3 Security complexes: a theory of regional security

This chapter presents an operational version of regional security complex theory (RSCT). RSCT provides a conceptual frame that captures the emergent new structure of international security \((1 + 4 + \text{regions})\): hence our title *Regions and Powers*. As we have shown, RSCT has a historical dimension that enables current developments to be linked to both Cold War and pre-Cold War patterns in the international system. It contains a model of regional security that enables one to analyse, and up to a point anticipate and explain, developments within any region. RSCT provides a more nuanced view than strongly simplifying ideas such as unipolarity or centre–periphery. But it remains complementary with them, and provides considerable theoretical leverage of its own. In an anarchically structured international system of sufficient size and geographical complexity, RSCs will be an expected substructure, and one that has important mediating effects on how the global dynamics of great power polarity actually operate across the international system. This makes the theory interoperable with most mainstream realist, and much liberal-based, thinking about the international system. In another sense, the theory has constructivist roots, because the formation and operation of RSCs hinge on patterns of amity and enmity among the units in the system, which makes regional systems dependent on the actions and interpretations of actors, not just a mechanical reflection of the distribution of power. Wendt (1999: 257, 301), for example, makes the connection explicit, pointing out that his social theory can be applied to regional security complexes.

By applying RSCT to the whole of the international system, this book offers both a vision for the emerging ‘world order’ and a method for studying specific regions. Our view of regions, and therefore our image of the contemporary structure of international security, is almost the
reverse of that set out in Huntington's widely read *Clash of Civilizations* (1993). Seemingly we are similar in emphasizing the importance of a distinct middle level between state and global system. Huntington emphasises how large civilisations like Islam, the West, and Asia clash, and how the really dangerous conflicts emerge at the fault lines of these culturally based macro-units. Conversely, we stress that security regions form subsystems in which most of the security interaction is internal; states fear their neighbours and ally with other regional actors, and most often the borders between regions are – often geographically determined – zones of weak interaction, or they are occupied by an *insulator* (Turkey, Burma, Afghanistan) that faces both ways, bearing the burden of this difficult position but not strong enough to unify its two worlds into one. The concept of *insulator* is specific to RSCT and defines a location occupied by one or more units where larger regional security dynamics stand back to back. This is not to be confused with the traditional idea of a *buffer state*, whose function is defined by standing at the centre of a strong pattern of securitisation, not at its edge.

Huntington's theory has the polemical advantage of ending up with a struggle that takes place at the system level, thereby putting the United States centre stage. That understandably appeals to an American audience, and was reinforced by the events of 11 September 2001. But seen from most countries of the world, the relevant strategic setting is not primarily at the system level – the first priority is regional. Huntington's delineation of the regions/civilisations differs from ours at several points because his are seen as reflections of underlying cultural affinities, whereas our RSCs – though possibly *influenced* by these and other factors – are *defined* (at the more 'superficial' or contingent level) by the actual patterns of security practices. In concrete cases this means that the same conflict (e.g., Bosnia) can be internal to our RSCs and intercivilisational to Huntington. Especially in the book version (Huntington 1996), there are conflicts both within and between civilisations, but the latter are seen as increasingly decisive. In our view, it was a bias of this type, favouring the global over the regional, that led to many of the disasters of Cold War policy from Southeast Asia and the Middle East, to Southern Africa and South Asia. Since regions matter more in the current era, the costs of underrated them could be even higher.

There are versions of RSCT going back to 1983, as well as a variety of applications of it to particular regions. So far, the most authoritative version is to be found as one chapter in a more general book (Buzan 1991b: 186–229) and at some points developed further in the context of different
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applications (notably Buzan et al. 1990; cf. also Buzan, Rizvi et al. 1986; Buzan 1988b; Väyrynen 1988, 1998; Wæver 1989, 1993a, 1993b; Buzan and Wæver 1992; Wriggins 1992; Ayoob 1995; Lose 1995; Coppetiers 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Lake and Morgan 1997c; Mozaffari 1997; Schlyter 1997; Zanders 1997, 1999; Aves 1998; Engelbrekt 1998; Ohlson 1998; Parmani 1998; Rondeli 1998, 1999; van Wyk 1998; Eide 1999; Haddadi 1999; Kinsella 1999; Muller 1999; Bøs 2000; Cornell and Sultan 2000; Khokhar and Wiberg-Jørgensen 2000; Lobo-Guerrero Sanz 2000; Takahashi 2000; Zha 2000; Jonson and Allison 2001; Kaski 2001; Limaye 2001; Schulz et al. 2001; Turton 2001; Adams 2002; Burnashev 2002; Christiansen 2002; Corpsora 2002; Hettne 2002; Alagappa forthcoming; Tickner and Mason forthcoming; Rees n.d.; van Schalkwyk n.d.). The purpose of the present book is to integrate the lessons from existing and new case studies, fill in remaining gaps in the theory, produce an operational formulation of the theory, and empirically apply it to all regions of the world. It is an extension of our previous book (Buzan et al. 1998), which was aimed at solving some problems arising from how to integrate the wider agenda of security with a focus on the regional level. Whereas the main focus of that book was on sectors, the main focus of this one is on levels of analysis, the two being linked by the process of securitisation. Although the original theory was largely conceived for third world cases, much of the elaboration of it was made with reference to Europe (our 1990 and 1993 books), and it is therefore important to survey global variations in regional security to expunge Eurocentric elements and produce a general theory of regional security. It is our hope that a book with such a general theory and applications will be of interest not only to security theorists, but perhaps even more for area specialists. Studies of ‘regional security’ usually take place without any coherent theoretical framework because, other than a few basic notions about balance of power and interdependence borrowed from the system level, none has been available.

The next section explains our approach to understanding security regions, and the second section looks at the main variables within RSCT. The third section sets out RSCT as a descriptive framework for area studies, explains the possible typologies for security complexes, and sets benchmarks for change. The fourth section sets out the predictive possibilities of RSCT through the generation of scenarios. The fifth section reviews the constructivist method of securitisation theory as the way of defining RSCs, and the final section puts all this into the context of the literature on regional security.
Security at the regional level

One of the purposes of inventing the concept of regional security complexes was to advocate the regional level as the appropriate one for a large swath of practical security analysis. Normally, two too extreme levels dominate security analysis: national and global. National security – e.g., the security of France – is not in itself a meaningful level of analysis. Because security dynamics are inherently relational, no nation’s security is self-contained. But studies of ‘national security’ often implicitly place their own state at the centre of an ad hoc ‘context’ without a grasp of the systemic or subsystemic context in its own right. Global security in any holistic sense refers at best to an aspiration, not a reality. The globe is not tightly integrated in security terms and, except for the special case of superpowers and great powers discussed in chapter 2, only a limited amount can be said at this level of generality that will reflect the real concerns in most countries. The region, in contrast, refers to the level where states or other units link together sufficiently closely that their securities cannot be considered separate from each other. The regional level is where the extremes of national and global security interplay, and where most of the action occurs. The general picture is about the conjunction of two levels: the interplay of the global powers at the system level, and clusters of close security interdependence at the regional level. Each RSC is made up of the fears and aspirations of the separate units (which in turn partly derive from domestic features and fractures). Both the security of the separate units and the process of global power intervention can be grasped only through understanding the regional security dynamics.

One might, then, think that the way to proceed would be to find the cultural or economic or historical sources of regions, and then start to investigate security dynamics in these. This is seen, for instance, in the endless debates about whether Russia is part of Europe – with listings of Russian literary achievements versus European intellectual movements that flourished without touching Russia. In a security context such arguments easily become normative-political arguments: security cooperation should correspond to the ‘natural’ or ‘true’, cultural, geographic, or historical boundaries (see, e.g., the Central European arguments of Milan Kundera and others in the early 1980s; Kundera 1984). This approach might work for securitising actors, but not, in our view, as the starting point for analysts seeking to define regions specifically in the functional terms of security. Security complexes are regions as seen
through the lens of security. They may or may not be regions in other senses, but they do not depend on, or start from, other conceptualisations of regionness. We do not rule out the study of causal effects of, for example, cultural or economic patterns on security patterns. Quite the contrary, it is only by defining RSCs purely in security terms that this causal relationship is opened up for examination.

If one hypothetically listed all the security concerns of the world, drew a map connecting each referent object for security with whatever is said to threaten it and with the main actors positively and negatively involved in handling the threat, the resulting picture would show varying degrees of intensity. Some clusters of nodes would be intensely connected, while other zones would be crossed by only few lines. Of the clusters that formed, RSCT predicts that most would be territorially based. There will, of course, be some connections across otherwise thinly populated terrain between the RSCs and, in addition, there will be some non-territorially based clusters such as those around ‘international terrorism’.

Some clarification of our previous statements of RSCT and security theory in general is called for. The original definition of a security complex (Buzan 1983: 106) was: 'a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot reasonably be considered apart from one another'. In our 1998 book (Buzan and Wæver 1998: 201), the definition of RSCs was reformulated to shed the state-centric and military-political focus and to rephrase the same basic conception for the possibility of different actors and several sectors of security: ‘a set of units whose major processes of securitisation, desecuritisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved apart from one another’. This more complicated formulation does not change the underlying idea or the main properties of the concept. The central idea remains that substantial parts of the securitisation and desecuritisation processes in the international system will manifest themselves in regional clusters. These clusters are both durable and distinct from global level processes of (de)securitisation. Each level needs to be understood both in itself and in how it interplays with the other.

Our 1998 book was aimed at meta-theoretical questions, and its more constructivist – but also more complicated – formulation of the nature of security in terms of practices of securitisation remains our frame of reference. Ultimately, we have an open framework in which it is left for history to decide whether states are the most important referent objects
for security or, say, the environment. However, this wider framework does not predefine that states are not dominant. It is perfectly possible that the world is still largely state-centric, even if our framework is not. The finding is more interesting when the framework does not pre-determine the result. Thus, one might see the relationship between the original, state-centric, and partly objectivist formulation of RSCT and the more recent presentation of it within the multisectoral, multi-actor securitisation perspective in parallel to that between Newtonian and Einsteiner physics: the latter is in principle the correct way to phrase things, but for the majority of cases (except extreme border cases) the former reaches the same results and is a much less complicated way of expression. Therefore we will use the terminology of states in the following pages to give the general idea of the normal RSC, and then add the refinements and the implications of the securitisation framework.

**Regional security complex theory: main variables**

RSCT is useful for three reasons. First it tells us something about the appropriate level of analysis in security studies, second it can organise empirical studies, and, third, theory-based scenarios can be established on the basis of the known possible forms of, and alternatives to, RSCs. These we will turn to in the following two sections, but first we have to clarify the status of RSCs and their main analytical components.

RSCs are defined by durable patterns of amity and enmity taking the form of subglobal, geographically coherent patterns of security interdependence. The particular character of a local RSC will often be affected by historical factors such as long-standing enmities (Greeks and Turks, Arabs and Persians, Khmers and Vietnamese), or the common cultural embrace of a civilisational area (Arabs, Europeans, South Asians, Northeast Asians, South Americans). The formation of RSCs derives from the interplay between, on the one hand, the anarchic structure and its balance-of-power consequences, and on the other the pressures of local geographical proximity. Simple physical adjacency tends to generate more security interaction among neighbours than among states located in different areas, a point also emphasised by Walt (1987: 276–7). Adjacency is potent for security because many threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones. The impact of geographical proximity on security interaction is strongest and most obvious in the military, political, societal, and environmental sectors. The general rule that adjacency increases security interaction is much less consistent in
the economic sector (Buzan et al. 1998: 95–117). All the states in the system are to some extent enmeshed in a global web of security interdependence. But because insecurity is often associated with proximity, this interdependence is far from uniform. Anarchy plus the distance effect plus geographical diversity yields a pattern of regionally based clusters, where security interdependence is markedly more intense between the states inside such complexes than between states inside the complex and those outside it. South Asia provides a clear example, where the wars and rivalries of the subcontinent constitute a distinctive pattern that has been little affected by events in the Gulf or in Southeast Asia (Buzan, Rizvi et al. 1986).

The basic premise that security interdependence tends to be regionally focused is strongly mediated by the power of the units concerned. As shown in chapter 2, superpowers have such wide-ranging interests, and such massive capabilities, that they can conduct their rivalries over the whole planet. Superpowers by definition largely transcend the logic of geography and adjacency in their security relationships. At the other end of the power spectrum are states whose limited capabilities largely confine their security interests and activities to their near neighbours, as in Southeast Asia or Southern Africa. Possession of great power thus tends to override the regional imperative, and small power to reinforce it. Smaller states will usually find themselves locked into an RSC with their neighbours, great powers will typically penetrate several adjacent regions, and superpowers will range over the whole planet. Local states can of course securitise threats seen to come from distant great powers, but this does not necessarily, or even usually, constitute security interdependence.

What links the overarching pattern of distribution of power among the global powers to the regional dynamics of RSCs is the mechanism of penetration. Penetration occurs when outside powers make security alignments with states within an RSC. An indigenous regional rivalry, as between India and Pakistan, provides opportunities or demands for the great powers to penetrate the region. Balance-of-power logic works naturally to encourage the local rivals to call in outside help, and by this mechanism the local patterns of rivalry become linked to the global ones. South Asia during the Cold War gave a clear example, with Pakistan linked to the United States and China, and India linked to the Soviet Union. Such linkage between the local and global security patterns is a natural feature of life in an anarchic system. One of the purposes of RSCT is to combat the tendency to overstress the role of the great powers, and
to ensure that the local factors are given their proper weight in security analysis. The standard form for an RSC is a pattern of rivalry, balance-of-power, and alliance patterns among the main powers within the region: to this pattern can then be added the effects of penetrating external powers. Normally the pattern of conflict stems from factors indigenous to the region – such as, for instance, in South Asia or in the Middle East – and outside powers cannot (even if heavily involved) usually define, desecuritise, or reorganise the region. Unipolarity might in its extreme form be an exception to this rule; when both sides of a local conflict are dependent on the same power, it is possible for that power to pressure the conflicting parties into peace processes, for example, the Middle East (see B. Hansen 2000) and, in the case of European regional unipolarity, the Stability Pact for Central Europe (Waever 1996b: 229–31, 1998a: 99–100).

The pattern of amity and enmity is normally best understood by starting the analysis from the regional level, and extending it towards inclusion of the global actors on the one side and domestic factors on the other. The specific pattern of who fears or likes whom is generally not imported from the system level, but generated internally in the region by a mixture of history, politics, and material conditions. For most of the states in the international system, the regional level is the crucial one for security analysis. For the global powers, the regional level is crucial in shaping both the options for, and consequences of, projecting their influences and rivalries into the rest of the system. The regional level matters most for the states within it, but also substantially for the global powers. Security features at the level of regions are durable. They are substantially self-contained not in the sense of being totally free-standing, but rather in possessing a security dynamic that would exist even if other actors did not impinge on it. This relative autonomy was revealed by the ending of the Cold War, when enmities such as that between Israel and Syria, and Iraq and the Gulf Arab states, easily survived the demise of a superpower rivalry that had supported, but not generated, them.

‘Regional security complex’ is not just a perspective that can be applied to any group of countries. One can argue about the correct interpretation of the boundaries formed by patterns of relative security interdependence and indifference, but within the terms of the theory one cannot just use the term RSC for any group of states (Norden, the Warsaw Pact, the Non-Proliferation Treaty members, the GCC states, Africa). In order to qualify as an RSC, a group of states or other entities must possess a degree of security interdependence sufficient both to establish them
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as a linked set and to differentiate them from surrounding security regions. Regions are not, as some argue, ‘necessarily arbitrarily defined’ (Khalilzad 1984: preface; B. Hansen 2000: 9). Within the terms of RSCT, RSCs define themselves as substructures of the international system by the relative intensity of security interdependence among a group of units, and security indifference between that set and surrounding units.

Two important questions need to be settled here. First, the existence of an RSC is not in terms of the discursive ‘construction of regions’. We are not (in this context) allowing, e.g., ‘Europe’ to be defined by how actors construct ‘Europe’ as a way to define its boundaries, or whether ‘the Middle East’ is an accepted regional definition in the region it applies to (which it is not). Regional security complex is an analytical concept defined and applied by us, but these regions (RSCs) are socially constructed in the sense that they are contingent on the security practice of the actors. Dependent on what and whom they securitise, the region might reproduce or change. We study the security discourses and security practices of actors, not primarily their regional(ist) discourses and practices. The latter is an interesting and important question (see Fawcett and Hurrell 1995; Schulz et al. 2001), and is an element of our analysis, but not the basis of it. Our approach is constructed around ‘security’. According to our theory ‘security’ is what actors make it, and it is for the analyst to map these practices. Consequently, these two ways of understanding the definition of regions have to be kept separate. The regionalist discourses of actors are part of their political struggle, and how they define the region has to be studied. ‘Regional security complex’ is our analytical term and therefore something is an RSC when it qualifies according to our criteria, not according to the criteria of practitioners. What we pass judgement on is securitisation practices of practitioners. Their practice in terms of labelling regions is only indirectly related to our criteria as such. RSCs are thus a very specific, functionally defined type of region, which may or may not coincide with more general understandings of region.

A second issue is whether RSCs are exclusive or overlapping. In contrast to the argument made by Lake and Morgan (1997c) that RSCs can have overlapping memberships (which we examine in more detail in the final section of this chapter, pp. 78–82), our position is that they are mutually exclusive. We take as the starting point of the analysis that the whole world has to be divided up on a map producing mutually exclusive RSCs, insulator states, and global actors. RSCs are distinguished
from each other by degrees of relative security connectedness and indifference. They are distinguished from global powers by occupying a different level of analysis as defined in chapter 2. If this set-up produces complications, anomalies, and difficulties, these are exactly what should be explained and what the theory has then served to alert us to. External involvement is analysed by the use of ‘penetration’ and ‘overlay’. Difficult border cases between regions may be explained by noticing an insulator state, or a case of asymmetry where a neighbouring great power leans on a weaker neighbouring RSC. Strong instances of interregional dynamics may be indicators of an external transformation (merger) of RSCs.

As argued in our previous book (Buzan et al. 1998: 163–93), it is in the nature of security practice as a prioritising and thus implicitly comparative move that actors themselves integrate and hierarchise security issues. Since one threat is interpreted in the light of other threats, we get an integrated field of security, not separate issues or for that matter separate sectors of say ‘economic security’ and ‘societal security’. Thus, the different issues get tied together, and a world of regions is therefore less unlikely than one might at first think when listing the diversity of security issues each drawing on a particular sector. So if we make the starting assumption that the world can be divided into a definite number of exclusive RSCs, what problems do we then have to solve on the way, which of these are instructive, and which are just artificially self-imposed? We return to these questions in part VI.

Within the structure of anarchy, the essential structure and character of RSCs are defined by two kinds of relations, power relations and patterns of amity and enmity. The idea that power operates on a regional scale is well known from the concept of a regional balance of power, in which powers that are not directly linked to each other still take part in the same network of relations. Thus RSCs, like the international system of which they are substructures, can be analysed in terms of polarity, ranging from unipolar, through bi- and tripolar, to multipolar. This is why it is essential to distinguish regional powers from global level ones.

The second component, patterns of amity and enmity, has been much less featured in IR theory than has power, an early exception being Wolfers (1962: 25–35). Indeed, in the more extreme versions of power theory (maximalist realism), they are simply reflections of power relations: one fears whoever wields greater power. Less dogmatically, they might be seen as ‘much stickier than the relatively fluid movement of
the distribution of power’ (Buzan 1991b: 190; parallel to Krasner’s (1983) classical discussion of regimes as intermediary variables and many other modified realisms, see Guzzini 1994). More realistically, these patterns are allocated a historically derived reality of their own as the socially constructed dimension of structure (Buzan and Little 2000: 68–89).

Those of a Wendtian predisposition can see that his social theory can easily be applied as a useful constructivist elaboration of the amity–enmity variable in RSCT, though his scheme is more differentiated than the simple dyad of enemy or friend. Wendt’s idea of social structures of anarchy (Hobbesian, Lockean, Kantian) is based on ‘what kind of roles – enemy, rival, friend – dominate the system’ (Wendt 1999: 247); and how deeply internalised these roles are – by coercion (external force), by interest (calculations of gain and loss), and by belief in legitimacy (understandings of right and wrong, good and bad). All of these ideas work as comfortably at the regional level as they do at the global one. His observation that there is no necessary correlation between type of social structure and degree of internalisation (e.g., warrior cultures, whether tribal or fascist, can believe in the virtue of enemy relations and therefore generate a deeply internalised Hobbesian social structure) is a particularly useful insight into thinking about RSCs. We hope to use our regional cases to assess the viability of Wendt’s assumption that one particular role (enemy, rival, friend) dominates sufficiently to assign an overall social structure to a system or subsystem. It is thus not enough to look at the distribution of power in order to predict the patterns of conflict – even if distribution of power might tell us quite a bit about what constellations are impossible and which might be likely. Historical hatreds and friendships, as well as specific issues that trigger conflict or cooperation, take part in the formation of an overall constellation of fears, threats, and friendships that define an RSC. These patterns of amity and enmity are influenced by various background factors such as history, culture, religion, and geography, but to a large extent they are path-dependent and thus become their own best explanation.

