

# Copenhagen School

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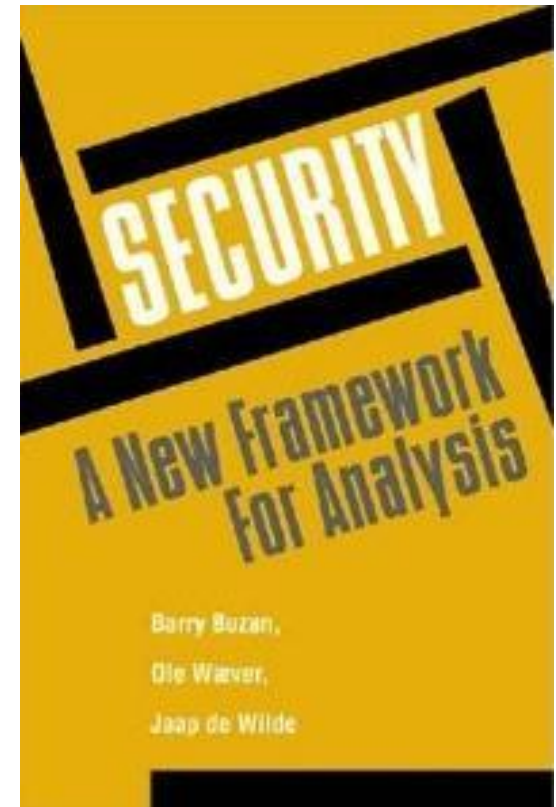
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# Outline

- Assumptions
- Securitization
- Security sectors
- Regional security complex

# Copenhagen school

- **Context:** traditionalists vs. revisionists
- Analytical framework for study of international security
- **Currently:** mainstream approach in security studies
  
- Based on:
  - (“radically”) idealist ontology
  - interpretative epistemology (discourse analysis)
  - “residual traditionalism”



# Security as a social construct

- There is **no “essence”**, no universal feature of security
  - Security is **socially constructed** and intersubjectively shared
  - Security is a **self-referential practice**: an issue becomes a security issue only by being labeled as one
- Focus on **discursive construction** of security issues



# Securitization

- Framing
  - standard (depoliticized)
  - politicized
  - securitized

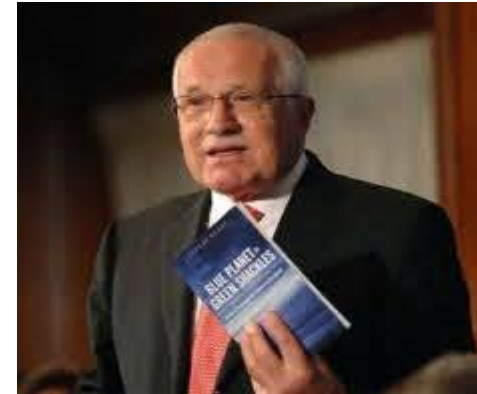


- Audience acceptance
- Emergency measures
- Linkages



# Securitization

- **Securitization actors:** ones that declare – via illocutionary speech act – existential threat towards a particular referent object



- **Functional actors:** ones that significantly affect the dynamic of the security environment (sector)

# Speech acts

- **Constative act:** the literal meaning of the utterance
- **Appellative act:** the social function of the utterance, for what purpose it is used in a given context
- **Performative act:** the effect of the utterance in a given context

*“I warn you, the oil is running out!”*

- Constative act: made vocal sounds, said that with a Czech accent
  - Appellative act: making a warning about (an existential) threat
  - Performative act: made you (audience) feel insecure (or amused)
- 
- **Facilitating conditions**

