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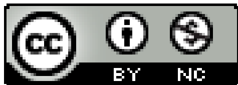

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1 | Introduction

Analyzing Greenland in Arctic Security

Marc Jacobsen, Ole Wæver, and Ulrik Pram Gad

Analyzing the Greenland Security Configuration

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Securitization Theory in Arctic International Relations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Securitization Theory: The Basics

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

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

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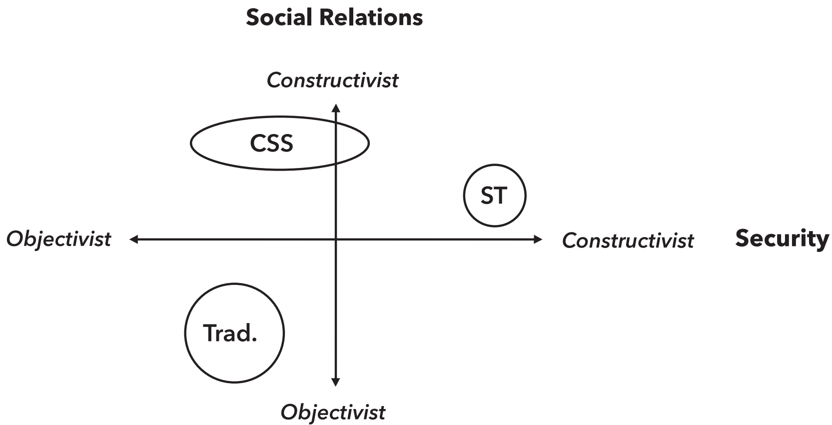

Fig. 1.1. Approaches to security studies. Adapted from *From Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde. Copyright © 1998 by Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., used with permission of the publisher.

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

Speech Acts of Security, and Desecuritization

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

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

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

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

Freezing a Referent Object

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

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

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

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

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

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

Aggregating Securitizations: Sectors, Dynamics, Configurations, Complexes

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

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

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

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

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

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

Securitization: A European Theory on Tour

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Arctic as a Destination on the Securitization Theory World Tour

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Arctic Security Configurations

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

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

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

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

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

Greenland between Regional Security Complexes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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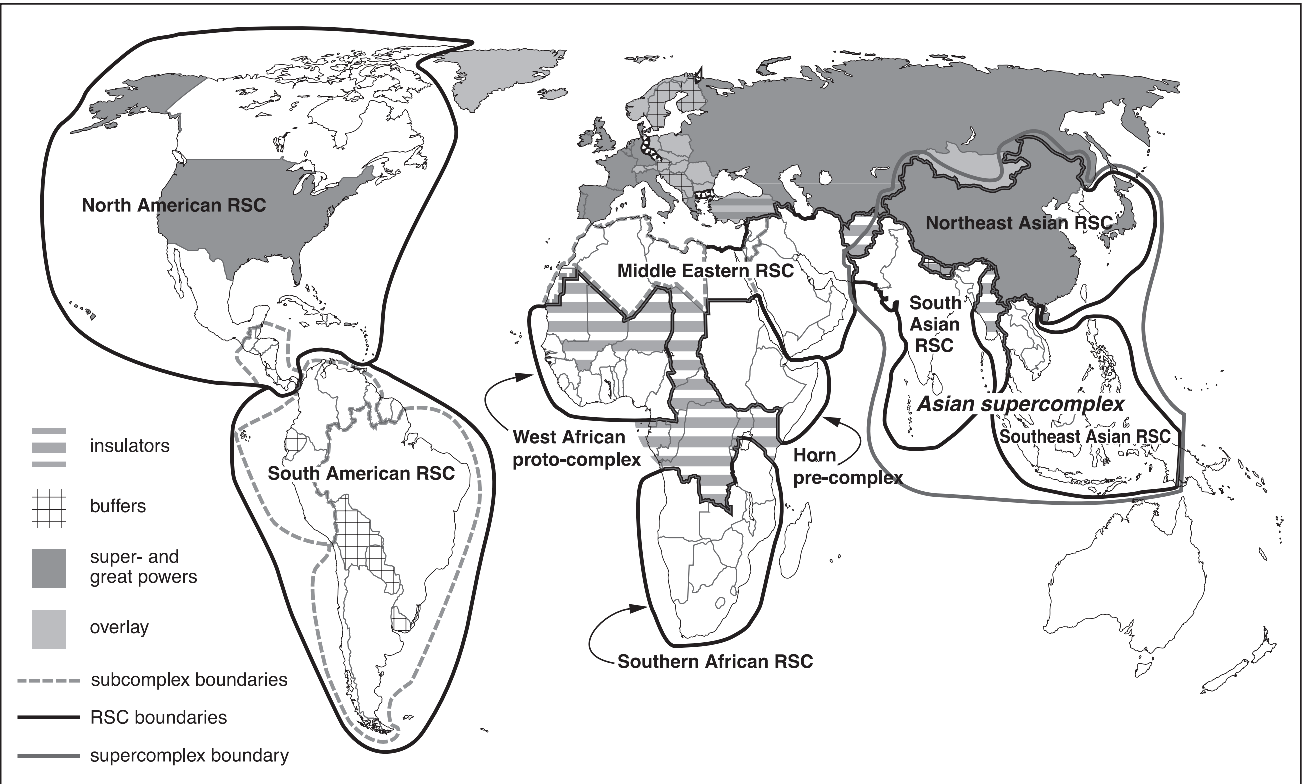

