The Stuff of International Relations? Process philosophy as meta-theoretical reflection on security, territory and authority

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Abstract
This paper offers first a meta-theoretical reflection on IR's ontological point of departure, i.e., in brief, what's the stuff of IR? With the help of process philosophy, that question could be dichotomized as a question of "substance vs. process", "things vs. activities", "verbs vs. nouns". A cursory reading of IR reveals that the language of IR has been one of substances, things, and nouns (a.k.a. "units" in IR *lingua*). IR's static ontology projects the world as composed of discrete, self-identical things, and that these things are primary to process. In the second part of the paper I put process philosophy to use and recast the ontology of three concepts central to the idea of the international: security, territory and authority. These concepts will thus be read as activities rather than things, as verbs rather than nouns. I ask less what these concepts "are" *in* the world and more what they "do" *to* the world. The advantage of a focus on securitization, territorialization and authorization are the possibilities to leave open the meaning of security, the sources of insecurity, and the subjectivities needed to be secured; to apprehend the duality of de- and re-territorialization in the making of political space; and to conceive of a multiplicity of practices of authorization, sovereign as well as "private".

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Introduction

What is the stuff of IR? Is IR about states, about failed states, rough states and virtual states? Or is it nations or classes? Or NGOs? Or hegemonies or terrorism? Or is it about capitalism, colonialism, anarchy, sovereignty, suzerainty, civilizations, empires and international society? Discovering what international relations is about is quite an elusive quest. With the help of process philosophy, the "stuff of IR question" can be dichotomized as a question of "substance vs. process", "things vs. activities", "verbs vs. nouns". A cursory reading of IR reveals that the language of IR has been one of substances, things, and nouns (a.k.a. "units" in IR *lingua*). IR's static ontology projects the world as composed of discrete, self-identical things, and that these things are primary to process.

The aim of this paper is to advance a meta-theoretical reflection on International Relations. What I will do is to situate security, territory and authority—three concepts central to the idea of the international—in an ontology informed by process philosophy and relational sociology. This move enables security, territory and authority to be recast, not in terms of what they "are", their essence, but what they "do", as practices. Not as mirrors of the world, but parts in the world of our making. I read these concepts as activities rather than things, as verbs rather than nouns, and I use the verbal form to make this explicit, hence securitization, territorialization and authorization. It will be clear that the state still casts its shadow on the meanings of security, territory and authority, as these concepts have so clearly been articulated in relation to the modern state, but it cannot contain them. The major advantage of the approach presented in this paper is to point at the possibilities: to leave open the meaning of security, the sources of insecurity, and the subjectivities needed to be secured; to apprehend the duality of de- and re-territorialization in the making of political space; and to conceive of a multiplicity of practices of authorization, sovereign as well as "private".

The Stuff of IR: From substance to process

If we begin from scratch and put IR theorizing back to basics: what is the primary ontological category through which IR has conjured up its world? Actually, this was the question that was posed in the 1970s during the "interparadigm debate". Earlier, for example in the transatlantic exchange between Bull (1966) and Kaplan (1966), the debate did not take place upon ontological turf. The two of them largely saw the same world but disagreed on how to study it. Later on, in the 1970s, epistemological tensions persisted and were complemented with disagreements about what the relevant objects of analysis were (classes, states, individuals etc.). Much of the fuss within IR around the "third debate" (Lapid 1989) was about the possibility that certain modern epistemologies (how we go out and look) in part already

contained assumptions of the world (such as about the subject/object distinction and about identity). Hence, the argument was that one could not expect a discipline that relied on those epistemologies to do more than affirm assumptions about the world in the study of the world. In that sense, if one starts with epistemology as the most crucial (of the two), then questions of ontology can easily become almost pre-given. This paper, however, will start in ontology as a way to recast central concepts of IR.

