Emphasis in original.)

The WOT has only served to strengthen these statist and regime-centric norms, allowing

for an ever growing emphasis on the primacy placed on the internal "stability," of states

through the tacit approval of anti democratic practices under the guise of anti-terrorism.

Conclusion
"Writing" East and Southeast Asian security: Regional effects of the WOT as a hegemonic security narrative

As reflected in this project, there is an ever-growing body of academic literature that utilizes critical approaches to the study of security and more specifically, to the study of security in the context of the US-led War On Terror. This "critical security studies" literature is diverse, inter-disciplinary, and perhaps most notably, it presupposes the need to shift the analytical emphasis away from understanding security questions only in relation to existential threats to the state. Instead, many critical security approaches delve into deeper ontological questions about the nature of security and insecurity itself. As such, these critical security approaches question the tendency within mainstream IR approaches to focus on the state as a predetermined entity and as the sole subject of security. Related to this, a growing number of critical security approaches tend to reject modernist and positivist methodologies in favour of emphasizing inter-subjectivity and indeterminacy. Hence, a key supposition, central to this type of critical security analysis, is that *the state itself can be a site of, and a cause of, forms of insecurity* that no mainstream approach to security or IR is equipped to grapple with. In the context of the WOT, critical security approaches also examine the myriad effects that terrorism *and* counter-terrorism, as well as terrorists *and* state authority can have on the production of security and insecurity.

In this project, I have taken for granted the idea that the WOT, as a hegemonic security narrative, "imposes its interpretation of political reality on… society and rationalizes, legitimizes and normalizes the practices of counter-terrorism," (Jackson

2005, 20). This has been the basic subtext of my own critical approach to the interrogation of security and security practices under the WOT. As outlined in the *Introduction*, the problem of political violence- as perpetrated by both state and non-state actors- is ever-present between and among communities and throughout history. Not surprisingly then, IR scholars tend to focus on questions surrounding the causes of political violence. But *critical* voices in explaining and understanding political violence continue to be under-represented in the academic and policy worlds, and this dissertation has sought to help redress this gap in the literature. As I have been at pains to emphasise throughout, the point was never to discount the threat of terrorism as far as it does exist. Nor does it mean that the security of or between states is not relevant to assessments of regional security- rather that it only tells us so much, and may also preclude considerations of other forms of insecurity. The point here has been to ask different questions than ones commonly asked so as to reveal some of the less obvious ways that the threat of terrorism, along with reactions to it, can also manifest itself.

Hence, the central research question guiding this project has been: *What can a critical security analysis tell us about the WOT and about security/insecurity in East and Southeast Asia?* This project set out to explore the tensions inherent in seeking "security" within the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT, with the larger purpose of demonstrating that the pursuit of "security" by states, in this case under the narrow rubric of counter-terrorism and in relation to American foreign policies in Southeast Asia, has actually contributed to forms of regional *in*-security, critically defined. This analysis was also undertaken with the view to help remedy the relative paucity of *critical* security

analyses focused on the East and Southeast Asian region in particular. Utilizing a "weak ontology" critical security approach, which demands a historically and geographically contingent method of immanent critique, I was able to examine and explore the effects that terrorism and counter-terrorism, as well as terrorists and state authority have had on the production of security/insecurity in the region.

In doing so, I demonstrated that forms of insecurity were constructed and/or abetted by the WOT itself, understood as a hegemonic security narrative, and that these forms of insecurity occurred in concert with the practice of traditional forms of state-centric security. In other words, *operating as an immanent critique* in the context of empirical examples in East and Southeast Asia, this project has demonstrated and affirmed the critical security supposition that the pursuit of "security" by states necessitates and exacerbates various forms of in-security. Further, I have emphasised the point that there were silences endemic to the WOT security narrative that allowed for significant "security" questions to be ignored in the region. Finally, I saw this project as an opportunity to demonstrate- using the weak ontology immanent critique method that I have outlined- that a deconstructive critical analysis of security based in post-structuralist commitments need not be anathema to engagements with pragmatic problems and security issues, nor should it have to preclude the possibility of enacting the politics and ethics that are required to theorize alternative security logics.

In Chapter I, I introduced my (modified) critical security approach, and argued for the benefits of employing a generally post-structuralist method, which emphasizes the need to remain reflexive and mindful of inter-subjectivity and inter-textuality in

considerations of security. In emphasizing these points, such an approach allows for a shifting of the referent object/subject of security and allows for security to be understood in broader ways than merely that of the state in a system of states. Perhaps most importantly, I have argued for the strengths of utilizing Stephen K. White's (2000, 2003, 2005, 2009) idea of "weak ontology" in order to move beyond deconstruction and to actually engage with the (contingent) empirical "realities" of actually occurring security logics. I have argued that there needs to be space for the re-imagining of alternative security futures, which is necessary in order to engage with (and if necessary, destabilize) power relations.

Nevertheless, the difficulty of such an endeavour must be recognized and continually acknowledged. This is because a weak-ontology approach takes seriously the post-structuralist assertion that essentialism should be avoided in the making of ontological claims, so as to avoid naturalizing or reifying any particular security logics. For this reason, any ontological claims that are made must always remain open to interrogation. In other words, weak ontology theorizing allows the theorist to make claims, but this must be done reflexively. These are tentative claims about what *might be*, as opposed to unreflexive claims about what *is*. These are the weak ontologies, which "demand from us an affirmative gesture of constructing foundations," but which prevent us "from carrying out this task in a traditional fashion" (White 2000, 8).

