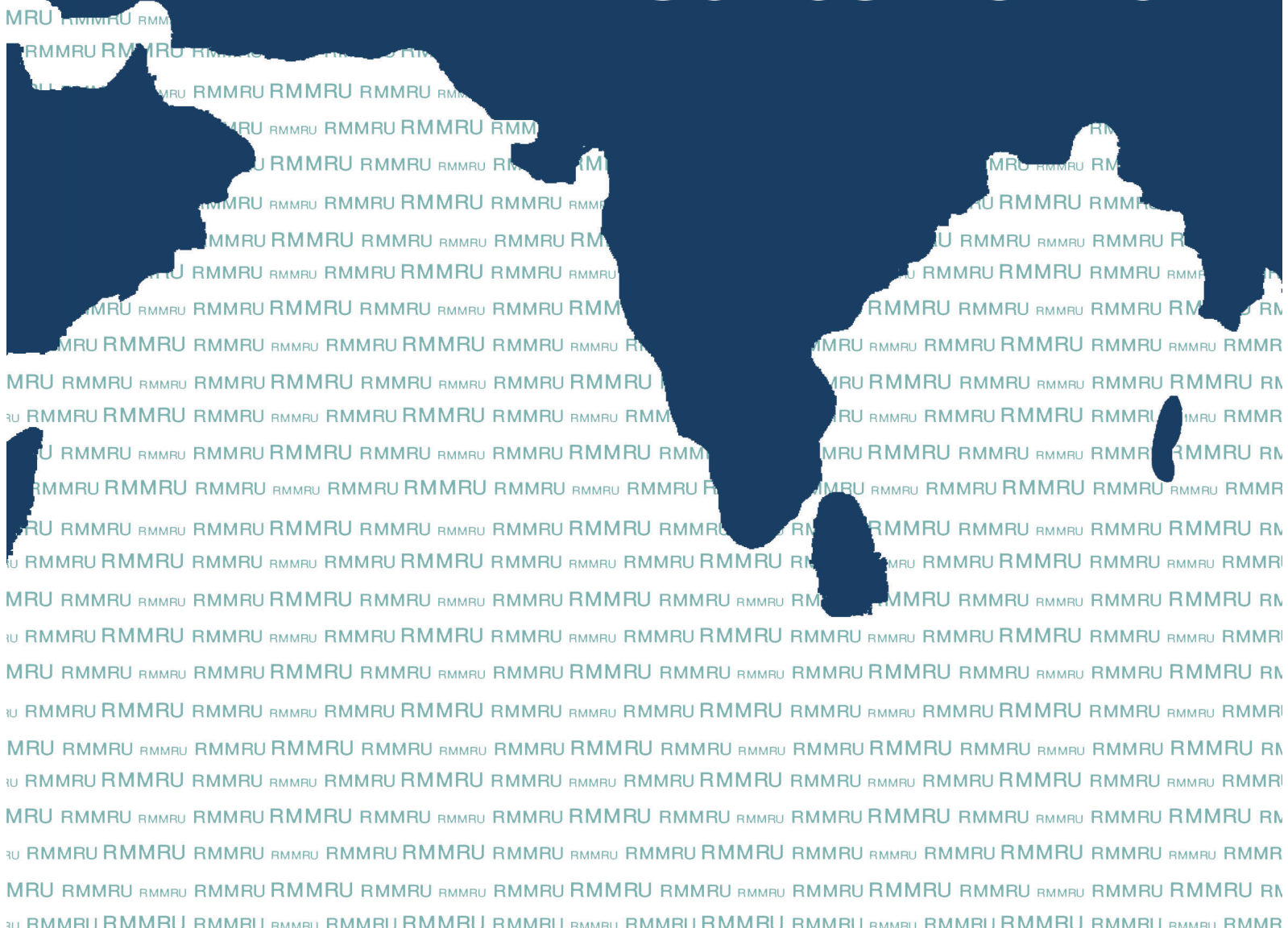




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Migration as a Non-Traditional Security Issue: Securitization and Beyond

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Migration as a Non-Traditional Security Issue: Securitization and Beyond