RSCs are durable rather than permanent patterns. As substructures, they can have mediating effects on relations between the great powers and the local states as well as on the interactions of states in the regions. The RSC constitutes a social reality, which is more than the sum of its parts, and thus it is able to intervene between intentions and outcomes. Although the RSC does not exist independently of the states and their vulnerabilities, the outcome of their interactions would be different if
it were not for the existence of the RSC. It is not a root cause in itself but a structure that modifies and mediates the action and interaction of units.

**Descriptive RSCT: a matrix for area studies**

The most well-established function for RSCT is as a framework organising empirical studies of regional security. The theory specifies what to look for at four levels of analysis and how to interrelate these. The four levels are:

1. domestically in the states of the region, particularly their domestically generated vulnerabilities (is the state strong or weak due to stability of the domestic order and correspondence between state and nation (Buzan 1991b))? The specific vulnerability of a state defines the kind of security fears it has (Wæver 1989) – and sometimes makes another state or group of states a structural threat even if it or they have no hostile intentions);

2. state-to-state relations (which generate the region as such);

3. the region’s interaction with neighbouring regions (this is supposed to be relatively limited given that the complex is defined by interaction internally being more important. But if major changes in the patterns of security interdependence that define complexes are underway, this level can become significant, and in situations of gross asymmetries a complex without global powers that neighbours one with a global power can have strong interregional links in one direction); and finally

4. the role of global powers in the region (the interplay between the global and regional security structures).

Taken together, these four levels constitute the *security constellation* (Buzan et al. 1998: 201ff.). Since the earliest development of RSCT we have also allowed the idea of *subcomplexes* as a ‘half-level’ within the regional one, and we stick with that here. Subcomplexes have essentially the same definition as RSCs, the difference being that a subcomplex is firmly embedded within a larger RSC. Subcomplexes represent distinctive patterns of security interdependence that are nonetheless caught up in a wider pattern that defines the RSC as a whole. The clearest example is in the Middle East, where distinct subcomplexes can be observed in the Levant (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria) and in the Gulf (Iran, Iraq, GCC), but where there is so much overlap and interplay that the
two cannot be disentangled (all of the Gulf states are hostile to Israel, rivalry between Syria and Iraq, etc.). Subcomplexes are not a necessary feature of RSCs, but they are not uncommon either, especially where the number of states in an RSC is relatively large. The device of subcomplexes eliminates most of what might otherwise occur as disturbing cases of overlapping membership between RSCs: e.g., if the Gulf and the Levant were seen as separate RSCs, Iraq would be a member of both but, with these as subcomplexes, Iraq can be a member both of the Gulf subcomplex and of the wider Middle Eastern one.

RSCT asserts that the regional level will always be operative, and sometimes dominant. It does not say that the regional level must always be dominant. We argue that all four levels of a security constellation are simultaneously in play. The question of which level is dominant is not set by the theory, even though particular circumstances (on which more later) might swing the odds one way or another. Determining the balance among the levels rests on empirical observation of particular cases, and in that sense the case studies that compose this book will be a test of our (and others’) assumption from chapter 1 that the conditions of the post-Cold War world will enhance the salience of the regional level for security. Just as in the social world individual psychology might be most influential in explaining behaviour in one case, family structures in another, and national society in yet another, so in the international world domestic factors might dominate some security constellations, regional ones others, and global ones yet others. The regional level may or may not dominate, but it will nearly always be in play in some significant sense, and cannot be dropped out of the analysis.

In its descriptive application RSCT is aimed at people working empirically on specific regions. It is mostly a descriptive language, a method for producing order out of complicated data, and for writing structural history. The theory offers the possibility of systematically linking the study of internal conditions, relations among units in the region, relations between regions, and the interplay of regional dynamics with globally acting powers. It also provides some structural logic, most notably the hypothesis that regional patterns of conflict shape the lines of intervention by global level powers. Other things being equal, the expectation is that outside powers will be drawn into a region along the lines of rivalry existing within it. In this way regional patterns of rivalry may line up with, and be reinforced by, global power ones, even though the global power patterns may have had little or nothing to do with the formation of the regional pattern.
One purpose of descriptive RSCT is to establish a benchmark against which to identify and assess changes at the regional level. Because RSCs are durable substructures with an important geographical component, they have both internal structures and external boundaries that can be used to monitor continuity and change and to distinguish significant change from less important events. The essential structure of an RSC embodies four variables:

1. boundary, which differentiates the RSC from its neighbours;
2. anarchic structure, which means that the RSC must be composed of two or more autonomous units;
3. polarity, which covers the distribution of power among the units; and
4. social construction, which covers the patterns of amity and enmity among the units.

From its configuration at any given snapshot in time there are thus three possible evolutions open to an RSC:

1. maintenance of the status quo, which means that there are no significant changes in its essential structure;
2. internal transformation, which means that changes in essential structure occur within the context of its existing outer boundary. This could mean changes to the anarchic structure (because of regional integration); to polarity (because of disintegration, merger, conquest, differential growth rates, or suchlike); or to the dominant patterns of amity/enmity (because of ideological shifts, war-weariness, changes of leadership, etc.); and
3. external transformation, which means that the outer boundary expands or contracts, changing the membership of the RSC, and most probably transforming its essential structure in other ways. The most obvious way for this to happen is if two RSCs merge, as might happen if Israel became dramatically concerned about Pakistan’s ‘Islamic’ nuclear weapons; or less often two RSCs splitting out from one.

**Types of security complex**

Within these parameters of structure and evolution, it is possible to identify different types of RSC. In our previous works we have talked about variations in polarity from unipolar to multipolar, and about variations in amity and enmity ranging from conflict formation through security
regime to security community (Wæver 1989; Buzan 1991b: 218). Wendtians should note that conflict formation, security regime, and security community run in parallel with Wendt’s Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian social structures. The main differences are that conflict formation is rather wider than Wendt’s Hobbesian model, and security regime is probably a rather narrower idea than his Lockean model. The same parallel could be drawn with the English School’s three traditions of Hobbes, Grotius, and Kant (Cutler 1991) on which Wendt (1999) draws. We have also sometimes talked about ‘centred’ regions (Wæver 1993a, 1997b), where centralisation of power in a region reaches a point at which its centre is primarily to be seen as a participant in the global security constellation among the greatest powers, and the regional dynamics can no longer be seen as a subsystem in which the primary fears and concerns of a group of states are defined by each other. One example of this is North America. The EU integration process might be thought of as moving towards another, albeit in a rather different way, and we have talked of this in terms of scenarios of ‘fragmentation’ and ‘integration’ (Buzan et al. 1990; Wæver et al. 1993). But we have not yet unfolded the whole range of possibilities in sufficient detail, nor have we had the benefit of a clearly worked-out differentiation between the regional and global level such as that set out in chapter 2. Our earlier classifications consequently blur or hide some significant issues.

The presence of several global powers in the international system (as in the present 1 + 4 system) raises questions about how great powers and superpowers interact with regions. The view of polarity cultivated during the Cold War assumed that the superpowers stood outside the regions as well as above them. On that basis, one could construct clear models of global and regional level security dynamics, and ask questions about how the two levels played into each other (Buzan 1991b: 186–229). The global level was distinguished by being unpenetrated by other powers, while the standard condition of RSCs was to be penetrated by outside powers. This scheme always ignored the regions within which the superpowers sat and, like Cold War polarity theory, fudged awkward questions about which level China occupied. But if there are several global level powers in the system, then it is unlikely that any complete differentiation between the global and regional levels will be possible. Some global level powers will be inside regions, while others, most obviously China at the present time, will have considerable entanglements in neighbouring regions, and will be operating at both levels
simultaneously. How do we deal with these problems, especially in the light of needing to fill in a map of the whole planet?

The first step is to draw a distinction between standard and centred RSCs. A standard RSC is broadly Westphalian in form with two or more powers and a predominantly military-political security agenda. All standard complexes are anarchic in structure. In standard RSCs, polarity is defined wholly by regional powers (e.g., Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia in the Gulf, India and Pakistan in South Asia) and may vary from unipolar to multipolar. In standard RSCs, unipolarity means that the region contains only one regional power: Southern Africa (where South Africa is a giant compared to its neighbours) provides the clearest example. It is not centred, because the security dynamics of the region are not dominated from the unipolar power at its centre. Although they can be unipolar in this sense, standard RSCs do not contain a global level power, and therefore in such regions (currently Africa, the Middle East, South America, and South Asia) clear distinctions can be drawn between inside, regional level dynamics, and outside, intervening, global level ones. In terms of amity and enmity, standard RSCs may be conflict formations, security regimes, or security communities, in which the region is defined by a pattern of rivalries, balances, alliances, and/or concerts and friendships. Within a standard RSC the main element of security politics is the relationship among the regional powers inside the region. Their relations set the terms for the minor powers and for the penetration of the RSC by global powers.

Centred RSCs come in three (potentially four) main forms. The first two forms are the special cases in which an RSC is unipolar, but the power concerned is either a great power (e.g., Russia in the CIS) or a superpower (e.g., the United States in North America), rather than just a regional power. The expectation in these cases is that the global level power will dominate the region (unipolarity), and that what would otherwise count as regional powers (Ukraine, Canada, Mexico) will not have sufficient relative weight to define another regional pole. Part of the reason that India’s claim for great power status has not been accepted is that Pakistan still defines a regional pole of power. It is possible that a unipolar standard RSC could also become centred without the unipole thereby elevating itself to global great power status. One can imagine such a scenario developing around regional level unipoles such as South Africa and Nigeria, but in fact we find no cases of this type (more on this in part VI).
Security complexes: a theory of regional security

One might think of the Cold War relationship between Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as an extreme case of a superpower-centred region, where Eastern Europe was not just overlaid, but virtually absorbed into a kind of Soviet empire, the whole acting more or less as a single entity at the global level. Less extreme, but comparable, is the situation in North America centred on the United States. The USA projects bases and military interventions into Central America and the Caribbean and, while it certainly cannot be said that this region functions as a unit at the global level, US influence clearly impinges on the indigenous security dynamics in quite major ways. In this rather odd hybrid, the core actor is driven much more by global than by regional security dynamics, and during the Cold War it was primarily global concerns that drove its security impositions on its smaller neighbours. Because the core actor is globally orientated, the security dynamics of the region are hugely distorted and suppressed. But since all other actors in the region have their concerns linked to each other, a general map of global security would still show a clear regional formation of densely knit connections compared to a lack of connections in and out of the region for most units. This therefore can still be treated as an RSC.

The third form of a centred RSC is very different, involving a region integrated by institutions rather than by a single power. The EU provides the example, hanging halfway between being a region in the form of a highly developed security community, and being a great power in its own right with actor quality at the global level. Another, though more problematic, example would be the USA during its ‘Philadelphian’ era (Deudney 1995). Like one of those drawings that can be either a rabbit or a duck depending how you look at it, the EU can be either a great power or an RSC in security community form. Institutional centredness created by the members of an RSC poses some problems for RSCT. The definition of RSCs (and the general methodology of our security analysis) is based on the security actions and concerns of actors: an RSC must contain dynamics of securitisation. Usually this means that the actors in the region securitise each other. But the development of a security community is marked by processes of desecuritisation, or what Wendt would think of as a Kantian social structure: actors stop treating each other as security problems and start behaving as friends. They still compete and feel challenged now and then, but this is dealt with as are normal political, economic, environmental, and societal problems – not as matters of security, i.e., threats to survival that mobilise extreme countermeasures. If a centred region moved into this kind of general
desecuritisation, it might eventually leave the world of security altogether and thereby also the map of RSCs (logically, this would also be true of non-centred security communities, though such a development is hard to imagine).

In the real world the extreme case of a region of total desecuritisation is not empirically significant, and the most mature cases of security communities today are not marked by a general forgetting of security concerns but rather by a conscious aggregation of them. As often stated explicitly in Europe, because of the risk of a return to power balancing, rivalry, and thereby eventually war, we Europeans have to do this (integrate) and abstain from that (beggar-thy-neighbour or rival intervention policies). The classical Deutschian definition of a security community (Deutsch et al. 1957: 5–9) states that the actors cannot imagine a war among each other. This would imply the complete desecuritisation form of security community and fits nicely with the neofunctionalist strategy of technocratic depoliticisation that marked European integration in the 1950s and 1960s. However, both today and at that time among the elites themselves, the process rested on the generalised security argument that one had to integrate to avoid the wars that thereby were imaginable. European integration and cooperation were not fully desecuritised – the historical trajectory itself was highly securitised (see Wæver 1998a; and Hurrell 1998 on Latin America). In a previous empirical study of securitisation in the EU, we found that the most intense and regular threat was Europe itself, the risk of Europe’s past becoming also Europe’s future (Buzan et al. 1998: 179–89; see also Wæver 1996b). The Southern Cone in South America is close to creating a security community based on securitising primarily an external economic threat, and from this deriving the necessity of regional pacification. The most relevant form of security community contains active and regional securitisation, only it is not actor-to-actor (one state fearing the other and therefore counterthreatening it), but a collective securitisation of the overall development of the region. Therefore, security community is a possible, if uncommon, form for an RSC. It is not a development that necessarily moves beyond the status of RSC.

But the EU case also points to a further difficulty. Not only has the EU moved strongly towards the amity end of the amity–enmity spectrum, it has also created joint institutions that are substantial enough to raise the question of whether it still qualifies as an international anarchy. In principle one could imagine a high level of security community without much in the way of accompanying institutions, but it is easier
to imagine that well-developed security communities will normally become increasingly institutionalised and integrated. In the case of the EU, centredness comes not from the domination of a single pole of power, but from the building by a group of states of collective institutions that are beginning to take on actor quality in their own right. It is not unreasonable to ask whether what goes on inside the EU is domestic or international politics, and this question is difficult to answer with any clarity. The situation is *sui generis*, and for our purposes it raises the question of when a process of integration replaces anachic with hierarchic political structure sufficiently to say that what was an RSC in security community mode has instead become a single actor.

Integration processes may have a variety of impacts. They may, as would be the case with an EU actor, transform virtually a whole RSC into a great power, and thus transform the structure of polarity in the international system as a whole. But integration processes can also occur within RSCs, as happened with the unifications of the USA in North America, Germany and Italy in Europe, and as might happen in Korea, changing the local but not the global polarity. There may of course still be security dynamics in a centred region – cultural units will still be concerned about their societal security (the European nations in a future unified Europe, the ‘races’ of today’s United States), and environmental security obviously is still at stake, but as centredness becomes the making of a new unit, the political consequences of these securitisations are constrained by the disappearance of balancing options and the increasing salience of a centre–periphery constellation.

What links these three types of centred RSC together is the idea that the security dynamics of a region are dominated from a centre located within it. This is partly a question of how dominant the centre is (i.e., the degree of power asymmetry), but equally of the form of hegemony established. A centred RSC is more likely to be stable if the centre establishes a kind of open or penetrated hegemony, where dominated states are given access to the policy process of the ‘imperial centre’ (see Deudney and Ikenberry 1999; Kupchan 1998; Ikenberry 2001). Even stronger is the case where the centre is a construct of the units such as the EU and the early USA, when still anarchically structured (Deudney 1995). Wholly imperial centred regions retain their form mainly as a result of power, and are less likely to survive changes in the distribution of power (viz. the break-up of the Soviet empire). These considerations run parallel to Kratochwil’s (1989) and Wendt’s (1999) ideas about how social structures get internalised: superficially if coercion is the mechanism,
deeply if they get accepted as legitimate. We will use Adam Watson’s (1992) term legitimacy in this context as the general designation of the degree of acceptance (also among the peripheral units) of centredness as natural and correct, not imposed against some timeless standard of maximum independence.

Having sorted out the distinction between standard and centred RSCs, the second step is to deal with the cases that do not fit into either category and in a sense fall between them. These cases arise from having a number of global level powers scattered throughout the system. The more such powers there are in a system, the less room there will be for standard RSCs; the fewer, the more room. Having great powers scattered through the international system creates two possibilities other than centred complexes: great power regional security complexes, and supercomplexes. In the present 1 + 4 system, both possibilities are most clearly visible in Asia.

In a great power RSC, the polarity of a region is defined by more than one global level power being contained within it. This was traditionally the case in Europe, and is now the case in East Asia, where China and Japan form the core of a bipolar great power RSC. Great power RSCs have to be treated differently from ordinary RSCs for two reasons. First, their dynamics directly affect balancing calculations at the global level in ways that one would not expect from a standard RSC. Second, because great powers are involved, one would expect wider spillover into adjacent regions, in other words, a higher intensity of interregional interaction than would normally be the case. Great power RSCs are hybrids of the global and regional levels. In some ways they can be analysed in the same way as standard RSCs in terms of polarity, amity–enmity, boundaries, and suchlike. But because their dynamics involve global level powers, they affect, are indeed part of, the global level security dynamics. In a 1 + 4 system, or anything like it, the existence of a great power RSC as a subset of the global polarity shapes the options available both to the powers involved and to the other powers in the system. Where two or more great powers share a regional RSC, then the internal dynamics of that RSC, whether of amity or enmity, will be a significant factor in global level security dynamics. If the great powers are all in centred RSCs, then the regional level does not directly affect how they interact with each other, except inasmuch as trouble within a centred RSC might weaken its great power in relation to its peers (Russia’s problem).

The second difference from standard RSCs arises from the spillover effects consequent upon the presence of great powers. Great powers will
normally be capable of projecting their power into adjacent regions and, other things being equal, can be expected to do so. The presence of global level powers in an area is thus likely to violate the rule that interregional security dynamics will usually be weak, by allowing an adjacent great power to play strongly into one or more neighbouring regions in a sustained way. The clearest example here is China, which during the Cold War played not only into the great power RSC in Northeast Asia, but also into the standard RSCs in Southeast Asia and South Asia. China plays into South Asia as an ally of Pakistan and an opponent of India, meaning that India has to divert substantial energies to balancing China. Similarly, in Southeast Asia during the Cold War, China fought a war with Vietnam. A weaker version of the same story can be found in US engagement with South America. The fact of adjacency makes this relationship qualitatively different from a normal global power intervention into an RSC because the option of disengagement is not really available in the same way. The USA or Russia can decide whether or not to be in Southeast Asia in a way China cannot (or cannot without endangering its status as a great power).

Put more formally, the rule violation attendant on the presence of great powers is that, in contrast to standard RSCs, we should expect them to generate a sustained and substantial level of interregional security dynamics. Rather than expecting the security dynamics of the interregional level to be weak in relation to those of the global and regional levels, we expect them to be strong. This spillover might result from the actions of a single great power, as in the case of China. Or it might result from the dynamics of a great power RSC, as might be imagined if China and Japan became serious rivals or friends in Asia. Either way, such intense spillover may well bind together what would otherwise be separate RSCs into supercomplexes with one or more great powers at their core. In such cases the security constellation becomes more elaborate than usual. Instead of there being just three main levels (domestic, regional, and global) to take into account, one may have to add a fourth, superregional, level to replace the normally weak interregional one. In a supercomplex, the interregional level is strong and sustained, as it has been between Northeast Asia and South Asia, but not so strong as to override the regional dynamics in the penetrated RSC (in this case, South Asia). If the interregional dynamics do override the regional ones, as happened during the 1990s between Northeast and Southeast Asia, the spillover subordinates the previous patterns of regional security dynamics, and the component RSCs within the
supercomplex undergo external transformation, merging to form a new and larger RSC (in this case, East Asia). More on this in part II. As with the idea of subcomplexes, supercomplexes pick up cases of what would otherwise seem to be dual memberships.

Analysing cases of this sort requires paying close attention to the whole spectrum of levels making up the security constellation: domestic, regional, superregional, and global. In the Asian case, all the levels are in play at the same time, confronting all of the states concerned with an extremely difficult hand to play: China and Japan cannot disentangle their regional and superregional roles from their global ones. In supercomplexes, as in standard ones, weaker powers may well seek superpower and/or great power support against the regional power (Huntington 1999: 45–7). In a standard RSC, the consequences of such alignments will resonate mostly at the regional level, and only indirectly at the global one (if, for example, there are rival superpower engagements in a region, as in the Middle East during the Cold War). But in a great power RSC, or a supercomplex, such alignments will resonate directly at the global level, as well as at the regional one. As the United States discovered in Vietnam, and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, misunderstanding the interplay of the different levels can come at a high price.

*Explaining the absence of RSCs*

So far we have talked only about the nature and definition of RSCs, and the theory has implied that, in principle, the map of any international system meeting the conditions of the theory could and should be completely filled in by a set of RSCs. But this is not the case. There is also the possibility that the regional level fails to function because the local actors do not generate their own patterns of security interdependence. RSCT presupposes that the units concerned are normal members of an international system: ‘normal’ in the sense that they possess autonomy to make their own policy and the power capabilities to engage the other units in the system. There are two general sets of conditions in which RSCs do not, or cannot, form: *overlay* and *unstructured*.