In terms of the relevance of weak ontology to my analytical method for this project, I have demonstrated that a weak ontology understanding of CSS proves compatible with the type of "immanent critique" method that Browning and McDonald

(2011) advocate for in the practical application of CSS. As mentioned, this method of "immanent critique," informed by a weak ontology, calls for the examination of particular security logics in ways that recognize their historical, geographical and ideational contingencies. In other words, this method calls for a case-based examination of empirical "realities" in order to move beyond deconstruction towards a reconstructive exercise of imagining alternative (but contingent) security logics. This exercise is about contingently situating one's theorizations of security in response to *particular cases* and in *particular contexts*. This creates opportunities to still engage in the types of (foundational) ontologizing that is required to cope with the political and ethical problematics of security, but to do so in ways that can help us avoid reifying or essentializing any particular logic of security.

Focusing on the importance of ontological theorizations in critical security led me ultimately to deploy this reflexive and inter-subjective method of immanent critique in this project, allowing for engagement with the politics and ethics of security practices in East and Southeast Asia in the specific context of the WOT. As such, this analysis of the US WOT and of the many-layered critical security effects of the WOT on East and Southeast Asia has been predicated on the presupposition that it is not only desirable, but necessary, to situate critical security perspectives within particular empirical contexts- historical, geographical, and discursive. This is the key to bridging the divide between a postmodern "post-ponism" (Connolly 1989) that is disengaged from the "realities" of security/insecurity and the pragmatic need to move from deconstruction towards a practical engagement with the world in the hopes of re-visioning alternative security

futures contingent upon the empirical realities of specific places and times. Importantly, this exercise is not about trying to operate without ever making foundational claims, but rather being very careful not to naturalize particular security logics as being timeless and inevitable.

In Chapter II, I critically examined the corpus of IR literature that attempts to explain and understand security (and insecurity) in East and Southeast Asia. I answered the question of how security/insecurity in East and Southeast Asia is explained and understood by highlighting the debates between realists and (mainstream) constructivists, identifying the conceptual gaps in these prevailing approaches, and introducing the critical voices that have emerged in East and Southeast Asian scholarship. Importantly, these academic "bodies of literature" were approached as discourses and narratives themselves: frameworks within which the theory and practice of international relations (IR) operate. Approaching academic bodies of literature discursively allows us to recognize that these are not homogenous or monolithic areas of inquiry, as each contain unique and sometimes competing representations of the subjects that they pertain to. Understanding this, it is important to critically engage with these literatures in ways that recognize which voices are privileged and which voices struggle to be heard.

Hence, Chapter II sketched out both realist and (mainstream) constructivist images of security in East and Southeast Asia: the "hub and spokes" model, and the "comprehensive security" model. The "hub and spokes" model of security corresponds with the realist image of security in East and Southeast Asia. This model sees the maintenance of an American hegemonic balance of power via bilateral alliances as the

lynchpin of East Asian security/stability, which is defined as an absence of inter-state warfare in the region. For the constructivist view however, security is understood as a condition that goes beyond the military dimension, albeit without excluding it. This approach still considers the military dimension to be the most important aspect of security, but *includes* the political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions into a broader conceptualization of security factors. Importantly, this "comprehensive" understanding of security is central to ASEAN regional security cooperation. This concept enabled the formation of ASEAN and in this comprehensive conceptualization of security, which extends beyond the military dimension, "security" is closely related to the concept of "national resilience," or the idea that domestic economic, political and socio-cultural stability in combination with a norm of non-interference between states is necessary for maintaining the stability of the region. In other words, stable and happy states make for a stable and happy (i.e. free of military inter-state conflict) region.

This constructivist image of security brings with it many of the same problems that a realist one does. The rationalist tendency to couple subjectivity with sovereignty means that the realist shortcoming of treating agency as ultimately pre-given remains a central feature of constructivism (Tan 2006). As such, the constructivist image of East Asian security remains "tellingly essentialist, particularly [with] concessions to state-centrism and ideational/normative determinism, both due partly to an uncritical emulation of rationalist constructivist perspectives in IR theory" (Tan 2006, 239). As mentioned, this has allowed for the continued "soft-soaping" of the "darker side of the ASEAN way," (Browing and McDonald 2007, 13), in ways that serve to strengthen the state and shield

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Southeast Asian governments from criticisms of how "internal claims to justice, separatism and difference" (Burke and McDonald 2007, 13) are dealt with. Hence, if ASEAN is a security community according to this view, Burke and McDonald (2007) caution that it is a community of "economic, political and military elites, and the security that it provides is… too often premised on the insecurity of others" (13).

Chapter III in turn, interrogated the powerful constitutive effects of US foreign policy in East Asia during the WOT, demonstrating how it has operated as a hegemonic security narrative that brought with it significant security implications for the region. Chapter III explored various different ways of seeing "foreign policy," ultimately arguing for a critical constructivist analysis of foreign policy as informed by David Campbell's (1998) reorientation of the concept. Campbell (1998) calls on us to see "foreign policy" as performative and constitutive, and as a boundary-producing practice "central to the production and reproduction of the identity in whose name it operates" (68).

As such, "foreign policy" is an integral aspect of the narratives of *Self* and *Other* that both construct and define threats and the security practices of states in response to those threats. I then set out the argument that foreign policies operate as discursively constructed "regimes of truth" and that US foreign policy during the WOT operated as such. The WOT then, featured a set of central narratives that framed the 9/11 attacks in specific ways, *necessitating* America's military responses abroad and security practices at home (Jackson 2005, 2006, 2011; Croft 2006; Jarvis 2008; Jervis 2005). The particularities of the WOT- its narrative, its policies, its manifestations- were informed by a prevailing pattern of American essentialism and a national style rooted in beliefs and

myths about America's role in the world as a responsible superpower. Prior to 1945, the claim had always been that America would "lose its soul" if it went abroad "in search of monsters to destroy," but President Woodrow Wilson turned this idea on its head and promoted the idea that America would lose its soul if it did *not* go abroad in search of monsters to destroy (Daalder and Lindsay 2005, 5-6).