Introduction

In the post Cold War era, the discipline of International Relations has witnessed a number of attempts to redefine “security” in innovative ways which included both “widening” the security agenda and “deepening” the definition of security. Security studies thus rapidly moved away from its traditional state centric and military security oriented approach to a broader discourse where a wide range of military and non-military issues (and sometimes their combination) were identified as threatening the security of the state, society and even the individuals. On one hand, authors like Mohammad Ayub, Bary Buzan, Ole Wæver, Michel T. Klairé or Thomas F. Homer-Dixon pointed out that security and stability of the states can be threatened by a variety of issues apart from military attack by another state and on the other, Ken Booth, Richard Wyn Jones and later, Ole Wæver sought to move beyond the traditional focus on the state as the only referent object of security.

It is within this emerging discourse that population movement, and more particularly, cross-border migration, has been treated as a security concern along with other “non-traditional” issues like environmental degradation, human rights violation, cross-border criminal activities, proliferation of small arms, repression of minority groups and decline of political institutions.

Treatment of migration as a non-traditional security issue, according to Jef Huysmans, discursively constructs migration as a threefold danger in that it posits ‘existential threats’ to the welfare system, to the public order, and to the cultural identity of the community/nation.¹ Indeed, a dominant trend in the arguments regarding migration and security emphasizes that large-scale population movements across borders by refugees or other migrants can affect the cohesion of societies and generate social and political conflict both within and between countries.² As such, the major focus has been on treating population movement as an additional threat to security of the states/societies rather than broadening the security agenda to incorporate the security concerns of the migrants, refugees or the other displaced people. Such treatment hardly captures the level of sufferings, pain and anguish of the people on the move, which completely compromises their individual or collective sense of security. On the contrary, perceiving migration as a non-traditional security issue may in fact facilitate “securitization” of migration and thus posing it as an existential threat to a designated referent object like the state or the society. Widening of security agenda to include migration thus may stall the project of broadening the meaning of security towards “emancipation of individuals from those constraints that stop them carrying out what freely they would choose to do, of which war, poverty, oppression, and poor education are a few”.³ If migration is perceived as an expression of individual’s freedom of choice then securitization can indeed curtail that freedom.

This paper seeks to critically analyze the treatment of migration a non-traditional security issue from the perspective of securitization and attempts to provide a conceptual outline for desecuritizing it. It argues that a focus on the insecurity dynamics of migration reinforces and even constructs a particular pattern of Foucaultian “power-knowledge nexus” that alienates migrants as individuals from the framework of security and depicts them as sources rather than victims of insecurity. Such treatment also undermines the positive implications of migration for international security and stability, highlighting which can significantly facilitate any project of desecuritization.

Security: Traditional and Non-Traditional

The end of Cold War marked a turning point of national and international security thinking. Following the end of this ideological confrontation, several scholars within the discipline of Security Studies have advocated redefining the very concept of security itself. Barry Buzan's depiction of security as an "essentially contested concept" indeed captures the post Cold War trends in Security Studies that attempted to refocus and reorient the notion and objects of security to understand the new patterns of threats emerging in the post Cold War era. The debate between the traditionalists, i.e. those who continued to explain security predominantly in military and state-centric terms, and non-traditionalists, i.e. those who sought to broaden the security agenda and/or deepen its meanings and implications, thus turned into a predominant concern of Security Studies.

The non-traditional authors questioned, in albeit varying manners, some of the basic assumptions of the traditional security studies (TSS) regarding the referent object and goals of security as well as the identification of the sources of insecurity. Departing from the "statism" of TSS or the perception of state as a unitary and coherent entity (and also the principal one) in international politics, the non-traditional security (NTS) scholars sought to "open-up" the state to understand its actual security concerns. They, however, differed significantly in identifying the referent object — while some argued that the conceptual focus should be placed on individuals,⁴ others have suggested that the apposite focus is society, particularly some notion of civil society.⁵ Yet others have proposed that societal identities, particularly ethno-national and religious, are crucial referents for conceptualizing security.⁶