*Overlay* is when great power interests transcend mere penetration, and come to dominate a region so heavily that the local pattern of security relations virtually ceases to operate. It usually results in the long-term stationing of great power armed forces in the region, and in the alignment of the local states according to the patterns of great power rivalry. The strongest examples of overlay are European colonisation of Africa, Asia, and the Americas, and the situation of Europe itself during the
Table 1 Summary of types of security complex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Key features</th>
<th>Example(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard</strong></td>
<td>Polarity determined by regional powers</td>
<td>Middle East, South America, Southeast Asia, Horn, Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Centred</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superpower</td>
<td>Unipolar centred on a superpower</td>
<td>North America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great power</td>
<td>Unipolar centred on a great power</td>
<td>CIS, potentially South Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Regional power]</td>
<td>Unipolar centred on a regional power</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Region acquires actor quality through institutions</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Great power</strong></td>
<td>Bi- or multipolar with great powers as the regional poles</td>
<td>Pre-1945 Europe, East Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supercomplexes</strong></td>
<td>Strong interregional level of security dynamics arising from great power spillover into adjacent regions</td>
<td>East and South Asia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cold War, when the classical European security dynamic was overlaid by the superpower rivalry. Northeast and Southeast Asia during the Cold War were heavily penetrated but not overlaid because their regional level dynamics remained significant. The term overlay will not be applied to dynamics within regions although the pattern in a centred RSC in some ways can be seen as analogous because a great (or super) power dominates a region. But since it is a power of the region, the region has not succumbed to extra-regional dynamics and therefore the situation is not designated overlay. Even situations where a distinct subcomplex is secondary to the core of an RSC (Central America in North America, the Balkans in EU-Europe) should not be designated overlay, because the subcomplex is part of what constitutes the RSC.

*Unstructured* security regions occur for either or both of two reasons: first, where local states have such low capability that their power does not project much, if at all, beyond their own boundaries; and, second, where geographical insulation makes interaction difficult (for example, islands separated by large expanses of ocean). Either condition can result in insufficient generation of security interdependence to form the structures of an RSC. Low capability of course amplifies the
effect of geographical insulators, and high capability reduces it. But even for capable actors it makes a difference whether one’s borders are defined by seas (Britain, New Zealand) or high mountains (Spain), or by open plains (Poland). Parts of sub-Saharan Africa and the Pacific after decolonisation illustrate this condition.

In the case of overlay, the security region is defined by outside powers. In the case of unstructured regions, it is defined in part by the absence of regional dynamics, and in part by the negative space left over on the map when all of the other security regions have been filled in.

Our previous presentations have not looked in much detail at these options, but moving to predictive RSCT requires that we do so. Attention must also be paid to the boundaries of these concepts, which like most things in social science are matters of definition and degree rather than sharp lines of discontinuity.

The main problem with overlay is to determine the boundary between it and mere heavy penetration of an RSC by great powers. The key to the distinction is that outside powers, rather than the interests and interactions of the local states, must shape the main security dynamics of the region. Normally this will mean that great powers have substantial military forces based in the region. Overlay is easiest to see when it has been imposed by force, by the invasion and occupation of a region by outside powers. Thus when Britain took over South Asia, it overlaid the local system, imposing on it both a strategic unity and a set of security dynamics driven by the ‘great game’ of colonial rivalry with Russia. More problematic is the semi-voluntary acceptance of overlay, when local states agree to subordinate themselves to a significant degree to an outside hegemon, and accept the stationing of its forces on their territory. This describes the situation of much of Western Europe during the Cold War (though less so of Germany where overlay extended from defeat in war and subsequent occupation). Even so, Europe during the Cold War counts as a case of overlay: clearly so in the east, but also in the west on the grounds of more or less complete suppression of local security dynamics plus extensive stationing of outside military forces. East Asia was heavily penetrated rather than overlaid.

While overlay is clear enough in snapshot, it is more problematic when looked at in historical perspective (Buzan 1989; Wæver 1990a). It might, for example, seem possible to conceptualise Cold War Europe as ‘an RSC that is overlaid’, in other words seeing overlay as a temporary phase in a longer history where an RSC exists on either side of the overlay period. However, this is rather dangerous, because when overlay is imposed on
what was an RSC, the region can easily be transformed, as happened in much of the third world during colonialism, and to Europe during the Cold War. What emerges after overlay might be a different RSC or no RSC. Therefore, overlay is in principle a non-RSC form that describes an area, although in practice it will often be a former and future RSC that is overlaid.

The simplest model of an unstructured security region is one in which the units are too weak as powers to generate security interdependence on a regional level. No regional RSC exists because the units do not become each other’s main security concern. The image is of a security constellation dominated by the domestic level, and perhaps also the interregional and global levels. Reality, however, is rarely that simple, and a pristine unstructured region containing largely inward-looking units is hard to find. The South Pacific islands probably come closest to this model. The question is when security interaction becomes sufficient to start generating a regional security substructure. Unstructured regions thus must in one sense be seen as RSCs in the making, and where such conditions exist it is useful to employ some intermediate concepts. We will talk of pre-complexes when a set of bilateral security relations seems to have the potential to bind together into an RSC, but has not yet achieved sufficient cross-linkage among the units to do so. The Horn of Africa is a good example. And we will talk of proto-complexes when there is sufficient manifest security interdependence to delineate a region and differentiate it from its neighbours, but when the regional dynamics are still too thin and weak to think of the region as a fully fledged RSC. West Africa is the clearest example of this condition.

At this point, recall from chapter 1 the distinction (Buzan 1991b: 96–107) between weak/strong states and weak/strong powers. Obviously, security independence can very well be the product of the weakness of units, not only of their strength. In Africa weak states create more room for mercenaries, insurgencies, etc. When the states are weak and nonstate actors take on a relatively larger role, the question of the power of units (weak/strong powers) should logically be asked equally of all units, state and nonstate. If some of the ‘other’ units were strong and formed stable constellations of threat and vulnerability – e.g., transnational tribal groups – this could very well qualify as an RSC (and not only a pre- or proto-complex). Low interaction capacity in a region makes it difficult for RSCs to form.

Given that our aim in this book is to fill in the world map according to RSCT, we now have to hand the whole descriptive apparatus that we
need. First we fill in the global level powers. Next we fill in the various types of RSC (standard, centred, great power), and any insulators between them. The internal character of the RSCs will range along a spectrum from conflict formation through security regime to security community, though institutionally centred RSCs will necessarily be towards the security community end of the spectrum. We expect that all of the global level powers will fit within either centred complexes or great power ones, though it is just about possible to imagine a political geography that would allow a global level power to stand alone. Then we fill in any supercomplexes, which would be superimposed on the pattern of complexes. Finally we add in any areas that are either unstructured (noting any pre- or proto-complexes) or overlaid. The proportions of these options will vary from one era to another. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the bulk of the international system is filled with one or other type of RSC. But during the nineteenth century much of it was overlaid, and in earlier periods there large swaths were unstructured.

**Predictive RSCT: scenarios**

The descriptive framework set out in the previous section is useful not only for structuring empirical studies of particular areas. It also sets out the full range of possible conditions for a security region as a basis for generating scenarios. Using RSCT to generate predictive scenarios is a more demanding and more controversial role for the theory than providing an analytical framework for area studies. Ontologically, the scenarios are soft limits. One can make negative predictions on the basis of a scenario analysis (Wæver in preparation). It can be specified which options are relevant under which conditions. For instance we previously presented three scenarios for European security (Buzan et al. 1990) – we have since stated that history has now narrowed them down to two: fragmentation (a reassertion of balance-of-power logic within Europe and thus a return to some form of standard RSC) or integration (the replacement of the RSC by a single, global level actor) (Wæver 1991, 1993a, 1993b; Wæver et al. 1993). The scenarios are deduced logically from the range of possible conditions in which a security region can exist. We claim that they constitute actual possibilities – in contrast to those scenarios devised as ideal types, which are therefore so extreme that they are less likely to exist than the in-between situations. The question of what is possible is always a question of probabilities. Anything is
possible. It is just a matter of how many other elements of our world have to change in order to make it so. Thus, the scenario analysis says: given the structure of the international system as it is, there are these possible forms the area can take. Which one becomes realised depends ultimately on politics, and structurally on the compatibility with other conditions – for instance, the dominant discursive structures regarding foreign policy orientation in the main powers (Holm 1992; Wæver 1994).

The scenarios cover the whole range of possible forms and, until the situation has reached one of these forms, the scenarios as realistic possibilities influence the situation as structural pressures pushing towards resolution in one direction or another. An example of such structural pressures is the role that integration and fragmentation options play in the EU (ch. 11). In general terms, the options are as follows:

An unstructured region has the possibility of becoming an RSC or getting overlaid. It is hard to imagine an unstructured region leaping straight to integration without passing through one condition or the other.

A standard RSC can undergo internal or external transformation or get overlaid. It is more difficult to imagine it unravelling back to an unstructured region, though not impossible (as, for example, if plague or environmental disaster greatly weakened all of the units), or moving directly to integration. An RSC in security community form has the possibility of building itself into a centred RSC, and possibly a new actor, by creating institutions. A centred great or superpower RSC, or a unipolar standard one, might do the same, probably more coercively, by becoming an empire. Conversely, either form could unravel back to standard multipolar mode, as happened to the Soviet empire. If an RSC contains subcomplexes, then these serve as markers for a possible split if the overarching issues tying the subcomplexes together fade away.

An overlaid security region could transform into any of the other forms, depending on the depth and character of the changes induced in it by the experience of overlay.

An integrated actor can disintegrate, as happened to the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Pakistan. If the actor is a large one, the most likely outcome is the creation of new RSCs and/or the internal or external transformation of existing ones. The disintegration of smaller actors is most likely either to define an internal transformation in the complex (Yugoslavia) or to have no effect on the essential structure of the complex (Pakistan, Czechoslovakia). The secession of Bangladesh from Pakistan is an interesting case of a major (in the sense of regional polarity-defining) actor disintegrating without affecting
the essential structure of the RSC: West Pakistan remained powerful enough to hold its position as a regional pole. It is rather unlikely that such disintegrations would move towards unstructured regions, though not at all impossible that elements of overlay or annexation might result.

The potential for internal transformation can be monitored by checking material conditions for possible changes (or not) of polarity, and discursive ones for possible changes (or not) of amity/enmity relations. The potential for external transformation can be monitored by looking at the intensity of interregional security dynamics, which should act as precursors to change. Where these are sparse and of low intensity, no change in the boundaries of RSCs is likely. Where interregional security dynamics are fairly thick, intense, and increasing, external transformations become more likely. Applying these general observations to specific cases allows one to focus more precisely on what are the likely, and unlikely, options for transformation. Here one can deploy additional variables such as interaction capacity, power differentials, and system polarity to fine-tune the general assessment.

Interaction capacity (technological and social infrastructure for transportation and communication: Buzan and Little 2000) plays quite strongly into the basic forms of security region. Low interaction capacity within the region is probably a necessary condition for unstructured security regions. It is safe to predict that Europe will not move towards being an unstructured security region because its internal interaction capacity is much too high to permit such an option. As we argued before, the real options for Europe seem to be two: either it continues to integrate, at some point becoming a new unit on the international stage, or it falls back towards one of the versions of a standard RSC. Since the Europeans have hung their security community so firmly on joint institutions, and since the present phase of these institutions does not look like a stable resting point (the degree of institutionalisation having created a democratic deficit and its accompanying legitimacy crisis, and more democratisation requiring more integration), and more generally because of the structural pressure of regional security, only these two options look possible (Wæver in preparation). Standard RSCs require quite high levels of interaction capacity within the region, and it is hard to imagine integration without high interaction capacity. Overlay, of course, can occur when interaction capacity in the region is low, but higher in the wider system.
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The relative levels of power between the region and global actors is important primarily because overlay emerges as a relevant option at high degrees of disparity (to the advantage of the global actors). The prospects for overlay depend also on discursive structures (within both sides) on questions of imperialism and national interest. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is safe to predict on both grounds that Europe is not in danger of overlay. Africa might be vulnerable to it in power terms, but is protected by the unfashionable standing of imperialism worldwide, which restrains the powers that might otherwise have the capability and the interest to impose it. For an RSC to operate it must not be overlaid by the global level. Because many regions now meet this criterion (unlike during the nineteenth century) we are confident in supporting the view that the regional level will be more important in the post-Cold War world. In the particular situation where none of the regional actors is a global power, but a joint regional centre would be of first global rank (as the EU potentially could be), a specific dynamic is instigated, because unification serves the dual purpose of intra-regional pacification and extra-regional power status. The classical Realpolitik argument against integration, that states do not give up their status as powers, is partly turned upside down because only by integration do they become or remain global powers. In this situation global and regional polarity are mutually defining – one is not given as a precondition for the other.

Global polarity has a difficult role because on the one hand it is a very strong factor but on the other hand it is not possible to formulate in strong terms because geography intervenes – a region which is located close to one of the parties to a bipolar rivalry (Central America) is likely to be overlaid by one of the parties, a region that is posed between can be overlaid in the form of division (Europe), and a strategically peripheral region might be left largely on its own (South America).

Those options that are evidently possible operate as structural pressures on the units. They translate structural dynamics into the regional context, and thereby operate as the fourth tier of structure in a Waltzian universe. Thus, when the region has fallen into one scenario as a clear trend, the structural forces of the international system tend to reinforce this trend – the way Waltzian structure generally contains reproductive rather than transformative logic (Waltz 1979; Ruggie 1983; Dessler 1989) – making it in this way self-reinforcing until some major shock hits it from either inside or outside. This can be seen in the way that the demand pull from outside for the EU to act as a great power often seems
stronger than the push towards a common foreign and security policy from inside, or by the attempts of the international community to stop the disintegration of the USSR and Yugoslavia. The three forms of security region (RSC, unstructured, overlaid), plus the main options within them, plus the possibility of exit to another level by regional integration, are all relevant as predictions because they are the only long-term stable forms. Since some of their conditions can be specified, it is possible in any given situation to say which ones are relevant if the situation is to change. To characterise an area in terms of which of the forms it is in is furthermore relevant at any given time – without change – because the different structures generate distinctly different security dynamics.

Orthodox Waltzians often make the error of explaining developments in a given region directly from the global power distribution (e.g., Mearsheimer (1990) in his famous 'Back to the Future' analysis of post-Cold War Europe), but the relevant power structure for the main actors in a region is the regional one. The main reasons for this oversight in mainstream neorealism are probably two. One is a general American bias towards thinking globally and seeing regions from above, as parts of a larger strategic, superpower setting, not bottom-up as the relevant context for regional actors. The other is a product of the scientific (and scientificist) preferences of American social sciences for general, abstract, and natural science-like theories (see Ross 1991; Waever 1999b). Realist theory has therefore evolved away from geopolitical and historical specificity towards abstract ‘systemic’ theory which operates with ‘units’ that are defined as alike and non-located, i.e., the basic, simple premise of international politics that states are non-mobile is ignored (Mouritzen 1998). In classical geopolitics – and in RSCT – states (and other units) are located in concrete places and distance is mediated by terrain (Waever 1997b). Global polarity is among the conditions that enable or constrain various possible polarities regionally, but within the regional level, whether the region is bipolar, multipolar, or unipolar generally tells one more about regional security than does the global polarity in which it is embedded (Waever 1993a).

Our approach is akin to a security version of much political geography. However, this is much less common in the study of international security than one should expect. Within the discipline of IR, the mainstream lost geography in its search for abstract theory, and the critics usually reacted against the reactionary connotations of geopolitics. Academic geopolitics seem to have become polarised. Traditional geopolitics are too materialist and mechanical (Mackinder 1904; Cohen 1994), while
‘critical geopolitics’ on the other hand seem too absolutist in studying only the social construction of space (Ó Tuathail 1996). We believe that geography as such matters but that it has to be analysed in a political framework. In the policy literature, titles with ‘The Geopolitics of…’ are common (of Caspian oil, of the Yugoslav wars, etc.) but this usually means an atheoretical survey of some power politics. RSCT is a theory of security in which geographical variables are central.

Predictive SCT is not offered as a causal model in which each situation automatically produces one and only one scenario – a necessity if one is to be able to test the theory as a traditional causal model. The aim is to narrow down the range of relevant scenarios in any specific case. That there is often more than one possibility is the analytical point of establishing scenarios: i.e., that one points towards the space for political choice in shaping the outcome. For much of history, only one scenario appears as relevant, not necessarily because of these causal conditions, but because development has turned on to one of the tracks that then becomes self-reinforcing. At crucial moments of historical change, the situation is open and several scenarios become possible, though, as we have seen, rarely all. We will follow through these ideas about scenarios and structural conditions in each of the regional chapters.

Revised RSCT: constructivist method and the wider agenda of securitisation studies

Along with many others we have in recent years found it increasingly necessary to include in security studies more than military-political security. At first, one might expand the concept of security to new sectors while keeping the state as the focus, as the only ‘referent object’. Especially when working on ‘societal security’, we realised that this was problematic. If security is always for the state, it implies that ‘societal security’ means the security of the state against society, i.e., society itself might be insecure and societal security high. This was too perverse, and in our 1993 book (Wæver et al. 1993) we eventually opened up the option of another referent object: in the societal sector, the referent object is any collectivity that defines its survival as threatened in terms of identity (typically, but not only, nations).

Once we had made this decisive move, it became clear that, although empirically most security action might be concentrated around states and nations, one could not analytically defend the exclusion of the
possibility that other units or levels might establish themselves as referent objects for security. Also, the case of societal security underlined the importance of distinguishing between referent objects (that which is to be secured) and securitising actors (those who make claims about this security). The distinction has typically been ignored in the classical security literature because the state has an official system for ‘who speaks security’, and even the ‘alternative’ literature, because written up against the traditional one, mixed up the two issues as a general (rhetorical) question about who security was for.

When distinguishing between referent objects and securitising actors, it becomes possible to formulate a general theory of the conditions under which an actor successfully ‘securitises’ some threat on behalf of a specific ‘referent object’. For contingent, empirical reasons this is more easily done on behalf of limited collectivities (states, nations, religions, clans, etc.) than on behalf of individuals or humankind, but there is no absolute necessity to this, and ‘universal’ principles are now beginning to take on some importance as referent objects in the political and the economic sectors (free trade, human rights, non-proliferation). Thus, it is possible to formulate a theory that is not dogmatically state-centric in its premises, but that is often somewhat state-centric in its findings.

To set up such an open, analytical framework able to catch security in its increasing variation – across sectors, levels, and diverse units – and to be able to judge when an instance qualifies as security, it is necessary to focus on the characteristic quality of a security issue, i.e., to have criteria by which to avoid the slippery slope of ‘everything is security’. A security issue is posited (by a securitising actor) as a threat to the survival of some referent object (nation, state, the liberal international economic order, the rain forests), which is claimed to have a right to survive. Since a question of survival necessarily involves a point of no return at which it will be too late to act, it is not defensible to leave this issue to normal politics. The securitising actor therefore claims a right to use extraordinary means or break normal rules, for reasons of security (Waever 1995c, 1997a; Buzan et al. 1998). With this definition of security, the approach has clearly turned constructivist in the sense that we do not ask whether a certain issue is in and of itself a ‘threat’, but focus on the questions of when and under what conditions who securitises what issue. The very act of labelling something a security issue – or a threat – transforms this issue and it is therefore in the political process of securitisation that distinct security dynamics originate. Although the
theory specifies ‘facilitating conditions’ that make securitisation more or less likely (Buzan et al. 1998: 32–3, 46–7), the theory is not causal in a traditional sense, because securitisation is conceptualised as a performative act never exhaustively explained by its conditions. It not only realises already given potentials, but also produces genuine novelty; in what Bourdieu (1991) calls an act of ‘social magic’, something happens at this exact point and therefore the act can never be reduced to a transmission belt in causal chains (Derrida 1977, 1992; Weber 1995; Butler 1997; Campbell 1998: 25–8; Wæver 2000b).

Traditionally, RSCs were usually generated by bottom-up (or inside-out) processes in which the fears and concerns generated within the region produced the RSC. However, the new definition intentionally opens the possibility of another kind of construction of RSCs that is increasingly relevant especially in the ‘new’ sectors: regions can be created as patterns within system level processes (Buzan et al. 1998: 198–200). A group of countries that find themselves sharing the local effects of a climate change is a case of collective responses to shared fates arising from outside systemic pressure. However, the RSC is still constituted by the regional actors because they are the ones defining the problem in such terms and interacting to produce a regional formation over the issue. RSCs are ultimately defined by the interaction among their units – the causes behind their action might be bottom-up (and thus internal to the region) or top-down (and thus external/global), but these causes never fully explain the outcome. It is in the nature of politics – and thus security too – that some autonomy is left for the acts of securitisation by actors in the region. The pattern formed by these acts defines the RSC. If it were purely a product of global processes, it would obviously not be a regional level phenomenon.