So, beyond the particular answer given in the "third debate", what is IRs primary ontological category? A clue has been given by philosopher Nicholas Resher, who argues that from the time of Aristotle, Western metaphysics has a marked bias in favor of things or substances (Rescher 1996a:29). While noting that Substantialism has been the dominant mode of thought, Rescher traces another line of thought that starts with Heraclites, moves over Leibniz, and Bergson and now has come to be associated with Whitehead and a twentieth-century figure such as Samuel Alexander. I would perhaps add Paul Virilio (Virilio & Der Derian 1998) and Gilles Deleuze (Kaufman & Heller 1998). However, the point is not about the people, whether anybody is in or out, but that one can identify a coherent philosophy of process. Rescher argues that "process philosophy" is a doctrine based on ideas of process as a fundamental category of ontological description, implying that process is more fundamental, or at any rate not less fundamental than things, for the purposes of ontological theory. Process philosophy is marked by an overall insistence on seeing process as an existential aspect of everything that exists (Rescher 1996b). Whitehead spoke in the 1920s about "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness" to describe the privileging of things and entities rather than relations as the proper units of analysis. In sum, the important point here is that process has priority over product, processes are basic and "things" are derivative. If taken to the extreme, Rescher's revival of process thinking can be read as the establishment of another (albeit different) realistic ontology. But that is not my use of it. A processual ontology is an assumed starting point that enables me to rethink and recast security, territory and authority. It should therefore not be evaluated in terms of whether it is a "right", or "correct" starting point, but whether it delivers the tools necessary for advance theorizing of the international. On this, Rescher notes that "the idea of process represents what might be called a categorical concept—one that provides a thought instrument for organizing our knowledge about the world" (Rescher 1996b:26).

Basic insights of process philosophy have appeared at various sites in the social science landscape. Emirbayer (1997) has published a "manifesto for a relational sociology" that focuses on the rift between Substantialism and Relationalism. Emirbayer uses Norbert Elias to

trace the analytical fondness for substances (things, beings, essences) back to the grammatical patterns deeply ingrained in Western languages:

> Our languages are constructed in such a way that we can often only express constant movement or constant change in ways which imply that it has the character of an isolated object at rest, and then, almost as an afterthought, adding a verb which expresses the fact that the thing with this character is not changing (Elias 1978:111-12).

One example is the wind, "the wind is blowing". "We speak as if the wind were separate from its blowing, as if a wind could exist which did not blow" (Elias 1978:111-12). Crucially, a processual ontology can avoid the ontological dualism of things and activities. For process philosophy, what a thing is consists in what it does. The shift in focus from things to activities challenges the Platonic starting point of Western philosophy where "true being" is identified as changelessness (Albert & Kratochwil 2001:280). Emirbayer declares in his manifesto that "relational theorists reject the notion that one can posit discrete, pre-given units such as the individual or society as the ultimate starting points of sociological analysis" (Emirbayer 1997:287). Cooper and Law (1995) have built on Norbert Elias and showed the difference between "distal" and "proximal" modes of thinking. Distal denotes the outcomes of a sociology of being or static states; proximal denotes an outcome of a sociology of becoming or process. Their point is that human sciences typically concentrate analysis on static results or distal effects, rather than on the processes or proximal relationships whereby these effects come about (Brown & Pujol 1998:80).

Robert Chia (1995; 1996; 1997; 2002), in several works, has discussed the implications of an ontology of becoming for organizational analysis, and stressed the need to see reality as processual, heterogeneous, and an emergent configuration of relations. It might be tempting to think of all the fuss about process as something that social science has focused on for many years. But that would be a mistake. To bring process thought onto ontological ground is different from the old modernist take on processes within or between social entities. Process in the modernist sense implies "entities in process" or "process in entities" (e.g. decision-making processes, negotiation processes), not processes in the very constitution of entities (Chia 1995:7). In the context of IR one could think of all the literature on "globalization" as being processual, but mostly it is not; it is about certain entities that become globalized.

It is possible to read the focus on process against a broader background, as a turn from the increasingly ahistorical thrust of Western philosophy and its allied disciplines.[1] Margolis

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[1] See also Patomaki and Wight (2000:3) who note that "we want to reverse a long-standing Western philosophical dogma; that of the privileging of epistemological questions over ontological ones.

regards it as a "slow revenge of time: the gathering, renewed, subterranean insistence on historicity" (Margolis 1999:9) and makes a brilliant comment on contemporary intellectual quarrels: "beneath the hubbub of the modernism/postmodernism, a deeper contest is looming: one between the partisans of modal invariance and the partisans of flux" (Margolis 1999:9).[2] Or as Walker (2002:111) formulates it, "modern politics rests upon a specific relationship between stasis (as norm) and change (as exception) or, more portentously/pretentiously, between space and time". To insist on historicity, and not just turn to history, is presently done by historical sociologists, e.g. Tilly (1990) and Mann (1986). While not doing "proper" IR, they trace the coming into being of the world that a lot of IR scholars have taken for granted.[3]