Secondly, NTS scholars have also questioned Security Studies' sole occupation with ensuring state survival. Ole Wæver's conceptualization of Societal Security thus emphasizes on the importance of a society's dominant pattern of identities for ensuring its survival. Barry Buzan in his famous formulations about security uses the word 'security' to highlight the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their identity and their functional integrity against forces of change, which they see as hostile. Authors like Norman Myers, Michael Renner and Neville Brown identified the crucial importance of a sustainable ecological system which ultimately underpin all our socioeconomic activities and hence our political stability. Another group of NTS scholars present an even broader understanding of security where the individual, rather than the state, becomes the ultimate object of security. One of the most prominent advocates of making individuals the main object of security is Ken Booth. In his seminal article "Security and Emancipation", Booth argued that states at best can be the means for providing security but ultimately it is only with reference to individuals that the notion of security has any meaning: "It is illogical therefore to privilege the security of the means as opposed to the security of ends."⁷ Thus, for him, the goal of security is to ultimately ensure the emancipation of individuals.

Thirdly, the NTS authors have been instrumental in pointing out a wide range of sources of insecurity rather than only sticking to threats of military attacks by enemy states. By rejecting the unitary concept of state, authors like Mohammad Ayub, Barry Buzan showed that state survival can be equally challenged by the internal vulnerabilities and instabilities like ethnic conflicts, religious riots, economic collapse, failure of political institutions etc.⁸ Buzan precisely identifies threats to security as emanating from five main sectors: political, societal, economic, environmental, and military. *Military security* concerns the two-level interplay of the armed

offensive and defensive capabilities of states, and states perceptions of each other's intentions. *Political security* concerns the organizational stability of states, systems of government, and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. *Economic security* concerns access to the resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power. *Societal security* concerns the ability of the societies to reproduce their traditional patterns of language, culture, association, and religious and national identity and custom within acceptable conditions for evolution. *Environmental security* concerns the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprise depend. Each of these defines a focal point within the security problematique, and a way of ordering priorities, but all are woven together in a strong web of linkages.⁹ Other NTS authors also brought forward the importance of threats that are non-military in nature. Various non-military issues can be a threat by themselves and can also induce intra-state and even inter-state conflicts. Thomas F. Homer-Dixon's study sought to establish a linkage between environment and violent social conflicts that in turn undermine state security.¹⁰ Ole Wæver argued that non-military issue like migration can threaten the dominant identity pattern of a society and hence undermine societal security.¹¹ Table 1.1 summarizes these principal differences between the traditional and non-traditional schools.

Table 1.1 Traditional and Non-Traditional Schools of Security Studies

	Traditional	Non-Traditional
Referent Object	Static: State as a Unitary Actor	Variable, depending on Time, Location and Issues — State, Society, Societal Identities (Ethno-national, Religious), Individuals.
Goal	Ensuring State Survival by Preserving Political Independence and Territorial Integrity.	a) State Survival by ensuring the Survival of its Society, Political Institutions or Its environment; b) Survival of Society as separate from State; c) Emancipation of Individuals from Constraints like War, Poverty or Oppression.
Sources of Insecurity	Violence/Aggression organized by other State or States, predominantly by Military Means.	Internal Instabilities (like, Intra-State Conflicts), Non-Military Issues (like, Environmental Degradation, Migration), Non-State Actors (like the Terrorist Organizations), the Government and even the State.

Studying Migration as a Security Issue:

The study of migration as a security issue essentially focuses on the destabilizing effect of cross-border population movement that can undermine stability by generating conflict (both inter and intra state), facilitating terrorism and international criminal activities and also by raising subjective threat perceptions of receiving societies regarding their dominant pattern of ethnic, religious or other identities.