As implied in this discussion, the new formulation also entails that the network of interconnecting security worries is no longer necessarily symmetrical. What one actor sees as a threat is not necessarily in itself an actor and thus not necessarily the subject of a counter-securitisation. The chain reactions are more complicated because A might securitise B as a threat with the effect that C becomes worried and securitises A as a threat. For instance, if Japan securitises foreign rice as a threat to Japanese national identity, and thereby legitimises protectionist measures in violation of WTO regulations, the United States might securitise this as a threat to the liberal international economic order (and to US economic interests), and the United States thereupon takes measures that, e.g., the EU/France and Russia see as symptoms of unipolar arrogance,
and therefore they securitise...and so forth. The complication is that it is really the relationships (the moves) that tie together, not the particular referent objects (Buzan et al. 1998: 21-47, 163-93; see Rosenau 1984 on relationships of relationships).

To trace RSCs empirically, one needs to look at the pattern of security connectedness in three steps:

1. is the issue securitised successfully by any actors?
2. if yes, track the links and interactions from this instance – how does the security action in this case impinge on the security of who/what else, and where does this then echo significantly?, etc.;
3. these chains can then be collected as a cluster of interconnected security concerns.

When this case together with the patterns from all the other cases are aggregated, we can see on what level the processes of securitisation and the patterns of interaction are concentrated.

The main task in this book is to survey the cases that are established as major security issues today – for whatever reason and through whatever measures. A detailed tracing of each process of securitisation is mandatory in a study of a single case, but in large-scale, aggregate analyses like the ones that follow in this book, we cannot report on the process behind each securitisation. Size matters here too. Because we want to produce a global overview, we have had to operate on a high level of generalisation. To do that we need to use broad indicators of securitisation rather than investigating each instance in detail. In most cases we will therefore use visible outcomes such as war, mass expulsions, arms races, large-scale refugee movements, and other emergency measures as indicators of securitisation. If people are killing each other in organised ways, or spending large and/or escalating sums on armaments, or being driven from their homes in large numbers, or resorting to unilateral actions contrary in major ways to international undertakings, then it is virtually certain that successful securitisations have taken place. In practice, the use of such events as indicators is not much different from the analysis generated by a traditional perspective since it operates from the security issues that are on the agenda. This means that the immediate indicators used to establish security issues cannot except in the most crucial or tricky cases be the ideal ones of discourse itself; they will most often be phenomena that register in the media and traditional literature and that are systematically associated with securitisation. Only in the
cases where the securitisation perspective makes an explicit difference to traditional perspectives will its terminology and apparatus be exploited to the full (i.e., cases that are only beginning to become security issues, or being desecuritised, or are contested as to whether they ‘really’ are security issues).

In practice this use of general indicators for securitisation means the chapters mainly unfold a relatively traditional story at the surface, so to say, of securitisations, without probing into their origins. It differs from traditional, objectivist security studies in taking securitisations rather than objective security problems as the basic dynamic of RSCs, i.e., the problems that are articulated as security problems, not those we project on to the region. However, a full-blown securitisation analysis would have to study more carefully how successfully different issues are securitised, by whom, and who contests this securitisation. Mostly we do not go into the single instances to clarify the nature of specific securitisations, because the nature of the present study as an integrative, synthesising, large-scale work prohibits this. With the maturing of securitisation studies, a synergy is emerging between micro-studies drawing on macro-studies and vice versa, but so far we have only a limited number of case studies to draw on, and these are mostly for Europe and North and South America, and to some extent the Middle East, Southern Africa, and South Asia. However, in each chapter we try to identify the defining or decisive issues on which developments hang – the questions that the large-scale analysis shows to be what the situation hangs on – and for each chapter one case is studied in more detail allowing for a little more of the refinements of securitisation analysis. Our case studies should thus be seen as preliminary sketches offering a template, or a target, for more detailed securitisation analyses.

These ‘deep looks’ in each chapter will not be identical in form. This is both because the needs are different from chapter to chapter and because we want to explore different forms of analysis. In some cases, the task is mainly to map what is securitised or check if some particular securitisation is powerful or not (in contrast to using indicators). In other instances, we want to explore the depth and solidity of some specific securitisation. When the focus is on a single country, this can be done by looking at the way securitisation draws on national identity and thereby which securitisations are easy or difficult to articulate. In several regions, the focus is naturally on the security debate of the central state: India in South Asia, Russia in the CIS, the USA in North America, and – with
a more specific question – China in East Asia and South Africa in Southern Africa. Especially in centred RSCs, it will very often be the domestic struggle over security in the central state that determines major developments. In the case of the EU, it would be interesting to explore securitisation in relation to national identities in each of the major states, but given the number of states this would be impossible within the limited space available for each ‘deep look’, and has to some extent been done elsewhere (Holm 1992; Larsen 1997; Malmborg and Stråth 2002; Wæver 1990b; Wæver et al. 1989, 1990). Instead, we explore the emerging security discourse at the European level and how it constructs time and identity. In South America, one of the major open questions is the future of Mercosur, both economically as an integration project and as a pillar of security. Some light can be thrown on both questions by looking at the security arguments in relation to Mercosur: do leading politicians in the two key countries, Brazil and Argentina, securitise (anything) in ways that serve to produce a security argument for Mercosur which in turn will make it more likely that the regional scheme will, in critical situations, eventually be given the priority necessary for it to survive? In the Middle East chapter, the case is terror groups like bin Laden’s and the question of whether they are non-regional in taking aim directly at a global level actor, the USA, or whether their struggle is still rooted in the region.

The regions differ between those driven predominantly by military-political security (all of Asia, Middle East, to some extent CIS) and those dominated by other sectors (the Americas, EU-Europe). Africa, as ever the odd man out, hangs in a complicated way between these two positions. To some extent the regions can be organised along an axis from ‘traditional’ realist regions to ‘postmodern’ ones, but with some complications such as Africa being pre- and post-traditional as well as in other respects exhibiting hyper-traditional realist dynamics. Latin America is also difficult because in terms of underlying societal development it is not postmodern but its regional security order raises some questions atypical for a traditional region.

Another more serious problem is raised by having an open ontology allowing for post-sovereign, non-state focused situations, but largely telling state-centric stories. In principle, the ‘unit’ of securitisation and security dynamics can be of any kind, and thus it would seem natural to say that ‘internal’ is internal vis-à-vis the units of the regional security dynamics whatever they may be, with international correspondingly
translated into inter-unit. This would, however, make a constantly fluctuating analytical scheme out of the four-level model. Instead, we keep the state as the defining unit for locating things in this scheme – one might call it the ‘measure’ – but this should not be taken to prejudice the analysis in favour of states necessarily being the main units (cf. Buzan et al. 1998: 7; Wæver 1997a: 347–72).

Our general assumption is that the post-Cold War security order will exhibit substantially higher levels of regional security autonomy than was the case during the Cold War. With the new agenda of the wider concept of security, one might try to produce sector-specific (homogeneous) complexes and thus generate different maps for each sector. This will show both some variation in the degree of regionalisation (versus localisation and globalisation) but also sometimes only partly converging maps (same ‘Europes’ but different ‘Middle Easts’ in different sectors). However, a strong case can be made for ‘heterogeneous complexes’ where all security actions are linked across sectors (Buzan et al. 1998: 16–17, 166–70). The key is the synthesising done by actors. The actors, not only the analysts, have to make up their mind about how the different kinds of security concerns add up. Importantly, because of the prioritising nature of securitisation, the different cases cannot be disconnected: a securitisation of an economic threat will tend either to push down a competing military threat construction or to link to it and draw energy from the same threat appearing in several sectors. The integrated approach has two important advantages. First, it captures all those loops, security dilemmas, and spillovers that occur across sectors – Latvia being concerned about both demography and the Russian military and, on the basis of this securitisation, taking steps that Russian minorities construct as threats to economic, political, and societal security. Second, it often explains why an issue is treated not only as an environmental problem but as an environmental security problem. This often happens when the actor deemed responsible is one that is already seen as a security problem in another sector.

This clarifies one important issue. This book does not try to map the formation and development of regions in general. This could be the impression given by the inclusion of the new sectors: economy, environment, identity. It should be remembered: we are interested in economic security, not economy per se, environmental security, not everything that happens in the environmental sector. Otherwise, we would be suggesting an integrated theory of everything. Instead, this is a reading of the world political development through the perspective of security.
Place in the literature

Before we move to the case studies, it may be helpful to some readers to set the nature and explanatory structure of this book into the context of the existing literature on regions.

Towards the end of the 1960s, a literature emerged on regional sub-systems (Russett 1967; Cantori and Spiegel 1970, 1973; Kaiser 1968–9; Haas 1970). Although it did not usually define the regions as ‘security regions’ (it was partly stimulated by the literature on regional integration), it often operated within the traditional quasi-realist image of the state system and thus produced theories of regional sub-systems that were clearly security-relevant and in some ways precursors for the concept of RSCs. However, this attempt to theorise international regions has generally been seen as a failure and has often served to keep others from attempting any theory of regional sub-systems (Thompson 1973). One reason for this was the complexity of the models, which began to make theory look more Byzantine than reality. Another was the comparative success of global level neorealist and neoliberal theories that arose during the 1970s, eclipsing the regional approach (Lake and Morgan 1997b: 6) and seeming to give a more accurate portrait of the Cold War. A third, subtler explanation arises from the behavioural scientific fashions of the day, which also affected small-state theory, comparative foreign policy, and to some extent foreign policy analysis at large. The attempt at theorising regional sub-systems in a behaviouralist mode meant that a lot of effort was put into producing precise, operational definitions and finding generally valid correlations about the subject. Therefore, when, for example, small states could not be defined with sufficient clarity and when few generalisations were valid for all small states, the theory was said to have failed. In the case of foreign policy analysis and regional sub-systems, the problem was rather that the approach developed into an ever-expanding net of relevant factors that increasingly put a question mark on the functionality and relevance of the theory. In all these cases, the problem was to a large extent the expectations. Much good work was done, important questions were raised and sometimes answered, and mechanisms were even uncovered but, due to the prevailing view of ‘science’, this was deemed unsuccessful and helped to keep others away from these areas. Post-Cold War, however, a new wave of books has emerged that study regionalism and regional security orders (Daase et al. 1993; Fawcett and Hurrell 1995; Holm and Sørensen 1995; Lake and Morgan 1997c; Adler and Barnett 1998; Schulz et al. 2001).
Fawcett and Hurrell (1995) and Schulz et al. (2001) really have regionalism as their dependent variable: are regions becoming more or less ‘regionalised’ (coherent and separate, maybe integrated)? In both volumes, but most explicitly Schulz et al., something close to RSCs enter the picture because the degree of regionalisation is explained by two kinds of factors: security and economics. Schulz et al. have tried to structure this by using RSC analysis as theory on the security side and globalisation for economics. Schulz et al. in particular have turned this into a teleological project in which regionalisation is an aim in itself, though the social consequences of globalisation and the maximisation of security are also part of the normative agenda of the book. Fawcett and Hurrell (1995) is more of a general overview of the problematique of regionalism with perceptive theory overviews and rather basic, solid, but not very theory-informed case studies. Daase et al. (1993) is a loose collection of theoretical and empirical articles on regional security with a number of case chapters on most of the regions of the world. It is not organised by a particular theory. By contrast Adler and Barnett (1998) and to some extent Holm and Sørensen (1995) are explicitly theory-based. Adler and Barnett is more coherently organised by a single theory than perhaps any other book, but the theory is that of security communities, which is highly relevant for some regions but hardly at all for others (see Kacowicz et al. 2000 on ‘stable peace’). Holm and Sørensen is not primarily about security but uses the lens of globalisation and in particular uneven globalisation to survey regional variation.

More recently, a number of single-authored studies have come forward proposing distinct theories about regional security but applying the theory only to one or a few case studies (Mares 2001; Kacowicz 1998; Solingen 1998; Lemke 2002).

Lake and Morgan is in many ways the book that comes closest to ours: it takes RSCT (as developed by Buzan) as its starting point and tries to study specifically security-defined regions. The book argues nicely why regional security is likely to become more salient after the end of the Cold War (Lake and Morgan 1997b: 6ff.). It spells out that only a comparative approach does justice to regions. On the one hand there is a strong IR perspective according to which international relations is always and everywhere the same, which if true means that regions are not very important. On the other hand, many area studies specialists claim that their case is unique, and thus that a general theory of regions is impossible. Only with a comparative approach is it possible to say both that regions differ, and that it is possible to generalise about them (Lake
and Morgan 1997b: 8ff.). Finally, theorising regions is made necessary by the argument that regions are not just micro-versions of the global system in which case the same theory could be used (ignoring the fact that it would have a dynamic of regional–global added even if each level followed classical neorealist systemic logic). Lake and Morgan (1997b: 9) argue that global and regional systems differ because the former are closed systems and the latter inherently open. These and many other points are shared between Lake and Morgan and the present volume.

But there are some differences. The first is that we (and also Schulz et al. 2001) attempt a full global picture of all the regions that exist. This holism is necessary both in order to see how well (or badly) our theory works, and to get the full benefit of the comparative approach. Selecting cases that fit too easily allows the ones that might embarrass the theory to be sidelined, especially if there are no explicit criteria for their selection.

The second difference between this book and Lake and Morgan's concerns what the whole effort is intended to explain. Their ultimate research question is the emergence and variation of regional security orders – i.e., who solves security problems how? This links nicely to the traditional, policy-orientated security literature with its focus on different security orders or systems or models. Their analytical set-up is then (in principle) that the structure of RSCs is to explain the regional outcomes in terms of conflict management and the shape of the regional security orders. But their concept of the structure of the RSC includes many different causal variables beyond security and thus recreates the problem that marred the old subsystem literature: too many causal connections and a lack of focus. They know how to solve this in principle, by a model of three-level games, but they acknowledge that in practice such theory has not been sufficiently developed and thus this part is indeterminate (Lake and Morgan 1997b: 14). Our set-up, in contrast, stays more narrowly with security and security-defined activities, and uses RSCT as a general instrument for telling a structured version of world history, past, present, and future. The possible forms that regions can take are derived from the concept of the RSC, not from the existing debate, and the various domestic and global causal factors are those that are directly part of security, such as domestic vulnerabilities, not domestic politics and society in all its complexity. The concept of the RSC plays a stronger role in our construction, and is allowed to define the possible orders on the outcome side and to select the relevant parameters on the input side. This approach forfeits the possibility of loose, ad hoc inclusion of additional variables in order to push as far as possible with
one integrated theoretical scheme, thereby showing both its virtues and limitations.

The third difference involves the fundamental understanding of what an RSC is. Since both our book and Lake and Morgan’s start from this concept, this difference matters a lot to how the respective analyses unfold. This is a basic methodological question that must affect any attempt to construct regional theory, and so it is worth examining in some detail. The essential difference is that we see the whole regionalist approach as hanging on the necessity of keeping and the ability to keep analytically separate the global and regional levels, whereas Lake and Morgan are happy to conflate the two levels into one. Their key move (Lake and Morgan 1997b: 12; Morgan 1997: 29–30; Lake 1997: 50–1; Lake and Morgan 1997a: 349) is to dissolve levels of analysis with the argument that ‘geographical proximity is not a necessary condition for a state to be a member of a complex’, and that great powers particularly should be counted as members of even remote regions into which they project force in a sustained way. In our view, this not only destroys the meaning of levels, but also voids the concept of region, which if it does not mean geographical proximity does not mean anything. They say that, if, for example, the USA is a consistent participant in European security, it is as much a member of the European security complex as Italy. Likewise in East Asia, they see the main regional powers as China, Japan, Russia, and the USA. We, in contrast, insist that regions are defined exclusively, and that external powers are treated in terms of penetration or overlay, not as members of the RSC as such. In our scheme, China and Japan are members of the East Asian complex, but Russia and the USA are not. In the light of Lake and Morgan’s move, we are puzzled by the accusation (Lake 1997: 48) that ‘Buzan’s conception... fails to distinguish adequately how regional interactions differ from global interactions’, when by conflating the two levels in this way they make such a differentiation almost impossible. Our approach in this book, as should already be clear from these first three chapters, is to improve our ability to draw this distinction.

At first, readers may side with Lake and Morgan. Our position of forcing a distinction between countries of the region and outsiders even though they are equally consistent participants in the security dynamics of the region, as the United States is in NATO and the OSCE, may seem excessively territorial. In conducting any particular regional security analysis it seems useful to be able to include the relevant powers in each regional case irrespective of the question of whether these states
are located in the region, or appear in another RSC or at the global level. However, in practice, their seemingly more pragmatic approach has some serious analytical problems. Ultimately, this is not a question of what concept produces the easiest snapshot, but which concept produces the best theory. With the Lake and Morgan definition, one ultimately generates an RSC for each security problem. This is actually also what is said in their theory chapter which sets out a definition of RSCs defined in terms of ‘security externalities’: ‘I define such a complex as the states affected by at least one transborder but local security externality’ (Lake 1997: 46). ‘If the local externality poses an actual or potential threat to the physical safety of individuals or governments in other states, it produces a regional security system or complex’ (Lake 1997: 48–9). Many readers probably find this quite economistic formulation a bit extreme, and will take the different elements of the Lake and Morgan approach as separate, e.g., accepting the revision of RSCT on delineation but not the definition in terms of externalities. However, the two are closely connected logically, because the security externality definition fills the hole left by the removal of the geographical criteria.

This approach must lead to an unmanageable multiplication of issues (and thereby security complexes), which can be contained only by taking a narrow (military) definition of security. It would be a tall order to structure a security complex and a full analysis around each single issue and, in practice, this is done by none of the empirical chapters of their book. Furthermore, by including external great powers as members of an RSC, the Lake and Morgan approach throws away all of the analytical leverage generated by levels of analysis. If remote great powers are ‘in’ the regions, how can one differentiate between global and regional level security dynamics in order to investigate their interplay? Although the United States may be ‘in’ Europe and East Asia and the Middle East in a seemingly durable way, it makes a big difference that it always has the option to withdraw from (or be thrown out of) these regions. China and Japan are in East Asia whether they want to be or not. The USA has a choice, and this choice underpins a whole range of policy options not possessed by actors that are really ‘in’ their regions. A major point of RSCT is to separate the global and regional security dynamics in order to see what each looks like separately, and then to see how they interact with each other. By collapsing this distinction, Lake and Morgan risk repeating the analytical and policy errors of the Cold War in which superpower dynamics were given far too much weight, and regional
ones far too little, in evaluating events in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere.

In terms of prediction and policy advice, the 'exclusive' approach has some advantages because it contains a picture of what the RSCs of the world, their borders, and their insulators are. Thereby, it can for instance judge which cooperative schemes are more or less likely to work depending on how they fit the structure.

As explained above, our operationalisation of RSCT is founded on a disciplined separation not only of the global level from the regional one, but also of each RSC from all the others. The reason for doing this is to cast maximum light on the distinctiveness of security dynamics at each level and within each RSC, so that the interplay between levels and among regions can itself be investigated as a distinct subject. If this approach generates anomalies or difficulties, then those are what should be explained and what the theory has served to alert us to.
The post-Soviet space: a regional security complex around Russia

In most Western analyses of the area of the former Soviet Union, the situation is presented as anomalous due to the blatantly asymmetrical relations. The underlying agenda is how the weaker states around Russia can gain enough independence and equality to establish a more 'normal' relationship. However, as argued above, there is nothing historically (ch. 1) or theoretically (ch. 3) strange about regions with a dominant power at the centre. Analytically we should rather try to understand how this RSC operates and where it is placed and headed in the larger historical pattern. This particular region has historically been structured by two long-term patterns: (1) the waves of growth and contraction of the Russian Empire; (2) change in degrees of separateness and involvement with other regions, primarily Europe.

The chapter opens with a brief discussion of the historical trajectory of the Russian state as well as those of the new states that have significant state histories of their own. The main section examines security dynamics as they have evolved in the region from the dissolution of the Soviet Union to today, in terms of levels (domestic, regional, interregional, global). Within this it specifies the variation among four different subregions: the Baltic states, the western group of states, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. For most of the states, security concerns relate mainly to other states in the subcomplex plus Russia. What define the wider RSC, grouping them all together, are the unifying factors, first, of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and, second, that a coalition attempting to rein in Russia necessarily cuts across regions. The argument as to why the Russia-centred complex is separate was given in the introduction to part V. The major complicating factor in this division is the role of Europe in the identity struggles of Russia. However, it will be argued here that, although Europe historically played
this role in Russian debates about themselves (Neumann 1996b, 1997a, 1997b), the global arena is today much more important than Europe for Russia’s attempts both to secure a larger role outside its region and to legitimise its regional empire. The chapter will end with a discussion of the prospects regarding internal and external transformation, particularly three questions: the interplay of global, regional, and domestic dynamics in Russian policy and a possible redefinition of Russia’s power status; the possibility that something like GUUAM evolves into a genuine counterweight to Russia; and finally the nature and location of the boundary with EU-Europe.

The RSC is clearly centred on a great power. Russia was until recently a superpower, and is still a great power. It neighbours two other RSCs containing great powers – EU-Europe centred on the EU, and the Asian great power complex with China and Japan – and one standard complex – the Middle East. In contrast to most other regions of the world, the one superpower, the USA, plays less of a role in this region, although a question mark has emerged in Central Asia and the Caucasus, mostly due to oil interests and, after September 2001, the war on terrorism.