The WOT was guided by the key points of the post-9/11 US security policy, often referred to as the "Bush Doctrine," which can generally be summarized as follows: a declared belief in democracy and liberalism at home and the historical "responsibility" to restructure and rebuild the world towards allegedly universal values of democratic freedom; the perception of great threats that can only be staved off by forceful policies that include pre-emption and "preventive" war; the willingness to act unilaterally in combination with the conviction that unilateralism can be both necessary and more effective than multilateralism; and the belief that the US must assert its primacy and hegemony in world politics, whereby "American security, world stability, and the spread of liberalism require the US to act in ways others *can* not and *must* not" (Jervis 2005, 583). Briefly stated, the Bush Doctrine was characterized by unilateralism and the doctrine of pre-emption, which were notions rested upon two key underlying themes: American fear, which arose out of an inflated threat assessment of terrorism; and an American sense of responsibility, which arose out of a latter-day Wilsonian, *mission civilisatrice* to cure the world of its undemocratic ills (Jervis 2005, 580-591).

Finally, Chapter III sketched out the significant aspects of US foreign policy toward East Asia in particular, revealing both the continuities and discontinuities in US

policy from before 9/11 and into the post-9/11 era. For example, up until 9/11, all signs had pointed towards a US foreign policy in East Asia that was mostly defined by the strategic containment of China. But after 9/11, the US rolled back its concerns around Chinese plans for BMD systems and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and instead the two countries declared their allegiance in the newly conceived WOT (Cox 2012). As exemplified by the changing tone of US-China relations, and despite the continued commitment towards the "hub and spokes" security model of bilateral cooperation, American foreign policy towards East Asia after 9/11 took on a different cast more generally. First, there was a marked withdrawal of US involvement from economic multilateralism in the region. The US also actively ignored human rights abuses in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. Washington re-established relations with the Indonesian military, sold them weapons, and began pressuring the Indonesian government to enact extra-judicial measures in their crackdown on local militant groups. Washington also re-established a controversial military base in the Philippines under the Visiting Forces Act, and dispatched US troops to the Southern districts to aid the local military in their counter-terror operations against Muslim separatist groups. After 9/11, US advocacy for democracy in Myanmar/Burma also fell off the agenda. Finally, US support for the "counter-terror" operations of many of the governments in the region- including China- meant that local dissident groups of any political stripe could be brutally repressed beyond international reproach, as long as they were officially labeled as terrorists by the relevant government authorities.

In Chapter IV, I interrogated the commonly held "expert" understandings of terrorism in the region under the rubric of WOT discourses. Specifically, chapter IV challenged three commonly made claims that emerged out of the post-9/11 security narrative and related "expert" discourses on Southeast Asian terrorism: first, that all forms of political Islam necessarily represent an imminent threat of terrorism; second, that there exists an emerging regional radical Islamist identity with robust organizational and ideological links to Al-Qaeda; and third, that terrorism and violence by non-state actors in the region is best understood as fundamentally irrational rather than political behaviour, and can somehow be responded to in isolation from the social and political contexts of history. In response to the first claim, I demonstrated that few (if any) forms of political Islam in Southeast Asia show propensities for supporting or deploying terrorist tactics to further their varied political goals. The tendency to conflate all forms of political Islam with fanatical terrorism, paints a falsely homogenous and ominous picture of what is actually a very complex and rich terrain of religion and politics in Southeast Asia- much of which has nothing to do with political violence.

In response to the second "expert" claim, I showed that we really do not see an emerging regional radical "Islamist" identity in the region, nor are there compelling indications that Islamist groups in Southeast Asia possess any robust linkages to Al-Qaeda. What is presented as "evidence" of Southeast Asia's Islamist linkages to the global Al-Qaeda terror network, is in fact a patchwork of facts and details that at best indicate overlapping interests here and there. And finally, I put into question the third, oft-made "expert" claim that terrorist violence by non-state actors in the region is best

understood as fundamentally irrational rather than political behaviour, and can somehow be responded to in isolation from the social and political contexts of history. Rather, the tendency to medicalize and pathologize terrorism is part of a biopolitical security move that removes the rational agency from political terrorism and in doing so, allows for a reading of terrorism where the "generative principle" of the formation of security is contingency and fear (Dillon 2007, 9). Governing terror then, becomes an effort to govern the unknown, where the unknown is always dangerous and its danger is always imminent.

Refuting each of these claims from a critical security perspective in turn demonstrated that the identification of Southeast Asia as the "second front" in the WOT, absent compelling evidence in support of this contention, renders a vast territory and its people as a contingent, emergent threat, transformed into "epistemic objects" by the experts that seek to govern their potentiality for danger. But these epistemic objects, and the shape that they take in our imaginations, *come out of* problematizations of security and not the other way around. And this is precisely why the "expert" discourses that come to "know" these epistemic objects must be open to interrogation since they are part of a wider hegemonic security narrative that inscribes its interpretations onto the bodies of the subaltern.

Next, Chapter V demonstrated that post-9/11 changes in US military and security policy towards the region under the rubric of the WOT altered local governments' framing of domestic political issues, as well as the ways in which secessionist groups and political dissidents came to be characterized. After 9/11 there was an uptick in the regional US military presence and increased security collaboration with key regional state

actors, along with a discursive re-framing of US relations in Asia more generally. These developments were heavily influenced by the Bush administration's pre-occupation with terrorism, and they pushed other important political and economic interests down the priority list. As a result, the security discourses of the WOT allowed for significant shifts to occur in the security logics and practices of governing regimes in the region. This contributed to an escalation of gendered insecurities around US military installations; re-configurations of post-colonial constructions of national identity; increases in anti-American sentiment among local populations; and a discernible rise in particular forms of state repression due to the coupling of counter-terror security policies with notions of "national resilience."