Migration as a Societal Security Issue

In their formulations about Societal Security, Buzan and Ole Wæver identified the importance of a society's identity in the security discourse. Whereas state security is concerned about threats to its sovereignty (if the state loses its sovereignty it will not survive as a state), societal security is concerned about threats to a society's identity (if a society loses its identity it will not survive as a society).¹² Threats to societal security can occur when societies perceive that that its 'we' identity is being put in danger. This identity is culturally constructed and can be ethnic, national or religious. A society's identity can be threatened by a range of factors, from the suppression of its expression to the interference with its ability to reproduce itself. Paul Roe further identified the existence of 'societal security dilemma' where the actions of one society, in trying to increase its societal security (strengthening its own identity), causes a reaction in a second society, which in the end, decreases its (the first society's) own societal security (weakens its own identity).¹³

In conceptualizing *Societal Security*, Buzan, Wæver and Japp de Wilde identified that migration can be viewed as an important source of threat/risk by the societies. They argued that influxes of population from another community with different identity might change the identity of the receiving community by a shift in the composition of population and hence can be perceived as a threat to the latter's identity.¹⁴ The cultural concept of identity indeed defines a community's sense of exclusion/inclusion and if migration violates such cultural norms, it is quickly identified as a threat to basic values of the society and in that sense is perceived as a threat to national security.¹⁵ Norms of indigenouness and nativism can be particularly threatened by unwanted flow of migration and hence can constitute a threat to societal security. James Hollifield argued in this respect,

"Unlike trade in goods or international financial flows, migration can alter the population and disrupt what Rey Koslowski has aptly described as the "demographic maintenance regime." If too many foreigners reside on the national territory, then it may become difficult for a state to identify its population vis-à-vis other states. The national community itself may feel threatened, and there may be a social or political backlash against immigration."¹⁶

Samuel Huntington's recent article on threats to American culture and identity from the continuous inflow of Hispanic communities is a clear manifestation of such constructed perception of societal security. In the words of Huntington, "the single most immediate and most serious challenge to America's traditional identity comes from the immense and continuing immigration from Latin America, especially from Mexico, and the fertility rates of these immigrants compared to black and white American natives."¹⁷ Huntington identified that Hispanic migration is threatening the core American values like English language, Christianity or the English concepts of the rule of law.

Migration as a Source of Conflict, Terrorism and Crime

Myron Weiner, from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), was one of the first to transform migration into a security issue. According to him, it is important to examine “the ways in which international population movements create conflicts within and between states” and that “A study of these effects is necessary to understand why states and their citizens often have an aversion to international migration even when there are economic benefits.”¹⁸ Weiner identified five broad categories of situations when refugees or migrants are perceived as a threat:

1. when refugees and migrants are regarded as a threat - or at least a thorn - in relations between sending and receiving countries, a situation, which arises when refugees and migrants are opposed to the regime of their home country;
2. when migrants and/or refugees are perceived as a political threat or security risk to the regime of the host country;
3. when immigrants are seen as a cultural threat;
4. when they are perceived as a source social and economic problem for the host society;
5. when the host society uses immigrants as an instrument of threat against the country of origin.¹⁹

Following Weiner, Krebs and Levy also cited a similar set of conditions to illustrate the nexus between migration and international conflicts:

1. migrants influencing host governments to pursue aggressive policies vis-à-vis their country of origin;
2. mistreatment of migrants can lead their country of origin to seek to intervene on their behalf;
3. discrimination by a receiving country in terms of permitting/forbidding migration from other countries;
4. migrants getting involved in terrorist activities, illegal weapon smuggling, drug trafficking and so on.²⁰

Some authors have also viewed migration as an agent of changing the nature of conflict. Brian Nichiporuk from the RAND for example, argued that migration has increased the size, visibility, and impact of ethnic diasporas and within these diasporas, activist groups can become a strategic asset for their home nations and territories. In extreme cases, rival diasporas might engage in violent conflict in their host countries to advance the causes of their home states.²¹

The 9/11 terrorist attacks have significantly aggravated the image of the migrants as destabilizing agents. The fact that all of the 9/11 attackers were in the United States on temporary visas and all of them belonged to a particular religious-identity group severely reinforced the migrant threat perception, particularly in the Western world. Along with the resurgence of anti-immigrant laws and policies in states all around the world, various academic studies and think-tank reports were instrumental in expressing concerns over the nexus between the migrants and international terrorist and criminal organizations and its detrimental impact on international security. Audrey Kurth Cronin, for example, pointed out that freer movement of people across boundaries is enabling terrorists to carry out attacks much more easily and potentially evade captures. It is also aiding the development of a dispersed financial and ideological support base for the terrorist groups.²² An article in the *Parameters*, US Army War College Quarterly asserted

“Just as the human body’s lymphatic system provides a stream for the spread of lethal cancer cells, so too can the global stream of human smuggling and illegal migration carry the agents of global terrorism.”²³ Similarly, at the policy level, countering terrorism has often been equated to excluding, monitoring, detaining, and deporting the immigrants.