# Facilitating (felicity) conditions

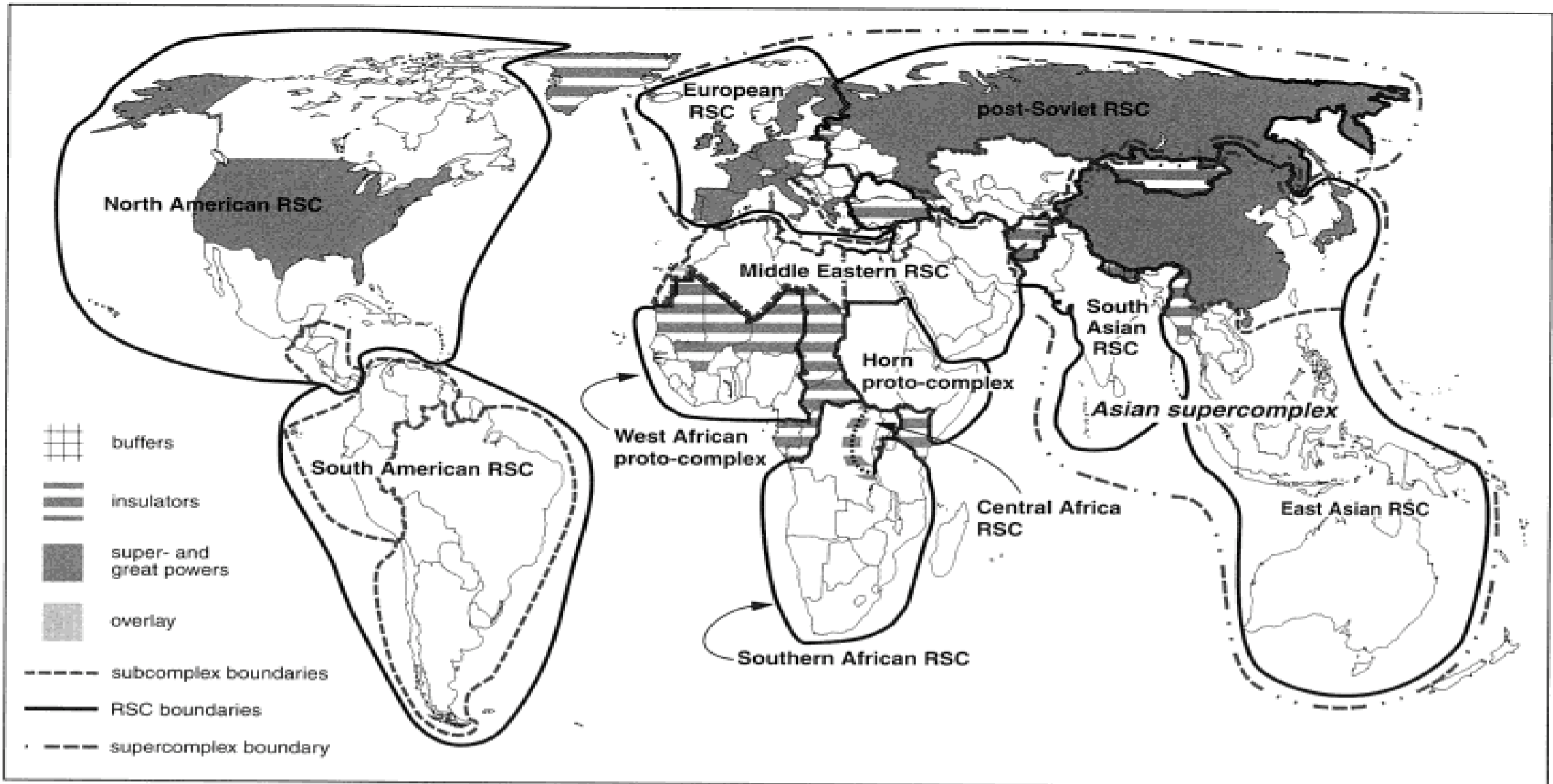
1. The speech act is following the **grammar of security** (i.e.: existential threat to referent object requires emergency measures)
2. The **relationship between speaker and audience** (i.e.: the speaker has a privileged/authoritative position in relation the audience)
3. **Features** of the alleged threats that **either facilitate or impede securitization** (i.e.: information about the alleged threat outside of the speech act)



degree of widening	modes of widening <span style="float: right;">(modified Weisová 2004)</span>			
	horizontal (sectors)	vertical (referent objects)	values	threat sources
narrow concept	military-political	state	sovereignty, territorial integrity	other states, (non-state actors)
widened concept	societal	nation, societal groups	national unity, identity	(states), nations, migrants, hostile cultures
	economic	state, non-state actors, institutions, individuals	development, subsistence	states, market failures
	environmental	environmental systems, humankind	sustainability, survival, quality of life	states, globalization, humankind