Despite the centredness of the region, it is – unusually – also a conflict formation. This is less surprising when the end of the Soviet Union is seen as decolonisation suddenly producing whole neighbourhoods of newly independent states. Just as several RSCs were born fighting or at least dropped into immediate hostility, the level of conflict started out relatively high in Central Asia and especially the Caucasus, and traditional security concerns were intense in Baltic–Russian and Ukrainian–Russian relations.

**History before 1991**

Russian history conventionally is traced back to the beginnings of a Russian state in the ninth century. In 1238 Moscow fell as the Tatar Golden Horde swept over the Eurasian plain. After pulling back from Latin Europe, they established a more stable hold over a territory similar to the later Soviet Union’s (Watson 1984b: 61). Muscovy developed under their suzerainty and took over techniques of war and administration (this in contrast to the self-image of Russians in which this period constitutes the dark Other). In 1480 Moscow freed itself fully and became the new Russian state, and soon reconquered much of the Tatar empire.

Russia was not closely connected to medieval and Latin Europe. With its identity centred on Slav Orthodox Christianity, it developed
separately for a long time, although it gradually increased its involvement in European diplomacy and military engagements, and alliances in the Baltic Sea area (Kirby 1990: 51–5). Under the Romanov dynasty (from 1613), Russians began more systematically to connect – and fight. Russia was first part of the Northern European RSC, and only as this merged into an all-European RSC around 1700 did Russia begin to be drawn systematically into European politics. Famously, Peter the Great strengthened Russia by absorbing Western techniques, not least in the military field. He did this not to fight Europe, but in order to join it. Both culturally and in the equations of power, Russia was accepted during the first half of the eighteenth century. Through the divisions of Poland in 1772, 1793, and 1795, Russia expanded both its territory and its influence westwards. Its role culminated in the Napoleonic wars in which Russia became a key power. Russia had both French troops entering Moscow (1812) and their own ending up in Paris (1814).

Meanwhile Russia continued to expand into Siberia and Central Asia, meeting primarily tribal peoples. On its ‘forest frontier’, Russia expanded (as did the United States) first via the fur trade along the river system. Europeans became a majority in Siberia by about 1700 (Johnson 1991: 268ff.; cf. Kinder and Hilgemann 1999: 112–13; Gilbert 1993: 26–34, 46–8, 59–63; Baev 1996: 7; Kotkin 1997; Buzan and Little 2000: 257–63; Roy 2000: 25–34; Trenin 2001: 54–5). In contrast, on the ‘steppe frontier’, the Russians met much tougher opposition from the Turks on the Ukrainian steppes and nomadic tribes further east. The conquest of Central Asia took 300 years, and as noted by Johnson resembled the ousting of the Indians in North America. In 1828, Russian intervention against the Ottoman Empire meant expansion into both the Balkans and Turkish Transcaucasia. In Georgia, Christians sought the protection of Russia, but many Islamic peoples in the Caucasus were hard to break and their resistance continues to haunt Russia, as witnessed in Chechnya. Russian expansion eastwards even meant explorations down the west coast of North America, but eventually Russia limited its North American presence to Alaska, and that was sold to the USA in 1867. When the waterways of Siberia had been explored, fortified, and canalised, i.e., Eastern Europe linked to Russian Asia, the European population of Siberia started to grow rapidly. The nineteenth century also saw the so-called great game in Central Asia in which Russia pushed southwards through Central Asia as Britain came up from India through Afghanistan. The 1904–5 war with Japan was important both in exposing Russian weakness, thus paving the way for the revolution, and in
settling the eastern border as well as to some extent Russia’s relationship to East Asia. Since this humiliating defeat, Russia has not concentrated on Asia as a primary arena, and it is therefore not possible in RSCT terms to place Russia in East Asia.

The classical divide in Russian self-conceptions between Westernisers and Slavophiles took shape in the 1830s and continues to influence Russian domestic and foreign policy (Neumann 1996a, 1996b, 2002). Although the Russian Revolution was based on a European set of ideas, Marxism, it led to a limitation of contacts other than conflictual ones. In terms of security, the West and Russia became closely connected as archenemies. The enmity started right after the revolution and was interrupted by alliance during the Second World War, but came to structure the world for half a century during the Cold War. The extent of the Russian empire was temporarily reduced after the revolution and Russia pulling out of the First World War. All of the lost territory and much more was regained after the Second World War, when an informal outer empire was added in the form of the Warsaw Pact countries in Eastern Europe as well as leadership of the global communist movement including, for a while, China, but more consistently Cuba, Vietnam, and a number of African and Middle Eastern countries.

In RSC terminology, the Russian regional situation during the Cold War is difficult to characterise. Clearly, the Cold War took the Soviet Union out of Europe by elevating it to superpower rivalry with the United States. But did it sit in the middle of its own RSC consisting of its ‘empire’, or was this so tightly controlled as to be basically one political unit and thus really no region? Given that all of Europe – West and East – was overlaid (and Mongolia too), there were no independent, regional states left to constitute an RSC (see map 11, p. 349).

More important than this question about a possible regional level around the Soviet Union is the monumental fact of Moscow galvanising a tighter grip on both its formal (Soviet) and informal (East European) possessions than had ever been the case for the Russian Empire. Under communist rule society was penetrated by the state to a unique degree, and international and imperial relations to units within the Warsaw Pact and in the parts of the Soviet Union, which Russia had previously controlled only with difficulty (particularly the southern republics), became transformed to direct control. This happened in synergy with the Soviet rise to the global top two.

As outlined in chapter 11, Eastern Europe during 1945–8 became gradually integrated fully into the Soviet sphere of control. All states got a
similar structure with a dominant communist party, military integration into the Warsaw Pact, and – with less success – economic integration and division of labour in COMECON. Yugoslavia and Albania took independent lines: they were still ruled by a communist party but not dependent on the Soviet Union. China joined the bloc after the civil war in 1949 and left in 1960. In global politics, the Cold War struggle with the USA took different forms in different parts of the world.

In some respects, the communist system was much less tight than it pretended (and was sometimes perceived to be by fearful Westerners). This was demonstrated by the inefficiencies of the command economy, and by widespread corruption and deception within this system. In other respects, it was nevertheless thoroughly organised and regulated. This meant a paradoxical combination of, on the one hand, ‘law and order’ in the sense of little (ordinary) crime and a high level of safety for the ordinary citizen and, on the other hand, insecurity for anybody who happened to come to crosspurposes with the system. In general, the whole region was characterised by an extremely high degree of predictability (which in the 1970s and early 1980s developed into gerontocratic stasis and decay under Brezhnev and his successors). This stability sharply contrasts with a post-Cold War situation of fluidity in overall relations and disorganisation and lawlessness at the micro-level.

This Cold War order unravelling with surprising speed and a relative absence of violence. From when Gorbachev took power as general secretary of the CPSU in 1985 and gradually introduced political and economic reforms, decentralising processes accelerated both within the Soviet Union and especially in Eastern Europe. During two years in 1989–91, communist rule ended in country after country, Germany was unified, and the Warsaw Pact officially dissolved. Within the Soviet Union, negotiations over a future union with increased independence for the republics were aborted by the August 1991 coup against Gorbachev. When the coup failed, the central figure was Russia’s leader (since 1990) Boris Yeltsin; most of the republics declared independence and, in December 1991, the presidents of Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia dissolved the Soviet Union and proclaimed the CIS. At the end of the year, the Soviet Union ceased to exist, the Russian flag rose over the Kremlin and control of the nuclear arsenal was handed over to Yeltsin.

Thus, much of the history of the area is about the shifting tides of a Moscow-centred polity (Baev 1996: 3–19; Trenin 2001: 39–99; Lieven 2000: 201–411). However, some of the other now-independent states also have (or construct) separate state histories. Ukraine has a medieval
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history as well as a competitive claim on the original ‘Rus’. Armenia and Georgia have histories of independence in the first century BC and again from the ninth century AD in the case of Armenia and from the eleventh and twelfth century in the case of Georgia. The Central Asian states could link back to the khanates of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries – and ideologically more powerfully to the triumphant tribes and hordes who regularly threatened all neighbours for centuries, although they could hardly be seen as the constructors of stable states (Buzan and Little 2000: 188; Rashid 2002b: 20–3). The Baltic republics had an interwar experience of independent statehood, which in the case of Lithuania followed centuries of independence and even great power-hood (Polish–Lithuanian state).

The nationalities question was important and a continuing source of worry within the Soviet Union, but in the 1980s only the Baltic states and to some extent Ukraine and later Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan had strong national(ist) movements aimed at a well-defined idea of statehood. Most of the others dropped inadvertently into independence and, although they have constructed national histories together with their states, the long story about the region is very much a unicentric one.

Paradoxically, the national identity of the new republics is to a large extent the result of Soviet nationalities policy. It both contributed to several of these groups forming a national identity and shaped it in some particular ways (Suyn 1999–2000; Tkach 1999; Grannes 1993: 10–14). Soviet policy on nationalities was marked by the tension between on the one hand the communist assumption that eventually national particularism would be transcended and Soviet man emerge, and on the other a short-term policy of accommodating and even reinforcing national identity for purposes of divide-and-rule. The Soviet Union was structured by a four-layered system of ethnically based administrative political units, a system of ‘matrioshka nationalism’. First there were the Union Republics (SSRs, Soviet Socialist Republics; officially with a right to secede), second, twenty Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics located within the Union Republics. Then came eight Autonomous Regions (oblasti) and last ten Autonomous Areas (okruga). Each had a similar set of institutions, nested hierarchically within each other. Characteristic of Soviet policy was that each unit had a ‘titular nationality’ defined, the one after which the republic, region, or area was named. And, irrespective of the numerical balance in the unit, that nationality had various privileges. Nations were treated as real and primary, as almost
something biological in the Soviet system and, with the idea of the titular
nationality, the background for how to think about nation and state was
predisposed towards ethnicised politics and a perception of the state as
belonging not to the people on a territory but to the nation whose name
it carried. Soviet drawing and redrawing of boundaries is at the root of
many of the conflicts in present-day post-Soviet space.

Evolution of the RSC, 1991–2002

Domestic level

In most of the Central Asian and trans-Caucasian republics, domestic
security is either high or top priority. Competing elites struggling for
political power are willing to trade national autonomy for external sup-
port (Roeder 1997), and the state order is so weak that threats to the
security of the regime can trigger a general crisis of political order and
in some cases civil war. In Russia and the western republics (Ukraine,
Moldova, and in its own odd way Belarus) the political order is more
stable either because an autocratic ruler has taken control (Belarus) or
because a democratic system is sufficiently well established that elec-
toral outcomes will be respected and power transferred according to
constitutional procedures (Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova). The democ-
ocratic structures are even more mature in the three Baltic states. Internal
tensions due to large (mainly Russian) minorities are in principle a prob-
lem in Estonia, Latvia, and Ukraine. In practice, the domestic dynamic
has been contained in Estonia and Latvia, and thus the issue is really a
question about Russian foreign policy. In Ukraine, an underlying tension
exists, and domestic conflict remains a risk.

Politics in Central Asia are not only generally undemocratic – with un-
fair elections, a controlled press, and harsh persecution of especially Is-
 lamist but sometimes all opposition – they have increasingly turned per-
sonalistic (some say ‘sultanistic’) with power controlled in a tightly knit
circle of family and friends. Lifetime powers and preparations for dy-
nastic succession can be found within these orders, ingeniously labelled
by Uzbekistan’s President Karimov ‘oriental democracy’ (Parakhonsky
n.d.). Having an individual at the centre of domestic level security often
means volatile policies, as exemplified most clearly and importantly by
the many abrupt changes in Uzbekistan’s foreign policy. This also ex-
 plains the repressive reaction to Islamism which many observers see as
leading to a vicious circle actually generating more Islamists and even-
tually more terrorists (Rashid 2000, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c; Olcott 2001b;
Norton 2002). Whether caused by the repression or actually vindicating it, the strength and radicalism of Islamist movements seems actually to have increased in recent years (Peterson 2002; Rashid 2002b; Olcott 2001b; Gunaratna 2002: 167–72). The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) fought with the Taleban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan in 2001, taking heavy losses, but the battle-hardened remains also picked up ‘leftover’ al-Qaeda Arabs. They are expected to shift from insurgency to terror and assassinations and to be regrouping in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan before hitting at Uzbekistan. The non-violent radicals in Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) are accused of coordinating destabilisation efforts with IMU. The three factors of drugs trade, wide availability of arms in Afghanistan, and Islamic groups are mutually reinforcing (Olcott 2001b). Worsening socioeconomic conditions particularly among the large youth population in especially Uzbekistan make future recruitment for Islamic radicals likely.

Russia does not have domestic security problems to the same extent, but its domestic level is nevertheless important in order to understand the security of the region. In a centred region, the factors that drive the foreign policy of the dominant regional power are obviously of special importance. Russian policy changed after the first two to three post-Soviet years. A first period of clear Western orientation (Kozyrev’s period as foreign minister, which has been called the ‘diplomacy of smiles’ and the ‘policy of yes’; Mozaffari 1997: 28) led to increasing criticism for a lack of Russian foreign policy.

The failure of this policy had external as well as internal causes. Western policy did very little to give Russia a sense of a role (out of concern for NATO, the USA resisted Russian wishes for a strengthened OSCE, and the West Europeans were preoccupied with their own projects: ‘1992’, Maastricht, and ex-Yugoslavia). As a result, it was impossible for the new Russian leadership to project itself into the world and the world into Russian domestic politics. Russia could not construct a vision of itself pointing towards a future world with itself in an attractive role and form (Wæver 1990b, 1995b; Christensen 2002). The policy of general participation in a Western, liberal order was therefore not viable. This foreign policy shift was closely connected with a partial backlash in domestic politics against the liberal reformers – both communists and nationalists gained ground and the president de facto accommodated much of their criticism regarding foreign policy.

The idea of the ‘near abroad’ as Russia’s main priority started to emerge already in 1992 and became official policy from 1993 (Karaganov
1992; Lough 1993; Migranyan 1994; Lepingwell 1994; Shashenkov 1994; G. Simon 1994; Malcolm et al. 1996; Baev 1996, 1997a, 1997b; Smith et al. 1998: 11ff.; Matz 2001). The former Soviet republics were defined as a Russian sphere of interest, partly justified by the need to protect Russian minorities, partly in terms of joint interests, including economic ones. The very term, the ‘near abroad’, revealingly created an in-between category between domestic and truly ‘foreign’ affairs, thus suggesting a polity formed in concentric circles (à la Watson), a centred RSC. At the global level, Russian policy has consistently promoted multipolarity and resisted American unipolarity. Towards the end of the 1990s multipolarity gained force as a platform for cooperation with the Chinese and Iranians and flirtations with Amerisceptic West Europeans.

Thus, the primary Russian security problem at the domestic level is one that in curious ways connects to the regional and global levels: the threats to Russian state identity from a lack of recognition (Christensen 2002), a lack of a respectable international role. Another domestic security problem, still identity-related, involves the relationship between state and nation: ‘What then is the “national” substance in the national interest, the national security and the national defence of the Russian Federation? Is it more properly Russian or multinational…?’ (Rühl 1997: 22). It is ethno-Russian enough to take a special interest in Russians outside the borders, but open and inclusive enough in its conception of ‘Russian’ to keep the multinational federation together. We return to the Russian answer to this question in the box on pp. 406–8, but a similar question was posed in several of the other new states. It was in most cases resolved predominantly by the ethno-national answer. Even Ukraine, with its striking need to formulate an inclusive identity bringing the Russian minority on board (Lemaitre et al. 1993), started out with a narrowly conceived national identity (Poulsen-Hansen and Wæver 1996). Increasingly, this has been reversed and Russians have been included in the political process – and not as a separate group (Casanova 1998). Kazakhstan stands out because President Nazarbayev has handled the ever-looming threat of Russian-dominated Northern Kazakhstan seceding by an elegant balance between national protection and inclusive strategies in both foreign (CIS) policy and domestic policy regarding the relationship between Kazakhs and Russians (see e.g. Roy 2000: 191ff.; Suny 1999–2000). Most other states have been driven by the more straightforward nationalist conceptions of the ‘titular’ nations.

The increased attention to the ‘near abroad’ was mostly received as a national(ist) if not neo-imperial turn away from a liberal, Western
policy. However, this reorientation also has a strong element of 'strategic retreat'. In one way, it is possible to draw a line from being mostly involved in European questions (still during the late and post-Soviet negotiations about German unification, troop withdrawal, etc.), through being interested in neighbouring states, to now being increasingly absorbed in domestic wars and fearing a disintegration of Russia itself (Baev 1999b). In a quasi-imperial structure like Russia's - and the EU's - one always has to give highest priority to the inner circles because their health is the precondition for that of the next circle outward. Still, the 'near abroad' should not be underestimated. In the series of 'doctrines' (foreign policy, national security, military doctrine) in 1999–2000 it is still the primary level that is allocated more long- or medium-term importance than both domestic and global security issues.

The main security importance of the political development in the other republics concerns statehood, i.e., economic and political viability. The only republic to directly seek a return to union and seemingly (try to) 'give up' independence was Belarus. All others managed in one way or another to continue as independent units. None of the ex-Soviet republics except the Baltic states has been terribly successful in terms of economic reform and growth, and all have experienced serious drops in GDP with ensuing social problems, crime, and disintegrative processes. However, economic decline has been halted in all the republics. In 1999 GDP grew in all except Ukraine and Moldova and in 2000 in all (IMF 2001). None of the republics seems on the verge of collapsing into the hands of Russia, but several are weak, vulnerable, or economically dependent enough to be easily manipulated and controlled from Moscow.

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**Nation, state, and security in Russian political thought**

Russia shapes this region more than any of the other states. By examining the historical construction of Russian national and state identity what can we discover about the importance of the different levels and about specific constraints on how Russia can securitise or desecuritise?

Relatively less can be said about the basic Russian concept of state and nation than in other cases (such as Germany, France, or India), because Russian debates are polarised and politicised down to the deep questions about how to relate to Western traditions like Rechtsstaat, democracy, and individual rights. At least at first, it seems less can be found in the form of sedimented, taken-for-granted common basis
(Neumann 2002; Terpager 2001). Therefore, we should – in order to get at the necessary framework for almost all policy – begin not from the ‘official’ disagreements like the standard polarisation between Westernisers and Slavophiles but from the minimalist shared basis. It is: state or not. In the particular historical references by which this is repeatedly posed, familiar periods of state failure and chaos are constitutive for the idea of the state: mythic renditions in the Chronicle of Nestor about the ninth century, the ‘Time of Troubles’ at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and the turmoil and dismemberment after the revolution (Terpager 2001: 64; Trenin 2001: 87). The meaning of the state is defined in terms of order versus chaos. President Putin expressed this in his millennium speech:

It will not happen soon, if it ever happens at all, that Russia will become the second edition of, say, the US or Britain in which liberal values have deep historic traditions. Our state and its institutions and structures have always played an exceptionally important role in the life of the country and its people. For Russians a strong state is not an anomaly, which should be got rid of. Quite the contrary, they see it as a source and guarantor of order and the initiator and main driving force of any change. Modern Russian society does not identify a strong and effective state with a totalitarian state.

(Putin 1999)

The idea of Russia is further shaped by the absence of a political concept of nation. Although the concept of ethnic Russian clearly exists (see the debates on Russians outside Russia), it has not been constituted as a basis for statehood. Due to continuous expansion, Russia did not become a nation-state. Dmitri Trenin (2001: 74) points to ‘Ivan the Terrible’s fateful annexation of the two Muslim khanates on the middle and lower reaches of the Volga, Kazan and Astrakhan [1552, 1556], and the concomitant decision to grant the new arrivals a measure of ethnic and religious identity. Early on ethnicity in Russia became subordinated to the imperial state. If there was a “Russian Idea”, it was that of a universal Eurasian empire. It was the state that formed the Russian mentality and way of life.’

From this followed the importance of the country’s geographical extension. ‘Generations of Russians have formed their conception of their country simply by looking at a map, which shows it to be the world’s biggest by far. A tsarist-era school primer cites Russia’s “bigness” as its natural defining quality’ (Trenin 2001: 12; see also 20).
This explains the Russian fashion for geopolitics far beyond the Realpolitik-orientated quarters where it is found in other countries – for Russians it is a way to discuss identity. 'Russia is a geographical concept' (Trenin 2001: 22). If reduced to the original, ethnically Russian, European possessions, such a state would be 'Russian, but not Russia' (Trenin 2001: 21).

A popular saying in Russia (which Putin quoted in the 2000 presidential campaign) is: 'He who does not regret the passing of the USSR has no heart; he who wants to restore it has no head' (Trenin 2001: 88).

There is near universal consensus that Russia must have a mission that transcends its confines, and must not be reduced to its ethnographic core (Prizel 1998: 178). The identity to which the state makes reference is therefore empire and civilisation rather than nation (Prizel 1998; Christensen 2002). The near abroad is the most obvious arena in which Russia might define a mission; it is also a means to an end, because having influence in a larger geographical area makes it easier for Russia to be recognised at the global level as a great power (Christensen 2002).