I paid special attention to the situation in the Philippines in the context of the WOT because in many ways it is a microcosm for the ill-effects that come along with the US military presence. Prior to the escalation of the US presence after 9/11 there had been a trend of *declining* US military presence in the Philippines- much of it buoyed by the efforts of nationalist, anti-imperialist and/or feminist political lobbying. And while the WOT has not been *unique* in creating gendered insecurities relating to military presence and infrastructure, the WOT is nevertheless notable in this respect because it has provided the perfect scenario for a renewed continuation of American imperial formations in Southeast Asia. Indeed, the re-establishment of the US military presence was further cemented in October of 2012 with Philippine government's official invitation to the US Navy to once again use Subic Bay as a base for their Pacific fleet operations. Further, the continually heightened gendered insecurities produced by the escalating US military

presence will continue to intersect with and bring forth complex questions relating to expressions of Philippine sovereignty and identity.

In Chapter V, I also looked at how the post-9/11 period saw a marked increase in regional state repression of groups and individuals under the aegis of a newly legitimized, extra-judicial and very broad umbrella of "counter-terrorism." Bush's WOT coalition-building in East Asia "impacted on the distance Asian countries have been able to maintain in relation to the US" (Camroux and Ofken 2004, 163) while simultaneously providing local regimes with new articulations of state repression. Notably, the support provided by the US WOT, both discursive and practical, strengthened the mandates of local regimes in this respect. This is because after 9/11 and under the auspices of the WOT, "…where it has felt appropriate the United States has sought to strengthen governing regimes and thus states in dealing with internal opposition" (Camroux and Ofken 2004, 164). This has meant the suppression of not only Islamist groups but of anti-government opposition more generally.

Finally, in Chapter VI, I looked at how regionalism and regionalization efforts in East and South East Asia have been affected by the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT and have affected articulations of regional identity. In this chapter I argued that the WOT operating as a hegemonic security narrative had critical security implications for the framing of the regional politics of trade and security in the region along with related patterns of regionalism. Using a weak ontology critical security approach, Chapter VI first delved into the ways in which regionalism and regionalization efforts in East and South East Asia have been affected by the hegemonic security narrative of the WOT and

had an impact on articulations of regional identity, solidifying an "Asians Only" approach to core regional arrangements. The re-orientation of American participation in East Asian multilateralism, and notably Washington's marked withdrawal from it, had the effect of pushing East Asian regionalism and notions of regional "identity" away from an expanded Asia-Pacific vision and back towards the "Asians Only" vision. To be sure, the "Asians Only" vision had already gained traction prior to 9/11 and the WOT for a variety of reasons, but the new dynamics of Washington's regional stance further cemented this vision. Individual ASEAN countries felt safer maintaining both strategic and economic relations with the US at the bilateral level- but as a group there were fears that letting the "Westerners" in to the core regional grouping would pose a potential threat to the ASEAN-way of regionalism and might invite incursions into East Asian state sovereignty.

Second, Chapter VI deployed a critical security analysis to further examine the related "securitization" of trade and economic relations between the US and East Asian countries observable under the Bush Doctrine (Higgott 2005). In this sense, when a state's behavior was seen to be "inconsistent with the 'expectation' of the US government [it became] the target of punishment by the United States" (Tago 2008, 380). As such, the securitization of US-Southeast Asian bilateralism and multilateralism was felt in various ways by local actors. This included the hijacking of trade and economic interests by a narrow security agenda and/or via exclusion from the benefits of US trade and aid in response to levels of support provided to the WOT effort. Another form of "securitization" that occurred under the WOT is articulated by Gerstl (2010), who argues

that since 9/11 ASEAN has reacted in a two-fold way to the complex political obstacles that stand in the way of closer counter-terrorism cooperation between ASEAN member states, and between ASEAN and non-ASEAN states such as the US and Australia. First, ASEAN members securitized the terrorist threat specifically as a trans-national *crime* and second, ASEAN members engaged in deliberate attempts to depoliticize its counter-terrorism policies through a consciously ASEAN-way approach, which prioritizes the principles of non-interference and sovereignty and tends to be regime-centric.

As I have outlined, from a critical security perspective this is significant on several levels. First, when a security issue is taken *out* of the realm of the political (as opposed to when its politics are re-framed), there can be "no genuine political debate about the counter-terrorism approach" (Gerstl 2010, 62) at all. And in the case of ASEAN, this "depoliticization strategy… with regards to ASEAN's treatment of political Islam" (Gerstl 2010, 62) in particular, has resulted in repressive state measures against political dissidence in general. Further, "while depoliticization seems an adequate method for the deepening of counter-terrorism co-operation in Southeast Asia, it is an inappropriate means for the strengthening of human security in this region, as is ASEANization" (Gerstl 2010, 69). And it is here where we can see that the dangers of a comprehensive security approach that buttresses the further consolidation of the ASEAN "strong state" to the detriment of individuals and groups residing within these states. Hence, Chapter VI finally looked at how the WOT security narrative has served to reinforce and entrench the "ASEAN-way" of comprehensive security as the means by which "regional resilience" and "national resilience" are concepts deployed by governing

elites in order to maintain *regime* security, narrowly defined in ways that engender insecurities for groups and individuals.