IR theory and processual thought

Already upon quick inspection, it seems clear that IR has borrowed quite a lot from a certain metaphysical tradition (Parmenides, atomists, Aristotle), and the Platonical search for unchanging universals has been the ideal. Things and substances, or "units" in IR's vernacular, have been the preferred way of thinking. Consider, for example, all the debates revolving around the appropriate "levels of analysis" (states vs. the system of states). Many authors have noted the statism of realism or the timeless wisdoms that supposedly lie therein (Ashley 1984; Walker 1987); hence "rationalism", as a research enterprise, cannot explain structural change (due to the conceptualization of interests as exogenous) (Ruggie 1983; Wendt 1995). To counteract the ontological primacy of stasis and fixity and to open up a thinking space for a different ontology as a theoretical takeoff, two publications stand out: Jackson and Nexon (1999) and Albert et al. (2001). They do not claim a new orthodoxy or a takeoff from a (another) privileged ground, but both publications try to envisage how a different kind of IR can emerge from a new kind of starting point. Jackson and Nexon primarily focus on the processual character of the relational to be able to say something about how this world came into being (relations before states), while Albert et al. use the processual to link IR to broader social and cultural landscapes through the concepts of identity, border and order. They all share the insight that large-scale, epochal change is only intelligible and comprehensible within a processual/relational ontology. This should be seen in contrast to the "partisans of modal invariance" who continue their search for kicks of exogenous change

Indeed, we think that when viewed from an ontological perspective current understandings of IR take on an altogether different hue".

[2] I first found this citation in Lapid (2001:19); see also a similar formulation by Shotter in Lapid (1996:6).

[3] See Hall (2002) for a brief overview of the latest meeting between IR and history.

(Jackson & Nexon 1999:298) or try to establish a new unit of agency, e.g. civilizations, NGOs or corporations that could account for the coming international order (Lapid 2001:17).

Constructivism revisited

The "constructivist" road, or turn, has been quite frequently traveled in recent years, but there is a lot of disagreement about what kind of road it is—e.g. a bridge (Wendt 1992:394)—or where it leads. While being frequently traveled, the road has also been vigorously patrolled both from the outside and from the inside. Scholars have tried to comprehend the core and the boundaries of the constructivist contribution to IR theory. Classificatory schemes are all over the place: thick/thin (Wendt 1999), modernist/interpretive (Rengger 2000:81), neoclassical/naturalistic/post-modernist (Ruggie 1998), mainstream explanatory/non-mainstream interpretative (Waever 1997a:24). However, most of the quarrel about constructivism is about what kind of epistemology it might imply and what kind of methodological reflections are seen to be appropriate (Adler 1997; Checkel 1998; Dessler 1999; Kratochwil 2000; Sterling Folker 2000; Zehfuss 2001b; Fearon & Wendt 2002). Why is this? Both Keohane (1988) and Lapid (1989) are indicative of the way IR in the late 1980s turned to epistemology to mark internal differences. That is also why constructivists have been so keen to occupy a space "in between" (Adler 1997) the "rationalist" and "reflectivist" approaches to knowledge.

I agree with Ruggie (1998:33) that the most distinctive features of constructivism in IR are in the realm of ontology. The overall message is that the structure of the international is a social one, or "intersubjective" as the preferred concept seems to be. However, this position is neither new nor radical in the disciplinary history of IR. It is associated with the so-called "English School" theorizing, and found in particular in Manning (1975), Wight (1977), and Bull (1977). Alongside the rise of constructivism and postmodernism in IR, many scholars have turned to the English School for inspiration and legitimacy; hence there have been calls for a "reopening" of the "school"—if it ever was closed.[4] The idea of a middle ground, a space in between, was present already in the English School, as they argued for a "Grotian" approach in relation to "Machiavellian" and "Kantian" ones. However, this middle ground was based on an ethical preference, a grounding quite different from the mild, soft and more conventional middle ground occupied in contemporary IR theory (Der Derian 2001a:99). If the basic building blocks of the international are ideational rather than material, it goes

[4] See e.g. Dunne (1998), Little (2000), Buzan (1993), Rengger (1992) and forum on the English School in Review of International Studies (2001).

without saying that they are constructed by human activity and hence are contingent and could be different. The puzzle then becomes how the world is constructed, i.e. what kind of political practice constructs what kind of world. While the processual ontological view makes change the natural state, it does not follow that things change all the time. The social world seems to stay much the same most of the time. What does follow, though, is that stabilizations are seen as a central problem. Hence, questions can be posed about how solidly something is constructed.

Both Ringmar (1997:282) and Jørgensen (2001) highlight the need to differentiate between constructivism in IR as a substantial theory and as a philosophical concern. Regarding the latter, philosopher John Searle (1995) has been very influential with his ontology of social facts, existing only by virtue of their agreement, i.e. their “collective intentionality”. Ruggie lists property rights, marriage, money and Valentine’s Day as examples of social facts (Ruggie 1998:12). From Searle comes also the notion of regulative and constitutive rules. Regulative rules regulate an activity, but constitutive rules make an activity possible. Searle gives the example of playing “chess”. The rules of chess create the possibility of playing chess. To “explain” chess is to account for its constitutive rules. Onuf disregards this distinction (Zehfuss 2001a:59), implying that rules are always both constitutive and regulative.