Security is not a 'first-order' question of dealing with actual challenges, nor only a 'second-order' question of defining what security is in order to handle issues in particular ways (securitisation theory); it is also a 'third-order' question of security being an arena for the state to obtain recognition (Christensen 2002; Ringmar 2002). If Russia does not gain recognition internationally, this would both have repercussions in terms of identity problems and raise questions about the ability of the state to guarantee order and society. The concept of a strong state connects international and domestic roles. Although concentric circle polities such as ancient empires, the EU, and Russia in some sense have to give priority to the inner circle in order for there to be an actor to deal with the next layer, in the case of Russia the inner circle is likely to be destabilised if the outer one fades. Therefore, it is unlikely that Russia even under pressure would retreat to a purely internal security agenda. The level of the 'near abroad' is a crucial arena and the ultimate measure is the global level.

Subregional and regional level
Most of the security dynamics operate at the regional – i.e., inter-unit – level although they are rarely of the traditional state-threatens-state
form. Classical interstate war and rivalry have most strongly erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the Central Asian states watch each other wondering about questions of long-term dominance or hegemony in the subregion. Finally, the Russian–Chechen wars are almost interstate – at least according to one of the sides; whether they will be filed in the archives of history under civil war or interstate war depends as always on the outcome. Most other security problems are more unconventional. Their nature varies and, in particular, the aggregate formations differ between the four subregions. Therefore, this section first deals with general patterns and then discusses each subregion.

One characteristic form of conflict involving a package of interconnected securitisations is the triangle: secessionist minority/state/Russia. An example is Abkhazia, where a break-away minority threatened the territorial integrity of Georgia which at the time (1992–4) was defiant against Russian strengthening of CIS structures. Russia at first supported the rebels and then (as another mafioso offering ‘protection’) eventually assisted Georgia – but for a price. In this case the price was Georgian re-entry into the CIS and acceptance of military cooperation with Russia: CIS ‘peacekeeping’ and Russian bases. In other cases, the threats are not sponsored by Russia – such as the domestic and transnational Islamic rebels in Tajikistan – but Russian assistance is crucial both to the protection of the external borders of the CIS and to domestic control in various republics. When Russia enters as the ‘solution’, it is often accused of freezing rather than solving the conflict in order to continue to utilise it (Kuzio 2000; Baev 1996, 1997b).

These are the constellations that emerge out of local threats to states ‘other’ than Russia. In addition, most of the republics see Russia as a threat in itself although one that only few try directly to balance. The GUUAM cooperation among Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova signals at least an exploration of the possibilities for such balancing. The main instrument of control by Russia is not direct military intervention but either manipulation of the domestic (or subregional) political scene in ways detrimental to obstinate leaders or simply exploitation of their dependence on Russia, not least economically.

In the opposite direction, seen from Russia, the ‘near abroad’ is important to security partly for specific reasons, partly for strategic ones. The specific reasons are (as with the USA in relation to Central America) externalities of various kinds (disorder, crime, environmental threats), the threat to infrastructure and thus often to production chains (because these were in Soviet days constructed across several republics), and the
fate of the approximately 25 million ethnic Russians who landed outside Russia when the Soviet Union dissolved. The bottom-line strategic threat is that, if Russia is to remain a great power able both to defend itself and to assert some influence globally, it needs to retain its sphere of influence in the CIS.

Under President Putin, Russian securitisation came to focus on terrorism (Putin 2000). This was already the main Russian legitimisation of its Chechen operation, and Putin attempted to extend this rationale to the CIS. Transnational terrorism was to justify crossborder operations by Russian military and intelligence (Monitor 26 January, 13 March, 22 June 2000; McDermott 2002). Reluctantly, the other member states accepted this in a bargain that allowed some of them to securitise ‘separatism and aggressive nationalism’ (Monitor 26 January 2000). This is a major concern to countries such as Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. It is often directed against Russian policy and is a standard phrase from GUUAM documents. Dmitri Trenin (2001: 108, 130–1, 167, 171) argues that Russia after the first Chechen war moved from exploiting separatists towards a general anti-separatist, pro-(whichever) government policy.

Also in the context of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Russia put terrorism at the top of the agenda (Abbas 2000; Stratfor 2000a). (Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan formed the Shanghai Five in 1996; it was renamed in 2000 the Shanghai Forum and became the SCO in 2001 when Uzbekistan joined.) Russia and the Central Asian states try to construct religious extremism, separatism, international terrorism, and drugs trafficking as closely interlinked, and thus blame international, fundamentalist extremists for all major threats. ‘The Shanghai-5’s loud denunciations of these partially genuine but largely exaggerated threats are meant to justify their (present and future) oppressive policies against domestic political opponents’ (Abbas 2000).

With terrorism in this prominent position, it was easy for President Putin to slot into the ‘war on terrorism’ started by the United States in 2001 – although Russians were often disappointed when their interpretation of the meaning of terrorism and of mutual support was not echoed by US policy especially in relation to Chechnya.

At the same time, the Duma upgraded securitisation in relation to ethnic Russians in the neighbouring states. Chairman of the international affairs committee Dmitry Rogozin, says: ‘Discrimination against and threats to the life, let alone taking the life, of Russian subjects amounts to a threat to the Russian state itself and its national security. We have
25 million compatriots in the near abroad. That problem is our number one problem, a national security problem' (Monitor 10 February 2000). The popularity in the West of ‘non-military aspects of security has had the unintended side-effect of inspiring the Russian establishment to “securitize” several new issues and to propel a brand new body, the Security Council, into a position of power not unlike that accorded the old Politbureau' (Skak 2000: 16).

The prospects for Russian control of the near abroad are closely connected to the question about the consolidation of the CIS. As noted by Roeder (1997), the whole conception is too openly about Russian interests to become a successful international organisation. It does not include the necessary quid pro quo whereby the dominant power gains an empire by granting the peripheral states some influence over its policy (see Kupchan 1998). Russia is in the same situation as the USA is in the Americas, not wanting to give up its unilaterality and therefore finding it hard to sell ‘multilateralism’ to the others in the region. The CIS as of 2002 has twelve members, and it was shaped, especially around 2000–1, by a polarisation between the independence-oriented states (GUUAM and Turkmenistan) and the ‘Russia plus five group’ with Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Plans for a free trade zone or an ‘economic union’ had little effect. Russia’s own protectionism is among the major obstacles. The members of the Customs Union by mid-2002 were Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan – the same as the Collective Security Treaty minus Armenia. In some cases, existing levels of integration threaten to unravel further as Turkmenistan in 1999 reintroduced visa requirements, and Russia threatens this move against obstinate neighbours who would often be severely hit due to the high number of their people working in Russia (Trenin 2001: 105, 286; Economist 17 August 2000). Generally, the economic part of the organisation has not been well developed, but by default many of the countries are drifting closer to each other as a result of post-Soviet dependence on infrastructure (including personal networks) and failure in alternative markets.

Something similar is happening in the military field where the collective security component of the CIS (the Tashkent Treaty, establishing the CSA) has had the problem of several countries not signing (Moldova, Ukraine, and Turkmenistan) and others leaving (Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Georgia). (So Tashkent has left the Tashkent Treaty! Although Uzbekistan in 2000–1 moved back towards Russia, this was bilateral and did not include re-entry into the Treaty on Collective Security.) Most
The post-Soviet space

of the Central Asian republics have upgraded their bilateral ties with Russia so that today Russian troops are patrolling most of the external border of the CIS. Russian troops were deployed in Tajikistan as part of a CIS peacekeeping operation in March 1993. In April 1994, all Central Asian republics, Georgia, and Armenia allowed Russian participation in patrolling their borders (Roy 2000: 197; Strategic Survey 1999–2000: 12–13; Baev 1997a, 1997b; Trenin 2001: 118–19). Especially in the context of the Anti-terror Centre a new strategy seems to be to line up the intelligence services (Monitor 22 June 2000). Given the striking proportion of leaders in the CIS with a KGB background, this might be an ideal level for networking. After Russian insistence, the Collective Security Treaty was in 2002 transformed into the CIS Collective Security Organisation (CSO), but the implications thereof were unclear (Kuzio 2002a).

The lack of CIS development to some extent reflects obstruction by sceptics. But to Russia, the main role of the CIS is to project an image of Russia as a bloc-leader (Monitor 26 and 28 January, 22 June 2000). It is important to its global standing that Russia speaks on behalf of this larger region (as e.g. Turkey has tried to do on behalf of all Turkic-speaking peoples and as Brazil uses Mercosur without bothering to deepen it).

The second important organisation is GUUAM. It is even less organised than the CIS and its track record more problematic. Nevertheless, it is crucial both to an understanding of the present-day CIS and to estimates about the future. It is an indicator of the degree of dissatisfaction with Russian dominance and a measure of the possibilities for and constraints on independent organisation. If the members are able to consolidate their cooperation – and tie it to the Western powers as they intend – the result will be a region less dominated by Russia: if not exactly balanced, then at least one where Russia is not able to control everything by divide-and-rule. In October 1997, the presidents of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova formed GUUAM. In April 1999, the primary policy statement as well as the inclusion of Uzbekistan (and a second U in the name) came symbolically in Washington at a meeting in the context of NATO’s fiftieth anniversary summit. GUUAM aims to solve crises, conflicts, and the problems of terrorism on the basis of respect for ‘sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence of states and inviolability of their internationally recognized borders’ (GUUAM 1999). It is against ‘dividing lines and spheres of influence’, wants to develop the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transport corridor as a modern Silk
Route, and, finally, wants to strengthen cooperation with NATO (GUUAM 1999; Pashayev 2000).

Much of this is aimed at Russian dominance. The formulations reflect opposition to the fact that Russia, in conflicts in Moldova’s Transdniestr, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Abkhazia and potentially in relation to Ukraine, supports solutions that imply either changing borders or a sharing of sovereignty between the (GUUAM) state and its rebelling minority. GUUAM has experienced difficulties since 2000 because of a rapprochement between Uzbekistan and Russia (RFE/RL 24 January 2000) and, despite Uzbekistan’s turn to the USA with the US attack on Afghanistan in October 2001, Uzbekistan surprisingly left GUUAM in June 2002 – allegedly from dissatisfaction with its lack of action, possibly because Uzbekistan did not need GUUAM once it had direct access to the USA (Blua 2002; Kuzio 2002b). A Moldovan change of government in January 2000 made that country a little less anti-Russian.

GUUAM’s long-term importance is the opening towards NATO with various degrees of ambition regarding hopes for membership. GUUAM can be the context for such cooperation. In the medium term, it has the effect of making opposition to Russian plans within the CIS easier. More and more often conflicts within the CIS line up with GUUAM (or now de facto GUAM, or even ‘GUA’) on the one side, against Russia and its closest allies on the other. It is thus not surprising that Russian leaders see GUUAM as a ‘Trojan horse’, ‘anti-CIS’, and ‘anti-Russian’ (Central Asia Caucasus Analyst 6 August 1999). Russian bilateralism is thwarted by a distinct coalition within the CIS. The members of GUUAM have tried to take specific steps to cooperate in the area of security, notably a joint peacekeeping unit and exchange of information on military and regional security issues.

Turning from organisations and alliance patterns to the actual conflicts, an emerging pattern in the ethnic conflicts is that the larger, more ‘dangerous’ conflicts are gradually cooling down, while possibly there are increasing numbers of more disorganised and not state-to-state conflicts notably in Central Asia and in Russia itself. The Ukrainian–Russian conflict – the most serious – has been gradually mollified, and also the Baltic–Russian controversies – with potentially significant impact on the relationship between Russia and the West – have come under control. The biggest military conflict, Nagorno-Karabakh, might finally be on a constructive development including plans for Armenia and Azerbaijan to swap territories to allow for access to the contested enclaves, constitutional creativity for the status of the enclave, and possibly a larger
subregional ‘stability pact’. Central Asia increasingly gets a subregional pattern of trans- and maybe interstate rivalry even with the potential to settle into a stable pattern of quasi-alliances. Internally in Russia, the big question is whether Chechnya is a forewarning about troubles to come elsewhere in the Federation. Generally, the CIS contains primarily the triangle struggles noted above, with secessionists and Russian interference – not classical interstate among ‘the others’ (except for Armenia–Azerbaijan and some mutual suspicions in Central Asia related mainly to the potential hegemony of Uzbekistan). Quantitative data on conflicts in the post-Soviet area indicate that since c. 1992, the number of new rebellions and protest movements started to decline dramatically (Rubin 1998: 165–70).

On the other hand, the whole RSC is shot through with geopolitical manoeuvring to a degree unseen at the present stage in any other part of the world. The combination of open decisions about alliance choices and therefore constantly shifting patterns, successful meddling in other countries’ domestic politics to obtain the desired foreign policy orientation, and geopolitical struggles over natural resources and transportation routes makes both for more geopolitics than anywhere else and for an instability and difficulty of interpretation. In turn, this has effects on the nature of the sources for this chapter, which is, much more than others, based on news reporting and internet documents. The relative youth of the new states and the relative novelty and volatility of the basic situation goes some way towards explaining that there are rather few solid and thorough books, or even articles in major journals, on the subject (but many anthologies that date fast). Although we have not really seen the mooted ‘new great game’ with the powers around Central Asia competing for influence, the region – internal as well as external actors – plays a number of complicated and unstable strategic games that make it highly interesting but also very open.

While some trends can be concluded at the aggregate RSC level, especially in relation to Russian policy, the subregions differ sufficiently that they need to be looked at one by one.

The Baltic states have generally managed to move out of the post-Soviet sphere: not members of the CIS, but expected future members of the EU, and not in principle ruled out as members of NATO. Although in many ways ‘lost for Russia’ with little doubt as to where the states are ultimately heading, the area is important because it is currently the main locale where Russian and Western ‘circles’ overlap. In practice, the division between spheres is agreed, although Ukraine could in the
future become a serious object of contention. Therefore, some of Moscow's rhetorical posturing around the Baltic states can be read as Russia defending a principle as a political 'forward defence' in relation to Ukraine.

Since analysts of European and ex-Soviet security assume that the Baltic states will make it to the West, there is a tendency already now to analyse them as part of the Western rather than the ex-Soviet system. A more exact picture demands that one look at the actual securitisations. Russian actors (in Russia more than in the Baltic countries) present the Russian minorities as threatened mostly by violations of their human rights. Conversely, Balts presented the minorities, especially in the early independence years, as a fifth column and thus a threat to the Baltic republics. Military security is a Baltic concern, because their situation is untenable in case of a military confrontation. Western aid has generally been cautious and indirect. Russian hardliners present Baltic independence as a security problem for Russia, because it interrupted the line of air defences towards the West, and reconstructing a system is costly. Finally, the entanglement of histories at the macro- (nation-state) and micro- (ownership of land) levels makes for numerous possible conflicts (Joenniemi and Prikulis 1994; Hansen and Heurlin 1998; Forsberg 1998; Sergounin 1998). The level of intensity in the securitisation has lowered compared to the first five years of independence. The Baltic states first securitised a Russian threat intensively both for domestic nation-building reasons and because this seemed to them a way to attract Western support and solidarity. However, they gradually learned that the West wants to be a postmodern polity, orientated towards a different agenda than this old-fashioned one, and therefore for the Balts to present a conflictual image of themselves is counterproductive to membership of the EU. The Balts have therefore gradually downscaled the intensity of securitisation (Joenniemi and Wæver 1997). From the Russian side, the level fluctuates as a reflection mostly of developments in domestic politics. In addition, Russia plays divide-and-rule in relation to the three states. Lithuania is most of the time presented in a positive light and Estonia and Latvia take turns at being criticised.

With de-escalation and even desecuritisation it is quite likely that the Baltic states will edge westwards and eventually join the EU-European RSC. However, a conflict scenario is a possibility and, at the opening of the twenty-first century, the Baltic states are in the Russia-centred RSC irrespective of how much they dislike this. A final complication in relation to the Baltic subregion is Kaliningrad, sometimes called the

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fourth Baltic republic, but a Russian enclave accessible from (the rest of) Russia only via Belarus and either Lithuania or Poland, and home to a large naval base in rapid deterioration. Very little has come of the optimistic scenarios from the first post-Cold War years for a free trade zone and possibly for more autonomy leading to a Hong Kong- or Singapore-like status (Joenniemi and Prawitz 1998). Nor has the complicated situation so far generated major conflicts with Lithuania, although it is obviously a source of continuing worry for both sides (see Jurgaitiené and Wæver 1996; Gricius 1998; Pavlovaite 2000; Trenin 2001: 155–7). Due to Kaliningrad, it will not be a fast and smooth process to ‘move’ the Baltic states to the West, because a bit of Russia comes along.

The western ‘theatre’ (Moldova and East Slavic Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia – or ‘the new Eastern Europe’, the old now being Central Europe) – is both the least and the most security-intense of the four subregions: least because states are more stable and conflicts fewer than in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and most because it is the subregion most important to Russia. Thus, even if security issues are fewer, they are vested with more significance. This is primarily because Ukraine and Belarus raise identity questions for Russia. In contrast to the newly independent states to the south, these states were seen as integral parts of Russia itself and hardly separate nations/nationalities. (‘It is a strange Russia that includes Chechnya but excludes Crimea’: Vitaly Tretyakov quoted in Trenin 2001: 180.) A second reason is that Europe is Russia’s most valued interregional link, and therefore the western CIS states are strategically located. Politically, the subregion contains both the most pro-Russian republic, Belarus, and the leading counterbalancer, Ukraine.

Belarus is of high military strategic importance, located on the main East–West axis and crucial for air defence and connections to Kaliningrad (Trenin 2001: 160–1). In terms of political and societal security, Belarus is a curious case because at least the current leadership does not securitise identity or sovereignty as threatened; in fact, they attempt to give it partly up to a union with Russia. While narrow majorities support the idea of independent statehood and nationhood, the closeness to Russia(ns) is sufficiently deep in the identification that the idea of basing Belarus on close support from Russia is widely supported (Trenin 2001: 162–3; Hjortsø 2002). It is still an open question as to what comes of the plans for the ‘Union State’ between Belarus and Russia (one that even Yugoslavia tried to join during NATO’s attack). Cooperation in
defence (not least air defence) is proceeding, Belarus’s military doctrine has been geared to the ‘common defence space’ with Russia (Monitor 31 May 2000), and neutrality has been conclusively abandoned. In the economic area, however, integration is much more complicated (at least as long as Belarus lags behind in reforms) because some of the economic schemes would be costly to Russia and allow Belarus to free ride, e.g., printing their own rubles or running a state deficit. By mid-2002, Putin seemed to be rejecting the union scenario, creating confusion in and renewed openness about the future orientation of Belarus (Hjortsø 2002). The relationship is little securitised and more about the joint handling of external security, i.e., cooperating in defence against NATO.

The Ukraine–Russia relationship holds much material for conflict (nuclear weapons, Black Sea navy, naval ports, Crimea, Russian minority, history). During the first years of independence, the situation was often tense and the conflict was seen as the most momentous of all post-Soviet conflicts. Generally, the relationship has stabilised during the mid- to late 1990s. Future conflicts cannot be ruled out because to Russia Ukraine is by far the most important of the ex-Soviet republics.

Future developments partly depend on to what extent the West (EU and/or the USA) becomes a credible alternative to Russia, economically and eventually militarily. With ultimate dependence on Russia, Ukraine can manoeuvre in relation to Russia, but must avoid a political showdown. Ukraine has moved up Western agendas in recent years and, with enlargement of NATO and the EU, the Western factor could begin to make a real difference and offer more of a choice to Ukraine. This, on the other hand, could trigger determined reactions from Russia, as seen e.g. in August 1997 when a NATO exercise in the Ukraine (‘Sea Breeze 97’) was modified after Russian protests. However, several further exercises have been held. In 1999, Ukraine began to express a clear preference for NATO and non-participation in CIS military structures. Yet, with a domestic political crisis in 2001, Russian–Ukrainian political alignment at the presidential level proved suddenly useful again.

The ultimate security problem is Ukraine’s domestic vulnerability and many Russians’ reluctance to accept Ukraine’s independence. An independent national state exists for the first time since the Middle Ages and a short period after the 1917 revolution. The borders resulting from various more or less bizarre adjustments (such as the anniversary gift of Crimea to Ukraine in 1954) bring together territories with very different state histories and very different attitudes to the idea of an independent Ukraine, from nationalistic Galicia, to Crimea and the southeastern part

The most likely triggering issue is Crimea, both because it is seen as very Russian by many Russians and because of the important naval base in Sevastopol (Trenin 2001: 165–8). Regulated by agreements on borders and base rights in 1997, issues have been de-dramatised even if disagreements remain, and Ukraine therefore will continue to explore countervailing options like GUUAM and ultimately the West.