Immanent Critique and the need for a (weak ontological) critical security approach

Significantly, it would have been difficult to draw the conclusions that I have drawn without deploying the particular critical security approach that has been articulated in this dissertation. This is a critical security approach with post-structuralist underpinnings, but is an approach that demurs from postmodern tendencies to eschew any and all foundational assumptions. Instead, I have articulated and deployed a promising method of "immanent critique," informed by Stephen K. White's notion of "weak ontology," which calls for a thoughtful engagement with complex security questions using a case-based examination of empirical "realities." This exercise is about contingently situating one's theorizations of security in response to *particular cases* and in *particular contexts*. This creates opportunities to still engage in the types of foundational ontologizing that is required to cope with the political and ethical problematics of security, but to do so in ways that can help us avoid reifying or essentializing any particular security structure. As such, my analysis of the many-layered critical security effects of the WOT on East and Southeast Asia is predicated on the presupposition that it is not only desirable, but necessary, to situate critical security perspectives within particular empirical contexts- historical, geographical, and discursive.

This is the key to bridging the divide between a postmodern "post-ponism" (Connolly 1989) that is disengaged from the "realities" of security/insecurity and the

pragmatic need to move from deconstruction towards a practical engagement with the world in the hopes of creating the space for re-visioning alternative security futures contingent upon the empirical realities of specific places and times. As mentioned, this exercise is not about trying to operate without ever making foundational claims, but rather calls on us to be very careful not to naturalize particular security logics as being timeless and inevitable. In revealing the silences that are inherent in a mainstream security analysis of this specific region during this specific historical period and under this specific security narrative, I was able to bring forward important ways of seeing and understanding the many insecurities engendered by the US WOT in East and Southeast Asia.

Notably, a critical security analysis can "see" the causes and the implications of the misconstrued threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia that continues to be propagated by the various "experts" who employ narrow visions of security in their analyses (see Chapter IV); the gendered insecurities that will only increase with the strengthened return of US military interests in the region along with the complex issues around post-colonial sovereignties and identities that East and Southeast Asian actors must continue to navigate (see Chapter V); the co-optation of the WOT discourse and security practices by governing regimes in the region in order to help legitimize various forms of state repression employed in pursuit of "national resilience" (see Chapter V); and the different ways in which regional multilateral fora have been influenced and hijacked by the WOT agenda (see Chapter VI). And once again, the whole point of this project was never to discount the threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia or the existence of more "traditional" security problems as far as they do exist. Rather, the point has been to ask an alternative

set of questions about terrorism and state responses to terrorism- different questions than ones traditionally asked by the "experts"- in order to reveal some of the less obvious ways that terrorism, along with reactions to terrorism vis-à-vis the WOT, can influence the security/insecurity of groups and individuals.

In terms of my contributions to security literature pertaining to East and Southeast Asia, with this project I have added to the growing field of CSS as it pertains to this region in particular. As I have outlined, much of the existing "critical" literature on the region (for example, see Foot 2005; Hamilton-Hart 2005, 2009; Caballero-Anthony 2005) though very valuable in its own right, is not the "critical" edge of security theory that I am particularly interested in due mainly to continuing adherences to different manifestations of strong ontology and presumed realist-based security logics. There is still then, a want for more approaches that emphasize critical post-structuralist ways of understanding security- ones that emphasize the importance of intertextuality and intersubjectivity, as well as the constitutive effects of a larger security narrative. They are starting to emerge (see Burke and McDonald 2007; Tan 2006 for example) and what is promising about them is that they ask fundamental ontological questions about "security/insecurity" itself. Who or what is being "secured" and does a "secure" state necessarily translate into a "secure" population? Can "security" and "insecurity" exist simultaneously? What questions have yet to be asked about "security/insecurity" in East Asia, and what questions are *unable* to be asked under the statist rubric of either realism or constructivism, both of which rely on "strong" ontological theorizations of security? These are the types of questions that I have been interested in exploring, and that I have

explored in this dissertation in the regional context of East and Southeast Asia.

Importantly, these are also the types of questions that can only be asked- and answered-

within a critical security studies framework that allows for the weak ontologizing

necessary for grappling with an immanent critique of actually occurring security logics.

Epilogue
New narratives in Obama's foreign policy: Hope and Change or more of the same?

This project and its critical security methods gesture towards emerging questions

relating to US foreign policy in East and Southeast Asia after Bush. We can ask the

following questions using the same critical security approach that I have outlined here, by

re-orienting our questions to the particular case and particular security logics of the

Obama administration: What (from a critical security perspective) has the Obama

administration's security policies brought to this region? Are we witnessing a change in

the way that security is understood and practiced in East and Southeast Asia in a post-

Bush era? Or are we seeing a continuation of familiar security discourses that have

marked the region? More importantly, what can a critical security analysis of these

questions tell us about the ways in which US security policy can act both as a practice and

as a narrative/discourse that influences actors in the region? While Obama's policies

continue to evolve into his second term, some interesting observations can be made.

Notably, there has been a shift in the ways in which "terrorism" is talked about. At first

glance, this appears to have destabilized the hegemony of the WOT security narrative.

However, we must be cautious in making assumptions about what this means, since the

degree to which Obama's security practices actually do differ from that of his predecessor is debateable (Jackson 2011).

As I have outlined in this dissertation, the practices of security under Bush's WOT hinged upon a narrative of "fear"- the fear of terrorist threats and of fear itself- as well as the "responsibility" to be a purveyor of democracy and liberalism abroad. As such, the security narrative of the WOT *required* that US hegemony and homeland "security" be aggressively maintained. The corollary to this was a strategy of pre-emptive military action; the utilization of questionable detention and prisoner interrogation practices; as well as the systematic erosion and subversion of privacy and civil rights within the United States. As mentioned in Chapter III (95), herein lay the greatest *problematique* of the WOT. Items in the WOT toolbox that were employed in the pursuit of security- such as pre-emptive strikes, extraordinary rendition, the use of waterboarding and other forms of prisoner abuse and humiliation, unlawful detentions of "enemy combatants" at Guantanamo Bay- actually contributed to *in*security. This occurred both in the sense that these policies would inflame the passions and provoke the ire of those groups that would seek to do America harm, as well as to the communities "subject" to the WOT discourses and security practices as outlined here.