Securitization: Deconstructing the Migration-Security Nexus

The dominant trends in study of migration as a non-military security, deliberately or unintentionally, essentialize the identity of the migrants as the “threatening others”. By constantly focusing on discovering the straight-forward linkages between population movement and security threats, policy-makers, media, academicians and researchers indeed constructs a generalized image of all migrants as a source of insecurity. Writers of the Copenhagen School, particularly Ole Wæver, were one of the firsts who sought to move beyond such essentialization by seeking to uncover the very security dynamics that turned migration into a ‘security issue’. The introduction of the concept of securitization brought in a critical dimension to the whole debate over migration-security nexus. According to Wæver, securitization basically denotes representation of an issue as an existential threat by a ‘speech act’ in which the sheer utterance of ‘threat’ constitutes the action that establishes an issue as a matter of security and hence justifies all actions outside the normal bounds of politics to deal with it. As Michel C. Williams observed,

“In securitization theory, “security” is treated not as an objective condition but as the outcome of a specific social process: the social construction of security issues (who or what is being secured, and from what) is analyzed by examining the “securitizing speech-acts” through which threats become represented and recognized. Issues become “securitized,” treated as security issues, through these speech-acts which do not simply describe an existing security situation, but bring it into being as a security situation by successfully representing it as such.”²⁴

Securitization process is initiated by the securitizing actors who “speak” security on behalf of particular referent object/objects. The Copenhagen School considers that there are no finite criteria regarding who can (or cannot) speak security. No actor conclusively holds the power of securitization. Nevertheless, in a hierarchical society, some actors occupy positions of power and are more likely to be accepted voices of security. Typical examples are political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, media, lobbyists, and pressure groups. In theory, any securitizing actor can “securitize” any “threat” to any “referent object”. In reality, however, when such an actor presents something as “threatening”, the “securitizing move” will only be successful if the claim gains successful resonance among a particular audience legitimizing “emergency measures.” Thus, securitization is an intersubjective process and it is not left to the securitizing actor alone to define the threat at its discretion. Buzan and Wæver held that conditions for successful speech-act leading to successful securitization can be divided into two categories, internal and external. The internal conditions are linguistic-grammatical: the speech act must follow the grammar of security, *i.e.* contain a plot involving a clear and present existential threat to survival, a point of no return, etc. The external conditions are contextual and social. They involve the position and social capital of the securitizing actors and the ability of the enunciator to link the securitizing move with certain ‘objects’ generally considered threatening.²⁵ In context of the logic of survival that securitization essentially entails, Jef Huysmans specified four elements that turns a threat into security:

1. “the referent object is subjected to a process of anthropomorphisation, it acquires human like qualities and therefore becomes legitimately concerned with survival;
2. threats acquire a quality of urgency;
3. threats demand of agents a special degree of vigilance;
4. threats are staged on a play of war, which means that war operates as an arch-metaphor in the bottom-line game of survival.”²⁶

While the conditions of securitization set limits to the scope of security agenda, treating security as a speech act also helps to understand its almost indefinite extension. Many authors have expressed concern that the approach of securitization itself can facilitate this process. However, this paper conceives the securitization approach more as a method of understanding the social construction of non-military security agenda rather than a part of that constructed discourse. Indeed, Wæver was aware about the potential dangers of securitizing non-military issues and hence extending the security agenda. As Sarah Léonard pointed out “Indeed, they (the writers of the Copenhagen School) do not share the traditional perspective which considers security the opposite of insecurity and which holds that ‘the more security, the better’.”²⁷