Moldova has had two crucial foreign policy issues. First was the wish for ‘reunification’ with Romania – a wish that faded rather fast. Second came the conflict over Transdniestra with a revolt of local Russians (and Ukrainians). Transdniestra is a textbook case of ‘matrioshka nationalism’, of nested ethnic identities. When Moldovans started to aim at independent statehood (or, worse, unification with Romania), the non-titular minorities (the previously privileged Russians and Ukrainians in Transdniestra and the Gagauz) reacted by putting forward their own claims for secession. The predominantly Slavic – and ideologically hardline communist – community on the left bank of the Dniestr River appropriated 15 per cent of Moldova’s territory. During 1989–92 the conflict claimed hundreds of lives, and ended in non-resolution, whereby Moldova accepted Russia brokering an agreement despite Russia’s lack of neutrality as well as a peacekeeping force composed of Russians, Moldovans, and local Transdniestra forces (Brzezinski and Sullivan 1997: 621–45; Tkach 1999). Moldova later protested against the continued presence of Russian troops. The Russian 14th Army drew its forces largely from the local population and often acted relatively independently of Moscow and seemed to be the army of the local Russians.

This illustrates Pavel Baev’s general interpretation that ‘peacekeeping’ has become the new name for conquest – a necessary relabelling in a world (and especially Europe) that does not accept changes of borders by the use of force (Baev 1994, 1996, 1999a). A semi-permanent conquest could remain under the peacekeeping label for a long time. Moldova – in contrast to Azerbajian and Georgia – has accepted the Russian concept of ‘common state’ as a solution to enclaves and secessionists, a model that grants much de facto autonomy to the insurgents (and continued Russian influence) (Monitor 10 February 2000; dpa 1 March 2002). Moldova seems to have become partially resigned to this fact, but it has simultaneously been party to the construction of the GUUAM group, which signals an intention to be on the countervailing side in the relationship to Russia within CIS.
This western ‘theatre’ has insufficient coherence to count as a subcomplex. There are few security connections among the three states. Partly, this is because they are at the core of the whole RSC. They are key players in central all-CIS politics: Belarus as Russia’s closest ally, and Ukraine and Moldova as leading members of GUUAM and among the countries with closest connections to the West (together with Georgia and Azerbaijan). Generally, most issues have found a relatively stable existence even if they have not been solved. The main risk of major upsets probably stems from the chain effects of NATO enlargement.

The Caucasus, by contrast, does cohere as a subcomplex, and one having two parts. North Caucasus is in the Russian Federation including Chechnya, Dagestan, and five other units and dozens of ethnic groups. South Caucasus consists of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia and had violent conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. The Caucasus is the object of external interest from Turkey, Iran, and the USA, primarily. The two parts of the Caucasus connect most clearly via border-straddling groups such as South Ossetia (in Georgia) and North Ossetia (in Russia).

Should the Caucasus and Central Asia be treated as one region? They share Turkic languages in most countries, Russian as a lingua franca, and a common Soviet past with legacies such as infrastructure. Among the differences are political developments, with ex-communists still in power in Central Asia whereas the Caucasus have seen often violent changes of elites (and sometimes back again). Most decisively for an RSC analysis, the two are relatively separate. The Caspian Sea unifies in relation to fish and hydrocarbons, but geopolitically it divides and not much securitisation happens across it (and when finally the dispute over territorial division of the Caspian is resolved, even less will tie the two sides together). The two are distinct subcomplexes (see also Mozaffari 1997).

North Caucasus is an ethnic mosaic with a certain religious radicalisation. ‘The ethnic relations in Caucasus are so complicated that the Balkans and Afghanistan become simple and clear in comparison. The most complicated pattern in terms of different ethnic groups is in the republic of Dagestan’ (Heradstveit 1993: 108 [our translation]). Should Dagestan – as just one illustration – be destabilised by the competition among ethnic elites or religious mobilisation and spillover from Chechnya (Pain 1999: 183), this would destabilise all of Northern Caucasus, interrupt crucial pipelines, and threaten spillover into Azerbaijan.
in the form of Lezgin irredentism. In the early 1990s, North Caucasus was interpreted by Russia in terms of a fear of general disintegration of the Federation, but once Yeltsin (who used regionalists as allies) was replaced by Putin (who tightened up) North Caucasus was approached more in its own terms.

Chechnya is in a sense simpler than most of the other conflicts in the area. The Chechens have always fought Russian control and, predictably, the disintegration of the Soviet Union renewed demands for independence. The 1994–5 Russian attempt to quell the uprising by force ended in military fiasco, humanitarian disaster, and an ambiguous compromise (the Khasaviurt Agreement of August 1996). In contrast, the 1999 military intervention was more successful as well as highly popular in Russia. Russian securitisation focused on the risk that Chechnya might become a haven of terrorism and the starting point for an Islamic ‘mountainous confederacy’ from the Caspian to the Black Sea. Therefore, the second intervention happened with reference to mysterious terror attacks in Russia and alleged instigation of revolt in Dagestan.

South Caucasus (Trans-Caucasus) is defined by a complicated interplay between on the one hand issues internal to the region such as separatist conflicts especially in Georgia and the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict over (primarily) Nagorno-Karabakh and on the other hand the issue of alignments out of the region, i.e., Russian involvement in Georgian conflicts and the ability of Armenia and Azerbaijan to obtain support from Russia, Iran, Turkey, or the USA – and at what cost. This ties into the question of energy and pipelines.

Georgia is threatened by both unresolved elements from its 1992–3 civil war, and secession in the three areas that had special status in the Soviet system: Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Adzharia (Cornell 2002). Russia has exploited these conflicts to impose itself as guarantor of an inconclusive status quo. Abkhazia received support from the ‘Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus’. Already in 1989, the smaller nations of North Caucasus tried to recreate a ‘North Caucasian Mountain Republic’ (as existed in 1921–4) which was to include the Abkhaz Republic with Checheno-Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Kabardino-Balkar, and Karachai-Cherkess all within the Russian Soviet Republic. By 2001, Georgia finally succeeded in achieving agreement in principle on closing down the main Russian bases but with incredibly slow implementation by Russia (Socor 2002) – and not on ending, or multilateralising, Russian ‘peacekeeping’. In early 2002, US forces assisted
Georgia in fighting Islamic troops linked to both al-Qaeda and Chechen rebels in the Pankisi Gorge.

Nagorno-Karabakh is an area within Azerbaijan predominantly populated by Armenians to which Stalin – after considering joining it to Armenia – gave the status of Autonomous Region within Azerbaijan (Celac 2000; Brzezinski and Sullivan 1997: 597–8). Violent attempts to leave Azerbaijan and join Armenia began in 1987, and in 1994 Russia and Kyrgyzstan brokered a cease-fire which left the Karabakh Armenians in control of the enclave, and Armenia with control of 20 per cent of Azerbaijan including access to the enclave. The area is in a ‘tension-filled lull’ (Brzezinski and Sullivan 1997: 597). International efforts at resolution are in the hands of the OSCE-designated ‘Minsk conference’ (Celac 2000). An eventual resolution of the Karabakh conflict is likely to be part of a general ‘stability pact’ for the Caucasus, which would have to involve not only desecuritisation of economy (pipelines) and ethnicity, but also a settlement of the Nichitivan enclave, possibly by corridor swaps between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Initiatives were put forward by Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, the United States, the EU, and Russia around the same time (end of 1999, beginning of 2000; see Celac and Emerson et al. 2000; Coppieters 2000; Monitor 27 January, 4 April, 23 June 2000; RFE/RL Caucasus Report 2: 36, 10 September 1999; RFE/RL Extracts 18, 25 January 2000, 25 April, 15 May 2000; Interfax 22 February 2000). Importantly, a corridor swap would connect Turkey to its mainly Azerbaijan, but cut Armenia off from Iran.

In the general pattern of alignments, the most stable element has been the Russo-Armenian de facto alliance. It is traditional Armenian behaviour, as Christians, to seek Russian protection against Muslim neighbours. Changes of leadership in all three Caucasian states have been connected to (attempted) shifts in orientation towards the surrounding powers. Attempts to move Armenia closer to Turkey and thus balance the Russian link led to the fall of Armenia’s first president, Petrosian; a similar process took place in Azerbaijan, where President Elcheybey was replaced by President Aliev, supported by Russia, who proved disloyal to Russia and took the GUUAM route towards the West. As originally the only one of the Muslim republics to reject Russian frontier guards as well as military bases (Roy 2000: 194), Azerbaijan’s problem has been that it did not get the ‘usual’ rewards from the West. Due to the power of the Armenian lobby in the USA, Azerbaijan has been blacklisted and barred from American support. In the new situation after 11 September, the US government and military have quietly been assisting

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Azerbaijan, in order to counter the two challenges of Iranian threats and rising tensions in the Caspian Sea (Blank 2002). The relationship to Iran has traditionally been difficult due to Iranian fear of irredentism in its Azeri north but occasional overtures are made (Yeni Azerbaijan 14 January 2000, translated in RFE/RL 18 January 2000; Monitor 24 January 2000; Central Asian Caucasus Analyst 31 July 2002).

Russia has come to recognise the limits of its power and the independence of the existing states without giving up its paramount position in the area. Most important to Russia is probably to secure itself a role in the development and transport of oil and gas, especially Azerbaijan’s offshore oil – and to prevent any other external power from gaining a strategic position.

In the longer run the EU could become an important player as enlargement rolls east, but so far the United States is most important and focused on pipelines too. Having cut itself off from Russia, Iran, and (until recently) Azerbaijan at one and the same time, the United States found it impossible to achieve wide-ranging strategic objectives in the region (Wiberg-Jørgensen 1999: 106; see also McKeepy 1999; Strategic Survey 1997–9: 27–8; Noreng 2000: 192; Rashid 2002b: 191).

The main prize in the geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus is control of the transportation of oil and gas. For some this is about energy per se (China), for others mostly about the economic implications (the states in the region and to some extent Turkey and Iran, and the oil companies); to others again it is mainly a way to gain influence and/or prevent others from doing so (the USA and Russia, in particular). In Russia, the heads of the two energy monopolies were present at the signing of the new military doctrine in which ‘Moscow now views the international battle for control over Caspian Sea oil and gas riches as a point of national security’ (AFP 21 April 2000). The struggle is basically about the politics and economics of competing pipeline projects to connect Caspian basin hydrocarbon resources to world markets, whether via Russia and the Black Sea, via the Caucasus and Turkey, via Iran, via Afghanistan, or via Kazakhstan to China. This is a complicated story and, as we write, one far from resolution and too big to recount here (see Giragosian 2000; Strategic Survey 1997–8, 1999–2000: 12–15, and 2000–1; Oilonline 10 May 2000; Mann 2001; Rashid 2000, 2002b; Lysenko 2002).

Security in the Caucasus did not turn into a ‘new great game’. The relative robustness of the new states has surprised many (Strategic Survey 1997–8: 23), and conflicts are now driven primarily by the regional actors themselves. The Caucasus is a complicated mini-complex and
repeats its historical insulator functions. Still, Russian influence remains strong and CIS politics the primary arena, so the region continues to be a subcomplex within the post-Soviet RSC.

A peculiar feature, which underlines the current status as subcomplex, is that all of the four main dynamics that tie the Caucasus together have a strong Russian component, while none of them generate very active triangular politics among the three independent states of Southern Caucasus: (1) secessionists in Georgia, (2) the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict over Karabakh, (3) spillover between North and South Caucasus through the micro-coalition patterns among small ethnic groups, and (4) energy and pipelines.

A possible future as a more fully insulating mini-complex outside the ex-Soviet RSC is signalled by a tentative bipolarised pattern involving both regional states (and secessionists) and external powers (Cornell 2002). Turkey and the USA jointly support Azerbaijan and Georgia, while Russia and Iran support Armenia (and separatist substates within Georgia).

**Central Asia**

Central Asia could be considered a candidate for a separate RSC (Peimani 1998). In some studies of security regions, it is given its own chapter (sometimes together with the Caucasus, e.g., Schulz et al. 2001). Others have had difficulty deciding as part of which region to treat Central Asia. Is it (as the name seems to indicate) a part of Asia, or a part of the Middle East, maybe a particular ‘northern tier’ with Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan (Ragigh-Aghsan 2000)? We classify it as a weak subcomplex whose internal dynamics are still forming and in which the involvement of Russia is strong. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, expectations were that it would become an arena for a ‘new great game’, this time with Russia, Turkey, Iran, and maybe China competing for influence. This has happened to a much lesser degree than expected, basically because the difficulties for all parties are bigger than expected and the potential gains smaller (despite oil and gas). Recently, the United States has entered as a main contender.

By Central Asia we refer to the four republics that made up Soviet Central Asia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan plus Kazakhstan. The security issues in the region are legion. All states are domestically vulnerable. The ethnic map points to both internal problems and transnational ties, but they have only occasionally been securitised. Real wars have been avoided (in contrast to the Caucasus) and
the worst conflict has been Tajikistan’s civil war. The amount of conflict is surprisingly low. As noted by Martha Brill Olcott: ‘Central Asia has suffered virtually every social ill hyperinflation, rising unemployment, rising death rates, falling birth rates, deteriorating health care, government corruption and crumbling infrastructure which could be expected to increase social tension and so make inter-ethnic violence more likely, yet Central Asia has recorded no large-scale ethnic-based disturbances since 1991’ (quoted by Goudie 1996). The main explanation is that Central Asia is a region of both weak states and weak powers. Interaction capacity is low, and the ability of states to engage in classical state-to-state rivalry is limited. Second, national and ethnic identities are weak and have to compete with other identities. This might well become a source of conflicts, but at first it makes the likelihood of straightforward ethnic conflict lower.

Conflicts over interstate boundaries are rare and threaten mostly in relation to the fertile Fergana Valley where a confusing border divides Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. Another important boundary question is between Russia and Kazakhstan. ‘Kazakhstan is obsessed with the risk that its northern Russian-majority territories might secede’ (Roy 2000: 191). In that case, Uzbekistan might even try to grab the remnants (Noreng 2000: 189). To counter this risk, President Nazarbayev has consistently pursued a balanced policy, accommodating the Russians especially in CIS politics while pursuing Kazakhisation domestically. In Roy’s summary, Nazarbayev ‘wants to hitch the Kazakh wagon to the Russian train, but throw the Russians out of the first class compartment’ (Roy 2000: 191). Kazakhstan’s border with China is problematic both for boundary delineation and because of secessionism among the Uighurs in China’s Xinjiang province (see pp. 431–2). China claims substantial territory in eastern Tajikistan containing gold and other minerals (Rashid 2002b: 87).

In this ‘most Soviet’ part of the Soviet Union, new boundaries and old infrastructure do not line up, and highways and railroads often cross international borders on domestic journeys. This could lead to cooperation or conflict. The states are Soviet creations and except for Kazakhstan the titular identities were not even related to previous nationalist movements (Roy 2000: 3). Names like ‘Uzbeks’, ‘Kazakhs’, and ‘Tajiks’ had referred to social or military categories or patterns of settlement (sedentary, nomadic, or oases) (Suny 1999–2000: 168–9). Clans are powerful and often cut across borders. Linguistically, the Central Asian peoples blend into each other. ‘What distinguishes them most clearly from one
another are the Soviet-constructed identities listed in their passports and the Soviet-made republics in which they live' (Suny 1999–2000: 166).

The most violent conflict has been in Tajikistan. A 1990–2 power struggle in the capital triggered a savage war in the south with all the elements familiar from the wars in ex-Yugoslavia (ethnic cleansing, massacres, rape, torture, looting, and summary executions; Roy 2000: 140; Grannes 1993: 47). The conflict was between political parties (neo-communist, Islamic, or democratic) but also among regionalist clans. After the ending of the civil war, Islamists were included in a coalition government, and Tajikistan became an experiment in power-sharing that strongly contrasts with neighbours like Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. However, Islamist radicals in IMU and HT continue to be a source of unrest, and a pretext for both repression and international cooperation among Russia, Tajikistan, and increasingly Uzbekistan.

The region generally struggles with transnational problems such as drug trafficking and religious movements enabled by weak states. Especially Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan seek to cooperate (with each other, Russia, and increasingly China) to combat 'terrorism' and 'religious extremism'. They are criticised by Western observers for using the threat of 'Islamic fundamentalism' to legitimise anti-democratic procedures, but the foreign policy reorientation of Uzbekistan in 2000 was probably an indication that the worry was serious enough that leaders were willing to pay a price to ensure Russian support. Although not a serious military challenge to the state, both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are regularly involved in fights and lose many soldiers.

Dependence on Russia has increased to the point at which Tajikistan is de facto a Russian protectorate. The other possibility for dominance is internal: hegemony by Uzbekistan, the most populous country and the one that comes closest to a historical justification for leadership (Olcott 2001a). With Uzbeks in several of the other countries, Uzbekistan has the means for exerting some influence there. Its potential for becoming regional hegemon is hampered by the lack of economic reforms including a non-convertible currency (Olcott 2001; Cutler 2000). Politically, Uzbekistan sought distance from Russia and opted for GUUAM and the West. Dramatic change in mid-2000 led to new defence agreements with Russia. Allegedly this reorientation was due to 'the President’s inordinate and indiscriminate fear of Islam and of the Afghan Talibs' (Monitor 29 June 2000). Also it was a disappointment that the Americans (who had been signalling a general commitment to balance Russia in the region) turned down an Uzbek request for modernising
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Uzbek air defences. However, the Uzbeks might have concluded that achieving a subregional position of hegemony was most likely by cooperating with Russia, so that Russia gets a general presence in the region, while Uzbekistan plays the dominant role within it. The 2001 US re-engagement in Afghanistan might return Uzbekistan to a US orientation and a distancing from Russia. The fall of the Taleban removes some pressure on the regime in Uzbekistan from Islamist radicals, thus reducing the need for Russian assistance. The Americans are suddenly present militarily — in neighbouring Afghanistan; directly in Central Asia, with troops primarily in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, and with smaller numbers (together with French and Italian troops) in Tajikistan; and with an invitation from Kazakhstan — the first Western troops in Central Asia since Alexander the Great (Peterson 2002; Rashid 2002a: 2). However, the domestic drivers — including Karimov’s repressive regime — might be strong enough to keep the Islamists going without the Taleban (Economist 10 November 2001: 60; Cutler 2001; ICG 2001b; Rashid 2002b; Olcott 2001b).

Security problems are generally more transnational than interstate in Central Asia. No pattern of amity and enmity has formed among the states, except a traditional suspicion and competition for regional leadership between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan (potentially intensified by the US support for Uzbekistan). ‘Nobody is looking to set up a system of alliances between the republics [of Central Asia]. Relations between them are relatively cool: there are few direct links, particularly as regards air transport; embassies have been slow in opening; and political summits are rare and tend to be a matter of form, despite the signature of technical agreements (customs, visa, etc.)’ (Roy 2000: 191). Part of the explanation for the lack of regional security dynamics is the weak military forces possessed by the countries — except Uzbekistan. Thus, the region has elements of the unstructured type — the states are not very state-like, and therefore dynamics form at other levels and the region is relatively open to penetration by external powers.

Of the external powers, Turkey was originally seen as a strong candidate but had to lower its ambitions due to both its own economic difficulties and the lack of enthusiasm in the region for a new big brother (Winrow 2001; Jonson and Allison 2001: 17). However, Turkey, due to the role of Central Asia in domestic identity and politics, is not likely to give up (Kazan 1996; Kazan and Wæver 1994; Wæver 1996b; Kazan 2002). Platforms in language, culture, and the early victory in the ‘alphabet war’ make Turkey a long-term factor. So far, it is mainly felt
in the states in the west of Central Asia, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, less in key country Uzbekistan (Jonson and Allison 2001: 17). Iran has not played the missionary role some expected, but religion has been powerful enough for the Sunni–Shi’a divide to prevent the full usage of the Persian language connector especially to Tajiks. As in the first Russian conquests of Caucasus and Central Asia, 'Russia’s greatest ally... was the Sunni–Shia conflict' (Johnson 1991: 273). The predominantly Sunni Turks and the Shi’a Persians do not cooperate against the Russians but are more inclined to worry about each other’s influence, because the competing Muslim faith is not only a geopolitical but also a religious threat.

Paradoxically, Iran, which many assume to be particularly ideological as an Islamic republic, has turned out to be the most pragmatic actor (Herzig 2001), and increasingly Iranian and Russian interests converge on opposing export of Taleban-like radicalism (IMU), on opposing US pipeline schemes, and, more generally on a quasi-alignment and arms trade because of the USA.

Russia generally has many assets including personal relations. Putin chose, against much criticism, not to protest against the US troops in Central Asia, but he reacted to the impression of a long-term US presence by taking steps towards increased Russian military presence. He has hinted that Russia should reassert a role in patrolling the CIS perimeter, which it gave up for all countries but Tajikistan (Blagov 2002; Najimova 2002). And, more importantly, the CSA substructure within the CIS has decided to set up ‘Collective Forces of Rapid Deployment’ to repel attacks – presumably by Islamist insurgents – against Central Asian states. The new airbase for this purpose was conspicuously placed in the one country among the CSA members which hosts a US airbase, Kyrgyzstan (Otorbaev 2002). The CIS anti-terrorist centre in Moscow and intelligence cooperation have also become increasingly useful as the Central Asian states prepare for attacks from IMU and related groups. Roeder (1997) argues that Russia wins first of all because it is the only power willing to be cynical enough to support those leaders able to gain power. Increasingly, however, it seems that the United States (re)learns this kind of practice, as witnessed by support for Turkmenistan’s lifetime dictator Niyazov (Noreng 2000: 182) and the instrumental logic of the war on terrorism including alignment with Uzbekistan’s Karimov. Russia’s major weakness is economic and on this basis many experts predict long-term retreat (Jonson and Allison 2001; Jonson 2001; Allison 2001), but Russia’s resources in terms of networks and geography should
not be underestimated. China has so far mainly been driven defensively by concern for spillover into its Xinjiang province. Economy could make China a stronger factor in the future.