Nevertheless, the point I want to make here is that concepts have a constitutive dimension, and ontological concepts can be seen as sets of constitutive practices (Biersteker & Weber 1996:3). The early Wendt (1987:337) criticized Neorealism for working with the state as an ontological primitive, and his call for not taking the identity of the state as given by the structure of the international system has been explored by numerous scholars. But Wendt’s world does not seem to diverge too much from the Neorealists’ (Blaney & Inayatullah 1996:73; Smith 2001:51). Wendt defines “states as the principal units of analysis for international political theory” (Wendt 1994:385); hence anarchy is what *states* make of it. Wendt’s limitation partly stems from his ambition to offer a substantial theory of international politics, and his position tends to circumscribe many of the ontological possibilities that have been commenced by the third debate. I agree that states are the “dominant form of subjectivity in world politics” (Wendt 1999:9), but “to simply assume the existence of states is therefore anything but an unproblematic, pre-theoretical ground from which to judge alternative approaches” (Behnke 2001:129). States, like other subjects, are best understood as subjects in process, and the crucial point is to get at the processes through which states are performed. This, in turn, leads us to the question of language, and language not as descriptive, as a tool to mirror the world, but language as social action.

Recasting Security, Territory and Authority

What is the relationship between the word and the world? Wittgenstein provides in *Tractatus* (1922) and in *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) two different answers. In the first one language is a picture of the logic of reality, in the second language is analogous to making moves in a game. Hence, within Wittgenstein's writing language moves from being descriptive of the world to being constitutive of the world. There is some irony involved in the fact that the "American bar" in Vienna, just off the Stephan's dome, was the preferred venue for the "Vienna Circle" and hence became the cradle for logical positivism. The interior is still very cool, although one might think that the cozy red sofas, the darkness and the kitsch contrast to the modernist aspirations of the Vienna Circle. The thoughts developed by the Vienna Circle were inspired by the early Wittgenstein's take on the relationship between logical propositions and the world, and propositions were seen as being more or less true in their ability to picture the world. This idea of language, as a true or false mirror of reality, has since Hume been the predominant position within research that builds on a positivist philosophy of science. Facts shall be described properly and concepts should match objects. Words are labels for objects existing independently in the world. This is a necessary foundation for the positivist insistence on hypothesis testing (Kratochwil 1989:5; Fierke 2003). According to Der Derian (1996:284), this is absolutely central for realism. How else could a realist describe things as they really are?

> The injunction that words mean what they say and say what they mean is the core-principle of realism—and its greatest aporia, or inherent contradiction in its international relations adaptation. For without a central authority, without a Leviathan of language, who is to legislate meaning in world politics? (Der Derian 1996:285)

The idea that language could mirror the world, that there is a direct correspondence between the word and the world, collapsed with *Philosophical Investigations*. Exit the Cartesian individual who uses labels to name properties in an independently existing world, enter the social nature of language, shared rules, meaning and context (Fierke 2003). Wittgenstein infused action into the understanding of the role of language; language use was synonymous with making moves in a game, hence "language games". With Wittgenstein (1953) came the insight that the meaning of a concept was not to be found in its correspondence to the world out there, but in the way it was used in speech. While *Tractatus* initiated the "linguistic turn"

in philosophy, *Philosophical Investigations* embarked parts of the humanities and the social sciences on a much more deviant course.[5]

The idea that language is a form of action that is constitutive of the world has been materialized with the discovery of "speech acts" by Austin (1961) and Searle (1969). The brief background is that while Hume divided all sentences into "is" or "ought" sentences, speech acts (betting, promising, naming a ship, saying "I do" in a marriage ceremony) are sentences that neither describe something nor engage in a normative debate. Speech acts are "performatives"; they perform an act instead of describing it. While "constatives" are used to make a true or false statement, performatives do not have truth conditions, but "felicity" conditions, conventions legitimizing the legitimate use of performative utterances (Waever 2000:286). By saying something is done, the utterance creates a new condition. The world is different before and after the utterance. The use of language creates institutions, i.e. institutionalized speech acts or speech enacted institutions. Paul Chilton exemplifies with oath swearing, an institution that depends on the presence of a lawyer as well as a form of words and where the lawyer is legitimized through a chain of speech institutions (Chilton 2004:31).