# Regional security complex

- Brings back **geography** to IR
- Structural characteristics:
  - **Boundaries:** differentiation from the rest of the system
  - **Anarchy:** number of actors in the complex
  - **Polarity:** distribution of power within the complex
  - **Social construction:** relationships of amity and enmity
- **Definition** (Buzan and Waever 2003: 44):  
*“...set of units whose major processes of securitization, desecuritization, or both, are so interlinked that their security problems cannot be reasonably analyzed apart from one another.”*
- **Security constellation:** an aggregate of all four levels of analysis



Map 2. Patterns of Regional Security Post-Cold War

# Summary

- **A comprehensive framework** for security analysis
- Esp. theory of securitization now **part of the mainstream**
- **The objective:** desecuritization of the debate
- **Criticism:** state-centric, inconsistent use of constructivist and rationalist concepts, focus mainly on discourse (omits context), conceptual and methodological doubts (audience)

# Balzacq's revision

- Distinguishes between **brute** and **institutional** threats.
  - **Institutional** threats: depend on social construction / intersubjectivity
  - **Brute** threats: do not depend on social construction (natural catastrophes)
- **Reduction of speech acts to appellative acts** is misleading.
  - does not allow interaction with the audience (performative effects)
- **Solution:** broader concept of a **pragmatic act**
  - strategic use of language centered at a specific audience
  - cultural embeddedness (“clues from ‘the real world’”)

# Balzacq's revision: pragmatic act

The processes of securitization – a pragmatic act – consist of:

1. A relatively stable **system of discursive resources** (metaphors, images, stereotypes, etc.),
2. **mobilized by an agent** (securitization actor), who
3. strategically **targets the audience** to build
4. a coherent **network of implications** that convene with actor's actions, by
5. portraying the **referent subject** (entity that threatens) in a way that
6. a **customized political act** must be taken to block its development
7. within a **specific social and space-time context**

# Balzacq's revision: situated interactive activity

- The speaker and the audience need to engage in responsive activity → the speech act is just “**a blueprint**” based on which **audience fleshes out missing meanings/details**.
- Thus, the speaker's argument has to employ terms that resonate with understandings (by speeches, gestures, images, etc.) of audience.
- → relation to **external reality** (external to securitization process)
- The **success of securitization** is here given by **mutual** (intersubjective) **understanding** and the speaker's ability to identify audience's feelings, needs and interests.