The most critical danger associated with securitization concerns the very nature of the word “security” itself that is inextricably connected with the concepts like state sovereignty and state-survival. Thus, authors like Jef Huysmans and Daniel Deudney pointed out attaching a “security tag” to non-military issues like environment or migration can lead to a militarized and confrontation-oriented approach or a logic of war and enemy construction in dealing with those issues. In other words, inclusion of “non-traditional” issues in the security agenda might create/extend the scope for conventional, militarized security responses, particularly on part of the state agencies, as states are privileged actors in the securitization process and tend to use military means to answer security problems. Deudney thus argued in context of environment-security nexus that environmental problems cannot be solved via the national security mindset and that indeed this very mindset is inimical to the development of “environmental awareness and action”.²⁸ Wæver acknowledged this problem of including non-military issues as security issues through securitization: “Security, as with any concept, carries with it a history and a set of connotations that it cannot escape. At the heart of the concept we still find something to do with defense and the state. As a result, addressing an issue in security terms still evokes an image of threat–defense, allocating to the state an important role in addressing it. This is not always an improvement.”²⁹ But even then Wæver pointed out, “analysts are justified in broadening security precisely because politicians already use the term in relation to problems that are nonmilitary in character but are still regarded as existential threats to the political order—the state.”³⁰ So widening of security agenda from the perspective of securitization serves a crucial analytical purpose — understanding the constructed aspects of the perceived non-military threats to the states and societies. Other authors, however, criticized non-traditional security analysts for reasserting the securitized image of the migrants as a source of instability. Maggie Ibrahim, criticizing Myron Weiner’s formulations regarding migration and security held that for example, even though Weiner is a liberal academic “who began his inquiry of migration by analysing the costs and benefits of migration in the 1970s..., his attempt to take issue with the impacts of demographic trends on international security creates a schema which reasserts the fact that migrants cause instability.”³¹

Applying the securitization framework, migration-security nexus could be understood as a “power-knowledge” “that brings together threats from different sectors (terrorism, crime, unemployment etc.) in the image of the immigrant”.³² It involves the construction of a societal

discourse that links together various day to day social threats like arms smuggling, drug trafficking, terrorism with the image of immigrant as the nexus of all fears. Professionals of security, law-makers and politicians try to project (through media and statistics, for example) that not only is the number of immigrants increasing, thus endangering the integrative capacities of the society, but also they are perpetrators of criminal deeds like pick pocketing, stealing, raping etc. The process effectively links subjective identity concerns of a society with “objectively existing dangers” and extends to include existential threats to the state. Thus interplay between state and societal security ultimately shapes the nexus.

Ceyhan and Tsoukala argued that the process of securitizing migration involves a corpus of rhetorical arguments that are usually articulated around four main axes:

1. “a socio-economic axes, where migration is associated with unemployment, the rise of informal economy, the crisis of welfare state and urban environment deterioration
2. a securitarian axis, where migration is linked to the loss of a control narrative that associates the issue of sovereignty, borders and both internal and external security
3. an identitarian axis, where migrants are considered as being a threat to the host societies’ national identity and demographic equilibrium
4. a political axis, where anti-immigrant, racist, and xenophobic discourses are often expected to facilitate the obtaining of political benefits.”³³

The authors rightly pointed that all these axes represented a discourse of ambivalence and subjectivity. The arguments of the socio-economic axis often emphasizes on the negative impact of illegal immigration on employment opportunities and wages for local people. While such arguments often gains considerable support of the local audience and presents the migrants as the “threatening others,” they tend to overlook “the fact that the influx of such a cheap and easily exploitable labor force allows the achievement of certain short-term economic goals, such as reduction of production costs, increase of exports, the economic survival or even the development of many firms.”³⁴ In other words, the economic “pull” factor behind both legal and illegal migration is almost deliberately overlooked, so also the migrants’ contribution to host countries’ economies. The presentation of migrants as threat to internal security readily links them with a broad range of criminal phenomenon including petty crimes like pick pocketing, theft to organized crimes like money-laundering, drug-trafficking and fundamentalist terrorism. This linkage is reinforced by various kinds of government statistical data like those showing increased crime rate in migrant inhabited regions or an overall rise in the national crime rate during a period of increased inflow of migrants. Such data are often used by various securitizing actors such as the politicians, police and media for legitimizing political control and institutional funding, avoiding responsibilities or simply for appealing to popular sentiments which often remain suspicious towards the “foreigners”. While emphasizing on the criminal-migrant nexus, such discourse tends to completely overlook the socio-economic deprivation, discrimination and injustice of and against the migrants, which leave them vulnerable to exploitation by criminal networks. Such exploitation also often affects the marginalized and vulnerable groups of the host societies alike. Similarly, the identitarian axis presents the migrants as “cultural others” and “shapes the migrants relation to the (host) society in a conflictual way.”³⁵ On the political axis, the politicians often demonize migration in order to secure electoral gains and legitimize coercive political actions.