Therefore, security, territory and authority are much more than just "lenses" that can easily be applied to the world and discussed in terms of their "correspondence" to that world; they fundamentally make up precisely that world which we are going to study. This taps nicely into the gist of process ontology: what a thing *is* consists in what it *does* (Rescher 1996a:46). As I see it, concepts of IR are better seen as verbs rather than nouns, as performatives rather than constatives, as processes rather than essences. Security, territory and authority are not labels for immutable parts of the world, but part of the "world of our making".[6]

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[5] See Debrix (2003) for the differences between the "constructivist" and the "postmodern" engagement with the relation between the word and the world.

[6] Somewhere in this neighborhood somebody will probably raise the question about the existence of the phenomenal world. There is certainly a world of "brute facts", but these cannot constitute themselves as objects of knowledge. What counts as a meaningful object is the result of interpretation, i.e. shared symbols, languages, codes, and practices (Guzzini 2000:160). That "nothing exists outside language" precisely implies that nothing intelligible can be said without language, indeed not much can be said whatsoever. On this, Campbell (2001:444) cites Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe saying "the fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has *nothing to do* with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition...What is denied is not that...objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside of any discursive condition of emergence". To my mind, one quite funny take on the charge of "relativism" is to be found in Edwards, Ashmore & Potter (1995) which is about "Death and Furniture: the rhetoric, politics, and theology of bottom line arguments against relativism".

Securitization

This section will outline security as securitization, i.e. how the category of security makes sense of the world. Securitization, as a performative practice, is crucial to the construction of the international and the issues that claim their presence there. Security as securitization is primarily associated with the so-called "Copenhagen School".[7] Distinctive collaborative works here are Waever et al. (1993), Buzan et al. (1998), Buzan and Waever (2003), but more about their work below. Analysis of "security as process" is also to found in recent work that converges around the idea that insecurity is a product of certain (security) discourses. Here one could include the attempts initiated by Didier Bigo (2000; 2001; 2002) to cover the actual security practice carried out by a range of agencies (e.g. police, customs, military). These practices form a "field of security", a rhizome of bureaucracies that transgress and redefine the dichotomies that security has been dependent on, i.e. internal/external, friend/enemy, state/society etc. Migration has here been a prevalent theme, and for interesting applications to migration as a security issue, see Huysmans (1998; 2000). A similar theoretical angle (the production of insecurity) is employed by scholars associated with University of Minnesota (Weldes 1999; Weldes et al. 1999) and could also be found in works such as Klein (1990), Campbell (1998), Der Derian (2001b) and Dalby (2002).

A certain strength of Copenhagen security studies is their sensitivity to the meaning of the *international* concept of security, i.e. what it actually implies to speak about security within the international. Their reason for developing this particular sensitivity could be read against the manifold attempts in security studies aimed at broadening/deepening; "only with a clear sense of *what is security*, is it possible to open up without being swept away" (Waever 2004:9, italics in the original). The Copenhagen School moves security away from stating an objective condition, and views it as a specific process. Securitization is the process whereby issues are turned into security issues. This process is conceived of as a speech act: "it is not interesting as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance itself is the act" (Waever 1995:55).

Securitization is located firmly within the active use of language, language as creative. However, to be meaningful, the users of the language game of security must follow a certain grammar. Buzan et al. (1998:21) identify this rhetorical structure as when "an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object (traditionally, but not

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[7] The name refers primarily to work that was initiated at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. The label "Copenhagen School" was coined by McSweeney (1996) in a (critical) review, but the label should not be taken as a sign that most work is nowadays done in Copenhagen.

necessarily the state)". So, in security discourse, "an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus, by labeling it as security, an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means" (Buzan et al. 1998:26). Security can thus be conceived of as "the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue as a special kind of politics or as above politics. Securitization can hence be seen as an extreme version of politicization" (Buzan et al. 1998:23). The designation of some issues as security issues is ultimately intersubjective and cannot be reduced to some background factors. Security rests neither with the "securitizing actor", nor with the "audience" that has to accept a "securitizing move" (for a securitization to become successful); security rests *among* the subjects, as (probably) Arendt would have had it.[8]