Finally, the position of the United States is the big question. NATO’s PfP programme and the strong US promotion of the pipeline option of Baku–Ceyhan (i.e., from Azerbaijan’s Caspian coast to Turkey’s Mediterranean) were early signs of involvement. After September 2001, the USA moved in with bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and, although it had a quite limited presence with an unclear long-term outlook, this was sufficient to trigger yet another regional realignment centred on Uzbekistan. In the American media and political spheres many have already either pointed out the likelihood of the US bases becoming permanent or argued for this move at least for the medium term (Starr 2001; Hoagland 2002; Schmitt and Dao 2002). Similarly, the wisdom of Putin’s acceptance of this US entrance into the region is hotly contested in Moscow. On the other hand, the seemingly certain victory for Baku–Ceyhan has become questioned by the post-Taleban reopening of the Afghanistan option as well as the permanent potential of the Iranian option which is much cheaper and kept out only by American obstruction. The USA immediately faced a difficult dilemma over the possibility that alignment with Central Asia would prop up repressive regimes like Karimov’s and thus compromise the alleged opportunity to push for reforms (Olcott 2001b; Rashid 2002a, 2002b, 2002c; Eshanova 2002; Peterson 2002; Karatnycky 2002). The possibility of a long-term US role in the region has in itself redefined the terms of politics in the region, although it remains an open question how much the United States will eventually be able to shape the region. Since Central Asian foreign policies are mostly driven by concerns about regime security, it is far from clear that the United States will unequivocally be seen as a less dangerous ally than Russia.

At first sight, Central Asia could be a major problem for RSCT if powers otherwise located in three or four different RSCs were rushing in from all sides. This has not happened. The main external actors have shown surprisingly low interest despite oil and pipelines, and now the question is whether Central Asia is an RSC and/or a huge insulator zone, or a subcomplex in the Russia-centred RSC. Our interpretation is that Central Asia is a distinct subcomplex with a possibility of becoming an RSC. If the states in the region consolidate and gain an ability to threaten each other more directly, Russia is gradually weakened, and no other external power steps decisively in, then Central Asia might become an RSC in its own right. If the USA hangs on with a few small bases becoming
semi-permanent, this is likely actually to stimulate the formation of an independent RSC because it weakens Russian hegemony while being insufficient to constitute an alternative source of external domination (see Starr 2001). Only in the unlikely case that the USA significantly upgraded its presence in Central Asia could an altogether different scenario open up whereby Central Asia became an arena for an odd mixture of interregional and global rivalry. Much more likely is a subcomplex gradually becoming a separate RSC. If Afghanistan were not already an insulator, this geographically large RSC could play an insulator function. In Central Asia, the geopolitical great game has materialised much less than expected, and less so than in the Caucasus because Turkey and Iran are less active. Instead the subregion has external involvement in more transnational ways including Islamic movements, drugs, and spillover to and from Afghanistan.

Inter-subcomplexes
What makes all of this one RSC? The organisation of CIS itself, but first of all the Russian fulcrum and the beginnings of a countercoalition (GUUAM) cutting across the subregions. Because of the dominance of Russia, whether a counterbalance will be established can be decided only at the level of the whole post-Soviet RSC.

Interregional level
A region located at the heart of the Eurasian landmass will have interregional links in several directions. Europe is the main interregional issue for Russia, although China is also important, and the rivalry to the south ties Russia to Middle Eastern politics. As argued above, Russia is no longer part of the EU-Europe RSC. During the Cold War, the United States became Russia’s defining Other and to a large extent it has remained so after the end of the Cold War.

Between Russia and EU-Europe, the main issues have been NATO enlargement, Balkan wars, and the Baltic states.

NATO enlargement on the one hand showed clearly that Russia and the West do not run a shared security system for Europe: this issue was ultimately outside Russia’s sphere and it had no veto. On the other hand, the issue became a burden on the relationship and thereby underlined connectivity (Lynch 1999; Dannreuther 1999–2000; Levitin 2000). Direct border-crossing relations between Central Europe and Russia are likely to decrease further with EU enlargement. As the Polish eastern border becomes the outer border of Schengenland, much tighter controls and
regulations will be imposed meaning the end of grey businesses which have until now been in the mutual interest of at least the areas close to the border on both sides (Nyberg 1999: 20). The first round of eastern NATO enlargement (decided in 1997) produced a solid anti-Western opinion in Moscow that influences future questions. The improved atmosphere in US–Russian relations since September 2001 due to the war on terrorism weakened Russian reactions to the second round (decided autumn 2002) and led to a strengthening of the 1997 ‘Permanent Joint Council’ which became the NATO–Russia Council in 2002. The Russian economic need for the West will probably be focused on the EU, both because it is Russia’s main trading partner, and because its geographical closeness makes the long-term commitment of Europe stronger. The latter is partly based on security reasoning. Especially in Germany, worries about the long-term security effects of developments in Russia produce a deeper commitment to Russia than in the USA (Bahr 1998; Schmidt 1999; Thumann 1999). In Germany, it is often argued that Russia inevitably is European and that institutional developments must reflect this reality. Such reasoning implies a supercomplex for a larger Europe.

The controversies over Bosnia and Kosovo were often interpreted as Russian special interests in the Balkans based mostly on the idea of a Slavic Orthodox link. This is often overestimated, and Russians are not generally willing to sacrifice much for the Serbs. They saw support for Serbia as important to gaining acceptance of the principle that Russia should be heard both because it is a global great power (UN Security Council logic) and because it is a European great power (Lynch 1999; see also Levitin 2000; Antonenko 1999–2000; Terpager 2001). The Contact Group is a manifestation of a kind of concert logic that suits the Russians well (see Zelikow 1992; Wæver 1995b), and they still push for their OSCE-based vision of future European security. But increasingly the OSCE (just like the OAS) is a security organisation for two RSCs, EU-Europe and the CIS. These connections point to a weak supercomplex.

The Baltic republics are a very different case from the Balkans. They constitute the biggest problem for the two-separate-RSCs interpretation. They are not part of the CIS, and clearly aspire to the fullest possible membership of the West (EU, NATO, and any other organisation). However, an RSC is not defined by membership of organisations or by agreement on belonging together. On the contrary, the most common way of being tied together is by negative dynamics, i.e., by being each other’s security problem. In this respect, the Baltic states do belong to the post-Soviet RSC. They are part of the West for most other purposes, but
security-wise they are not. Their main security concern is Russia, and Russians often securitise the Baltic states, especially Baltic treatment of Russian minorities. Interregionally this is probably the most important link between the two RSCs. If the enlargement of the EU and/or NATO continues, it is possible that Ukraine in future will replace the Baltic states in this role.

In Asia, the relation to China has moved from threat to quasi-ally against American unipolarity. Improved Russian–US relations after September 2001 strengthened Russia’s position in relation to China, which feared losing out in the triangle. Contrary to many Western expectations, Russia is unlikely to give up this comfortable position in favour of a full swing to the West. The global level recognition/identity question makes the war on terrorism ambiguous. While it improves Russian–US relations and gives some appearance of bilateral importance in the good old Cold War summity sense, it also reinforces US unilaterality and thus confirms to Russia the need for a counter-unipolarity coalition in which China and Russia are the two leading members. One might expect Russia to be part of the (East) Asian power equation as in numerous considerations on the future relationship between China, Japan, the USA, and Russia as the ‘regional great powers’, but this has not happened. Russia is not strong enough at present to assert itself in Asia, and the eastern part of the country is so thinly populated and peripheral within Russia that its mere geographical position does not make Russia a major Asian actor. The China connection is on the one hand about local authorities cultivating crossborder cooperation and ‘growth regions’, Asian-style, and on the other hand a great power relationship oriented at the global level. Already in December 1992 Russia and China agreed to pull most of their troops back 100 kilometres along their common border, and in April 1997 (in addition to agreeing on criticising American world domination) they decided to further reduce troops along their shared border. The Far East is a source of Russian security concerns because of the stark contrast between population figures and growth rates in the Russian Far East and northeastern China, which arouses fears of ultimately losing Siberia (Trenin 2001: 214–20).

Russia and China act jointly in Central Asia. The SCO, originally formed to settle border questions, has now reorientated towards cooperation against terrorism, drugs trafficking, fundamentalism, and separatism. In practice, this is mainly about mutual support for repression of local revolts from Chechnya to Xinjiang. Islamic extremism is blamed for it all, and Afghanistan was singled out as a possible object for
action (Abbas 2000). Uzbekistan started to move towards this group (and away from GUUAM) before the American war in Afghanistan changed all calculations. This cooperation is enabled by China’s recognition of Russian leadership in Central Asia (Blank 2000; Trenin 2001: 130, 203–4), which China so far sees as the best strategy to ensure stability and thus handle its main concern, Uighur rebels in Xinjiang.

Mongolia has been more truly independent since the end of the Cold War than for several centuries. A nation of two million people on one million square kilometres, squeezed in between two of the world’s great powers, China and Russia, Mongolia has notoriously been either occupied or under some form of suzerainty by one of them. China dominated for two centuries until 1921. From 1924 to 1992 it was overlaid by the Soviet Union including (1966–92) Soviet troops stationed in Mongolia (Pavliatenko 1999). Since the early 1990s, Mongolia has been an insulator, maintaining balanced relationships with the two great neighbours and diversifying relations beyond them especially towards the West. In regional terms, Mongolia strives to gain a position in Asia (e.g., to become a member of APEC) (Mongolia, Concept of Foreign Policy n.d.; Rossabi n.d.).

Due to the inadequate demarcation of the border and the movements of the nomadic people, there are routine violations of the borders with Russia and China. Mongolia makes territorial claims on the neighbouring Russian republics of Tuva and Buriatia where the titular nations are ethnically and culturally close to Mongols. This is, however, undramatic as long as transnational traffic can continue due to a lenient Russian border regime that makes the border less felt (Kunadze 1999). In the case of renewed conflict between Russia and China, Mongolia’s position would become difficult.

The Russo-Japanese relationship remains deadlocked. Despite numerous attempts to move forward – and reap some of the potential economic benefits of cooperation (Supian and Nosov 1999; Sato et al. 1999) – it has proven impossible to unlock the question of the Kurile Islands. Not only has this relationship changed very little compared to the Cold War, even the Second World War has not formally been ended between the two (see Monitor 27 January 2000; Kunadze 1999; Kimura et al. 1999; Trenin 2001: 220–6).

The net Asian result is weak interregional connections.

In the Middle East, ‘Russia’s two and a half centuries of contiguity with the Middle East, initiated by Catherine the Great, has ended’ (Halliday 2000: 218). Although Russia occasionally tries to play a role in
the Middle East (e.g., in relation to the Israel–Palestinian peace process), the end of the Cold War basically meant an end to the system of Soviet allies in the region (see ch. 7). The main interregional link now goes via the newly independent republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Some of the republics have been strongly influenced by interregional dynamics, especially because of the Taleban in Afghanistan, but also more generally by Iranian and Turkish policy towards the subregions. But since the whole ‘great game’ has turned out much less intense than expected five to ten years ago, this has become a less powerful factor for Russia and, when external involvement in Central Asia began to be a serious concern for Russia in 2001, this was not for interregional but for global reasons, i.e., US power. The general pattern continues to be that, for Russia, the interregional level is not as important as the three other levels. This is surprising given the basic geopolitical location of Russia at the heart of the large Eurasian landmass.

The global level

The global level is more important than the interregional to Russia. It is a key aim of Russian policy to retain a position as global power, i.e., to secure its global say via the permanent seat in the Security Council and generally to cultivate concert-like (or, even better, bilateral) management patterns with the United States. Membership in the G8 (gradually achieved during 1994–8) was an important step in this direction. Directly, this is about fighting for Russia’s place, but more structurally it is about whether the world is multipolar (because then Russia is most likely one of the powers) or it is unipolar. Thus, the overarching foreign policy aim for Russia is increasingly formulated as the need to secure a multipolar world. All the three major doctrine-like documents finalised during 2000 – ‘Foreign Policy Concept’, ‘National Security Concept’, and ‘Military Doctrine’ – refer to this struggle between ‘two trends in the world’, a unipolar project of domination, unilateralism, and use of military force (‘humanitarian intervention’) versus a multipolar world order based on international law.

Russia has to uphold an image of itself at the highest level of powerhood, call it superpower or great power. In our terminology, the country at least has to underline that it is a great power (not a regional power) and one with the potential for superpowerdom. This puts pressure on Russia to reproduce the defence appropriate for a superpower, notably the nuclear forces. In Russian defence debate, on one side stand those (like Head of the General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin) who prefer to
downgrade nuclear weapons and give priority to conventional forces since this is what Russia needs to deal with its immediate internal and regional needs. On the other side, Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev gives priority to upholding nuclear parity as the main basis for superpowerhood. 'The outcome of this debate will define not just policy, but how Russia views its place in the world. Nuclear weapons constitute less an instrument of war than a measure of Russia’s self-image. The debate over them and the way that Moscow constitutes its forces in the coming years will reflect whether Russia intends only to be a great power or whether it aspires, again, to the status of superpower' (Stratfor 2000b).

A closely related choice concerns the American programme for missile defence (MD). The original Russian position was – not surprisingly – strong opposition to this programme that could in the long run question the Russian deterrent and thus nuclear parity. Furthermore, the issue worked well internationally as a campaign issue for those opposed to American ‘unipolarity’ (Russia, China, India, et al.). During 2001–2, Putin pursued a balanced policy in which de facto tolerance reaped ‘rewards’ such as a treaty on ‘offensive weapons’ that was more formalised than preferred by the US defence establishment. On the other hand, Russia did not literally endorse the US withdrawal from the ABM treaty. Russia had an interest in exploring potential cooperation on missile defence because ‘rogue states’, especially in the Middle East, were at least as much a concern to Russia as to the USA. However, simultaneously, widespread concern in Moscow over MD meant that US actions were closely tracked, particularly regarding the eventual choice of ‘architecture’ for the system, which will determine its exact military implications for Russia.

MD is one of three military-related areas where President Putin accepted ‘retreat’ with only modest compensation, the two other being NATO enlargement and American military presence in Central Asia. One scenario for Russia is therefore a repetition of ten years before, when a pro-Western policy failed to generate domestic support; then, when Western ‘payment’ – both economic and in terms of global position – failed to emerge, Russia shifted to a more critical line.

In general, Russian defence is in serious crisis and in many places literally falling apart. Defence reform is badly needed, but also very difficult to implement due to the interests it will violate. However, Russia is in any case sure to remain a very considerable military power and the West will likely treat Russia as a great power. Only in the case of dramatic disintegration of the country will Russia drop from being a great power.
to becoming only a regional power. To revive superpowerhood is even more unlikely.

**General constellation**

To Russia, the most important levels are the regional and the global (and the two are closely linked), whereas to most of the other states in the region the most important are the domestic and the regional. Surely, the domestic level counts for Russia too, but the key axes are those shown in figure 1.

**Conclusions**

The post-Soviet space is a centred region – around a great power – and part of a weak supercomplex with EU-Europe. Three transformations are possible: (1) a change in the global position of Russia, (2) internal transformation from centred to balanced, (3) external transformation most likely regarding the border to Europe.

(1) To assess a change in the global position of Russia it is necessary more generally to understand the interplay of global, regional, and domestic dynamics in Russian policy. At present, Russian policy is much driven by the aspiration to remain in the global rank, i.e., to avoid falling to regional power status. Thus, questions in the near abroad are defined as a problem in relation to global position. The top-down logic is: because we want to be a global power, we need to control our own region and especially our domestic space. Even more important is the domestic—global link. As shown in the box on pp. 406–8, domestic security in Russia cannot be self-contained but needs external definition either in the near abroad or globally, or probably both. Because of these internal links between the levels, it is unlikely that an intensification of security problems at the domestic or regional level will ‘out-compete’
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global security (see the South Africa box, pp. 235–8). Should Russia be forced out of its international role, the domestic effects will be dramatic. Conversely, Russia is likely to do the utmost to keep this position.

(2) For something like GUUAM to evolve into a genuine counter-weight to Russia within the CIS is not realistic in terms of material balance. However, coordination among a possibly increasing number of ex-Soviet republics makes control and manipulation from Russia more difficult. In combination with Russia’s internal problems, Russian rule may become difficult. Post-Soviet space will remain a centred RSC, but with the centredness under degrees of challenge.

(3) The nature and location of the boundary between CIS and EU-Europe gradually consolidated during the 1990s, and it seemed to be favoured by both sides. However, new policy questions have arisen for Europe. So far it has been an advantage to have separate spheres, but now EU-Europe confronts two problems: (a) it is cut off from influence on Russian behaviour (see the critique of Western governments’ inaction on Chechnya) and (b) the prospect of a future rift over the question of Ukraine and EU enlargement. Therefore, seen from EU-Europe it might be advisable to blur dividing lines by upgrading the OSCE and/or producing other all-European institutions.
Conclusions: scenarios for the European supercomplex

Europe consists of two centred RSCs, one centred on the EU, one on Russia. Both are centred on great powers. The EU-dominated one is a security community and its centredness holds high legitimacy in most of its periphery, which to a large extent tries to join the core as members. Russia in contrast dominates its area by more heavy-handed measures and its legitimacy is challenged, although at the elite level (especially in Central Asia) there is a certain voluntary participation in a Russian imperial order. The Balkans is a subcomplex in EU-Europe.

The Balkans is unlikely to change dramatically. More wars might be in store (e.g., in Montenegro, in Macedonia, in or around Albania), and the Balkans will remain a conflictual subcomplex within Europe. It is not likely that the EU can disengage and leave the Balkans as a separate RSC (though the USA is more likely to be able to do so). Nor will conflicts be overcome and political and economic transformations executed with such efficiency that the Balkans soon blends into European normality and stops being distinct.

For the whole European supercomplex, there are three primary questions.

(1) In the EU-dominated RSC, it is the general question of European integration. One can imagine a spectrum from the EU cohering further internally and becoming a much more efficient global actor, to something like the current contradictory status quo, or elements of disintegration. Complete fragmentation and renationalisation cannot be ruled out, but are increasingly unlikely. Thus, the complex basically stays centred, a security community, and a great power of (increasing) global relevance. This means continued avoidance of mutual state-to-state securitisation and most likely updated versions of the meta-securitisation about the threat that Europe’s past poses to Europe’s future.
Conclusions: scenarios for European supercomplex

(2) In the Russia-centred complex, the main open question concerns the relationship between Russia and the rest of the post-Soviet space. In pure power terms, the complex will undoubtedly remain unipolar, but it is undecided whether it will operate around a centre holding some general legitimacy or whether it will be a unipolar balance-of-power system. One possibility is that Russia manages to stabilise a truly imperial system with differentiated forms of control tailored to the different kinds of peripheral units. Most of the republics will stay formally independent, but Russia will generally be in control in the whole complex. The opposite scenario is that groups like GUUAM succeed in establishing some kind of counterweight to Russia. Technically, it is hard to see true ‘balance’, given the Russian ascendancy in terms of economic, military, and organisational power. But it might be possible to impede Russian dominance by a countercoalition. A third prospect is that a systemic countercoalition does not form, but resistance and friction are high enough that Russia does not ‘run’ the RSC.

(3) A merger between the two complexes can be imagined, either through increasing tension and thus (in)security interdependence, or by a strengthening of all-European security institutions and cooperation. The conflictual scenario is hard to imagine in the short term because Russia is both too weak and too preoccupied with problems internally in Russia and in its ‘near abroad’. For the long term it cannot be excluded. The cooperative scenario can come about in three possible ways. One is driven by long-term security concerns, i.e., the EU wants to engage Russia more and create an overarching security order to avoid future problems – an argument that is heard most consistently in Germany. Second, popular pressure might make it intolerable to Western leaders to have so little influence on developments in the CIS area. The second war in Chechnya following on the heels of NATO’s intervention in Kosovo created a sense in Western Europe of inability to act consistently on its humanitarian and human rights principles. This could create a rationale for a strengthening of pan-European political and security institutions that Russia wants for different reasons. Russia would be consulted more on matters like Kosovo, while higher demands are then put on Russia in cases like Chechnya. The third possibility is that the two grow together as EU enlargement reaches Ukraine and Moldova. Eventually, Russia will be either antagonised or drawn into the process – probably never as a member or serious applicant, but then some other way.
Thus, the current situation in Europe is likely to continue for quite a while – no external transformation, no internal transformation in EU-Europe, and in the CIS different possibilities on a spectrum of degrees of centredness and legitimacy. The primary long-term possibility for qualitative change is a gradual strengthening of the all-European supercomplex, though a full merger remains unlikely.