On the surface at least, the narrative of Obama's policies initially set out to confront this *problematique* head on. In his inaugural presidential speech, Obama pointedly rejected key elements of the Bush Doctrine. In contrast to Bush's emphasis on threat and fear, Obama spoke of "hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord" (*Obama's Inaugural Address* 2009). In rejecting unilateralism and Bush's

doctrine of pre-emption, Obama recalled "that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks, but with sturdy alliances… and [understands] that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please" (*Obama's Inaugural Address 2009*). In contrast to Bush's exhortation of American hegemony as the nation's birthright, Obama "[understands] that greatness is never a given… it must be earned" (*Obama's Inaugural Address* 2009). The language of American "responsibility" is also shifted with Obama. Whereas under Bush, America's "responsibility" was a Kantian, "civilizing" mission to enlighten the dark corners of the world with American-style liberalism, under Obama there was to be "a new era of responsibility--- a recognition that on the part of every American that we have duties to ourselves, our nations and the world" (*Obama's Inaugural Address* 2009). America's "responsibility" under Obama is a responsibility of a World Citizen to "work alongside [people of poor nations] to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and to feed hungry minds" (*Obama's Inaugural Address* 2009).

On suspending civil rights in the name of security, Obama "reject[ed] as false the choice between our safety and our ideals…our Founding Fathers drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man… those ideals still light the world and we will not give them up for expedience's sake" (*Obama's Inaugural Address* 2009). In pursuit of the "safety of the American people," Obama's White House "refuses the false division between our values and our security…the United States can be true to our values and ideals while also protecting the American people" (White House, *Guiding Principles of President Barack Obama's Foreign Policy*).

To make good on such assurances, the first foreign policy item on the Obama Administration's agenda was the announcement of two executive orders issued on the 22nd of January 2009. The first ordered the closure of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Center (The White House, *Executive Order- Review and Disposition of Individuals Detained at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base and Closure of Detention Facilities,* 2009). The second explicitly prohibited the use of torture on anyone under United States custody who is detained in armed conflicts (The White House, *Executive Order Ensuring Lawful Interrogations,* 2009). The expediency of these orders was plainly part of a larger communications strategy to clearly delineate Obama's administration from that of his predecessor. Notwithstanding the ongoing difficulties of accomplishing the former and enforcing the latter, these executive orders were at once notable for the strong message that they sent.

The call to close Guantanamo and the explicit prohibition of torture relates to Obama's (then) declared approach to combat terrorism. In a move away from Bush's hard and fast policy of non-negotiation with "evil-doers," Obama seemed to be moving toward an approach to "win hearts and minds." It is interesting to note that the current administration has largely done away with the term "War or Terror." The phrase is used sparingly in official White House documentation and in Obama's briefings or remarks. In place of the jingoism of the WOT, Obama has very carefully come at the issue (and discourse) of combating terrorism from two distinct yet complementary angles. On the one hand, Obama avoids specifically targeting Islam, "Islamists" or "Islamic fundamentalism" in the security narrative of his administration's stance against terrorism.

Instead, he issues general statements such as those against "those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents… you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you" (*Obama's Inauguration Address* 2009). In these general terms, he speaks also of "relentlessly confront[ing] violent extremists who pose a grave threat to our security—because we reject the same thing that people of all faiths reject: the killing of innocent men, women and children" (White House, *Remarks by the President on a New Beginning*, Cairo June 4 2009. aka *The Cairo Address*).

At the beginning of his now famous Cairo Address, Obama also broke from Bush's positioning of terrorism by acknowledging that tension between the United States and Muslims are

> … tensions rooted in historical forces that go beyond any current policy debate… tension fed by colonialism that denied rights and opportunities to many Muslims, and a Cold War in which Muslim-majority countries were too often treated as proxies… violent extremists have exploited these tensions in a small but potent minority of Muslims. (Obama's *Cairo Address* 2009)

Here, Obama was also careful to reject as false the idea that there is an innate rupture between America and Islam, but that instead they "overlap, and share common principles-- principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings…and that Islam has always been a part of America's story… Islam is a part of America" (*Cairo Address* 2009).

In Cairo, Obama also outlined his vision for the issues that must be dealt with in America's relations with Islam and Muslims. They include combating terrorism by "confronting violent extremism in all of its forms"; dealing with the Israel-Palestine problem by acknowledging the challenges faced by Palestinians under Israeli occupation

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and pursuing a two-state solution; pursuing the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons while recognizing the right of nations- including Iran- to pursue peaceful nuclear power "if they comply with their responsibilities under the NPT"; that democracy should be promoted but that "no system of government can or should be imposed on one nation by any other"; that religious freedom should be protected including the religious freedom of Muslims in America, because "we can't disguise hostility towards any religion behind the pretence of liberalism"; the protection of women's rights and education; and the promotion of economic development and opportunity (*Cairo Address* 2009).

In characterizing Islam, the religion, Obama does not sustain the WOT narrative that emphasized terrorism as an endpoint on a continuum of *Islamic-ness*, where the idea of "moderate" Islam implies that extremism and violence are to be expected from the ardent believers of that religion. Instead, he repeatedly asserts that the 'violent extremists" are an extremely small minority and that Islam, the religion, does not condone terrorism. Among other things, Obama says that "the partnership between America and Islam must be based upon what Islam is, not what it is not" (*Cairo Address* 2009). This shift in rhetoric might be imperceptible to many observers, but its importance to Muslims in the campaign to win back goodwill should not be underestimated.