# Balzacq's revision: situated interactive activity

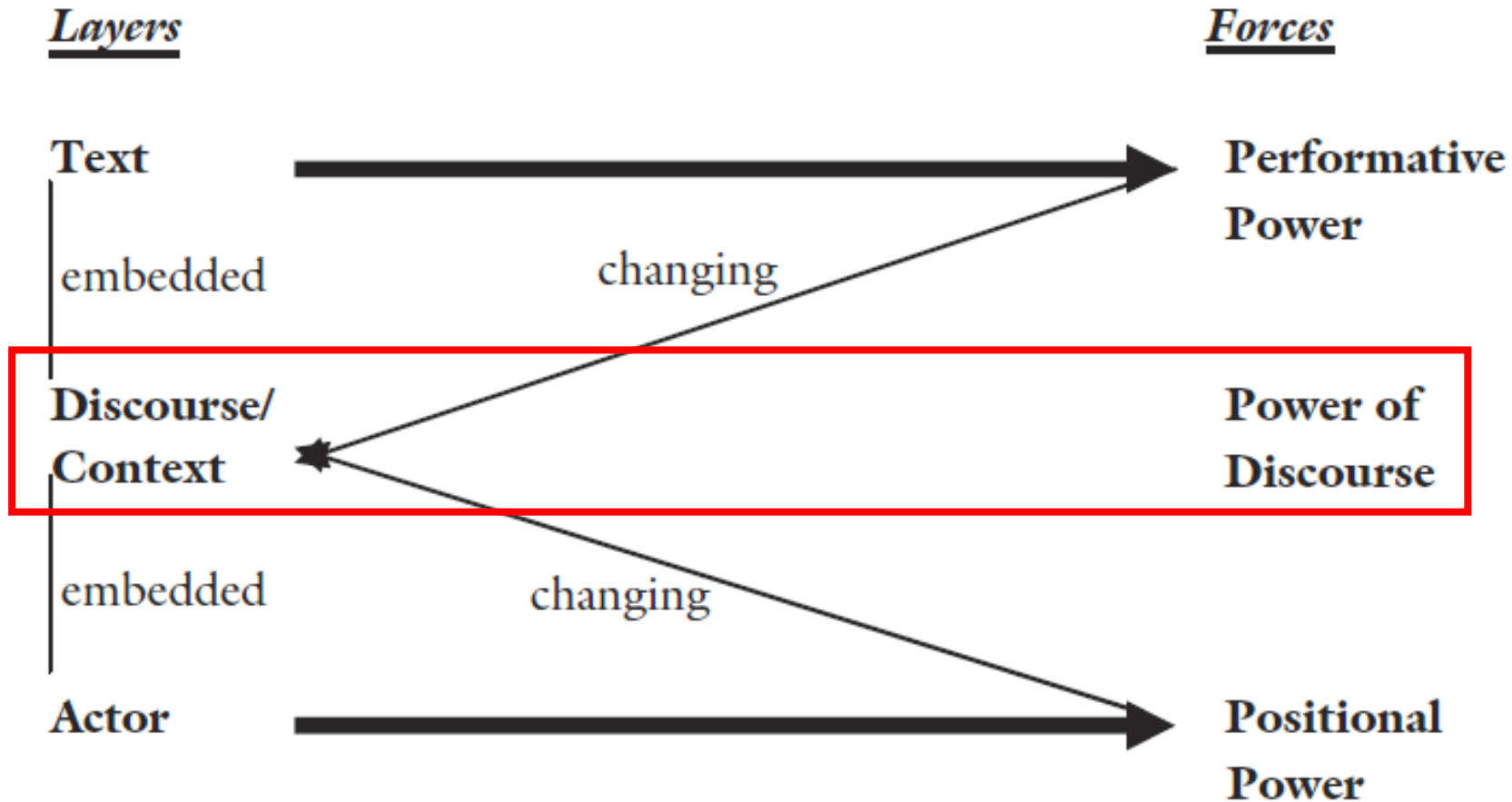




# Stritzel's revision

- Distinguishes between **internalist** and **externalist** position (compare with Balzacq 2005).
- **Internalist position:** speech acts are capable to transform understanding of a certain issue (if the felicity conditions are fulfilled): *“By saying the words, something is done.”* (Buzan et al. 1997: 26)
- **Externalist position:** securitization is a **process** – not just a particular speech act - that takes place in concrete **socio-temporal context**.
  - Broader discursive environment
  - Production of “threat-texts”
  - Power positions (field)