Map 1.1. Patterns of regional security during the Cold War. The legend marks Greenland as "overlayed."

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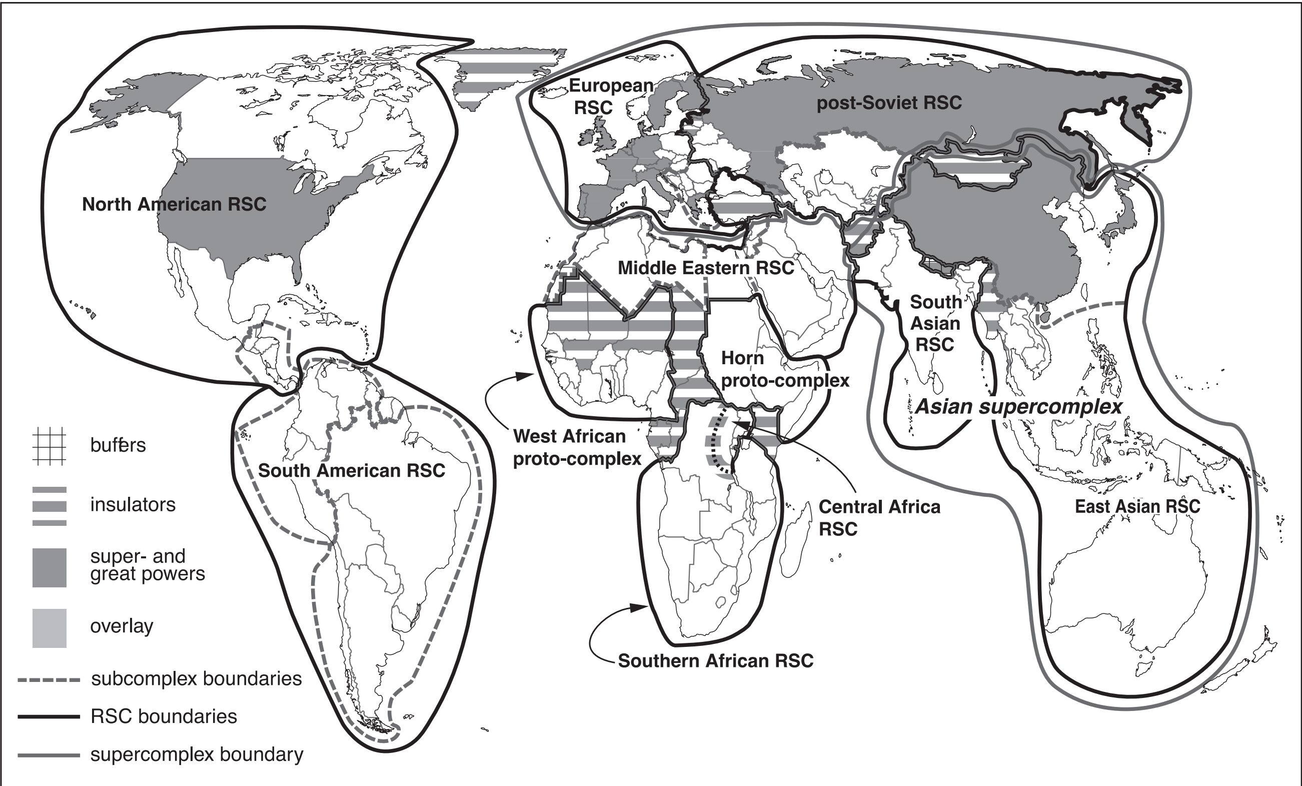

Map 1.2. Patterns of regional security in the post-Cold War period. The legend marks Greenland as "insulator."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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NOTES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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