In terms of the Obama administration's relations with Asia, a relevant departure from Bush's approach has been a return to (President) Clinton's broadly held commitment towards multilateralism in international relations. This was evidenced from the first year of the Obama administration, across different sectors and different issues. The United States has returned to the table of international and regional multilateral fora

pertaining to security, trade and the environment. The Obama administration brought these changes to US economic and trade relations with Asia, or at least to Washington's *approach* to these relations with Asia under its *Pivot Asia* policies. First and foremost, relations with East Asia in general have been notably re-prioritized by the White House under Obama. This was evidenced by the fact that Secretary of State Clinton's first foreign visit was to Asia in July of 2009 where, among other things, she signed the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) on behalf or the United States.

Another early sign of Obama's pivot to Asia was his high-profile 10-day trip to the region in November of 2009, which included stops in Japan, China, South Korea and Singapore. During that trip, Obama attended the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Singapore and afterwards attended the very first US-ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) summit. He also met with individual ASEAN leaders, and in a great departure from his predecessors, engaged Burma/Myanmar in discussions about the detention of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and the upcoming elections, which as we now know, was a prescient diplomatic move. Again, this was a show of renewed interest in the Asia-Pacific region and in multilateralism in particular. In contrast, the Bush administration was notorious for its avoidance of multilateral engagement, showing a preference for bilateral security and economic relationships in East Asia. Under Bush, Secretary Rice had snubbed several ASEAN and ASEAN Regional Forum meetings that the US had been invited to attend.

It is worth noting that the Obama Administration has expressed continued commitment to existing bilateral military and security relationships in the region. Indeed,

in January of 2010, Secretary Clinton gave a speech on American principles and priorities in the "regional architecture" of Asia, where she reaffirmed the importance of bilateral ties to the region. According to Clinton, US "engagement and leadership in the region," hinges upon the US' bilateral strategic partnerships, including those with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines (Clinton, 2010). In March of 2009, President Obama and President Arroyo of the Philippines reaffirmed their commitment to the "long-standing U.S.-Philippines alliance, including the Visiting Forces Agreement, which remains critical to the bilateral relationship and our strategic interests" (The White House, *President Obama's telephone call to President Arroyo of the Philippines* March 13 2009).

What is interesting here is that despite the marked shift in the grand narrative and rhetoric of the Obama administration, as outlined in the previous sections, Washington's core "security" relations with East Asia remain very similar to those of the preceding administration(s). While it is true that Washington's willingness to engage with Burma is probably the most revolutionary aspect of Obama's policies in East Asia, on the ground, there is nothing particularly novel about the "new regional architecture" as outlined by Secretary Clinton save for a heightened *diplomatic* emphasis on the region.

That is to say, while Obama demurs from discussing China's rise as a strategic power in the region- emphasizing instead economic relations with the regional powerhouse- it is evident that tensions continue to exist and that the region is still subject to many of the same "balance of power" issues between the US and China. Multilaterally, the status-quo of official US-Southeast Asia relations remains fairly static even though

the President is now personally attending and/or sending the Secretary of State to regional

summits instead of lower-level officials (or instead of snubbing meetings altogether).

Furthermore, bilateral alliances with Southeast Asian nations maintain top billing on

Washington's agenda, and effectively still take priority over multilateral relations.

According to Secretary Clinton, the Obama administration's principles and

priorities for the "regional architecture" still revolve around "security" and the contention

that East Asia faces an uncertain future because:

> … Asia's progress is not guaranteed. Asia is home not only to rising
> powers, but also to isolated regimes; not only to longstanding challenges,
> *but also unprecedented threats*. The dangers of nuclear proliferation,
> military competition, natural disasters, violent extremism, financial crises,
> climate change, and disease transcend national borders and pose a
> common risk… (Clinton 2010. Emphasis added)

This is a continuation of Bush's fear and uncertainty discourse, in contrast to the message

being relayed by Obama himself. The solution, according to Clinton, is that the US play

the stabilizing role of benevolent hegemon, where "the United States not only continues

to have dynamic and durable bilateral ties, but plays a central role in helping to deal with

the difficulties that individual states and this region confront" (Clinton 2010).

As such, the following points outline the apparent approach of the Obama

administration to East and Southeast Asia: first, that existing bilateral strategic

partnerships continue to be the "cornerstone of [American] regional involvement, and that

the US commitment to bilateral relationships is "entirely consistent with- and will

enhance- Asia's multilateral groupings"; second, that regional institutions, both strategic

and economic, are key to advancing US objectives; third- and this is a pointed challenge

to the loose and informal characteristics of the "ASEAN way"- that institutions must be

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effective, with clear goals, and that "concrete and pragmatic considerations" should drive the formation and operation of regional institutions; fourth, that there still needs to be "flexibility in pursuing the results we seek," which means that "where it makes sense," informal and ad hoc arrangements will sometimes be needed in specific situations (such as the Six-Party Talks on North Korea). To this end, a special Ambassadorship to ASEAN has been created to respond to these needs; and fifth, that regional institutions will be prioritized and the more "important" ones be identified, which is another way of saying that although the US officially commits to multilateralism in the region, it will not waste its time with make-work groupings that serve no immediate purpose (Clinton 2010). In short, the real change in the substance of the Obama administration's Asia policy is that they plan to show up more often. While Obama's larger security narrative and rhetoric has undergone a marked change in the messaging of the United States' place in the world, what the regional architecture action plan reveals is that for US-East Asia relations, it is still mostly business as usual.