# Stritzel's revision



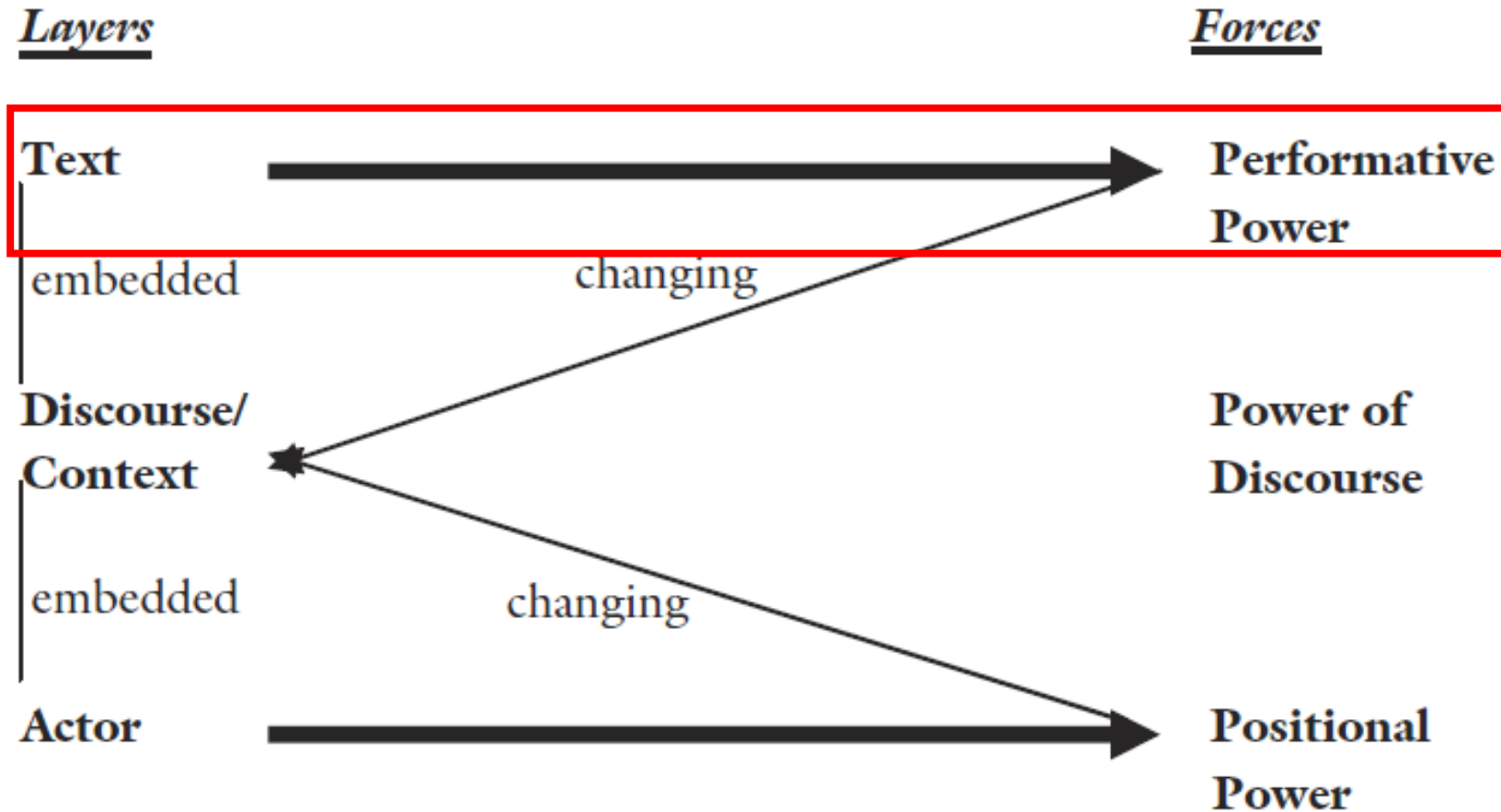
# Discursive context / embeddedness

- The speech acts and texts (“threat-texts”) are embedded within a **network of constitutive rules and narratives** that surround them.  
(Stritzel 2006: 369)
- The (security-related) **meanings do not come “out of nowhere”** or just from securitization actors’ heads.
  - involved actors/audiences need to **understand a speech act** (or a threat-text)
- Actors exploit **discursive contexts as stocks** of ideas, images, analogies, metaphors or – **historical/cultural traumas** (Sztompka 2000).