Walker argues that "modern accounts of security have been articulated in relation to the structures and practices of the modern state" (Walker 1997:61). Very few of those who study security have paid attention to the specific characteristics of the international usage of security or tried to locate it in a historical context. The Copenhagen School has invested a lot of effort in trying to situate security within the international (survival, urgency, priority etc.) while not containing it there. In an overview over two millennia of the idea/concept/word security, Waever (2002) shows that there has not existed a timeless, stable, core meaning of security. Instead, the meanings have shifted concerning what security is about, what is meant by security and whether it is positive or negative. Similarly, Der Derian has tried to make a preliminary genealogy of the concept of security. He finds one connotation to be associated with being protected, free from danger, and another connotation to be associated with security as a condition of false or misplaced confidence in one's position. He exemplifies the second one with Shakespeare's line in *Macbeth* that "Security is Mortals cheefest Enemie" (Der Derian 1995:28). Interestingly, between these two senses of security he locates a third that mediates between the other two; "In the face of a danger, a debt, or an obligation of some kind, one seeks security, in the form of a pledge, a bond, a surety" (Der Derian 1995:28). This financial usage of security actually has a long history. As an early form of insurance it is called "debt forgiveness" and goes back to as long ago as Hammurabi, king of Babylon, whose ships were insured via advances from lenders who agreed to forfeit their loan should the ship be lost at sea (Doherty 1997). In the financial usage, to securitize means nowadays to turn a risk into a marketable security, i.e. to package the risk in a standardized form (for example as bond) and sell it on the capital market. Hence, the risk is "secured" on the capital

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[8] In Arendt's view, we are born into this world. This is our "Human Condition" (Arendt 1958), a condition where reciprocal communication and webs of relations constitute our subjectivity. Allen (2002) has written an interesting piece on Arendt's view on power and subjectivity where he finds similarities and differences with Foucault's view on this.

market (Stripple 1998:13). To bring the financial usage of security in touch with the international one is an important move as it reopens the question of what it possibly might mean to be secure. If the international is not the kind of stable space that can arrest a certain meaning of security, then we should pay close attention to adjacent meanings. Insurance is, to invoke Ewald's (1991b; 1991a) perspective, a technology of risk that has implications for how we (as a society) think about security:

> Security is a commodity bought like any other: and as its rate of tariff falls in proportion not with the misery of the buyer but with the magnitude of the amount he (sic) insures, insurance proves itself a new privilege for the rich and a cruel irony for the poor" (Proudhon, as quoted in Ewald 1991a:206).

The financial usage of security shifts the focus from security understood as being free from danger to security understood as having the right to be compensated.

Security has been articulated in many ways and in many different contexts over the years and the very denotation of what it means to be secure has not been stable. The context of the international is just one among many contexts where security has been invoked. A quick look around reveals that in the in the discipline of IR, issues of security are now raised in relation to a range of different phenomena; e.g. to the war on terror and Department for Homeland Security, to the essentialization of identities, to the privatization of security in gated communities, to the commercialization of security in private armies, to the commodification of security within the insurance and safety industries, to the techniques of surveillance, policing and foreign policy, to sites such as Srebrenica, Columbine and south central Los Angeles, to agents/networks such as Interpol, Al Qaeda and the EU, to the insecurities produced by the very organization of societies and subsumed under the notion of a "risk society". Hence, the (specifically) modern concept of international security, which rested on a (specifically) modern account of the international, cannot be stabilized anymore, and we (as scholars and practitioners) have only begun to comprehend what this might mean and imply.

Territorialization

Space is an important referential system for ordering individual and collective thoughts, perceptions and feelings (Sack 1986). IR, as all other vistas, makes certain spatial assumptions about the world. In Agnew's (1994) phrase, these assumptions form a "territorial trap" for our thoughts about what politics is about, and where the political is located. Agnew believes that a good number of all scholars in politics and international relations tend to tumble into this trap slightly too often, and I agree with him. The point to make here is that the spaces of international relations are not just there to be "discovered" as new continents;

they are instead produced by the very organization of politics, by the organization of political space. In this section, I conceive of territory as a process of territorialization. I situate territoriality within a processual ontology to emphasize, not its essence, but its constitution. Knight noted more than twenty years ago that "territory is not; it becomes, for territory itself is passive, and it is human beliefs and actions that give territory meaning" (Knight 1982:517). However, Knight's argument has not been much followed up, particularly not within IR: "It is truly astonishing that the concept of territoriality has been so little studied by students of international politics; its neglect is akin to never looking at the ground that one is walking on" (Ruggie 1993:174).

Fortunately, within our neighboring discipline of geography one does not dismiss the spatial dimensions of politics so easily. A small "dissident" group of political geographers has been formed in the 1990s under the loose rubric of "critical geopolitics" (Ó Tuathail 1996; Ó Tuathail & Dalby 1998b; Newman 1999). The term geopolitics invokes memories of the 19th century study of the geographical determination of politics. Critical geopolitics is, however, not a heroic attempt to resurrect this tradition, but rather a rethinking of both the "geo" and the "politics": "this volume seeks to radicalize conventional notions of geopolitics through a series of studies in its proliferating" (Ó Tuathail & Dalby 1998a:2). What I find interesting in their work is the sensitivity to the political production of space: "intellectuals of statecraft 'spatialize' international politics in such way as to present it as a 'world' characterized by particular places, peoples and dramas" (Ó Tuathail & Agnew 1992:192).