Broadly speaking, we now have a clearer picture of Obama's security architecture in general and several notable changes have occurred since his seminal inaugural and Cairo speeches. Obama's rhetoric, we can easily concede, is markedly different from that of Bush's. But for now it is mostly in the area of rhetoric that we can observe any great shifts in Washington's approach to the world. In some ways, the *substantive* aspects of Obama's foreign policy and counter-terrorism agenda are not remarkably different from Bush's WOT. That is to say, there is an observable continuity in American policies "on the ground," at least in East and Southeast Asia. For example, bilateral security

relationships are still the most prominent feature of US engagement there. Furthermore, a discourse emphasizing fear and uncertainty still finds a place in Obama's plans for the American role in the region.

However, these threads of continuity of the WOT *are* tempered by the loftier values of understanding and multilateralism consistently evangelized by the current President. As a discursive analysis would suggest, even the "talk" can mean more than Obama's detractors would grant him. Obama has promised engagement and dialogue, where Bush promised pre-emptive strikes and non-negotiation with "evil-doers." In his Cairo address, Obama extended an olive branch to the Muslim world in a speech where he extensively and knowledgably quoted the Qur'an and emphasized the shared traditions of the Abrahamic faiths. In relations with Asia, he has personally attended ASEAN meetings and spoken directly to Southeast Asian leaders, discounted the realist preoccupation with relative gains in relation to the rise of China, and wowed Indonesian audiences with his personal knowledge of their country. He uses terms like "militant" and "extremist" rather than "Islamist" to describe terrorists. He insists on pronouncing it Ee-RAHN instead of Eye-RAN. Perhaps most interestingly of all, he rarely uses the term "war on terror." Does the demise of the term "war on terror" and a shift in the way that an American president verbally addresses the world actually signal a *substantive* change in US foreign policy? Or is a change in the discourse *by definition* a change in foreign policy?

The central question then, is this: does the security narrative of the Obama Administration actually destabilize the hegemonic security narrative of Bush's WOT? Put

another way, has Obama successfully constructed a "counter-scenario" (Lipschutz 1995)

that will, once and for all, undermine the plausibility of Bush's WOT? The attempted

terrorist attack against a US passenger plane by Nigerian national, Umar Farouk

Abdulmutallab, on December 25 2009 could be seen as a litmus test of Obama's resolve

in constructing a plausible "counter-scenario" to Bush's WOT. Faced with the reality of a

system-wide intelligence and security failure and the fact that the so-called "underwear

bomber" could have succeeded in his goal to detonate explosives onboard an aircraft in

American airspace, Obama's rhetoric noticeably shifted gears. In this instance,

Abdulmutallab was not a "violent extremist," he was most definitely a "terrorist" (The

White House, *Remarks By President Obama on Strengthening Intelligence and Aviation*

Security, January 7 2010). In his remarks in response to the attempted attack, Obama's

use of language revealed a much more hard-line sentiment than in any of his previous

statements regarding the threat of terrorism:

> … We are at war. We are at war against al Qaeda, a far-reaching network
> of violence and hatred that attacked us on 9/11, that killed nearly 3,000
> innocent people, and that is plotting to strike us again. And we will do
> whatever it takes to defeat them… (The White House, *Remarks by*
> *President Obama on Strengthening Intelligence and Aviation Security,*
> January 7 2010)

In the same breath, however, Obama hammers home his consistent message of

reconciliation with the Muslim world and staying true to American values by asserting

that

> … here at home, we will strengthen our defenses, but we will not succumb
> to a siege mentality that sacrifices the open society and liberties and values
> that we cherish as Americans... We will define the character of our
> country, not some band of small men intent on killing innocent men,
> women and children… That's what it means to be strong in the face of

> violent extremism. That's how we will prevail in this fight. And that's how we will protect our country and pass it -- safer and stronger -- to the next generation. (The White House, *Remarks by President Obama on Strengthening Intelligence and Aviation Security,* January 7 2010)

This brings us back to the broader question: does the security narrative of the Obama administration successfully destabilize the hegemonic security narrative of Bush's WOT? When we consider that the practice of security requires the definition of threats, along with the identification of the referent objects/subjects that must be "secured," it becomes easier to assess the ways in which Obama's security narrative may or may not be different from Bush's.

What Obama's security narrative has introduced- at least discursively- is a new referent of security: the "open society and liberties and values that we cherish as Americans." These values were among the casualties of Bush's WOT. In *naming* those values as objects to be "secured" and in constructing the idea that the *loss* of those values is something to fear, Obama has suggested a plausible counter-scenario for how "security" can now be understood in the context of combating terrorism.

In so far as his policies have actually reflected this however, the degree to which this "counter-scenario" is successfully constructed remains to be seen. Osama bin Laden is now dead, killed extra-judicially in a Navy Seal operation in Abbottabad on May 2 2011, in Pakistani sovereign space. Guantanamo is still open and "enhanced" interrogation tactics continue to be defended by members of the American defence and intelligence establishments with impunity. Drone warfare has killed thousands of innocent people in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and continues to be deployed by the Obama administration despite its illegality from an international law perspective. Further, Obama

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has not only demurred from rolling back the assault on civil liberties brought by Bush's Patriot Act, he has further increased executive privilege in this regard. And in East and Southeast Asia, Washington continues to support and legitimize repressive regimes. The real question is: to what extent does the change in Obama's security narrative have an impact on the way in which Washington's "business as usual" relations with the region actually manifest themselves? Does the talk, *by definition*, alter the action? While the WOT security narrative allowed for a variety of insecurities to be instantiated, we must now wonder what role Obama's counter-narratives may be playing in deflecting attention away from the continued insecurities brought forth by the continuation of the WOT. These are exciting questions for future research in this area and would surely benefit from an immanent critique approach rooted in a weak ontological critical security analysis, which is what I have both advocated for and executed in this dissertation.

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