# Historical/cultural trauma (Sztompka 2000)



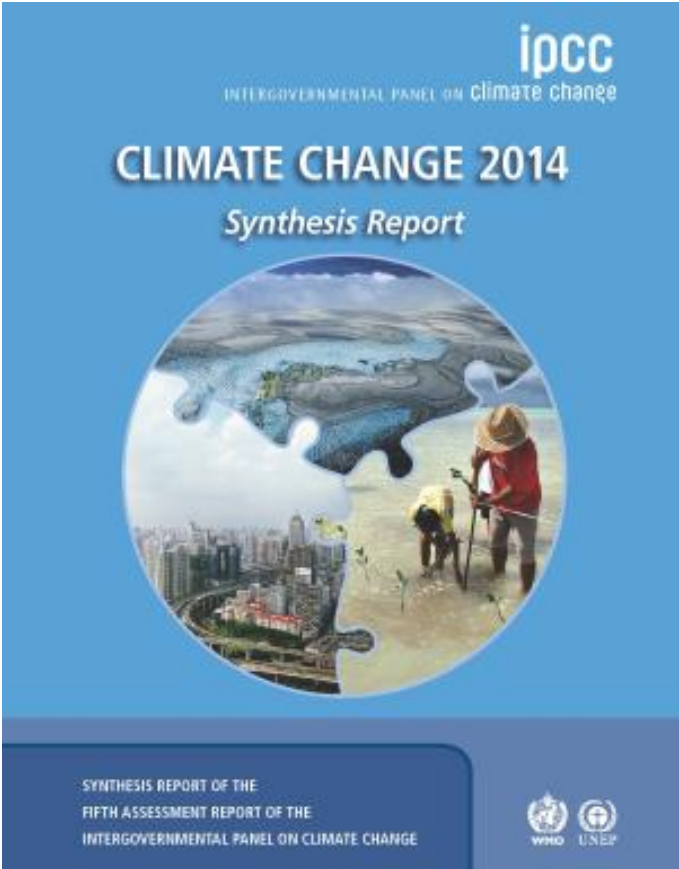
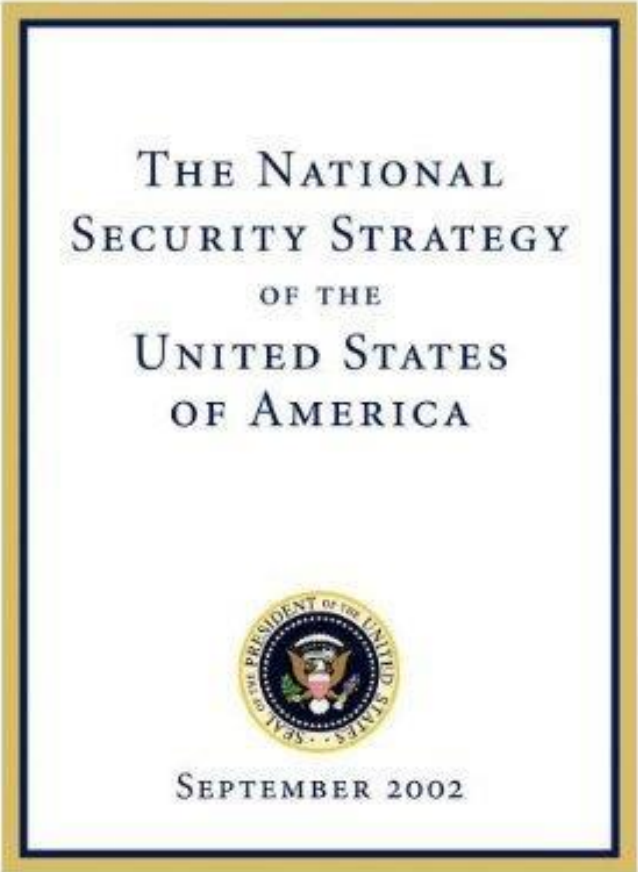
# Stritzel's revision