In this way, "critical geopolitics" avoids treating geopolitics in terms of containing a particular essence. In Ó Tuathail's centerpiece *Critical geopolitics: the politics of writing global space*, geopolitics is situated historically and contextually as a problematic that "avoids treating 'it' as a stable and singular 'it'" (Ó Tuathail 1996:17). I understand the work within "critical geography" as a movement against a geography that "just is". This is in line with Whitehead's notion of the "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness" (the tendency in Western metaphysics of privileging things and entities rather than relations as the proper units of analysis). Critical geopolitics is about politicizing the writing of social space. Hence, territoriality is understood as a form of behavior that uses the bounding of space for political advantage, i.e. "the process by which individual actors define, reify and control space as a means toward some social end" (Steinberg 2001:29). In accordance with a processual ontology, territory could thus be conceived of as territorialization, which, in turn, consists of the processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization (Ó Tuathail 1996:170). In Albert's words, "Sovereignty is something that has to be practiced through "marking" space by

boundaries of various kinds—and by mapping these boundaries in an exact science" (Albert 1999:61).

For Ruggie (1993) and Kratochwil (1986), political spaces that stand in tension to the space of sovereign territoriality are important. For example, the space of the global economy (cf. Rosow et al. 1994) or the space of global ecology (cf. Kuehls 1996) are crucial sites of investigation because they can provide a venue for the exploration of contemporary international transformation. Those "between" or "beyond" spaces are part of the process of "unbundling" territoriality, which is a "stabilizing mechanism that has been and is employed by the modern system to handle its anomalies" (Waever 1997b:195). To conceive of territorial space as the dual processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization provides a way of understanding how territorial space comes into being. At once, these processes do not so much challenge the spatiality of the state system as they reproduce it.

Authorization

Authority is about founding. Hobbes and his account of *Leviathan* are often proposed as the moment when modern politics was founded. In Orwin's (1975:39) words, "Hobbes succeeds where his predecessors had failed by grounding his despotism upon an earthly rather than a heavenly foundation". The legacy of the *Leviathan* has been invoked to describe the eternal condition of the international. Bull, for example, states that "all of what Hobbes says about the life of individual men in the state of nature may be read as a description of the condition of states in relation to one another" (Bull 1981:721). The move from a state-of-nature to a state of sovereign authority has been crucial for the discipline of IR. Authority is often treated as if it were a ground, but it is worth reiterating (although it might sound trivial) that authority is a claim—not a ground. To situate authority within a processual ontology is to make a move from the search for authority's eternal essence to an appreciation of various practices of authorization.

I will, in this section, recast authority as a process of authorization. In processual terms, it is important not to look for an essence of authority, but to conceive of authority as an activity. Authority is important in terms of what it does. So what does authority do? The word *authority* stems from the Latin "auctoritas" and "auctor". Friedman (1990:74) notes that "the word 'auctor' derives from the lost verb 'augere': to augment, increase, enrich, tell about". An "auctor" could be, on the one hand, "founder, inventor", and, on the other hand, "writer, reporter". In the Weberian tradition, authority is imposed. Weber was concerned with *Herrschaft*, i.e. domination and command (Onuf & Klink 1989; Lukes 1990:206). But as

Friedman (1990:71) notes, authority is relational; it is constructed in a social relation between those who claim or exercise authority and those who are subject to, or recognize, authority. Authority is therefore not best viewed as a stable entity, but as a contingent process within a mutually recognized relationship. For Lincoln (1994:10), authority is not so much an entity as it is an effect, and Cutler reiterates this point when she argues that "the social context in which authority is constructed suggests that it is better conceived of as an 'effect' rather than as an 'entity'" (Cutler 2003:65).