Ceyhan and Tsoukala’s arguments clearly reveal the essentially constructed nature of the “migrant threat perception.” Arguments along all of the four axes basically represent subjective

interpretations regarding the migrants' linkage with destabilizing forces which are constructed by the interaction between political and institutional interests and a society's deep seeded fears about the culturally alien others. The securitization approach thus provides a dynamic method of studying migration as security issue, which goes beyond identifying the existence of objective linkages between population movement and insecurity.

Migration as a Micro-Level Human Security Issue

The evolving agenda of *Human Security* primarily concerns variety of threats to the survival of individuals, rather than the state and the society. The first major statement concerning human security appeared in the 1994 *Human Development Report*, an annual publication of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). "The concept of security," the report argues, "has for too long been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of nuclear holocaust....Forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives."³⁶ The scope of this definition is vast. As, Ronal Paris noted, "virtually any kind of unexpected or irregular discomfort could conceivably constitute a threat to one's human security."³⁷ Authors on *Human Security* usually points out seven specific elements that comprise human security: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security.³⁸ The principal referent object in all seven elements remains the individual.

Surprisingly enough, even while focusing on individuals, the UNDP promoted notion of human security also treats migration as a threat alongside narcotics production and trafficking, international terrorism and environmental degradation. But as Maggie Ibrahim rightly pointed out, "In terms of migration, the populations that *are* at risk are the migrants who move across borders to escape war, persecution, and hunger" and thus according her, the basic question facing the new UNDP sponsored paradigm of human security is "Whose 'human security' is to be first protected, the citizen or the migrant?"³⁹ This contradiction within the human security agenda in fact points out an inherent problem in the language of security, particularly the state-centrism it inevitably entails, where the interests of the state in the discourse of security ultimately supersede the interests of the individual.

Desecuritizing Migration

Concerned about the dangers of framing more and more issues in the language of security, the writers of the Copenhagen school advocated "desecuritization" as a more effective and democratic way of handling various socio-political and economic issues. Desecuritization basically denotes removing issues from the realm of security and thus to render it more amenable to cooperative dialogues.⁴⁰ Thus, while securitization as an approach of understanding security can reveal the socio-political and economic dynamics involved in transforming migration into a security issue, desecuritization can help bring the issue back into the sphere of normal politics.

Desecuritization, in reality, necessitates a complex process of alternative agenda setting and generating socio-political consensus around such agenda. Jef Huysmans pointed out three specific strategies of desecuritization in context of migration: objectivist, constructivist and deconstructivist.⁴¹ The objectivist strategy perceives that security has an objective content against which subjective notions of threat will be either real or illusionary. Thus, the emphasis of the objectivist strategy would be on highlighting that migration is not actually a security problem;

rather that it can have various positive implications for the host countries' economy and society. Such a strategy can also focus on the objectively existing threats against the migrants themselves and thereby question the practice of "blaming the victim." However, Huysmans also pointed out that the objectivist strategy reproduces the native-migrant dichotomy and hence leaves scope for strengthening the very basis of securitization logic — the depiction of the migrants as the essential others.

The constructivist strategy of desecuritization highlights the very process of securitization that turns migration into a security issue. In other words, the emphasis here is on "the social construction of insecurity — how it is that the migrant, as Huysmans describes it, becomes part of a 'security drama'."⁴² The goal here is to understand the securitization process in order to handle that very process effectively. However, the changing social realities can undermine such a strategy as the changes can create a critical gap between handling and understanding securitization.