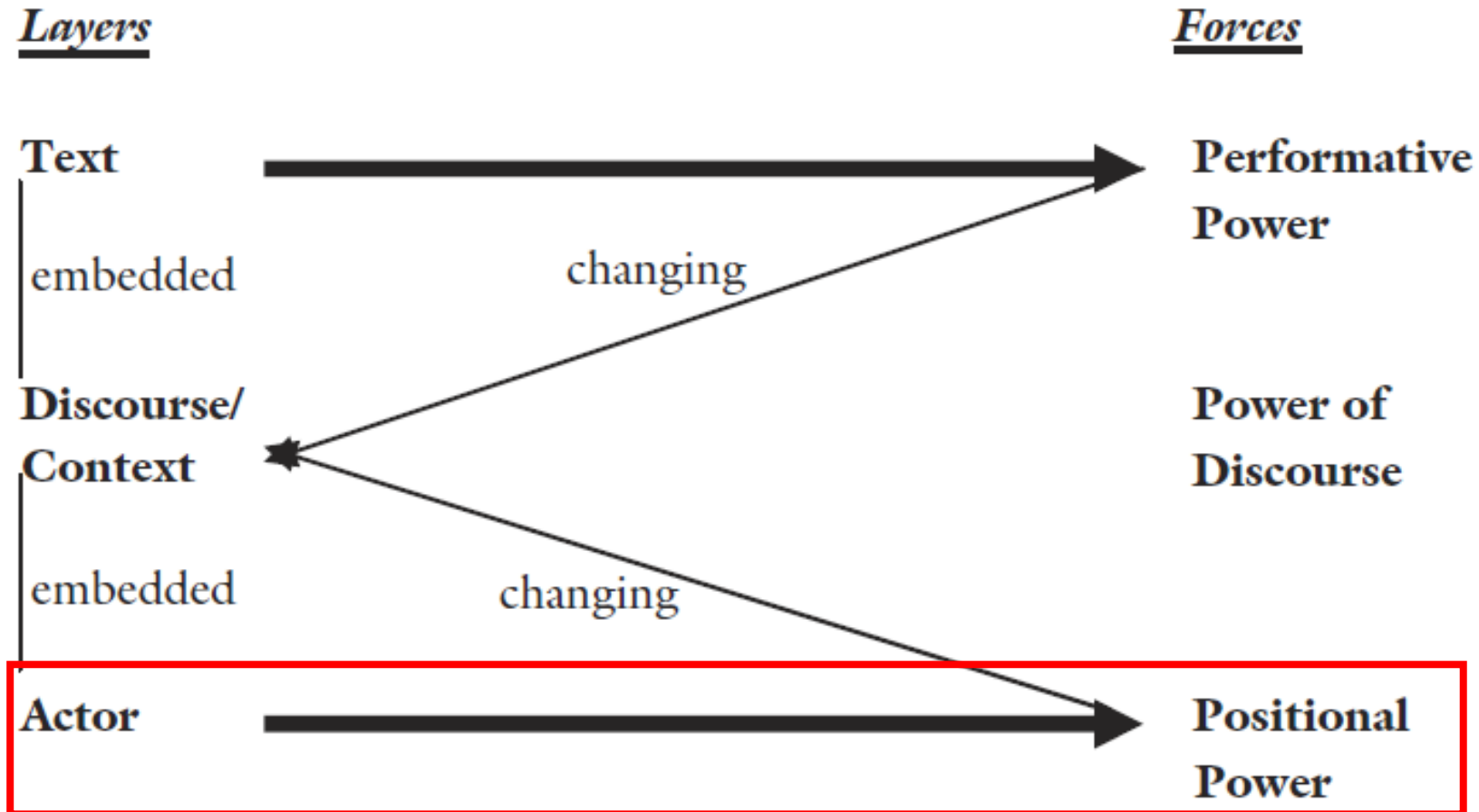
# “Threat-texts” (Stritzel 2007)

- In contrast to exceptional speech acts, threat-texts **evolve over longer periods of time** and have **performative force** that shapes discourse as well as (consequently) power-relations.
- Again, **“fit” of the threat-text** with the **existing discourse** (its **resonance**) is crucial for its influence.
- → **localization** (Stritzel 2011): re-interpretation of a threat-text in a particular context where it meets a new (local) audience.
- **Thus:** what counts as a security practice in one period or locale, does not necessarily count in the same way in other periods/locales (ibid.).