Latham (1997:13) provides a useful overview of the "function" of authority as "the ability to place action, practices, symbols, and institutions into a meaningful social frame or context: i.e., to subject something or somebody to the operation of a system of meaning, significance, and power". Authority is in this sense a relational concept. It does not exist outside a relation, nor does it exist prior to a relation; it emerges within a relation. The modern (sovereign, territorial) state has been an extraordinarily important site for practices of authorization. The state has constituted the "most" meaningful social frame, to use Latham's conceptualization. However, modern forms of authorization resonate with (but cannot be reduced to) the forms of authority we associate with the state (Walker 2003:278). State sovereignty is not a "thing", a cold principle of international law, but an activity. Sovereignty does something to the world; it organizes political life based on territoriality and autonomy (Krasner 1995:119). This "sovereignty-doing" is not static, "it is best to think of the meaning of sovereignty as in terms of a continual contestation of practices" (Mitchell 2002:163). Orwin (1975) has aptly called this "sovereign authorization", which alludes to the possibility of other forms of authorization. If authority is not an achieved condition (as Hobbes tries to persuade us) but a complex and variable practice, then the claim to authority can be initiated and reproduced by various actors in various contexts.

Latham's way of looking at authority has the strength of being open towards a multiplicity of practices of authorization. As Hurd (1999:404) notes, "authority can exist (and coexist) in many institutional arrangements, of which the legitimate international institution is one and the territorial state is another". One interesting result of this recasting is that it enables us to conceive of practices of authorization without assuming the familiar contours of the public/private divide. That distinction that has been one of the most fundamental and constitutive ordering principles in social life (Bailey 2000, 2002) and in Political Science and International Relations the legacy of the *Polis* is particularly pervasive. The equation of the public, the state and the territory have had fundamental implications for how the disciplines have come to think of authority as legitimate power, and that which is outside the territory/state/public as illegitimate power. In a historical overview of the public/private

divide, Bailey argues that there is no essential "private" or intrinsic "public"; "it is the contrast between them, the need to distinguish one from the other, the necessity of making the distinction in any particular social and political situation, that endures" (Bailey 2002:1). Bailey adopts an understanding of the public, not as that which is "the state", but that which is "collective". In Bailey's extensive categorization, collective actors derived from civil society, the market and the community become effectively public. Caporaso (2000) has in a short, but very eloquent, way pushed this line of reasoning a bit further. Caporaso (2000:9) points out that success or failure of a claim to authority "rests on a variety of bases, including active political support, a generalized acceptance of the rules of the game, deference to experts, fear of retaliation, and a sheer indifference to outcome". Caporaso cites Arendt's "relational" account of authority:

> The authoritarian relation between the one who commands and the one who obeys rests neither on common reason nor on the power of the one who commands: what they have in common is the hierarchy itself, whose rightness and legitimacy both recognize and where both have their predetermined stable place (Arendt 1961:93 cited in Caporaso 2000:9).

For Caporaso (2000:9) the above definition of authority "makes it clear that 'private authority' is not a contradiction in terms nor is the phrase 'sovereign authority' redundant". Two recent edited books, *Private Authority in International Affairs* (Cutler et al. 1999) and *Private Authority in Global Governance* (Hall and Biersteker 2002) could be identified as central for IRs new way of thinking about authority, but the search for practices of authorization in different contexts has just begun.

Concluding thoughts

This paper advances process philosophy as a meta-theoretical reflection on International Relations. Security, territory and authority are concepts that convey IRs traditional idea of the international (as state-based authority over a territory and a priority order of issues and subjectivities needed to be secured). I situated security, territory and authority in a processual ontology. This move enabled the concepts to be recast, not in terms of what they "are", their essence, but what they "do", as practices. I made an inventory of what IR has to say about what these concepts "do" to, or "in", the world. Crucially, the primary accounts of security, territory and authority have been articulated in relation to the modern (sovereign, territorial) state, but they do not necessarily have to be wedded to the state forever, or not even now. To displace the "ghost of the state" in these concepts is an important undertaking.

Hobbes told us that without sovereign authority there is no security; hence, beyond the border, insecurity becomes a timeless feature of existence. Security, in the international sense, organizes the world on the basis of urgency and priority (i.e. existential threats) towards certain entities. Securitization can be conceived of as the process where issues are turned into security issues and, in that process, some entities or values are being established as worth securing. Insecurity is therefore not just a state of affairs to be determined, but an outcome of security practices. The international meaning of security (to be free from danger) is challenged by other accounts (i.e. financial meanings and ideas about risk) of what it means to be secure. Territoriality organizes the world on the basis of "flat", bordered and divided space. Space has been a crucial encounter for the international, which is usually thought of as the space beyond the state's border. I conceive of territorialization as the bounding of space for political advantage. The idea of territoriality is reproduced through practices of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Authority organizes the world in terms of a specific type of relation. I conceive of authorization as being about the ability to place action, practices, symbols, and institutions into a meaningful social frame, i.e. to subject something or somebody to the operation of a system of meaning, significance, and power. Authority has been thought to be nonexistent beyond the border of the state, but it is possible to conceive of a multiplicity of practices of authorization, with sovereign authorization being just one.

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