The deconstructivist strategy aims at a rather radical goal of constructing an alternative narrative regarding the migrants in such a manner that is not the recounting of a security drama. Huysmans described it as "telling a story in a particular way" that helps to produce and reproduce the social world.⁴³ The alternative discourse should subordinate the label "migrant" to plurality of other more "everyday identity markers" such as a women, teacher, mechanic or family member and avoid associating migrants with any perception of "otherness" or separateness. Exploring and pointing out the insecurities faced by the migrants which are also objectively existent for the vulnerable groups in the host societies can play an important role in identifying the migrants as part of the greater "insecurity discourse." A human security agenda, broader than the one articulated by the UNDP, can help to locate the necessary set of linkages between migration and security. This can be achieved by identifying the traumas and sufferings of the migrants both during their movement from one state to another and during their stay and settlement in the countries of destination. All migrants are susceptible to negative reactions in host countries— be it in the form of xenophobia, racism, discrimination or other forms of intolerance. Perceiving migrants as threat to societal stability or economic opportunities leads to coercive reaction on part of the host community and migrants fall pray to abuse, torture and unequal treatment. Such treatment can violate all seven elements human security and hence turn the migrant population into a highly insecure population group. This is particularly true for the irregular migrants as they remain devoid of any security/protection assurance both from the states of origin and states of destination. An alternative security discourse more sensitive to the insecurities of the migrants can support a process of developing social consciousness about the stereotyping associated with securitization of migration. Thus, by going beyond the migrant-native dichotomy, the strategy can effectively de-legitimize any securitization project aiming the "alien" migrants. While deconstructivist strategy has clearly been favored by most of the authors writing on desecuritization (like Huysmans, Aradu or Paul Roe), a fundamental problem lies with the very concept of identity that it seeks to deconstruct. Construction of identities in the dialectics between reciprocally opposing self and the other clearly undermines desecuritization through deconstruction for as Rens van Munster identified, "For if one accepts, if only tacitly, that identity is always constituted through an antagonistic relationship with the other, it becomes unclear how one can envisage desecuritized ways of mediating belonging between self and other."⁴⁴ Without overcoming this fundamental dilemma, any articulation of a desecuritized identity "will automatically lead to the institutionalisation of a new, yet equally absolute, difference."⁴⁵ Thus, it will still remain difficult to overcome the dichotomizations, like that between migrants and natives, inherent in a society identity discourse.

Conclusion

The relationship between migration and security is shaped by essentially complex patterns of socio-political and institutional interactions. Depiction of migrants as an objectively existing source of instability and insecurity presents a rather simplified picture of the actual interplay between politico-economic interests and deep-seeded societal fears about the “alienness” of the migrants that constructs and reproduces the migration-security nexus. The concept of securitization developed by the Copenhagen school creates scopes for looking beyond the simple cause and effect linkages between migration and security and questioning the essentialization of the migrant identity involved in the process. The securitization framework perceives security as a social construction through “speech act” where, securitizing moves seek to find resonance among the audiences to justify emergency measures. Successful securitization can legitimize “emergency measures” like border control or other tighter immigration policies to deal with the “insecurities” resulting from migration and can result in increased discrimination, injustice and even harassment and abuse against the migrants.

Identifying the potential dangers of securitization, the Copenhagen School authors unambiguously advocated desecuritization as the ultimate long-range option to deal with the inter-subjectively constructed threats to the society. Desecuritization or normalization of threats previously constructed as extraordinary, is however a complicated process, which seeks to replace the “logic of war and of enemy construction” deeply inherent in any project of securitization with a logic of accommodation. Desecuritization of migration can be achieved by objectivist, constructivist and deconstructivist strategies. However, ultimately the desecuritization process can be successful by dealing with the deep-seeded societal threat perceptions about the migrants as the “other” and hence should aim at embedding migration in everyday practices: the migrant would no longer be the ultimate enemy, but just another person, facing problems like the rest of ‘us’. Successful desecuritization cannot only facilitate a more “secure” movement of population but also can reconstruct social ethics of security as different from traditional constructions relying on perpetual threat perceptions of the “alien others.”

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