# Threat-texts



# Stritzel's revision

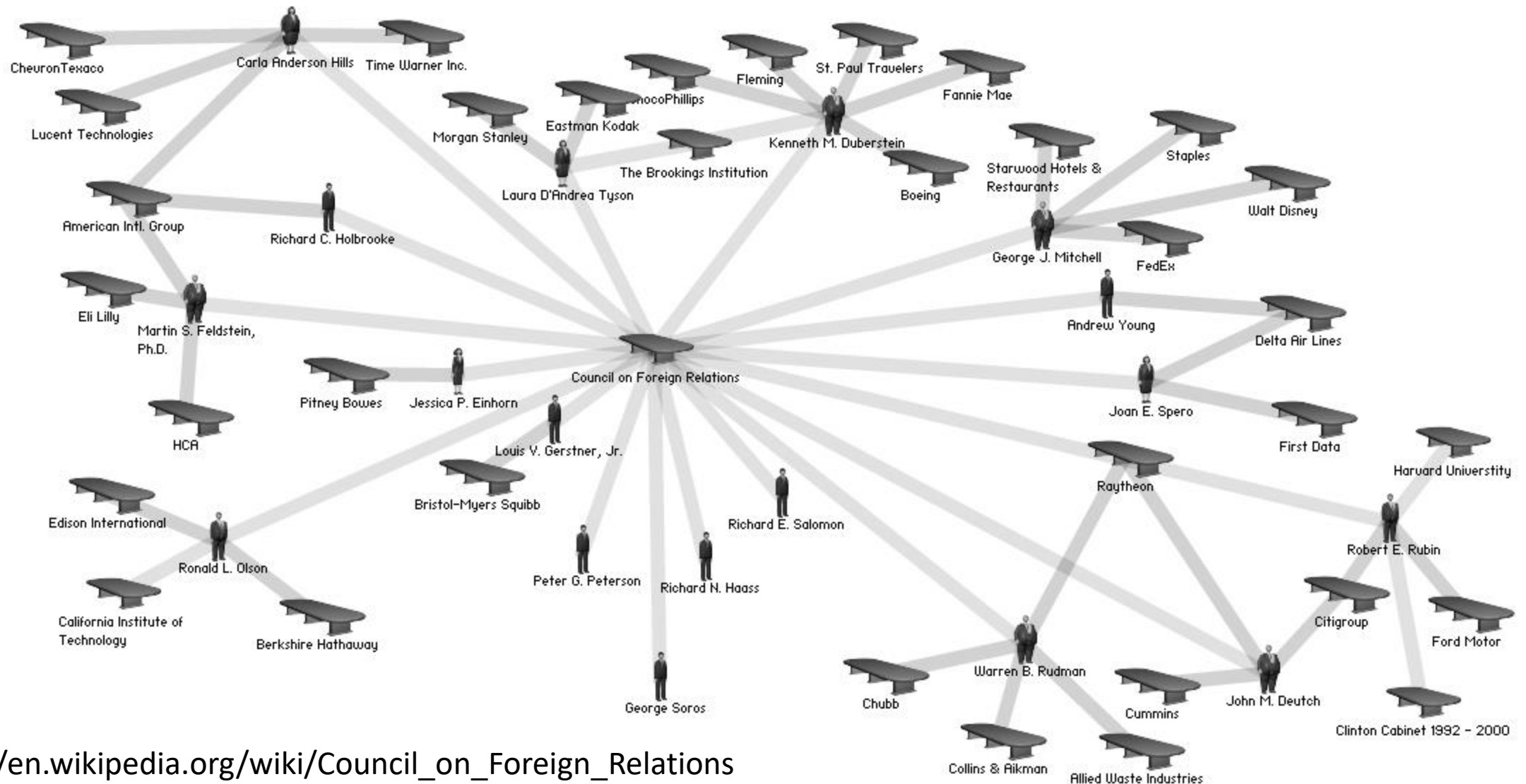




# Power positions: embedded agency

- Agency is embedded **sociopolitical context** where actors occupy different **power positions** defined by access to cultural (knowledge), moral (legitimacy), and formal (capability to make decisions) resources.
- → There is an **uneven distribution of opportunities and constraints** to the actors.
- → This embeddedness poses **objective** (in sense actor-independent) **limitations** (objective context according to Balzacq) to securitization moves.

# Power positions: embedded agency



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council\\_on\\_Foreign\\_Relations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_on_Foreign_Relations)